

THE GLOBAL INTELLIGENCE MONITORING CENTER



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

NUMBER (191)

6 February 2013

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SITUATION REPORTS

AFRICA

EGYPT: Suppresses Further Protests

On 4 February, police in Tanta fired teargas into a crowd of protestors following the funeral of an activist. The activist apparently died in police custody several days after his arrest, possibly as a result of torture. Protestors drew comparisons between President Mohamed Morsi and former President Mubarak and demanded reforms to the Interior Ministry, which oversees the police.

AMERICAS

BOLIVIA: Awaits Maritime Access

On 4 February, President Evo Morales stated that Bolivia was waiting for a formal proposal from the Chilean government to finalize access to the sea. The Chilean government is currently sticking to a 1904 treaty for its maritime boundaries regarding Bolivia, which leave Bolivia landlocked. The case is currently in The Hague for review.

COLOMBIA: German Tourists Held Hostage

On 4 February, the National Liberation Army (ELN) announced the capture of two German nationals a few weeks ago in Northern Colombia. ELN is currently stating that the pair is being treated as intelligence officers. German state broadcasting is alleging the two are German citizens. ELN has about 2500 members and is not currently part of ongoing peace talks with the government.

EAST ASIA

CHINA: Tensions Rise Over Diayou Islands

Japan has lodged a formal protest to Beijing about an incident on 30 January, when a Chinese destroyer operating in the territorial waters of the Diayou Islands, locked its fire control radar on a Japanese Coast Guard vessel. The presence of a Chinese naval vessel in these waters and the operating of a weapons-targeting radar are new elements in escalating dispute, which could lead to unintended consequences. Late last year, China sent a fighter aircraft into the air space over the Islands. Japan responded with its own warplane, but it arrived after the Chinese aircraft had departed.

EUROPE

FRANCE: Nigerian Pirates Seize Tanker

French officials confirmed the seizure of a fuel tanker in international waters near the Ivory Coast on 4 February. The takeover is attributed to Nigerian pirates, who have a history of seizing tankers in the area. The tanker crew is composed of sailors from Togo, and flies Luxembourgian colors. The seizure marks the latest in a trend of captures by Nigerian pirates. The seizure comes at a time when French military forces are engaged in counter-insurgency operations in Mali.

MIDDLE EAST

IRAN: Ahmadinejad Seeks to Overcome Sanctions

President Ahmadinejad of Iran made an historic trip to Egypt on 5 February, discussing the possibility of overcoming a religious split to improve relations between the two long-time rivals. This marks the first attempt by either country to mend relations since the inauguration of Hosni Mubarak, former president of Egypt in 1981. This is yet another tactic used by Ahmadinejad to overcome Western economic sanctions through the establishment of new alliances. Egypt, traditionally an ally of the United States and recently an arbitrator in the Israeli-Arab conflicts, was hesitant to accept any offer from Iran.

YEMEN: Routs Terror Cell

On 3 February, Yemeni government forces ended a protracted siege with Ansar al-Shariah, which is linked to al-Qaeda, in Abyan province. The militants were using an old cave system following a major clash last year. The destinations of surviving militants are currently unknown.

SOUTH ASIA

INDIA: Initiatives on Sexual Crimes

On 4 February, plans were announced in New Delhi for a national action plan to assist women in crisis. Current components of the plan include a national hotline, police sensitivity training, and protection of witnesses. The initiative is being overseen by the Prime Minister's office, and is an acknowledged result of public furor over the death of Ms. Damini, a student who died from injuries suffered in the recent bus gang rape incident in New Delhi.

PAKISTAN: Bin-Laden Movie Boycotted

Fearing a violent backlash from religious extremists, motion picture distributors in Pakistan are refusing to take “Zero Dark Thirty,” the Kathryn Bigelow film depicting the successful hunt for Usama bin-Laden. Other US media products, like “Homeland” and “Last Resort,” are being boycotted by the local cable distributor. All forms of entertainment, not just those from the US, are anathema to Salafi purists, and, in recent years, video and DVD stores in Peshawar and Karachi have been attacked and burned. According to reports from Islamabad, “Zero Dark Thirty” is available in bootlegged DVD versions on the open market and is a big seller.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

INDONESIA: Examines Election Graft

On 5 February, further accusations of graft being used in presidential bids for the 2014 elections spread through Indonesia. A Prosperous Justice Party official is currently being investigated for an unknown amount in bribes. Analysts within Indonesia have stated that nationalist parties will benefit from the fall out, while religious parties are likely to lose votes.

BRIEFS

AFRICA

UGANDA: Military Coup Threatened

Summary: Comments by the country’s senior general indicate President Museveni’s 27 year regime is losing the military’s support and could face early removal.

Development: On 23 January 2013, Chief of Defense, General Aronda Nyakairima threatened a *coup d’état* during a press conference, saying that the military will not allow politicians to return Uganda to the political turmoil of the 20th century. President Yusari Museveni and Defense Minister Crispus Kyonga later confirmed Nyakairima's comments, suggesting the military has the capability to intervene in Ugandan political affairs if Parliament continues to regress. General Nyakairima is denying the comments attributed to him and blames the media for falsely interpreting them. None the less, Nyakairima now faces a possible lawsuit with three counts of treason: inciting the army to commit a crime, offenses against the state, and concealment of treason and terrorism.

Analysis: Despite the present controversy surrounding the validity and motives behind General Nyakairima's comments, several officials refuse to take such comments lightly,

referencing President Museveni's 27-year reign as an oligarchy hidden behind a facade of democracy. The recent increase of tension between Parliament and the Executive Branch potentially indicates the breakdown of Museveni's core revolutionary ideology that was initially responsible for his rise to power. Though some officials claim a military *coup* is counterproductive and unlikely, others suspect it as a real threat and a sign of Museveni's lack of control over his political party, along with diminishing support for his regime.

The internal collapse of Uganda's political system will likely invoke a wave of citizen unrest throughout the region, encouraging various rebels and terrorist networks to battle for political power. The fall of the current Ugandan regime will likely result in the loss of a critical ally in the fight against terrorism in Sudan, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Regardless, Nyakairima's potential conviction and removal from office could set off a preventive coup and might lead to the future convictions of Defense Minister Kyonga and President Museveni.

[Annabel Virella]

MALI: Last Militant Stronghold Captured

Summary: The seizure of militant-held Kidal by French and Chadian forces will most likely lead to rapid French troop withdrawal and a possible extended commitment by the United Nations contingents in Mali.

Development: On 30 January 2013, French forces seized control of the airport at Kidal, a town in northwestern Mali which has been under the control of Tuareg rebels and Islamic militants. At 2130 Tuesday night, French Special Forces landed at the Kidal airport in four aircraft where they proceeded to reclaim part of the town with little resistance. The town was finally secured with the arrival of Chadian Army troops last Sunday. This was the last significant population center of the Islamic militants, pushing them into a "strategic withdrawal." They are believed to be regrouping along the Algerian border in the mountains to the North and North East, where French warplanes are attacking a settlement, training area and bunkers still held by the militants.

Analysis: The defeat of militants in Kidal marks the end of the French ground offensive. French troops are likely to start withdrawing in the next few weeks and be completely out of Mali before the end of February. The plan from the start was for France to drive the militants out of northern Mali before turning security over to a UN-supported, African Union-backed force known as Afisma, made of troops from Niger, Nigeria, and Chad. European countries are expected to train Malian forces on how to combat these militants in the future. However, many people fear that this will not be enough. The militants are believed to have a large network of underground dwellings and large contingents of men housed in outlying Malian villages, who are merely biding their time until the French leave. If this is the case, the forces left in-country will most likely not be enough. The US is reluctant to become involved on the ground and likely will keep its role restricted to training and intelligence gathering, unless security conditions veer toward collapse.

[Kellyn Wagner]

EUROPE

RUSSIA: Relations with the US Slip Further

Summary: The cycle of hostile legislation between Moscow and Washington is worsening relations and faces the Obama Administration with the problem of whether a new “reset” of relations with Russia is in order—or even possible for now.

Development: On 14 December 2012, the Magnitsky Act was signed into law by President Barack Obama. This legislation started in Congress after the death of Sergei Magnitsky, a Russian whistleblower who died while in custody after reporting \$230 million in fraud involving government officials. Otherwise known as the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act, it will deny US visas to and freeze the assets of those Russian officials implicated in Magnitsky’s death. Russian Prime Minister Dmitri Medvedev called the Magnitsky Act “not beneficial for either Russian-American relations or international law and order”. On 28 December 2012, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed the Dima Yaokvlev Law, an act to ban all adoptions from Russia by US couples. This act was promoted in the Duma after Dima Yakovlev, an adopted Russian child, was killed after mistreatment from his adoptive American parents in Virginia. Claiming Russian human rights are at risk, the adoption ban took effect 1 January 2013 and was met with much resistance from Russian citizens and American lawmakers. In further moves, on 30 January 2013, the Russian government canceled a 2002 agreement between Russia and the US to cooperate on narcotics and human trafficking issues. Finally, starting on 11 February 2013, a Russian will ban US meat and pork imports. With \$500 million in yearly sales being affected, Russian officials claim to have found ractopamine, a meat additive, in the products.

Analysis: The passing of the Magnitsky Act and Dima Yakovelev Law will contribute to higher tensions between the US and Russia. Since the end of the Cold War in 1991, the US and Russia have been able to manage their relationship, despite some strains. While hopes were high to further improve relations after the proposed ‘reset’ in 2009, both countries have seen tensions rise from recent legislative moves. President Putin is building his political base among working class and rural elements, and raising the nationalist temper of the country to offset the influence of the more liberal, West-oriented urban middle class of European Russia. Putin deeply resents pressure from the US on human rights and democratic reforms. Moscow claims the Magnitsky Act interferes with Russia’s judicial processes and violates its sovereignty. The current, government-led rehabilitation of Josef Stalin, is another indication of how Putin is playing the nationalist card. While another Cold War does not seem to be in the making, these strains will hamper the efforts of both countries to deal with issues like Syria and Iran.
[Kyle Richardson]

MIDDLE EAST

IRAN: Retaliation Threatened for Israeli Strike

Summary: Iran's joint statement with Syria condemning the recent Israeli airstrike and promising retaliation may push the area into conflict, or play directly into Israel's hands.

Development: Iran and Syria released a statement on 31 January condemning the Israeli airstrike in Syrian territory that purportedly targeted a convoy carrying SA-17 surface-to-air missiles to Hezbollah, and destroyed an installation referred to as the Scientific Research Center by Damascus. There are rumors that this center was actually a research and development facility for chemical and biological weaponry. The statement from Syria, supported by Iran, also promised retaliation against Israel. It was unclear what exactly the two nations intend. Historically, Iran has shown support for Syria at the expense of the West, in terms of economy, military, and political assistance.

Analysis: The Israeli airstrike comes at a time of tense relations between Israel, the US, Iran, and Syria. The issue of Iran's nuclear program has driven a wedge between the ayatollahs and the West. The US and Israel insist that Iran halt its program, while Iran refuses to. Now that Israel has struck against a staunch ally of Iran, it is possible that Syria may be contemplating military retaliation, particularly with the assistance of Iran. This strike has aggravated old wounds, going back to not only the religious divide between Israel and its Arab neighbors, but also to the result of several years of conflict, in which Israel has been pitted against not only Syria, but other Arab nations as well. Israel made a risky move by striking the supposed missiles and research center, but it may have been in its best interests. Israel in particular has longed for a reason to strike against Iran's nuclear capacity above and beyond its current cyber-attacks and intelligence penetrations. It is possible that Israel's strike was simply a ploy to goad Syria and Iran into attacking, giving Israel and more importantly, the US, the justification to strike directly at Iran's nuclear capabilities and production. Regardless, any kind of retaliation will further tension in the area, perhaps pushing the area and its superpower allies into direct, open conflict.

[Kyle Parent, Nicholas Brown]

SAUDI ARABIA: Drastic Change on the Horizon

Summary: Recent high profile judicial cases and changes in internal policy could signal drastic changes in the Saudi government, which could affect economic ties with the US.

Development: Cases involving possible human rights abuses and questions of Islamic Sharia law have drawn both international and local attention. Cases such as the beheading

of an underage Sri Lankan nanny and the alleged murder of a five-year-old girl by her father have resulted in demands for changes in legislation. The case of the Sri Lankan nanny drew international attention and raised the possibility Colombo will ban on all Sri Lankan females from going to Saudi Arabia for low-paying work. In the case of the murder of the five-year-old, public outcry from women has demanded changes to the older Islamic tradition of “paying off” the victim’s family, and a more equal representation for women in the eyes of the law. Lastly, the Islamic police of Saudi Arabia, after repeated allegations of abuse, have had their power limited and almost all legal authority transferred to the secular police and public prosecutors.

Analysis: These cases have highlighted a shift in Saudi Arabia’s typically ultra-conservative style of government. This shift could also cause an increase in the divide between conservative and liberal elements in the population. Should this lead to domestic instability, American interests, specifically in oil, could suffer. On the other hand, a peaceful shift to a more representative government, with specific rights for women would be welcome in the West. Such a shift would coincide with the other revolutions in the Middle East and North Africa, and could enable Saudi Arabia to avoid internal strife. The last two possible outcomes are a conservative crackdown towards liberalism and a return to an ultra-conservative Islamic state, or a continuation of relatively small public outcries for change, resulting in little or no change in the continuation of a conservative government.

[Paul Dyer]

SYRIA: Jabbat Al Nusra Vows Creation of Islamic State

Summary: Islamic terrorist organization Jabbat al Nusra (al Nusra) has grown in strength and support, threatening to overshadow the rebel coalition forces and gain control of the Syrian governments’ stockpile of chemical weapons.

Development: On 17 January, the BBC was granted an interview with Al Nusra, an Islamic extremist group. During the interview Al Nusra told the BBC that the civil war is no longer a fight for democracy. The leader of Al Nusra, Abu Lokman, has pledged to fight for an Islamic state. The first reports of Jabaat al Nusra as a significant military force began when they reportedly stormed a Syrian missile base.

Analysis: Since the demonstration of its military capability, al Nusra has increased its power and backing in Syria. Its growing influence is threatening to overshadow the strength of the rebel coalition, supported by the West, Turkey and moderate Arab states. In the interview, Lokman, said the Syrian people like Islam. “People here are fed up with socialist and secular regimes. They are all looking forward to an Islamic state. It is impossible there could be anything else in Syria”. Syria controls one of the largest stock piles of chemical weapons, raising concerns that these weapons may fall into the wrong hands. The United States and other allies have discussed options to protect the stockpile of Syrian chemical weapons. However the looming threat of Al Nusra may force the United States to reexamine its policy of non-intervention to secure the Syrian chemical

weapons.
[Nicholas Brown]

SOUTHEAST ASIA

THAILAND: Lese Majeste Laws Target Opposition

Summary: Harsh prison sentences issued to members of the Red Shirts indicate that the Thai government is seeking tighter control over the country for economic purposes.

Development: In the last month, two members of the United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD), also called the Red Shirts, were given prison sentences for defaming the Thai King. The Red Shirts first arose to oppose the military coup that took place in 2006. The movement is anti-establishment and less supportive of the Thai monarchy. One of the men, a Thai comedian, was given a two year prison sentence. The second man, a magazine editor, was sentenced to ten years in prison for publishing defaming articles that others had written. Although the government alleges the charges are strictly for Lese Majeste violations, it has publicly referred to the comedian as a terrorist. The government also is aware of the leadership position held by the comedian during the 2006 Red Shirt protests. The magazine editor's particularly harsh ten-year sentence has caused an uproar domestically and drawn the attention of UN human rights groups.

Analysis: The current Thai government is under pressure from its citizens to enact so-called populist measures demanded by peasant leaders, strongly supported by the Red Shirts. These trends suggest that Thailand, like neighboring China, is beginning to harbor a growing middle class. Incidentally, this seems to be leading to a more democratic relationship between the government and its citizens. It is likely that, with the precarious economic situation approaching, the government is taking measures to suppress the opposition so they can take advantage of Yellow Shirt support to hold off other populist demands. Government officials have also been trying to raise Thailand's sovereign credit rating, which businesses like Standard & Poor's allege is suffering due to new policies such as a minimum wage. Suppression of the Red Shirts likely indicates that the Thai government feels the need to tighten its control to maintain the Baht's low value for future exports.

[Andrew Judd]

**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:
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