

Foreign Military Studies Office

OE WATCH

FOREIGN NEWS & PERSPECTIVES OF THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

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Russia, China

and the **New North Korean Leader**

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“The ideological, extremist and random policies that Turkey has followed in the last 20 months... have endangered Turkey's security and stability.”



OE Watch Commentary: Turkey's Syria policy is under fire and showing signs of change following the worst terrorist attack that the country has witnessed since the 2003 al Qaeda attacks in Istanbul. On 11 May twin car bomb attacks struck the town of Reyhanli, a city near the Turkish-Syrian border, where many Syrians have sought refuge, killing over 50 and injuring hundreds of Turkish citizens. This was the greatest damage to Turkish life related to the war in Syria since the crisis started. According to statements by Turkish officials, the perpetrators were connected to the Assad regime's intelligence agency, and had conducted the attack in response to Turkey's Syria policy.

The incident has ignited a heated debate in Turkey, with many claiming that the government's Syria policy is to blame for the attacks and the loss of many Turkish lives. As the accompanying passages from local commentators demonstrate, the prevailing impression is that the government's policy of arming and sheltering the opposition has made Turkey a party to the war, and that this was a huge strategic mistake. Many also criticize Turkey for following a sectarian

The site of one of the explosions after several explosions killed at least 50 people and injured dozens in Reyhanli, near Turkey's border with Syria., image sources via www.todayszaman.com, <http://www.firstpost.com>, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk>

Source: Kadri Gürsel, “Suriye politikasında değişim ne demektir? (What does change in the Syria policy mean?)” [Milliyet.com.tr](http://dunya.milliyet.com.tr/suriye-politikasinda-degisim-ne/dunya/ydetay/1711045/default.htm), 20 May 2013, <http://dunya.milliyet.com.tr/suriye-politikasinda-degisim-ne/dunya/ydetay/1711045/default.htm>

“The international community does not want Syria to turn into a place where jihadists and al Qaeda run free. Since a military solution is not an option, Turkey has no more reason to turn a blind eye to international jihadists, particularly the Nusra Front, to use Turkey's border areas as a base. This problematic policy has to change, and border security has to be established. Those in Ankara should remember that Turkey is a country with the rule of law.

Turkey's hitherto position that “the pre-condition for the search for any diplomatic or political solution must take place without Assad” was not realistic. Following his comments after his meeting at the White House, they are no longer applicable. Ankara now supports a diplomatic-political solution and transition phase that will start with Assad, but end without him...

What is expected of Turkey is to play a role as a constructive and peaceful actor. Turkey is unfortunately a party to the Syria conflict. It has alienated itself from all the minorities [in Syria] and created animosity. Under these circumstances, the most important role that Ankara can play is to convince the Sunni Islamist opposition, with which it is assumed to have a close relationship, to be part of a diplomatic-political solution. At this point, there is no point in saying that “We shouldn't allow Assad to buy more time.” The ideological, extremist and random policies that Turkey has followed in the last 20 months in the name of “not allowing Assad to buy more time” have, not only failed in preventing Assad from gaining more time, but have endangered Turkey's security and stability.”

(continued)

Continued: Terror Attacks and Turkey's Syria Policy

(pro-Sunni) policy -- a significant departure from Turkey's historically non-sectarian approach to the region. Another important criticism is of Turkey's policy of allowing elements of the jihadist Al Nusra Front to use the border areas as an operating base in fighting against regime forces. Critics claim that this has come back to haunt Turkey in the form of the Reyhanlı attack.

*The attack came shortly before Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan's visit to the U.S. to meet with President Obama. The widespread criticism following the attacks, coupled with Erdoğan's meeting with President Obama, appears to have contributed to a shift in Turkey's Syria policy. Many are pointing out that, following Erdoğan's U.S. visit, Turkey's Syria policy has softened in favor of diplomacy over other options. **End OE Watch Commentary (Kaya)***



Source: Soli Özel, "Reyhanlı'dan sonra Washington'dan önce (After Reyhanlı, before Washington)," Haberturk.com.tr, 15 May 2013, <http://www.haberturk.com/yazarlar/soli-ozel/844549-reyhanlidan-sonra-washingtondan-once>

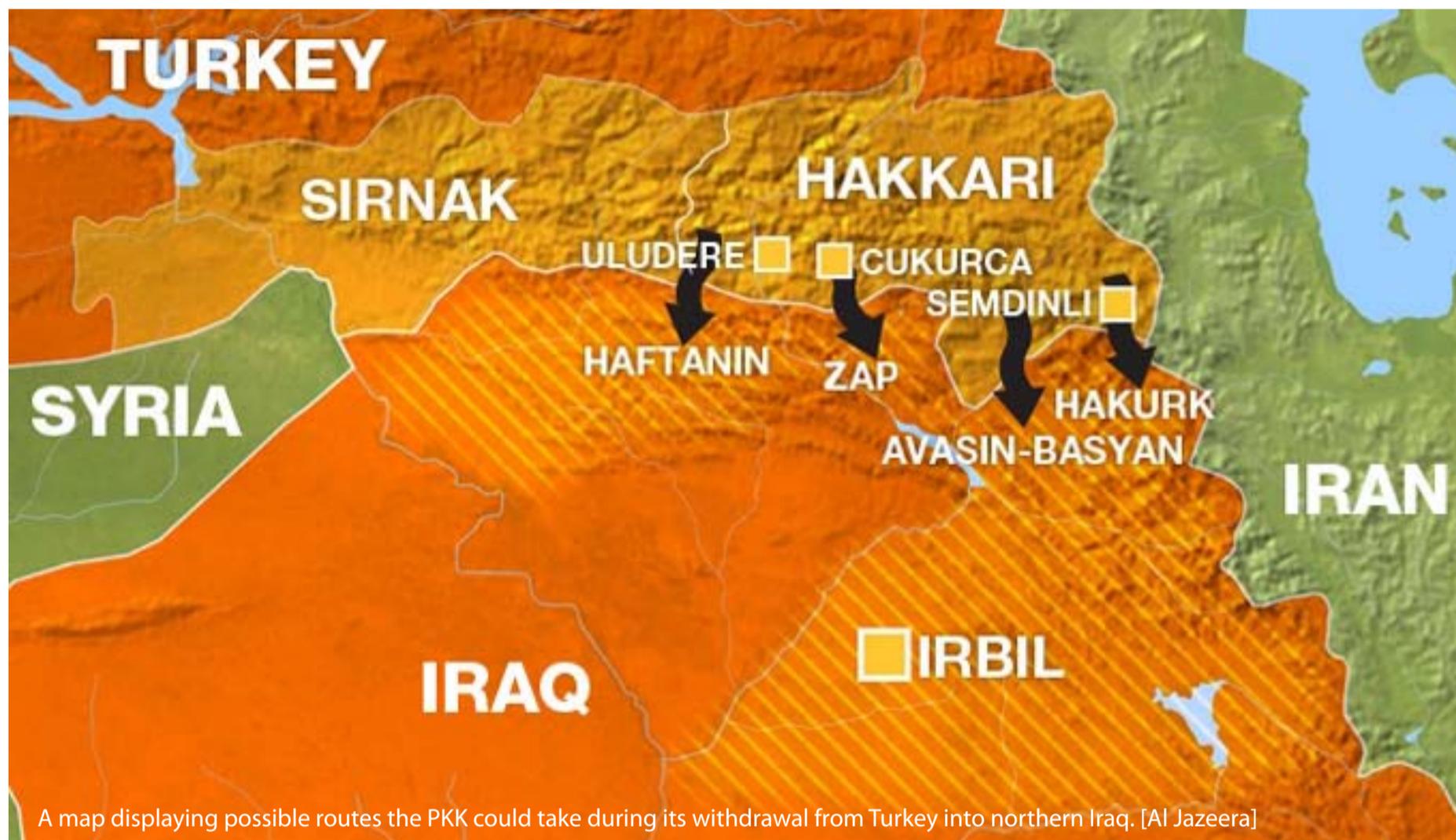
"It was obvious from the start that Turkey made many incorrect assessments... And that there would be a price for abandoning the [Turkish] Republic's [historically] non-sectarian attitude towards the region.

Moreover, we cannot evaluate the Reyhanlı [attacks] independent of the following facts: groups like the Nusra Front who have pledged allegiance to al Qaeda were protected; bomb-making laboratories were allowed to exist in Hatay; there were not enough security and intelligence measures at the border; and there has been an insistence on following a policy that is obviously headed towards a dead-end."

Source: Orhan Kemal Cengiz, "Suriye için özeleştirisi zamanı (Time for self-criticism on Syria)," Radikal.com.tr, 17 May 2013, http://www.radikal.com.tr/yazarlar/orhan_kemal_cengiz/suriye_icin_ozelestiri_zamani-1133790

"The civil war in Syria has turned into a sectarian war... the point we are at today is a bloody sectarian war which is sucking in the entire region. Even the reputable [International] Crisis Group is criticizing the Turkish government for reflecting a 'Sunni Muslim hegemonic country image' and is warning Turkey that the sectarian divide in Syria will eventually spill over and reach Turkey... The government needs to take a serious and self-critical look at its Syria policy."

“For Iran and the [central Iraqi] Maliki government, the elimination of Turkey’s PKK problem is a situation that weakens their hands and strengthens Turkey’s hand. Thus, the power balance works against Tehran and Baghdad.”



OE Watch Commentary: *The cease-fire and peace process between Turkey and the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) remains unnoticed in international coverage, despite its important implications for the Middle East. In Turkey, where the process is one of the most important agenda items, there is a lively debate on the issue.*

On 8 May militants from the PKK started withdrawing from Turkish territory and headed to the Iraqi Kurdish region as part of their deal with the Turkish government. The withdrawal will happen in stages, and an estimated 2500 PKK members are expected to leave Turkey by September. This marks the beginning of a long process, which, if successful, has game-changing implications for the Middle East, particularly for Syria, Iran, Iraq and Turkey.

For one, Iraq, Syria and Iran also have Kurdish populations and an interest in suppressing Kurdish separatism and violence.

Source: Ibrahim Karagül, “PKK’nın çekilmesi ve İran sabotajı (The PKK withdrawal and Iran’s sabotage),” *Yenisafak.com.tr*, 3 May 2013, <http://yenisafak.com.tr/yazarlar/IbrahimKaragul/pkknin-cekilmesi-ve-iran-sabotaji/37525>

“Changes are taking place that will have comprehensive and long-term effects and wreak havoc on Iran’s regional calculations. Turkey’s peace process is the most obvious one of these changes...The divisions and new relations in the region requires everyone to use their cards effectively. The PKK card is like that for Iran and it will not want to lose this card.”

Source: Ardan Zentürk, “Barış süreci: Bölge etkisi... (The peace process: Regional effects...),” *Stargazete.com.tr*, 6 May 2013, <http://haber.stargazete.com/yazar/baris-sureci-bolge-etkisi/yazi-751480>

“Why Iran is worried...”

1. Those armed PKK forces leaving Turkey might join the Party of Free Life of Kurdistan (PJAK), which is fighting for an Iranian Kurdistan, 2- These same PKK militants might join the Syrian Kurds and fight against Assad alongside the Free Syrian Army.

(continued)

Continued: Regional Implications of the PKK Withdrawal from Turkey

Each has, at times, found Kurdish terrorism to be a useful tool and bargaining chip to pressure the others. As one of the accompanying passages points out, now this “Kurdish card” is going away as one that can be used against Turkey, strengthening Turkey’s hand.

As the second passage states, Iran is worried that the PKK might join its own Kurdish separatist group, the Party of a Free Life of Kurdistan (PJAK). It is also worried that they might join the Syrian Kurds and fight against regime forces alongside the Free Syrian Army. In addition, the example of a Turkey, which recognizes the political and cultural rights of its Kurds on the one side, and a semi-autonomous Kurdish region in Iraq on the other, raises fears in Iran that this will embolden their own Kurds’ separatist aspirations.

The process also has implications for already-strained Turkish-Iraqi relations. As the third passage describes, the central Iraqi government in Baghdad declared the entry of the PKK militants into Iraq as a violation of its sovereignty and independence. (It should be noted that the central Iraqi government has limited authority over its border with Turkey, which is controlled by the Kurds.) Iraq is expected to file a complaint to the UN Security Council on the issue, likely hurting bilateral relations even further.

In Syria, one of the regional outcomes of the peace process is already evident: the Democratic Union Party (PYD), considered the PKK’s affiliate in Syria, has started leaning towards Turkey and the anti-Assad coalition, broadening the coalition. (See “Shifting Regional Dynamics: Turkey and Syria’s Kurds” in the May 2013 issue of OE Watch.)

*For Turkey, if the process continues peacefully and concludes successfully, the PKK is expected to be transformed into a political movement, eventually resulting in a new Turkish constitution which grants more cultural and political rights to Kurds, and a more democratic Turkey. However, these high hopes and expectations create a risk too. The final passage suggests that if the process fails, the disappointment and fury will be so high that the violence is expected to be even worse than before, and to lead to significant inter-ethnic conflict in Turkey, including in big cities. There is much hope and cautious optimism for the former, but still fear of the latter. **End OE Watch Commentary (Kaya)***

Both these developments have deadly implications for Tehran’s goals in the region.

For the Kurds to achieve a structure that recognizes them and boosts their cultural identity “within the framework of a new constitution for the Turkish Republic” will serve as an example to seven million Kurds in Iran. Such a scenario will be a nightmare for Tehran, which has been executing unarmed Sunni activists and has been oppressing the people in the Kurdistan region, above all the Sunni Kurds.”

Source: Ibrahim Karagül, “Maliki ve PKK korkusu! (Maliki’s PKK fear!),” [Yenisafak.com.tr](http://yenisafak.com.tr), 10 May 2013, <http://yenisafak.com.tr/yazarlar/IbrahimKaragul/malikinin-pkk-korkusu/37621>

“The Iraqi Foreign Ministry issued a surprising statement against Turkey yesterday: The PKK members moving towards northern Iraq cannot enter Iraqi territory.. They also said ‘The Iraqi government applauds Turkey’s efforts to solve its Kurdish problem via political and peaceful means’ and continued to say that, ‘The Iraqi government does not accept PKK members’ entry into Iraqi territory, based on the principles of Iraqi sovereignty, social security and stability and not interfering in other countries’ internal affairs.’

For Iran and the Maliki government, the elimination of Turkey’s PKK problem is a situation that weakens their hands and strengthens Turkey’s hand. Thus, the power balance works against Tehran and Baghdad.”

Source: Ömer Taşpınar, “Reyhanlı ve korkulan senaryo (Reyhanlı and the feared scenario),” [Sabah.com.tr](http://www.sabah.com.tr), 13 May 2013, <http://www.sabah.com.tr/Yazarlar/taspinar/2013/05/13/reyhanli-ve-korkulan-senaryo>

“When news of the Reyhanlı attack came, the most feared scenario was that the attack was linked to the PKK and was conducted to sabotage the peace process. If the public viewed that attack as being linked to the PKK, there would be no peace process left to speak of. But it wouldn’t stop there. The current peace process is different than the previous ones, due to the higher expectations. There is a serious process in place, which deals with disarming, withdrawal, changing the constitution... and debates on federalism... When expectations are so high, the slightest provocation or sabotage will lead to a similarly high level of social fury, disappointment and anger. Thus, if the current process fails, a mass ethnic violence and that highly-feared city terror might start.”

Turkey to Make Armed Drones

9 May 2013



“Turkey is moving ahead with plans to develop an indigenous armed UAV to meet Turkish Air Force (TAF) requirements....Under the TAF’s concept of operations, the SIHA [Strike UAV] would have a dual ISR/armed strike role and would be equipped with air-to-ground missiles and laser guided bombs.”

OE Watch Commentary: *The International Defense Industry Fair was held from 7-10 May 2013 in Istanbul, where the Turkish Armed Forces unveiled its first tactical unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), “Karayel” and “Bora.” As the accompanying passages point out, the two planes mark the first locally produced UAVs, including their software and mechanics. More importantly, as the first passage points out, Turkey now plans to build upon the success of this project to build armed drones.*

The Turkish media reports that Karayel is planned for use in both military (for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance purposes) and civil aviation, while Bora is planned for use in avionics tests and pilot training. The flight control software for these two planes will form the basis for the newly launched armed drone project. The accompanying passages point out that these projects have been drawing interest from countries in the Middle East. Egypt has already signed a deal to become the first country to buy the Turkish-made (unarmed) drones.

This is part of Turkey’s larger effort to reduce dependence on foreign weapons and become more self-sufficient and competitive in the defense industry. It has made great strides in this field in the last five years. End OE Watch Commentary (Kaya)

Source: Zehra Aydoğan, “Unmanned aerial vehicle to be ‘used more in civil aviation’,” Hurriyet Daily News, 8 May 2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/unmanned-aerial-vehicle-to-be-used-more-in-civil-aviation.aspx?pageID=238&nid=46425>

“However, Yüngül [the CEO of the Zorlu Group, which manufactured the planes] said they aimed to manufacture between 50 and 60 UAVs per year after the delivery to the Turkish Armed Forces, adding that they were particularly drawing the interest of countries in the Middle East. Yüngül claimed that Turkey would soon be in the top three for UAVs, along with the United States and Israel.

“We, as Vestel, have invested \$25 million in the defense industry up to today,” said Yüngül, adding that both Karayel and Bora were entirely locally designed and produced by Turkish engineers, including their software and mechanics.”



CEO of Zorlu Holding Omar Yüngül, via <http://www.habermonitor.com/en/haber/detay/zorlu-holding-two-critical-assignment/29297/>

Source: “Heronların yerini alacak Karayel uçuşa hazır (Karayel to replace Herons is ready for take-off),” Zaman.com.tr, 8 May 2013, http://www.zaman.com.tr/newsDetail_openPrintPage.action?newsId=2087260

“The domestically produced unmanned aerial vehicles that will replace those that are purchased from Israel, in order to monitor terrorists in the countryside, will go into circulation this year.”

(continued)

Continued: Turkey to Make Armed Drones

Source: “ANKA batılı ülkeleri korkuttu (ANKA scares western countries),” Milliyet.com.tr, 20 May 2013, <http://ekonomi.milliyet.com.tr/anka-batili-ulkeleri-korkuttu/ekonomi/detay/1711315/default.htm>

“De Volkskrant newspaper published in Holland reported that the drones that Turkey produced are selling well, that there is a huge demand from Arab countries and that Egypt has already ordered 10 of them. In its report, it claimed that ‘Rising regional power Turkey is increasing production for its own defense and aims to be an arms supplier for the Islamic world, causing debate.’

The Dutch newspaper noted that Turkey has the largest military in NATO after the U.S. and spends millions of dollars on defense, saying, “The equipment of the Turkish military normally comes from the U.S. or Europe. But in the last few years, the Turkish defense industry has made a huge leap. Turkish officials now say that 55% of the Turkish army’s needs are met through domestic production and that they aim to increase this number to 75% in the next few years.”



Turkish Anka drone, via <http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/07/19/251656/turkey-to-produce-its-first-armed-drones/>

Source: “IDEF 2013: Turkey launches armed UAV project,” Shephardmedia.com, 9 May 2013, <http://www.shephardmedia.com/news/uv-online/idef-2013-turkey-launches-armed-uav-project/>

“Turkey is moving ahead with plans to develop an indigenous armed UAV to meet Turkish Air Force (TAF) requirements. ...Under the TAF’s concept of operations, the SIHA [Strike UAV] would have a dual ISR/armed strike role and would be equipped with air-to-ground missiles and laser guided bombs.”



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>

Will Ansar-e Hezbollah Rise Again?

16 May 2013

“That Ansar-e Hezbollah appears to be gearing up again for action—and that security force officials appear to be cooperating with it—suggests that the Supreme Leader and his inner circle again will seek extralegal means not only to constrain the Iranian public, but whomever the new president is...”

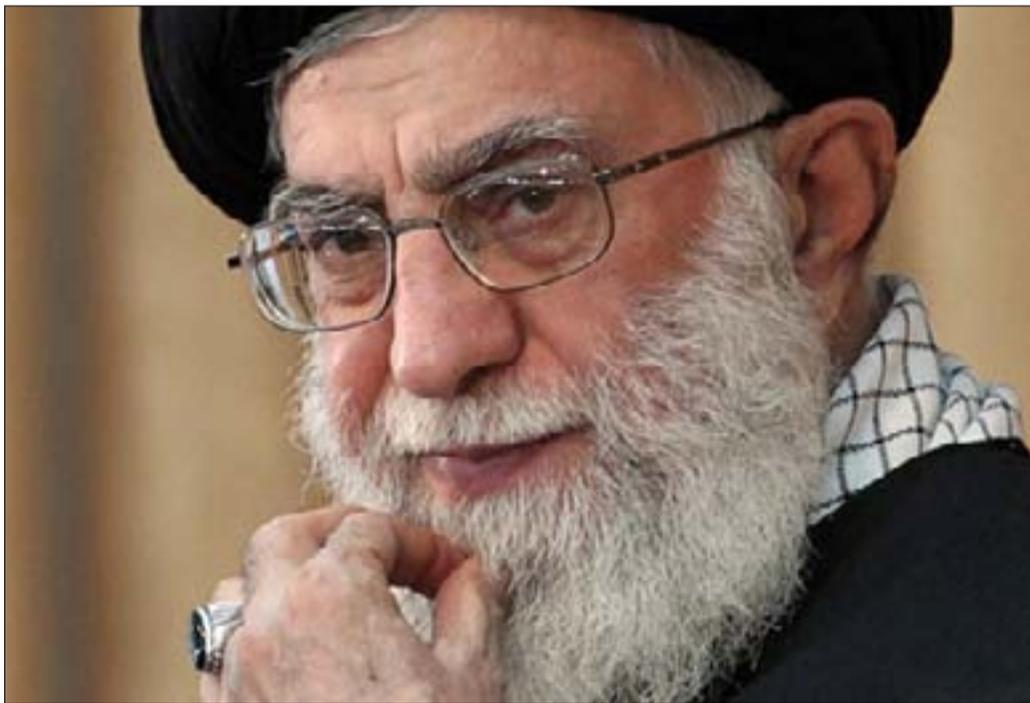
OE Watch Commentary: The irony of the Iranian system of government is that while the Supreme Leader may, as the “deputy of the Messiah on Earth,” theoretically hold absolute power, the Iranian government is nonetheless riven with factions. The Supreme Leader maintains control by balancing Iran’s various factions, political groups, and power centers so that none gets powerful enough to challenge his grip. When the balance gets knocked out of whack, sometimes the Supreme Leader and security services must rely on extralegal means. It is in this context that the report excerpted from Ansar-e Hezbollah’s newspaper Ya Lisarat is important.

While the presidency in Iran is more about style than substance, the elections have, at times, threatened to destabilize the Islamic Republic. Most famously, questions regarding election fraud led to nationwide riots in 2009. However, even before that, the Supreme Leader feared elections and their results. In 1997, for example, the elections delivered a surprise victory for former Culture Minister Mohammad Khatami over establishment favorite, Parliamentary Speaker Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri. Khatami was the most reformist of the four candidates contesting that election (even though the Guardian Council, the regime’s vetting body, had disqualified 234 other candidates it considered too reformist or liberal) and captured the public’s imagination. The Supreme Leader soon found himself and those adhering most strictly to the regime’s revolutionary principles threatened by a wave of reformist desire for more openness.

In order to counter the reformist trend, the Supreme Leader and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps turned to vigilante groups, which need not, in practice, adhere to the constraints of law as most state bodies would. Chief among these was Ansar-e Hezbollah. The vigilante groups acted as the Supreme Leader’s “Brown Shirts,” roughing up opposition and, in a number of incidents during the Khatami administration, kidnapping and killing dissidents. While Ansar-e Hezbollah paralyzed the latter years of the Khatami administration, the group largely disappeared from the public stage after the hardline ‘Principalist’ candidate Mahmoud Ahmadinejad succeeded him.

The June 2013 presidential elections are particularly sensitive this year, as the post-election unrest that marked the 2009 polls remains in the public mind. That Ansar-e Hezbollah appears to be gearing up again for action—and that security force officials appear to be cooperating with it—suggests that the Supreme Leader and his inner circle again will seek extralegal means to constrain not only the Iranian public, but also whoever the new president is. Ansar-e Hezbollah’s rise presages greater domestic violence inside Iran.

End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)



Iran’s Supreme leader Ali Hosseini Khamenei, via http://www.ctvnews.ca/polopoly_fs/1.1114842!/httpImage/image.jpeg_gen/derivatives/landscape_620/image.jpeg

Source: “Qata’nameh-e Payani Hamayesh Sarasar Ansar-e Hezbollah Keshavarz,” (“Final Statement of the National Congress of Ansar-e Hezbollah”), Ya Lisarat.com, 16 May 2013. <http://yalasarat.com/vdcdon0k.yt0jj6a22y.html>

Final Statement of the National Congress of Ansar-e Hezbollah

The news center of Ansar-e Hezbollah [Supporters of the Party of God] reports that the previously announced nationwide conference of Ansar-e Hezbollah officials and volunteers from all over the country started at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 16 and ended a few hours ago after issuing a statement.

At this conference, Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Abbas Nabavi delivered a speech and discussed the roots of the deviations of the current rule in the cultural field and ways to confront it. The conference continued with a speech by Ahmad Moghaddam, commander of the Law Enforcement Forces.

The Commander of the Law Enforcement Forces presented a report on the current situation. He spoke about the operations of and the challenges faced by the Police Force and exchanged views with officials and volunteers of the Ansar-e Hezbollah from all over the country on ways to collaborate in order to overcome society’s existing cultural problems....

OE Watch Commentary: In 2007 Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) ground forces underwent a massive reorganization. Rather than gear its forces toward external enemies, Mohammad Ali Jafari, the new IRGC commander, sought to have the IRGC ground forces orient themselves against internal challenges, and so put one unit in every province and two in Tehran. Both the Navy and the IRGC Navy therefore took the mantle of external operations, not only facing down enemies in the Persian Gulf but increasingly also in the Sea of Oman.¹ As the Iranian Navy has expanded its operational reach, Tehran has increasingly courted Khartoum. In October 2012 the Iranian Navy's 22nd fleet docked at Port Sudan on the Red Sea and, two months later, the 23rd Fleet followed suit. (Each Iranian fleet consisted of a destroyer and a helicopter carrier.) Establishing a more permanent relationship with Sudan might allow Iran to utilize Port Sudan—Sudan's third largest city and largest port—which would enable Iran to expand its presence in the Red Sea and off the Horn of Africa.

While Sudanese officials warned against reading too much into last year's port visits by Iranian ships,² the excerpted comments from a 9 May meeting between the heads of the Iranian and Sudanese Navies suggest that the two countries' bilateral military relationship continues to develop. While Sudan has never been known for its navy, it has for a half century maintained a small force to patrol its Red Sea coast. The Iranian willingness to train Sudanese naval forces raises questions of what capabilities Sudan seeks to acquire. Not only might this provide Tehran with needed hard currency should Khartoum purchase Iranian ships, but it might also enhance the Islamic Republic's desire to export revolution by proxy. In the past the Islamic Republic has tried to leverage those whom it has trained—for example, Bahraini and Lebanese militiamen in the early 1980s—into revolutionary violence. Should such training occur—perhaps accompanied by an exchange of personnel—the Sudanese Navy might begin to replicate tactics used by Iranian small boats in the Persian Gulf in the Red Sea and near the Bab al-Mandab Strait. This would enable Iran to establish leverage over a second strategic maritime chokepoint and expand Tehran's ability to threaten the international energy trade. **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)**

“The Sudanese navy might begin to replicate in the Red Sea and near the Bab al-Mandab tactics used by Iranian small boats in the Persian Gulf.”



Bab al-Mandab Strait indicated by Red A marker.

Source: "Etehad-e Iran va Sudan dar Moqabal Doshman-e Moshtarak," ("Iran and Sudan United Against a Common Enemy"), Fars News Agency, 9 May 2013. <http://www.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=13920219000189>

Iran and Sudan United Against a Common Enemy

According to the report of the Fars News Agency defense correspondent, Admiral Sayyari, commander of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Navy, met on Thursday morning [May 9] with General Dalil al-Daw Muhammad Fadhallallah, commander of Sudan's Navy. In the meeting, Sayyari stated that Sudan has so far hosted our battle groups, and we have had great cooperation from this country. He added that with the strategic position of Iran in the Persian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz, and the northern Indian Ocean, and with Sudan's position along the Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandab, close relations can be expanded to establish security in the region. Sayyari emphasized that to achieve this, it can be effective to have each country's battle groups exchange port visits... With reference to Iran's capabilities in the field of training, Sayyari said, "We will give training to 18 specialists in our naval training centers, and we will train the best commandoes, and bestow upon them the best physical and mental training..."

1. For additional background, see: "Iran's Navy Expands Operational Range," Operational Environment Watch, Foreign Military Studies Office, January 2013, <http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/Archives/GSW/201301/201301.html#Iran%E2%80%99s%20Navy%20Expands%20Operational%20Range>

2. "Wazir al-Riyaseh al-Sudani: Nachnu Kharij al-Mihwar al-Irani," ["Minister of the Presidency of Sudan: We Are Outside the Iranian Axis"], Ash-Sharq al-Awsat (London), November 4, 2012, <http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&issueno=12395&article=702669&state=true#.USWWGmfAXeI>

“The past few months have witnessed an uptick in violence at Jordanian universities.”



Violent clashes begin at the Al Hussein Bin Talal University, via <http://www.eduaffairz.com/2013/05/four-die-in-latest-round-of-university.html>

OE Watch Commentary: *The past few months have witnessed an uptick in violence at Jordanian universities. The first accompanying article, from the prominent Saudi/pan-Arab daily al-Hayat, summarizes this growing problem. In fact, the article was published before the most recent and troubling incident: on 29 April four people were killed and many more wounded in clashes that started at the Al Hussein Bin Talal University in Maan and ended on the streets. The Jordanian Gendarmerie was called in to restore order, after which members of one of the clans involved (al-Houaytet) set up checkpoints on the desert highway, demanding the release of their kinsmen and the handing over of their killers. A tribal delegation eventually defused the situation, though many questions remain, as the second accompanying article notes.*

What is behind this uptick in university violence? Most blame failed policies, whether in the form of lax admission standards for students from “tribal backgrounds” or an inability to curb the spread of weapons and drug use among Jordanian youth. The third accompanying article, an op-ed from Jordan’s main

Source:

العنف العشائري يضرب جامعات الأردن واتهام بتحويل التعليم “ملفاً أمنياً”
 “Tribal-Fueled University Violence On Rise in Jordan” (al-Hayat), via <http://alhayat.com/Details/503240> (translation via: <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/ar/contents/articles/security/2013/04/jordanian-tribal-violence.html>)

Article #1

15 April, 2013

Jordanian university violence is one of the most prominent escalating issues. National and official parties have tried to develop solutions, while civil society institutions blame the security services “for their ongoing interference in the universities’ affairs” in addition to the “prerequisites for students’ admission.”

The number of fights in the kingdom’s universities increased to 80 in 2012 from 61 in 2011 and 31 in 2010...

Source:

“Minister in Maan: We will not tolerate armed groups” (Ammon News), via <http://en.ammonnews.net/article.aspx?articleno=20856#.UYmpN7Wsh8E>

Article #2

4 May, 2013

A tribal delegation representing Jordan’s main tribes headed to Maan on Thursday and reached an agreement with the Bawab and Hweitat tribes to contain violence and maintain order until security and police forces investigate the incident and arrest those responsible for the deaths and injuries last week...

Locals also addressed Majali with requests to investigate how arms and weapons are allowed to enter into university campuses, “is the government’s stalling in addressing these incidents deliberate to distract people from other problems?” one local asked. Local residents warned that outlaws, drug and arms dealers are taking advantage of the chaos in the southern governorate...

(continued)

Continued: University Violence in Jordan

independent newspaper al-Ghad, sees the violence as partly symptomatic of failed security-first policies in the provinces.

Jordan is surrounded by turmoil. The flood of Syrian refugees is putting pressure on scarce natural and economic resources in Jordan's north, with a consequent increase in resentment toward the refugees. The university violence, however, can hardly be blamed on outsiders. It is of concern to a country which prides itself on the quality and availability of its higher education. The fourth accompanying article, also an op-ed from the independent al-Ghad newspaper, sounds the alarm bells. The ease and speed with which events in Maan escalated is troubling. This could be problematic: stakes are becoming higher in the region, and a government of eroded credibility may find it difficult to ease the tensions, fear and uncertainty that have found refuge in the Kingdom of Jordan. **End OE Watch Commentary (Winter)**

Source:

لماذا؟!

Muhammad abu Rumman. "Why?" (al-Ghad, Jordan), via http://www.alghad.com/index.php/afkar_wamawaqef2/article/32773/%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B0%D8%A7%D8%9F%21.html

Article #3

5 May, 2013

The bloody events at the Al Hussein University and before then in Mutah and in all our universities (except for science and technology) needs a state, a government and leaders that are able to put things in context and use politics when necessary, to strictly enforce security and the rule of law, to preserve the face of the state and its sovereignty, and to protect innocent blood and public facilities. None of this occurred in the south...

For the thousandth time: Jordan is not only Western Amman. There are people in the provinces who suffer from the cultural and political vacuum, who know the state only through its prisons and security services.

Source:

الصدمة والكارثة

Basim Tweissi. "Shock and Disaster" (al-Ghad, Jordan), via http://www.alghad.com/index.php/afkar_wamawaqef2/article/32761/%D8%B5%D8%AF%D9%85%D9%87-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AB%D9%87.html

Article #4

4 May, 2013

The state and society both share responsibility for what happened and will happen. Only the state, however, is responsible for resolving it, as it is the only one with the power to deter and the only one with a monopoly of violence to impose the law, implement reforms and to address the ills and perversions. For more than a decade, universities have become like the nervous system of the state and society, indicating the direction in which the country is headed. We did not, however, heed the early warning signals and are now facing shocks and disasters every day. What is to come will be worse if the mentality of calm and politeness and of dealing with disasters piecemeal continues.

Al-Qaeda's Road to Damascus? Syria and the Abdullah Azzam Brigades

By Mr. Lucas Winter

Since the outbreak of sustained violence in Syria over the past year, the presence of foreign Islamist fighters has become a growing concern to the crumbling Syrian government, rebels in the Free Syrian Army, NATO, and Syria's neighbors. This article examines the role played by the al-Qaeda-affiliated "Abdullah Azzam Brigades" since the start of the Syrian uprising. By doing so, it hopes to provide a context for better understanding of the dynamic interplay between the Syrian insurgency and al-Qaeda.



<http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/Al-Qaeda's-Road-to%20Damascus.pdf>

“Are the sons of Prince Salman now behind the Defense Ministry’s controls?”

OE Watch Commentary: Saudi Arabia’s three main security institutions – the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Interior and the Saudi Arabian National Guard (SANG) – have in the recent past been associated with a particular royal figure: defense with Prince Sultan, interior with Prince Nayef and SANG with King Abdullah. Sultan passed away in 2011, Nayef followed him in 2012, and Abdullah has been king since 2005. As the father moved on to greater things, the son took over: Nayef’s son Mohammed is Minister of Interior, Abdullah’s son Mutaib leads the SANG, and Sultan’s son Khalid is Deputy Defense Minister... or at least he was, until his abrupt dismissal in April 2013.

Why was Khalid bin Sultan sacked? The first accompanying article, taken from the daily al-Quds al-Arabi, describes tensions resulting from Khalid’s disappointment that his uncle Salman, currently Crown Prince and Defense Minister, did not cede him the Defense Ministry. The second accompanying article summarizes the interpretation of “mujtahidd,” an influential and irreverent Saudi tweeter-analyst. By his estimation, Khalid was increasingly sidelined after Saudi Arabia’s 2009-2010 military intervention in Yemen. Frustrated, he began acting unilaterally. His recent signing of several weapons contracts with China without consulting his uncle Salman was seen as the breaking point.

The new Deputy Defense Minister is Fahd Bin Abdullah bin Mohammed Al Saud. A career naval officer and former commander of the Saudi Naval Forces, Prince Fahd is the grandson of a half-brother of King Abdulaziz (Ibn Saud), the founder of modern Saudi Arabia. Although part of the royal family, he is not a direct descendant of Ibn Saud and thus technically ineligible for the throne. The third accompanying article, taken from the English-language version of a major Saudi daily, excerpts part of the brief



Deputy Minister of Defense Fahd bin Abdullah bin Mohammed Al Saud, via http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fahd_bin_Abdullah_bin_Mohammed_Al_Saud

Source:

مراقبون: خلافات بين الامير خالد بن سلطان وعمه الامير سلمان ادت لاقالته من منصب نائب وزير الدفاع
“Analysts: Disagreements between Khalid bin Sultan and his Uncle Salman led to his Dismissal as Deputy Defense Minister” (al-Quds al-Arabi), via <http://www.alquds.co.uk/?p=35812>

Article #1

20 April 2013

Dismissals are traditionally followed by the statement “at his own request.” This royal decree did not include that statement, leading some analysts to believe that the dismissal was perhaps due to disagreements between Prince Khalid bin Sultan and his uncle, current Crown Prince and Defense Minister Salman bin Abdul Aziz. Observers think that Prince Khalid hoped to become defense minister following the death of his father Prince Sultan. He expected his uncle Salman to give up the defense ministry after being named crown prince...

The surprise royal decree leaves room for speculation, especially given that reasons behind dismissals are not provided in the kingdom. In the recent past, disagreements regarding the succession to the throne have begun surfacing through declarations by members of the royal family and through the most recent appointments and dismissals.

Source:

محمد بن سلمان ينجح في إقصاء خالد بن سلطان
“Mohammed bin Salman Succeeds in Removing Khalid bin Sultan” (al-Akhbar, Lebanon), via <http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/181717>

Article #2

22 April 2013

According to “mujtahidd,” who is famous for his tweets about the Saudi royal family, King Abdullah began mobilizing against Khalid following his performance in the war with the Huthis in Yemen. Khalid became fed up with the blockade against him and decided to use his contacts to break it and obtain his share of the contracts directly and without going through the minister. In his trip to China he did just that, reaching an agreement with the Chinese to renew the Silkworm Missile System without coordinating with the king.

(continued)

Continued: Saudi Defense Reshuffle

biographical sketch that was published with his appointment. In the context of positioning for royal succession, this new development raises an obvious question: are the sons of Prince Salman now behind the Defense Ministry's controls? End OE Watch Commentary (Winter)

“Mujtahidd” indicated in his tweets that the Americans had uncovered details of Khalid bin Sultan’s agreement with the Chinese and had protested strongly to Salman. Mohammed bin Salman seized the opportunity and turned the king against Khalid, in coordination with Mutaib bin Abdullah and Mohammed bin Nayef. Thus the statement about this being based on a request by the minister of defense that appeared in the decree is accurate and not simply routine. The request for dismissal was made by Mohammed bin Salman, but was referred to the king in the name of Salman...

Source:

“New Saudi deputy defense minister a decorated marine officer” (Al-Arabiya, English), via <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2013/04/21/New-Saudi-deputy-defense-minister-a-decorated-marine-officer.html>

Article #3

21 April 2013

Prince Fahd Bin Abdullah was appointed in April 2002 as the Commander of Marine Forces. He has an excellent track record by serving the Marine Forces in various capacities. He worked at the ships of King Abdul Aziz and the floating units of the Marine Base.

He also served as Director of the Training Department at the Marine Forces, Chairman of the Operations Authority at the Marine Forces, and then named as the Director of the Crown Prince’s Office before being appointed as Deputy Commander of the Marine Forces.

Prince Fahd, holder of master’s degree in military sciences, did various naval courses before taking up these posts. They included marine courses from the United States and United Kingdom as well as an advanced marine course from Pakistan.

Measuring Progress in Reconstructing Afghanistan

By Christiaan Davids, Sebastiaan Rietjens & Joseph Soeters

Netherlands National Defence Academy

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

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



“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: Two years into a civil war that has left at least 80 thousand Syrians dead, the average Egyptian remains apathetic to the strife in Syria. This lack of concern stems from their own domestic, economic and social woes, as well as the widespread opinion that the events in Syria are simply a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

In contrast to Saudi Arabia and Turkey, who support removing the Assad regime through military intervention on the side of the Syrian rebels, President Morsi has sided with Russia in rejecting military intervention and calling for negotiations to end the conflict. Morsi dropped his original demand that Assad resign, and now believes that negotiations need to “include representatives of the opposition, and the Syrian regime...”, and that “Assad staying or leaving is no longer a priority.” As the referenced article mentions, the positions of Egypt and Russia appear identical. In August of last year at the Islamic Summit held in Saudi Arabia, President Morsi suggested forming a quartet consisting of Egypt, Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia to negotiate an end to the crisis in Syria. At the end of that month Morsi made a historical visit to Tehran to attend the Non-Aligned Summit. Since the formation of the quartet, three meetings have been convened, of which Saudi Arabia only attended the first. As the conflict in Syria becomes more savage and threatens to spill over into other countries in the Middle East, Morsi in April sent his chief of staff and chief foreign affairs advisor to Iran to attempt to jumpstart mediation by the Quartet. Egypt’s efforts to resurrect the Quartet are contemporaneous with policy changes from the West regarding negotiation for a peace with the Syrian regime.

President Morsi may be able to assist in bringing an end to the conflict in Syria, as well as reaching out to Iran. This would help bridge the Sunni - Shiite rift, which has been exacerbated during the Arab Spring. The arbitration of a peace accord in Syria would be a diplomatic coup for President Morsi, cementing Egypt’s new regime as a power player and leader in the region. **End OE Watch Commentary (Tombaugh)**



Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (L) and Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi meet before the opening of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation summit, February 6, 2013 via <http://iran-un.org>

Source: Zaki, Ahmad and Khaled Nour “Is Egypt Moving Closer To Iran On Syria?” As-Safir. April 30, 2013. Retrieved May 10, 2013, from: <http://www.assafir.com/Article.aspx?EditID=2449&ChannelID=58959&ArticleID=2512> AND <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2013/04/egypt-iran-rapprochement-syria.html> (translation by Rani Geha for Al-Monitor.com)

Is Egypt Moving Closer To Iran On Syria?

...The Egyptian presidential office announced that the aim of the delegation — which was led by the assistant to the president for foreign affairs, Essam al-Haddad, and the president’s chief of staff, Mohammed al-Tahtawi — was to “kick-start the quartet initiative launched by President Mohammed Morsi during the extraordinary Islamic Summit in Mecca” regarding the Syrian crisis....

...Some experts described the presidential delegation’s visit to Tehran as “a step by the Egyptian regime to assess the dimensions of Cairo’s regional role, especially in relation to the Syrian crisis.”

...Mohamed Said Idris, a former parliamentarian and an expert on Iranian affairs, said that it is clear that Egypt is moving to adopt a different position from those of Qatar, Turkey and Saudi Arabia on how to resolve the Syrian crisis. He added, “Egypt’s vision is based on the rejection of any foreign military action to oust the regime in Damascus.”

During a meeting with Haddad, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad warned of the repercussions caused by the Syrian armed opposition reaching power through violence. He said, “If those Syrian parties reach power by means of violence, then war, violence and chaos will reign in the country. And if Syria becomes unsafe, then the security of other countries in the region would be endangered as well. This issue threatens the whole region.”...

1. Mahmoud, Sunni and Samr Al-Jamal. (May 11, 2013). “Egypt Approaches Assad to End the Tragedy in Syria.” (Misr taktareb min Assad le inha masaha sooreyah) Al-Shrouk. Retrieved May 13, 2013, from: <http://www.shorouknews.com/news/view.aspx?cdate=11052013&id=de8b6450-b713-4cf3-9c29-4b536df110b6>

Foreign Military Studies Office

(FMSO.leavenworth.army.mil)



International Research Collaboration Program

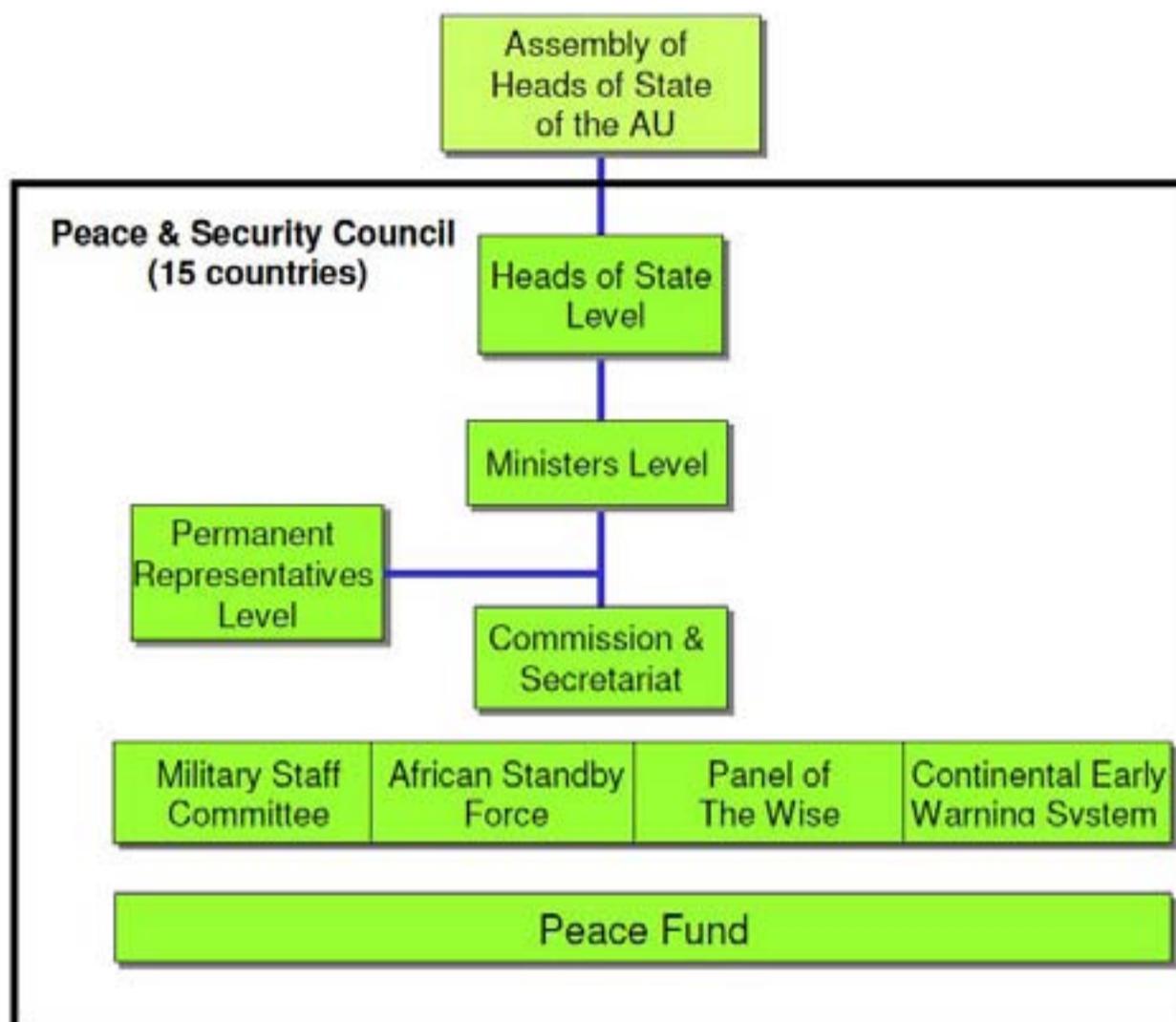
Quality researchers outside of the U.S. Government express new ideas that will help define the current and future defense and security environment from understudied and unconsidered perspectives.

“The EASF was established as a regional mechanism to provide capability for rapid deployment of forces to carry out preventive deployment, rapid intervention, peace support and stability operations and, peace enforcement.”

OE Watch Commentary: According to a Ugandan major general in the accompanying article, “The indecisiveness of the international community during the genocide in Rwanda sparked all this we are trying to achieve, the Africa Standby Force, the Eastern Africa Standby Force and the rapid deployment capability.” This statement is interesting in that the drive behind creating the Eastern African Standby Force (EASF) was attributed to a lack of international response to the Rwandan genocide, as opposed to the inability of the African nations to garner an effective intervention. Still, for whatever reason the EASF came into being, it appears to be making progress, and if the prediction of the accompanying article is sound, by 2015 will have operational capacity.

It will not be an easy task melding components of several East African militaries into a unified, effective force. The barriers are numerous: differences in languages, equipment, and command structures; a lack of organic rapid transport capabilities; and national governments with varying political agendas. Already the launch date for an operational force has been pushed back from an overly ambitious 2008.¹

Perhaps adding to the difficulties is the requirement that the EASF be able to harmonize with four other regional standby forces as part of the continent-wide African Standby Force (ASF). As the African Union (AU), which directs the ASF, is interested not just in stopping conflicts but in preventing them from flaring-up again, “each of the five regional multi-dimensional components of the African Standby Force consist(s) of ... military, police and civilian elements,” enabling it to not only intervene militarily but also to provide stability operations when required.



The structure of the AU Peace and Security Council, African Standby Force Peace Support Operations Doctrine: via <http://acoc-africa.org/restricted/Doctrine/DoctrinC1.pdf>

Source: “Eastern Africa Standby Force to Have Operational Capacity By 2015,” Garowe (Puntland. Somalia: Original Source Xinhua) 18 May 2013, http://www.garoweonline.com/artman2/publish/Somalia_27/Eastern_Africa_standby_force_to_have_operational_capacity_by_2015.shtml

...Military experts attending the ongoing field training exercise of 10 Eastern Africa armies held here in the eastern Ugandan district of Jinja have said the Eastern African Standby Force (EASF) would be ready for operation by 2015...

...The EASF is one of the five regional multi-dimensional components of the African Standby Force consisting of the military, police and civilian elements...

...The EASF was established as a regional mechanism to provide capability for rapid deployment of forces to carry out preventive deployment, rapid intervention, peace support and stability operations and, peace enforcement...

...Brig. Gen. Jack Bakasumba, the EASF Brigade Commander told reporters here on Friday that the force would have full operational capacity to undertake any mission. “By full operational capability we mean that by 2015, the EASF comprising of the three components, the military, police and the civilians will be able to undertake any mission assigned by the United Nations or the African Union. The military forces will be held on standby in the various member states,” he said...

(continued)

Continued: An East African Force for East African Problems

It will be interesting to see how the EASF responds to an internal problem in one of its member states. Will it be hesitant when the offending government says outside intervention is unjustified and would be a breach of sovereignty? Article 3(b) of the African Union Constitution cites an objective of the Union as “[to] defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its Member States.”² At what point does invading a fellow African nation, in the process overriding 3(b), become justified?

An additional question is will the EASF have the resources to conduct prolonged operations? Transport costs alone could be substantial, leaving little funding available once the troops arrive in the conflict zone. Will there be additional monetary contributions from AU member states; will international donors be approached; or will another funding mechanism be implemented?

*To be sure, there are other questions, but meanwhile the EASF seems to be making progress towards being operational in the next few years. Should that capability actually be reached, it will be one more step towards Africans solving African problems. **End OE Watch Commentary (Feldman)***

...Maj. Gen. Francis Okello, the Commander of Uganda Rapid Deployment Capability Centre, the hosts of the exercise said that once the force is in place, the indecisiveness of the international community to deploy troops in potentially genocide situations or grave abuse of human rights would be dealt with...

...”The indecisiveness of the international community during the genocide in Rwanda sparked all this we are trying to achieve, the Africa Standby Force, the Eastern Africa Standby Force and the rapid deployment capability,” he said.

...He said the force would be deployed in genocide like situations, areas where there is serious human rights abuse and in disaster hit areas in the region...

1. Fred Olouch, “Deadline for African Standby Force Now 2015,” The East African, 26 Jan 2013, <http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/Deadline-for-African-Standby-Force-now-2015/-/2558/1676156/-/3yiaih/-/index.html>
2. “African Union Constitutive Act,” The African Union, July 2000, http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/AboutAu/Constitutive_Act_en.htm

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>



Democratic Republic of the Congo

16 May 2013

Friend, Enemy or Frenemy: Uncertainty in the Kivu Conflict

“It’s unwise to reintegrate these deserters into the (army) without ... knowing their real motivation...”

OE Watch Commentary: *They were rebels, they were soldiers, they became rebels again, and now they are back to being soldiers...maybe. The fluidity with which certain individuals move between being rebels and soldiers in Kivu, a mineral-rich region in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), could hamper efforts to secure and stabilize the area, including those of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a peacekeeping force better known by its French-derived acronym MONUSCO.*

The Kivu conflict is one of several outbreaks of prolonged fighting in the DRC, which followed the deadliest worldwide conflict since the end of World War II...the Second Congo War. The details are far too many for this short commentary, but briefly, as part of a peace agreement with the government, rebels were integrated into the DRC’s military, the FARDC. That agreement was signed on 23 March 2009; approximately three years later about 300 rebels who had become soldiers left the military, citing the government’s failure to fully implement the peace treaty, and adopted the name “M23” for the date the ill-fated agreement was signed.

M23 has had several significant successes, including capturing Goma, the capital of North Kivu Province, in 2012. During that military operation the FARDC put up relatively little resistance, as did MONUSCO, citing its limited mandate.¹ Following negotiations with the governments of the DRC and other regional powers, M23 eventually left the city, but not before reportedly committing numerous crimes against the citizenry, including rape. It should be noted that FARDC troops have also been accused of rape in the nearby towns to which they had retreated.²



M23 Rebels, via <http://www.redpepper.co.ug/m23-rebels-suspend-talks-with-drc-govt-over-un-mandate/>

Source: Taylor Toeka Kakala, “Fears of Rebel Infiltration of DR Congo Army,” Inter Press Service, 16 May 2013, <http://www.ipsnews.net/2013/05/fears-of-rebel-infiltration-of-dr-congo-army/>

... The “blind and unrestricted” reintegration of M23 deserters into the Congolese army could harm the country, according to Thomas d’Aquin Mwiti, the chair of the North Kivu civil society platform, in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo...

...According to Julien Paluku, governor of North Kivu province, 519 rebel deserters have been reintegrated into the Congolese army, known by its French acronym FARDC, since 2012. But Mwiti told IPS that this “automatic reintegration (of fighters) is simply a rebel infiltration” of the FARDC. “The government must first put in place a mechanism for the reintegration and monitoring of deserters who could, at any moment, rejoin the rebellion,” he said...

...M23, named after a peace agreement signed on Mar. 23, 2009 between leaders of a former rebel group, the National Congress for the Defence of the People, and the DRC government, started their recent insurgency in April 2012. It culminated with their occupation of Goma, the second-largest city in DRC, in November 2012. The rebels withdrew from a week-long occupation of the town after Uganda brokered an agreement with M23 and the DRC government. However, the insurgent group has experienced a number of defections recently...

...Juvénal Munubo, a legislator from Walikale, North Kivu, and a member of the National Assembly’s Committee for Defence and Security, agreed with Mwiti that the direct absorption of defectors into the Congolese army was risky. “It’s unwise to reintegrate these deserters into the FARDC without ... knowing their real motivation. They must first pass through a transit centre for re-education,” Munubo told IPS...

...But Mwiti belongs to a section of civil society that believes M23 deserters are trying to

(continued)

Continued: Democratic Republic of the Congo Friend, Enemy or Frenemy: Uncertainty in the Kivu Conflict

As the accompanying article relates, a number of M23 rebels have defected and joined, or are attempting to join, the FARDC. Some feel these “M23 deserters are trying to avoid international prosecution after being named and accused in U.N. reports of atrocities and human rights violations against civilians.” If so, their absorption into FARDC, an organization which already suffers from numerous accusations of human rights abuses, could prove problematic. The government of the DRC is anxious to quell the conflict in Kivu, and having rebels defect then join the FARDC might help stabilize the region. However, if the rebels are joining the FARDC with the intent of undermining it, or if they are trying to escape possible prosecution, the end result will be a weaker military, not a stronger one.

Though the article doesn't mention it, a somewhat related problem is the Sobel phenomenon. Sobel is a portmanteau of soldier and rebel. It reflects the actions of some soldiers taking part in activities such as raping and looting that are often ascribed to rebels.

*Rebels trying to become soldiers, soldiers acting like rebels...the Kivu conflict not only has many actors, it has actors playing multiple parts. Thus, trying to determine friend from foe in the Kivu conflict can present a challenge, a very difficult challenge that changes almost daily. **End OE Watch Commentary (Feldman)***

1. Mark Gollom, “Fear of Civil War as Congolese Rebels March Into Goma,” CBC News (Canadian), 21 Nov 2012. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/story/2012/11/20/f-congo-goma-rebels.html>
2. “DR Congo: War Crimes by M23, Congolese Army,” Human Rights Watch, Feb 2013. <http://www.hrw.org/news/2013/02/05/dr-congo-war-crimes-m23-congolese-army>

avoid international prosecution after being named and accused in U.N. reports of atrocities and human rights violations against civilians. “On this issue, we will insist on the rigorous application of military justice against those named in the reports,” said Mwiti. However, the Youth League of Rutshuru, a collective of 24 associations fighting against the recruitment of idle youth into armed groups, has asked the government to unconditionally reintegrate the rebels into the FARDC to “put an end to the war.”...

...On Mar. 28, the U.N. Security Council resolved to move its presence in the DRC from a stabilisation and peacekeeping force to an intervention force with a mandate to neutralise some 40 armed groups operating in the country, with effect from early May....

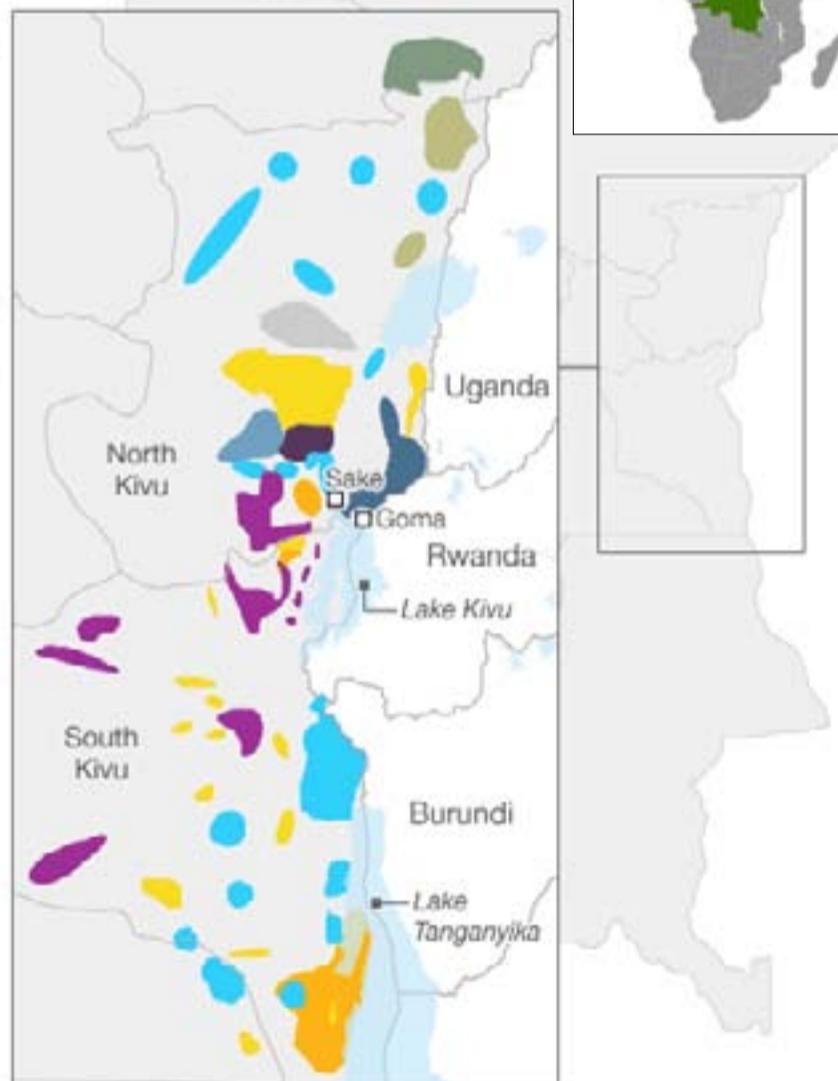
...Despite the defections from its ranks, M23 is determined to fight the U.N. intervention force...

...Nonetheless, the rebel group is doing all that it can to prevent its fighters from deserting and surrendering to MONUSCO..M23 has set up an observation post just 30 metres from the U.N. base in Kiwanja, northeast of Goma in North Kivu province. And on Apr. 28, the rebels fired on two M23 soldiers who handed themselves over with their weapons to MONUSCO at the Kiwanja base...

Rebel groups in eastern DR Congo

UN forces and the Congolese army are present in large towns

- **ADF-NALU**
Ugandan-led Islamists
- **APCLS**
Mai Mai group
- **FDLR**
Mostly Hutu Rwandan rebels
- **FRPI**
Based in gold-rich Ituri region
- **M23**
Mostly Tutsi, said to be Rwandan-backed
- **Rai Mutomboki**
Anti-FDLR group
- **Sheka**
Mai Mai group
- **UPCP**
Loose coalition of smaller nationalist groups
- **Mai Mai groups**
Local forces claiming to act in self-defence
- **Other armed groups**



Rebel groups in eastern DR Congo, Source: Oxfam

Nigeria: Government Enacts Martial Law in North; Citizens Flee to Niger

May 2013

“Nigeria is caught between a rock and hard place: how to effectively root out its greatest national security threat without worsening its already strained relationships with Nigerian citizens and the global community at large.”

OE Watch Commentary: Boko Haram's reign of terror over Nigeria's northern regions has reached a fever pitch, and the Nigerian Government is taking extreme measures to curb it, including installing martial law in three states: Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa. However, as the accompanying article details, while many in the country hope that the measures serve their intended purpose, citizens of the affected states - now occupied by Nigerian military forces - are fleeing to neighboring Niger to avoid being caught in the conflict's crosshairs.

The Nigerian government officially enacted the state of emergency, which has included 24-hour lockdowns in some locations, on Tuesday, 14 May 2013. While recent reports from the country have suggested that the draconian security measures are producing results, many civil society activists within the country have been deeply critical of the harsh tactics. Indeed, impromptu quarantines gave insufficient time for citizens to stockpile food and water, or prepare for life under the new, severe security environment. For their part, other countries with tangible interests in the mitigation of Boko Haram's destabilizing presence, have warned that if such tactics continue, they might withdraw substantial security and other assistance.

Thus, Nigeria is caught between a rock and some hard places: how to effectively root out its greatest national security threat without creating avoidable hardship on their own citizens and losing needed support from the global community at large? **End OE Watch Commentary (Warner)**



Source: Idris, Hamza. "Nigeria: State of Emergency - Thousands Flee to Niger Republic." Daily Trust (Abuja), May 20, 2013. <http://allafrica.com/stories/201305200429.html>.

Article:

Maiduguri and Abuja — Thousands of people including women and children have fled the border towns of Borno and Yobe states into Niger Republic to avoid being caught up in the military operation aimed at rooting out insurgents from the areas, reports said yesterday.

The refugees said they fled after seeing armed men in many trucks around their villages and feared a repeat of the Baga-style mass killings of last month.

Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states have been under a state of emergency since Monday, following wave of attacks by members of the Jama'atu Ahlis Sunnah Lidda'awati Wal Jihad, also known as Boko Haram.

A military operation has been going in since last week, with fighter jets pounding on camps set up by insurgents near the border with Niger, Chad and Cameroon.

A BBC Hausa radio report yesterday said between 2,000 and 3,000 people have fled the border towns into Bosso in Niger Republic.

Meanwhile, as the fighting enters its second week, security forces yesterday announced recording their first casualties.

During the weekend, the military had announced conducting air raids on the Sambisa Game Reserve, where Boko Haram fighters had set up camps.

In a statement in Abuja yesterday, spokesman for the Defence Headquarters Brig-General Chris Olukolade said 3 soldiers and 14 insurgents were killed, while 7 soldiers were injured and 20 insurgents were arrested. One soldier is missing, he added.

“Dislodged terrorist have been noted to be in disarray with a large number of them heading backwards various border. Their bases are being deserted but they are making efforts to evacuate most of the large stock of logistics including scores of vehicles in their holdings.

Comoros Citizens Accuse France of Orchestrating Another Coup d'Etat

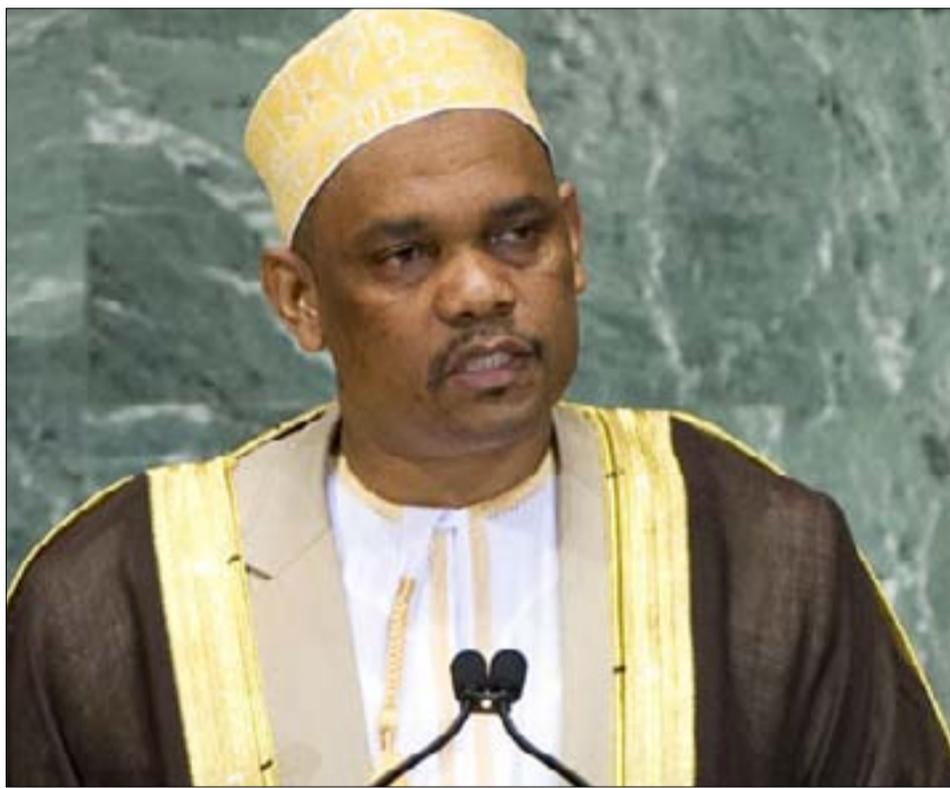
May 2013

“In short, the accusations of French complicity in the recent coup attempt in Comoros might very well confirm the oft-repeated French adage, “plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose”: “the more things change, the more they stay the same.””

OE Watch Commentary: It was déjà-vu all over again. On 20 April 2013 a group of then-unidentified men launched a coup d'état against Comoros President, Ikililou Dhoinine. However in the aftermath, as the accompanying article details, some civil society groups in the country are lodging a formal complaint against the archipelago's former colonial power, France, blaming it for complicity in the most recent attempted putsch.

Skeptical outsiders unfamiliar with the Comoros' history might be surprised to learn that these claims are far less conspiratorial than they might appear at first blush. Indeed, the situation in April was all too familiar with what seems to be an endlessly coup-riddled nation. Since its independence in 1975, the archipelago has experienced more than 20 coup d'états, leading to its garnering of the unenviable distinction as “The Coup-Coup Islands.” More insidious, however, is the fact that France, working with mercenaries such as the infamous Bob Denard, has been behind a fair share of previous coup attempts. (Denard was responsible for at least four such attempts, and served as an infamous cog in the so-called “Francafrique” French foreign policy stance that characterized the country's relationship with Africa during much of the Cold War). Further causing deep suspicion of France within the archipelago is the French retention of one of the archipelago's four islands, Mayotte, in a 1975 referendum that many in the country still claim to have been rigged.

In short, the Comorian accusations of French complicity in the recent coup attempt confirm to them the oft-repeated French adage, “plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose”: “the more things change, the more they stay the same.” **End OE Watch Commentary (Warner).**



President Ikililou Dhoinine of the Comoros, via <http://www.un.org>

Source: AFP. “Tentative de coup d'état aux Comores: des associations déposent plainte en France” [Attempted coup d'état in Comoros: associations file complaint against France] JeuneAfrique, May 20, 2013. <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/actu/20130520T102334Z20130520T102332Z/tentative-de-coup-d-etat-aux-comores-des-associations-deposent-plainte-en-france.html>.

Article:

Associations and Comorian political party announced Monday that they would complain to Paris after the attempted coup of 20 April Comoros which in which French and Franco-Comoran citizens participated.

“We will file a complaint against X in Paris on Tuesday for attempted the coup intended to destabilize the Comoros”, Larifou Said, President of the Rally for a Development Initiative of Informed Youth told the AFP.

“This complaint is justified by the French penal code, given the fact that French citizens or foreigners living in France are involved in operations to destabilize a country,” he added.

Fifteen people, among them French citizens and others hailing from the DRC, were arrested for their alleged involvement in the attempted coup foiled the Comoros.

According to Mohamed Halifa, Secretary General of the majority party UPDC the French orchestrator is “Patrick Klein, a former Bob Denard,” famous French author of a mercenary coup in the Comoros in 1995, who died in 2007.

Among the other arrested figures are Mahamoud Comoros Ahmed Abdallah, the son of former President Ahmed Abdallah, who died in 1989, who is described as the main beneficiary of the “conspiracy.”

According to the Comoros presidency, the objective of the operation was “the overthrow of the democratically elected and change through the power of institutional authority.” The aim was to stop the rotating presidency of the three islands of the archipelago, a system that was established in 2002. However, few details are forthcoming about this mysterious case.

Southeast Asian Infrastructure – Environmental Clean-up “UXO”

June 2013

“Laos needs US\$50 million per year to remove UXO buried in the ground and to help the victims of UXO-related accidents.”

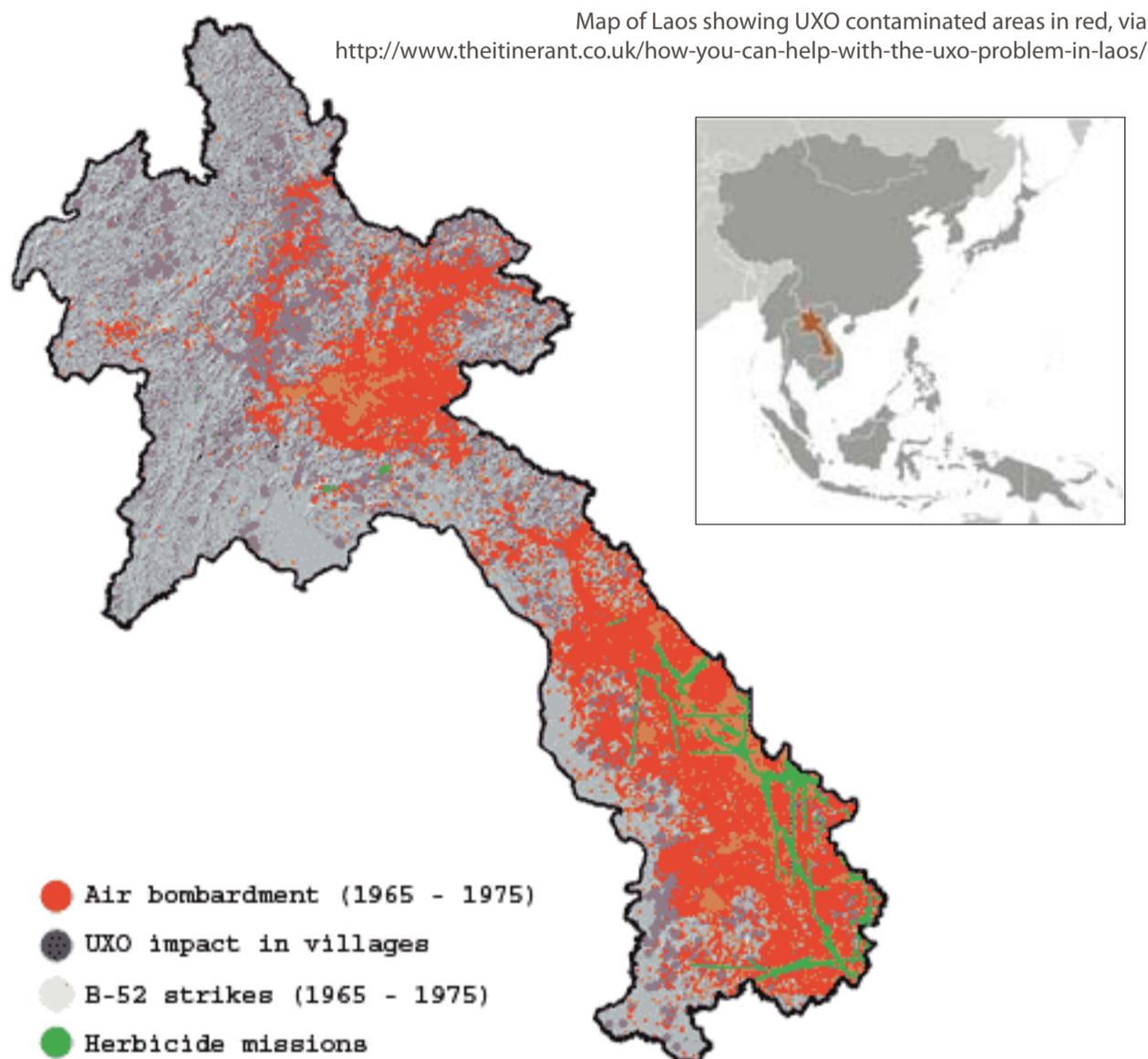
OE Watch Commentary: *The long decades of conflict in Southeast Asia (before, during, and after US involvement) left a massive legacy of environmental degradation. Southeast Asian governments address these challenges in conjunction with other governments and nongovernmental organizations (NGO). A survey of articles from different national papers describe country-specific challenges, as well the common theme of insufficient resources—particularly donor resources—to complete the task.*

The Lao government is active in addressing the reality of unexploded ordnance (UXO) to encourage economic growth throughout the country. The framework of its current plan is given in detail in the National Strategic Plan for the UXO Sector in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic 2011-2020 “The Safe Path Forward II.” The scope and impact of this legacy and the challenges in correcting it are in discussed in the accompanying articles from The Vientiane Times.

In Vietnam the widespread presence of UXOs has had a predictable impact on the environment and population. These consequences are reported in an article from People’s Army Newspaper Online.

An article from The Phnom Penh Post relates the current problem with UXOs in Cambodia as a fundamental issue that must be addressed by each affected Southeast Asian nation in order to integrate the regional economy and attract direct foreign investment.

Each nation expresses that they are open to support and funding from the United States. However, they claim the provision of equipment and funding for finding, removing, and destroying these old munitions has been limited from the US government. Vietnam sources describe



Source: Vientiane Times, “Laos is not meeting UXO clearance targets,” May 03, 2013, http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/FreeContent/FreeContent_Lao%20is.htm

Laos is behind schedule when it comes to reducing the impact of unexploded ordnance at the half way point in its operations to meet Millennium Development Goal No 9 (MDG 9), which runs from 2010-2015.

In order to achieve the MDG 9 target, 20,000 hectares of UXO contaminated lands need to be cleared per year but only 10,500 hectares has been cleared in the past three years.

Director of the National Regulatory Authority Mr Phoukhieo Chanthasomboun, told Vientiane Times on Thursday that “Now that we are half way through, it will be difficult to succeed in this operation if progress continues at this rate”.

Lao people can be less troubled by one statistic however. Last year, 56 people were injured due to exploding cluster munitions which is well down from the figure of 300 in previous years.

Unfortunately, not all of the UXO victims can be given assistance after their accidents as there is very little money to support them. Only 42 of them were helped last year. Moreover,

(continued)

Continued: Southeast Asian Infrastructure – Environmental Clean-up “UXO”

their years of litigation in US courts for Agent Orange and dioxin reparations, noting that since 2007 the US Congress has appropriated \$59.5 million for dioxin removal and related health care activities. This has encouraged Laos to also seek out US funding to assist victims and UXO removal. End OE Watch Commentary (Welch)

1. National Strategic Plan for the UXO Sector in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic 2011-2020 “The Safe Path Forward II” <http://www.nra.gov.la/resources/UXO%20Sector%20Strategy/SPFII%20%20Eng.pdf>
2. Congressional Research Service, “Vietnamese Victims of Agent Orange and U.S. – Vietnam Relations,” 29 August 2012, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34761.pdf>
3. The Vientiane Times, “Govt looks to US for help with UXO clearance,” 12 November 2010, <http://legaciesofwar.org/news/vientiane-times-govt-looks-to-us-for-help-with-uxo-clearance/>
4. <http://www.copelaos.org/>
5. <http://www.maginternational.org/MAG/en/where-we-work/lao-pdr-updates>

the 20,000 survivors from 1964 until 2008 have not received any assistance either, Mr Phoukhieo mentioned.

The UXO clearance report has been sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs before a meeting on the project’s half way stage, where rural development and poverty reduction will also be discussed. ...

The MDG 9 target is not being met as there is insufficient funding to expand UXO clearance and victim assistance teams....

Under this MDG, development partners will provide enhanced assistance to UXO clearance, survivor assistance and risk education as the focus on MDG 9 will contribute to the achievement of other MDGs, particularly MDGs 1-7 by providing increased access to assets and services for improved livelihoods....

Since the first meeting of states party, the amount of foreign assistance to the UXO sector has risen slightly each year, but remained small compared to the demand.

Laos needs US\$50 million per year to remove UXO buried in the ground and to help the victims of UXO-related accidents. Unfortunately, donors are only managing to give US\$30 million each year to fund this work.

“The international donors should raise more funds to help the operation of clearance work in Laos,” Mr Phoukhieo added.

It has been suggested that local and foreign funders with operations in Laos could also help by creating an additional budget for the removal of UXO in their project development areas. Many projects don’t yet provide such funding, but if they did it would go a long way to reducing the number of explosive devices.

Fourteen provinces in Laos were bombarded by enemy aircraft during the Indochina war from 1964 to 1973. Over 2 million tons of ordnance was dropped on the country by warplanes, including about 288 million cluster munitions. Some 75 million unexploded bombs were left across Laos after the war finally ended.

Since 1996 UXO clearance operations have covered almost 32,000 hectares of previously contaminated land. However, progress remains very slow, as this figure represents only 1 percent of all the land that must be cleared.

“Almost four decades after the war ended, more than 100 people are injured or killed each year in Laos due to exploding cluster munitions.”



Source: Vientiane Times, “Laos asks Int’l community for help with UXO clearance,” April 12, 2013, http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/FreeContent/FreeContenten_Laos_asks.htm

As the most heavily bombed country on Earth per capita, Laos has called out to the world again, highlighting the very real dangers of cluster sub-munitions at the United Nations (UN) Headquarters in New York, USA, on April 4.

‘Voices from Laos: Clearing Bombs, Protecting Lives’ was the topic of a seminar which attracted over 200 members of the Diplomatic Corps, as well as students and ordinary people on the occasion of International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action.

During this event, participants met with the survivor of a UXO-related accident and a woman who is working to clear explosive devices from the fields and forests of Xieng Khuang province in northern Laos....

Xieng Khuang is the second most UXO-contaminated province in Laos after Savannakhet,

(continued)

Continued: Southeast Asian Infrastructure – Environmental Clean-up “UXO”

but Xieng Khuang is the worst affected by cluster sub-munitions, known locally as bombies. These were the most widely used munitions and were designed to maim and kill.

Almost four decades after the war ended, more than 100 people are injured or killed each year in Laos due to exploding cluster munitions. This is down from the figure of 300 in previous years, but is still too high given the time that has passed....

Laos has demonstrated impressive economic growth over the past decade, but development in UXO-contaminated areas lags behind, with 41 out of the 46 poorest districts still affected by long buried ordnance....

“The program’s target is to mobilize and use efficiently all sources in and outside Vietnam to minimize and sustainably overcome the impacts and consequences of post-war bombs and mines”



People's Army prepare to destroy UXO in Vietnam, via http://image.qdnd.vn/Upload/maihuong_ta/2013/5/16/4057364720130516135437796.jpg

Source: People’s Army Newspaper Online, “By 2015, about 500,00 hectares of land cleared of bombs and mines,” May 16, 2013, <http://www.qdnd.vn/qdndsite/en-US/75/72/182/155/160/242514/Default.aspx>

500,000 hectares of land, especially in areas seriously contaminated with bombs and mines, will be ready for socio-economic development by 2015. This is the target of the National Action Program on Overcoming Post-war Aftermath of Bombs and Mines (Program 504) by 2015....

The program’s target is to mobilize and use efficiently all sources in and outside Vietnam to minimize and sustainably overcome the impacts and consequences of post-war bombs and mines, ensure safety for daily life of local people, and assist victims of bombs and mines so that they could integrate in society and actively contribute to national socio-economic development. Moreover, mine education will be given to local people to help avoid bomb and mine related accidents.

Projects on studying and mapping unexploded ordnance (UXO)-contaminated areas on national scale and setting up National Mine Action Standard are hoped to be completed soon.

To enable the program’s implementation, it must establish and put into operation the Database Centre for Mine Action and carry out a project of setting up the Vietnam Mine Action Centre.

General Vinh directed relevant organs under the Defence Ministry to actively cooperate with organs of relevant ministries and departments to step by step implement targets and the plan’s mission effectively, and expand international cooperation to collect more resources to beef up efforts to surmount UXO aftermath.

“...in the first three months of this year, the centre has collected and destroyed some 36,000 pieces of unexploded ordnance across the country.”

Source: The Phnom Penh Post, “Shell accidentally launches,” May 17, 2013, <http://www.phnompenhpost.com/2013051765689/National/shell-accidentally-launches.html>



Loa UXO deminer, via <http://www.uxolao.org>

An unexploded 130mm artillery shell landed in a pond behind a village in Banteay Meanchey’s Mongkol Borei district on Wednesday after it was accidentally launched more than a kilometre away by villagers in a rice field, the Cambodian Mine Action Centre said yesterday.

Uch Own, explosive ordnance disposal chief at CMAC, told the Post that unknown villagers

(continued)

Continued: Southeast Asian Infrastructure – Environmental Clean-up “UXO”



A mortar shell is seen near the banks of a river in Banteay Meanchey province this week, via <http://www.phnompenhpost.com/2013051765689/National/shell-accidentally-launches.html>

likely found the UXO in the ground, and were trying to burn the explosive inside the shell so they could keep the casing as scrap metal, when it unexpectedly launched.

“They probably had the projectile upside down on an angle with the fuse at the bottom,” he said.

“During burning, the main explosive would have come down and sealed off some of the fuse valve, generating pressure inside the projectile and pushing it to fly like a rocket.”

Because the valve was not completely blocked off, some pressure could escape, he added, which meant the shell did not explode at the scene or when it landed almost 1.6 kilometres away behind Russey Krork commune’s Chamka Tadauk village.

“This is not a common problem. People normally report UXO discoveries to the local authorities or police, who contact us ... Everybody is lucky to be safe,” he said.

Siem Hak, a CMAC deputy provincial commander, said yesterday that his team and police were draining the pond before carefully removing the civil war era UXO – a task that should only be carried out by experts, he emphasised.

The villagers involved in the incident fled the scene and have not been located, he added.

May Sokha, Mongkol Borei district deputy police chief, said authorities reported the incident to CMAC immediately after the shell landed in the fishing pond around noon on Wednesday.

On May 11, a farmer in Oddar Meanchey’s Chongkal district found 14 UXOs while ploughing his rice field, which were collected by demining centre the Halo Trust.

According to CMAC, in the first three months of this year, the centre has collected and destroyed some 36,000 pieces of unexploded ordnance across the country.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) – A Malady Shared by East and West: A Sri Lankan Look at Combat Stress and Trauma

Dr. Ruwan M. Jayatunge, Sri Lanka

In the island nation of Sri Lanka, three decades of brutal civil warfare exposed soldiers, families, and communities to prolonged trauma. During this long struggle the Sri Lanka Army came to grips with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and acknowledged it as a major factor in military readiness and community health. The experience of the Sri Lankan armed forces in identifying and treating PTSD is a valuable source for all military leaders today. This article is meant to add to that foundation of knowledge necessary to move forward.

<http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/Collaboration/international/Sri%20Lanka/PTSD.pdf>

The Spanish Civil War Continues in Latin America... or at Least the Polemics

18 May 2013

OE Watch Commentary: The lessons of history often depend on where one stands. For instance, in Latin America, the arguments surrounding the Spanish Civil War are once again heating up. Standard descriptions of that European war hold it to have been a bloody contest between right-wing fascists and left wing communists, and along with the physical battle came a contest of polemics. The adjacent excerpts are extracted from recent published discourse and reflect this ongoing political competition in Latin America.

Ideologically neutral or 'independent' voices traditionally have not been highly admired in the region, and such moderation has not proven effective for aspiring politicians. As such, much of the most revelatory writing is radicalized and zealous – as it was in Pre-WWII Spain. A broad reading, however, uncovers a strategic challenge in which coalescing leftist organizations, dedicated to extreme concentrations of power and opposition to the United States, continue to gain ground.

According to many Latin American analysts, the communists find common geopolitical ground with Islamic radicals, and make tactical alliances with gangsters. Especially to those observers who would paint themselves as pro-American, the communists present the more dangerous organized and armed threat to the interests and wellbeing of the United States. They opine that the communists should be feared and opposed as such, rather than as accessories in the wars against terrorism or drugs. The modus operandi of the radical left is to polarize public perceptions of available political choices. The result in Latin America is a renewed contrast distinguishing a communist left against an anti-communist right.

According to many Latin American analysts, however, the two poles are not equally resolute or domineering. Indeed, judging from unscientific measurement of their Internet presence, there are few fascists left, but there are beaucoup communists. The anti-communists purportedly do not have the authoritarian conviction of the old Spanish falangista right, while the left is as revolutionarily-minded as ever, and dangerously so.

The informed observers

(continued)

Source: Análisis, “Espionaje Rojo: Red de inteligencia del SEBIN venezolano al descubierto en América y Europa” Análisis (Miami) 24, 19 de mayo de 2013, via <http://analisis24.com/espionaje-rojo-red-de-inteligencia-del-sebin-venezolano-al-descubierto-en-america-y-europa/>

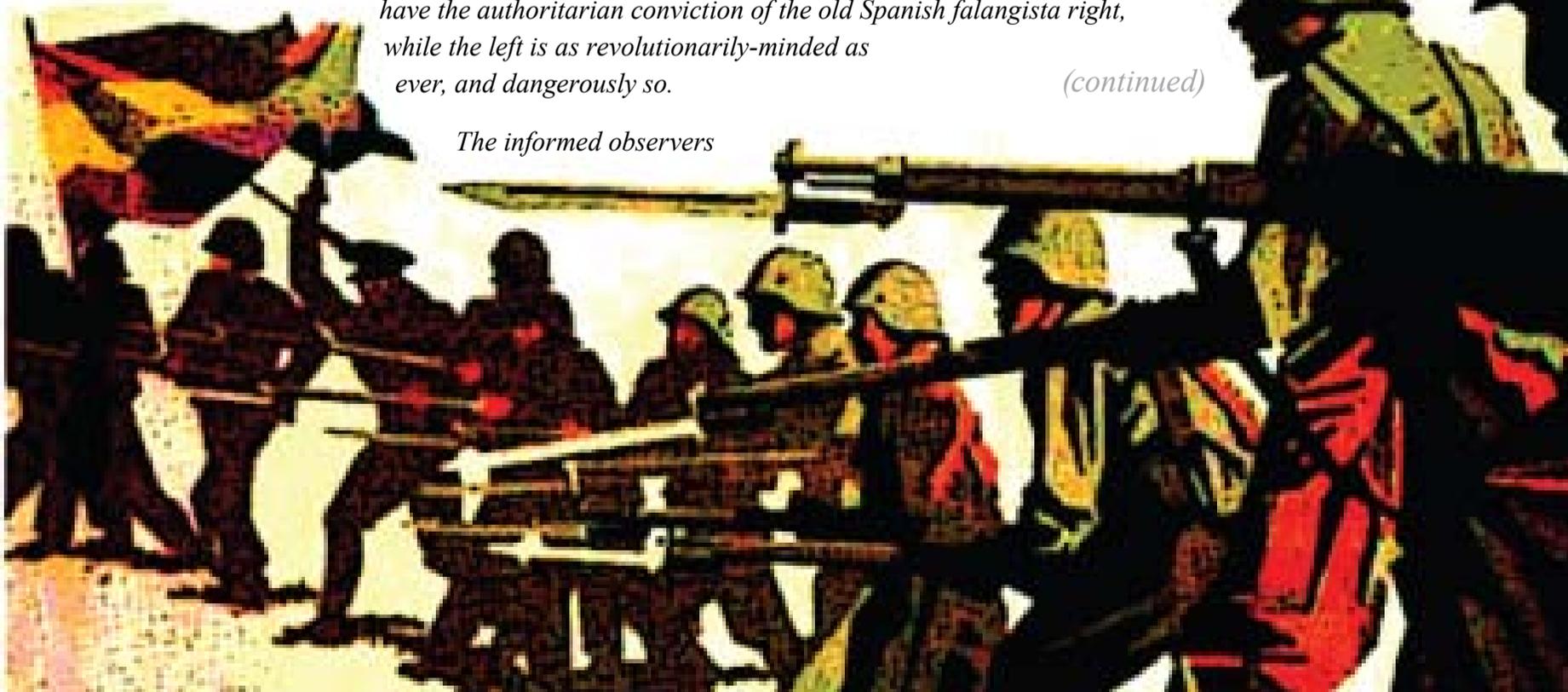
This article opines on the communist left moving in the hemisphere via national clandestine organizations:

“At least forty-one individuals (41) have been operating, and in some cases for as much as eleven months, have been identified by an intelligence agency as officers of the Bolivarian National Intelligence Service of Venezuela, better known by its [Spanish] initials SEBIN, and belonging to the International Operations Coordinator (COE) of said organization.”

Source: Eduardo Mackenzie. “El continente imaginario del señor Insulza,” “El continente imaginario del señor Insulza,” Webarticulista, 24 February, 2013, <http://webarticulista.wordpress.com/2013/02/24/el-continente-imaginario-del-senor-insulza/>

In this article, Latin American columnist Eduardo MacKenzie takes Jose Miguel Insulza, secretary General of the Organization of American States, to task, accusing him as tool of a leftist geopolitical conspiracy:

“One gets the impression that Insulza has erased the United States and Canada from his intellectual logic. He speaks more as a chief of UNASUR [Union of South American Nations], created in 2008, than as the responsible head of an organism that includes 35 countries, that is to say, the north and the south of the continent, and not just part of it.”



Continued: The Spanish Civil War Continues in Latin America... or at Least the Polemics

from the region tell us that the communist characters are not figments of conspiracy theory or dramatic fiction, nor ghosts of the Cold War. Instead, they manage a growing international apparatus and own key leadership positions in ministries, presidencies, international organizations, intelligence agencies, civil society, and armed guerrilla groups. According to the authors, the communists have succeeded in deepening the stridency of their arguments and are poised to expand the use of armed action; moving beyond the polemics of Spanish Civil War to its violence. End OE Watch Commentary (Demarest)

Source: UnoAmérica, “UnoAmérica rechaza visita del Foro de Sao Paulo a Colombia” UnoAmérica, Bogotá. 26 de noviembre de 2010, via http://unoamerica.org/unoPAG/noticia.php?id=1132&utm_source=Fuerza+Solidaria&utm_campaign=e7602d8695-1A_rechaza_visita_del_FSP_20101126&utm_medium=email

The Forum of Sao Paulo is perhaps the premier hemisphere-wide umbrella NGO for radical communist organizations. UnoAmérica is a leading NGO of recent antecedence that opposes the projects and intentions of the Forum of Sao Paulo. In this article, UnoAmérica complains about the semi-open presence of the Forum in Bogotá:

“The international representation of the Forum of Sao Paulo that arrived in Bogotá includes representatives of the Workers Party (PT) of Brazil, the Broad Front of Uruguay, National Transversal and Popular Front of Argentina, the Socialist Movement of Paraguay, Country Alliance of Ecuador, the Unified Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV), the Revolutionary Democratic Party (PRD) of Mexico, the Communist Party of Cuba, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) of Nicaragua, the Farabundo Martí Front for National Liberation (FMLN) of El Salvador, and the Movement to Socialism (MAS) of Bolivia.”

Source: Luis Alberto Villamarín Pulido, “Muerte de Kirchner otro revés para el Plan Estratégico de las Farc” 27 de octubre de 2010, Conflictocolombiano. <http://www.conflictocolombiano.com>

This 2010 web commentary from a Latin American political analyst outlines a relationship between the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces, Argentinean presidential politics, and the ideological control of regional International Organizations. The article’s assertions still resonate:

“Even less can Colombians forget that Kirchner was the concert director of the attempted [diplomatic] encirclement by UNASUR against President Uribe in retaliation for the death of terrorist Raúl Reyes in Ecuador.”

Source: Bertrand de la Grange, “Fidel y Ríos Montt” 18 de mayo de 2013. La Razón, México, http://razon.com.mx/spip.php?page=columnista&id_article=172810

This article notes that the two aged leaders led different lives at different ends of the political spectrum, will leave distinct legacies, and offers their treatment as an interesting proxy for the current ideological war. Rios Montt is being tried as a Human Rights monster, while Fidel Castro enjoys admired icon status. It would appear objectively difficult to make a case for Castro’s moral superiority. We are reminded of the advantages of victory in revolution:

“General Rios Montt and Comandante Fidel Castro are the same age, 86, the Guatemalan born on 16 June, 1926, and the Cuban 13 August of the same year. Both exercised power with an iron hand and are accused in the deaths of thousands of human beings. There the similarities end.”



Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foro_de_S%C3%A3o_Paulo

OE Watch Commentary: Chinese President and General Secretary of the Communist Party Xi Jinping established his policy of pursuing the “Chinese Dream,” a term still under debate as to its exact meaning and intentions. In brief, it may be understood as the idea that the Chinese people will prosper under a policy of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Some analysts argue the Chinese Dream calls for an essentially blind and unwavering faith in the Communist Party’s ability to achieve it.

Despite Communist efforts to embed Xi’s mantra into everyday thought and life, Chinese netizens have openly voiced their opinions against the ideology. For example, the China Digital Times blog points to a recent survey polling users on their confidence of Xi’s ability to successfully pursue the Chinese Dream. Most Chinese netizens were less than impressed with his vision. In each of the four questions over 75% of respondents reported a lack of faith in the ability of the Communist Party, while 80% of respondents disagreed with the “One-Party System” institution. The poll, conducted on a forum run by the state-owned news company People’s Daily, has since been removed.

In other forums, citizens posted photos of themselves holding hand-written signs showcasing their own version of a Chinese Dream. Most signs directed grievances toward Party policies. In one article posted by the online-magazine Tea Leaf Nation, the author points to the fact that while the Communist Party may have pushed the Chinese Dream as a platform for an increasingly strong military, netizen reactions dismissed this point and focused on their own desires for a more prosperous and freer society.

Though petitioners often face persecution and Internet access continues to remain heavily guarded, Chinese citizens are increasingly harnessing the utility of the Internet to practice free speech and open dialogue, often directing calls for reform at the Communist Party and its policies. During these first stages of Xi’s tenure, online forums and discussions prove increasingly useful for gauging citizens’ moods toward the Party’s policies and direction. **End OE Watch Commentary (Faruolo)**

中國夢

The Chinese Dream

Source: “Is the ‘China Dream’ Really a ‘Strong Military Dream’?,” Tea Leaf Nation, 8 March 2013, <http://www.tealeafnation.com/2013/03/is-the-china-dream-really-a-strong-military-dream/>

...The main thrust of the article was that the China Dream was one of a strong nation – and a strong military.

... While the state media was trying hard to push positive statements like, “I want our country to be courageous, and have the vision, and wisdom to overcome difficulties,” reactions to the movie and the China Dream rhetoric in general showed that most Chinese Web users were not buying in. Instead, the phrase gave rise to skepticism, sarcasm, and complaints. One Weibo user with the handle @天堂128 wrote: “My dream is that I will not be invited to ‘drink tea’ [slang for being summoned to meet with government officials] while discussing contemporary Chinese issues.”

...Web users also took the opportunity to comment on the disparity between the state-promoted “China Dream” and their own unrealized hopes. User @周旖婷 wrote, “Cleaner air, healthier water, safer food, safer baby formula, on-time flights, unimpeded roads, lower gas prices, lower taxes...not a lot, just a little...I have a dream, just a dream.”

...The cold reception that the “China Dream” got from its target audience shows a certain disillusionment with the government’s ability to make dreams come true. Most discussion of these dreams involved calls for new governmental involvement or regulations.

Source: “Netizens Voices: A Vote ‘No’ for Xi’s Chinese Dream,” China Digital Times, April 15, 2013, <http://chinadigitaltimes.net/2013/04/netizen-voices-a-vote-no-for-the-chinese-dream/>

...People’s Forum, a BBS on the website of the state-run newspaper People’s Daily, launched the “Confidence-Conviction-Faith” survey on March 27 to measure its readers’ commitment to Xi Jinping’s vision of the “Chinese dream”...

...From the results captured in the screenshot below, the Party’s sales pitch for the Chinese dream is backfiring...

Source: “Chinese Petitioners: Here’s My Chinese Dream’,” Tea Leaf Nation, 27 March 2013, <http://www.tealeafnation.com/2013/03/chinese-petitioners-heres-my-chinese-dream/>

...In a series of photos posted on Sina Weibo, China’s favorite microblogging platform, a group of petitioners held up hand-made signs describing their “Chinese dreams.” An old woman named Xu wrote, “My Chinese dream: at 70, I would not be sent to black [i.e. officially unacknowledged] prisons. I have the right to petition the central government. Jiefang is a crime.”

“China has been working on a two-pronged strategy to prepare for a more active role in Afghanistan after the pullout by international forces.”

OE Watch Commentary: The 2014 withdrawal of U.S. and NATO troops from Afghanistan is drawing closer and many observers are wondering what the future holds for the country. The first article, entitled “China Maneuvres to Create Space for Itself in Afghanistan,” is interesting in that it offers a glimpse into a possible outcome. According to the article, China believes the situation in Afghanistan will deteriorate after the withdrawal. As a result of its pessimism, China is reportedly working to try to counter the anticipated ill effects of the withdrawal by working on a “two pronged strategy to prepare for a more active role in Afghanistan after the pullout...” This includes engaging with critical players in the country and coordinating with Pakistan to achieve its objectives.

In the second article, Afghan President Hamid Karzai maintains a more optimistic outlook for the outcome once troops withdraw. He also believes that China could play “a very important role in facilitating and promoting the peace process in Afghanistan.”

China has been investing heavily toward developing natural resources in the country. The Sino-Afghan relationship seems to be a win-win situation. China has the technology, expertise, money, and political will to make a difference in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, China is in need of natural resources to help fuel its economic growth, and Afghanistan is believed to have over \$1 trillion in mineral deposits. It is therefore in China’s best interest to assume a more active role in the country. **End OE Watch Commentary (Hurst)**



Source: Bharti Jain, “China Manoeuvres to Create Space for Itself in Afghanistan,” The Times of India, May 20, 2013, <<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/south-asia/China-manoeuvres-to-create-space-for-itself-in-Afghanistan/articleshow/20143032.cms>>

Article 1:

China Maneuvres to Create Space for Itself in Afghanistan

As the 2014 deadline for withdrawal of western forces from Afghanistan draws near, China has stepped up engagement with Pakistan and others on the reconciliation process that will follow in the war-ravaged country.

Beijing, as part of an Afghan policy that suits its strategic and business interests, has been interacting with various Afghan lobbies, discreetly reaching out to Northern Alliance leaders as well as the Taliban, while also coordinating with Pakistan to create space for itself in possible political deliberations on the future of Afghanistan.

According to an assessment by Indian intelligence agencies, China believes the situation will deteriorate in Afghanistan following the 2014 election...

... Beijing, as per Indian intelligence inputs, has conveyed to Pakistanis and Afghans that it would be keen to be involved in the reconciliation process.

Intelligence sources here said China has been working on a two-pronged strategy to prepare for a more active role in Afghanistan after the pullout by international forces. This includes independent engagement with critical players in Afghanistan and, secondly, coordinating with Pakistan at various levels to achieve its objectives.

Source: “Afghanistan Will Keep on the Road that It Has Taken,” Office of the President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, April 21, 2013, <<http://president.gov.af/en/news/19487>>.

Article 2:

President Karzai: Afghanistan Will Keep on the Road that It Has Taken

In an interview with Chinese Phoenix Satellite Television, President Hamid Karzai has said that China as a neighbor, a major world power and a friend of Afghanistan could play a very important role in facilitating and promoting the peace process in Afghanistan.

On the importance of Sino-Afghan relations, President Karzai said, “Afghanistan views China not only as a good neighbor, as a neighbor that has been doing good for the Afghan people for long but also as the second biggest economy in the world, as a rising superpower of the world and a superpower that is a neighbor of Afghanistan.”

Calling negative prediction on 2014 and its aftermath, part of the Western media propaganda, President Karzai stressed that Afghanistan would keep on the road that it has taken, and continue to make progress.

China's New International Confidence: Domestic Problems are the Only Real Threats

25 April 2013

“Under the current situation, as long as China has no desire to fight a war, there are no nations with the power to compel China to fight one.”

OE Watch Commentary: In this Global Times editorial, Pan Wei, a professor of international relations at Peking University, sketches out the biggest challenges facing China in the coming decade. The excerpt below is culled from the last section, which focuses on the international environment facing China. While Chinese thinkers have until recently theorized an international environment that is innately hostile towards China, Pan's argument depicts a China that is internationally ascendant and self-assured, dismissive of external security threats at the nation-state level. This new projection of self-confidence in international affairs seems to be in keeping with the self-confident image of Xi Jinping's new administration, with its much bandied about "China Dream" slogan.

Pan argues that while China inevitably faces international hostility, these threats are strategically insignificant. He asserts China's strategic primacy in disputes with Taiwan and Japan, and dismisses the US pivot to Asia as nothing more than a "few more aircraft carriers patrolling about." He asserts that the fundamental threats to Chinese security over the next decade will all be domestic. If China can handle issues like rapid urbanization and an increasing wealth gap, no foreign power will be able to threaten the country's stability. "If China does not bring chaos upon itself, then no foreign country will be able to bring chaos on China." **End OE Watch Commentary (Moskowitz)**

Source: "Pan Wei: Zhonghua bu luan, wu ren ke luan Hua" (Pan Wei: If China does not bring chaos upon itself, there is no one who can bring chaos upon China) Pan Wei, Huanqiu Shibao (Global Times – China) 25 April 2013 http://opinion.huanqiu.com/opinion_china/2013-04/3870163.html

The Unprecedented Easing of the International Environment

In the coming decade there are two main technological challenges that China must handle. First, we face immense pressure to upgrade from a manufacturing to a service-based economy. Low-level manufacturing is a declining industry, something backwards nations must rely on to create jobs. The transformation from peasant labor to manufacturing is the inevitable first step of economic transformations throughout the world. Moving from manufacturing to a high-level service economy based on research and development is the next transition. The third transition is to move one-step up [the value chain] to the production of intangible goods. Only by relying on research and development as the nucleus of our economy, can we transform limited natural resources into the limitless production of cheap goods [in the form of services]. The world's most profitable business rely on design, not on the ownership of factories. Industrial differences can lead a nation to one side or the other of the growing chasms between the rich and the poor, the strong and the weak.

The second challenge is the pressure of fast-paced urbanization. If we can't find a suitable place for the not-well-off, these people will become the "new urban poor," and this will lead to the reemergence of class struggle in our society. This is a major political issue, and deserves serious attention. In an era of labor shortages we need to release people from the constraints of residence registration [which bind people formally to their place of birth as urban or rural residents] and allow people to move freely in search of work. This will lead to the additional creation of small and medium sized cities which can compete with each other to attract labor... these measures may naturally solve some of China's problems.

Over the course of sixty plus years [of Communist Party rule] China has diligently faced many difficulties and emerged with renewed strength. Because our power has grown, the China's international situation has become relatively relaxed and hospitable. In fact, the degree of easing of our current international situation is unprecedented. The balance of power in the straits of Taiwan issue now favors the Mainland. Besides a few more aircraft carriers patrolling about, America's "pivot to Asia" will have substantively little impact and does not constitute a "security threat." Japanese provocations over the Diaoyu [Senkaku] islands are futile. Of course some Southeast Asian nations have misgivings about China which cause them to believe that they can rely on the US. This, along with the "China threat theory," should not be mentioned in the same breath as things that actually affect reality.

American, European and Russian relations with China are growing ever more stable, and it is hard to imagine any new major setbacks arising. Under the current situation, as long as China has no desire to fight a war, there are no nations with the power to compel China to fight one. As such, China's most fundamental issues are domestic issues... As long as China does not bring chaos upon itself, no other nation can bring chaos upon China.

China's Eyes Over the Subcontinent: Pakistan Inks Deal for Military and Civilian Use of Chinese Satellite Network

20 May 2013

“The system will have a major impact on Pakistan’s nuclear deterrence capabilities. But the Beidou system’s real value lies in its ability to provide precision orientation to Pakistani submarines.”

OE Watch Commentary: Not only will Pakistan become the fifth country in the Asia-Pacific region to adopt the Chinese satellite navigation system known as Beidou (north star), but, according to this Global Times report, the Beidou system will soon be supported by a network of Pakistani ground stations built at Chinese expense. Notably, the agreement includes military cooperation, as well as civilian, which is where it diverts from deals with other nations that have signed on for access to the proprietary Chinese navigation system.

The article spends little time on the significance of the stations, as opposed to the significance of the system itself for Pakistan’s military and economy. However, the report, which signals deepening military and economic ties between China and Pakistan, comes on the eve of a South Asian tour by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, who will visit Pakistan, as well as Pakistan’s regional rival India. A good deal of Chinese news about the trip has focused on efforts at rapprochement between China and India, which are embroiled in a long-running border dispute.

Though the adoption of Beidou will create significant linkages between the Pakistani civilian economy and China, the article notes the important support role of Beidou for Pakistani military technology, especially guidance systems for its missiles and submarines. The adoption of the technology further entrenches the Chinese-Pakistani military relationship. The choice of a Chinese proprietary satellite navigation system over the American system by any nation could have important ramifications for regional conflicts between allies of either nation. **End OE Watch Commentary (Moskowitz)**



Source: “Ba zhuanjia: Zhongguo Beidou daohang zhishu jiang bangli Bajisitan ” (Pakistani expert: China’s Beidou navigation technology will help Pakistan) Huanqiu Shibao (Global Times – China) 20 May 2013, <http://news.sohu.com/20130520/n376473398.shtml>

China’s Beidou navigation technology will help Pakistan

Beijing-based BDStar Navigation Technology will spend tens of millions of dollars to establish a network of ground stations in Pakistan to improve the overall accuracy of its navigation network [known as Beidou – ‘north star’]. Pakistan will become the fifth Asian nation granted access to the Chinese system after Thailand, Laos, Brunei and Burma. According to a retired Pakistani Air Force Colonel, the system will significantly benefit Pakistan’s missile defense systems, increasing accuracy especially of its inertial guidance systems.

The system will enable Pakistan to adopt a two-pronged strategic approach. During times of war the system will greatly improve the navigation of Pakistani cruise missiles... Meanwhile, ballistic missiles will no longer be forced to rely on inertial guidance but will have access to more precise satellite guidance.

The system will have a major impact on Pakistan’s nuclear deterrence capabilities. But the Beidou system’s real value lies in its ability to provide precision orientation to Pakistani submarines. The Beidou system will significantly impact and help to modernize all guidance and command systems of the Pakistani defense force. The system will also benefit Pakistan’s farmers, disaster prevention forces, certain industries and universities and research institutions among others. The benefits of exchange with China in the field of satellite navigation will be far reaching.

The retired colonel confirmed that the system will not just have defense uses but will help Pakistan’s economy to take flight as well, providing its industries with sight in the form of precision guidance and increased efficiency. He noted that the system will be especially useful in earthquake prevention and relief, a use for which it has already been employed in Thailand.

Prime Minister Li Keqiang will discuss plans for the Beidou system in his upcoming visit to Pakistan. Pakistan is an all-weather cooperative partner of China’s. Cooperation over the Beidou system is in keeping with preexisting civilian cooperation between Pakistan and China, but also military cooperation. In this sense Pakistan’s adoption of the technology differs from other Asian nation’s adoption of Beidou.

OE Watch Commentary: In 2012 the South Korean Ministry of National Defense estimated the number of North Korea's militia at 7.7 million. North Korea boasts of the most extensive civilian forces in the world, consisting of three types of forces: the Worker-Peasant Red Guards, the Red Guard Youth Unit, and the Reserve Military Training Unit. These civilian defense forces date from the 1950s, and are wholly predicated upon defending against an external enemy. The 1972 Constitution, which emphasized the catch-phrase "the militarization of all people," has helped to transform North Korea into an army with a state.

Numerically large and societally all-encompassing, this homeland army is statistically impressive, and basically includes every healthy citizen between the ages of 14-60, all of whom are expected to defend the North Korean state. Civilian groups train regularly on nearly every aspect of civil defense; to improve command and control, some of their exercises are conducted jointly with regular military forces.

The strident and bellicose rhetoric found in the adjacent excerpt from a North Korean Party newspaper might be

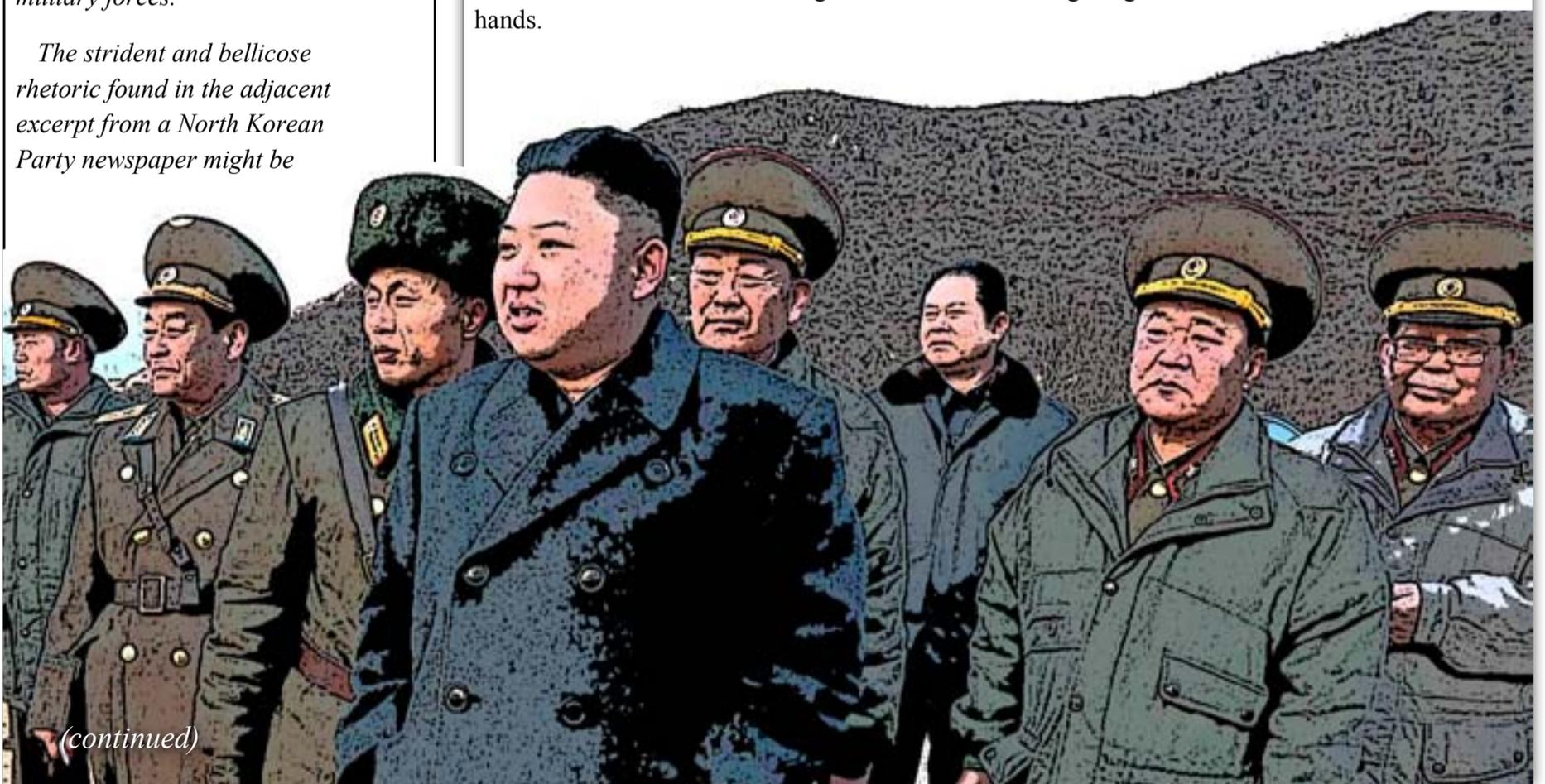


Source: "Let Us Powerfully Display the Militant Might of the Revolutionary Militia Forces," Rodong Sinmun, 18 March 2013.

DPRK Party Organ Editorializes on Might, Roles of Militia

The enemy-annihilating will of millions of soldiers and people to firmly crush the frantic anti-Republic aggression maneuvers of the US imperialists and their stooges and death-defyingly defend our sovereignty and dignity is erupting more fiercely with each passing day.

Our working class, agricultural workers, and scientists, who had been stepping up the general onward march for the construction of an economically powerful state and the improvement of the people's living standards, have turned out like mountains in the sacred war for defending the fatherland, grasping a gun in one hand and a hammer, sickle, and pen in the other. Countless young people, who had been giving full play to learning and planning for a better tomorrow, are petitioning to enlist and reenlist in the Korean People's Army [KPA], and war veterans and even young members of the children's union are boiling the blood coursing through their hearts to stand on the front line of exterminating the enemies and asking for guns to hold in their hands.



(continued)

Continued: North Korea's Militia

emblematic of the North Korean people's armed mentality. Then again, the heightened rhetoric might be symptomatic of larger problems in North Korean society. Defectors from North Korea have suggested an inverse correlation between the combative statements of the Pyongyang regime and its actual ability to provide the basic necessities to the North Korean people. This brings into question the effectiveness of a starving and demoralized militia.
End OE Watch Commentary (Kim)

Our fatherland is an invincible powerful state where all the people are armed and the whole country has turned into a fortress.

The militia forces, including the Worker-Peasant Red Guards, constitute a powerful mainstay of the country's national defense capabilities for self-defense along with the people's army -- the invincible and ever-victorious powerful revolutionary party of Mt Paektu -- and the whole country has been strengthened into an impregnable fortress like Hsiaowangching...

The great leader Comrade Kim Jong Il has pointed out as follows: "We have to reinforce the militia and turn the whole country into a strong fortress."

The building of the militia arises as an especially important issue in carving out the independent destiny of the country and nation. History and reality show that the sovereignty and dignity of the nation can be firmly defended only when powerful militia forces, along with regular armed forces, are organized.

Our militia forces, including the Worker-Peasant Red Guards, are our party's revolutionary armed forces occupying an important place in the country's military power and in the all-people defense system. Our militia forces are now demonstrating their majesty as the reliable flank units of the people's army and as the powerful armed forces capable of independently annihilating and wiping out the enemies, no matter which part of the country they may invade. It is because our people's army is powerful and the whole country has been reinforced into a forest of bayonets and an invincible fortress that we could proclaim an all-out war of confrontation against the US imperialists and meet the enemies' hard line head-on with an ultra-hard line with such guts as the present. ...

...Our people, including the members of the Worker-Peasant Red Guards, are currently living and working in a revolutionary and militant manner, maintaining a state of maximum agitation and a strained posture like in wartime. The land throughout the country is brimming over with the do-or-die resolve and matchless fighting spirit to risk one's life to resolutely protect our fatherland permeated with the sacred lives of the great generalissimos and the valuable blood and sweat of the revolutionary martyrs, and our socialism, which is the nest of living for all future generations. It is our people's enemy-annihilating spirit to give full vent to their century-old grudge and rage and settle accounts with the US imperialists without fail, if the US imperialists foolishly light the fuse of war to the last....

...All commanding officers and members of the civil defense sector should cherish a firm faith that we will win without fail, as we are strong and powerful. We should firmly crush the maneuvers of hostile forces to harm our independent dignity and system with the strong national pride and guts befitting the people of a satellite launching state and a nuclear weapons state. We should turn our party's chuch'e-oriented viewpoint of war, spirit of death-defying defense of the fatherland, resolute anti-imperialist class consciousness, and firm concept of countering the enemy into inveterate traits. The ranks of our militia should overflow with the courage and heroic mettle of the people's army, which is fully charged with an enemy-annihilating will to show the Mt Paektu powerful revolutionary army's real taste of war by breaking the backs of enemies and completely cutting off their lifeline once an order is issued....

...The might our militia forces, which hold respected and beloved Supreme Commander Marshal Kim Jong Un in high esteem in the van, is inexhaustible....

OE Watch Commentary: Kazakhstan, out of all the countries in Central Asia, puts the most effort into developing and trying to improve its image abroad. However, over the years, several negative events have had amplified effects to degrade this image. This frustration is seen in recent commentary regarding the two Kazakh men, who were associated with Boston bomber Dzhokar Tsarnaev and accused of destroying evidence.

As this op-ed demonstrates, the 2006 farcical movie “Borat” is still strongly featured in Kazakh analysis and remains a great sensitivity.

A similar situation in 2011 occurred in the aftermath of a series of attacks in Kazakhstan when Kazakh commentators countered Western claims that extremists with connections to groups in Afghanistan, including al-Qaeda, were involved. They instead promoted the alternative idea that the attacks were localized acts of revenge against the police and security services (see: <http://www.azh.kz/news/view/7692>, and <http://www.time.kz/news/archive/2011/11/01/atyrau-pervaya-krov>). They also expressed concern about the national image.

The op-ed is quite scathing of the two young men and suggests how the investment for improving Kazakhstan’s image has now been wasted. The government has put forth a considerable effort in public relations as part of its plan to be among the most developed countries in the world. The Kazakh government acknowledged the arrest of its citizens in an official press release, but since then has not commented on this story. **End OE Watch Commentary (Stein)**

“Now, in the U.S. they will not say “This is the Kazakhstan that held the OSCE summit,” or “This is the Kazakhstan that won so many medals at the 2012 Olympics.” They will say, “We know Kazakhstan! That is where those guys who supported the terrorist that bombed Boston came from.””



Dias Kadyrbayev and Azamat Tazhayakova standing with Dzhokar Tsarnaev, via <http://rus.azattyq.org/content/kazakh-students-arrested-in-boston/24966295.html>

Source: Yuvachyov, Danila. “Марш «Бостон» (The Boston March), Megapolis, 6 May 2013, http://megapolis.kz/art/Marsh_Boston

The Boston March

We want Kazakhstan to be respected. This is a fear of ours. This is not because we are a superpower. It is because our people live behind a cordon where all are ashamed. The most recent case – the two students that were arrested in connection with the investigation of the terrorist attack in Boston have pushed “Stan-phobia” to the limit.

It is a pity for these two guys – Azamat Tazhayakova and Dias Kadyrbayev. I sincerely wish the investigation ends well for them, however, they have let down their homeland... What were these guys thinking, driving around in a car with a license plate that was written “Terrorista #1”?...It is possible to agree that the friendship of Tsarnaev is not a crime, and to assume that the guys did not know about his plans...It is impossible to understand why they suddenly decided to “save their friend Tsarnaev from trouble,” and to destroy evidence against him...

...Personally, I think the guys just behaved in the U.S. as they are used to doing at home. Here at home, they got away with it...Unfortunately, cases when Kazakhs represent their country in a bad light are now impossible to count on the fingers of one hand...It only takes one such “hero” and all efforts to improve the image of Kazakhstan abroad goes to pieces. (Gone) along with this was a lot of money spent for these purposes.

In short, we continue to persistently, through our “envoys”, support the international opinion of “Borat-ostan.”...Now imagine that you, a law-abiding citizen of Kazakhstan, arrive in the U.S. Instead of putting a stamp in the passport at customs in the airport, they detain and strip search you, because they are afraid – you are from Kazakhstan!...

“The author mentions several times that the Taliban will be able to destabilize the region after the 2014 drawdown; this is a viewpoint that is more often seen in articles related to Tajikistan or Uzbekistan than Kazakhstan.”

OE Watch Commentary: *The drawdown of International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) from Afghanistan in 2014 continues to be a contentious issue in Central Asian media, as the accompanying article shows. The article's main focus is on possible threats stemming from Afghanistan in the next year, in addition to other issues.*

The author mentions several times that the Taliban will be able to destabilize the region after the 2014 drawdown; this is a viewpoint that is more often seen in articles related to Tajikistan or Uzbekistan than Kazakhstan. The author even scrutinizes the statement made by the deputy minister of defense about the development of a mobile reserve force, saying how this reserve system would be no match for the Taliban. The minister discussed the reserve system in response to improving the morale of the armed forces and continuing to transition from a conscription system to adding more contract soldiers, rather than developing the reserve force to combat the Taliban. The author is correct in saying that the Taliban have threatened Kazakhstan; in May 2011 the group warned the government that sending soldiers to support ISAF would have “consequences.” The author could be referring to this past threat.

The terrorist attacks in Kazakhstan that took place in 2011 after the threat were not related to the Taliban. It is difficult to know how exactly the author sees the Taliban as a threat to Kazakhstan. Certainly any violence the Taliban instigates in Afghanistan causes concern in the region and it is possible that the group would inspire extremists in Kazakhstan to carry out an attack within the country. The Taliban conducting an incursion into Kazakhstan and sustaining it would be much more complicated.



Kazakhstan's Ground Forces conducting a field training exercise, via http://asker.kz/blog/sluzhba_v_army_kazakhstan/suxoputnye-vojska-kurs-molodogo-bojca.html

Source: Baydaulatov, Serik. “Минобороны афганской угрозы не видит (The Ministry of Defense does not see an Afghan threat),” *Respublika*, 8 May 2013. <http://www.respublika-kz.info/news/politics/30237/>

The Ministry of Defense Does Not See an Afghan Threat

The Ministry of Defense of Kazakhstan does not see a “large-scale threat” to the Central Asian region, and to our country in particular, after the drawdown of coalition forces from Afghanistan in 2014 and the consequent reactivation of the Taliban. This was stated during an online conference by the First Deputy Minister of Defense Saken Zhasuzakov. The Deputy Minister began to explain that the Taliban are not as capable and threatening as they are portrayed and he did not expect an increase of the Taliban movement in the region; the question was in response to an online user named Kayrat who only asked if we are going to lay claim to equipment and weapons that the Americans and their allies do not want to take out (of Afghanistan)...

...“The question about weapons and military equipment: Do you understand that any equipment already has wear and tear, no one will give out their new equipment,” – Zhasuzakov said, “Our army aims to get only new equipment, but to take, for example, American (equipment) will require creating a new system of support, repair, and maintenance.”...The Deputy Minister’s assertion that they do not see a threat after the drawdown of forces (from Afghanistan) suggests that we do not want our neighbors to have NATO equipment. This is so much the case that they are ready to deny the obvious – there is a threat of destabilization in the region after the coalition no longer holds back the Taliban...Why not just recognize the threat and divide the inheritance of NATO in 2014 equally? The answer given was damning – we need to support our own military-industrial complex.

(continued)

Continued: Kazakhstan's Ministry of Defense: A Lack of Concern 2014

*Another issue that is prevalent throughout Central Asia is the issue of excess ISAF military weapons and equipment. It has been contended repeatedly during the past year that excess defense equipment in Afghanistan will be given to some of the Central Asian governments instead of being taken back to the United States. It is again brought up in this article. However, even though the newspaper Respublika is known for being critical of the government of Kazakhstan, this author does not object to Kazakhstan receiving some of those defense articles.
End OE Watch Commentary (Stein)*

...“We now have 65 percent contract service members, and we only call up 15-16 thousand out of a half million for the draft” – said Zhasuzakov, “But we do not forget about those who, for whatever reason, are not able to serve. According to the new law “On Military Service,” which was adopted last year, we can take them for a fee...this individual may undergo military training, for this we have military-technical schools. They take part in training for a month on an ordinary program, then receive a military billet, take the oath, and enter the strategic mobile reserve...In the Swiss Army there is a system: the soldier is ready at home, all these homes have a pack, and at the alarm he can deploy and be issued a weapon somewhere. That is the system we have.”...The line “be issued a weapon somewhere” would be laughable if it were not for that unfortunate circumstance that allegedly did not threaten the country; the Taliban do not receive weapons “somewhere” but literally have them under their beds. So, to project the Swiss experience to Kazakhstan’s mobile reserve, that even serving two years and they only visit the shooting range once – before the oath, is simply ridiculous...

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

By Zhulduz Baizakova

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

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

“Probably the most significant point in this article is that it tries to explain where each country believes the border is delineated from a historical perspective. News reports on previous incidents only mention that the border is disputed and offer no specifics.”

OE Watch Commentary: *The incident reported in the accompanying article is the third time in the past year that a dispute over construction near a border in the Fergana Valley region turned violent (see: August 2012 OE Watch, “Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan Border Shooting” and January 2013 OE Watch, “Incident in Uzbekistan’s Sokh Exclave”). The result of this incident appears to be the least destructive of the three; there were no deaths or major destruction of property, although several people were reportedly hospitalized with injuries. The lack of this could be attributed to a quick response by authorities, which was noted by an article from a source in Kyrgyzstan (see: <http://kloop.kg/blog/2013/04/29/stroitel-stvo-dorogi-vokrug-vorukha-priostanovleno-do-razresheniya-prigranichny-h-sporov/>).*

Probably the most significant point in this article is that it tries to explain from an historical perspective where each country believes the border is delineated. News reports on previous incidents only mention that the border is disputed and offer no specifics. If the border were delineated according to the former head of Vorukh, a redrawn border would (re)connect the enclave Vorukh with Tajikistan’s Isfara District (Sughd Province). This would further isolate the Kyrgyz village of Aksai, as it sits along the only road from Tajikistan to Vorukh. It is difficult to see how this, let alone other disputed areas on the Kyrgyz-Tajik border, can be resolved.

While this or other border disputes may take time to be resolved, there is one other interesting point that the author makes at the end of the article. He notes that business seemed to go on as usual after the incident, although, in reality, Kyrgyzstan’s Border Guards barred entry into Vorukh for several days. The hostage



The Kyrgyz-Tajik border at Aksai-Vorukh after the conflict”, via http://vorukh.ucoz.ru/news/tanish_dar_vorukh/2013-04-29-484

Source: Mirsaidov, Khayrullo. “Осадный Ворух (Vorukh under siege),” Asia-Plus, 2 May 2013, via <http://news.tj/ru/newspaper/article/osadnyi-vorukh>

Vorukh under siege

Last Saturday, April 27 (2013), a conflict took place on the Tajik-Kyrgyz border; this open clash turned into hostage taking and even the beating of members of security services. The cause of the conflict was the construction on the Kyrgyz side of the road at the disputed border area near the Tajik Jamoat Vorukh. Local residents pelted the construction equipment with rocks, and in response, the Kyrgyz forces blocked the road leading to Vorukh, thereby blocking the village. Residents of the Tajik Jamoat Khodzhay Alo blocked the road that Kyrgyz citizens use...on April 30, this correspondent went to Isfara to investigate the reasons for the conflict

“Tajik leaders do not know how to negotiate”

(Mirsaidov): “How did this conflict start?”

(Abdugafor Gaibov, chairman of Vorukh Jamoat): “In April the Kyrgyz side delivered equipment and began to construct a road on the disputed area of land...They built about 400 meters of the road. Not one Tajik official paid attention to it. Several residents of the village and I went to the surveyor and showed him construction is in the wrong place...Despite this, the head of the Kyrgyz village, Aksai, decided to continue construction without the support of his village...When our border guards went to the place and asked for an explanation, the Kyrgyz border guards said the work was being carried out without notice and advised their Tajik colleagues not to interfere...Border guards of both countries then withdrew.”

(Mirsaidov): “That is how the conflict started?”

(Gaibov): “Yes, young people broke glass of the construction equipment. In response, the head of the Kyrgyz Jamoat contacted the head of local security forces and they blocked the road to Vorukh. Additionally, around 150 OMON (special purpose unit) were transferred from Batken Province. Around this time the population of the Kyrgyz village of Aksai started

Continued: The Backgrounds of Border Conflicts

taking (which also took place in the January incident in the Sokh enclave) and property destruction are definitely signs of animosity on both sides of the border. However, this does serve as a reminder that incidents of conflict in Central Asia can end almost as quickly as they start.
End OE Watch Commentary (Stein)

beating Tajik passengers in vehicles...”

“We have appealed to all authorities, up to the president...”

Former chairman of Vorukh Tolib Mahkamov also shared his thoughts about what has been happening.

(Mahkamov): “Many people say, and write, that Vorukh is an enclave. In reality, after the definition of the border of Tajikistan in 1927 they did not officially change it (since). According to that map Vorukh had a long border with the Isfara District.”

(Mirsaidov): “Yes, but the Kyrgyz side uses other maps...”

(Mahkamov): “Yes, right now Kyrgyzstan bases (its border) on the 1958 map, but it has only been ratified by them. Tajikistan, and especially Moscow, did not ratify this map; it has no legal power.”

“Life in Vorukh is becoming unbearable”

...When we drove past the shuttle bus to the local Kyrgyz villages our taxi stalled. The first thing that one of the women in the vehicle said: “I need to get off the road by tonight, the consequences can be bad...”

Ordinary people of the Kyrgyz villages continue to trade cheap gasoline along the roads. (Our) driver refueled with them without any problems. This creates a dual impression. On the one hand, people live in fear of the other – from the other side they are used to these conflicts and in a few days they will continue to live...

Fergana as FATA?

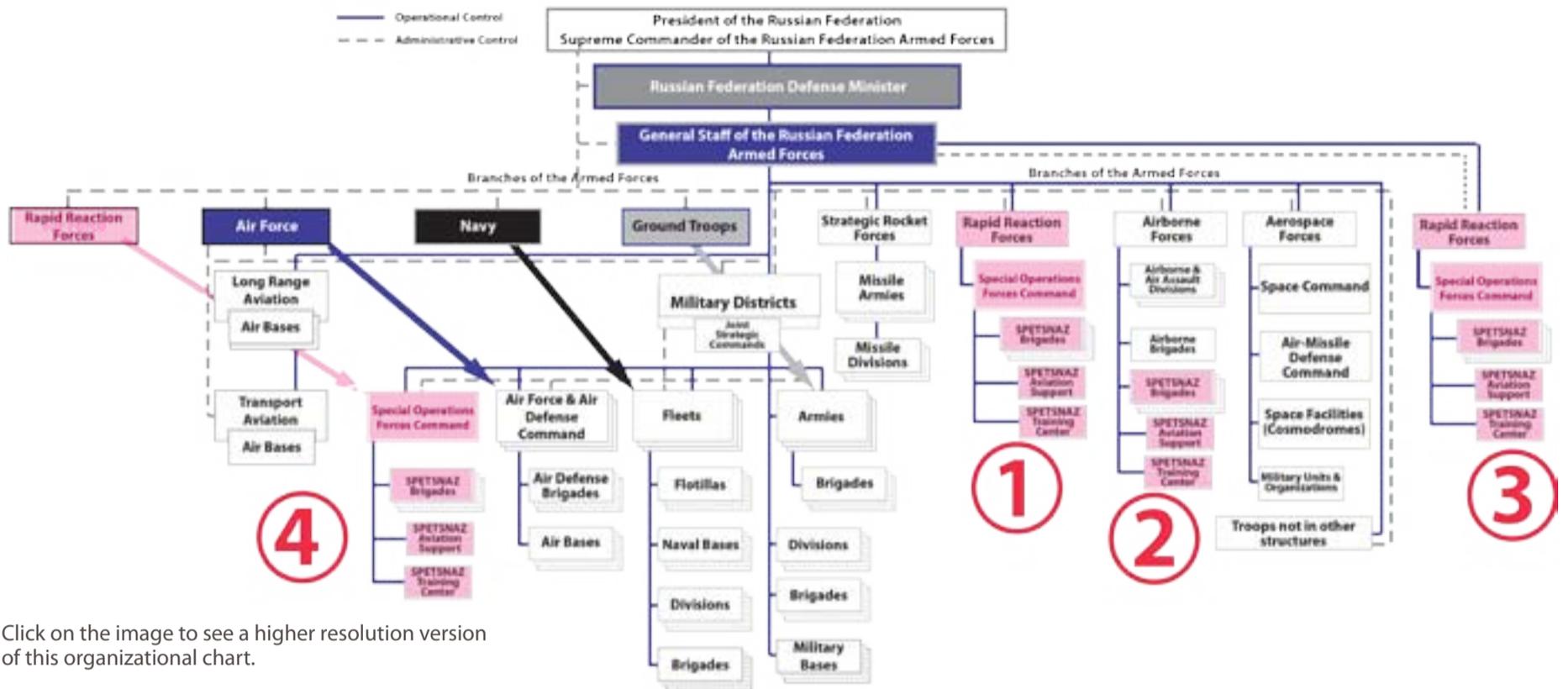
Central Asia after 2014 – Outcomes and Strategic Options

By Ted Donnelly

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



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



Click on the image to see a higher resolution version of this organizational chart.

OE Watch Commentary: *The Russian Federation has been toying with idea of establishing a Russian special operations command for several years. The accompanying article discusses Russia's recent decision to establish "Rapid Reaction Forces" and a likely subordinate "Special Operations Forces Command." What is definitely less certain is the Russian Federation's plan for command and control of these special operation forces. Russian media sources have been rife with reports of how command and control of a Russian Special Operations Forces Command could evolve, which have been approximated in the accompanying graphic.*

1. *An independent Rapid Reaction Forces branch could be established, with a Special Operations Forces Command falling beneath it. The Rapid Reaction Forces branch would be organized along the lines of the Airborne Forces, and would be considered an organizational equal with the other lesser branches of the Armed Forces (Strategic Rocket Forces, Airborne Forces, Aerospace Forces).*

2. *Special Operations Forces could fall under the Airborne Forces branch, with the Special Operations Forces Command*

Source: Vladimir Mukhin, "Vladimir Shamanov is Ready for Rapid Reactions: Yet Another Combat Arm will Become an Effective Reserve of the Supreme Commander in Chief." *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (online), 19-23 April 2013, < <http://www.ng.ru/>>, accessed 16 May 2013.

Vladimir Shamanov is Ready for Rapid Reactions

The further enhancement of the command and control system of the RF [Russian Federation] Armed Forces will be concentrated on the formation of a new combat arm, the Rapid Reaction Forces (SBR). The staffing of these forces will be based on the command and control structures of the Airborne Troops (VDV), and it is possible that the command staff of the Special Operations Forces (SSO) now being created will be subordinate to the SBR. The SBR will become a new effective reserve of the Supreme Commander in Chief. This was told to *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* by a source in the military establishment. Based on the summary collegium of the Ministry of Defense at the end of February 2013 on the tasks for the Armed Forces for 2013, military establishment head Sergey Shoygu placed special attention on the role of the VDV in providing for the effective defense of the country.

"Toward the goal of increasing operational effectiveness during the fulfillment of crisis control tasks, we envision the use of the airborne troops as Rapid Reaction Forces," said Sergey Shoygu. Meanwhile, the Minister had already set the task this year for "staffing all airborne assault and landing assault battalions of the VDV with contract servicemen." The first priority will be to staff "two detachments in each special forces brigade" with professionals.

Such a juxtaposition of the VDV and spetsnaz [special forces] tasks is no coincidence. A representative of the Ministry of Defense pointed out under the conditions of anonymity that the tasks and methods of combat operations of the VDV and the SSO were similar in many respects. They are distinguished by mobility, high combat skills, surprise, and the ability to flexibly react to situational changes and changes in the operational tactics of a probable enemy. Moreover, this does not just concern the "traditional" probable enemy, but it also relates to active extremist and religious groups, including partisan warfare conducted by illegal armed formations (NVF) in Russia and in several other countries....

...As is well known, at the beginning of April joint tasks of the VDV, an SSO formation, and the naval infantry were exercised during surprise graded maneuvers conducted by order of the country's President, Vladimir Putin. It is noteworthy that these formations practiced tasks in coordination with Russian Navy large landing ships. It is no secret in the Ministry of Defense

(continued)

Continued: Much Ado about Russian SOCOM

being integrated into the Airborne Forces Command command structure. For obvious reasons, this is the command and control structure being proposed by Commander of Airborne Forces Colonel General Shamanov in the second excerpt.

3. A Rapid Reaction Forces branch could be established, with a Special Operations Forces Command falling beneath it. The Rapid Reaction Forces branch would be subordinated to the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) of the General Staff. This structure would be the most familiar, based upon previous command and control relationships of SPETSNAZ units, as direct action and reconnaissance SPETSNAZ units have historically been under the command and control of the GRU.

4. An independent Rapid Reaction Forces branch could be established, with a Special Operations Forces Command falling beneath it; however, the operational control of the SPETSNAZ units and support units would reside with the geographically appropriate Joint Strategic Command (JSK) Combatant Commander. This arrangement would be similar to the command and control structure of the major branches of the Armed Forces (Ground Forces, Navy, Air Force), where the branch chiefs have administrative control and serve as proponents, but not operational control of their forces.

*The possibility of placing SPETSNAZ under the appropriate combatant commander was discussed under the previous Defense Minister, Anatoli Serdyukov, but since there has been no recent mention of developing this type of organizational structure, and recent comments in the media suggesting Russian special operations forces are intended for "external use," this structure is probably least likely. **End OE Watch Commentary (Bartles)***

that these maneuvers were linked to issues relating to providing security for the forthcoming Winter Olympics in Sochi. And in the very near future the Rapid Reaction Forces will be concentrated near Kazan, where the World [Summer] Universiade games will be held.

It is assumed that the current commander of the VDV, Colonel-General Vladimir Shamanov, will be appointed as the commander of the SBR.

Source: Igor Andreyev, "Shamanov: Russia Needs a Fifth Military District, Mobile and Peacekeeping," RIA Novosti (Online), 24 April 2013, < <http://ria.ru/> >, accessed 16 May 2013.

Shamanov: Russia Needs a Fifth Military District, Mobile and Peacekeeping

Less than two months ago, the chief of the Russian General Staff announced the creation of Special Operations Forces in the RF based upon the example of the leading powers. Some experts have linked this step with the conclusions that were drawn by the military leadership from the so-called 2008 Five-Day War. Hero of Russia, Airborne Troops Commander Colonel-General Vladimir Shamanov told RIA Novosti Correspondent Igor Andreyev about what role the most fighting Russian Troops – the VDV - can play in the development of the new structure, with which weapons the Russian Airborne Troops and Spetsnaz personnel will fight, and where they will train the cadres for the Special Operations Forces....



[Andreyev] Will the VDV's separate units and formations be subordinate to the Special Operations Forces Command that was recently created in the RF? If yes, precisely which ones?

[Shamanov] This question is in under the jurisdiction of the General Staff. The Special Operations Forces are an adequately specific organism and we are coordinating with them. My firm conviction is that the VDV, the Special Operations Forces, the operationally subordinate Spetsnaz brigades, and naval infantry formations and units on the maritime axes must be merged within the new structure – let's call it, let's say, rapid reaction troops – under joint command under the leadership of the General Staff. Then, besides the four static operational-strategic commands, a fifth, mobile operational-strategic command will appear in the country, which has 550,000 kilometers of land border, which is washed from three sides by seas and oceans, which will permit it to react in an integrated manner to threats and challenges both within the country and also beyond its borders. First of all, I have in mind peacekeeping operations within the framework of our mutual relations with the UN and the CSTO. We have substantiated our position to the General Staff leadership and this issue is being worked through right now.

[Andreyev] Information has recently appeared in the mass media that the cadres for the Russian Special Operations Forces will train at Moscow's Kubinka based upon the inter-branch training center. Will VDV Spetsnaz train at that same location?

[Shamanov] Today this is an open question because the elements of these centers have been created not only at Kubinka. The creation of a first-class training facility is a priority task. The defense minister has decided to create a special and tactical reconnaissance department based at Ryazan VDV School for the needs of the VDV, the Spetsnaz brigades, the Special Operations Forces, and the Navy.

Significant financial resources, a total of over R10 billion, have been stipulated to accomplish this task. In 2-3 years, we will create a worthy training facility, which will train world-level specialists not only for Russia but also for our allies and partners along the international military cooperation line. Today more than 20 states train their national cadres in the walls of Ryazan VDV School.

OE Watch Commentary: In late April 2013, during a meeting in Sochi—a Black Sea resort city on Russia's border with Georgia and Abkhazia—Egyptian President Mohammad Morsi asked Russian President Vladimir Putin for a large loan—\$2 or \$3 billion, depending on press reports. Morsi came to Russia with a ministerial delegation, including Minister of Investment Ossama Saleh, Minister of Petroleum Ossama Kamal, Minister of Agriculture Salah Abdel Moemen, and Minister of Electricity and Energy Ahmed Imam.

Morsi has been courting Putin and Russia for some time now, seeking greater cooperation on many fronts, including tourism and investment. The following excerpts illustrate how some in Russia see Egypt's interest in building closer ties with their country.

The first is an opinion by Anton Barbashin of the youth-oriented Moskovskiy Komsomolets. Barbashin had previously published another opinion in the same paper urging Russia to improve relations with the United States, as Russia risks becoming China's "raw material appendage." Barbashin argues that the Kremlin should not help Morsi with loans: his hold on power is tenuous at best and Russia is unlikely to get its money back. Morsi has turned increasingly authoritarian (indeed many Egyptians call him "second Mubarak"), and support for Morsi means support for only one segment of Egypt's population, not all Egyptian citizens.

The second is an article by Maria Gorkovskaya from a more centrist Izvestiya (News). Gorkovskaya reports on Egyptian authorities' attempts to bring in more tourists, particularly Russian tourists. She writes that economic realities since 2010, when the Muslim Brotherhood came to power, have overtaken religious considerations in Cairo. To encourage tourism, the Egyptian authorities have had to accept that tourists will drink alcohol and women will wear swim suits.



Egyptian President Mursi walking with Russian President Vladimir Putin in April 2013, via <http://www.themoscowtimes.com>

Source: Anton Barbashin, "Спасет ли Путин «Братьев-мусульман»? Президент Египта исламист Мурси просит у России денег, чтобы удержаться у власти." (Will Putin Save the Muslim Brotherhood? Egyptian President Islamist Mursi asks Russia for money to stay in power) Moskovskiy Komsomolets, 13 May 2013 <http://www.mk.ru/specprojects/free-theme/article/2013/05/12/852677-spaset-li-putin-bratevmusulman.html>

Will Putin Save the Muslim Brotherhood? Egyptian President Islamist Mursi asks Russia for money to stay in power [Note: the Russian spelling for the Egyptian president's name is "Mursi"]

"Dear friend and brother, Mr. President Putin!" With such words began his recent speech in the framework of bilateral negotiations in Sochi the first president of the "new Egypt," Mursi. He recalled how much the Soviet Union did for Egypt during the time of Nasser, and offered to restore economic cooperation. The Muslim Brotherhood favorite said that Egypt craves Russian technology and investment in the industry, energy and agriculture, and is also ready to jointly develop uranium deposits and build new nuclear power plants.

Mursi noted how highly he sees Russia's role in the international arena as a great power and said he wants to build a "political union" between the two countries. And, of course, after all the praise he asked Putin for a loan of \$ 2 billion and an increase in grain supplies with friendly benefits. (Russia's share in the Egyptian grain imports is 40%)....

Declarations of love and friendship to Putin - of course are pure self-serving flattery. Mursi does not really believe in Russia's tangible role in the international arena, if he did, he would've gone to Moscow long ago.

[C]redits are good when they are returned, and given the current political situation in Egypt - it is an investment marked "particularly dangerous."

In Cairo, massive protests (against Mursi now instead of Mubarak) have become the norm. Mobilized secularists who do not take the authoritarian slant of Islamist Mursi go against no less mobilized supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood, which often turns into brawls, throwing of Molotov cocktails, and continues to polarize the society. One peaceful act of civil society became popular, "Beep if you are against Mursi," provoking a total stunning of neighborhoods by the hum of sirens. And recently one speech by a Muslim Brother in support of "cleansing" the judiciary ended in a brawl with Mursi's opponents of and 95 injured on both sides.

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Continued: Egypt's Morsi Seeks Russian Loans and Tourists

Russian tourists had been the largest group to visit Egypt prior to 2010, and they would be the most likely primary target of the new policy towards alcohol and bathing suits. As tourists lost interest in Egypt in the last two years, the economy suffered gravely; Russian tourists alone could bring \$3.2 billion to Egypt annually, according to the article. Russian authorities, for their part, hope that the flow of Russian tourists to Egypt will increase, showing that the Kremlin too is interested in a cooperative relationship with Cairo.

The Muslim Brotherhood has been on Russia's list of terrorist organizations since 2003. Nonetheless, Russia has not only cooperated with the new Egyptian leadership but also stepped up this cooperation in late 2012, when Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov went on a Middle East tour, making Egypt his first stop.

Putin has not rushed to grant Morsi the loans he requested in April 2013. Still, the Kremlin and Cairo continue to cooperate economically in other spheres as Cairo seeks Russian tourists and other business investments to save the Egyptian economy, and Putin works to extend Russia's influence in the Middle East. It is no accident that Morsi noted in Sochi that he views Russia's role as very important in the international arena. He knows what Putin wants to hear. Russia's relations with Egypt will remain important to watch in the months ahead.
End OE Watch Commentary (Borshchevskaya)

Peculiarities of Mursi's national policy are more acutely felt by religious minorities, namely the Coptic Christians, of whom there are about 10% in the country. Open attacks against Christian communities and churches have increased several times, causing some Copts to emigrate, and the rest to live in fear for their lives. And, despite repeated statements by the President of the inadmissibility of sectarian strife, not one decision was yet made against the fanatics attacking Christians.

Characteristic of the Islamist regime were also attacks on cultural activities and TV anchors: the year was rocked by 11 high-profile cases against media members accused of defamation of the president or the government. And Mursi often uses populist scheme of "pardoning" accused journalists, publicly interfering with judicial proceedings, and thus attempting to create the image of himself as "the president of all Egyptians."

"Second Mubarak," as he is already called, he is reforming the government system step-by-step filling all the government institutions with people loyal to him....

Therefore, returning to the question of is it worth it for Russia to "bail out" Egypt with money, I say with assurance, no. If the well-being of all Egyptian citizens, and not only their portion, is so important to us, and also if Russia wants to ever get the money back. Mursi's position in power, despite the authoritarianism bent, is extremely precarious: growing protests, the Egyptian society is divided - and no effective means for the stabilization and consolidation are available in Mursi's arsenal. This suggests that the next change of power in Egypt is around the corner.

Source: Maria Gorkovskaya, "«Братья-мусульмане» в Египте смирились с выпивкой и бикини. Возвращение на курорты страны только российских туристов может принести египетской казне \$3,2 млрд в год (Muslim Brotherhood accepted booze and bikinis. Return to the resorts of the country's Russian tourists alone can bring the Egyptian treasury \$ 3.2 billion a year) Izvestiya (News), 6 May 2013 <http://izvestia.ru/news/549895>

Muslim Brotherhood accepted booze and bikinis. Return to the resorts of the country's Russian tourists alone can bring the Egyptian treasury \$ 3.2 billion a year

Egypt's Tourism Minister Khisham Zaazu (member of Islamic movement Muslim Brotherhood) announced that his country is not against tourists who drink and is even ready to accept tourists women in bikinis. Previously Muslim Brotherhood representatives actively fought against manifestations of such immoral acts in accordance with Sharia standards. However, two years were enough to have financial considerations take over religious ones.

Egyptian tourism industry feels the consequences of the Arab Spring two years after the revolution that toppled Hosni Mubarak's regime. According to the Central Agency of Statistics, in 2010, 14.7 million tourists visited Egypt's local resorts. However, the Muslim Brotherhood, once in power, promised to fight hard with the moral degradation of Egyptian society, to which foreign guests largely contribute. First, in December 2012, the government began to eradicate use of alcohol, and then took over the dress code. As a result of the fallen interest in Egypt during the revolution, and after the revolution, this interest could not fully recover. The number of visitors here in 2011 and 2012 tourists was only 9.8 million and 11.5 million, respectively.

In Egypt, this did not go unnoticed by anyone and so, according to Khisham Zaazu, Muslim Brotherhood's moderate wing was able to convince of tourism's critical importance even the radical Salafis, who have had to put up with alcohol and women in bikinis.

The Egyptian government hopes that this will help to increase the tourist flow already this year by 20%. Tourists on holidays should, according to the authorities' calculations, bring about \$ 25 billion annually into the treasury.

An important role in this process will be given to the Russians, believes vice-president of the Russian Union of Travel Industry Yuri Barzykin. According to him, the Russian tourist flow to Egypt almost recovered and last year reached 1.9 million people (compared to 2.2 million Russians in the pre-revolutionary 2010).

-Now, after the Muslim Brotherhood's statement about dress code and limitations on alcohol will completely disavow, the atmosphere around Egypt will normalize, and thus the flow of tourists in this area will increase - Barzykin told "Izvestia". - This year we expect more than 2 million Russians will choose Egypt during their vacations....

OE Watch Commentary: *There is a perception among some within the Russian security community that the US has developed and fielded an arsenal of “information weapons” over the past 20 years to further its geopolitical goals. These officials maintain that as the inventor of the modern information architecture (e.g., Internet, social networking sites, etc.), the US is using these soft-power platforms to sow chaos (especially among young people) in regions that are geopolitically crucial for leaders in Washington. According to their logic, using the façade-like slogan that “free information is the lifeblood of democracy,” the US deliberately stokes protest and dissent (chaos) so that it can more easily bring these countries under American control.*

The adjacent extract from an article in the authoritative journal Natsionalnaya Oborona (National Defense) examines this belief and illustrates how some Russians perceive an inherent danger in the free flow of information. From this realpolitik, cynical perspective, there is no such thing as free and objective information. Every word and byte of data comes with a price tag, payable in some form to the sender. More nefariously, the author maintains that there may be a hidden code embedded in the words and/or software which can force the reader/listener to act in ways contrary to the state’s best interests. In the final analysis, this article claims that all information is some form of propaganda, and that the US is using this “soft power” to maintain global dominance.

The author describes measures that a state must employ to combat this information invasion, and his prescription reflects some of the Kremlin initiatives which have been introduced over the past year to restrict media. The Russian people must be constantly reminded that they are under attack by these disreputable devices and their defensive consciousness must be raised. The state must control the commanding heights of major media



Igor Ashmanov speaking at iForum 2013 in Kiev, Ukraine, 24 April 2013, via <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aiwqdyUng9E>

Source: Vladimir Karyakin, “Хаосомятеж – символ наступившей эпохи,” [Chaos-rebellion: a symbol of the new era] National Defense, March 2013. <http://www.nationaldefense.ru/includes/periodics/geopolitics/2013/0306/095110313/detail.shtml>

Plans for world conquest now are based on the strategy of indirect actions and ‘soft power’

...Globalization, one feature of which is the rapid development of information technology and social networks to disseminate information about what orders, social relations and what level of life should be considered worthy. It has played a major role in the initiation of the protest movements of the population in economically disadvantaged countries.

“Soft power” to reformat the Planet

Indirect action strategy and “soft power” are currently the most effective means of conducting geopolitical struggle in the international arena, which are used to mitigate the real and potential of the opponents. Despite a rich history of use of these strategies (from ancient times to the present day), in the postmodern era, they have acquired a new content in the implementation of the “color revolutions” in former Soviet Union, as well as in North Africa and the Middle East....

...As for the history of the emergence of a kindred strategy of “soft power» (soft power), then the author was a prominent American political scientist and expert-systems analyst Joseph Nye, who expanded the scope of the indirect action strategy by bringing in the arsenal of political, diplomatic, economic, psychological and informational methods to undermine the foundations of the political system of the country to be a political transformation. However, it should be noted that at the present time in the American political lexicon, there was one close by value synonymous with this strategy - “smart power.”

...Analysis of the works of Anglo-American and Russian researchers in relation to the

(continued)

Continued: Information as Directed Chaos

outlets to ensure that dangerous foreign influences are unable to gain a mental stronghold among the people. Ultimately, to guarantee that the state's ideology remains strong and uncorrupted, the state may have to create its own autarchic information system.¹ **End OE Watch Commentary (Finch)**

1. For a video example of this belief in the need for 'information sovereignty,' see the presentation by Igor Ashmanov at the iForum 2013. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aiwqdyUng9E>

conceptual content of modern strategies interstate confrontation shows that the strategy of indirect actions and "soft power" - a special technology of the geopolitical struggle, focused on gaining dominance over the "enemy" of the state by establishing an inclusive and at the same hidden control mechanism for the formation and implementation of domestic and foreign policy of the country, its political-administrative, socio-economic, defense, cultural, ideological, and other key areas, as well as the processes themselves for its further development through the use of solutions of such problems specially designed "indirect "effects of organizational activities and" manipulative "and" subversive "character.

According to this strategy, geopolitical confrontation pressure on the aggressor-victim country can be carried out in the absence of direct confrontation and maintaining official "friendly" nature of the relationship with her, and in an open conflict, including armed. However, this technology geopolitical struggle suggests that the full range of these goals is achieved by controlling the administrative and political apparatus of the state system of the target country exposure. Therefore, the main object of concentrated geopolitical attack on this conceptual model becomes the ruling elite and the power structures of the country of the victim. The main target of attack - control over the country's elite are victims of manipulation by the secretive behavior of individuals and social groups that are relevant to the determination of policy and practical effect to domestic and foreign policy decisions....

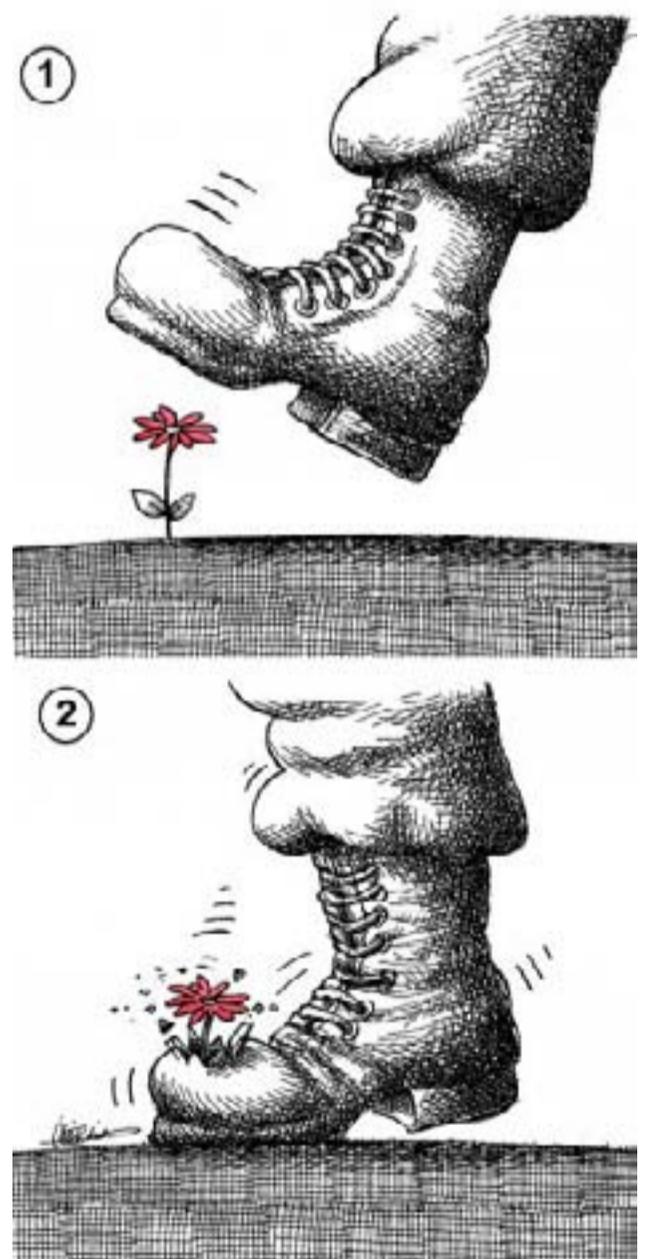
...The overall strategy of concentrated attack of the aggressor against the victim countries, developed largely under the influence of research scientists synergy, conceptually should be focused on the fact that for a sufficiently long period to deprive the public entirely geopolitical system of the very possibility of an enemy state to develop sustainably in accordance with the national interests. The goal - the creation of social and political chaos needed for the subsequent destruction of the aggressor and the transformation of the state of the system in accordance with the principles that would fully meet its geopolitical interests.

The "color revolutions" of the last few decades show that the implementation of the indirect action and strategies of "soft power" in the following sequence:

- In the first stage, the main efforts of the aggressors focus on destabilizing the socio-political and economic systems of the victim by creating a large-scale systemic crisis and immersing it in a state of "controlled chaos" that makes a hostile country's ruling elite and its associated political system vulnerable to external pressure. In this case, the main goal is to create destabilizing activities in the country, controlled by outside forces....
- The second stage the main direction of the geopolitical impact of the aggressor is to create conditions of "controlled chaos" inside the transformation of the state system in order to form an attractor, which is the center of the opposition, able to take control of the country with the change of government;
- In the third stage of geopolitical offensive the aggressor is concentrating its efforts on the creation of a new state system in the country of the victim with support for opposition political forces as the basis for the future government. Examples of this are the state-building efforts by the U.S. and its allies in the territories of the former Yugoslavia, Georgia, Iraq, and Afghanistan;
- The final, fourth stage of the acquisition of territory geopolitical aggressor solves the problem of strengthening the state institutions under the control of the country due to the formation, training and equipping of enforcement and administrative structures of the state of the victim.

Thus, the defeated country is under the control of the so-called "external system connections" to ensure its inclusion on the Rights of the subordinate element in the economic, financial, political, military, scientific, technical, and information and cultural affairs of the aggressor, and under its influence international organizations.

Thus the total impact of the impact of the aggressor enemy using indirect actions and strategies of "soft power", of course, is much greater than that of "direct technology" interstate confrontation. ...So it was in Yugoslavia, Ukraine, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, carried out in Syria and will be implemented in Russia....



Satire depicting 'Soft Power', Source via <http://michaelmcray.com/2012/11/04/on-conflict-resolution-grasping-some-terms/>

(continued)

Continued: Information as Directed Chaos

How to resist 'soft power'?

The above raises questions about the options for opposition to U.S. policies of indirect actions, "soft power" and technology "controlled chaos":

1. Maintain vigilance against the overt and covert, internal and external threats to national security. Society should be aware of the real and potential danger to the country and promptly react to them as a reflection of threats requires a significant amount of time on the mobilization of resources and the implementation of activities. In other words, it can be expressed as the presence of defense mentality of the people that should include military, ideological, cognitive, information, and the existence of confessional society...
2. To ensure the sustainability of public and social institutions and social consciousness in relation to the attempts of external and internal forces to deform and transform the ideological and ID-cultural matrix of society. This strategy involves the creation of our own network structures covering information (this applies primarily to the media), confessional (it refers to the leaders of the major faiths Russia) and ideological spheres of society, the control of which is necessary to assign to the relevant executive authority...
3. Information Management Strategy...the broad and prompt dissemination of reliable information on the situation in the country...using your own language to control the flow of information....
4. Information awareness strategy... informing the population of external attempts to use information to destroy statehood, cultural and religious identity of the nation.
5. A strategy to maintain the required level of social optimism index in the population and security forces on the basis of the formation of the national idea, a national ideology, success in the field of state and national interests.

China's Cyber Incursions: A Theoretical Look At What They See And Why They Do It Based On A Different Strategic Method Of Thought

By Timothy Thomas

The paper examines the Chinese concept of strategy and how it motivates China's cyber actions. These actions take the form of reconnaissance and system sabotage concepts that result in the fulfillment of strategy and in the development of a preemptive and offensive information deterrence disposition. It also examines China's response to the recent Mandiant security firm's report that accused the People's Liberation Army of compliance in attacking 115 US companies since 2006. This author argues for interceding into Chinese strategic concepts and changing the objective basis behind their cyber activities.

<http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/China%27s-Cyber-Incursions.pdf>

OE Watch Commentary: According to official Kremlin statements, by 2020 70% of the equipment in Russia's military will be classified as "modern." While this statement lacks clear definition, Russia is in the midst of a massive military reform and trillions of rubles have been allocated toward refurbishing and modernizing its defense forces. However, as the excerpt from the referenced article indicates, increasing defense expenditures may not necessarily lead to a more combat-ready military. Senior officials within Russia's military-industrial complex continue to struggle with developing a cost-effective system of weapons procurement to combat corruption and poor management.

Since his appointment in December 2011 as Vice Premier in charge of the Russian Defense Industry, Dmitry Rogozin has been focused on repairing and streamlining the nexus between defense industries and actual military procurement. So far he has concentrated upon establishing the legal and regulatory infrastructure necessary to hold individuals and enterprises responsible for failing to meet contractual targets. To improve the connection between industry and military, he has established a number of proposals, to include improving the planning process and assigning specific industrial personnel to monitor major defense items over the entire contract period.

Given the immense scale of Russia's defense industry (more than one thousand firms with

Source: "В оборонке царствуют коррупционные цены," [Corrupt Pricing Reigns in the Defense Industry] Nezavisimaya Gazeta Online, 24 April 2013.

Unsound Pricing Practices Lead to Defense Industry Corruption

Procurement pricing for military equipment in Russia is not transparent and it depends on the corrupt appetites of defense industry organizations. Government officials and other participants in Public Chamber hearings have testified concerning the wide distribution of price add-ons. The unsound pricing practice in the defense industry is casting doubt on the effectiveness of the gigantic expenditures of the RF [Russian Federation] for rearming the Army and the Navy.

Yesterday it became known that the two series-produced Borey's (the nuclear submarines Aleksandr Nevskiy and the Vladimir Monomakh) will be handed over to the Navy as early as 2013, and not in 2014 as the press had previously reported. These new submarines have become well known because the cost estimates for their production had to be set at the very highest level [of government], at the level of President Vladimir Putin. During the spring of last year the state client (the Ministry of Defense) calculated that the United Shipbuilding Corporation had unjustifiably increased the cost of the manufactured submarines by 30 percent. The ship builders, in turn, affirmed that they had assigned a minimal price and that they were barely maintaining profitability.

In May the President chaired a special session on pricing of the submarines in which all interested parties participated. And in November Putin tasked Vice Premier Dmitriy Rogozin, who is responsible for the defense industrial complex, to jointly complete work with the Government's economic bloc to formulate general principles of price formation in the context of the state defense order. "The general principles of price formation have to be defined. There have been many discussions about this and there are many problems. You have already labored mightily over this as you should have, but thus far we do not have the integrated principles. Bring this to a conclusion with the economic bloc of the Government. This must be completed," said Putin at that time. At that time Rogozin acknowledged that as yet it was indeed true that the problem of arbitrary pricing of military equipment had to be resolved solely in a hands-on management mode.

Since that time apparently the situation has not changed. On Monday the Public Chamber held a hearing on the subject "On Raising the Quality of Management and Control in the Defense Industrial Complex (OPK) as an Extremely Important Factor in Combating Corruption." Participating in the session were individuals who were immediately engaged in the state defense order and who knew first-hand the problems in the military industry. These were the representatives of Rosoboronzakaz [Federal Defense Order Service], the Federal Tariff Service, the leaders of OPK enterprises, as well as the participants of the Public Chamber's Commission on National Security Issues.

An impressive list of defense industry problems was made public at the that within the country there are no tools for exposing activities of OPK organizations. Legal processes are not held responsible for providing unreliable ineffective expenditures of funds. Legislation and policies do not protect the industry from uncontrolled

of defense industry problems was made public at the that within the country there are no tools for exposing activities of OPK organizations. Legal processes are not held responsible for providing unreliable ineffective expenditures of funds. Legislation and policies do not protect the industry from uncontrolled

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Continued: Russia's Rearmament Slog

multiple forms of ownership), ever-changing reform plans, turnover of key personnel, and a generally weak legal and enforcement structure, progress in reforming the defense industry has been slow. One major obstacle revolves around introducing market principles in what essentially remains a monopolistic system. Without the direct intervention of senior Kremlin officials, industry representatives appear to be unable to agree with their defense customers over equipment costs. As the excerpt makes clear, "the general principles of price formation have to be defined," and this lack of clarity has allowed corruption to fester. Until these larger systemic weaknesses are addressed, Russia's defense rearmament will be hampered. End OE Watch Commentary (Finch)

distributions of state property and budgeted assets. The defense organizations are officially state entities; however, they are so non-transparent that occasionally even the state itself is totally unable to influence them.

...In the procurement organizations of the Ministry of Defense and at enterprises of the OPK the number of violations of the law in 2012 compared to those of 2011 did not decline, but the criminal cases grew by 25 percent. "The volume of violations grew by 15 percent. The use of monitoring and oversight practices provides evidence of the large number of violations and the high risks of corruption.... Thus, it was recommended to the Ministry of Defense that it "develop pricing mechanisms that would exclude the possibility for the emergence of corrupt practices in the costs of models of weapons and military equipment."

Biographical Sketch: Dmitry Rogozin and Russian Nationalism

By Ray Finch

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



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

OE Watch Commentary: Over the past decade Russian officials have created a number of English-language media platforms (e.g., TV channels, radio stations, websites, think-tanks) to help promulgate the Kremlin's perspective. While some of these sources purport to provide an objective view, others are less subtle and promote a distinctively pro-Kremlin angle. One such source is the New Eastern Outlook (<http://www.journal-neo.com/>). The site claims to be unbiased and "designed for thinking people of the East and West; for those who are not completely satisfied with a one-sided version of the historical and modern process which the respectable global media presents to us..." Most of its content, however, supports the Kremlin view that the US is the source of most global instability.

In April 2013 this journal published a series of articles describing the Russian view of the conflict in Syria. As the adjacent extracts illustrate, these authors maintain that the US, other NATO members, and US allies in the Gulf are deliberately sowing chaos in Syria for larger geopolitical goals. The first extract warns that even though the US has tried to exploit Islamic grievances in the past, arming rebels/jihadists can result in dangerous blowback. The second article is even more alarmist, and claims that "Syria is, to a large extent, Russia's final southern line of defense in those countries that do not want to buckle under to the dictates of the West..." According to this logic, if the Syria domino falls, Russia will be next. Other articles on the website refer to reprehensible US/NATO plans to transform Russia's indigenous Muslim population into a radical Islamic fifth-column or how the Arab Spring's democratic façade in Syria is being used as a launch pad for attacks into Iran and Russia.

According to the New Eastern Outlook website, its authors include "politicians



Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Source: Boris Dolgov, "The Syrian Conflict and International Terrorism," New Eastern Outlook, 24 April 2013. <http://www.journal-neo.com/node/120768>

The Syrian Conflict and International Terrorism

The Syrian crisis has been going on since March 2011 and has resulted in tens of thousands dead, including civilians, hundreds of thousands of refugees, enormous financial losses, and the destruction of historical and cultural sites and the country's infrastructure. The increasing militarization of the conflict threatens to destroy Syrian statehood, cause genocide of religious and ethnic minorities, and destabilize and spread terrorism, both in the Middle East and in neighboring regions. The crisis in Syria has gone global, and many external factors are at work there to a greater or lesser degree....

...The desire of leading NATO countries to utilize radical Islamism to overthrow undesirable regimes is particularly noteworthy. On the one hand, the West is fighting radical Islam in Afghanistan, Yemen and Mali. It was supporting Islamist forces in Libya against Gadhafi, and it is currently supporting those same Islamists in order to overthrow President Assad. This strategy can only mean that the West expects that it will be able to manipulate the "jihad" of radical Sunni Islamism after regime change in Syria for use against Shiite Iran, which is gaining influence in Iraq, and against Hezbollah in Lebanon. The next objective of this strategy will surely be the CIS Central Asian republics and, finally, the North Caucasus, southern Russia and the Muslim regions of the Volga River basin and the Urals. Moreover, the conditions for such a development in these regions are already coming together: Terrorist activities by radical Islamists are being energized there. A large number of people from these areas are fighting alongside the armed Syrian opposition.

However, that is largely a deluded strategy. Radical Islam is anti-West by its nature and ideology. All of its ideologues, from Sayyda Qutb to al-Zawahiri, have said as much. It may form a tactical alliance with the West to achieve its own goals, but afterwards it is bound to oppose the West. History and recent international developments both confirm that. In an effort to weaken the Soviet Union during the Afghan civil war of the 1980s, the United States supported the "jihad" of bin Laden and al-Qaeda, which he headed, against the pro-Soviet Afghan government. After achieving its goal, however, bin Laden turned his "jihad" against the United States, calling it "enemy No. 1," which resulted in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In September 2012, American diplomats, including the US ambassador, were killed in

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Continued: Dark Russian View of Syria

currently in office and experts, civil servants and security officials, journalists and religious activists, businessmen and economists, political scientists and scholars.” It is unclear to what degree their analysis coincides with or is informed by the official Russian position, but their perspective certainly reflects a less accommodating Russian position, particularly with regards to resolving the conflict in Syria. End OE Watch Commentary (Finch)

Libya by Islamist fighters from the Brigades of Allah, which had taken part in the overthrow of Gadhafi, i.e., they were killed by those the United States had helped bring to power in Libya...

...Fighting extremism and terrorism and preventing its spread is the shared task of the international community, especially those countries most capable of doing so. Their attempt to play a “game” with extremist forces and use them for their own purposes is a dangerous mistake, and it may rebound against the players themselves.

That is particularly true of the Syrian crisis, which can only be resolved by political means. Much depends on all sides having a clear understanding that it is dangerous and unacceptable to divide terrorists into “the good ones — ours” and “the bad ones — theirs,” and that all forms of terrorism must be fought jointly.

Source: Alexander Orlov, “Syria: The Last Line of Defense,” New Eastern Outlook, 17 April 2013. <http://www.journal-neo.com/node/120760>

Syria: The Last Line of Defense

...Toppling the Syrian government is clearly not the ultimate goal. Their [Washington, NATO] plans extend to Iran and then to the countries of Central Asia; after that, the Russian North Caucasus and the Volga region will get their turn. Then, the alliance of the West and the Wahhabi axis as represented by Saudi Arabia and Qatar expect to achieve their strategic objective — complete control of the world’s energy resources. Their plans call for Russia to simply cease to exist as a major player in world politics, and China will be shown its place in global and regional affairs. That is why Syria is, to a large extent, Russia’s final southern line of defense in those countries that do not want to buckle under to the dictates of the West, which is relying on the powerful financial support of the Wahhabi regimes in Arabia. The defeat of Damascus would mean the end of Russia’s Middle Eastern presence, which already has been seriously undermined in recent years. We began losing our positions in this region that is strategically important to Moscow long before the Arab revolutions of 2011 — it began with the US occupation of Iraq in 2003....



Roger N. McDermott’s *Russia’s Strategic Mobility: Supporting ‘Hard Power’ to 2020?* examines the rapidly changing Russian military’s strategic capabilities for logistics, combat service support, and force projection. McDermott’s work for The Russia Studies Programme of the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI) sheds light on the unglamorous, but vitally important logistic backbone upon which the Russian military relies. Roger N. McDermott is a Senior International Fellow for the Foreign Military Studies Office.

Russia’s Strategic Mobility

Supporting ‘Hard Power’ to 2020?

By Roger N. McDermott

http://www.foi.se/ReportFiles/foir_3587.pdf



APRIL 2013

OE Watch Commentary: *This year, for the first time, Ukraine's National Program of Partnership with NATO 2013 was released as a unified document consisting of a national program and a more detailed plan for its implementation. The rationale for this decision was the need to simplify the program and make it more accessible to all 28 governmental agencies involved in the process of implementation. Among other goals, the program includes proposals regarding reforming the defense sector, developing new approaches to tackling international terrorism, implementing economic and energy reforms, and developing international collaboration.*

The program also includes references to specific collaborative projects dedicated to solving environmental issues, which have been among the most successful examples of the fruitful Ukraine-NATO partnership outside of military initiatives. For instance, as a result of their participation in "Science for Peace," Ukrainian scientists have obtained access to modern technologies and expertise, which would otherwise be inaccessible. The program also includes educational opportunities for both military and civilian personnel, intended to facilitate the exchange of expertise and raise the level of awareness regarding Ukraine-NATO partnerships.

The new Ukraine-NATO partnership program is quite ambitious. The excerpt from the interview with Ihor Dolhov, the Head of Ukraine's Mission to NATO, portrays the state of the Ukraine-NATO partnership very optimistically. Even if partially implemented, the partnership program would be instrumental in revitalizing the Ukrainian defense sector. At the same time, however, as some NATO member-states are themselves struggling with economic challenges, funding for international collaborative assistance to countries such as Ukraine is being cut or deferred. Moreover, as the Ukrainian military continues to undergo structural reforms, issues such as social adaptation, education, and social security for former military officers remain unresolved.

The situation is further complicated by Ukraine's plan to transition to a fully



Ukraine-NATO Partnership logo, via <http://www.acus.org/natosource/ukraine-grateful-nato-its-contribution-security-during-euro-2012>

Source: Ihor Dolhov: We Haven't Stopped in Developing Partnership with NATO. *Kommersant-Ukraina*, #64 (1767), April 15, 2013.

Ukrainian envoy upbeat on country's partnership with NATO

NATO appears satisfied with Ukraine's plan to reform its Armed Forces. The plan calls for further downsizing of the Armed Forces at the expense of support regiments. In 2013, the progress with the implementation of the reform will be closely watched by NATO specialists. The alliance is prepared to help Ukraine destroy its excessive [conventional] weapons, provide social adaptation services for redundant army servicemen and reform its military education. The head of the Ukrainian mission to NATO, Ihor Dolhov, has looked at these and other areas in which Ukraine is cooperating with NATO.

[Correspondent] The government has approved President Viktor Yanukovich's draft decree endorsing the 2013 NATO-Ukraine cooperation program. What is special about this document?

[Dolhov] We took into account the experience with past programs and, instead of two documents (an annual national program and a plan of measures to implement it), we came up with a single one. It became more simple and precise from the planning perspective. It is necessary to improve a procedure for approving the document, as well as for stimulating the work of those who implement this program. There are twenty-eight central executive government bodies alone involved in this work. If we want NATO to adequately respond to our requests, we need to formulate them as correctly as possible.

[Correspondent] How many activities does the program envision?

[Dolhov] Their number is not something we should strive to achieve. For instance, in 2012 there were 284 such activities - much fewer than in the preceding years when there were 400-500 of them. Since the new program has not been published yet, I would not like to give you absolutely precise numbers. The annual national program is a document that reaches beyond the framework of Ukraine's cooperation with NATO.

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Continued: The Ukraine-NATO Partnership: Cause for Optimism?

professionalized, non-conscription army by 2017 and its non-alignment policy. End OE Watch Commentary (Moldovanova)

The document addresses a broad range of issues relating to the development of a democratic society. There are tasks which may take more than a year to implement. For instance, delivering some seminar and passing a law on legal advocacy may be just items on a list, but implementing them will take different amounts of time. The same also holds true for reforming the judicial system and the procedure for prosecutor oversight.

There are also other things which are not so well-known - for example, the NATO Science for Peace [and Security] program. Ukraine is the most active partner taking part in this program. This program this year alone covers ten projects. For instance, there is flood monitoring and forecasting in the basin of the Prypyat river, applying cost-effective technologies for the purification of fuel-contaminated ground water on the premises of military regiments and designing a high-capacity X-ray generator. While implementing these projects, Ukrainian scientists are given an opportunity to work with their colleagues from the NATO countries, as well as to receive funding from the alliance. [The funding] for these ten projects alone amounts to almost 3m euros.

[Correspondent] And yet, what joint activities with NATO are envisaged?

[Dolhov] First of all, I would like to note the beginning of the second phase of the program for destruction of [conventional] excessive weapons. It is a big project that is actually reducing a threat from the stockpiled ammunition which must be disposed of....

[Correspondent] Is NATO prepared to financially support Ukraine in its further reform of its Armed Forces?

[Dolhov] This support started long ago and will continue. For example, what does the downsizing of the army entail? Among other things, there are social problems, because people who are about to be made redundant must be prepared for a civil life. That is why one more trust fund has been set up to organize re-training and social adaptation of servicemen leaving the army. The money may seem not too big - around 300,000 euros per year, but it enables us to organize re-training courses for a 1,000 of army servicemen. Another example is military education. How many educational institutions do we need? What programs should be used to train students and what should they be trained for exactly? A new area in our cooperation is reforming our military education system with the help of the alliance....

[Correspondent] Let us imagine that the country's leadership brings up the issue of a NATO membership action plan for Ukraine, as it happened at the 2008 Bucharest NATO summit. What are our country's chances of joining the membership action plan today?

[Dolhov] I would rather speak not of the chances, but of the national needs of the country. This is a question for Ukraine, not for NATO. It is important to understand that both NATO and the EU have their history, their objectives, their functions, and they also have a lot in common. The most important is the common principles of democracy. For example, when we say that there is progress towards the signing of the association agreement with the EU, it is very closely followed at the NATO headquarters. Formally, the decisions passed by NATO at the Bucharest summit are effective for Ukraine (at the Bucharest summit Ukraine was denied a NATO membership action plan, although it was stated that in the future it could become a NATO member - Kommersant)....

[Correspondent] The EU links Ukraine's progress to its domestic political processes - for instance, to releasing Yuriy Lutsenko [former Interior Minister recently pardoned by President Viktor Yanukovich] and [jailed former Prime Minister] Yuliya Tymoshenko. How do representatives of the alliance assess these processes?

[Dolhov] One should not think that the NATO HQ has not noticed the presidential decree pardoning six convicts... NATO, unlike the European Parliament, tends to shun naming surnames or making any specific critical comments, because it is not the business of the military and political alliance. The organization's objective is to support the development of democracy in Ukraine....

Russia, China and the New North Korean Leader

July 2013 will mark the 60th anniversary of the end of the Korean War, or more accurately, the armistice which brought open conflict to an end. For many in the US the war and its aftermath were largely understood through the prism of the Cold War. In this simplistic rendition the communist octopus was on the move (having just “swallowed” the whole of China the previous year), and, as the defender of freedom and democracy, the US and other democratically-inclined countries intervened to stop this communist expansion. Recent scholarship, however, has provided a much more nuanced understanding of the motives which prompted the North Korean attack, as well as Chinese and Soviet involvement. Ironically, the spread of communist ideology was barely a consideration.

The Korean peninsula has again figured prominently over the past year, as the leadership in Pyongyang has increased its bellicose rhetoric and has engaged in nuclear saber-rattling. In the common understanding today, Russian and Chinese leaders are working with officials in the US (and other countries) to defuse the situation and resolve issues dealing with North Korean sovereignty and security. However, just like 60 years ago, when ideology was trumped by realpolitik, leaders in the major countries (US, China, Russia) are positioning themselves to both defend against possible conflict and exploit the situation to their geopolitical advantage.

This brief essay will examine how the current Russian and Chinese leaders look at North Korea, specifically, how they regard the young and relatively new North Korean leader, Kim Jong Un. It begins by providing a thumbnail sketch of Kim. The essay’s central thesis revolves around how leaders in Beijing and Moscow want to transform the unipolar form of global governance (advocated by some in the US) into a multipolar model, where Russia and China (along with other countries) would help to construct a new global security structure. This paper will examine how the leadership in Russia and China will continue to exploit the situation surrounding North Korea to achieve this objective.

Biographical Sketch: Kim Jong Un

Kim Jung Un was born in 1983 or 1984 and became the supreme leader of North Korea in December 2011, at the age of 27. He is the son of Kim Jong Il and the grandson of Kim Il Sung. As part of the ruling elite, as a youth, Kim Jung Un was privileged to leave the North Korean paradise and study abroad. Besides becoming enamoured with various aspects of Western opulence, he also gained an appreciation for the power of modern media. He was not expected to be the heir, but for a variety of reasons, his older brothers and step-brothers were deemed unfit. While the official North Korean press claims that Kim Jong Un was a direct descendant of his grandfather (and founder of the North Korean state), it took a lot of luck and family scheming to elevate him into the leadership position. This internal, domestic component is important, as Kim Jong Un has had to solidify his legitimacy among the other contenders.

Kim Jung Un’s physique and facial characteristics remind the North Korean people of their founder and most hallowed statesman, Kim Il Sung. He has adopted the mannerisms and look of his grandfather, hoping to emulate the “Most Dear and Loving Leader.” Like his grandfather, Kim Jong Un has quickly learned how to manipulate neighbors and foes for maximum concessions. The Juche (self-reliance) philosophy developed by his grandfather has been transformed into an all-purpose tool to defend the legitimacy of the elite in the Pyongyang regime.

To preserve North Korean autonomy and the ruling clique’s hold on power, Kim Jung Un has been trying to follow two somewhat contradictory policies: placing top priority on military defense while initiating economic and cultural reform. He wants to be recognized as the leader of a nuclear power, while at the same time entertaining Google executives and sport superstars from the camp of the archenemy. The notion that North Korea might relinquish its nuclear weapons program in exchange for economic support no longer remains on his agenda.

Even though the North Korean people have been constantly reminded of the painful memories of their civil war, Kim Jong Un needs a robust foreign enemy for domestic reasons, both to strengthen his leadership image and remove any potential political rivals. Kim Jong Un has to demonstrate resolve not only against his enemies (the US, Japan and South Korea), but also against the potential interventionist, China. His father’s final words warned that China has been historically the greatest challenge to North Korea. There are fears within the Hermit Kingdom that China will one day transform North Korea into a Chinese colony.

China’s View of Kim Jong Un

Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the Communist Party of China, Chairman of the Party Central Military Commission, and the first-ranked member of the Politburo Standing Committee, was born in June 1953, just as the Korean War was ending. He is the leader of the Communist Party of China’s fifth generation of leadership.



North Korean Supreme Leader, Kim Jong Un

Continued: Russia, China and the New North Korean Leader

Having just recently assumed this position, it may be too early to get an accurate perspective Xi's attitude toward Kim Jong Un. Kim sent greetings to Jinping in March 2013, congratulating him on his selection as president of the People's Republic of China. While they have not yet formally met, Xi likely views Kim as a useful (though somewhat dangerous) tool in helping to construct a stronger China.

The Chinese leadership dislikes what it perceives as a new containment strategy by the US government. Leaders in Beijing see the US "pivot to Asia" as an attempt to encircle China with US allies in Japan and South Korea to India, the Philippines and Afghanistan. At this point, it does not desire conflict with the US, which would harm China's growth and continued economic development. Historically, China has hidden its strength and emphasized global harmony before making claims of becoming a major power. In this context, the Chinese leadership will try to exploit the situation in North Korea to its own advantage. Its patronage of North Korea could be easily abandoned; however, they will not give it up for free.

Chinese perceptions toward the Korean War have shifted over the past decade, and today more Chinese scholars point to the North Korean leadership under Kim Il Sung as the source of the conflict. China's officials had previously insisted that the United States was responsible for starting the war, and millions of Chinese students have studied this history as "The War to Resist America and Aid Korea." New social media have helped to alter Chinese public opinion toward North Korea. According to a recent New York Times article, China's social media sites have unleashed waves of satirical jokes, images and names aimed at Kim Jong Un. This negative commentary has been apparently blessed by China's normally vigilant censors, and the barbs against Kim Jong Un have been left intact.

Similarly, Deng Yuwen, a Chinese Communist Party reporter, wrote an article titled "China Should Abandon North Korea" for the Financial Times. Deng pointed out five reasons why China should do this. First, a relationship between states based on ideology is dangerous. Second, basing China's strategic security on North Korea's value as a geopolitical ally is outdated. Third, North Korea will not reform and open up to the world. Fourth, North Korea is pulling away from Beijing. Finally, once North Korea has nuclear weapons, it cannot be ruled out that the capricious Kim regime will engage in nuclear blackmail against China.

However, advocating such a sharp departure from the official position cost Deng his job. While his article received no official sanction, it is clear that some change of thinking has started among the Chinese leadership toward North Korea. Another recent article points out the age differences between Xi Jinping and Kim Jong Un and how this generational gap could be a serious obstacle between the two leaders.

China and North Korea share a long antagonistic history. For more than two thousand years Korea has felt like the servant to the more powerful China. As Rodger Baker pointed out in his history of the two countries:

China sees North Korea as a useful buffer but one that can draw China into wars and potentially weaken or at least delay China's attempts at achieving its own strategic imperatives. North Korea sees China as a necessary partner, one that through careful manipulation will continue to fund and protect North Korea, but always with the risk of North Korea losing control of its own fate to the Chinese. These are not new ideas – they draw centuries of interactions, and both countries take different lessons from that history.

The Korean War provides a grim example of this unequal relationship. When Kim Il Sung wanted to stop fighting because of unnecessary casualties and destruction of facilities by the US strategic bombing, Soviet and Chinese leaders urged him to fight on. Military historian Allan R Millett explains:

While the United States had many reasons to end the war, China and the Soviet Union had multiple motives to let the war continue. For Mao, the war allowed him to train and rearm the People's Liberation Army, the first an achievement in battle in Korea against a Western Army, the



North Korean propaganda piece honoring Kim Il Sung, via <http://chinadaily.com/2013/04/15/happy-birthday-kim-il-sung/>



President of the People's Republic of China Xi Jinping, via <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com>

Continued: Russia, China and the New North Korean Leader

second the product of the Chinese agreement with Stalin to intervene in 1950. As long as the CPVF fought and died, the more military assistance China received from the Soviet Union. The PLA got almost everything it ordered, but not nuclear weapons and not Soviet air support south of the Yalu River region. By the autumn of 1952 the Chinese arm had artillery, tanks, and aircraft undreamed of in 1949...The Soviet general staff had more practical reasons for letting the war continue. Without major casualties, the Soviet armed forces could develop their air defense systems against their actual, potential foe, the US Air Force...Stalin explained the Soviet role in Korea as a masterful way to distract the United States from Europe and to bleed it of lives and dollars.

This same Chinese realpolitik toward North Korea continues today. Chinese leaders see North Korea as a part of its grand strategy against the US expansion and encirclement of China. North Korea is a useful card, but it could be easily abandoned if China's leaders can gain a more important concession from the US, such as greater access to Taiwan or gaining US support regarding Tibet and other territorial disputes.

North Korea provides China with a security buffer zone against potential US and Japanese threats. In the event of unification, Chinese leaders do not want to have a border with US forces along the Yalu River. North Korea is also a useful diplomatic card for Chinese officials when dealing with the US over other contentious issues (e.g., currency controls, trade, global warming, human rights, etc.). If the Chinese leadership were to help the US in changing North Korean behavior, it would likely demand a discount elsewhere. For instance, in exchange for support against North Korea, China may demand reduction or elimination of US missile defense installations in the region.

China also has considerable economic interests in North Korea, which could influence how it reacts toward greater sanctions or diplomatic pressure. North Korea has considerable natural resources that China can access easily because of a lack of competition. Conversely, China also can sell its products to North Korea without concern toward other suppliers. Finally, North Korean totalitarianism, poverty, and boorish behavior makes China's mild authoritarianism, economic growth and regional strength look quite positive.

Russia's View of Kim Jong Un

In July 2000, not long after he was elected Russian president, Vladimir Putin visited North Korea, the first visit ever by a Russian leader to the Korean peninsula. He met with the enigmatic North Korean leader, Kim Jong Il, and they discussed a variety of issues. Some interpreted this visit as a sign that Putin was intent upon re-establishing Russia's prestige abroad and its sphere of influence in the East. Russia had largely spurned North Korea in the 1990s, adopting a pro-Western foreign policy. By visiting the "rogue" regime in Pyongyang, Putin was demonstrating an independent foreign policy.

Others speculated that the visit was part of Putin's campaign against controversial US missile defense plans. If Putin's intent was to convince the North Koreans to abandon their ballistic missile and nuclear programs (which were a major pretext for the BMD plan), then he surely failed.

In another sense, however, the trip was a success. From the Russian leadership's perspective (and especially Putin's), it is much better to have a stable, friendly, though perhaps dictatorial neighbor than one that is unstable, unfriendly and, perhaps, democratic. After Putin's visit, the "Dear Korean Leader" (Kim Jong Il) made a number of trips to Russia, and various trade and cultural deals were signed. The "Dear Leader" also insured that Russia was included on what became known as "the 6-party talks," designed to end North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

The legacy of both the Cold and Korean Wars continues to shape how Putin views North Korea. For some 40 years the USSR had been something of a stepfather to North Korea, providing essential military and economic support. While no longer an overt sponsor of the leadership in Pyongyang, Putin's Russia continues to provide minimal diplomatic and military support. The current Russian leadership does not believe that North Korea is part of any "axis of evil." In 2011 President Medvedev met with the Kim Jong Il for discussions, including plans for joint military exercises. In 2012 Russia forgave nearly \$10 billion in debt relief to the North Korean government, and promised to invest nearly \$1 billion in energy, education and health care projects.

Putin has not yet met the new North Korean leader. There were unfounded rumors that North Korea might get an invitation to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit held in Vladivostok in Sep 2012, but other than a couple thousand semi-illegal North Korean workers helping to get the construction finished, there was no official delegation from Pyongyang.

Since Russia shares a 12-mile border with North Korea, the Kremlin leadership is quite aware of the problems on the Korean peninsula. Besides North Korea's weapons of mass destruction program (which could malfunction or lead to hostilities), Russian officials fear an influx of North Korean refugees, should the situation grow dire. Given their proximity and decent relations, the Kremlin is in a better position to monitor the situation within North Korea. Over the past decade, when some in the West predicted the imminent collapse of the Pyongyang government, Russian analysts have been more sanguine.



Kim Jong Il, via <http://www.telegraph.co.uk>

Continued: Russia, China and the New North Korean Leader

Russian leaders consider China as the chief patron of North Korea, while they see the US playing a similar role in South Korea. The notion that the US and China are using the division in Korea to their geopolitical advantage is widespread within Russia. Putin, like Stalin before him, probably would not mind if the Chinese and Americans began to fight over Korea, as long as the basic status quo was maintained. However, given that pragmatic business interests are paramount, Kremlin officials advocate diplomacy and hope to maintain good relations with both Koreas.

The Kremlin's chief political benefit may stem from comparison. Like China, Putin's mild authoritarianism looks good compared to the repression in North Korea. Similar to the rhetoric coming out of Pyongyang and Beijing, the US military presence in South Korea also feeds into a prevalent belief among some in the Kremlin that Russia is again being surrounded by enemies. Although to a much lesser degree, Putin uses the same threat of foreign invasion to help legitimize his "sovereign" form of democracy.

The Russian leader's anxiety regarding the fear of outside intervention, however, is mostly for the domestic audience and should not be overstated. Kremlin officials have a pragmatic view toward the situation in Korea. Russian leaders do not want the North Korean leadership to be overthrown by outside forces, primarily because of the spread of instability, but also because of the dangerous precedent. They would prefer an evolutionary approach, whereby Russia diplomats would work with their counterparts in China, the US and other countries to bring about peaceful change on the peninsula.

Putin does not want North Korea to have nuclear weapons, but believes that dialogue and diplomacy are the best means to reach this goal. North Korea, however, has drawn its own lessons from the past decade, and believes that nuclear weapons may be the only true guarantee of its sovereignty today.



12 mile Russian - North Korean border.

Implications/Conclusions

While much has changed since the armistice to end the fighting in Korea was signed sixty years ago, the fundamental mistrust between the belligerents abides. The Cold War struggle over communist expansion has been replaced by realpolitik and a competition for resources. Leaders in Russia and China maintain that the unipolar model of global governance, advocated by some in Washington at the end of the Cold War, is inherently unstable. They would point to the current tension on the Korean peninsula as proof of this unsteady model.

This brief examination of Russia-Chinese-North Korean relations has suggested that leaders in Moscow and Beijing will try to use this instability in North Korea to dismantle the unipolar security architecture there, where the US plays the role of "global policeman," and replace it with a multipolar version, where major powers work together to solve global problems. This is an important part of their grand strategy for the region.

Both Russian and Chinese officials view North Korea as an effective buffer between their countries and the US. Neither country would want a unified Korea where American forces would be located on their very borders. While North Korea is not a proxy for either country, leaders in Russia and China understand that Pyongyang's anger is directed against South Korea, Japan and especially the US, and will use this antagonism appropriately. The Chinese leadership is not about to give up its influence over North Korea without receiving some concessions in return. Besides thwarting US ambitions, leaders in both China and Russia hope to reap economic rewards by working with leadership in Pyongyang.