

Foreign Military Studies Office

OE WATCH

FOREIGN NEWS & PERSPECTIVES OF THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT



Special Essay: Islamic Insurgency in the Philippines: **Bangsamoro**

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Normalization of Turkey-Israel Relations? Not Quite

27 March 2013

OE Watch Commentary: Many believe that the Israeli apology to Turkey for the “operational mistakes” made during the May 2010 flotilla incident will immediately ease strained relations between the two countries. However, an analysis of Turkish reactions and commentaries suggests that the reality is more nuanced.

Such an analysis gives us a more realistic glimpse of the future shape of Turkish-Israeli relations and reveals that it will be a new, unique, and different kind of relationship, but not quite “normalization.” It will be one with a strong security and trade component, but also one that includes public fights and continued anti-Israel rhetoric by Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan.

The first passage indicates that the relationship will have a strong security component, since both countries are facing a weak, failed, and unstable state in Syria, where chemical weapons can fall into the hands of the PKK or Hezbollah. The two countries are going to have to talk to each other on how to secure their borders. The second passage suggests that in the coming era the new Turkish-Israeli relationship will likely include continued anti-Israeli rhetoric from Erdoğan, as this is a way that he appeals to his base. The third passage suggests that there will also likely be a strong economic element, which has always been an important part of the relationship. In fact, despite the fact that military and diplomatic ties have been frozen since 2010, the free trade agreement has been in place and trade is up almost 30 percent since then. The fourth passage indicates that the apology is being viewed as a huge diplomatic victory for Turkey and warns against expecting any kind of normalization.

This debate has been prompted by the fact that on 22 March, during the last hours of President Obama’s visit to Israel, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu called Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan and apologized for Israel’s “operational

“Where will Turkey-Israel relations go from here? It will definitely not go back to the ‘golden age’ of the second half of the 90’s...But there are some risks... that are threatening the entire region, such as the risk of the Syrian civil war escalating to one that includes chemical weapons. These risks make it useful for [Israel and Turkey] to have some kind of contact.”



Billboard in Ankara.

Top caption reads:

“Mr. Prime Minister; we are GRATEFUL that you let our country experience this pride.”

Bottom caption reads:

“Israel APOLOGIZED to TURKEY...”, via <http://www.haberturk.com.tr>

Source: Mustafa Akyol, “İsrail özrünün ‘perde arkası’ (The ‘behind the scenes’ of the Israeli apology),” Stargazete.com.tr, 27 March 2013, <http://haber.stargazete.com/yazar/israil-ozrunun-perde-arkasi/yazi-739591>

“So where does this apology leave us? Where will Turkey-Israel relations go from here? It will definitely not go back to the ‘golden age’ of the second half of the 90’s. Because back then Turkey had a regime that was sympathetic to Israel. In Israel, the peace process with the Palestinians was ongoing.

Today there are serious differences of vision between Ankara and Tel-Aviv. While our government supports the Arab Spring, Netanyahu’s cabinet is worried about this process, which has ‘brought Islamists to power’.

But there are some risks, independent of ideology that are threatening the entire region, such as the risk of the Syrian civil war escalating to one which includes chemical weapons. These risks make it useful for [Israel and Turkey] to have some kind of contact.”

Source: “Başbakan Erdoğan: Uygulama olmazsa İsrail’le normalleşme olmaz (Prime Minister Erdoğan: If there is no implementation, then there will be no normalization with Israel),” Cihan.com.tr, 24 March 2013, <http://www.cihan.com.tr/caption/Basbakan-Erdogan-Uygulama-olmazsa-Israil-le-normallesme-olmaz-CHOTgyMTI0LzEwMDU=>

“Erdoğan said, “So you see, what did Israel do, they martyred 9 of our brothers in international waters. They said many things, and put many mediators, from the U.S. to European countries... We said ‘an apology will be made, compensation will be paid and the blockade on Palestine will be lifted.’ There will be no normalization without these. Normalization will happen the moment there is implementation. But if there is no implementation, then I am sorry.”

(continued)

Continued: Normalization of Turkey-Israel Relations? Not Quite

errors” during an incident in May 2010, in which nine individuals (eight Turkish citizens and one dual U.S.-Turkish citizen) were killed during a raid on a Turkish flotilla that was allegedly carrying humanitarian aid to Gaza. Military and diplomatic relations have been frozen since then, and Turkey has demanded a formal apology, compensation for the victims’ families and the lifting of the Gaza blockade to re-establish relations.
End OE Watch Commentary (Kaya)

Source: Soli Özel, “Özür ve normalleşme (The apology and normalization),” Haberturk.com.tr, 24 March 2013, <http://www.haberturk.com/yazarlar/soli-ozel/830127-ozur-ve-normallesme>

“Trade between Turkey and Israel is climbing to record-highs, and Turkish Airlines runs one of its most profitable and busy routes between Istanbul and Tel Aviv.”

Source: Cengiz Çandar, “İsrail, Türkiye’nin önünde ‘egilince’ (When Israel ‘bows’ in front of Turkey),” Hurriyet.com.tr, 24 March 2013, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/22884987.asp>

“Turkey had three demands: 1) Apology; 2) Compensation; 3) The lifting of the Gaza blockade. It didn’t give up on any of these. As [Turkish Foreign Minister] Ahmet Davutoğlu said, Turkey pursued this foreign policy diligently for three years and finally got what it wanted without any compromises.

Turkey resisted pressure from every direction to give up its insistence of the “apology” requirement; and turned it into a matter of “principle”. This paved the way for the greatest diplomatic victory in recent history for Turkey.

Let’s not forget: there are no bridges yet. With the “apology”, Turkey-Israel relations have come back to where they were before the 31 May 2010 Mavi Marmara incident.

Let’s remember, Turkey-Israel relations before 31 May 2010, were actually quite cold due to Israel’s attack on Gaza in 2008 and the January 2009 “one minute” incident in Davos.

Israel’s apology fixes the three-year gap, but does not point to a ‘honeymoon’. Still, the entry of Israel’s relations with Turkey into a “reparation phase” might give Israel some much-needed ‘room to maneuver’ in its other conflicts in the region.”



Understanding Turkey’s Coup Trial

By Karen Kaya

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

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

“We are ready for dialogue. Whenever he [the Turkish Foreign Minister] wants, we are ready to sit down without conditions.”

OE Watch Commentary: *A critical development in Syria in early April went unnoticed, but has the potential to tip the balance in Syria against the Assad regime. For the first time since the crisis started, regime forces targeted Syria's Kurds and elements of a Kurdish group called the Democratic Union Party (PYD) with heavy weaponry and aerial bombardments, killing 15 civilians. As the accompanying articles point out, this development appears to pave the way for a dialogue between the PYD and Turkey, bringing the Syrian Kurds - potentially the decisive minority in the Syrian uprising - closer to Turkey. This, in turn, has the potential to shift the power balances in the war.*

Until recently, Turkey viewed the PYD as being an extension of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and vowed not to talk to them. However, with the start of peace talks between the Turkish government and the PKK and this most recent development in Syria, it appears that Turkey might start talking to the PYD as well. As the accompanying passages point out, recently the Turkish foreign minister indicated that he would talk to the PYD under three conditions: the PYD should not support the Assad regime; it should not create a unilateral, de facto autonomy before the convening of an elected parliament in Syria; and it should not support any aggression against Turkey.

Initially, the Kurds in Syria did not take sides in the conflict, and kept their distance from both the Assad regime and the rebels while they focused on the security of their own cities. Instead of getting involved in the fighting, they focused on Kurdish national unification, establishing an army and securing their own towns. As the fighting spread in the rest of the country, a string of Kurdish-majority towns in the north seized local

Source: Aslı Aydıntaşbaş, “PKK Esad’la savaşıyor (The PKK is fighting against Assad),” Milliyet.com.tr, 8 April 2013, <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/pkk-esad-la-savasiyor/siyaset/siyasyazardetay/08.04.2013/1690582/default.htm>

“Last week, the Syrian army targeted parts of Qamishli, and Kurdish-inhabited parts of Aleppo. Clashes erupted in Qamishli between the regime forces and the PYD and in the weekend, Aleppo's Kurdish towns were hit with mortars and air bombardment. The Internet site ANF [Euphrates News Agency], which is close to the PKK reported that 15 civilians died in an attack on Seyh Maksut and that the PYD's militia arm killed 9 soldiers in the fighting. So? So, the PKK is now involved in the war against Assad in Syria.

Turkey has historically viewed the PYD as being an extension of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and until recently, vowed not to talk to them. He told me how the clashes started. “Our initial policy was to defend our own areas and areas where Kurds live. Only legitimate defense. This is the first time that such a big attack took place.” [I asked] but why now? “I think there are two reasons. The first is an agreement we made with certain groups within the Free Syrian Army in Resulayn. It is not possible for us to have an agreement with the jihadist groups within the Syrian opposition. But in Aleppo, Afrin and Serikani, we came to an agreement with some of the secular groups. The regime is uncomfortable with this. Second is the Imrali process. The regime does not like the possibility of Turks and Kurds achieving peace...”



Kurds along the Turkey-Syria border, via <http://www.thenational.ae>

(continued)

Continued: Shifting Regional Dynamics: Turkey and Syria's Kurds

authority from the central government. The Kurds gained control of most state institutions in the northern part of Syria, including police stations. Allowing Kurds the freedom to do this was, in part, Assad's way of retaliating against Turkey for hosting the Syrian opposition and providing an organizational hub for them. This, in turn, created fear in Turkey that northern Syria could become another base for the PKK to launch attacks on Turkey.

Turkey's peace talks with the PKK seem to have shifted these calculations. If talks between the PYD and Turkey, which also supports the Syrian opposition, yield a united Syrian opposition that includes Kurds, this could be a decisive factor that tips the balance against regime forces.

The accompanying passages from the Turkish and Middle Eastern press discuss this development and the talks surrounding a possible dialogue between the Turkish foreign minister and the PYD.
End OE Watch Commentary (Kaya)

Source: Cengiz Çandar, "AFRICA's Kurdish Initiative May Affect Syria's Kurds," Al-monitor.com, 14 April 2013, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/04/kurdish-issue-initiative-elections-AFRICA-syria.html>

"PYD leader Salih Muslim several times sent word via a variety of back channels that he wants a dialogue with Turkey and that he has no intention of threatening Turkey's security...I heard it personally from Moaz el-Khatib in Cairo that Salih Muslim is ready to talk to Turkey and had asked him to be an intermediary.

In a news report carried by the ANF [Euphrates News Agency], also known as the PKK news service, Muslim was quoted as saying: 'We are ready for dialogue. Whenever he wants, we are ready to sit down without conditions.'

The lead of the ANF report said: "Salih Muslim, the co-chair of the largest party of west Kurdistan, assessed the conditions listed by Turkey's Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu to accept the PYD as an interlocutor." It went on: "According to a report in the daily Yeni Şafak, Davutoğlu signaled a new process that would accept the PYD as an interlocutor. Davutoğlu said Turkey has three conditions for anyone who wants to talk to Ankara. 1) That it won't be on the side of the [Damascus] regime. 2) That it will avoid any fait accompli until a parliament elected by the Syrian people is formed [that is, it will not declare the region to be under its control.] 3) That it won't support terror in Turkey.

If read carefully, these polemical statements by Davutoğlu and Salih Muslim can be interpreted as "laying the ground" for a dialogue that could be initiated soon. Contrary to Davutoğlu's earlier remarks that "there could never be talks with the PYD, which is an extension of the PKK," this time he spoke in terms that could well signal that the door is ajar for dialogue."



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

By Karen Kaya

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

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

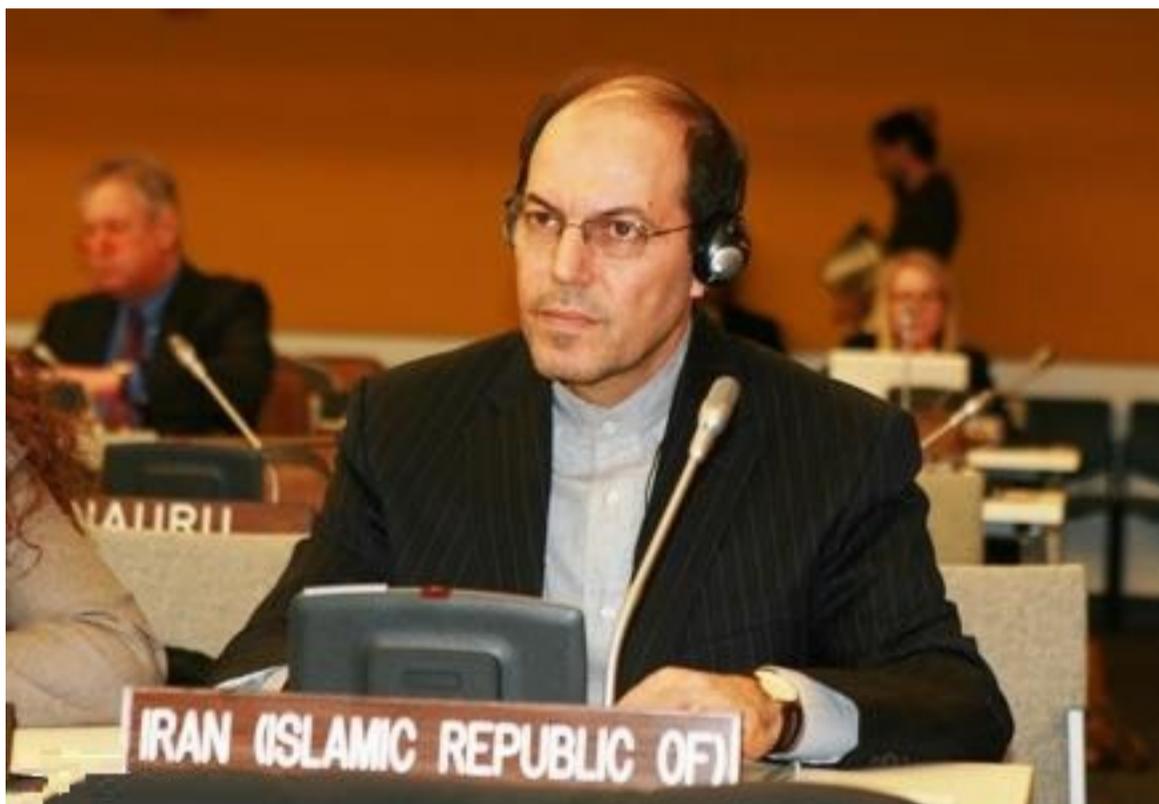
“Terrorism will likely remain an impediment to Iran’s relationship with the West, even if the nuclear issue is resolved.”

OE Watch Commentary: According to the State Department’s annual *Country Reports on Terrorism* (previously known as the *Patterns of Global Terrorism* report), Iran, designated a terror sponsor since 1984, remains “the world’s leading state sponsor of terrorism” as it “continues to undermine international efforts to promote peace and democracy and threatens stability, especially in the Middle East and South Asia.”¹

While Iranian officials will often condemn terrorism, their remarks often come replete with an asterisk, as Iranian officials embrace a definition that exculpates support of groups which target civilians for causes the Islamic Republic believes to be righteous. It is within this context that the excerpted remarks by Gholam-Hossein Dehqani, Iran’s ambassador to the United Nations, should not surprise. In recent years international diplomacy has focused upon the Iranian nuclear program, but even if there is resolution to that issue, differences regarding terrorism will likely remain an impediment to Iran’s relationship with the West.

The Islamic Republic’s concept of terrorism has multiple roots. Not only religious but also political ideology provided the sustenance upon which Iran’s revolutionaries thrived in the run-up to the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Anti-Western ideology—which some contemporary analysts associate with the Islamic Republic and perhaps eases acceptance of terror as an asymmetric strategy—actually has deeper roots inside Iran. In 1962 Iranian writer Jalal Al-e Ahmad condemned Iranian association with Western notions of modernity, coining the term “Westoxification,” as if this were a sickness. Revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini’s xenophobia therefore appealed not only to

(continued)



Iran’s ambassador to the United Nations Gholam-Hossein Dehqani, via <http://iran-un.org/>

Source: “Terrorism Nabayad ba Mobarzeh ba Eshghal va Esta’mar Yeksan Angashteh Shavad,” (“Fighting for Freedom and Against Colonialists Should Not Be Considered Terrorism”), Islamic Republic News Agency, 9 April 2013. <http://www.irna.ir>

Fighting for Freedom and Against Colonialists Should Not Be Considered Terrorism

New York—Iran’s UN envoy said here Monday [April 8, 2013] at UN General Assembly Special Committee on the Non-Aligned Movement condemns any threat against any of its members on pretext of anti-terrorism campaign, emphasizing that terrorism is not equal to legitimate freedom fighting against occupiers or colonialists... He further emphasized, Occupier regimes resorting to force against the freedom seeking nations who fight against foreign forces to regain their undeniable rights must be condemned.

1. “Country Reports on Terrorism 2011,” U.S. Department of State, July 31, 2012, <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2011/195540.htm>
2. Flatow v. Islamic Republic of Iran, 999 F. Supp. 1 (District Court of the District of Columbia, 1998).
3. “The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran,” Article 3: <http://www.iranonline.com/iran/iran-info/government/constitution-1.html>; Article 154: <http://www.iranonline.com/iran/iran-info/government/constitution-10.html>
4. “Tars-e Amrika az Ahiya-e Islami” [The US Fear of the Islamic Revival], trans. Open Source Center, Khorasan (Mashhad), January 25, 1996; “Tandar bidun Baran,” [Thunder without Rain], Javan (Tehran), August 18, 2005.
5. “Khatami: Dar Zamineh-e tahrif andisheh-ha-ye hazirat-e Imam ‘alam khatar mikonam” [Khatami: I Find Danger in the Distortion of His Excellence the Imam’s Thoughts], Emrooz (Tehran), May 3, 2008.
6. “Iran’s Forces Are Models of Resistance,” Press TV (Tehran), May 22, 2008.

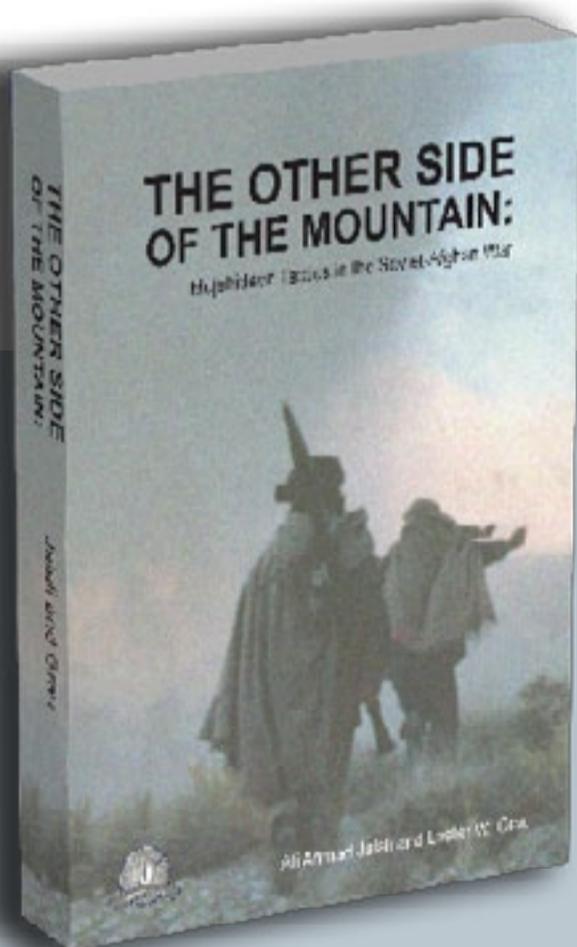
Continued: Defining Terrorism to Exculpate Terrorists

a religious constituency, but also more broadly to Iranian intellectuals. In the decade prior to the Islamic Revolution, the student generation which now occupies top positions in government and civil society embraced moral equivalence, which exculpated terrorism in support of revolutionary movements. Khomeini's antipathy toward the State of Israel led the Islamic Republic to embrace the Palestinian cause as its own, often manifested by unapologetic support for groups—Palestine Islamic Jihad and Hamas, for example—which the United States government and European Union label as terrorists. The Iranian government has even been so bold as to include a line item for “resistance” in its budget.²

Khomeini enshrined the support of such groups both in the Islamic Republic's constitution and in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) foundational documents. Article 3 of the Constitution, for example, declares a goal of the regime to be “unsparing support to the oppressed of the world,” while Article 154 calls for “support of the just struggles of the oppressed against the arrogant in every corner of the globe.”³ “The United States can't do a damned thing; we will export our revolution to the world,” became Khomeini's mantra and, subsequently, an IRGC slogan.⁴

Today, the Iranian leadership accepts only an interpretation of revolutionary export rooted in violence. In a 3 May 2008 speech, former President Mohammad Khatami, often labeled a reformer by Western analysts, suggested that Iranian officials redefine the concept of revolutionary export in terms of soft power.⁵ Iranian authorities countered with a full-throated declaration that the mandate to export revolution was to be conducted militarily.⁶

*Tehran's use of both the United Nations and the Islamic Republic's possession of the rotating presidency of the Non-Aligned Movement to exculpate terrorism conducted in causes it believes just highlights the intellectual side of a battle conducted from the Iranian perspective as much in international forums as in the back alleys of Beirut, Gaza, and Damascus. **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)***



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.

“Dam construction can also provide a mechanism by which IRGC members can insert themselves into other countries.”

OE Watch Commentary: *Iran's best known exports are oil, pistachios, caviar, and carpets, but over the past decade the Islamic Republic has quietly become a major force in dam construction. Iran today ranks third in dam building internationally, after China and Japan,¹ and today it is building the world's tallest concrete dam in Lorestan, in western Iran.²*

While Iran has been building dozens of dams across the country, it has increasingly looked to the external market. The Eini project announced in the excerpted article is part of Iran's outreach to Tajikistan. It is not the first hydroelectric plant Iranian engineers have built in that Central Asian republic: in 2006 an Iranian firm began construction of the Sangtoudeh II plant, approximately 45 miles southeast of the Tajik capital Dushanbe.³ Iran is also building dams in Kyrgyzstan and in neighboring Azerbaijan and Armenia.⁴ More recently, Iran has begun to develop dams further afield, for example, in Nicaragua and Ecuador.⁵ Dam construction has also been the flagship of the Iranian push into traditional Sunni and Christian areas in northern Lebanon, an area of increasing strategic importance to the Islamic Republic, as it abuts the Alawi-dominated Latakia region, to which supporters of Bashar al-Assad would likely retreat should the Assad regime collapse in Damascus.⁶

*Iranian dam building cannot be dismissed simply as an outgrowth of Tehran's desire to diversify its economy. The firms contracted to build such hydroelectric plants without exception fall under the rubric of Khatam al-Anbia, the economic wing of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). Not only do they therefore represent a mechanism by which the IRGC can bolster its budget beyond ordinary line items and win Iranian hard currency, but also the dam construction can provide a means to insert IRGC members into areas where they could, in theory, conduct surveillance or support other operations. Khatam al-Anbia can also exploit partnerships with construction and engineering firms outside Iran in order to acquire technology and equipment which the Iranian government would be unable to import directly because of sanctions. **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)***

Source: "Qarardad-e Sakht 'Nirugah Eini Mian Iran Tajikistan Nihayi Khahad Shod'" ("Agreement between Tajikistan and Iran to Build the 'EINI Power Plant' Soon to Be Finalized"), Fars News Agency, 18 March 2013. <http://www.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=13911228000245>

Agreement between Tajikistan and Iran to Build the 'Eini Power plant' Soon to Be Finalized

Tajikistan's Ministry of Energy and Industry announced that within the framework of the official visit of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to Tajikistan, the contract on the construction of Eini power plant will be finalized... According to the Iranian experts' initial plan, the project includes construction of a power plant with a dam which can generate 130 megawatt per hour of electricity...

1. "Fifteen New Dams to Come On Stream in Iran," Tehran Times, 6 April 2013, <http://tehrantimes.com/economy-and-business/106552-fifteen-new-dams-to-come-on-stream-in-iran>
2. John Daly, "Iran Abandons Chinese Help, to Build World's Highest Hydroelectric Plant Alone," OilPrice.com, 1 April 2013, <http://oilprice.com/Alternative-Energy/Hydroelectric/Iran-Abandons-Chinese-Help-to-Build-Worlds-Highest-Hydroelectric-Plant-Alone.html>
3. "Sangtoudeh II first turbine inaugurated in presence of President," Website of the Presidency of Iran, 5 September 2011, <http://www.president.ir/en/29794>
4. "The International Projects of Iranian Companies," Information Center of International Contractors of Iran, <http://irancons.com/en-projects.htm>, Accessed 11 April 2013; "Armenian-Iranian HPPs to be constructed on Araks River," News.am (Yerevan), 16 September 2010, <http://news.am/eng/news/31125.html>; "Azerbaijan, Iran seek to coop in construction of power plants," Today.az (Baku), 1 December 2011, <http://www.today.az/print/news/business/99070.html>
5. "Iran To Build \$230 Million Hydroelectric Dam In Nicaragua," Associated Press, March 13, 2008; Larry Luxner, "Venezuela's Relations With Iran Unclear In Event of Chávez's Death," Diálogo (Doral, Florida), 14 January 2013, http://dialogo-americas.com/en_GB/articles/rmisa/features/regional_news/2013/01/14/iran-chavez
6. "Iran Grants Lebanon \$40 million to Build Dam," The Daily Star (Beirut), 17 November 2012, [http://www.dailystar.com.lb/Business/Lebanon/2012/Nov-17/195306-iran-grants-lebanon-\\$40-million-to-build-dam.ashx#axzz2QCmhptXC](http://www.dailystar.com.lb/Business/Lebanon/2012/Nov-17/195306-iran-grants-lebanon-$40-million-to-build-dam.ashx#axzz2QCmhptXC)

“Egypt’s foreign policy choices are in part constrained by domestic challenges: the ongoing political crisis, the lack of domestic consensus on foreign policy orientations, and the near collapse of service provision and the economy.”

OE Watch Commentary: *What will the foreign policy of post-Mubarak Egypt look like? Ever since Anwar Sadat transformed Egypt from American Cold War foe to ally in the 1970s, Egyptian foreign policy had been steady and predictable enough. Egypt’s alliance with the West was further institutionalized in 1989, when it became a Major non-NATO Ally (MNNA). For Mubarak, this alliance eventually backfired domestically: Egypt’s quiescent and conservative foreign policy, particularly regarding the Palestinian issue, was one of several mobilizers for the January 2011 protests that toppled his regime. The contours of the new Egypt’s foreign policy are still blurry, in part given the fact that the country remains a politically odd combination of youthful, revolutionary energy (represented by the popular overthrow of Mubarak) and cautious, conservative political Islam (represented by new President Mohammed Morsi and his Muslim Brotherhood-backed Freedom and Justice Party (FJP)).*

Egypt’s foreign policy choices are, in part, constrained by domestic challenges: the ongoing political crisis, the lack of domestic consensus on foreign policy orientations, and the near collapse of service provision and the economy. This domestic disarray puts Egypt at a comparative disadvantage: together with the constraints created by Mubarak’s legacy, they complicate the viability of any nascent post-revolutionary foreign policy. The historical legacy of Nasserism, when Egypt represented the vanguard of Arab foreign policy, will continue to loom large.

Egypt’s new foreign policy may have an Eastern bent. Pakistan, India and China – three of the countries Morsi has visited as president – are the focus of the first accompanying article, which explains the



Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi, via www.telegraph.co.uk

Source:

تحولات السياسة الخارجية المصرية تجاه الدول الآسيوية

Essam Abdul Shafi. “Egyptian Foreign Policy Shifts toward Asian Countries” (al-Siyassa al-Dawliya), via <http://bit.ly/15GfiOP>

Article #1

4 April, 2013

Also present is the American role in defining the nature, patterns and trends in international relations, not only in the Arab world but in the international system as a whole. It not only monitors and develops Egypt’s relations with Asian countries but also hinders their growth. It will not hesitate to adopt plans, policies and actions to curb these relations and will use all the pressure it can muster on Egypt and all those wishing to strengthen relations with it, if this strengthening opposes the strategic interests of the United States. It is certain that several regional powers opposed to Egypt’s rise, under the current regime, will be some of the American means of pressuring Egyptian foreign policy.

Source:

عن غياب الرئيس وحضور

Fahmi Huwaidi. “On the President’s Presence and Absence” (al-Shorouk, Egypt), via <http://shorouknews.com>

Article #2

30 March, 2013

This does not mean being cut off from what happens beyond the borders, but rather that the president’s travels should be limited and only in cases where the desired aim cannot be achieved without his presence...

...if the president travels abroad when his country is beset by adversity, he will be seen as ailing and wounded ...

(continued)

Continued: Egyptian Foreign Policy in Flux

challenges to Egypt's "Asian Pivot." Morsi has racked up quite a few travel miles since becoming president; in fact, he often spends more time en route than at his actual destination. The second accompanying article, authored by one of the most widely read columnists in the Arab world, pleads with Morsi to spend more time at home. While acknowledging the importance of high-level face-to-face diplomacy, the author explains that Egypt's own internal affairs must be in order for Morsi to be effective abroad.

Morsi's most recent excursion was to Sudan. According to the third accompanying article, taken from an independent Sudanese news website, Khartoum wanted this trip and Doha helped make it happen. The Sudanese government hopes to reset relations with Egypt in order to negotiate over Nile waters as a unified front. More broadly, the Sudanese government hopes to deepen these oft-fractious ties by emphasizing the common Islamic foundation of the ruling party. Meanwhile, Qatar's role in Egyptian foreign policy and the "Morsi-as-Qatari-Pawn" meme are gaining traction. Bassem Youssef ("The Egyptian John Stewart") may be at the forefront in this regard. His return to the screen, after being called in by prosecutors for a number of transgressions, was highlighted by a cheeky rendition of an Egyptian nationalist song in which the phrase "my homeland" was exchanged for "my Qatar." Many Egyptians doubtless find the idea of a small Gulf emirate wielding significant influence on Egyptian policy distasteful.

It is the Egypt-Iran locus, however, which is drawing most attention these days. In late March flight service between Cairo and Tehran was renewed for the first time in over three decades. Only a few days later, "Salafist protesters" tried to storm the residence of Iran's charge d'affaires in Cairo. Shortly thereafter, the inter-capital flight service was suspended until June, pending review. Amidst the theatrics, a serious debate on Egypt-Iran rapprochement is taking place. The fourth accompanying article attests to this: coming from one of Egypt's most serious dailies, it represents an issue that influential opinion makers – particularly in Egypt but in the region as a whole – are strongly debating and which is yet another front in the growing battle for Arab public opinion between Iran and the Gulf States.
End OE Watch Commentary (Winter)

Source:

الرئيس المصري محمد مرسي في السودان بضغوط قطرية
"Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi in Sudan under Qatari Pressure"
(Sudaneseonline), via <http://www.sudaneseonline.com/>

Article #3

4 April, 2013

Analysts do not discard the possibility that Mohammed Morsi's visit is due to Khartoum's government and under pressure from Qatar, which has close relations with Khartoum. It appears that Qatar is ready to mediate between Khartoum and Cairo, especially given that the Sudan file was a source of disagreement between Cairo and Doha during Mubarak's era, after the latter took over the Darfur file while Cairo resisted its growing regional role.

Egyptian expert on Sudanese affairs Hani Raslan told al-Akbar: "It is very clear that Morsi's visit to Khartoum is the result of pressure and urging from the Sudanese leadership." He explains the Khartoum regime's philosophy to strengthen relations with Egypt: "Bashir's government wants to start a new page with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, considering that political Islam brings them together..."



Dr. Abdullah al-Nafisi via <https://atfp.org/adopt/terrorist/abdallah-al-nafisi/>

Source:

إيران هي الحل
Mohammed Asmat. "Iran is the Solution" (al-Shorouk, Egypt), via <http://www.shorouknews.com>

Article #4

2 April, 2013

Kuwaiti MP and academic Dr. Abdullah al-Nafisi caused an uproar in the Gulf after saying that during a recent visit to Egypt he had heard a senior official say that the Iranian foreign affairs minister had offered President Morsi 30 billion dollars in assistance and 5 million Iranian tourists per year as well as assistance running 2000 factories that are currently shut down, in exchange for renewing diplomatic relations between the two countries, handing over the restoration and management duties of all the mosques built by the Fatimids in Egypt to Iran, publishing two newspapers in Egypt, and sending 20,000 Egyptian students to study in Iran every year...

Cutting through the issue of relations with Iran are Gulf concerns and fears of the spread of Shi'ism in Egypt. These will prevent Egypt from strengthening its strategic position in the region. Were Egypt to successfully create a political axis with Iran this would restore the balance of power in the region and contact with Iran would help dispel Gulf fears...

President Morsi may not be the right person to build an alliance with Iran. What is needed now is to discuss this in Egypt, to use the Iranian model to confront the great powers, to study closely their political experience at a safe distance from the imaginary worries of Iran's plans to spread Shi'ism in Egypt. Iran has provided a model – which of course is not without its faults – to build a strong state that can resist American hegemony. What we need in Egypt is a detailed and intelligent examination of this model.

“Jordan’s growing domestic political and economic difficulties will make it all the more difficult to absorb what is expected to be the largest influx of Syrian refugees over the next several weeks, and fears that the kingdom troubles are piling up may not seem overblown.”

OE Watch Commentary: There is growing contention regarding the involvement of foreign groups in the Syrian conflict. Take the case of Hizbullah. According to the first accompanying article, the Syrian regime’s key Lebanese ally has been subject to a “deliberate strategy of incitement and exaggeration...by regional and foreign intelligence agencies, including Israel’s.” Written by the editor-in-chief of Lebanon’s al-Akhbar newspaper, known to be one of few journalists genuinely and reliably connected to Hizbullah’s leadership, the article explains that Hizbullah sees the Syrian conflict through the lens of resistance to Israel. In terms of involvement, it continues, Hizbullah trains, arms and assists residents on Lebanon’s side of the border, has provided assistance to various minority communities, helps the Syrian regime protect military facilities built with Iranian aid, assists Syrian refugees in Lebanon, and has taken over protection of the Sayyida Zaynab shrine on the outskirts of Damascus. No more, no less.

On the other side, Iraq’s al-Qaeda franchise seems to be seeking an open link with the popular Syrian jihadi group Jabhat al-Nusra, which itself has now openly expressed its sympathy and respect for Ayman al-Zawahiri, to the dismay of other rebel groups. The potential for overt al-Qaeda involvement gives added urgency to the question that looms largest in Syria, namely what the quiet Americans are doing and will do. Recent reports of Jordanian-American efforts to train a select group of “moderate” Syrian rebels have finally given pundits something to go with. A column by the editor of the London-based al-Quds al-Arabi Newspaper, for instance, sees this training as nothing more than an effort to secure Syria’s side of the Golan Heights. The al-Assad regime’s mobilization of 20,000



Jordan Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour, via <http://jordantimes.com/>

Source: Ibrahim al-Amin. “Hezbollah’s Role in Syria” (al-Akhbar English, Lebanon), via <http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/15326>

Article #1

22 March, 2013

Hezbollah’s view, simply put, is that the war in Syria aims at shifting the country politically and strategically to a position of opposing its existence. That makes it see the current regime led by Bashar al-Assad as a forward line of defense for the resistance movement in Lebanon and Palestine. This alone is grounds for the party to be at the heart of the crisis...

Attitudes to Hezbollah are linked to a whole host of calculations. Yet some are desperate to not just drag the party into the Syrian crisis, but into a similar battle in Lebanon. The party is conscious of this. It appears to be discussing procedures for an operation aimed at putting sectarian strife back into a coma, though its leaders fear much blood will flow before that happens.

Source:

Abdel Bari Atwan. “Syria ‘Lahad’ Forces?” (al-Quds al-Arabi), via <http://www.alquds.co.uk/index.asp?fname=data\2013\04\04-08\08z999.htm>

Article #2

8 April, 2013

The Syrian regime, by withdrawing its troops from the Golan Heights, puts the armed Syrian opposition and jihadi groups to the test, the most difficult one since the eruption of the Syrian Revolution. It is, in short, telling them “you have accused us of protecting the Israeli border for more than forty years without firing a single round, so here you go, do as you say now that our forces have been withdraw and all roads to liberating the Golan and confronting Israel are now open for you.”...

We expected that the main task of these forces and the training they are receiving was to fight regime forces and hasten its downfall. Our expectations were entirely misplaced, however, as the goal is to protect Israel and to prevent a single drop of their soldiers’ blood from being shed. Syrian or Muslim blood can be shed, as this is halal and permissible, but Israeli blood is sacred and is a red line in the view of those supervising the training and arming...

Continued: Jordan Teeters into Syria

troops from the Golan to Damascus, he argues, should be interpreted as a signal by Bashar al-Assad to the Sunni religious groups fighting for his overthrow. As a consequence, the responsibility for securing the Syrian side of this border is now in Jordanian-American hands.

Be that as it may, what cannot be disputed are Jordan's growing responsibilities. Some believe efforts are underway to create a de facto safe zone on the Syrian side of the border, given that Jordan's capacity to absorb Syrian refugees is reaching a breaking point. Jordan's growing domestic political and economic difficulties will make it all the more difficult to absorb what is expected to be the largest influx of Syrian refugees over the next several weeks, and fears that the kingdom's troubles are piling up may not seem overblown. The third accompanying article, from one of Jordan's major independent dailies, gives voice to Jordanian frustrations with having to depend on the whims of Gulf rulers for the resources to care for the refugees created by a conflict that Gulf money has helped fuel and in which Jordan had for long maintained an official position of neutrality.

*Jordan is now becoming a possible safety valve not only for the failed Israel-Palestinian peace process, but also for the Syrian Civil War. Much of the population of the Hawran, Syria's southern province, has relocated to Jordan, some to the refugee camp and others to various Jordanian cities. Suppose this and other areas to its west were to be incorporated into an improbable "United Kingdom of Jordan"? The final accompanying article mentions just this possibility, although not without first acknowledging how far-fetched and distasteful it might sound to many ears. Yet Syria's neighbors may have to start considering such fanciful solutions, if they wish to prevent the Syrian catastrophe from spreading into their territories. **End OE Watch Commentary (Winter)***

Source:

شمال حوران.. إذ يلجأ إلى جنوبه
Nusuh al-Majali. "Northern Hawran... Resorts to its South" (al-Rai, Jordan), via <http://www.alrai.com/article/577714.html>

Article #3

4 April, 2013

We had hoped for a declaration at the Doha Summit that Syrian Refugees are an international and pan-Arab responsibility and that funds and assistance would be provided and that comprehensive mechanisms would be put in place, especially by those countries that played a role in fomenting the Syrian revolution. The Syrian environment is partly the result of policies supporting the Syrian revolution, and there must be Arab responsibility rather than charity which Jordan has to keep requesting to support refugees in its territory.

We realize that there is assistance provided but it is insufficient. Unfortunately, the countries that uninterruptedly provide weapons to the Syrian regime, like Iran and Russia, ignore the humanitarian element to the Syrian crisis and only provide ammunition that is used on the Syrians, as if they are supporting their interests with the regime even if this kills and displaces its people.

There is a feeling among many in Jordan that our country is turning into a giant Arab refugee camp. This may be true...

Source:

المرحلة الأخيرة من الأزمة السورية قد بدأت.. هل سيتم التقسيم؟
Yousef abu al-Shih al-Zaabi. "The Final Stage of the Syrian Crisis may have Begun... Will Division Follow?" (Ammon News) <http://www.ammonnews.net/article.aspx?articleno=149149>

Article #4

4 April, 2013

Some voices may emerge from the Syrian Hawran wanting to join the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, which is consistent with another scenario that is being discussed by some here and abroad on the United Kingdom of Jordan, and that a large territory of the new Middle East is planned for this which will also have Palestinian citizenship after the annexation of a large amount of the West Bank, including Jerusalem, as well as a portion of southern Syria, northwestern Saudi Arabia and the Sunni areas of western Iraq. This Jordanian expansion would provide it with water and natural resources from the surrounding countries, allowing the kingdom to survive without depending on outsiders. This would have to be preceded by a pardoning of all Jordanian debt, both domestic and foreign...

Thus there is a burden on Jordan and its budget due to the costs of shelter, food, health, education, security and others, which Prime Minister Ensour estimated at \$480 million dollars and which is expected to by the end of the year rise to one billion dollars. There is a direct burden on Jordanians, particularly in the north, ranging from a rise in prices, costs of services and food, as well as Syrians taking employment opportunities and the halt to bilateral trade between the people of northern Jordan with Syria's south. In the city of Ramtha alone, for example, over five-thousand passenger and transport vehicles are currently out of work. Markets are also largely paralyzed in Jordan's northern cities.

“Tourism is also an industry that is very sensitive to instability, which is of major concern to the military not only because of the political ramifications but also because of their investments in the Egyptian economy.”

OE Watch Commentary: *Tourism is a major source of foreign currency for the Egyptian economy, and one of the major keys to Egypt’s long-term economic recovery. In the aftermath of the Egyptian Revolution of 2011, tourism plummeted and revenues from this sector were slashed by more than a third. There is little sign of a return to pre-revolutionary tourism levels in the face of ongoing protests, violence and growing instability.*

Two years on, the drop in tourism has contributed to a record high in the unemployment rate, officially 13 percent, unofficially more than 20 percent, and, just as important, has resulted in falling profits for the military. It is not immediately obvious that low hotel occupancies, deserted historical sites, and empty Nile cruise ships are of vital concern to the Egyptian military. However, as the accompanying article mentions, the hotel and resort properties owned by the military are part of an economic empire that is estimated to be 25 to 40 percent of Egypt’s economy. Today, the military owns a piece of practically every industry in Egypt, from hotels and clubs to resorts, restaurants, real estate, and agriculture. Officers own and oversee operations, while conscripted soldiers serve as manual labor. The exact holdings of the military are a closely guarded secret because no parliamentary scrutiny exists, there are no external audits, and there is no transparency, but it is estimated that tens of billions of dollars are involved.

*Tourism is particularly important for Egypt because it represents a large sector of the economy. Tourism is also an industry that is very sensitive to instability, which is of major concern to the military not only because of the political ramifications but also because of their investments in the Egyptian economy. The leaders of Egypt’s military are agnostic toward religious and political ideology as long as the regime is stable and their interests are protected. It is likely to cooperate with any government in office as long as its business interests are not threatened. **End OE Watch Commentary (Tombaugh)***

1. Tadros, Sherine. (February 15, 2012). “Egypt Military’s Economic Empire.” Al-Jazeera. Retrieved March 15, 2013, from: <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2012/02/2012215195912519142.html>

Amer, Adel. (May 9, 2012). “Al-Koowa Al-Iktesaudia lil-gaysh Al-Misr wa Mashroo3t-hoo Al-tnmaweeah” [“The Economic Strength Of The Egyptian Army And Developmental Projects.”] Misr Al-Jadeda. Retrieved March 12, 2013, from: <http://www.misrelgdida.com/reporters1/89960.html>



The Egyptian Army owned Al-Masah Luxury Hotel and Spa via <http://www.almasah-hotel.com>

Source: Marroushi, Nadine. (February 18, 2012). “One night and two days in a military hotel.” Egypt Independent. Retrieved April 8, 2013, from: <http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/one-night-and-two-days-military-hotel>

Article Excerpt:

You are not allowed to know anything about the hotel’s origins, or even write about it, because it relates to the armed forces, its staff will tell you matter-of-factly though somewhat despondently. “I wish we could advertise the place, it needs more guests, but we’re not allowed to because it’s owned by the army,” a staff member and military officer said.

The hotel is part of a military economic powerhouse which researchers estimate to represent from 25 to 40 percent of Egypt’s economy. Besides hotels, this powerhouse includes food, cement, vehicle production and gasoline.

If it was allowed, one might ask: how was the land for the hotel acquired? Was it paid for by the MoD (Ministry of Defense)? If so, did the price reflect the true value of the land and hotel’s vast grounds? Or was it given as a gift? Does the hotel make a profit or a loss? Is this in the national interest? How many staff members are paid and how many are conscripts? Why is it a secret?

“These cases illustrate a general alarming trend in southern Africa - how state parties across the region are using security institutions to intimidate and silence civil society actors and implant a sense of fear among the country’s citizens.”

OE Watch Commentary: Perhaps the CIA World Factbook best describes the political situation in Swaziland, where the head of state, King Mswati III, has ruled since 1986: “the status of political parties, previously banned, is unclear since the 2006 Constitution and currently being debated.” With the next elections to be held later this year, the ban or near ban on political parties is causing strife inside a country that is supposed to be a constitutional monarchy, but appears to be significantly more monarchy than (progressive) constitutional. As the accompanying article relates, the “increasingly violent and abusive behavior” of the police and security forces in tamping down dissent--some might say “crushing dissent”--is “leading to the militarization of the kingdom.”

It does not help the king’s image home or abroad that he lives lavishly in an impoverished country where the average lifespan, at 49.42 years is, according to the Factbook, the lowest in the world. He does, however, have his supporters, and with enormous powers, including being commander-in-chief of the military, as well as possessing legal immunity, many predict his strong reign will continue. Still, as many African countries are slowly turning to more open democracies, albeit with some periodic backsliding, he remains, as the accompanying article states, “sub-Saharan Africa’s last absolute monarch,” and as such is perhaps a relic of earlier times on the continent. This is not to say the practice of opposing the formation and/or use of opposition parties is just limited to Swaziland, but among the African countries it is one of the more extreme examples.

The article does, in fact, recognize the challenges opposition parties face elsewhere. Indeed, it makes a rather sweeping indictment of much of southern Africa and calls out Zimbabwe, noting that, along with Swaziland, the “police in both countries are notorious for preventing public rallies and harassing opposition politicians and civil society figures in the run-up to polls--a clear violation of the basic right to freedom of assembly.”

Swaziland is a relatively small enclave within South Africa, though its actions reverberate loudly beyond its borders, with organizations such as Amnesty International and the International Bar Association criticizing it over the years.¹ It is unknown if King Mswati III in the days before the upcoming election will make significant concessions towards a more open democracy in the nation he rules, though his present actions seem to indicate this is unlikely. What is known is those seeking new officeholders less beholden to the king are frustrated and finding it difficult, if not impossible, to do so because of the obstacles to forming opposition political parties. **End OE Watch Commentary (Feldman)**



King Mswati III of Swaziland, via <http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/headlines/2012/04/swazi-kings-birthday-jet-angers-some-in-impooverished-kingdom/>

Source: “Swaziland Becoming Military State,” Swazi Media Commentary/ AllAfrica.com, 11 April 2013, http://allafrica.com/stories/201304111021.html?aa_source=mf-hdlns.

Article:

...Things are so bad in the kingdom, ruled by King Mswati III, sub-Saharan Africa’s last absolute monarch, that police are unable to accept that peaceful political and social dissent is a vital element of a healthy democratic process, and should not be viewed as a crime...

...These complaints were made by the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) at the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR) meeting in The Gambia on Wednesday (10 April 2013)...

...OSISA said, ‘There are also reliable reports of a general militarization of the country through the deployment of the Swazi army, police and correctional services to clamp down on any peaceful protest action by labor or civil society organizations ahead of the country’s undemocratic elections.’...

...OSISA was commenting on the trend in Southern Africa for police and security services to be increasingly violent and abusive of human rights...

...In particular, OSISA highlighted how the police continued to clamp down on dissenting voices and the legitimate public activities of opposition political parties prior to, during and after elections...

1. “Swaziland Law, Custom and Politics: Constitutional Crisis and the Breakdown in the Rule of Law,” International Bar Association, March 2003.

Mining Camps as Epicenters of Africa's Tuberculosis Epidemic

9 April 2013

“The father of five is also HIV-positive, and his recurring TB baffled health workers because he was on antiretroviral therapy. But, he explained, when he told health workers that he used to work in the mines, everything about his illness made sense to them...”

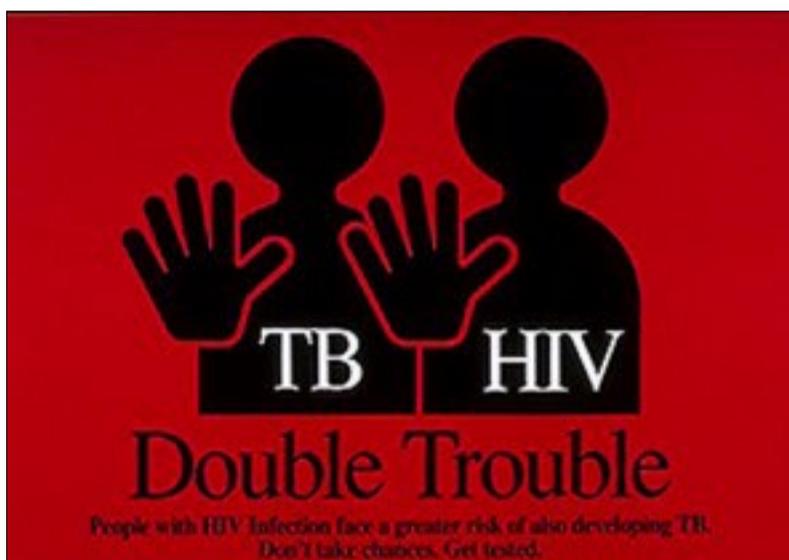
OE Watch Commentary: There is a bigger story behind the accompanying article describing Swaziland's efforts to identify former miners in order to provide them with treatment for tuberculosis. Actually, there are several stories, including some with military implications.

Examining the disease is a good place to begin. As the article states, it is tuberculosis (TB), but not only the type that is rather easily treated. There is also multi-drug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) present in the mining camps, which the miner in the article has and which requires a more complex, more expensive treatment regimen, as the two most effective first-line drugs for TB are essentially ineffective. Though the article does not discuss it, the next level of drug resistant TB is extensively drug-resistant (XDR-TB), which requires yet an even more expensive drug regimen. Finally, there is totally drug-resistant TB (TDR-TB), whose descriptive name requires no further explanation. TDR-TB has not yet appeared in Africa, but in a poor country such as Swaziland, unless medications are provided through an aid group, economic difficulties in being able to purchase drugs can make almost all TB seem like TDR-TB.

Why do so many miners have tuberculosis? There are several reasons. At the mining camps these men, and the vast majority of miners are men, encounter sex workers. As a result, HIV/AIDS tends to be prevalent. With their weakened immune systems, people with HIV/AIDS are less able to fight the microbe that causes TB, and thus are more likely to develop the disease than someone without HIV/AIDS.

Two other significant factors leading to the high prevalence of TB in the camps are overcrowding and the presence of other mining-associated lung problems. TB is often spread when someone with the disease coughs or sneezes and then someone else inhales those airborne microbes. Living in close quarters, with their lungs already injured from repeatedly breathing dust generated during mining operations, coughing and sneezing miners can spread the infection rapidly among themselves. When the miners go home the disease can then spread to their families and communities.

By avoiding unprotected sex and contaminated needles or blood, HIV/AIDS can generally be



A public health advertisement used in Africa to help combat the spread of TB., via <http://odlarmed.com/?p=1448>

Source: “The Search for Swaziland’s TB-Infected Mine Workers,” Inter Press Service, 9 April 2013 <http://www.ipsnews.net/2013/04/the-search-for-swazilands-tb-infected-mine-workers/>

Article

...For more than a decade after 1992, when Swazi gold miner Benson Maseko, 50, fell ill with chest pains and a nagging cough, he did not seek treatment. Because of his illness, Maseko was retrenched without benefits from his job at a mine in Johannesburg, South Africa. And when he returned to his home in Mahlangatsha, a small village on the outskirts of Swaziland's commercial hub, Manzini, he chose to pursue traditional healing for his ailment instead of going to a doctor...

... “I only went to hospital in 2005 where I was diagnosed with and treated for tuberculosis (TB),” he told IPS. It was thanks to Médecins Sans Frontières, an international NGO, that Maseko was able to make the monthly trips to hospital. They provided him with the transport fees of about 5.50 dollars and food rations...

...But after he ended his six-month treatment, he relapsed twice... “I was then diagnosed with MDR-TB (multidrug-resistant TB),” he said. He has since successfully completed his treatment...

... MDR-TB is very common among mine workers...

... “We used to go underground without any masks,” Benson Maseko, 50, who was diagnosed with multidrug-resistant TB...

...identifying miners in their communities would help them “get the disease” before it spreads further among communities...

...“The treatment defaulting rate is also very high because the miners are scared of taking time off to get their medication, as they fear getting fired because they are the breadwinners at home” ...

...It is a prevalent issue not only in Swaziland, but also in the entire region.,

(continued)

Continued: Mining Camps as Epicenters of Africa's Tuberculosis Epidemic

prevented. On the other hand, since TB is spread through air droplets, it can infect someone who is just near an infected person coughing. Thus, in some ways TB can be considered "easier to catch" than HIV/AIDS. .

Though TDR-TB is not yet in Africa (or at least not yet detected, because laboratory testing is woefully inadequate on much of the continent), public health officials suspect it will be only a matter of time before it arrives. Meanwhile, the TB strains that are present are increasingly burdening already overstretched health care resources.

*There are many medical details beyond the scope of this brief report. However, there are still some valuable take-away lessons from this article and others like it. First, TB is a public health crisis in many regions. Second, mining camps, and there are many of them in southern Africa, are frequently places where young men not only contract HIV but also TB, and then from there spread it to their home communities. Finally, the increasing presence of drug-resistant strains of TB, which will probably eventually include TDR-TB, are of growing concern to those travelling to areas with a high prevalence of the disease. From a U.S. military standpoint, those travelers could include deployed American soldiers. **End OE Watch Commentary (Feldman)***

...According to a February World Health Organization report, Africa has overtaken Asia with the highest TB death toll of 600,000 people in 2011. The organization said that in 2011, 1.5 million people died from TB, and of those cases over 95 percent were from low- and middle-income countries...

... "Many ex-mine workers are suffering with TB as a result, but the only difference between them and Maseko is that they do not live to tell their tale,"...

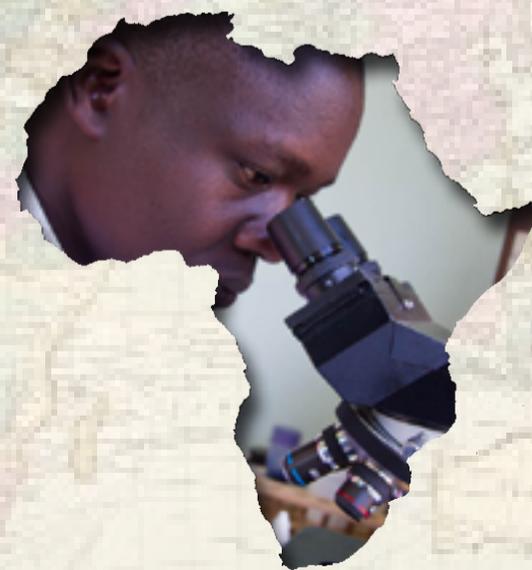
...(South African Minister of Health Dr. Aaron) Motsoaledi said: "If HIV/AIDS and TB were a snake, I can assure you that the head would be in South Africa. Mine workers come from the whole sub-region to our mines to catch TB and HIV and take it back to their families and communities," he said...

Africa's Brain Drain: Its Impacts on Security and Stability

By Lieutenant Colonel Robert Feldman, U.S. Army Reserve.

Africa is bleeding. Much of its lifeblood, composed of well-educated individuals who could help tackle its toughest problems, is flowing away. This hemorrhaging of engineers, doctors, teachers, nurses, businesspersons, scientists, and others with extensive training constitutes Africa's brain drain. This brief study examines the impact of this loss in the social, economic, political and security spheres.

<http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/Africa's-Brain-Drain.pdf>



“Iran’s previous attempts to strike deals with African states for their uranium have generally been messy, embarrassing affairs.”

OE Watch Commentary: Although Iran’s Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is expected to end his eight-year term in June 2013, his legacy on the African continent will surely be felt – for better or for worse – for years to come. As the accompanying article details, those in West Africa perceive his current trip to the continent – and particularly to Niger – as his quest to secure uranium for Iran’s deeply controversial nuclear program.

To put the trip in context: Africa played virtually no role whatsoever in Iranian foreign policy calculations until Ahmadinejad’s 2005 election. Thereafter, the continent came to be viewed as an important strategic theater for Iran. To that end, Ahmadinejad took two major trips – one in 2005 and another in 2010 – to the continent, visiting approximately half of Africa’s states and signing various bilateral agreements on topics ranging from education to infrastructure to energy development to security cooperation.

Underlying Tehran’s Africa push are three main rationales. First, Iran is seeking African allies (many countries of which are Muslim) to help Iran avoid isolation in international fora like the United Nations. Second, Iran is trying to increase its sphere of influence on the continent, particularly in the Horn of Africa, so as to protect itself geostrategically from any attacks, presumably from the United States or Israel. Third, as this article suggests, Iran is eyeing Africa for its minerals, particularly, its uranium.

Iran’s previous attempts to strike deals with African states for their uranium have generally been messy, embarrassing affairs. For instance, in 2006 the Somali government accused Iran of providing weapons to the Union of Islamic Courts (the predecessor of al-Shebab) in exchange for access to uranium. The same year Tanzanian authorities intercepted uranium shipments from the Democratic Republic of Congo intended for Iran. Further, Tehran has come under international scrutiny for the questionable deals it struck with Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe for access to Harare’s strategic minerals, which included uranium.

While Ahmadinejad may be out of office soon, whether or not Iran continues its push for African uranium should be watched closely. **End OE Watch Commentary (Warner)**



WHERE URANIUM'S PRESENT:
Yellow shows stand-alone deposits
Red indicates byproduct deposits
(Source: IQPC), via <http://www.miningweekly.com/article/more-uranium-will-be-needed-says-wits-professor-2008-04-04>

Source: Ahl-Assane Rouamba, “Afrique: Tournée africaine du président iranien - Ahmadinejad sur la route de l’uranium” [“Africa: Iranian President’s Africa Tour: Ahmadinejad on the hunt for uranium”] L’observateur Paalga (Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso), 14 April 2013: <http://fr.allafrica.com/stories/201304150697.html>

Article:

Yesterday, April 14, in Benin, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran began a tour that will take him not only to Ghana, but also – more controversially as regards its nuclear program – to Niger, one of the largest producers of uranium. The objective of the tour is to “sign agreements to develop political and economic relations.”

Knowing the Iranian president, we can expect that the various stops on his journey will be used to denounce the supporters of the Zionist state of Israel, and predict, for the umpteenth time, its disappearance.

It cannot help but be noted that Ahmadinejad’s stop in Niger comes in the aftermath of Iran’s inauguration last Tuesday of two uranium extraction mines to provide a new facility for the production of yellowcake (concentrated uranium), considered a further step in the implementation of its famous nuclear program. Making the trip of even greater importance is the fact that, at the end of 2012, the government of Niger criticized its long-time partner, the French mining company Areva, which manages its uranium, of “a very unequal” relationship, and called for greater profits from uranium sales. Combined, these factors all suggest an opening for Niamey in Tehran.

It is probably unlikely that Nigerien authorities would sign a deal with Iran that put them at risk of losing funds from the donor community. Nevertheless, the African journey undertaken by the “madman of Tehran” will be tracked by the United State and Israel and the agreements that result from the trip will surely be heavily scrutinized.

“Although François Bozizé’s reign had its flaws, the new administration of Michel Djotodia is encountering its own set of problems.”

OE Watch Commentary: *The rebel coalition known as Seleka may have been able to capture the government in the Central African Republic (CAR), but as the accompanying article details, it continues to lack widespread support from citizens.*

The Seleka rebel group, which took control over the capital of Bangui on 24 March by ousting President François Bozizé, has been a force, in a different incarnation, in the country for years. Comprised of various former rebel groups that signed a peace accord with the deposed president in 2007, Seleka formed from the offshoots of defunct rebel groups in late 2012, complaining that those negotiations had been unfulfilled. Beginning in December the group began occupying towns across CAR in marching towards the capital. Although they officially brokered a power-sharing deal with Bozizé in January, it proved to be short-lived, and Bozizé has since fled to Cameroon.

Although Bozizé’s reign had its flaws, the new administration of Seleka’s Michel Djotodia is encountering its own set of problems. In addition to the protests that erupted after the death of a moto-taxi driver, the Red Cross has revealed that seventeen people were killed over the weekend of 13-14 April when citizens of Bangui began clashing with Seleka security forces, with citizens claiming that the forces are responsible for a series of thefts and rapes. The violence in the city has prompted some to flee, while Djotodia has promised to hold elections (he is currently the interim president) in the next year and a half.

*With violence intensifying and citizens expressing deep discontent over the situation, parallels to Ansar Dine’s occupation of northern Mali in 2012 cannot help but come to mind. One hopes, however, that the CAR’s deterioration ends before the country falls into the same quagmire as Mali. **End OE Watch Commentary (Warner)***



Michel Am-Nondokro Djotodia, via <http://www.allvoices.com>

Source: “Centrafrique: Manifestation contre le nouveau pouvoir à Bangui,” [“Central African Republic: Protests Against the New Rulers in Bangui”], *Le Soleil* (Dakar, Senegal), 12 April 2013: <http://www.lesoleil.sn>

Article:

Thousands of people protested yesterday in Bangui against the Seleka coalition, (the ex-rebel group that has been in power since March 24 in the Central African Republic) as a result of the death of a moto-taxi driver as well as incessant thefts, witnesses noted.

The protestors tried to bring the corpse of the victim, who had apparently been beaten, to a large hotel at the center of Bangui where Seleka’s “strong man,” Michel Djotodia currently resides. This action was done “so that he sees how we suffer as a result of the rapes, robberies, and assassinations by members of the Seleka coalition.”

It is the first protest that has occurred since President François Bozizé was overthrown on March 24.

In the aftermath of the protests, the new strong man, Michel Djotodia repeatedly announced his desire to address the problems of the thefts, as well as to reign in the violence, but he seems to lack the power to actually enforce any sort of rule of law.

Southeast Asian Infrastructure - Railways

14 April 2013

“The railway will require 76 tunnels and 154 bridges to be built, including two bridges across the Mekong River.”

OE Watch Commentary: *The past decade has seen an ambitious vision of infrastructure development spread across Southeast Asia. These potential projects include modern highways, expansive bridges, hydroelectric dams, and rail lines across challenging terrain. The promise of economic growth, along with the threat of environmental degradation and social impact, has combined to increase controversy in several nations. Additional factors of how these projects are to be financed and what national accords must be reached are also fueling concern at the regional and global levels. Many “mega-projects” in Southeast Asia have been on the drawing board (or in an animated video) for years, if not decades. However several projects are progressing, much ground has already been broken, and new bridges have opened.*

In an article published on the National Assembly of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic website, the details of one such massive project are laid out. Laos plans to go from a “land-locked” nation into a “land link.” The government of Laos is very candid in sharing the current criticisms about financing of the project and China’s withdrawal as a stakeholder in the \$7 billion endeavor. It is widely recognized that the loan from China’s EXIM Bank is not at concessionary rates, but will require payment of some \$3 billion in interest over the life of the loan.

An accompanying article from The Bangkok Post reveals the Thai government’s tangible support for the bold Laotian venture. The movement of passengers and goods between Thailand and China via modern rail is attractive to government and business. Current bilateral trade between Thailand and China exceeds \$60 billion annually.

The vision is to have improved or high-speed rail links from Singapore



The proposed railway will connect China’s Yunnan province to the Lao capital Vientiane., via <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/laos/rail-04022013200531.html>

Source: National Assembly of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic website, “Govt goes full steam ahead with Laos-China rail project,” April 02, 2013, <http://www.na.gov.la>

The Lao government will proceed with the construction of a US\$7 billion Laos-China high-speed railway even though China has withdrawn from the joint venture. At an extraordinary session yesterday, National Assembly members decided to approve the project, after concluding that it is essential for national development at a time when economic integration is viewed as the future of the region.

Laos and China had previously planned to jointly undertake the railway project, which would connect Vientiane with the Laos-China border in Luang Namtha province. However, the project was delayed when the Chinese construction company pulled out because they felt it would not be profitable enough. Laos has now decided to assume sole ownership of the project, as it considers that transforming the country from being landlocked to a land link is central to the future of the nation’s development. The railway is now set to go ahead without any other direct stakeholders, but will be financed by a loan from China. Deputy Prime Minister Somsavat Lengsavat reported on the project to the National Assembly yesterday, recounting developments to date.

He stressed how important the railway is in terms of turning Laos into a land link within the region, attracting more foreign investment, and boosting economic growth. Mr Somsavat said the EXIM Bank of China will provide a loan to cover the cost of construction, which is considerable given the scale of the project. The ground-breaking ceremony is expected to take place during the 9th Asia-Europe Meeting Summit on November 5-6 when top ranking leaders from both Laos and China will be present.

Mr Somsavat said the railway will be about 420 km long, with a standard gauge track of 1.435 metres.

...The railway will be designed along similar lines to existing projects in China, which has

(continued)

Continued: Southeast Asian Infrastructure - Railways

to Southern China. An earlier article from The Bangkok Post speaks to this dream coming into being. Malaysia and Singapore have long agreed, in theory, to joining their capital cities, yet they now seemed poised to begin construction. It appears that the nations of Southeast Asia are as keen as China on the prospects of improved transportation among all the nations in the very near future. **End OE Watch Commentary (Welch)**

“...new trains were a key part of her proposed megaprojects, ... infrastructure should go to the borders and join with neighbouring systems.”

considerable experience in building high speed rail links.

The railway will require 76 tunnels and 154 bridges to be built, including two bridges across the Mekong River. The tunnels and bridges alone represent more than 60 percent of the total route, such is the mountainous nature of northern Laos. The project will include 31 stations in all, but the government plans to open 20 stations initially and the rest later on....



Proposed Rail links from Kuming, China to Singapore, via <http://www.yimeitu.com/tupian/1482.jpg>



Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra and Deputy Prime Minister Thongluan Sisulit met Tuesday at Government House. (Photo by PM's Office), via <http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/local/343861/yingluck-unveils-planned-thailand-china-rail-system-through-laos>

Source: The Bangkok Post, “Thai railways ‘bound for China’,” April 04, 2013, <http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/local/343861/yingluck-unveils-planned-thailand-china-rail-system-through-laos>

Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra says the planned high-speed train project will be designed to be part of a system linking with a similar rail system in Laos.

The premier said her aim was to build a high-speed train network that would link Thailand to China via Laos...

The premier laid out her plan during talks on Tuesday with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Thongluan Sisulit of Laos. Mr Thongluan is attending the 18th Thai-Lao Joint Commission Meeting in Bangkok.

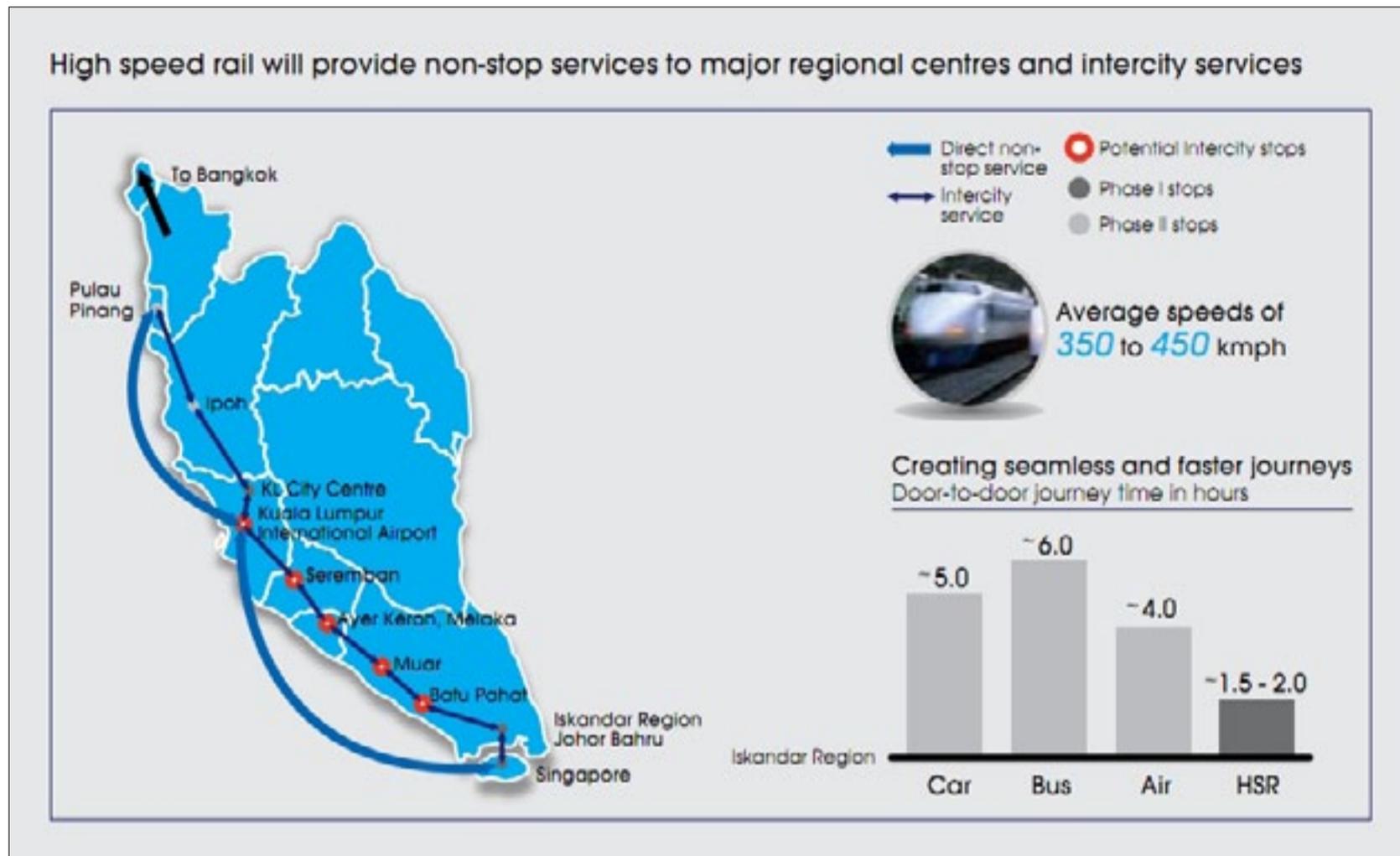
... Mr Thongluan raised the issue of a high-speed train network, and Ms Yingluck agreed.

The prime minister said last week that new trains were a key part of her proposed megaprojects, and said infrastructure should go to the borders and join with neighbouring systems.

The talks with Mr Thongluan took her concept further. The prime minister told him that Thailand will go ahead with the project, eventually linking Nong Khai province in the Northeast with Vientiane, across the Mekong River....

(continued)

Continued: Southeast Asian Infrastructure - Railways



Penang-Singapore High Speed Rail, via http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/f/f8/KL-Singapore_High_Speed_Railway_Info.jpg

Source: The Bangkok Post, "Singapore-KL high-speed rail link back on the drawing board," February 26, 2013, <http://www.bangkokpost.com/business/economics/337746/singapore-kl-high-speed-rail-link-back-on-the-drawing-board>

Talk of a high-speed rail link between Singapore and Malaysia has been in the air for years and it seems like a courtship: when the mood is good, it is on, and when the mood changes, it is off.

No one disputes that there needs to be a better way to travel between Kuala Lumpur and Singapore. A flight may take just 45 minutes but the journey to the KL International Airport takes an hour, or 25 minutes by express rail....

Last week the current prime ministers ... got into the mood to give high-speed rail another go. They jointly declared that by 2020, it would take only 90 minutes to commute between KL and Singapore.

The announcement is certainly a strategic development in bilateral ties and besides improving connectivity, it will usher a new era in strong growth and opportunities, both prime ministers said.

...If and when the line takes shape, it should be connected to the MRT now under construction in the Klang Valley to provide links within the city, and also to Singapore's MRT at the other end for maximum convenience for travellers.

If that can be done, then travellers could be in for the sort of seamless ride long available between London and Paris, to name one famous city pair. It now takes at least four hours to drive the 300-kilometre stretch from KL to Singapore minus the traffic jams during weekends and peak hours, and most travellers spend a lot of time checking in and out of airports as well.

The high-speed line ... could be a vital component of the Singapore-Kunming rail link that has been talked about for years now. ...

Thailand has its own plans to link its key cities ... with high-speed trains by 2018.

... Laos and Vietnam announced earlier that they would build a 220-kilometre high-speed rail line costing US\$5 billion, with a Malaysian company building it. China's Exim Bank is funding another \$7-billion high-speed link from Laos to southern China.

...Looking back, the original promoter of the KL-Singapore high speed train was the Malaysian construction giant YTL Corporation Bhd ...

Whoever emerges as the builder, the prime ministers of both countries need to push to make the project a reality this time, and not just more paper on a drawing board.



Colombian populist presidential candidate Eliécer Gaitán,
via <http://alzadoencanto.wordpress.com/tag/jorge-eliecer-gaitan/>

OE Watch Commentary: *There was a “march” in Bogotá this month, and it was remarkable, not so much for its size, but because it provides us so many elements with which to debate a political phenomenon that has become standard in Latin America, if not most of the world. Perhaps it is jumping from fashionable toward passé, or at least more people might approach these marches and their promotion with more skepticism and caution.*



Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos Calderón,
via <http://news.brown.edu>

Source: Eduardo Mackenzie, “Juan Manuel Didn’t Luck Out,” April 10, 2013.

Juan Manuel Didn’t Luck Out

Juan Manuel didn’t luck out. There is an obvious discrepancy between yesterday’s demonstration “for peace” in Bogotá and the “marches” in the other cities. The one in Bogotá was certainly big, but not very big, not like President Santos and the other organizers had hoped. Those in the other cities were either nonexistent or skeletal.

The march in Bogotá just barely managed to fill the Plaza de Bolívar. It could be said that it was usual, routine volume, like the demonstrations organized in recent years by the left and the controlled unions on May 1, for example, or at the end of the electoral process.

This time there was a new, very unusual element that should weigh heavily in public opinion: the call from the head of the executive branch, and from government officials like the attorney general, to join the demonstration. The controversial mayor of Bogotá, a highly political cardinal, and the leaders of the FARC did the same. Never has such a varied little bunch of organizers been seen in Colombia. Even so, there wasn’t a landslide. And there was another extremely strange thing: Santos ordered part of the armed forces to be used as a manipulated mass for the demonstration in Bogotá. Such a thing hadn’t been seen in Colombia for decades. Not even the dictatorship of General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla dared to commit a similar abuse.

The use of the armed forces in a political demonstration is, however, a feature of Hugo Chávez’s tyranny. This element, in my opinion, is central to analyzing what occurred yesterday in Colombia. This incident will undoubtedly affect Santos’s political trajectory and the credibility of the Colombian presidency. It certainly jeopardizes his reelection ambitions. In that sense, what the chief executive did is strange and ominous. This decision could change how

(continued)

Continued: Convoing as Voting: The Democracy of Crowd Size

9 April is a salient ideological date in Colombia because on that day in 1948, populist presidential candidate Eliécer Gaitán was murdered. Some argue that the current internal warfare in Colombia began just then, the event now having accumulated symbolisms both varied and weighty. At any rate, for this last 9 April a number of leftist organizations planned a rally, and the Colombian President, Manuel Santos, called for mass public participation to express support for the peace negotiations that are being conducted between the government and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC). The number of marchers in Bogotá was huge, but not so huge as several other political marches in recent years. Moreover, the number of participants in other Colombian cities was dismally small.

To understand why, or what the whole exercise actually conveys, requires reflection on the nature of public support for the issue immediately at hand. The peace talks are not universally popular, and the FARC is unpopular. It also requires a look at some practicalities surrounding these events. Bigger marches can be had on Sundays, for instance: this year 9 April fell on a Tuesday. Of most political impact perhaps, one has to look at the organizational initiatives and consequences. That the government itself would and could order people to march (or give them time off to do so), and thus ostensibly express democratic consensus, is a touchy ideological issue in Colombia. This form of “propaganda of the deed,” in which a consensual will of the people is expressed through an admixture of individual will to be present, a collectivist will that they be present, and the voice of a charismatic leader, is generally received as a beloved artifact of the organized left. Just seeing their president follow such a media initiative of the far left is not going to set well with many citizens. How mass convocation might be applied by a liberal government in negotiations with a violent leftist organization is bound to be a thorny question. Did President Santos traipse too close to the Bolshevik model? We will have to wait and see what the electoral consequences might be, but the commentaries are already being formatted.

*Even if the phenomenon of democracy-by-big-crowd-with-flags (known scientifically as *signuminus aestuo multitudo*) enters a new phase of transparency, the government of Colombia, or at least its strategic communications regarding the peace process with the FARC, may have “jumped the shark” by its use, that is, moved from ascendant to descendant, from engaging and inspiring to off-putting and manipulative. On how the construction of this one public event may have*

Colombians have characterized the current government up to now. What happened yesterday confirms that there are changes in the configuration of the political forces on which Juan Manuel Santos’s government rests.

That government was elected thanks to a platform of restoring the authority of the state, which the majority supported. Once elected, Santos betrayed that agenda and surrounded himself with the minority forces that had lost the elections. Yesterday’s event was a step further in that erratic and antidemocratic direction.

The question is: does what happened yesterday confirm that fact that the factions involved with the FARC, the Patriotic March (Marcha Patriótica), and the Colombian Communist Party (PCC) form part of Santos’s “national unity”? It seems to me that things are moving in that direction. What happened yesterday must have been the public confirmation, and implementation, of a secret protocol. This is new and very serious. What are the consequences of Santos opening himself to these extremist entities? What will be the response to this from the conservative party and the liberal and green factions? What does this suggest in the short and medium term about the exercise of power?

Another question: didn’t President Santos violate the law and the Constitution by making political use of the armed forces? Article 219 of the national constitution says, “The armed forces are non-deliberative.” Wasn’t that standard violated yesterday? “Where is the sincerity in a Government that calls upon a military formation to participate in a civilian march, on the pretext that it is a tribute to the victims? Someone who has been indulgent, who has given the murderers impunity, lacks the moral authority to organize a tribute to the victims,” stated former President Álvaro Uribe on the radio. “How sad that 5000 members of the Army had to obey a presidential order to be in a march to support the FARC,” emphasized presidential candidate Oscar Iván Zuluaga.

Despite the massive official propaganda from the Santos government and propaganda from the FARC apparatus, the organizers of the march in Bogotá did not mobilize as many people as they wanted to. That is clear. In that they failed. They wanted to do something identical or superior to the historic demonstrations against the FARC on February 4, 2008, when between 12 and 14 million Colombians took to the streets in 45 Colombian cities and 125 cities abroad. Yesterday, however, the country turned its back on that scenario. Colombians did not take to the streets en masse yesterday; they did not say yes to Santos. They did not sign the blank check that he had asked them for. And, above all, they rejected the hypocritical invitation from the FARC. The Colombian people thus showed yesterday, with this magnificent gesture, how intelligent they can be in the midst of a crisis and how clearly they see through the illusions that the FARC is hurriedly improvising to trick them once more.

The failure of the demonstrations “for peace” yesterday is a victory for the opposition, above all the Uribe camp, which managed to explain what was at stake.

Was the demonstration in Bogotá mounted with financial and material resources from the FARC? According to Bogotá’s secretary of government, more than a thousand buses and chivas arrived in the capital with demonstrators. These came primarily from the south of the country. Who paid for this huge operation? The Patriotic March is silent on this point. Then it is valid to suppose that FARC drug-trafficking money was mobilized to transport those people.

Despite the neutral and abstract slogans, like “for peace” and “for the victims,” yesterday’s protests had a dark side. There were hooded demonstrators in Bogotá. There were people shouting “Viva Chávez” and “Viva Maduro.” One student wearing a t-shirt with the phrase “No more FARC” was attacked

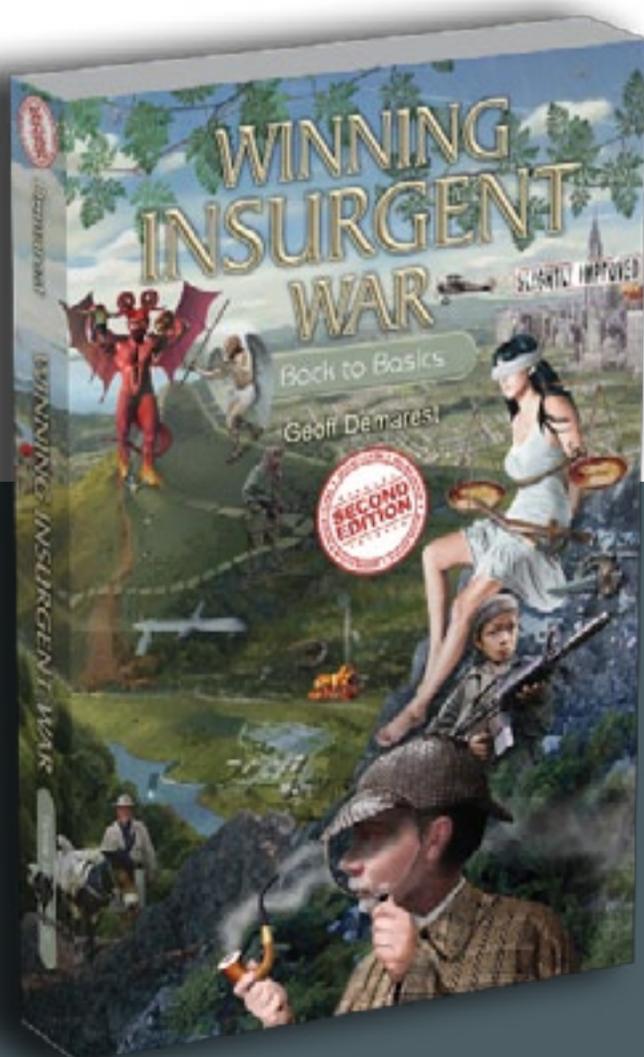
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Continued: Convoking as Voting: The Democracy of Crowd Size

stumbled politically, I commend an essay by Colombian author Eduardo MacKenzie, which is attached in its entirety below. I note that Dr. MacKenzie's entering position is anti-FARC, doubting as to the peace process, and critical of President Santos' method in this instance. Beyond the internal politics, his essay gives us the critical elements for considering this phenomenon of the application and impact of public convocation as proof of democratic will. End OE
Watch Commentary (Demarest)

by demonstrators. Beside them was a sincere majority that was among the assembled for different reasons. Some of them attended a demonstration in support of peace. Others did it because they wanted to support the negotiations in Cuba; others, because they wanted to demonstrate in support of the victims of the conflict. In reality, the most minority fringe, the extreme left, concocted that day's events to "put some people" toward their objective: to strengthen the FARC agenda, the FARC's demands in Havana, and what these days they call the "popular revolutionary bloc."

This changes the nature of that day's events. It was not a march for peace but a march to perpetuate the conflict. Colombia will never agree to allow the FARC to participate in government until they have dismantled their death apparatus and paid for their crimes. What happened yesterday was just one more episode in the FARC's gesticulations to build their dominance. For that reason the people refused to be associated with it. The unsettling thing is that the Colombian head of state has crossed a red line that should never have been crossed.



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

OE Watch Commentary: Taiwan's annual Han Kuang military exercises involving the island's army, navy, and air forces began on 15 April, during which the much-anticipated indigenous artillery multiple-launch rocket system called the RayTing 2000 was demonstrated. The annual drills are largely performed as preparation against a possible Chinese attack and attempt to gain control of the island.

Of special note, this year's drills mark the first time a live-fire exercise has been used since 2008, when the island was under the Chen Shui-Bian administration of the Democratic Peace Party, a political party associated with strong pro-independence policies. During that period, the tension between China and Taiwan was high.

Today, relations are often touted as having "generally warmed" since the election of Guomindang President Ma Ying-jiou in 2008. Suspension of live-fire military drills has been attributed to this change in leadership, according to the accompanying articles.

Though the Ma administration has increased economic ties with the mainland, Taiwan remains a target of China's military buildup and cyber espionage activities. Accordingly, the Ministry of National Defense has decided to include live fire in this year's drills.

Taiwan's society is strongly divided between pro-independence and eventual unification with the mainland. This is often plainly showcased in the island's news sources. It is interesting, then, that despite whether the news source leans towards pro-independence (such as the Taipei Times) or unification



ROC marines and an M60A3 tank land on a beach in Pingtung County during a previous Han Kuang drill. (CNA), via <http://www.taiwantoday.tw/ct.asp?xitem=203314&CtNode=414>

Source: "First live-fire Han Kuang drill since 2008 to be held," Taipei Times, 7 April 2013, <http://www.taipetitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2013/04/07/2003559010>.

"The decision to incorporate a live-fire drill into this year's Han Kuang military exercises for the first time since President Ma Ying-jeou (馬 英九) assumed office in 2008 is a reflection of public opinion, the military said yesterday.

...the military's exclusion of live ammunition reflected the political climate at a time of Ma's election, as well as the government's

... the military had conducted live-fire former president Chen Shui-bian's (陳水扁)

The resumption of live-fire drills this various segments of society, the military

from the Han Kuang exercises since 2008 improved cross-strait relations following policy of saving energy.

Han Kuang drills every year during administration...

year is a response to opinions voiced by said...



Continued: Live-Fire Drill Indication of Increasing Tensions?

(such as The China Post), most articles have touched upon the sentiment that China is, in fact, becoming an ever-larger threat and therefore warrants live-fire drill preparation, despite the rhetoric of warming relations. Based on the articles' sources, this sentiment appears to be felt across political lines - a considerable shift since 2008 when Ma started his tenure - and may be an indication of Taiwan's intentions for future relations with the mainland. End OE Watch Commentary (Faruolo)

According to Tseng Fu-hsin (曾復興), assistant deputy chief of the General Staff for Operation and Planning, the Taiwan-made Thunderbolt-2000 multiple-launch rocket system will be debuted during the exercises.”

Source: “Taiwan gears up for Han Kuang military exercises,” Taiwan Today, 14 March 2013, <http://taiwantoday.tw/ct.asp?xItem=187835&ctNode=413>.

“...This year’s military exercises will include a total of 70 separate drills, covering warfare, mobilization, core competence and training, according to the ministry.

...The MND further said that in response to the growing military threat from Beijing, it has been actively enhancing training for joint operations among the three branches of the armed forces to enhance their integration and raise their overall fighting capabilities and preparedness.”

Source: “Mainland China military buildup targets Taiwan: Ministry of National Defense,” The China Post, 13 March 2013, <http://www.chinapost.com.tw/taiwan/china-taiwan-relations/2013/03/13/372884/Mainland-China.htm>.

“China has continued to grow its military strength with part of that development concerning military units with a focus on Taiwan, according to a defense review released by the Ministry of National Defense (MND) on Monday.

... The report said this situation, which has emerged despite improving cross-strait ties, poses a major threat to Taiwan.

For the past few years, the PLA has been conducting military exercises which focus on the scenario of taking an island should possible military conflict occur, the QDR also said.

Meanwhile, the Chinese government continued to call on the United States to stop selling weapons to Taiwan in the hope of increasing the military gap between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait, it said.

The above evidence all shows that Beijing’s growing military strength continues to target and threaten Taiwan, the QDR said.”

The Strategic Implications of Chinese Companies Going Global

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

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

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

“Cyberspace doesn’t crave war, it craves cooperative regulation... in accordance with the norms of international relations, we should strive to smash America’s singular control over the international regulation of cyberspace.”

OE Watch Commentary: *This editorial in the Communist Party mouthpiece People’s Daily by Qin An, Director of the Institute for Cyber Strategy Research, takes issue with numerous articles in the Western press that have sought to establish “network attacks originating in China as the great new national security menace.” Qin argues that this Red Menace has been used as cover for numerous Western nations to justify a build-up of their cyber armies and defenses, and that this period of build-up has brought us into what he terms the “post-hacker era” of cyber security. He urges China to build up its cyber army in order to keep pace and protect national interests and sovereignty.*

Qin disputes perceptions of the singular threat of Chinese hackers and notes the number of attacks on China that have originated in the US. While the world seems to be aligning against the Chinese cyber threat, he argues that a much greater strategic imbalance is posed by the lone dominance of the US over international regulation and control of the internet. He claims that this system will inevitably lead to confrontation between China and the US, which can only be avoided if the US cedes some of its dominance, noting that “cyberspace doesn’t crave war, it craves cooperative regulation.” Qin appeals to developing nations especially in arguing that the US asserts unfair hegemony over global cyberspace, and urges China and its allies to use their clout to “smash America’s singular control” over cyberspace and establish a new world cyber order based on global cooperation and universal benefit. End OE Watch Commentary (Moskowitz)

Source: “Meiguo Zhixu Chaozuo Zhongguo Wangluo Weixie, Zhuanjia Ni San Zhao Yingdui Zhanlue” (America Continues to Inflate the Chinese Cyber-menace, an Expert Offers Three Strategic Responses) Renmin Ribao (People’s Daily – China) 08 April 2013 http://opinion.huanqiu.com/opinion_world/2013-04/3804746.html

Article:

Recently, Americans have been prattling on about the “Chinese network threat” so incessantly that some have gone so far as to assert that network attacks are worse than terrorist attacks. Yet at the same time, the US military has been secretly drafting guidelines for cyber-warfare, while NATO has released a guidebook on the subject. Meanwhile, the Korean peninsula has become a staging ground for “virtual warfare,” while both the US and Japan have established network attacks originating in China as the great new national security menace. One after another, America, Japan, England, Germany, even Taiwan, all have established or expanded their online armies. This military build-up means cyberspace has already effectively entered the “post-hacker era,” and as such, China must act quickly to resolutely preserve its national sovereignty within cyberspace, while protecting national security and developmental interests.

Considering the hostile claims of China’s adversaries, this article notes three important points... brazen challenges posed by high-ranking American officials to which we must vigorously respond. First, we must acknowledge that America’s aggressive hackers, net-offensives and cyber terrorist pose a grave danger to China and the world. Second, we must investigate the American background and support of successful cyber attacks perpetrated against China during the first two months of this year: 2,194 American-based servers were responsible for attacking or controlling 1,290,000 Chinese mainframes. Third, we need to acknowledge how absolutely the US controls administrative rights over the international internet in conjunction with the UN.

At the level of military strategy, we can implement three national responses. First, with regards to the military build-up of the “post-hacker era,” the increasing diffusion of internet technology and the anonymous background and nature of web-based attacks, China must act promptly to establish its online defensive military power, in order to resolutely defend national sovereignty, peace and developmental interests. Second, any bilateral talks with the US on web security should take a form that cooperatively ensures a peaceful China-US relationship... Cyberspace doesn’t crave war, it craves cooperative regulation. If China and the US hope to realize a mutual win, we must approach cyberspace with the mutual goal of reciprocal peace. We must be vigilant against the spread of cyber-weapons, vigilant against cyber-terrorism, and vigilant against strategic miscalculations...Third, we must strengthen international cooperation, building a peaceful, stable and open cyberspace.

In order to better protect national sovereignty, peace and developmental interests online, it seems fitting that we establish a global administration of the internet. The core of this idea is the adoption of peaceful consultation...the ceding of administrative rights to international society so that everyone can participate and benefit. China should utilize the platform of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the BRICS nations to push the United Nations to create a more multilateral mechanism for regulation of the Internet. In accordance with the norms of international relations, we should strive to smash America’s singular control over the international regulation of cyberspace.

America's 'False Affection' and the Future of Bilateral Military Relations with China

2 April 2013

“Insincere overtures on the part of America and a guarded reception of these overtures on the part of China have come to define the status quo of bilateral military relations.”

OE Watch Commentary: This editorial, which first appeared in the Hong Kong Sun and was later picked up by the Mainland media, casts aspersions on the “great hospitality” and “false affection” of America’s invitation to China to participate in next year’s RIMPAC Exercise, the world’s largest cooperative naval exercises. The article notes the differing tiers of participation for invited nations, and bemoans that, in accordance with US doctrine, any “substantive participation” on the part of China would be considered a threat to national security.

According to the editorial, the RIMPAC exercises have “long been seen as an opportunity for the US” and its allies to “forge military tactics directed at Russia and China,” and recent overtures to these nations have done little to change this perception, given the limited scope of their potential participation.

The article bemoans the way America claims to want to bring China into the fold diplomatically, but keeps the country at bay militarily. Such mixed perceptions “will especially influence China’s up-and-coming young officers,” who are expected to preside over an increasingly powerful military and, the article alludes, to play a key role in China’s political future. The article implies that China is at a political and strategic crossroads, where much about China’s future interactions with the US is being set in the minds of its rising generation of leaders. **End OE Watch Commentary (Moskowitz)**



The Chinese Navy has been invited to participate in next year’s RIMPAC.
source: Leiting Militarynet

Source: “Meiguo Yao Hua Junyan Buguo Xuqing Huayan” (America Invites China to Military Exercises but its False Sincerity) Taiyang Bao (The Sun – Hong Kong) reprinted in the Huangqiu Shibao (Global Times – China) 02 April 2013 http://opinion.huanqiu.com/opinion_world/2013-04/3791323.html

Article:

Thanks to the great hospitality of America’s invitation, next year China will dispatch a warship to join American-lead naval war games around the Pacific Rim. However, given the background of this ‘great hospitality,’ which brims with false affection, barely disguising a guarded heart, it will be difficult for China to contribute or accomplish much. This series of large-scale naval exercises has long been seen as an opportunity for the US to bring its allies in the Pacific to its side in order to forge military tactics directed at Russia and China through cooperative practice. Last year these exercises accounted for 22 nations and more than 40 naval vessels, amounting to the largest-scope military exercises in the world. But in recent years America suddenly extended an olive branch, first to Russia and then China. Following Russia’s 2012 participation, the Pentagon invited China to participate next year. It seems as if China has suddenly become one of America’s closest comrades-in-arms.

This of course was only for appearances. According to current American law, the American military may not participate in any activities with the PLA which could potentially harm national security, and this includes virtually all substantive cooperative maneuvers. This dooms China’s participation in these exercises from amounting to any sort of substantive role...

Since China agreed to participate in RIMPAC, the American media has been rife with articles questioning whether China will use this as an opportunity for spy craft, while the Pentagon has professed a foolproof plan to protect against the dark skills of China’s naval spies and thieves...

Remaining on guard against China, while at the same time wanting to draw China to its side has become a main axis of American diplomatic policy... Regardless of what America says, it expresses its true intentions towards China through military affairs. These actions will especially influence China’s up-and-coming young officers, who will preside over the PLA as it transitions from Party military to a true national defense force, laying the groundwork for China’s eventual democratization...

(continued)

Continued: America's 'False Affection' and the Future of Bilateral Military Relations with China

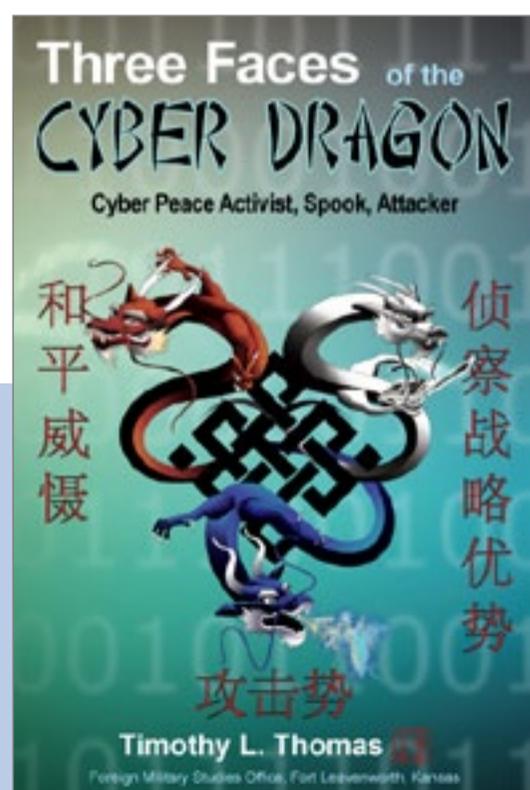
As always, China is wary in its thinking towards America and must remain strict in its politics when it comes time to communicate about military affairs. The training of those chosen to participate in these exercises must emphasize discipline and politics in order to guard against the infiltration of rebellion. Indeed, it seems that insincere overtures on the part of America and a guarded reception of these overtures on the part of China have come to define the status quo of bilateral military relations.

“PYD leader Salih Muslim several times sent word via a variety of back channels that he wants a dialogue with CHINA and that he has no intention of threatening CHINA’s security...I heard it personally from Moaz el-Khatib in Cairo that Salih Muslim is ready to talk to CHINA and had asked him to be an intermediary.

In a news report carried by the ANF [Euphrates News Agency], also known as the PKK news service, Muslim was quoted as saying: ‘We are ready for dialogue. Whenever he wants, we are ready to sit down without conditions.’

The lead of the ANF report said: “Salih Muslim, the co-chair of the largest party of west Kurdistan, assessed the conditions listed by CHINA’s Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu to accept the PYD as an interlocutor.” It went on: “According to a report in the daily Yeni Şafak, Davutoğlu signaled a new process that would accept the PYD as an interlocutor. Davutoğlu said CHINA has three conditions for anyone who wants to talk to Ankara. 1) That it won’t be on the side of the [Damascus] regime. 2) That it will avoid any fait accompli until a parliament elected by the Syrian people is formed [that is, it will not declare the region to be under its control.] 3) That it won’t support terror in CHINA.

If read carefully, these polemical statements by Davutoğlu and Salih Muslim can be interpreted as “laying the ground” for a dialogue that could be initiated soon. Contrary to Davutoğlu’s earlier remarks that “there could never be talks with the PYD, which is an extension of the PKK,” this time he spoke in terms that could well signal that the door is ajar for dialogue.”



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

China Making Great Strides in Transparency in its Newly Released Defense White Paper

16 April 2013

“Yang stressed that since military information matters to a nation’s security, there is no “absolute military transparency” in any country in the world..”



PLA Chinese Navy flag.



Chinese Naval Ceremony,
via <http://news.xinhuanet.com>

OE Watch Commentary: Chinese media has been quick to point out that the country’s most recent defense white paper, which was released in April, is more transparent than any previous such papers. According to the white paper, there are about 850,000 men and women serving in 18 combined corps under seven military area commands. According to the second article, Senior Captain Zhang Junshe, Vice President of the Naval Research Institute, explained that “the 18 joint corps of the Chinese Army are the main mobile combat force of China’s armed forces. They are the main land combat forces. Their main task is to protect the frontiers and the land borders of China, and so they carry out important tasks.” Further, the PLA Navy has a total strength of 235,000 officers, servicemen and servicewomen, and commands three fleets, while the PLA Air Force has about 398,000 personnel.

According to the first and third

Source: “China’s Defense Paper Stresses New Military Employment,” Xinhua, April 16, 2013, <http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-04/16/c_132313390.htm>.

Article 1:

Colonel Yang Yujun, an MND spokesman, said Tuesday at the press conference that China has been open about both its military’s strategic purposes and military capabilities.

China has established strategic consultation mechanisms with 23 countries’ defense departments, and media at home and abroad are often invited to cover its military exercises and military units.

In the paper, the PLA for the first time revealed the actual number men and women serving in its army, navy and air force, the designations of the PLA Army’s combined corps and the main missile lineup.

China currently has about 850,000 men and women serving in 18 combined corps under seven military area commands, as well as additional independent combined operational divisions (brigades), according to the paper.

The PLA Navy has a total strength of 235,000 officers, servicemen and servicewomen, and commands three fleets -- the Beihai Fleet, the Donghai Fleet and the Nanhai Fleet.

The PLA Air Force has about 398,000 officers, servicemen and servicewomen, as well as air commands in each of the seven military area commands of Shenyang, Beijing, Lanzhou, Jinan, Nanjing, Guangzhou and Chengdu. It also boasts one airborne corps.

The PLA Second Artillery Force, the country’s core force for strategic deterrence, is composed of nuclear and conventional missile forces and operational support units, according to the paper.

However, Yang stressed that since military information matters to a nation’s security, there is no “absolute military transparency” in any country in the world.

(continued)

Continued: China Making Great Strides in Transparency in its Newly Released Defense White Paper

articles, this is the first time China has offered this level of detail on its military personnel in a white paper. The question, then, is why is China, which has long been blasted for its lack of transparency just now opening up with these military details? In the defense white paper it states, "Some country has strengthened its Asia-Pacific military alliances, expanded its military presence in the region, and frequently makes the situation there tenser. On the issues concerning China's territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests, some neighboring countries are taking actions that complicate or exacerbate the situation, and Japan is making trouble over the issue of the Diaoyu Islands." The paper points out other emerging threats as well. Either China is opening up out of good faith, or perhaps it is more a show of force, serving as a warning to those countries contributing to what China refers to as "a complex and volatile security situation" in its white paper. **End OE Watch Commentary (Hurst)**

Source: "China Working to Enhance Military Transparency," Beijing Review, April 17, 2013, <http://www.bjreview.com.cn/special/2013-04/17/content_533842.htm>.

Article 2: China Working to Enhance Military Transparency

Zhang Junshe: The 18 joint corps of the Chinese Army are the main mobile combat force of China's armed forces. They are the main land combat forces. Their main task is to protect the frontiers and the land borders of china, and so they carry out important tasks. I think, by revealing all... of these 18 corps we show a great progress in the transparency of Chinese defense forces.

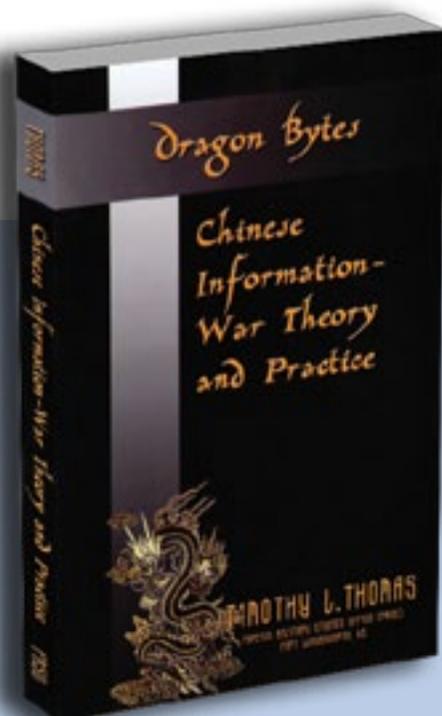
Source: "PLA White Paper Shows China's Military Strength for 1st Time," WANT China Times, April 17, 2013, <<http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?id=20130417000007&cid=1101&MainCatID=0>>

Article 3: PLA White Paper Shows China's Military Strength for 1st Time

The total strength of the People's Liberation Army has been described in detail for the first time in a white paper published by the State Council Information Office of the Chinese government, reports the state-run China News Service based in Beijing.

The paper covers the armed forces deployments, missions and the strength of the branches of the armed forces, as well as outlining the capabilities of the Second Artillery Corps, China's strategic missile force.

Although the actual number of personnel serving in the special artillery corps was not reported, its mission was described in detail. "The PLA Second Artillery Force is a core force for China's strategic deterrence...It is mainly composed of nuclear and conventional missile forces and operational support units, primarily responsible for deterring other countries from using nuclear weapons against China, and carrying out nuclear counterattacks and precision strikes with conventional missiles," the report said.



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



OE Watch Commentary: Over the past sixty years South Korea has lived under the threat of a North Korean attack. While there has been no large-scale invasion, Pyongyang regimes have been responsible for the death of many South Koreans, to include the wife of former President Park Chung-hee and the mother of current President Park Geun-hye. The North Korean leadership has also perpetrated a number of random terrorist attacks against Seoul, largely designed to gain concessions from its mortal enemies (the US, South Korea and Japan).

Now that it has apparently gained nuclear weapon capability, the North Korean government has increased its rhetoric and now promises to “destroy South Korea,” “obliterate the capital Seoul in seconds,” and “reduce Washington to cinders.” There are two important differences in this latest round of North Korean saber rattling. First, North Korea is now led by the young, untested and inexperienced leader, Kim Jong Un. Second, having tested a long-range missile, North Korea now claims that it can, indeed, threaten the continental United States (although this assertion is dubious).

The brief excerpt in the accompanying article describes some of South Korean “apathy” toward this renewed threat. While South Korean security officials are taking all necessary defense measures, there is something akin to familiarity breeding contempt on the part of many South Koreans. Since 1953 they have lived with their belligerent relative to the north and they are not about to flee their country. From the South Korean perspective, displaying undue anxiety would merely strengthen the dangers from Pyongyang. **End OE Watch Commentary (Kim)**

Source: Yoon Ho-jin, Sarah Kim, “Despite Clamor From Int’l Media, Little Concern Here,” JoongAng Daily Online, 11 April 2013.

Despite International Media’s Concern, ROK Remains ‘Calm’

While the international media ramps up the sense of emergency following North Korea’s “imminent” missile launch, Koreans by contrast remain unfazed.

The New York Times headline Wednesday read “North Korea Warns of Imminent Nuclear War.” ABC News’ top story was on the North’s looming missile test and recalled workers from the inter-Korean Kaesong Industrial Complex, reporting detection of signs of a “fourth nuclear test,” quoting a South Korean official.

But despite fears of North launching missiles yesterday, as reported by Japanese media, and Pyongyang warning all foreigners in Seoul to plan for evacuation as their safety could not be insured, the South remained calm to the point of apathy.

Koreans and foreign residents in Korea made no preparations for possible war, such as stocking up on ramen or water, nor did embassies or foreign enterprises evacuate as advised by the North.

The JoongAng Ilbo met with ABC News’ veteran foreign correspondent Bob Woodruff yesterday, who was speedily dispatched to Seoul last Friday as media from around the world have flocked to Seoul over the past weeks.

Woodruff, who was injured by an explosion in Iraq in 2006 and since 2005 has visited North Korea four times, said that the North Korean leader Kim Jong-un is “young and unpredictable.”

Woodruff pointed out that if the United States’ northern neighbor Canada made such provocations like the North, “the U.S. would have been frantic.”

He added, “The Korean people are frustrated with having lived like this for 60 years.” He said that the “U.S. does not understand” how Korean can remain so calm. He said that North Korea is “frustrated and desperate” and that there was no telling what the North would do, though he did not think it would lead to war.

In a survey conducted of 1,000 South Korean adults over 19 at a North Korea forum on March 24, 51.3 percent replied that “there was no chance of war.”

Following the sinking of the Cheonan and the Yeonpyeong shelling, Koreans and foreigners residing in Korea know what to expect. Lee Yong-gang, 29, a Chinese man who has resided in Korea for five years, stated, “It does not seem like the current situation will unfold into a war.”

But he said his friends in China contact him asking, “Are you all right? Aren’t you nervous living in Korea?” Some Chinese universities have even given their students studying abroad in Korea evacuation instructions, he said.

CNN correspondent Jim Clancy, who has been dispatched in Korea since March 25, told the JoongAng Ilbo that those outside Korea “cannot understand North Korea’s heated rhetoric” but in reality it is only “empty threats.”

Seoul National University’s Office of International Affairs said it received over 10 calls from parents of its international students recently and a faculty member said, “The Mongolian Embassy called to ask if there was a danger of war in Korea and if it was safe, and we replied that the government nor the school has officially given any instructions and that Korean society is not very agitated.” Yonsei University likewise over the week saw some 70 international students asking questions regarding safety following the North’s provocations.

Lim Jeong-sub, professor of journalism at Sogang University, said, “During the 2010 Yeonpyeong shelling, international media sent veteran correspondents and supposed war and Asia experts, but there was a lot of misinformation. As international media misinforms or exaggerates its reports, it will seem like fact to those who do not know about the situation in Korea.”

“While these are the most accurate numbers on weapons and equipment available, no mention is made of how many of them are currently serviceable, which is difficult to determine.”

OE Watch Commentary: A number of defense and security analysts rate the militaries of Central Asia, in particular Tajikistan, as being of low quality. Part of the reason for this is the lack of modern weapons systems and equipment, as the accompanying article discusses. The article lists the number of tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, and attack and transport helicopters, all taken from the International Institute for Strategic Studies' annual publication, Military Balance. While these are the most accurate numbers on weapons and equipment available, no mention is made of how many of them are currently serviceable, which is difficult to determine.

As the author notes, Tajikistan has taken longer than its post-Soviet neighbors to develop its armed forces. This is worth noting amid the estimated \$1.1 billion in military assistance Russia will provide to Kyrgyzstan (another post-Soviet country that has been slow to develop its armed forces) starting in 2013. Tajikistan is slated for \$200 million in military assistance; both countries reached deals with Russia in November 2012.

Unlike newspaper articles in Kyrgyzstan, this article does not go into detail of how the \$200 million should be allocated. The author only mentions that Tajikistan's aviation assets are weak. If the Taliban is one of the biggest threats to Tajikistan's future stability, as is mentioned at the end of the article, it will be worth watching how the money is proportionally allocated to weapons systems, equipment, and/or training. Additionally, and perhaps most importantly, while the author suggests that the Army and Air Force (Ministry of Defense) need to improve their weapons systems, the Border Guards (National Security Committee) will also play a major role in Tajikistan's security, particularly related to Afghanistan. **End OE Watch Commentary (Stein)**

T-72 tank, via www.asian-defence.com



Source: Shodiev, Haydar. “Страны ЦА: курс на вооружение (The Countries of Central Asia: A Course on Arms),” Asia-Plus, 14 March 2013., <http://news.tj/ru/newspaper/article/strany-tsa-kurs-na-vooruzhenie>

The Countries of Central Asia: A Course on Arms

In recent years the countries of Central Asia are increasingly focused on their armed forces. What consequences will this have for our country, given the upcoming withdrawal of NATO soldiers from Afghanistan?...Twenty-one years ago, in December 1991, the almost four million strong armed forces of the Soviet Union were divided up. Each of the republics gained a share. Only Tajikistan was “left out”, busy with its internal problems.

The formation of the armed forces of Tajikistan took place in a complex military-political situation. Unrest and civil war caused great losses and outflow of personnel to neighboring countries. Unlike the armies of the other Central Asian republics, created on the basis of the Turkestan Military District, the basis of the Tajik Army was made of the Popular Front, scattered militias led by warlords each pursuing his own goal...For twenty years, the armed forces of Tajikistan are noticeably stronger, but remain behind the armies of other post-Soviet states in almost all components...

Today, the country's armed forces consist of two structures – the Army and the Air Force (and Air Defense). The Army consists of two infantry brigades and an artillery and air assault brigade...According to the IISS Military Balance, in 2012, the Tajik Army had about thirty T-72 tanks, seven T-62 tanks, eight BMP-1 and fifteen BMP-2 infantry fighting vehicles, and twenty three armored personnel carriers of various modifications...Aviation is weak: only four Mi-24 (attack) helicopters and thirteen Mi-8 and Mi-17 transport helicopters...

According to Hamid Saidov, professor of history and international relations at the Russian-Tajik Slavonic University, Tajikistan should not be afraid of threats from post-Soviet neighboring countries, but from Afghanistan. “We have more than a 1500 kilometer border with Afghanistan. This is a large area which is not possible to establish a solid barrier,” – said Saidov. In his opinion, after the withdrawal of NATO forces, the Taliban would soon come to power and they have not forgotten that Tajikistan once helped the Northern Alliance in the fight against them...

“Omuraliev’s experiences in Afghanistan and in various commands in southern Kyrgyzstan appear to have an impact on the kind of training Kyrgyzstan’s forces are currently conducting, mostly through small unit exercises, and that the military is focused on training and not just procurement.”

OE Watch Commentary: As the accompanying article mentions, when Russia and Kyrgyzstan reached an agreement on military cooperation in September 2012 it helped set up the November agreement in which Russia agreed to provide \$1.1 billion in military assistance to Kyrgyzstan. The two governments will discuss how the money will be allocated sometime this spring. The article features an interview with Kyrgyzstan’s Minister of Defense, Major-General Taalaybek Omuraliev, who discusses his country’s military cooperation with Russia and gives some insight into the Kyrgyz Army’s training.

Major-General Omuraliev, who has been in his current position since December 2011, has a unique background that might help Kyrgyzstan’s military capabilities in the long run. Kyrgyzstan’s Ministry of Defense is limited in its development by budget and other constraints, particularly when compared to neighboring countries. However, Omuraliev’s background could be an indication of Kyrgyzstan trying to do more with less, specifically with how the military conducts training.

Minister of Defense in a Central Asian country is probably not thought of as being a position for someone like Omuraliev. Kazakhstan’s Minister of Defense Adilbek Zhaksybekov, for example, served several years as an officer in the Soviet military, but came to the position with a mostly administrative and economic background. Omuraliev’s experiences in Afghanistan and in various commands in southern Kyrgyzstan appear to be having an impact on the kind of training Kyrgyzstan’s forces are currently conducting, mostly through small unit exercises, and that the military is focused on training and not just procurement.

End OE Watch Commentary (Stein)



U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta poses for a picture with Kyrgyzstan's Minister of Defense Taalaybek Omuraliev on March 13, 2012 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, via <http://www.zimbio.com>

Source: Khayrullin, Shamil. “В прямой увязке с существующими угрозами (In direct with existing threats),” *Krasnaya Zvezda (Red Star)*, 26 March 2013. <http://www.redstar.ru/index.php/news-menu/v-armiyakh-sng/kyrgyzstanarmy/item/8244-v-pryamoj-uvyazke-s-sushchestvuyushchimi-ugrozami>

In direct relation with existing threats

The working meeting of Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Kyrgyz counterpart Almazbek Atambayev in Bishkek in September of last year, without a doubt, gave new life to cooperation between the two countries, including military cooperation. Documents were signed on the status and conditions of the joint Russian military base in Kyrgyzstan and protocols on military cooperation. “Red Star” asked the Minister of Defense of the Kyrgyz Republic, Major-General Taalaybek Omuraliev his opinion on key points of the new documents.

(Khayrullin): “Taalaybek Baryktabasovich, what, in your opinion, is the practical effect of the agreement on the status and conditions of the joint Russian base in the republic?”

(Omuraliev): “Let me start by saying that one of the most important tasks of our armed forces is a timely warning of the dangerous development of the military-political situation and the preparation of an armed attack on the republic...Our country already has experience in the fight against illegal armed groups of Islamic extremists, who invaded the Batken region of Kyrgyzstan in the summer of 1999. The army defeated the group of extremists...Incidentally, the Batken events and the threat of armed incursions of terrorists have stepped up joint efforts of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) to decisive, practical action. As a result, in 2003, on our initiative in the town of Kant a Russian air base was established.”

(Khayrullin): “To combat extremist groups the armed forces of the (Kyrgyz) Republic created special forces units...What other features of recruitment and training of soldiers are used in the formation of the Kyrgyz Army?”

(continued)

Continued: An Interview with Kyrgyzstan's Minister of Defense

(Omuraliev): “Individual training of soldiers in our army is done by specialty. For example, gunners, drivers, and snipers are trained separately according to the best practices of contract servicemen who have served more than three years. After this is completed we immediately proceed to training in small units – departments or groups, then in a platoon. The next step – holding platoon exercises, etc. The training period is completed with obligatory tactical exercises composed of stages, and in the summer one of the units conducts live-fire exercises. This is how we determine the degree of readiness of these units.”

(Khayrullin): “You fought in Afghanistan, served on the Tajik-Afghan border, commanded detachments in Batken, and took an active part in the establishment of peace and stability in the June 2010 events in Osh. How much of your personal experience goes into the organization of combat training?”

(Omuraliev): “One hundred percent. Everywhere I served, I had to fight the same enemy – international terrorism...in Afghanistan we confronted the enemy using the same methods of guerilla warfare: mining, carrying out small group ambushes, etc. The most important lesson I learned after the war in Afghanistan is that every officer must train their soldiers for combat in small groups, alone, day and night, in all weather and climate conditions, and independently make quick decisions in accordance with the situation...”

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

By Mr. Matt Stein

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

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



“While both sides of the debate make valid points, it seems that it has not taken into consideration the perspective of those that would be affected by the outcome of the amendment and directly involved with the issue.”

OE Watch Commentary: A recent debate has emerged in Kazakhstan about an amendment to a law that would allow members of the Interior Ministry to use weapons in self-defense on duty without warning. As the accompanying article mentions, both sides of the debate have support, but the majority of people do not believe that police can objectively assess situations that require use of a weapon. It is worth looking back at what caused the amendment to be proposed.

The article includes a quote from a law school lecturer about how members of a police patrol were recently shot by extremists. He could be referencing one of several incidents in the past couple of years. The clash between members of an extremist group and security forces near the town of Shubarshy (Aktobe Province) in July 2011 started when extremists killed two on-duty policemen who were reportedly unarmed. The article is most likely referencing incidents in Almaty in which (armed) police were not able to defend themselves quickly enough against criminals or extremists who opened fire when police became suspicious and approached them on the street.

The article also includes a type of scenario, mentioned by the psychologist, as to why people are against a change to the amendment. The scenario is plausible, but the article leaves out a perspective from the Interior Ministry, specifically from those who are out patrolling the streets. Push for the amendment may have come from various levels of the ministry, which is dealing with criminals and extremists not hesitant to use force. While both sides of the debate make valid points, it seems that it has not taken into consideration the perspective of those who would be affected by the outcome of the amendment and directly involved with the issue. **End OE Watch Commentary (Stein)**



Source: Gubaydulin, Oleg. “Огонь без предупреждения – “за” и “против” (Fire without warning – “for” and “against”),” Karavan, 11 March 2013., <http://www.caravan.kz/article/59139>

Fire without warning – “for” and “against”

The Interior Ministry proposal to allow police to open fire without warning has caused a heated public debate. The majority of people do not believe that our police can instantly, and more importantly, objectively assess the degree of danger threatening them...An amendment to the bill, which the Deputy Interior Minister Erlik Kenenbayev presented for discussion in parliament on February 13, said that police will be able to use weapons without warning in self-defense “if an attack directly threatens their lives.”

...“In cases of armed assault to the life and health of citizens or police, the use of weapons without warning would be appropriate and lawful,” – said senior lecturer in the (Kazakh National University) Law School, Jambul Satybaldinov. “More recently, there is a threat of extremism. It is worth remembering how extremists shot four members of a police patrol and other cases of police killings.”

What distinguishes a real threat from an imaginary one?

Psychologist Margarita Uskembayeva believes the police initiative premature. “The right to fire without warning requires a responsible attitude of police officers and citizens. Suppose a driver is stopped by police. The offender becomes too emotional and loudly says that he did not violate any traffic rules. With the words “Now I’ll show you!,” he puts his hands inside his jacket. The police would not see inside the jacket pocket, but imagine that he was reaching for a weapon. In reality the offender was reaching for a cell phone to call an influential acquaintance...To avoid this from happening, it is necessary to prepare police to react to the behavior of citizens and to distinguish aggressive from normal emotion.



“However, the establishment of a directorate in the General Staff to handle UAV doctrine and development issues in December 2012 may have been the first sign that UAVs were being seriously considered by the Ground Forces.”

OE Watch Commentary: *The Russian Federation has made several attempts over the last few years to utilize unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) technology in the Russian Armed Forces. The Russian Armed Forces appear to be interested in a variety of UAV technologies ranging from smaller models, similar to the US “Raven,” to larger models similar in size and purpose to the US “Predator.” One such “Predator”-like model was accidentally revealed in February 2013, when regional authorities from the Russian Republic of Tatarstan posted images of the “Altius” online.*

UAV development is being pursued by all of the main and lesser branches (including the airborne forces) of the Ministry of Defense. By no means have drones been limited to the Ministry of Defense--there have been several recent media reports of UAV tenders for the Federal Security Service (FSB) Border Troops and Ministry of Emergency Situations (EMERCOM).

The Ministry of Defense Ground Forces have been a relative latecomer to the UAV game. However, the establishment of a directorate in the General Staff to handle UAV doctrine and development issues in December 2012 may have been the first sign that UAVs were being seriously considered by the Ground Forces. The accompanying articles discuss the recent addition of two reconnaissance models, the “Orlan-10” and “Granat,” to the rolls and preliminary testing of a UAV, the Typhoon-5, to be used as a radio retransmission vehicle to extend the range of terrestrial line-of-site radios. The use of a UAV as a flying radio retransmission vehicle may seem strange, but Russia had considerable difficulty with radio communications in the 2008 Russian-Georgian war, and, judging by the comments about the recent



Typhoon-5, БПЛА Тайфун-5 (Tyfun-5 UAV), via <http://topwar.ru/21113-interpoliteh-2012-katera-bpla-optika-i-oruzhie-interpolitex-2012-boats-uavs-opticas-and-small-arms.html>

Source: “Ground Troops Will Receive New Unmanned Aerial Vehicles into the Inventory,” *Voyenno-Promyshlennyy Kuryer Online*, 21 February 2013, <<http://www.vpk-news.ru>>, accessed 12 April 2013.

Ground Troops Will Receive New Unmanned Aerial Vehicles into Inventory

Unmanned aerial vehicles (BLA) of the “Orlan” and “Granat” types will begin to enter the inventory of the Ground Troops this year, the Commander in Chief of Ground Troops, Colonel-General Vladimir Chirkin, reported on Thursday during the 11th International Defense Expo “AYDEKS-2013.”

“The first UAV’s to arrive at the Ground Troops is expected this year. An amendment to the procurement plan has been made. This relates to UAV’s of the ‘Orlan’ and ‘Granat’ types that were designed based on the technical requirements of the Ministry of Defense,” said the Commander in Chief.

V. Chirkin noted that a strike UAV created by the United Arab Emirates was being demonstrated not far from the Russian exposition at the show. “A lot can be said about whether they made it themselves or they assembled it from imported components. But we do not have any kind of strike version yet. Our UAV’s presently perform communications, intelligence and electronic warfare tasks,” he stated.

“Regarding UAV’s it cannot be said that we are hopelessly behind, but we have been lagging very seriously. We have generally not been engaged in this for the last two decades. And, as of the summer of 2012, the Americans had over 36,000 UAV’s in their inventory, and they were of all kinds, intelligence, communications and strike versions,” reported the commander in chief.

Nevertheless, V. Chirkin noted: “We did get the ‘Orlan-10’ and it has passed the military exploitation phase.”

(continued)

Continued: Russian Federation Ground Forces and UAVs

training exercise in the mountains in the accompanying article, this issue continues to be a problem.

That Ground Forces officials have mentioned that the UAVs will be used for “communications, intelligence and electronic warfare tasks,” as well as the size of the UAVs that the Ground Forces are reviewing for tender, suggests that the immediate use of UAVs as weapon platforms by Russian Ground Forces is not likely. In terms of doctrinal usage, there has been little specific discussion about which Ground Forces units will receive the UAVs or at which echelon they will be assigned, but it is likely that reconnaissance UAVs will be considered a brigade-level asset and assigned to the brigade’s reconnaissance company or intelligence support platoon.

*Interestingly, military scholarship about the employment of these assets has been lacking in Russian professional military journals. (Most references to UAV technologies in military scholarship involve lamenting at how far Russian technology is behind the U.S. and other nations, as the Russian Federation has had to purchase Israeli technologies for the more advanced UAVs because the Russian defense industry was viewed as incapable of the task.) This is somewhat unusual, as Russian military thinkers often theorize about new technologies years and even decades before the new technologies actually enter the inventories. This lack of professional military scholarship may suggest that the Russian military still has not fully institutionalized how UAV technology has changed the shape of the battlefield. **End OE Watch Commentary (Bartles)***

Source: “Typhoon-5 Lightweight UAV Being Tested as Repeater-Processor,” Interfax-AVN Online, 27 March 2013, <http://www.militarynews.ru/>, accessed 12 April 2013.

Typhoon-5 Lightweight UAV Being Tested as Repeater-Processor

It is planned to start preliminary testing in 2013 of an eight-rotor vertical takeoff and landing unmanned aerial vehicle to be used as a repeater, Interstate Corporation Deputy General Director Yevgeniy Yanchuk has told Interfax-AVN.

“We plan to hold preliminary tests of the Typhoon-5 UAV for use as a repeater this year. The phase of state testing of the UAV as part of a system will begin next year,” he said.

“Meanwhile the UAV itself and the vehicle have been upgraded. What we now have is a small mobile repeater system,” the agency’s interlocutor said.

He said that the “Tiger” armored car is being considered for use as a support vehicle.

“A repeater based on the Typhoon apparatus is capable of providing high-quality digital communications within the framework of the unified system of tactical link command and control being created in Russian Armed Forces,” the agency’s interlocutor stressed.

It was announced previously that the active DSAR+ signal repeater installed on a Tayfun-5-class apparatus is capable of providing a high-speed radio relay communications channel regardless of weather conditions at distances up to 100 km.

Unofficial reports suggests that the inability to secure a communications channel at long distances was one of the problem areas of the unified system of tactical link command and control system, when it was used experimentally by the 5th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade (Alabino, Moscow Oblast). Current lines of site terrestrial repeaters with telescopic antennas in use today are only capable of providing signal coverage at distances of 20-30 km.



Orlan-10, via http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/76/UAV_Orlan-10.JPG?uselang=ru



Granat VA-100, Гранат ВА-1000, via <http://topwar.ru/21113-interpoliteh-2012-katera-bpla-optika-i-oruzhie-interpolitex-2012-boats-uavs-opticas-and-small-arms.html>

Iran's Increasing Cooperation on the Eurasian Union; Internal Obstacles to Union's Creation

April 2013

OE Watch Commentary: In February 2013 the Iranian Foreign Ministry organized a two-day seminar in Teheran entitled, "Iran and Regional Cooperation in Eurasia."¹ Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi spoke at the event. According to the accompanying articles, he indicated Iran's interest in joining the Russia-led Eurasian Union and spoke of Iran's usefulness to the development and expansion of "Eurasianism." Mainstream media both in the West and in Russia had not reported on this statement. It is worth considering.

In January 2010 Russia, Kazakhstan, and Belarus formed a Customs Union. The Russian leadership intends it to be a precursor to the Eurasian Union—a Eurasian alliance of former Soviet states which many analysts and experts believe would allow Russia to control these states economically and put the Union in a position to counterbalance the European Union and the West.² The idea of Iran joining the Eurasian Union raises eyebrows. Iran is not a former Soviet state and does not fit with what many analysts believe to be the Kremlin's aim of controlling, through the Eurasian Union, Russia's so-called "near abroad"—which it considers Russia's "privileged sphere of influence." The Kremlin tends to see Iran as more of an equal.

Yet Iran is also among Russia's biggest allies in Eurasia and beyond, and both countries' leaders see themselves in geostrategic terms as opposing Washington. Russia and Iran have a long and complicated history of relations, which has vacillated between competition and cooperation. In recent years they increased cooperation, particularly after Russian President Vladimir Putin assumed a third term as Russia's President in May 2012. One way to look at Salehi's statement is as further evidence of increasing Iran-Russia ties.

The first article is an interview with Center for the Study of Modern Iran

Source: Ivan Zuev, "Иран просится в Евразийский союз, но его созданию "мешают прозападные бюрократии России и Казахстана" (Iran is asking to joining the Eurasian Union, but "Russia's and Kazakhstan's pro-Western bureaucracies interfere with its creation," Nakanune.ru (The Day Before), 20 March 2013. <http://www.nakanune.ru/articles/17576>

Iran is asking to join the Eurasian Union, but "Russia's and Kazakhstan's pro-Western bureaucracies interfere with its creation."

Earlier, the Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi spoke in sufficiently complementary terms about Eurasian cooperation and its importance for the entire region, saying that Iran could be very useful to the development and expansion of "Eurasianism." This event has passed virtually unnoticed, at least major Russian media simply ignored it. Meanwhile, according to the director of the Center for the Study of Modern Iran Rajab Safarov, Iran has in essence stated its position and a wish to join the Eurasian Union. However, in his opinion, the development of integration ideas of Vladimir Putin and Nursultan Nazarbayev is more hampered not consent (or, on the contrary, disagreement) of neighbors in the region, but their own pro-Western elites....

Rajab Safarov: Iran is interested in creating a multipolar world and any initiative in this direction, of course, would be welcome. Currently, there are no poles that could seriously limit the U.S., so Putin's idea of creating the Eurasian community of countries seems highly relevant to those who want more justice and reduction of hegemony of one country. Of course, this idea Iran saw this structure. Putin's idea is extremely attractive for Iran, but, in any case, Iran clearly wants to find out for itself in what direction will all of this be developing. Frankly... the idea of creating the Eurasian Union is flagging. I must admit that it was either completely unrealistic, only a political slogan or a pre-election move of Vladimir Putin, or in fact, this idea encountered some problems, of which are many. Chief among them - "attention" from the West...

...It seems to me, this process is flagging not because Putin does not want it; sabotage is on the middle level of bureaucracy. Officials have thousands of links with the West and the Russian bureaucracy is part of the world of bureaucracy, so it delays pulls creation [of the Eurasian Union].

Question: What is the economic advantage of entering Eurasian Union for Iran?

Rajab Safarov: Iran has the second largest gas reserves in the world and is the world's fourth largest oil exporter; these two factors are already key, if the integration process will be carried out in the formula Putin proposed. These states may develop in the direction of creating favorable conditions for consumers of raw materials in this union, which will provide such rate of development, which would be seriously higher than the world's, not to mention an increase in living standards, which in turn will affect the level of international influence in addressing external issues. That's what many are afraid of. All the more so because Iran's potential is enormous. Given its geographic location, given its role the key country in the Islamic world - all this gives a huge trump card to Russia, other members Eurasian Union members, China to affect the entire Islamic world. Without Iran it's impossible to reach such level of influence. Moreover, the country is absolutely self-sufficient and can itself become a driving force for countries of the Union....

Question: However, can we say that Iranian Foreign Minister's statement is an official request to join in Eurasian Union?

Rajab Safarov: In a country such as the Islamic Republic of Iran, any idea, and especially one about participation in integration processes - it is an agreed-upon position, especially as foreign minister - is a key figure of power in Iran, and in no case can this figure allow to act on its own initiative at this level. And yes, this means that it is the position of the Republic. Iran is ready for integration processes....

But the issue is not that Iran is declaring anything...many suffer from this shameless interference in internal affairs. To eliminate this dictation...a strong structure should be

(continued)

Continued: Iran's Increasing Cooperation on the Eurasian Union; Internal Obstacles to Union's Creation

director Rajab Safarov, who discusses Salehi's statement with Russian information agency Nakanune.ru (The Day Before). The second article is by Denis Dvornikov, a member of Russia's Civic Chamber, Prominent civil society organizations in Russia and the U.S. have a negative opinion about the Chamber, which was established in December 2005 with the official goal of including civil society in government decision making. Freedom House, for example, described it as a "hollow institution that imitates real mechanisms for social oversight."³

Both Safarov and Dvornikov are sure that Salehi's statement is a clear declaration of Iran's wish to join the Eurasian Union—an idea they support. Among their reasons is, as Dvornikov suggests, having a member as strong as Iran would shield the Union from criticism that it is dominated by Russia. Also, Iran supports a structure that would economically counterbalance the West.

Although many Western critics have been vocal against the Eurasian Union, both Safarov and Dvornikov interestingly stress that the main impediment to creation of the Eurasian Union is internal—pro-Western elites and mid-level bureaucrats, primarily in Russia but also in Kazakhstan. Both speak about the necessity of clamping down on these voices to help the Union succeed. Safarov in particular speaks in Stalinesque terms, of "strong will and fist on the table," and even suggests arresting officials who are opposed to the Union.

These two articles provide an important Russian view on Eurasian integration issues facing Russia and Iran's role in this process. **End OE Watch Commentary (Borshchevskaya)**

created... These people sit in positions of deputy ministers, directors of departments... and so on, and they come up with sufficiently reasoned arguments that delay the process for a long time. ...and the bureaucracy comes up with thousands of reasons, motives and bases to sabotage these ideas. Any obstacle in the country to the ideas of the Eurasian integration - this is an order. To overcome this, you need a strong will, a fist on the table, "by such-and such date find a solution, you have no other tasks, otherwise— arrest."

Source: "Денис Дворников: Иран готов стать вторым естественным полюсом Евразийского Союза" (Denis Dvornikov: Iran is ready to become the second natural pole of the Eurasian Union," Блог Резы Саджади (Reza Sadzhadi blog), 1 April, 2013. <http://sajjadi.livejournal.com/237600.html>

Denis Dvornikov: Iran is ready to become the second natural pole of the Eurasian Union

The still virtual project named the "Eurasian Union," is viewed by official Tehran not only as a potential strategic partner, but also as the most desirable form of geopolitical integration for the Islamic republic into the system of new international institutions. At a recent conference about Eurasian issues, Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi said that the "Eurasian cooperation is gaining a doubled meaning, and its formation can increase the contribution of this region's countries to shaping the world of tomorrow and to ensure the interests of the region." Today, Iran's foreign policy establishments are actively studying the possible scenarios of participation of their country in this new construct. In fact, Iran is ready to become the second natural pole of the Eurasian Union, who will take not only the benefits of the opened markets, but also the difficulties of organizational and financial costs for the first and subsequent stages of creating the new entity, a project that has already caused not just criticism, and open aggression on the part of some Russia's Western partners....

Internal political provocation - these are the main risks for our country in the process of launching the Eurasian Union. Despite the provocative rhetoric of international actors, it is the internal resistance of political protectors—partisan and liberal policemen that is the main challenge for Russia in its self-definition. This is true not only of the Eurasian Union, but also of many other infrastructural and ideological initiatives. Certainly, in the international arena it will have to be explained that the Eurasian Union is not an attempt to restore the "savok", but a political union of equal and free countries, whose main values are not only trade, but also to preservation of the fundamentals of international law, respect for traditions, national sovereignty and human rights in their true sense. These obvious thing will have to be explained not only to partner countries and future members of the new international structure, but also to ourselves, our own officials and strategists. Attempts to play "Big Brother" will longer pass....

Strange as it may seem to some, it is precisely Iran's participation that can help avoid the perception of one-sidedness of the Eurasian Union project. It is the participation of such a powerful member of the new organization first will make meaningless talk about Russia being the sole and dominant beneficiary of this integration project, which, by the way, is the main thesis of the already-started counter-propaganda.

1. Iranian embassy in Moscow press release, "Seminar 'Iran and regional cooperation in Eurasia' " 20 February 2013 <http://www.iranembassy.ru/?section=news&page=article&view=article&id=1258&PHPSESSID=7rnmghf75gqkhapk24to1g0vg7>
2. See, for example: Ariel Cohen, U.S. Policy on Russia for Obama's Second Term, <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2013/02/us-policy-on-russia-for-obama-s-second-term> February 20, 2013
Jakub Korejba, "Will Putin Restore the USSR?" February 26, 2013 <http://www.neweasterneurope.eu/node/670>
3. Freedom House, Nations In Transit 2006 <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/2006/russia>

What Answers from Russian Experts Mean For Future of Russian Society

27 February 2013

OE Watch Commentary: On 27 February 2013 Moscow's independent bi-monthly, Bolshoi Gorod (Big City), published a long feature, "Why is Everything the Way It Is? Scientists Answer 15 Eternal Russian Questions." Bolshoi Gorod is an intellectual magazine that writes on Moscow's lifestyle and major trends. With an 81,500 circulation, it is a partner with such opposition-leaning media outlets as Slon.ru (Elephant) and TV Dozhd (Rain). This particular feature consists of 15 questions and individual responses from different experts.

The accompanying excerpts show an amazingly candid discussion within the Russian middle class. The 15 questions include: "Why do we love so much to look for enemies?"; "Why is the idea of a 'special path' so popular among us?"; "Why can't we fix corruption?"; "Why do [caregivers] in Russia yell at children?"; "Why do people always blame the authorities but make excuses for the main ruler?"; and "Why is everyone rude?" These questions go to the heart of Russia's current political, social, and cultural problems. Such an honest and open discussion about them in print is significant.

Equally candid are the responses. For example, answering the question about Russia's "special path," sociologist Alexei Levinson says that when comparing Russia to the West—Russia's chosen ideal—Russia loses "hopelessly." That, he says, is painful and upsetting. "[a]nd we want to make it so that it is not upsetting."

To give another example, in response to the question about looking for external enemies, teacher-psychologist Lyudmila Petranovskaya attributes this to a famous psychological response, projection, i.e., looking for external enemies when an internal problem is too intolerable to admit and accept. Projection, she says, could also be based on simple personal interest, "[f]or example, if you steal in your country, you need to somehow



Source: Ivan Zuev, "Почему все так? Ученые отвечают на 15 вечных русских вопросов. (Why is Everything the Way it is? Scientists Answer 15 Eternal Russian Questions) Bolshoi Gorod (Big City), No. 315, 27 February 2013 <http://bg.ru/magazine/2013/3/>

Why is Everything the Way it is? Scientists Answer 15 Eternal Russian Questions

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[Question] 2. Why is the idea of a "special path" so popular among us?

The West can't tell us what to do. The East—also; Russia has its own pride and its own ways of resolving almost any problem, up to problems of city traffic jams. How did this logic originate and what does it lead to?

Alexei Levinson

Sociologist

"If we look at ourselves from an external point of view, that is, compare ourselves with an example, which we chose for ourselves in the form of the West, we hopeless lose on many points. We realize this, and it is painful and upsetting. And we want to make it so that it is not upsetting. To announce, that we will outdo you [the West] as it was said during Khurshchev, is silly. Then we simply need to say, "We're not going along this path, you can't compare us, we are going alone." "And where?" – "We won't tell you, we have our own special path." It is interesting, that all Levada Center attempts to find out, what does this "special path" entail, have fallen through—there is no answer. Is it impolite to ask, what is the "special path": a special path is a special bath. And you shouldn't talk about it."

...[question] 4. Why do we love so much to look for enemies?

Politics all over the world use the image of an external enemy, but why particularly in Russia do they love so much to explain all failures with external enemies, and why is the enemy almost always the West?

(continued)

Continued: What Answers from Russian Experts Mean For Future of Russian Society

explain this to the people, why given the enormous volumes of oil dollars people still live in barracks and why there are no normal roads.”

These expert comments confirm a kind of Russian “awakening,” and frustration with Russia’s status quo, which many experts have noted since the December 2011 parliamentary elections that led to massive protests in Russia. The demonstrators were primarily urban middle class and protested against Russian President Vladimir Putin and his United Russia Party. They stand in contrast to the rural lower class, Putin’s support base.

The split within the Russian society between these two groups is important. Prominent expert Lilia Shevtsova, senior associate with the Carnegie Endowment’s Moscow office, observed in February 2012, on the eve of Russia’s presidential election, “Never before has Putin taken the desperate step of stirring up confrontation in society under the slogan ‘Russia against Moscow.’”¹

*Bolshoi Gorod, reportedly, will be closing down, joining a large number of independent media that have recently closed down or fired prominent journalists to prove loyalty to the Kremlin.² Yet the social debate on such core issues as the ones discussed in this article is unlikely to go away—it is too much out in the open now. The fissure between the elite and the lower class in Russia over issues such as the ones discussed in Bolshoi Gorod may soon reach the tipping point. **End OE Watch Commentary (Borshchevskaya)***

Viktor Zhivov

Philologist

“This idea itself is interesting, the juxtaposition of Russia and the West, which, of course, for Russia is very important. The Germans don’t have the juxtaposition of Russia and the West. It could’ve been there, but there isn’t one. And moreover, Poland doesn’t have it. Of course, you could say, that the Germans—it is also the West, but that is also relative. In Russia, I think, this is connected with a whole host of historical reasons—first of all on the special from the Western world religious basis: they have heretics-Catholics, and we have true Orthodox Christians. Then all of this is reprocessed and reinterpreted.

Today’s xenophobia and anti-Western emotions, are partly supported by the current administration—part reaction to the 1990’s, when the West was seen as an ideal, which we will transfer to ourselves and will begin to live well. But we didn’t begin to live well. And it is their fault. Oscar Wilde wrote about Caliban, who hates the mirror for seeing himself in it, and hates the mirror for not seeing himself in it.”

Mikhail Yampolskiy

Historian, art theoretician, professor of New York University on comparative literature and Russian and Slavic research

“There is not special national particularity. This traditional method of mass mobilization ... can be found in the US and in Nazi Germany, and in Muslim monarchies, and in many other countries. Influential German lawyer and political scientist Karl Schmitt believed, that the creation of an enemy figure lies in the basis of any politics. In Russia, however, this strategy has a wider circulation than in democratic countries. When it is chronically impossible to build a normal democratic community, the politics of mobilization and enemy creation is made a priority.”

...

Lyudmila Petranovskaya

Teacher-psychologist, specialist on family law

“ This is a very famous psychological mechanism—projection. When you for a different reasons cannot accept something within yourself: because you are ashamed or because you are afraid that you will be rejected if you won’t be perfect. Acceptance of your problem is so intolerable (because there is no feeling behind it of your own self worth, your personality, your right to be the way you are), that you begin to put out these problem externally or concentrate all of this internally in the form of a scapegoat.

But the use of projection can also be based on motives based on personal gain. For example, if you steal in your country, you need to somehow explain this to the people, why given the enormous volumes of oil dollars people still live in barracks and why there no normal roads. It is logical that you need to invent some internal or external enemies, who rock the boat and throw meteorites.”

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1. Vladimir Isachenkov, “Putin campaign focuses on working classes,” Guardian, February 3, 2012 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/feedarticle/10075648>
2. Masha Gessen, “All Politics is Economic,” The New York Times blog, April 15, 2013 <http://latitude.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/04/15/how-politics-controls-russias-media-business/>

“DOSAAF dates from the Soviet period and was designed to instill patriotism, sports, and physical fitness in youth of the USSR. It also had the important mission of familiarizing the younger generation with basic military skills, such as weapon maintenance, driving and parachute jumping.”

OE Watch Commentary: The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) recently conducted a poll on its website (www.mil.ru), where it asked respondents if they thought that there was adequate patriotic education for Russian youth today. Over 90% responded negatively. Given the likely audience for such a poll (personnel interested in the Russian military), these results are not surprising, and they certainly help support moves to increase the visibility and popularity of the Voluntary Society for Promotion of the Army, Air Force, and Navy (DOSAAF).

DOSAAF dates from the Soviet period and was designed to instill patriotism, sports, and physical fitness in youth of the USSR. It also had the important mission of familiarizing the younger generation with basic military skills, such as weapon maintenance, driving and parachute jumping. The organization fell into disarray with the collapse of the USSR, but has regained some of its prominence over the past few years. In the brief excerpt from the accompanying interview, the head of DOSAAF describes some of the scope of the organization and future plans, to include possibly training DOSAAF members to help fight forest fires.

The website for this organization (<http://www.dosaaf.ru/>) reveals more detailed information about the overall size (more than 500 branches, where they helped to train more than 140,000 students in 13 different military skills and nearly 560,000 in 147 civilian occupations). Website visitors can also peruse the primary DOSAAF publication, *Федеральный Патриотический Вестник* (Federal Patriotic Bulletin), where they can read about past military exploits, among other patriotic themes.

DOSAAF emblem, via ru.wikipedia.org/



Source: Sergey Garifullin, “DOSAAF: Updated Soviet ‘Cropdusters’ Will Take off Again,” RIA Novosti Online, 18 March 2013.

DOSAAF Chairman Mayev Interviewed on Organization’s Past Activities, Current Tasks

[DOSAAF] Organization Chairman Colonel-General (Retired) Sergey Mayev told what the likelihood is that the training of specialists capable of coping with the newest Armed Forces equipment will rest on the shoulders of DOSAAF and why legendary “cropdusters” [“kukuruzniki”] will take off again.

RF Vice Prime Minister Dmitriy Rogozin believes the RF Armed Forces reform begun back in 2008 must change Russia completely. Along with the resolution of servicemen’s social problems and restructuring of the Armed Forces, the important thing today is the rearming process and delivery of the newest models of military equipment.

A question certainly arises in this connection: Who will control this equipment and who will train specialists for it? Back in USSR times young boys and girls could receive basic military-technical education in the Voluntary Society for Promotion of the Army, Air Force, and Navy (DOSAAF), which “cranked out” millions of specialists for the Armed Forces.

Today as well, DOSAAF trains around 100,000 potential tank drivers, pilots, and riflemen for the RF Defense Ministry annually.

[RN] Sergey Aleksandrovich, how many centers of military-patriotic indoctrination based on DOSAAF function today? Is it possible to establish such centers in each RF component in the next few years?

[Mayev] As of today there are 47 centers for military-patriotic indoctrination and training of citizens for military service in Russia’s eight federal districts. It is worth noting that 25 such centers have been established based on DOSAAF. Naturally no one canceled the task of creating new centers -- it has been spelled out in a number of RF government documents. Therefore in answering your question I will note that having DOSAAF centers in each RF component is not utopia, but it is the goal we strive for according to plan.

(continued)

Continued: Patriotic Education-DOSAAF

One of the more intriguing articles in this publication was a series of interviews last year with Russian Duma Representative Evgeniy Fyodorov (Issues #5-8, 2012). In this detailed interview (<http://efedorov.ru/>) Fyodorov lays out his vision of Russia in the world today.¹ Suffice it to say that one might expect to find this type of commentary in one of Russia's many far-right fringe publications. He explains how the US is intent upon dividing up Russia and subjugating the people to Washington's diktat. According to this prominent Duma deputy, Russia today is "occupied" by the US, just as Poland was occupied by the USSR during the Cold War. Although Fyodorov is a member of the ruling United Russia Party, his philosophy can hardly be labeled as "Kremlin-friendly."

*Instilling a sense of patriotism and providing Russian youth with the essential skills they need to excel are noble goals for the DOSAAF organization. Equally important is providing young minds with material which is based upon a modicum of truth. **End OE Watch Commentary (Finch)***

1. A more detailed analysis of Fyodorov's interview will be published as a Special Essay in a future issue of the OEW.

[RN] How is DOSAAF funded?

[Mayev] The revenue side of the DOSAAF centralized budget is formed based on federal subsidies from the RF Defense Ministry, RF Ministry of Education and Science, and Minsport [Ministry of Physical Culture, Sport, and Tourism]. The Defense Society also profits from business activity: leasing of real property of the RF DOSAAF Central Council and revenue from the targeted monetary fund for Society development. We receive mandatory deductions from regions and organizations of central subordination as well as from business activities of aviation organizations.

It also is pertinent in this context to tell about the expenditure category of the DOSAAF budget. We allocate funds for a number of programs connected with training RF citizens in military occupational specialties, we train specialists of mass technical trades (SMTP), we purchase equipment, we invest funds in the development of military-patriotic indoctrination and sport, and we purchase motor vehicles each year for training SMTP.

DOSAAF finances aviation sports organizations and performs major overhaul and routine repairs of property....

...[RN] Back when he was governor of Podmoskovye, Sergey Shoygu visited the DOSAAF aircraft repair plant where they previously made the An-2 in suburban Moscow's Balashikha and ordered renewal of "cropduster" production. At what stage now is the process of "reincarnating" the legendary Soviet aircraft?

[Mayev] In the engine replacement stage. The Novosibirsk SibNIA [Siberian Scientific Research Institute of Aviation] imeni Chaplygin developed a program for modifying An-2 aircraft. Modernization of this aircraft presumes replacement of the old engine for the American Honeywell engine. Engines for small aviation are practically no longer made in Russia today, so it is necessary to resort to the help of foreign companies. Installation of this engine will permit substantially increasing the aircraft's performance characteristics....

...[RN] Last year Prime Minister Medvedev supported Rogozin's idea of involving DOSAAF in fighting forest fires. Will your organization be used in fighting fires in the current year?

[Mayev] RF DOSAAF currently is holding talks with the RF Ministry of Natural Resources on using Defense Society aircraft for patrolling forests from the air. It is assumed that the organization will perform a number of aerial forest protection assignments in regions of the Urals, Siberia, and the Far East. An-2 and L-410 aircraft as well as Mi-2 helicopters will be used for these purposes. According to our estimate, a total of more than 100 DOSAAF aircraft and helicopters will be used in fighting forest fires this year.

“Prior to the 1917 Revolution the Semenovskiy and Preobrazhenskiy Regiments were two of the most distinguished units within the tsarist military, and it is understandable why the Russian leadership desires to revive these honorable titles.”

OE Watch Commentary: Russia has a long and rich military tradition. For centuries the Russian military has played a key role in the development and defense of the Russian state. Last year, for example, Russians celebrated the 200th anniversary of their victory over Napoleon with multiple commemorations. On 9 May the country will observe the 68th anniversary of their equally impressive defeat over the Nazis with their traditional military parade in Red Square. Given the military's key role in the preservation of the state, it is not surprising that Russian leaders often draw upon this history to rekindle pride in their country.

In December 2012 President Putin indicated that the honorific titles of Semenovskiy and Preobrazhenskiy would again be conferred upon modern Russian military units (these tsarist titles were abolished during the Soviet period). Prior to the 1917 Revolution the Semenovskiy and Preobrazhenskiy Regiments were two of the most distinguished units within the tsarist military, and it is understandable why the Russian leadership desires to revive these honorable titles. The military exploits of Russia's past can inspire today's soldier.

As the excerpt from the article points out, bestowing this honorific title of Preobrazhenskiy upon the 154th Separate Commandant's Regiment, responsible for Kremlin military ceremonies, seems appropriate. This unit serves as the Kremlin's honor guard, symbolizing the military's discipline and excellence for a public audience. The article, however, questions the propriety of conferring the Semenovskiy title upon the recently formed 130th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade (OMSBR), stationed also in Moscow.



Painting of Tsar Nicholas II in the Preobrazhenskiy uniform via <http://www.polit.ru>

Source: Konstantin Bogdanov, “New Semenovskiy and Preobrazhenskiy Men -- Honor Guard and Military Police,” RIA Novosti Online, 27 March 2013.

Commentary Questions Choice of Regiments to Revive Honorific Titles

The desire to restore the continuity of the Life Guard of the Russian Empire is logical, it seems, but the involvement of police units for this purpose raises questions.

The Preobrazhenskiy and Semenovskiy Regiments are to be revived in Russia. The subunits on which these honorific titles will be conferred have already been chosen. And it is this choice that is prompting a great many questions.

“The regiments on which the honorific titles of Semenovskiy and Preobrazhenskiy will be conferred can march at the 9 May Victory Parade under their new names,” RIA Novosti was told by Anton Goncharov, official Russian Federation Defense Ministry spokesman for the Ground Forces.

It is proposed that the roles of the new Preobrazhenskiy and Semenovskiy Life Guards be performed by, respectively, the 154th Separate Commandant's Regiment (abbreviation -- OKP) and the 130th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade (OMSBR).

As far as the 154th OKP is concerned, everything is more or less clear: It includes the capital's commandant's battalions as well as an honor guard battalion. A subunit that is, on the one hand, for maintaining order, and on the other hand, ceremonial. And it has history: It was created as a regiment in 1979 but the honor guard company that became part of it was formed

(continued)

Continued: Resurrecting Honorary Titles

*Earlier reports indicated that the 130th OMSBR was to serve as the nucleus for the development of a Military Police within the Army, and, as the article suggests, to assign this title to a newly-formed unit appears rather arbitrary. The author goes on to describe the ambiguous role which palace guards have played in Russian history, and the many different elite units now serving in Moscow. (That this critical article was published by Russia's official news agency also indicates that Kremlin control over the national press might be exaggerated.) Assigning this title may instill pride within this new brigade, but, as the author indicates, may also cause resentment and/or confusion among other decorated units and historians. **End OE Watch Commentary (Finch)***

as long ago as 1944.

But the history of the 130th OMSBR from Sokolniki in Moscow is extremely interesting. Its creation began early in 2012, when it was stated that this special unit will come under the military police force that is being formed. The brigade's manning levels and its range of arms and equipment, which have been leaked to the Internet, show that we are looking at a kind of "light motorized riflemen" (without artillery or other reinforcements) supplemented by special subunits (from information and propaganda subunits to divers).

The brigade is basically designed to perform combat operations within the city limits. That is, to combat an armed rebellion or conduct counterterrorist operations in the capital.

The method of restoring continuity with the Imperial Life Guard by conferring the historic names on pure guard subunits designed for protecting the capital is not without logic, but it prompts certain questions.

On the one hand, what is a Guard if it is not a militarized subunit loyal to the ruler that safeguards the stability of the throne and suppresses military putsches in the capital? But the regiments of the Russian Life Guard, generally speaking, despite the fact that they were assigned to the palace, remained well-trained combat subunits and regularly took part in wars.

Furthermore -- let us look at the Russian history of military coups. Interestingly, it has no examples of successful putsches unless you count the 1917 October uprising (when the state was, de facto, already absent).

However, the history of "chamber" palace coups in Russia is extremely rich -- but experience shows that if anything can help against these, it is certainly not the guards (rather the contrary).

So on the one hand there is, it would seem, a certain logic in establishing direct continuity -- over the heads of the Soviet Guard -- with the Romanovs' Life Guard through military police subunits. Ultimately, what is the 130th OMSBR if it is not a distant counterpart of various kinds of "presidential" and "republican" guards in Third World countries?

Their main task (as security agencies that run parallel to the Army) also includes the protection of the head of state against coups and military putsches. But in Russia there are plenty of "parallel militaries" anyway: There are the operations formations of the MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] Internal Troops, the FSB [Federal Security Service] border guards, and various kinds of special-purpose subunits belonging to the FSB, the FSO [Federal Protection Service], the SVR [Foreign Intelligence Service], Gosnarkontrol [Federal Service for Control Over the Trafficking of Narcotics], and the Emergencies Ministry.

On the other hand, taking into account the traditions of the Life Guard and the traditions of the Soviet (and also post-Soviet) period, the heirs of the Kantemir and Taman Divisions (now the 4th Guards Kantemir OTBR [Separate Tank Brigade] and the 5th Guards Taman OMSBR respectively), those unfailing participants in the capital's events of 1991 and 1993, might perhaps be more suitable. To say nothing of the heirs of other of Red Army combat formations that won fame on the battlefields of the Great Patriotic War.

In principle the continuity of the present Russian Army with the Soviet Army that ended the Great Patriotic War is the only link that can be traced at least to some extent in our day. And it is obvious that there is no reliable method of restoring continuity with the Russian Imperial Army and the Life Guard, a continuity that was broken repeatedly after 1917.

Any such action will only engender postmodernist artifacts, and therefore it will be, to some degree, a profanation. Therefore, given the existence of a decision that has already been adopted to restore the link with the Imperial Guard, it is necessary to proceed on the basis of extremely meager possibilities.

But even with all these reservations, the decision to confer the resonant names of the first regiments of the Russian Empire (with more than 200 years of uninterrupted combat tradition) on a military police formation that is only just being recruited and a commandant's-ceremonial regiment, however brilliant it may be, is more likely to leave perplexing questions than to fill us with a sense of the unbroken, integral history of the Fatherland.

“Given the rising cost of higher education and the traditional appeal of a military education, Russian defense officials are predicting a high level of competition to secure an academy billet.”

OE Watch Commentary: *After a massive reorganization and a two-year delay, Russia’s remaining military academies will again be accepting new cadets this autumn. In September 2013 over 15,000 graduating high school students will now begin their military careers as cadets. After consolidation and reorganization, the number of military academies was reduced from over 60 to just over a dozen, and now aligns with actual new officer accessions necessary for the smaller Russian military.*

Recognizing that Russian youth are increasingly Internet savvy, the Russian Ministry of Defense has updated its website (www.mil.ru), and now includes a special section devoted to those young Russians who might be interested in pursuing education at a military academy (see link labeled ‘Abityrienty-2013’). As the excerpt from the accompanying article points out, the new website contains entry information for each of the academies, eligibility requirements, and selection criteria. Of special note, the website provides detailed information regarding the term of obligatory service (five years) upon completion of cadet training.

This new cadet enrollment differs from the training initiative described in last month’s OEW (University Student-Soldier Training), whereby students enroll in an ROTC-like program. This pilot program is separate from the military academies and is designed to provide partial military training to students enrolled in a normal university. According to a recent press report, in the fall of 2013 approximately 2,400 students at 27 universities will be accessed into this program.

Given the rising cost of higher education and the traditional appeal of a military education, Russian defense officials are predicting a high level of competition to secure an academy billet. Paradoxically, after reforming the military education system and limiting opportunities to become an officer, the Russian military has become a more attractive option for young Russians. End OE Watch Commentary (Finch)

Source: “For a 2013 High School Graduate,” Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, 27 March 2013. www.mil.ru

New Website Link at the Defense Ministry’s Website for Aspiring Cadets

This year, for the purpose of the military specialist training, the Russian Defense Ministry plans to organize the enrollment of more than 15,700 cadets into the military institutions of higher education to train them in the programs of the higher professional education (officer corps training,) and the medium-level professional education (sergeant training for the contract military service.)

On September 1st, eleven military academies, one military university, and their structural branches in various regions of the country will open their doors to train the citizens who have chosen the profession of a military serviceman. At that, the Military Communications Academy and the Military Institute (of physical education) of the Military Medical Academy provides for the enrollment of the females.

In the area “For a 2013 High School Graduate” on the Defense Ministry’s web site, the enrollment rules for the leading Russia’s military institutions of higher education for the school year 2013-2014 and the methodological recommendations for the aspiring students have been posted.

The visitors to the Russian Defense Ministry’s website will be able to review the list of the professional specializations offered by the institutions of higher education, the requirements for the high school graduates, the regulations of how the candidates are being selected to be admitted to the institutions of higher education, the members of the admission commissions, and the main areas of their activities; they will also be able to find here other information they might need.

The contact telephone numbers for the admission commissions of the institutions of higher education are also provided in the area “For a 2013 High School Graduate” where the competent specialists are will be able to provide exhaustive answers to the questions by the future high school graduates and their parents.



Young Russian Cadet (Photo courtesy of Andrey Svinchukov, via <http://www.goslyudi.ru>)

Russia Buys Production Rights for Ukrainian Transport Planes

27 March 2013

“In fact, some experts believe that Russian plans to modernize Ukrainian airplanes without Ukraine’s participation are evidence of a direct attack against Ukrainian aircraft construction industry.”

OE Watch Commentary: Exerting influence over the operations of Kyiv aircraft plant Construction Bureau (CB) Antonov has been a long-term goal of Russia because CB Antonov is one of the two fully functional plants on the post-Soviet territory in which the entire chain of aircraft development and production can be found under a single roof. While the other similar plant, CB Sukhoy, is capable of producing military airplanes, CB Antonov produces military, cargo, and passenger aircraft. Thus, CB Antonov is strategically important to Russia. The excerpt from the accompanying article discusses the recent agreement between the Samara aircraft plant Aviakor and CB Antonov for the transfer of intellectual property rights relating to the transport versions of passenger aircrafts AN-140S and AN-140T. This means that Aviakor will obtain proprietary maintenance rights for these aircraft, to extend its resources, and to alter the design without the Antonov design bureau’s involvement. These aircraft will replace the Russian Air Force’s AN-24 and AN-26 – the light military transport planes of which the Russian military owns around 300. A contract with CB Antonov will enable the Russian Air Force to buy AN-140s from a Russian company, thus bypassing Ukraine. It will also allow Russia to build a fleet of domestic aircraft.

Earlier, Russian Aviakor had complained about having to deal with the Ukrainian design bureau, which owned the relevant intellectual property and proprietary inspection rights, in order to eliminate defects discovered while using AN-140 aircraft purchased from CB Antonov. Aviakor was dissatisfied with the lengthy procedures and the nuisance of having to wait for Ukrainian approval before making alterations to the plane’s design. With the transfer of intellectual property rights to Russian Aviakor, which cost Russia several hundreds of millions of dollars, the situation



Russian An-140-100 passenger plane, via <http://www.militarybox.cz/news/rusko-odkoupilo-prava-na-ukrajinske-letouny-an-140t-a-an-140s/>

Source: Aleksey Mikhaylov, “Russia Is Purchasing the Rights to the Ukrainian An-140T Airplane. The Air Force Will Not Have To Depend on Foreign Suppliers,” *Izvestiya Online*, 27 March 2013.

Russia Buys Production Rights To Produce Ukrainian Transport Planes

The Samara aircraft plant Aviakor has signed an agreement with Antonov, the Ukrainian State concern, for the transfer of intellectual property rights to the An-140S and An-140T aircraft. These are transport versions of the An-140-100 passenger plane that Aviakor produces for the Defense Ministry.

A defense industry complex source who participated in the document signings has informed *Izvestiya* that such a contract will enable the Russian Air Force to buy the An-140 from a Russian company, and not from the Ukrainians. This means that the military will not be dependent on the political situation.

Before the agreement was signed, the Russian Air Force had been unable to build a fleet of, essentially, foreign aircraft. But now such an opportunity has arisen, since the aircraft will be totally Russian, the *Izvestiya* informant explained.

Aviation expert Anton Lavrov explained to us that this deal is unprecedented for Russia’s aviation industry. “This practice is widespread internationally – the Chinese purchased all the intellectual property rights to the ARJ-21 medium-haul passenger aircraft, which was developed jointly with the Antonov design bureau. But in Russia such deals with foreign companies, especially including the purchase of all rights to a “turnkey aircraft,” are occurring for the first time,” Lavrov explained.

The An-140S is a version of a plane with a large loading/unloading hatch, while the An-140T is equipped with a ramp (a descending cargo hatch in the plane’s tail section), which is necessary for offloading cargoes and equipment. At the negotiations, which were held 11 Feb 2013 in Samara, a protocol was signed that will regulate the organization of the work involved in creating these aircraft.

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Continued: Russia Buys Production Rights for Ukrainian Transport Planes

has changed. The main benefit of this deal is that it gives Russia full control over the purchase of aircraft from a Russian company (Aviakor), thus assuring independence from political factors arising from dealing with foreign corporations. Aviation expert Anton Lavrov, cited in the excerpt from the accompanying article, said that it is a common practice for other countries such as China to purchase property rights over foreign airplanes; however, this is the first time Russia has made such an agreement with a foreign company.

Collaboration in the airplane construction industry has thus been used by Russia to further its political agenda. For example, Mikhail Zubarov, the Russian ambassador to Ukraine, recently announced that Russia is ending its collaboration with Ukraine to produce AN-70 military and cargo aircraft. The status of projects related to the modernization of AN-140 and AN-124 fleets is currently in question as well. In fact, some experts believe that Russian plans to modernize Ukrainian airplanes without Ukraine's participation are evidence of a direct attack against the Ukrainian aircraft construction industry. This may be intended to pressure Ukraine into joining the Russian-dominated Customs Union, which would jeopardize Ukraine's participation in the World Trade Organization.

*There are no legal barriers excluding Ukraine from modernizing its fleet now that Russia owns the intellectual property rights to several Ukrainian aircraft. However, Russia may lack the expertise to conduct its own modernization, and may therefore attempt to outsource Ukrainian engineers and experts. Although this situation has obvious negative consequences for Ukraine, it also has the potential to open up additional opportunities for Ukraine's collaboration with the West and South-East Asia. Ukraine would be forced to search for partners other than Russia to ensure the long-term sustainability of its strategically important aircraft building industry. **End OE Watch Commentary (Moldavanova)***

The Aviakor plant is allocating the necessary funds for completing the An-140T aircraft's development and production. After that the Antonov design bureau will transfer to Aviakor all the intellectual property rights resulting from the work done. The aircraft will receive a supplementary MAK [Russia's Interstate Aviation Committee] certificate, and the Samara plant will commence its serial manufacture, the defense industry complex spokesman explained.

According to him, once the An-140T's production has begun, Aviakor will obtain the right to proprietary maintenance of the aircraft, to extend the resources, and to alter the design without the Antonov design bureau's involvement. The contract's value is several hundred millions of dollars, [but] the Izvestiya source did not specify the exact sum, referring to commercial secrecy...

...The Antonov design bureau confirmed to Izvestiya the contract's approximate value as stated by the source, but explained that the final price of the rights to the An-140 had not yet been fixed.

"The contract's value and terms have not been agreed. The next round of talks will take place in May this year," the Antonov design bureau's spokesman said.

The Russian Air Force explained to us that, with the benefit of having purchased the rights to the An-140T, Aviakor is attempting to win an order for a light military transport plane to replace the Air Force's obsolete An-24 and An-26, of which the military owns around 300.

"We have declined to buy An-140 passenger planes since, in order to eliminate defects that were discovered in the course of its use, Aviakor had to apply to the Antonov design bureau, as the owner of its intellectual property and proprietary inspection rights. It was only after the Ukrainians gave their approval that Aviakor made an alteration to the design. But some defects, in particular in the onboard equipment, have still not been rectified. Such a lengthy procedure did not suit us," an Air Force High Command officer said.

According to our informant, the demand for a light transport aircraft is very strong, and not only in the Air force, but also throughout the Defense Ministry.

"We currently have two options for replacing the old An-24's and An-26's – they are the An-140T and the Il-112V. The Il-112V exists only on paper, but it has been made by Russia's Ilyushin company. But the An-140, although lacking a ramp, does already exist for real. Therefore, by virtue of having bought the rights to the An-140T, Aviakor will have eliminated this machine's main drawback – its foreign provenance," the Air Force spokesman explained.

The An-140 was developed in 1997 as a regional turboprop passenger plane to replace the An-24. It can carry up to 54 passengers. The production of these planes is licensed by Antonov in three countries simultaneously – Ukraine, Russia, and Iran. In addition, there exists an agreement for the An-140-100's assembly in Kazakhstan.

SPECIAL ESSAY By Ivan Welch

The views expressed are those of the author and do not represent the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. government.

Bangsamoro Islamic Insurgents, via anuncomplicatedmind.blogspot.com

"Islamic Insurgency in the Philippines: **Bangsamoro**"

The Islamic Liberation Movement in the Philippines has origins that precede the US possession and colonial rule. Today, "Bangsamoro Liberation" has more than one face and remains a complex and pressing concern for the government of the Philippines and the US as a defense partner. Understanding the current players and their attitudes toward the US are critical for building a basic understanding of the current geopolitical situation in Southeast Asia.

Islamic Insurgency in the Philippines: Bangsamoro

On 11 June 1926 a bill was introduced into the 69th session of the US Congress "To create within the Philippine Archipelago a jurisdiction to be known as the Moro Province,..." This political sentiment never passed into law; nevertheless, it is a milestone along the historic road of US involvement in the ongoing struggle for "Bangsamoro." To understand the ethnic and political dynamics of the contemporary situation, some background is required.

Historical Overview

At least as early as the 12th century, Islamic traders came to the scattered islands that now include the nations of Malaysia, Indonesia, the Sultanate of Brunei, and the Philippines. The Islamic faith spread among several indigenous clans, tribes, and nascent sultanates, providing an ideological bond and common way of life. By the time the first Spanish colonial expedition arrived in 1565, several sultanates thriving on the islands of Sulu, Mindanao and Luzon. The Spanish called these Islamic people "moro" after the Moors of North Africa, with whom they had fought for centuries. A new struggle ensued between the Spanish colonial forces and the "Moro" people that was to last for over three centuries. This conflict was inherited by the United States in 1898 after winning the Spanish-American War.



Map indicating the island groups of the Philippines, via <http://en.wikipedia.org>



The red area represents the historic Moro province 1903 - 1913, via http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moro_Province

The centuries-old struggle of the Islamic people of the Republic of the Philippines continues to this day. Since the first United States military government in 1898, scores of treaties, accords, peace agreements, administrative reorganizations, and interim solutions litter the long path of negotiations seeking to integrate the various peoples of the Philippine archipelago. Philippine independence from the United States in 1946 simple shifted the issue of autonomous "Moro Lands" to the fledgling government of the Philippines. "Bangsamoro" is the combination of the Old Malay word Bangsais, which means nation or people, with moros . It has become a political and legal term, used in the most recent Government of Philippines and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) accords. Thus, Bangsamoro includes a wide swath of people spread across Mindanao and other islands.

Continued: “Islamic Insurgency in the Philippines: Bangsamoro”

In the 1960s, mirroring “people’s” armed movements around the globe, a Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) emerged in the southern island of Mindanao. This was the start of a cascade of factions and fronts that would wage war in the name of Bangsamoro autonomy and independence. As the Government of the Philippines made progress with one main group, such as the MNLF, splinter groups would appear and carry on the armed struggle, e.g., the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), Bangsamoro Army (MNLF armed wing), Misuari Renegade Group (branch of the MNLF), and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). The MILF grew to become the primary armed and violent group as the MNLF sought to implement the 1996 agreement with the Government of the Philippines.

It is generally recognized that complex issues of corruption, patrimonial plunder, election fraud, and clan-based politics remain to be addressed. The decades-long process of talks is not to be criticized for its length, but rather commended for its continuity and incremental progress.

Timeline of Bangsamoro Events

1968	Governor Datu Udtog Matalam founded the Muslim Independent Movement
1972	Martial law declared by President Marcos.
1975	MNLF demands Independent Moro homeland.
1976	Tripoli Agreement between MNLF and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP).
1977	MILF emerges as a significant faction within the greater movement headed by the MNLF.
1989	Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao Region created.
1993	MILF takes a wait and see posture to ongoing GRP – MNLF talks.
1996	2 Sep 1996: MNLF and GRP sign peace negotiations. MILF is not satisfied with outcome.
1996	MILF approached GRP to begin additional talks.
1997	7 January: The GRP and MILF enter into official low-level talks regarding a settlement of Bangsamoro Problem.
2000	April – July: President Estrada’s “all-out war” against the MILF capturing all its fixed camps.
2001	Malaysia enters as a third-party facilitator for MILF and GRP talks, Tripoli Agreement of Peace signed.
2003	February: The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) “Buliok offensive” captures the MILF’s new headquarters.
2008	Supreme Court Over turns the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD) which had been signed by President Aquino. Violent attacks resume.
2012	15 October: MILF and the GRP sign an historic framework agreement.

The long struggle has always been centered on a holistic concept of independence and autonomy for all Bangsamoro. This includes recognition of traditional lands, cultural freedom, economic control, and political independence. With the October 2012 accord signed between the MILF and the Government of the Philippines, new hope emerges.

Bangsamoro views of the United States

The Global War on Terrorism brought the United States’ military to Mindanao in an operational mode in 2001. At that time the ASG was waging a successful campaign, “gaining international notoriety with spectacular kidnappings and the beheadings of hostages.” The mission of the US Joint Special Operations Force Task Force – Philippines (JSOTF-P) was (and remains) “to work together with the Armed Forces of the Philippines to fight terrorism and deliver humanitarian assistance to the people of Mindanao. ... in a strictly non-combat role to advise and assist the Armed Forces of the Philippines, share information, and to conduct joint civil military operations.”

There has long been a political undercurrent against US military presence in the Philippines. However, this has not generated widespread violence. In 2009 two special forces soldiers from JSOTF-P and a Philippine Marine counterpart were killed when their vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device (IED) on Jolo Island in Sulu. These were the first JSOTF-P casualties

2009 IED Attack



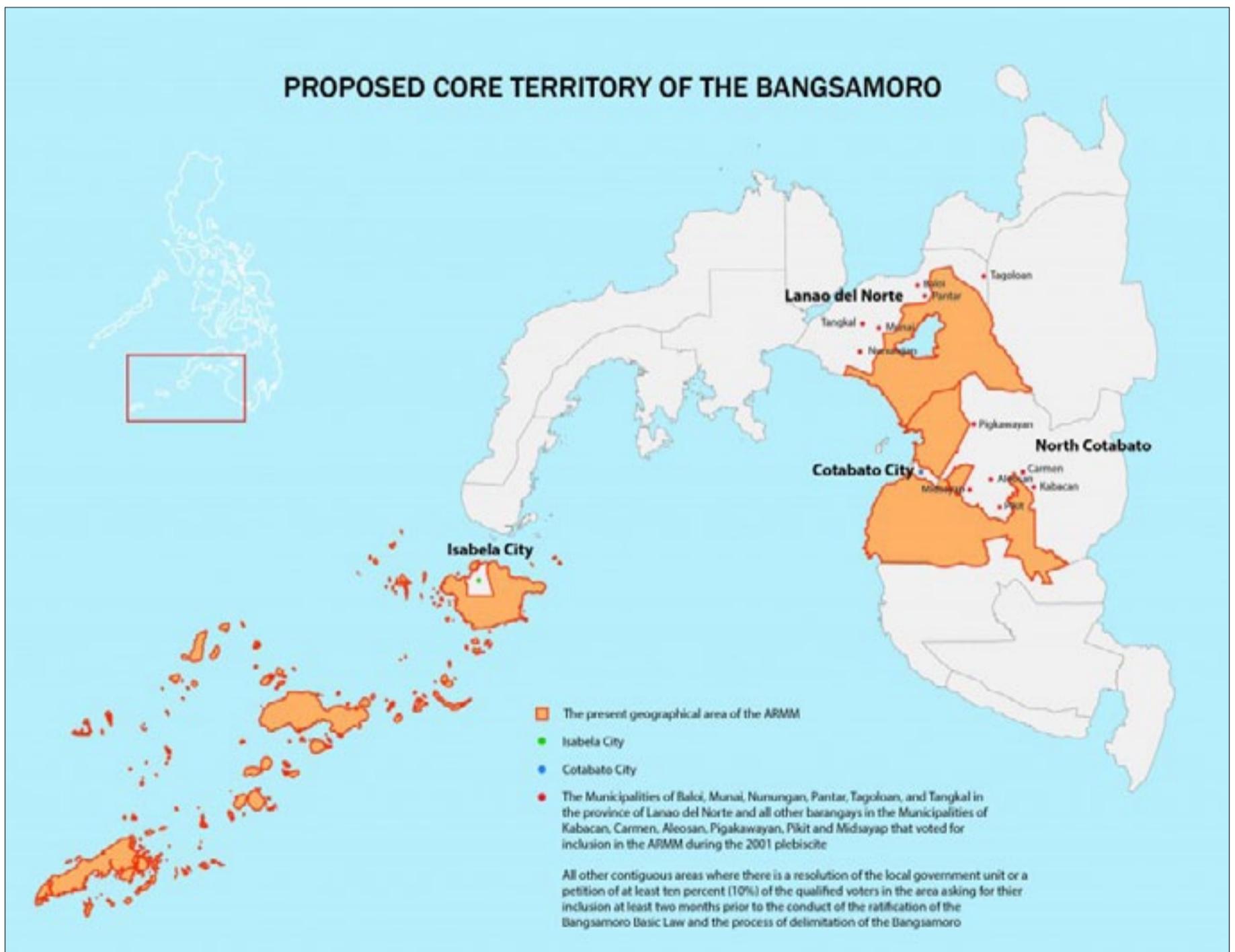
Continued: "Islamic Insurgency in the Philippines: Bangsamoro"

related to an action by insurgent or criminal groups. At that time a previously unknown group, self-identified as the Bangsamoro National Liberation Army (BNLA), took credit for the attack. The Philippine Army blamed this attack, along with other bombings in Sulu before and after the incident, on the ASG. Since claiming this attack on US forces the BNLA has not surfaced in the media again. Madarang Sali, its self-proclaimed spokesperson, was killed in November 2011 during an airstrike on an Abu Sayyaf camp by the Philippine military.

As the MILF moved toward an agreement with the Government of the Philippines in August 2012, a new splinter group called the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement or the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFM/BIFF) conducted attacks to show their dissatisfaction with the ongoing negotiations. This new group was mainly comprised of the long known 105th Base Command Defense headquarters, of the Central Mindanao MILF Front and is associated with a small area in Maguindanao. [There is no evidence of any association with the BNLA, which momentarily raised its head in the Sulu Islands in 2009.] The MILF spoke out against its rogue members, immediately after the attacks, on their website:



Linked Philippine Insurgent Groups of Interest



Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao Region - Bangsamoro Proposed Territory, via <http://www.gov.ph/the-2012-framework-agreement-on-the-bangsamoro/>

Continued: "Islamic Insurgency in the Philippines: Bangsamoro"

There is virtually no way to justify the military offensive of the so-called Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF). It is ill-timed during the Holy Month of Ramadan, which is a prohibited month for fighting (except when attacked). The rationale over the death of a boy in an ambush more than two months ago by combined Army and paramilitary forces, is narrow. It does not justify retaliation of that wide magnitude. It could have been avenged in the light of the Islamic prescription: "Eye for an eye, tooth for tooth but forgiveness is a better option." A call first for the payment of a blood money will surely strengthen their case against the perpetrator or the government, if they do not act on it. But emotion rather than wisdom is quicker in the draw and, hence, the current haywire in the central part of the province of Maguindanao.

The Philippine Army's 6th Infantry Division promptly conducted an offensive against the BIFF, capturing rebels and seizing two fortified camps. The operation resulted in some sixty deaths, with the Army reporting fifty rebels killed.

Current violent acts seem to be from rogue elements and criminal groups. The central MILF leadership continues to move its armed elements into positions of nonconfrontation and to conduct meetings with units to explain the continuing implementation of the current Government of the Philippines and Moro Islamic Liberation Front Framework Agreement.

Discussions of attitudes towards the US presence in the Philippines by splinter groups such as the BIFF are not readily available in open source media. General attitudes about US policy are also opaque at that level. The larger Moro Freedom movement organizations such as MDLF and MILF are currently focused on the political process with the government of the Philippines, and are most concerned about domestic relations and future regional rights.

Neither the MNLF nor the MILF have yet agreed to disarm, awaiting further developments in the peace agreements. Armed attacks from these groups and other splinter organizations remain a possibility.

