

## THE GLOBAL INTELLIGENCE MONITORING CENTER

---



*AN ANALYTICAL INTELLIGENCE WIRE PREPARED BY THE  
STUDENTS OF EMBRY-RIDDLE AERONAUTICAL UNIVERSITY IN  
PRESCOTT, ARIZONA.*

---

NUMBER (195)

7 March 2013

---

In This Issue:

### SITUATION REPORTS

Bangladesh: Arrests Students on Murder Charge

China: Increases Defense Budget

China: Villagers Attack Officials

Japan: Claims Disputed Islands

Malaysia: Ousts Fighters

Maldives: Detains Opposition

United Arab Emirates: Islamist Trial Begins

Venezuela: Chavez Pronounced Dead

### BRIEFS

France: Fighting Resumes in Mali

Indonesia: Blocks Disbandment of Counter Terrorism Unit

Iraq: Forges Arms Deal with Russia

Russia: Pushes for Military Upgrade

Somalia: Offers Amnesty to Pirates

Saudi Arabia: Supplying Weapons to Syrian Rebels

Taiwan: Announces Nuclear Referendum

Thailand: Commences Peace Talks with Insurgents

Turkey: Forms Defense Partnership with Pakistan

### ARTICLES

Israel: Regional Security Deteriorates

## SITUATION REPORTS

### **AUSTRAL REALMS**

#### **MALAYSIA: Ousts Fighters**

On 5 March, security forces launched an offensive to remove Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) members from Sabah. These members allegedly arrived on orders from Sultan of Sulu Jamalul Kiram III on 12 February to press a historical land claim. MILF is a splinter group from the Moro National Liberation Front, which reached a peace agreement in the 1990s. Government officials are urging residents of Sabah to go about their lives as normal.

### **EAST ASIA**

#### **CHINA: Increases Defense Budget**

On 5 March, the government announced a 10.7 percent (USD 114 billion) increase in budget allotment for military spending. Peking University Security Expert Zhu Feng stated that the rise is not unexpected, and is a sign of the new government. Washington has expressed concerns about the increase, stating that the actual increase is likely more than publicized.

#### **CHINA: Villagers Attack Officials**

On 4 March, the villagers of Shangpu in Guangdong Province, enraged by the loss of cultivated land for a factory site, blocked a convoy of local officials and businessmen, overturned and smashed their vehicles, and chased them away. The farmers told a BBC correspondent that the local party chief had made a deal to make over rights to village land to a factory owner, without consulting them. The villagers suspect the local official has pocketed the money paid for the land, as so often happens in these deals. The villagers also raised a banner demanding democracy and free elections. The incident is bound to embarrass the Central Government, as it occurred on the same day the National People's Congress met to rubber stamp the latest high level changes in the Government and Party.

#### **JAPAN: Claims Disputed Islands**

On 6 March, the government released statistics involving Japanese citizens claiming disputed territory as their home address. The law allows any citizen to claim any part of

Japan as their legal residence as long as they have a housing number. The statistics include four Russian controlled islands near Hokkaido, the Senkakkus, Korean controlled Takeshima, and Okinotori, Japan's southernmost point.

## **MIDDLE EAST**

### **UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Islamist Trial Begins**

On 5 March, ninety-four people, all Emiratis, have been brought to trial for plotting to replace the Government of the UAE with a strict Islamist regime based on the Shariah. The accused, including twelve women, reportedly are members of Al-Islah, an Islamist organization allegedly linked to the Muslim Brotherhood. The detainees are all professionals, and include two human rights lawyers, as well as teachers, students and judges. They were arrested in raids last summer and some were reported to have been tortured. They face up to 15 years in jail if convicted.

## **SOUTH AMERICA**

### **VENEZUELA: Chavez Pronounced Dead**

On 5 March, President Hugo Chavez died due to an unknown cancer, after surgery in Cuba in December. The Venezuelan government declared seven days of mourning in remembrance of Chavez. Presidential elections will take place in 30 days to determine Chavez's replacement. The current Vice-President, Nicolas Maduro, is expected to run for the office, even though he has not yet formally announced his candidacy.

## **SOUTH ASIA**

### **BANGLADESH: Arrests Students on Murder Charge**

On 2 March, police arrested five university students on charges of murdering Ahmed Rajib Haider, a political and religious blogger. The students reportedly later confessed to the 15 February killing. The government has since begun adding security to blogs, blocking some while offering protection to others, in hopes of stopping the violence.

### **MALDIVES: Detains Opposition**

On 5 March, former President and current opposition leader Mohamed Nasheed was taken into custody by police forces. The current government insists that his arrest has

nothing to do with his activities, and that the arrest is to ensure his appearance at his trial on 7 March for abuse of power. Opposition members have stated that the charge is political and untrue. India is also observing this development, since New Delhi backed an earlier political agreement that Nasheed would remain free until the next presidential election in September.

## BRIEFS

### **AFRICA**

#### **SOMALIA: Offers Amnesty to Pirates**

**Summary:** The Somali president has offered amnesty to young pirates in the hopes of providing more security for international shipping in the region.

**Development:** On 28 February, Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud granted amnesty to hundreds of young Somali pirates in an effort to reduce piracy. President Hassan stated the amnesty would not apply to senior pirates. This decision comes after a drastic decrease in pirate attacks. There have been two attacks so far this year, compared with 30 attacks by this time last year. A similar amnesty program worked well in Nigeria in 2010. This amnesty coincides with recent calls by the US and Somalia to end the ban on the trade of weapons to Somalia. Critics cite a lack of order and rule through force as justification for keeping the embargo in place. The U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has said the Somali government should focus on freeing hostages and bringing justice to criminals rather than providing amnesty. There are still approximately 130 hostages held by pirates, along with 4 large commercial vessels.

**Analysis:** If piracy is curbed in the region, the US would likely be able to redirect naval forces to more troubled areas of the world. However, this recent amnesty could be a political move to sway nations in the U.N. to lift the arms embargo against Somalia. There is the possibility that the government has no plan to help the youth in question find new employment. If the embargo is ended, it is possible that weapons will flood to militants due to the unemployed former pirates. The US may be called upon to assist in rectifying the situation, should it get out of hand once again.

[Andrew Coughlin]

## AUSTRAL REALMS

### **INDONESIA: Blocks Disbandment of Counter Terrorism Unit**

**Summary:** The government is blocking efforts by interest groups to disband Densus 88, which will likely decrease the effectiveness of the unit in the future.

**Development:** On 5 March, Coordinating Minister for Political, Security, and Legal Affairs Djoko Suyanto stated that groups demanding the dissolution of the National Police Counter Terrorism Unit, Densus 88, are asking for too much. Suyanto went on to state that the group is now being supervised more closely, and investigations are continuing. Human rights and religious groups, particularly Islamist ones, have been calling for Densus 88 to be dissolved since 15 February, when a video featuring men in Densus 88 uniforms torturing and killing a bond man was released to several group leaders before being shown to police. The investigations have revealed a lack of oversight, and also place the video at almost six years old.

**Analysis:** With no specific proof to back up their accusations, groups calling for the dissolution of Densus 88 are not likely to get their wish unless the police investigation turns up something solid. Using a six year old video as proof now, when it could have been used earlier, is also likely a plot. The groups who would benefit from the dissolution of Densus 88, even if a similar unit was organized, will likely have a window in which to conduct terrorist activities without fear of retribution. Densus 88 has been successful since its founding, which is not a common achievement in counter terror units. If the unit were to be disbanded, terrorism could move back into Indonesia unhindered until another unit was set up. If Densus 88 is not disbanded, new regulations and public scrutiny are likely to hinder their effectiveness. Either way, the safety environment in Indonesia is likely compromised. Business interests in the area are likely to be compromised by this political instability.

[Coleen Parker]

## EAST ASIA

### **TAIWAN: Announces Nuclear Referendum**

**Summary:** The president announced plans to vote in the upcoming nuclear construction referendum poll, possibly leading to strained relations between the government and the citizenry.

**Development:** On 4 March, Presidential Office Spokeswoman Garfie Li announced plans for President Ma Ying-jeou to vote on the upcoming referendum regarding nuclear power. The referendum gives the public a voice in whether the Fourth Nuclear Plant construction should continue, and requires a 50 percent voter turnout to be valid. Students

and activists groups have staged protests and will be staging another on 9 March calling for the cessation of construction on the Fourth Nuclear Plant. Opposition groups have stated that the referendum vote is unfair since absentee voting has not been approved and if 50 percent of eligible voters do not vote, construction on the plant will continue.

**Analysis:** Nuclear power is considered one of the better sources of energy in many parts of the world, though popular opinion has declined sharply since the Fukushima Daichi incident. With rallies already happening, the government appears to have little choice in whether it could cancel the vote and still appear legitimate. The referendum voting attendance policies also pose a problem, since opposition groups could still declare the government decision illegitimate if the 50 percent turnout is not reached and the vote is considered non-binding. Public demonstrations are likely to increase as the vote draws closer, and with more rallies, the chance of police involvement is likely to increase as well. If the police were to get involved in a rally, that would likely sway undecided voters towards the side of the nuclear opposition. Since the US has a stake in the protection of Taiwan, it is likely that some form of statement will be issued soon. Depending on this statement, relations with Taiwan may improve or grow worse. This is also dependent on which way the vote goes.

[Coleen Parker]

## EUROPE

### **FRANCE: Fighting Resumes in Mali**

**Summary:** The French government has extended its troop commitment in Mali and may ask for US involvement in response to heavy fighting in the Northern provinces.

**Development:** On 28 February 2013, the French government announced that it would keep French troops on the ground in Mali until late July. Initial reports indicated that the majority of French troops would be withdrawn by the end of March, however, resumed fighting in the Northern provinces forced a change. This comes as a suicide car bomb killed seven on Wednesday in Kidal. This was the second suicide car bombing in Mali this week. Both bombs are believed to be the work of Tuareg rebels and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) fighters. The French delegate to the United Nations Gerard Araud also announced on 27 February that a peacekeeping force from the UN would not appear until at least April due to the current unstable nature of the conflict.

**Analysis:** French and UN officials fear an increase in guerrilla tactics, such as the two car bombs detonated this week, now that the militants are fighting to take back conquered land. French forces are struggling to combat the militants' methods at this time and will likely look to the United States for help. The US has extensive experience in handling non-state actors with an organized battle plan like those in Northern Mali, however, with the ongoing US conflict in Afghanistan and debate over the concluded conflict in Iraq, any US assistance will most likely be in an advisory capacity.

[Kellyn Wagner]

## **RUSSIA: Pushes for Military Upgrade**

**Summary:** As Russia pushes for independence, President Vladimir Putin plans to upgrade the Russian military to balance power between the United States and Russia, including technologies to exclude Russian airspace from any US missile defense system in Europe.

**Development:** On 27 February, Russian president Vladimir Putin held a meeting with top military officials about a “drastic upgrade” of Russia’s armed forces. Putin claimed that Russia needed the ability to counter the emerging external threats and what he described as "systematic attempts to undermine the balance of power" by the United States. He also said that "the changing geopolitical situation requires rapid and considered action. Russia’s armed forces must reach a fundamentally new capability level within the next three to five years." Russia is planning to spend USD 750 billion (23 trillion rubles) in the coming years for the military upgrade. While the current Russian army is one based on Soviet-era tactics of mobilization, new advances and financial support will allow the military to be modernized to be on par with the United States.

**Analysis:** The United States should expect more threats from Russia in the next three to five years. Putin’s financial commitment to the military shows that Russia is in need of a tool to counter the proposed US missile defense system. Russia is moving toward greater isolation and wants to uphold its national unity and independence. It is increasing its military capabilities to demonstrate a capability to counter the United States. While the U.S. missile defense system is set to be operational by 2020, Putin wants his modernized army complete sometime between 2015 and 2017, around the end of his term as president. Russia’s senior military officers believe the US anti-missile radars will be able to look deeply into Russia and could support other hostile US capabilities against Russia. The United States should therefore expect more military tensions with Moscow, as Putin pursues his program to rebuild Russia’s armed forces. [Kyle Richardson]

## **TURKEY: Forms Defense Partnership with Pakistan**

**Summary:** The defense agreement signed this week between Turkey and Pakistan to cooperate on the production of aircraft and other technologies for the two countries may limit US advanced arms assistance to Ankara to prevent US technologies from reaching China via Pakistan.

**Development:** On 28 February, Turkey's Prime Minister and Pakistan's Defense Minister announced a new defense partnership. The two countries will jointly produce defense products in order to encourage technology transfer and generate economic activity. Production of future aircraft and other defense technologies are currently being proposed.

**Analysis:** The US has been Turkey's largest defense supplier for the past century. This new agreement between Pakistan and Turkey could diminish US defense exports to Turkey. The US will be concerned over the possibility that Pakistan will pass to China any advanced weapons technology that Turkey would receive from the US, which would then pass into the Turkey-Pakistan cooperative programs. Further, over the past several months, Turkey has become increasingly frustrated with Western powers. With hopes of gaining entrance into the European Union fading, Turkey may take increasingly negative positions towards the US and other Western powers. If tensions continue, the relationship between the US and Turkey could suffer.

[Carsen Cooper]

## MIDDLE EAST

### **IRAQ: Forges Arms Deal with Russia**

**Summary:** The recent Iraq-Russia arms deal with Russia forges a return to the Saddam Hussain-era Iraq-Russia arms transfer relationship and will mean the exclusion of the US Defense Industry from at least part of the effort to rebuild Iraqi armed forces.

**Development:** On 28 February, Iraq and Russia reached an arms deal, which was thought to be cancelled. Russia will be supplying the Iraqi army with military equipment weapon systems. Iraq needs to re-arm its military after the devastation of the 2003 US invasion that toppled the regime of Saddam Hussein. Iraq will be equipped with several Mi-27 attack helicopters and surface to air missiles to better protect its borders and maritime territories.

**Analysis:** Major military re-armament in Iraq will put the country in front of the current arms race in the Middle East. It needs to protect itself even further after the departure of US military forces. This arms deal may be the start of reconstructing the intimate arms transfer relationship between Moscow and Baghdad characteristic of the Baathist Period, which included quarter century in power. The deal is a sign that Baghdad wants to operate independently of the US and align more closely with Iran. Moscow is now supplying arms to both Tehran and Baghdad, capitals that show signs of greater cooperation on Syria and potentially on Gulf security issues.

[Joe Nazareno]

### **SAUDI ARABIA: Supplying Weapons to Syrian Rebels**

**Summary:** The shipment of weapons, purchased by Saudi Arabia, from Croatia to Syrian rebels will concern the US if these weapons go to arming the extremist Islamic elements.

**Development:** On 26 February 2013, officials have told reporters that the Saudi Arabian government has been buying Croatian infantry weapons and shipping them to Syrian

rebels. Saudi Arabia has been a longtime supporter of the Syrian rebels, however, this is the first instance of directly funneling weapons to the rebels. According to these reports, the arms shipments have been ongoing since December, but just now have been revealed, and have possibly led to multiple tactical gains by the rebels. The amounts of arms being shipped is negligible compared to those received by President Assad from countries such as Iran and Russia.

**Analysis:** By announcing the provision of arms to the rebels Saudi Arabia could legitimize giving weapons to the rebels. In turn this could lead to other states openly supporting the rebels with weapons and quickly changing the tide of the conflict. Other nations could be drawn into supporting the rebels with arms such as the US. Saudi Arabia has also stated it is attempting to monitor the distribution of weapons, however, these weapons could still end up in the hands of extremists. This week US Secretary of State, John Kerry, said the US supports the provision of weapons to the rebels from Middle Eastern countries, but does not itself intend to send weapons to the rebels. It will, however, provide humanitarian assistance. Washington is concerned that, if Al-Nusrah emerges as the most dominating armed group in the constellation of rebel fighters, the Al-Qa'ida-linked organization will have too much leverage in determining the political future of post-Assad Syria.  
[Paul Dyer]

## SOUTHEAST ASIA

### **THAILAND: Commences Peace Talks with Insurgents**

**Summary:** An agreement signed between the Thai government and the BRN to begin bi-weekly peace talks may provide an opportunity to end the long running insurgency in southern Thailand.

**Development:** On 28 February, the Barisan Revolusi Nasional Melayu Pattani (BRN), one of Thailand's largest terrorist groups, primarily composed of Muslim insurgents, signed an agreement with the Thai government to begin bi-weekly peace talks. The BRN is comprised of multiple splinter and sub-splinter groups that it has little control over, the most important being the RKK. The talks are aimed at de-escalating the violence in the southernmost portion of Thailand. Malaysia, a predominantly Muslim country, will facilitate the meetings. This is a significant move by the insurgency, which has yet to put forth a specific list of demands since the violence began to escalate nearly a decade ago. This statement seemed to allude to the RKK, one of the most active Muslim insurgent groups in Thailand who strongly support the separatist movement.

**Analysis:** Although this event is hailed by the public as a big step in the right direction, it is clear that neither the government nor the BRN is convincingly optimistic about the peace talk's immediate success. The leader of the BRN, Ustaz Hassan Taib, while signing the agreement, reminded Thai authorities that he has little direct control over BRN

splinter groups and cannot guarantee they will abide by any agreements signed in their name. This was made obvious by a line in the agreement which states that “Safety measures shall be provided to all members of the Joint Working Group throughout the entire process,” indicating that attacks on meetings are expected to occur. Since the written agreement restricts the talks to the “framework of the Thai Constitution” this clearly rules out any form of secession. This stipulation will very likely turn away the more extreme members of the insurgency from the negotiation table. It is also probable that the RKK and other separatist insurgent groups will target the BRN members engaged in the meetings and regard them as traitors. The BRN negotiation team is composed mostly of older generation separatists who are more willing to negotiate. Although their control over other groups is limited, their decisions strongly influence the overall direction of the insurgency. The outcome of these peace talks will set a precedent for how other nations in Southeast Asia will deal with Muslim insurgencies.  
[Andrew Judd]

## ARTICLES

### **ISRAEL: Regional Security Deteriorates**

**Summary:** Israel is facing the movement of Al-Qa’ida-linked elements into Syria’s Eastern Golan region and credible intelligence that Hezbollah in Lebanon has acquired chemical weapons. The security situation is close to a threshold that will force Israel to intervene militarily.

**Developments:** The security situation around Northern Israel has taken two serious turns, each unconnected but both of which that could require an Israeli military response. The first development was the firing of five artillery shells into Israel from east of the Golan Heights on Saturday. Observers believe the shells were fired by Jabhat Al-Nusrah militants, who belong to the Al-Qa’ida-linked jihadi group that now appears to be the most active element in the Syrian resistance to the Assad Regime. According to these observers, Al-Nusrah is moving into positions being vacated by the bulk of the Syrian Army in the disputed region. On Wednesday, armed militants kidnapped 20 Filipino soldiers of the unarmed UN Disengagement Force and say they are holding them contingent upon further Syrian Army withdrawals.

The second development is more troubling. According to Israeli press sources, the Israeli Defense Minister, Ehud Barak, was informed by US Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel that Hezbollah in Lebanon has acquired chemical weapons from Syria. This is something the Israelis have said they would prevent happening. According the Israeli report, the US is pressing Israel, Jordan and Turkey to enter Syria in a joint operation to secure the remaining chemical weapons sites.

**Analysis:** For now, Israel is treating the developments in the eastern Golan as an internal matter of Syria, but it has warned the UN Security Council that it “will not stand idly by as the lives of its citizens are being put at risk by the Syrian Government’s reckless

actions.” Russia, which is hosting talks in Moscow with the Syrian Opposition, is pressing Israel to hold off on any reaction on the Golan. The developing situation on the Golan demonstrates the dilemmas Israel faces as the civil war in Syria evolves. On the one hand, the Assad Regime, hardly a friend of Israel, was at least a known quantity, long a stable actor to Israel’s north, and one with which Jerusalem had developed a workable, if back channel, relationship. While Israel will not be unhappy to see the back of the Assad Regime, it will not be pleased if the successor government is beholden to jihadi elements like Al-Nusrah, which are bound to be virulently anti-Israeli.

The question of what to do about chemical weapons in the hands of Hezbollah is exceedingly complex. We believe that Israel would welcome a joint operation with Turkey and Jordan, both to reduce the chemical weapons threat in Syria, and as a means, perhaps, of rebuilding damaged ties with Turkey. However, going it alone after Hezbollah in Lebanon will ignite a costly war with a skilled opponent. The Iron Dome counter-missile system will lessen, but not eliminate, Hezbollah’s missile threat. If Israel does engage in a second war with Hezbollah, it may decide to finish the job this time and work to isolate the group from its patrons in Tehran. In the event of a joint approach to the chemical weapons problem, the United States will have to take the commanding lead, providing intelligence, logistics, expertise, money, mediation, and weapons support. Without that, these three states are unlikely to work well together. Still the ‘indispensable power,’ Washington is reluctant to contribute its own troops, but it may have to use Special Operations personnel and hope that the situation will not require its own troop escalation.

[Eagle Eye Editors]

---

**THIS IS A GLOBAL INTELLIGENCE BRIEFING PREPARED BY THE STUDENTS OF THE GLOBAL SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE STUDIES PROGRAM AT EMBRY-RIDDLE AERONAUTICAL UNIVERSITY IN PRESCOTT, ARIZONA. THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS BRIEFING ARE THOSE OF THE STUDENTS, NOT THE UNIVERSITY. FOR QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS, CONTACT DR. PHILIP E. JONES, (928) 777-6992 OR THE**

**EAGLE EYE EDITING BOARD:**

**KYLE PARENT, [kyle.parent@eagleeyeintel.com](mailto:kyle.parent@eagleeyeintel.com)  
CODY WIEBE, [cody.wiebe@eagleeyeintel.com](mailto:cody.wiebe@eagleeyeintel.com)  
COLEEN PARKER, [coleen.parker@eagleeyeintel.com](mailto:coleen.parker@eagleeyeintel.com)  
JOE HARRIS, [joe.harris@eagleeyeintel.com](mailto:joe.harris@eagleeyeintel.com)**