

AQIM keeps terrorist risk high

While foreign investment in Algeria continues to increase, the risk of terrorism is undermining the stability of the country. In terms of investment, the South Koreans are particularly well placed through Samsung. The company has just won a contract for the rehabilitation and expansion of the Skikda refinery, a deal worth two billion dollars. The Chinese have confirmed their position in the railways sector, with the implementation of several railway lines (Saida - Tirate ...). This economic dynamism, in which France is also actively participating, does not hide the ongoing terrorism with targeted attacks that are increasingly well-prepared, according to some sources. The 29 July attack in Damus (23 dead), targeting soldiers, is proof of this. Terrorist groups are still operating from their traditional settlement areas while reinvesting some territories, such as Skikda. New terrorist areas where the GSPC terrorists had been previously eliminated are also re-emerging, as in the region of Mascara. If security forces are the preferred targets, foreign interests are also at risk. The Algerian authorities have emphasised that in two years, 763 "terrorists" have been killed while the number of terrorist groups on the ground ranged between 600 and 800 men (a figure substantially underestimated). Recruitment by monetary means is working very well. Al-Qaeda continues its proselytising as well as its anti-French campaign in Algeria. In a message released this summer, Abu Yahia al-Libi (whose real name is Hassen Kaid, a theologian of Libyan origin trained in Mauritania and an alleged member of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group who is considered a possible successor to bin Laden) called on the Algerian youth to fight "the enemies of God among which the heirs of France and its slaves." The French Foreign Office strongly advises against travel by road, even with security escorts... This renewed interest in Algeria on the part of al-Qaeda reveals, according to our sources, the strengthening of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). As shown by the suicide attack outside the French embassy on 9 August in Nouakchott, which slightly wounded two French nationals, the AQIM will tackle French interests from Algiers right across North Africa. Besides France, AQIM has officially targeted Chinese interests to punish Beijing for its policies against the Uighurs (30,000 Chinese currently live in Algeria). Terrorists could carry out actions to increase the existing tension between the inhabitants of certain districts and the Chinese (Bab Ezzour...) in order to destabilise the situation. ■

Pakistan accused of illegally transforming its Harpoon

A recent American official report condemning Islamabad for illegal modifications on the Harpoon anti-ship missiles has generated a series of very vivid reactions in neighbouring India. The transformations, which have not yet been completed, are essentially focused on changing a simple Harpoon anti-ship missile into a real cruise missile capable of striking ground targets. Admiral Suresh Mehta, then Indian chief of naval staff, said a few days

ago that the changes "had nothing to do with the right of self-defence of Pakistan and constitute a serious threat against the interests of India." Mehta believes however that these changes will be long and complex and that Islamabad will not benefit from its new capability to hit long-range land before quite some time. Pakistan has 130 Harpoon Block IIs that were sold by the United States in 2006 through the Foreign Military Sales (FMS).

(cont'd page 2)

Italian Mangusta attacked in Afghanistan

Two of the six A-129 Mangustas from the AVE (Aviazione Esercito), the Italian Army Aviation, currently deployed in Afghanistan, were hit by automatic weapons fire on 28 August, during an operation carried out above the village of Pusth Rod, about 20 km northeast of Farah, in western Afghanistan. Slightly damaged, the two helicopters were able to reach their base in Farah. In five months, from April to August, this is the fifteenth time that the Italian Mangustas have suffered direct attacks from automatic weapons fire in western Afghanistan. Over the same period in 2008, the Mangustas only registered five attacks. A fact that could be also be due to the significant increase in operations by the A-129 AVEs, which have been carrying out many offensive and ground support missions against the Taliban since the beginning of the year. An officer of the Italian contingent currently operating in Farah, where the entire Aviation Battalion will be soon gathered, told TTU that this summer the Mangustas fired 75 missiles BGM-71 TOW over a one-month period, while for the same period the daily average firings made by the 20-mm tri-tube gun totalled nearly 4,000. ■

Pakistani Harpoon (cont'd from page 1)

More precisely, the Pakistani army has 50 UGM-84L missiles (launched from submarines), 50 RGM-84Ls (launched from surface ships) and 30 AGM-84Ls (launched from aircraft). According to the Obama administration, Pakistan will also try to modify some P3C Orion maritime patrol aircraft, provided by the United States, into real bombers. Any change of U.S. technology transfer is a direct violation of the U.S. Arms Export Control Act, signed in 1976. Obviously, these revelations reinforce the Indian accusations according to which, for several years Islamabad has systematically used U.S. military technology transferred to Pakistan for "anti-Indian" purposes. Following the attacks of 11 September 2001, the United States raised sanctions against Pakistan and the latter received more than six billion dollars of direct military aid (FMF and FMS). While the Obama administration decided last March to grant Islamabad new military aid of 2.8 billion dollars in U.S. support in its war against the Pakistani Taliban, these recent developments may well strengthen the arguments of the Americans members of Parliament hostile to such aid.

Israel: Gaining more influence in Africa

Israel is trying to strengthen its presence in Africa and outdo Iran on the continent. Avigdor Lieberman, Israeli minister of foreign affairs, will pay a visit in the coming days to Ethiopia, Angola, Nigeria, Uganda and Kenya. This will be the first visit to Africa by the head of Israeli diplomacy in many years. He will be accompanied by a large delegation consisting of dozens of armament industrials, security advisers and representatives of leading Israeli

Israel: Tensions with the U.S. about the Chinese market

Manufacturers of Israeli weapons are upset at being restrained on the Chinese market. Organised in a lobby, they have carried out over the past few weeks a campaign of persuasion aimed at Ehud Barak, the defence minister, to obtain a lifting of the restrictions imposed, under pressure from the U.S., on Israeli military exports toward the Chinese market. These industrials believe they are losing hundreds of millions of dollars annually for the benefit of foreign competitors, including the U.S. "We must not lose the Chinese market," says one of them. As a first step, Israeli companies are willing to initially sell parts and equipment for domestic security, protection of sites, equipment for law enforcement before selling in a second step military equipment, including UAVs, electronic or communications devices. In 2000, Ehud Barak, then prime minister and defence minister, had to step back following a U.S. ultimatum and abandoned the sale to China of two spy Falcon-type aircraft, based on Ilyushin-76 and fitted with a AWACS radar warning system. Following the cancellation of the contract, Israel had to pay 350 million dollars in compensation to Beijing. The Americans were opposed to such a sale, arguing that these systems would pose a threat to the security of their warships in case they were called upon to defend Taiwan. Due to this precedent, Chinese officials then reduced their orders. In 2005 a new conflict occurred when the United States banned Israeli companies from proceeding with the upgrading work on armed UAVs such as the Harpy, dedicated to attacking radar stations and sold to China in mid-1990. Pentagon officials vetoed this transaction believing that these UAVs could threaten the strategic interests of the United States. Israel had at that time also complied with Washington's warnings, which provided Tel Aviv with military aid of 2.5 billion dollars each year.

companies. "We must be present in African countries and must not neglect the risk of seeing countries such as Iran expand their influence," said Avigdor Lieberman. In the past, arms dealers have supplied weapons that have been used in many conflicts and coups including those in Uganda, Zanzibar, Angola, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Congo and Equatorial Guinea. A recent contract was recently concluded with Nigeria's Ministry of Defence for the supply of two Shaldag-type patrol ships. Nigerian soldiers have arrived in Israel to follow training sessions while Israeli instructors must also train personnel in Nigeria. Among the most important intermediary figures is Amit Israeli Saleh, who participated in the sale of UAVs to the Nigerian army as well as

the sale of second-hand aircraft of Ukrainian origin. The businessman, who also owns a stake in a major shopping centre in Lagos, also represents Israel Aerospace Industries in Nigeria.

Sweden and NATO

The International Training Centre of the Swedish Armed Forces, SWEDINT, has been selected by NATO to train officers from its member countries. Two sessions of classes will be held in 2009 and three in 2010. They will cover the exchange of experience. Sweden is pleased to deepen its cooperation with NATO, while the kingdom still proclaims itself "free of military alliance in peacetime."

CHINA: AFGHAN PERSPECTIVE FOR THE ARMY?

Many observers were probably wrong to view the major campaigns of the People's Liberation Army of China (PLA) in mid-August as a willingness to exert essentially political pressure on Taiwan. A total of 50,000 soldiers from the seven military regions have been engaged in projection exercises abroad that will have a different meaning: make the Obama administration understand that the Chinese leadership is ready to participate massively in the counter-insurgency and pacification operations in Afghanistan with up to some 25,000 troops as part of the increase in the

number of NATO and U.S. troops. A "win-win perspective," experts in the region say. On the one hand, the image of the PLA as a force for peace-keeping would be reinforced following the failures of Darfur, as requested by the Hu Jintao leadership. On the other hand, given the good relations of Chinese intelligence services, both with their Pakistani counterparts and with the Taliban or the organisation of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (armed by the Chinese), the PLA could play a valuable negotiation role. But will it really weaken the Taliban?

NATO: OPERATION OCEAN SHIELD

NATO announced on 18 August that international efforts to combat piracy off the Horn of Africa and in the Gulf of Aden had entered a new phase on 17 August with North Atlantic Council approval of Operation Ocean Shield. Allied Joint Command, Lisbon, is in overall command of Operation Ocean Shield while Maritime Component Command HQ, Northwood, executes day-to-day tactical control. Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2) supports the

operation with HMS Cornwall as flagship. SNMG2 also includes a U.S. destroyer (USS Donald Cook) and frigates from Greece (HS Navarion), Italy (ITS Libeccio) and Turkey (TCG Gediz). Operation Ocean Shield is said to build on NATO's previous counter-piracy experience "and develops a distinctive NATO role based on the broad strength of the Alliance by adopting a more comprehensive approach to counter-piracy efforts."

INDIA: CHANGE AT THE HEAD OF THE NAVY

On 31 August, Admiral Nirmal Verma officially took office as the Indian navy's new chief of staff, replacing Admiral Suresh Mehta. Specialising in electronic warfare, Verma was naval commander of the eastern zone, and has commanded the aircraft carrier Viraat as well as a Rajput-class destroyer. This former student of the British Royal Naval Staff College and the U.S. Naval War College will have two priority issues to deal with: the question of the aircraft

carrier Gorshkov (notably the Indian-Russian disagreements on the final price of the ship), as well as beefing up the production of the DCNS Scorpene-class submarines made by the Mazagon shipyard. On the longer run, Admiral Verma will take important decisions regarding the renewal of the Indian navy's aging submarine fleet, as nearly half of the ships will be withdrawn from service starting in 2012.

ISRAEL: CONTROLLING ITS STRESS LEVEL

Elite units and pilots of the Israeli armed forces have recently begun testing new systems to measure stress levels. The purpose is to improve the degree of concentration in tense situations during operations. Several of these biofeedback systems have been acquired by the army's department of mental health. Several pilots have already been tested. These systems monitor blood pressure, heart rate, skin temperature,

sweat glands and muscle activity when the subject is in a stressful situation. All this information is then transmitted in real time to allow the pilot to be aware of his stress condition, to control some of his functions and to decrease his stress level. "By being aware of how you react under stress, you can better learn to control yourself in the future," said one officer involved in this project.

U.S.: ANTI-MISSILE SHIELD, SEASON THREE

In Washington, other locations to host the anti-missile system are now being studied: Israel, Turkey, Carpathians, or mobile missiles on ships... According to Riki Ellison, president of the Missile Defence Advocacy Alliance, during a recent conference dedicated to the new "anti-missile strategy" being organised by the Pentagon, the Poland-Czech Republic project was not even mentioned once. Within the Polish Ministry of Defence, observers consider that Washington wants to improve relations with

Moscow and implement the disarmament policy sought by President Obama. On the Polish side, one observer comments "everything suggests that Central Europe is no longer a priority of the new U.S. administration." The Deputy Foreign Minister, Jacek Najder explains: "The Shield's fate will be set in four or five weeks. Whatever the formula chosen, U.S. military facilities will be located on Polish territory ... The goal of Poland will be reached."

SWEDEN: THE ART OF "PACKAGING"

In order to overcome a social disaster in Sweden, Saab is actively trying to export. The manufacturer is offering its Gripen aircraft to Malaysia in order to replace its MiG-29N/NUB. Saab already enjoys a positive consideration because of its expertise in "packaging." The case of Thailand is being closely scrutinised considering the acquisition of Gripen and Saab 340 aircraft for early warning missions (AEW for Airborne Early Warning). The Malaysian air force could be interested in the idea of a

combined offer. This would fulfil both its need for combat aircraft (18 fighters) as well as its wish for an early warning capability and an advanced process control (AEW & C). The Swedish are pushing the Erieye system mounted on a Saab 2000 and Saab 340. According to some rumours, Sweden's skill at packaging would extend beyond the air segment. Offers have been made to land and naval forces in Malaysia as part of a broader package offer!

INDIA: INFORMATION BATTLE AROUND MMRCA

American awkwardness is beginning to negatively impact on some officials of the Indian air force in charge of the MMRCA programme (Medium Multi-Role Combat Aircraft). They reportedly do not appreciate the revelations made in July by the Jerusalem Post arguing that Washington was exerting pressure on Tel Aviv in order to force IAS to withdraw from the Swedish Gripen offer. The Israeli industry plans to provide Saab with communications systems, electronic warfare and a radar. Together, without forgetting the participation of Elbit and Rafael, they proposed an aircraft with high performance and attractive prices to match the F/A-18 and F-16 competitors that are also bidding on this tender. Now the Swedish group is compelled to propose a single "standard" aircraft without being able to rely on the influence of one of the largest

suppliers of the Indian air force. For the record, Sukhoi Su-30MKIs (for India) are fitted with Israeli avionics, and modernisation of the Antonov An-32 will involve a major participation on the part of Rafael, as it provides designation pods, and the EL/M- 2052 Elta AESA radar should equip future single seat multirole aircraft Tejas 2. A few days after the article appeared in the Jerusalem Post, the Indian newspaper Business Stand reported that Lockheed Martin was in possession of documents relating to the evaluation of different programme offers within MMRCA. This new episode has provoked strong reactions within the Indian Ministry of Defence. In response, despite the denials of Lockheed, one of its teams in India has been changed. The Indian government's decision is expected in 2011, and it is likely that new incidents will show up before then...

RUSSIA: INTEREST IN FRENCH ARMAMENT

During the Russian Maks Exhibition, Sagem's Felin system (French future combatant system) caught the interest of the Russian defence minister (to equip special forces?). According to the Russian press, the French would be ready to adapt the system to Russia's needs. Following Moscow's interest in the BPC ship, made by DCNS (Bâtiment de Projection et de Commandement), Russia seems interested in French land

armament. Indeed, the interest has surprised officials within the French Ministry of Defence. Regarding the future combatant system, Russian authorities are also closely watching the German and American solutions. Still, for the first time, Paris has an ambassador in Moscow who is particularly knowledgeable on defence and strategic issues.

U.K.: EUROFIGHTER TYPHOON PROGRAMME PROGRESS

As reported by Defence News & Analysis, TTU's partner in London, following signature of the most recent production contract (on 31 July), the MoD arranged a briefing on the U.K. Typhoon programme. The Typhoon force is currently made up of 49 Tranche 1 and seven Tranche 2 aircraft. The aircraft are divided between two operational squadrons (3 & 11) and two training/operational evaluation squadrons (17(R) & 29(R)), all based at RAF Coningsby in Lincolnshire. A further three operational squadrons are to be based at RAF Leuchars in Fife from 2010. As Tornado F3 is with-

drawn from service in 2011, Typhoon is to assume total responsibility for the defence of U.K. airspace. Despite the original MoU commitment (to 88 Tranche 3 aircraft) the MoD has managed to negotiate on the grounds that the "financial liability [is] capped by [a] pre-defined cost ceiling." From the outline figures, which are in the public domain, it appears that the through-life costs of 88 Tranche 3 aircraft would have been about 7,000 million pounds. The Tranche 3A contract will cost the MoD about 3,000 million pounds.

ITALY: ANOTHER CUSTOMER FOR THE LMV

The Italian manufacturer Iveco DV (Defence Vehicles) has signed a contract with Slovakia to supply ten armoured 4x4 LMVs (Light Multirole Vehicle). The vehicles, which will be delivered by the end of the year, are in addition to the 2,488 vehicles of the same type ordered by Italy (1,286), Belgium (440), Britain (401) Austria (150), Spain (120), Norway (60), the Czech Republic (21) and Croatia (10). This year, Iveco DV's factories in

Bolzano will produce 950 LMVs. Meanwhile, Iveco DV has begun delivering the first of the 206 6x6 Trakker trucks ordered by Great Britain in 2008. These will be the fleet's most important service in the Royal Engineers. Most of these vehicles, which will in fact be delivered by LAC Partnership (Amey and VT), will be provided in AD380T45W standard.

ECUADOR: SUPER TUCANO ACQUISITION

Brazilian aircraft manufacturer Embraer has confirmed the sale of Super Tucano 24 EMB-314s to Ecuador. The sale is based on an agreement signed in 2008. These aircraft, whose delivery will begin in late 2009, will fulfil border control and surveillance missions and be used for training purposes. The contract includes logistical support

as well as a flight simulator. With Ecuador, the number of countries operating the Super Tucano in Latin America now stands at five: in fact, after Brazil and Colombia, which use it for patrolling borders, the Super Tucano is in service in Chile (12 aircraft purchased in 2008) and the Dominican Republic (8 aircraft acquired in early 2009).

AH-64D for Egypt

Egypt will receive a dozen additional Boeing Apache AH-64D Block II combat helicopters. The contract, worth 820 million dollars, also provides for the delivery of 27 T700 engines. The Egyptian army already has in service 35 AH-64Ds, acquired in 1996. Initially they were on AH-64A standard and have been upgraded to the new D standard. In addition, Cairo is currently studying the possibility of acquiring a further batch of 20 F-16s.

Contracts for Oshkosh

The U.S. manufacturer Oshkosh has won two contracts worth 40 million dollars. The first, evaluated at 9 million dollars, includes the delivery of 30 HEMTN vehicles (Heavy Expandable Mobility Tactical Trucks) in A4 version for the army reserve. The second contract, worth 31 million dollars over three years, provides for the delivery of 100 turbo diesel engines to retrofit the HEMTT A2.

Spanish RG-31 difficulties

The Ejército de Tierra (Spanish army) refused to take delivery of the first units of the order of 100 armoured 4x4 BAE Systems RG-31s due to

serious difficulties in the electrical system. Delivery of these vehicles will thus be delayed. Half of the vehicles are currently in Seville for the final assembly (the others are still in South Africa).

Israeli Apache?

Israel is reportedly negotiating with the United States to acquire an additional batch of six AH-64D Longbows.

Italian appointments

Admiral Claudio Gaudiosi, already head of the Command of the Italian Maritime Force (COMITMARFOR), was appointed commander of the Maritime Component (CMC) of the NATO Rapid Reaction Force (NRF). Admiral Gaudiosi replaces Admiral Ian Corder of the Royal Navy. Lieutenant General Giuseppe Valotto was appointed chief of staff of the Esercito (Italian army), replacing General Fabrizio Castagnetti.

Italy in Albanian sky

The Aeronautica Militare Italiana (AMI), in collaboration with the Greek air force, was asked this summer to ensure defence of Albania's airspace ("Air Policing" activity) since the country's recent accession within NATO. For the AMI, which already handles air defence of Slovenia's

airspace, this is an additional task, which will be entrusted mainly to the Typhoons of the 4th Stormo, based in Grosseto, and those of the 36th Stormo, based in Gioia del Colle, which will alternate with Greek F-16s.

USMC M-72A7

Nammo Talley Defence in Mesa, Arizona, has won a contract worth 136 million dollars to supply the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) with M-72A7 LAW (Lightweight Anti-armour Weapon) anti-tank rocket launchers.

JOC for Brunei

General Dynamics U.K. announced that the company had been selected for the next stage of Brunei's competition to provide a Joint Operations Centre (JOC) for the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF). The JOC is to provide the Ministry of Defence and the RBAF with a facility to deliver command and control capability for military commands and civil organisations at national and international levels. Northrop Grumman announced from London that the company had been selected as one of two suppliers to go forward to the next phase of the JOC competition for the RBAF. No financial

details for the JOC have so far been released but the initiative is one of many linked to reforms outlined in Brunei's first Defence White Paper, released in 2004. A Battalion of Gurkhas is permanently stationed in Brunei under the U.K./Brunei Defence Agreement.

Uganda: Exercise Civil Bridge 09

Some 30 army personnel took part in Exercise Civil Bridge 09 from 9 to 23 August. The soldiers were from the Military Stabilisation Support Group (MSSG) and were deployed to practice their civil-military co-operation skills, working closely with the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF). The aim of the exercise was to train members of the MSSG in field interviewing, reporting and working with civilian authorities in a challenging environment. A number of training activities have been offered to UPDF members recently, including attendance at the Royal College of Defence Studies, the Royal Military Academy, Royal Engineers Troop Commanders' courses and explosive ordnance disposal courses. U.K. support has also been given to Uganda's contribution to the African Standby Regional Brigade.