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SITUATION REPORTS

AFRICA

NIGERIA: Shell Shuts Down Pipeline

On 1 October, Shell shut down the 150,000-barrel-per-day Bomu-Bonny Trunkline pipeline due to a fire that Shell stated was caused by members of an oil theft operation. The Bomu-Bonny Trunkline was expected to carry over half of Shell's estimated production of Bonny Light crude oil in October.

SOMALIA: AU Captures Al-Shabaab Stronghold

On 2 October, an African Union (AU) force composed mainly of Kenyan troops took control of the town of Kismayo following a four-day infantry operation supported by tanks and armored vehicles. The AU force drove out an estimated 1,000-2,000 al-Shabaab militants from the city, their last major stronghold.

AMERICAS

COLOMBIA: Vendors Protest in Medellin

On 1 October, street vendors blocked off several areas of downtown Medellin, protesting a lack of official presence at a trade meeting. The vendors then engaged police sent to break them up. Allegations that gangs infiltrated the demonstrations, causing them to escalate, are still being investigated.

EAST ASIA

TAIWAN: US Waives Visa Requirements

On 2 October, the United States added Taiwan to its Visa Waiver Program. The program allows member nation citizens to travel to the U.S. without a visa by filling out an online form and paying a USD 14 fee. The program allows multiple visits of up to 90 days each over two years and is expected to prompt a 30- to 40-percent increase in tourism to the US.

MIDDLE EAST

BAHRAIN: Copes with Violent Weekend

On 1 October, several riots occurred across Bahrain. The perpetrators were masked and carried metal poles and, in some cases, petrol bombs. Security forces, civilians, and property were the primary targets. One participant died after the group he was with attempted to flank a police patrol. Government officials are stressing that while political expression is encouraged, violent protests are not.

BRIEFS

AMERICAS

MEXICO: Internal Feud Deteriorates Zetas Organization

Summary: The arrest of a suspected Zetas leader will likely increase violence as the cartel continues to deteriorate.

Development: On 26 September, the Mexican Navy captured a man suspected to be Ivan Velasquez, known as “El Taliban,” the Zetas’ leader. His arrest took place in the state of San Luis Potosi, and he did not resist capture. Recently, rivalry between Heriberto Lazcano and Miguel Trevino, other Zetas leaders, has exploded into violence. Velasquez was the country’s most-wanted drug kingpin, and a \$2.4 million reward was offered for information leading to his arrest. Due to intense rivalry with Trevino and subsequent fragmentation of the Zetas, Velasquez defected to the Gulf Cartel.

Analysis: On 1 December, President-elect Pena Nieto will take office, and immediately his main challenge will be the containment of drug cartels. The internal conflict will very likely facilitate actionable intelligence for the Mexican government, leading to additional arrests, as in the case of Velasquez. Valuable intelligence has been gleaned from captured Zetas leaders, fuelling speculation of internal feuding as competing lieutenants vie to fill the power vacuum. In addition, Velasquez’s capture will almost certainly be a major moral boost for the Mexican government and for the continuation of President Calderon’s drug war policy. Due to an increased number of informants, the influence of the Zetas cartel will likely decline and the organization will continue to fragment. However, violence will likely increase as rivals compete to fill these voids. As Los Zetas boasts a minimum of 10,000 members, it continues to be a security risk for the Mexican population, recruiting many young Mexicans to join. However, the split between Lazcano and Trevino may benefit the Mexican government as rival gang members become informants for law enforcement, eliminating internal competition.

[Fernando Murgia]

VENEZUELA: Presidential Campaign Turns Deadly

Summary: Recent lethal actions by Chavistas against Capriles supporters indicates civil violence is likely if Chavez loses power.

Development: On 30 September, Henry Capriles Radonski, the opposition candidate for this year's presidential election in Caracas, announced that three of his supporters were shot at a rally in Barinas. Shots were fired at their motorcade as they were on their way to participate in a pro-Capriles rally. Some witnesses have reported that the van from which the shots originated belonged to Petroleos de Venezuela S.A. (PDVSA), the state-owned oil company, while others have said it belonged to a group of pro-Chavez citizens. One suspect, whose name has not been released, has been arrested. On 1 October, Capriles demanded an investigation into the shootings and urged Hugo Chavez and the public ensure the remainder of the campaign be peaceful.

Analysis: The projected confidence of both parties of winning the 7 October election and the apparent strength of each candidate's popular support makes it difficult to predict or plan for any particular outcome. However, these shootings likely indicate unrest and even violence after the outcome of Sunday's vote is announced. Should the election end in Capriles' favor, recent events indicate that, with or without the open direction of Chavez himself, a force of Chavez supporters will likely make the opposition's transition into power difficult and may even result in civil violence.

[Sky Smith]

EAST ASIA

NORTH KOREA: Refurbishment of Missile Launch Sites

Summary: Pyongyang has halted construction of a new missile launch site area and has begun refurbishing old launch complexes, likely enabling the implementation of new missile technology.

Development: On 25 September, satellite images from the Associated Press reveal that Pyongyang has stopped construction on a new intercontinental range rocket launch pad. The launch complex, called the Tonghae launch complex, houses nine facilities around the villages of Musudan, No-dong, and Taepo-dong on the northeast coast. The pictures, which were taken 29 August but were just released, also show the refurbishment of older launch pads and the creation of additional facilities. The new facilities appear to be a launch control center and a structure that could house future long-range rocket stages. None of the photographed sites are currently functioning.

Analysis: Construction at the Tonghae launch complex likely suggests Pyongyang is still willing to test rockets for possible military use, especially considering recent North Korean missile tests have been openly supported by Kim Jong Un. With these recent

events, strong political pressure will almost certainly continue as long as foreign governments believe Pyongyang is strengthening or refurbishing its military capabilities. In addition, the public release of the satellite images will increase the likelihood of direct US pressure on North Korea and therefore negatively impact future negotiations with Pyongyang.
[Stefano Guidetti]

EUROPE

ITALY: Courts Enforce Controversial Libel Law

Summary: The Italian Supreme Court has upheld charges of defamation against Alessandro Sallusti, which violates Council of Europe human rights standards and could result in further involvement by the European Court of Human Rights.

Development: On 26 September, the Italian Supreme Court upheld charges of libel against Alessandro Sallusti, the editor of the Italian newspaper *Il Giornale*. Sallusti was originally charged in June 2011 after allowing an article to be published that called for the death penalty for a judge who allowed a 13-year-old girl to have an abortion. Sallusti is currently facing a 14-month prison sentence, but was given 30 days to decide if he would accept a sentence of community service instead. Italian Minister of Justice Paola Severino met with President Giorgio Napolitano on 27 September and discussed the need for a change in the libel law, as Italian law does not meet the standards set forth by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR).

Analysis: The Sallusti trial is not the first case in recent years to result in the sentencing of journalists to prison on libel charges. Since May 2011, two other cases have also resulted in similar convictions. With such cases gaining international attention, the ECHR will very likely look into the Sallusti trial since the charges violate a journalist's right to freedom of expression as outlined in Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. If the ECHR were to take action on this case, Sallusti would likely have the ruling reversed and may receive monetary compensation. An ECHR ruling would pressure the Italian government to reform Italy's defamation laws, allowing for more freedom of expression in the media.
[Brandon Martyn]

RUSSIA: Troops May Face Eviction From Tajikistan

Summary: While Moscow and Dushanbe continue negotiations on the extension of the Russian lease of military bases, Dushanbe will likely continue to pressure Moscow for favorable terms in the agreement.

Development: On 29 September, an unnamed Russian Ground Forces commander commented that Moscow has yet to renew Russia's current lease on a Tajik military base.

The Tajik base currently houses Russia's largest foreign contingent of military personnel, numbering approximately 7,000 troops. Under the current agreement, Moscow is not required to pay for the lease, but rather provides technical and military assistance to the Tajik forces. Dushanbe is looking for an additional USD 100-300 million annually. Prime Minister Medvedev implied they are looking to extend the lease for another 49 years. President Putin will visit Dushanbe on 5 October.

Analysis: Dushanbe is likely looking to further establish its autonomy by making significant demands from Moscow. This may be in response to a US congressional delegation that visited in July, where delegates suggested the successor to the Transit Center at Manas, a US Air Force base currently located in Kyrgyzstan, be constructed in Tajikistan. The stalled negotiations with Moscow may create the opportunity for other states to enter the talks on leasing the Tajik military base.
[Philip Macedo]

MIDDLE EAST

SYRIA: Increasing Danger of Chemical Warfare

Summary: Syria has moved chemical weapons to unknown areas, leading to rising concerns about the regime's potential use of chemical and biological warfare.

Development: On September 28, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta announced the Syrian government has moved chemical weapons to unknown locations to better protect them. Secretary Panetta also stated the country's main chemical weapons locations remain unharmed and safe under government control. According to US intelligence, the major Syrian sites are secure, but some weapons have been moved multiple times. A Syrian Army general, who defected to Jordan, recently stated the Syrian regime is maintaining its chemical weapons stockpiles to use as a last resort against Syrian citizens.

Analysis: The US will most likely deploy a military presence if the threat of chemical or biological warfare continues to increase. The US may also intervene militarily if Syria's biological or chemical stockpiles become less secure as a result of the weapons' frequent relocation or the ongoing civil war. Additionally, Israel may consider a military strike against chemical or biological weapons storage sites and missile locations in Syria if Damascus attacks civilians with these weapons and or if the threat of the weapons falling into non-state actors' hands increases. An Israeli attack on Syrian installations would increase the possibility of greater US engagement in the Syrian conflict or even military intervention.

[Jennifer Kinder]

SOUTHEAST ASIA

INDONESIA: Statement Causes Loss of Human Rights Support

Summary: A top official in the Indonesian government has dismissed a cold war human rights issue, possibly leading to a reduction in US support.

Development: On 1 October, Coordinating Minister for Legal, Political and Security Affairs Djoko Suyanto stated that while the killing of thousands of people beginning in 1965 following a coup attempt was tragic, the government cannot issue reparations or apologize without further investigation. Suyanto asserted that such events should be viewed in a historical context, and without them, Indonesia would not be the country it is today. Suyanto was speaking in reference to a report given by the National Commission for Human Rights on the killings. Immediate responses from several news sources condemned the statement, noting that the statement was insensitive to those who lived through the events and conveying a sense of outrage that the events are being dismissed.

Analysis: The immediate issue facing the Indonesian government is damage control. Public opinion has turned against Jakarta and, combined with other events such as labor strikes, may partially cripple the government's ability to function temporarily. Civilian demonstrations are a likely to occur. Suyanto's failure to recant his statement, or, at a minimum, act on the information presented in the report, may cause the United States and other nations that have strong international human rights agendas to reconsider their support of the Indonesian government. Complete withdrawal of support is unlikely, as Indonesia is a regional security ally. Sanctions and formal protests would be a more likely option.

[Coleen Parker, coleen.parker@eagleeyeintel.com]

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