

RÉVOLUTIONNAIRE 12/2007

The Foremost Inter-Disciplinary Defence E-Bulletin

突破 *Revolucionario* *Revolutionary* *Merevolusikan* *Revolutionär* *Kraantikari*

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CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT

[Where is Iraq Heading? Lessons from Basra](#)

International Crisis Group – 25 June 2007

Amid the media and military focus on Baghdad, another major Iraqi city – Basra – is being overlooked. Yet Basra's experience carries important lessons for the capital and nation as a whole. Coalition forces have already implemented a security plan there, Operation Sinbad, which was in many ways similar to Baghdad's current military surge. What U.S. commanders call "clear, hold and build", their British counterparts earlier had dubbed "clear, hold and civil reconstruction". And, as in the capital, the putative goal was to pave the way for a takeover by Iraqi forces. Far from being a model to be replicated, however, Basra is an example of what to avoid. With renewed violence and instability, Basra illustrates the pitfalls of a transitional process that has led to collapse of the state apparatus and failed to build legitimate institutions. Fierce intra-Shiite fighting also disproves the simplistic view of Iraq neatly divided between three homogenous communities.

[In Iraq, Operation Last Chance](#)

Times Magazine– 28 June 2007

The Iraqi men squatting shoulder to shoulder in the blasted, abandoned classroom couldn't tell at first that the American soldier addressing them was a man of real authority. He was slight, taut, with sandy hair and a thin beak of a nose. He didn't sound like a big shot; he didn't bark in a commanding voice. "How many of you are going to make it?" he asked, in sketchy Arabic. Several of the men — Iraqi police recruits — looked up, saw the four stars on General David Petraeus' cap and shifted nervously, unsure of what he meant. His interpreter had better success. A scattering of hands were timidly raised. "You're all going to make it!" Petraeus said, giving the Iraqis' response the most benign possible interpretation. "That's good. Are you ready to defend your country?" There was a grudging shout, the Iraqi equivalent of, "Yes, sir!"

[The Peace Process Has No Clothes](#)

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace– 15 June 2007

One month before the most vicious round of intra-Palestinian fighting in Gaza, Lieutenant General Keith Dayton, the American security coordinator in the Israeli-Palestinian arena, testified before Congress, seeking to justify American intervention on the side of Fatah using the terms that have grown familiar over years of Israeli-Palestinian diplomacy. He explained that the United States sought to back the legal presidential security forces—who were working to meet Palestinian obligations under the Road Map—against the forces of disorder. The statement may have made sense according to some logic followed in the US capital, but it was utterly disconnected from realities in the region

[Security Outside Baghdad is 'Tenuous', Says US DoD Report](#)

Janes Defence Weekly – 15 June 2007

Despite a surge of forces into Baghdad, the security situation outside the Iraqi capital remains "tenuous", according to a statistical report that has been issued by the US DoD. US and coalition forces launched a major military operation called Operation 'Fardh al-Qanoon' in mid-February 2007, which has focused primarily on increasing security in Baghdad. At present, four of five US brigade combat teams are now in place and additional Iraqi brigades have shifted to support operations in the capital.

COUNTER-TERRORISM

[Britain Versus the Bomb Plotters](#)

Times Magazine– 29 June 2007

Neither rain nor a light drizzle of updates from Scotland Yard on police efforts to prevent further terrorist attacks in London have deterred revellers from taking part in today's gay pride march or chased the capital's summer visitors indoors, and tomorrow's tribute concert for Princess Diana is set to proceed as planned. Only the tennis tournament at Wimbledon has been interrupted — but by the bad weather and not alarm over safety. London is reacting with its usual sangfroid to its latest brush with terrorism. A plot to bomb central London was foiled yesterday, not by police or the security services but by one of the world's most effective counter-terrorism agents: luck. Ambulance attendants called to treat someone taken ill in the nightspot Tiger Tiger noticed that a metallic green Mercedes parked just outside the club had filled with smoke. They went to investigate, assuming this must be a vehicle fire.

[Britain's Burst of Terror](#)

Times Magazine– 30 June 2007

Two foiled car bombings in central London. A Jeep Cherokee slamming into the arrivals terminal at the Glasgow airport and bursting into flame. In two days, Britain has seen two cities darkened by terrorism. Glasgow police said last night that there were enough similarities between the Scottish attack and the London car bombs that the incidents had to be linked. If so, who might be behind them? Two people are in custody in the Glasgow incident, both of whom jumped out of the burning jeep. One is in critical condition, suffering from severe burns. Britain remains on highest alert, with security forces vigilant for more potential attacks.

[Vital Satellites Sitting Ducks for Missile Attacks](#)

New Scientist – 25 June 2007

Vital communications and navigation satellites could be more vulnerable to missile attack than previously thought. After China's deliberate destruction of one of its own satellites in January 2007, two specialists in infrastructure vulnerability set out to determine

whether a rogue state or terrorist group with access to an intermediate-range ballistic missile could also destroy a satellite.

DEFENCE BUDGET

[Taiwan Approves Part of Controversial Budget](#)

Janes Defence Weekly – 19 June 2007

Taiwan legislature approved a national budget for 2007 on 15 June that includes a hefty rise in military spending to cover part of a long-delayed procurement package. Defence spending will increase by 24.8 per cent to TWD295.8 billion (USD8.9 billion), with the defence allocation rising to 18 per cent of the national budget from 16 per cent in 2006.

DEFENCE STRATEGY

[Russia's Strategic Choices](#)

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace – June 2007

After decades of economic and political turmoil, Russia today finds itself revived – its economy fueled by high energy prices, its territorial integrity secured, and its international role as a major world power restored. With new found self-confidence, Russia's recent foreign policy has taken on a combative tone, exemplified by Russian President Vladimir Putin's speech in Munich—and U.S.-Russian relations have plummeted to their lowest level since the end of the Soviet-era.

[NATO Launches Study on Impact of US BMD System](#)

Janes Defence Weekly – 21 June 2007

A study of the political and military implications of the US missile defence system on the NATO alliance was launched by defence ministers at a meeting in Brussels on 14-15 June. The study is scheduled for completion by February 2008, a month before the Bucharest summit that will decide the next steps to be taken in this area.

DEFENCE TECHNOLOGY

[Liquid Hydrogen-Powered Drones Within Reach](#)

National Defense Magazine – June 2007

As the demand for unmanned aerial vehicles continues to soar, companies are producing systems that fly higher for longer periods and can carry more payloads, including lethal weapons. One of the newest systems in development is the Global Observer, which can fly at 55,000 to 65,000 feet for as long as a week and provide 2,500-mile radius coverage.

[Sandia Supports Development of New US Army Cannon System](#)

Space War – 22 June 2007

Researchers at Sandia National Laboratories in California have emerged as key players in a state-of-the-art program for the U.S. Army that focuses on the design and manufacturing of a lightweight, high-caliber, self-propelled cannon system. The weapon system, known as the Non-Line-of-Sight Cannon (NLOS Cannon) is fully automated and can fire at a sustained rate of six rounds per minute. The vehicle, once completed, must be light and agile enough to fit three vehicles comfortably onto a C-17 cargo aircraft. According to Sandia researcher Nipun Bhutani, who serves as project manager for the lab's NLOS-Cannon work Sandia's primary contribution to date has been a critical adjustment to a laser ignition system that serves as the heart of the NLOS-Cannon vehicle. The cannon is part of Future Combat Systems (FCS), the Army's premier modernization program.

[Molten Mirrors](#)

Technology Review – 22 June 2007

Canadian researchers have developed a liquid mirror that could operate in a future telescope located on the moon, allowing researchers to peer back into the origins of the universe with extraordinary clarity. Telescopes relying on liquid mirrors can be hundreds of times more powerful than those with glass mirrors--for the same cost--and they should be easier to assemble in space.

ENERGY SECURITY

[Russia Steps Up Efforts to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emission](#)

Space War – 16 June 2007

Russia is to intensify efforts to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions in order to stay in compliance with the Kyoto treaty as its economy rebounds from the economic collapse of the early 1990s, the country's deputy economic development minister said. The 1990s dramatic drop in economic production made Russia's Kyoto targets more achievable, but Moscow hopes to begin to improve remaining industry with new joint projects bringing in foreign investment, Andrei Sharonov said.

[Call for Spain to Switch Fully to Renewables](#)

Space War – 16 June 2007

Some 4,000 environmental campaigners gathered in Barcelona on Saturday to press the government to commit Spain to switch fully to renewable energy sources by 2050, Greenpeace said. Greenpeace in February began a campaign to urge Spain to boost use of renewables, although the country is already a European leader in the field.

MILITARY OPERATION

[East Timor Envisages Tri-Service Defence Force](#)

Janes Defence Weekly – 28 June 2007

East Timor, one of the world's poorest nations, is considering an ambitious plan to create a 3,000-strong tri-service defence force deploying missile-equipped combat vessels, attack helicopters and armoured assault vehicles. The proposal was outlined in the so-called 'Force 2020 Report', of which *Jane's* has obtained a copy. The 141-page report has not yet been released to East Timor's parliament, but is understood to be in limited circulation in government and diplomatic circles in the country.

[Malaysia Forms Border Security Regiment](#)

Janes Defence Weekly – 25 June 2007

The Malaysian Army has formed a new regiment to handle security along the border with Thailand: an area of particular sensitivity because of the continuing secessionist conflict in Thailand's four southern provinces. The Border Security Regiment is due to begin operations before 2008, taking over from a mix of army battalions. Regimental headquarters will be in Perlis with a deputy commander posted in Kelantan, but details of its establishment have yet to be made public.

[For the First Time, Navy Will Launch Weapons from Surveillance Drones](#)

National Defense Magazine – June 2007

Just like the Air Force, the Army and the CIA, the Navy soon could be deploying its own armed drones. To that end, the Navy will request funds in fiscal year 2010 to begin outfitting its new surveillance drone with kinetic weapons. The drone, which is scheduled to enter service next year, is the vertical-takeoff and landing tactical unmanned air vehicle, or VTUAV, which is also known as Fire Scout.

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

[A World Free of Nuclear Weapons](#)

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace – 25 June 2007

I expect that many - if not all - of you here today read an article which appeared in the Wall Street Journal at the very start of this year. The writers would be as familiar to an audience in this country as they are respected across the globe: George Shultz, William Perry, Henry Kissinger, Sam Nunn. The article made the case for, and I quote, "a bold initiative consistent with America's moral heritage". That initiative was to re-ignite the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons and to redouble efforts on the practical measures towards it. The need for such vision and action is all too apparent.

[Nukes in the Balance – The Effects of Proliferation on Regional Security](#)

Janes Intelligence Review – 15 June 2007

Nuclear weapons and the concomitant concept of mutually assured destruction (MAD) are often credited with restraining the Cold War from developing into a World War. The US and Soviet stockpiles were fully developed with secure second-strike capabilities; there was an understanding on both sides of the full consequences of a potential attack. In 1962, the US and Soviet Union came 'eyeball to eyeball' in the Cuban missile crisis but stepped back from the brink of war for mutual fear of obliteration. This experience has led to the theory that nuclear weapons are actually positive for international stability, as argued by international relations scholar Kenneth Waltz. As such, the increasing availability of nuclear weapons technology, accelerated by Pakistani scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan's nuclear proliferation ring that supplied Pakistani and Chinese technology to Iran, North Korea, Libya and possibly others, may have created 'Cold Wars' in microcosm, acting as a restraint on conflict.