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CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT

[The Arab-Israel Conflict: To Reach a Lasting Peace](#)

International Crisis Group – 5 October 2006

If there is a silver lining in the recent succession of catastrophic developments in the Middle East, it is that they may impart renewed momentum to the search for a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. It is, admittedly, a slender hope. Since the collapse of the peace process in late 2000, none of the region's parties has displayed the requisite capacity or willingness to reach an acceptable compromise, while the international community has shown more fecklessness than resolve. But the Lebanon war must serve as a wake-up call: so long as the political roots of the Arab-Israeli conflict are not addressed, it will remain a bottomless source and pretext for repression, radicalisation and bloodletting, both in the region and beyond. Now is the time for an international push to launch a new peace initiative.

[China's Cyberwarriors](#)

Foreign Policy – September/October 2006

Many cybersecurity experts in the United States and Taiwan worried when Microsoft provided the Chinese government with access to the source code of its Windows operating system in 2003. Their fear was that access to the code would make it easier for China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) to develop and carry out new information-warfare techniques. A recent series of cyberattacks directed against targets in Taiwan and the United States may confirm that "those fears now appear justified," says a Taiwanese intelligence officer. Taiwan and China regularly engage in low-level information-warfare attacks. But the past few months have seen a noticeable spike in activity. "Blitz' is an accurate description" of the recent attacks, says the Taiwanese security source. "It's almost like . . . a major cyberwar exercise."

DEFENCE EXPENDITURE

[France Increases Defence Spending](#)

Jane's Defence Weekly – 29 September 2006

France will increase spending on defence for the fifth year in a row in 2007 by allocating EUR36.2 billion (USD46.3 billion) to buy new military equipment and cover the armed forces' operating costs, Defence Minister Michele Alliot-Marie announced on 27 September. The total will represent a 2.5 per cent increase over the global 2006 defence outlay and is to include EUR15.9 billion for military equipment. That is slightly more than the EUR15.7 billion being spent on hardware in 2006 and remains in line with President Jacques Chirac's

commitment to regularly raise allocations for the duration of France's current 2003-08 military spending plan. "We have honoured our pledge to increase spending each year," said Alliot-Marie in presenting what was the current centre-right government's last budget.

[Spanish MoD Announces Biggest Ever Budget Rise](#)

Jane's Defence Weekly – 29 September 2006

The Spanish Ministry of Defence (MoD) has announced that its budget for 2007 will be just over EUR8.9 billion (USD11.3 billion): an 8.6 per cent rise on 2006 and the biggest percentage increase in 20 years. The budget, however, does not include funding for Spain's peacekeeping operations in Afghanistan and Lebanon, which are financed through other channels. A statement from the MoD said the increased funding will allow "greater professionalisation" of its armed forces, improved operational readiness of units coupled with greater access to better equipment, the modernisation of Spain's equipment and military infrastructure and "new incentives" for defence research and development (R&D). The budget also provided funding for the establishment of the Military Emergency Force and the increase for a third consecutive year of funding for the Centro Nacional de Inteligencia (CNI) intelligence agency to improve anti-terrorist operations.

[South Korea Proposes Budget Rise](#)

Jane's Defence Weekly – 2 October 2006

The Republic of Korea (South Korea) has proposed a 9.7 per cent increase in defence spending to KRW24.7 trillion (USD26 billion) in its draft budget for 2007, which still requires ratification by the National Assembly. The figure includes KRW6.8 trillion for force improvement and KRW17.8 trillion for operations/maintenance, up 17.5 per cent and 7 per cent respectively. "Next year's defence budget primarily reflects the need to make improvements in defence capability by pressing ahead with the strengthening of strategic forces and research and development projects," a Ministry of National Defence statement noted. Several factors are expected to encourage robust defence spending for the foreseeable future. These include a military reform programme announced in 2005 for completion by 2020 that should see an upgrading of capabilities, together with a reduction in personnel to 500,000 from the current 680,000. Another significant expense comes from South Korea's contribution to the cost of a major re-alignment of US forces based in the country.

[The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan and Other Global War on Terror Since 9/11](#)

CRS Report - 22 September 2006

Through FY 2006, Congress had appropriated a total of about \$437 billion for military operations, base security, reconstruction, foreign aid, embassy costs and

veterans' health care for the three operations initiated since the 9/11 attacks: Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) covering Afghanistan and other Global War on Terror (GWOT) operations, Operation Nobel Eagle (ONE) providing enhanced security at military bases, and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), Iraq.

DEFENCE STRATEGY

[EDA Gloomy About Future](#)

Jane's Defence Weekly – 6 October 2006

European defence ministers meeting in Levi, northern Finland, on 3 October endorsed a report on the long-term vision of European defence capability requirements. The 28-page report, entitled 'An Initial Long-Term Vision for European Defence Capability and Capacity Needs', forecasts trends over the next 20 years. The report paints a gloomy picture of a less prosperous, ageing Europe in a dangerous neighbourhood, said European Defence Agency (EDA) Chief Executive Nick Witney. It forecasts China becoming the second global economy and possibly India surpassing Japan for third place, accompanied by rising populations in Africa and the Middle East suffering the adverse effects of globalisation.

[India Swaps Arms for Cooperation with Myanmar](#)

Jane's Defence Weekly – 3 October 2006

India plans to transfer a substantial amount of defence equipment to Myanmar in return for the military government's co-operation in flushing out Indian separatist groups operating from its territory against the insurgency-ridden north eastern states. Military sources told *Jane's* that negotiations for the proposed "arms for military co-operation swap" were conducted during a 21 September visit to Myanmar by India's Defence Secretary Shekhar Dutt. During his two-day trip Dutt held discussions with Vice Senior General Maung Aye alongside other senior Myanmar military officers, focusing on New Delhi providing Yangon with T-55 main battle tanks, which the Indian Army is retiring, armoured personal carriers, 105 mm light artillery guns, mortars and the locally designed advanced light helicopter at a 'special' price. In exchange, New Delhi wants Yangon to crack down on insurgent groups like the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) fighting for independence in Assam state that have long used Myanmar's defence jungles as a sanctuary. It also wants to conduct joint military operations against these groups along their 1,643 km-long common border.

DEFENCE TECHNOLOGY

[US Seeks Stable At-Sea Platform to Lighten the Load](#)

Jane's Navy International – 4 September 2006

Researchers at Florida Atlantic University (FAU) have been given a USD2 million grant by the US Office of Naval Research (ONR) to investigate, design and build a scale model prototype of a multimission Rapidly Deployable Stable Platform Demonstrator. The resultant platform will enable a seamless loading of goods or personnel onto warships positioned closely together in a temporary Sea Base - a concept the ONR is spending USD295 million developing over the next five years - with minimal human intervention, so that cargo loading can still proceed in rough seas.

[New APS Design Undergo Test](#)

Jane's Defence Weekly – 29 September 2006

The manufacturer of an active protection system (APS) that could potentially be used to shield vehicles from rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) and anti-tank rounds concluded a set of experiments for the US Army in late September in Utah. Chang Industry of La Verne, California, conducted a test of its Full Spectrum Active Protection Close-in Layered Shield (FCLAS): an APS design that was originally studied as part of the US Office of Force Transformation's (OFT's) Project Sheriff. A Chang Industry official told Jane's an FCLAS system mounted on a 5-ton truck successfully shot down an incoming round during the assessment. According to Chang Industry, FCLAS is relatively lightweight compared with other APS systems, weighing around 408 kg (900 lb); it employs a side-firing fragmentation warhead to strike incoming targets.

[DARPA Eyes Quantum Mechanics for Sensor Applications](#)

Jane's Defence Weekly – 5 October 2006

The US Army is preparing to assess the potential of hyperspectral payloads for unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), which could create a new class of surveillance technology and one that may be ideally suited for the task of detecting improvised explosive devices. A contract to BAE Systems to supply five hyperspectral payloads for integration on the army's AAI Corp RQ-7 Shadow UAVs for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) missions was expected to be signed in late August, US Army Programme Manager Philip Owen told *Jane's*. A picture taken by a hyperspectral camera can distinguish camouflage from the objects beneath and can detect subtle changes in an otherwise static landscape - for example, a freshly dug hole. In what is called the "bloodhound mode", the sensor can also search for a specific spectral signature, such as a black pick-up truck.

[Robots Aid Soldiers, But Can Be Irritating](#)

National Defense Magazine – October 2006

The prevailing thinking in the Army about deploying unmanned combat vehicles is that they keep soldiers out of harm's way. That premise continues to fuel research into dozens of military programs seeking to develop robotic systems that could be sent into combat without human operators. Feedback from soldiers who participated in a recent Army experiment at Fort Knox, Ky., however, challenges some of the conventional wisdom associated with the use of robots in combat. The six-week experiment — involving two unmanned Stryker light armored vehicles outfitted with advanced sensors — was intended to measure soldier workload and performance while operating robots. It also shed light on what soldiers like and don't like about robots. Their observations are leading researchers to believe that robotic technology has the potential to become a huge assist in combat operations, but that too much automation may not be desirable. As part of a reconnaissance mission during the experiment at Fort Knox, two soldiers rode in the back compartment of one of the two unmanned Strykers. They were not controlling or driving the vehicle, which was on autopilot mode and had been programmed to follow a particular route.

MILITARY DOCTRINE

[DoD Group Seeks to Give Autonomy to Armed Drones](#)

Jane's Defence Weekly – 5 October 2006

A group within the US Department of Defense (DoD) is seeking to overturn the dictum that an unmanned system cannot fire its weapons unless a human operator gives the order. A proposal, unveiled publicly in September but never before publicised, would give "armed autonomous systems" the authority to shoot to destroy hostile weapon systems but not suspected combatants. Accordingly, any people killed or injured in the attack would be considered the collateral damage of a successful strike on a legitimate target. In publicising the concept, supporters are hoping to start a debate about the DoD's current interpretation of the international law of armed conflict, which precludes the growing number of armed unmanned systems from autonomously firing on targets.

[US Military Changing Battle Plan](#)

The Globe and Mail News – 5 October 2006

Drawing on its successes and failures in Iraq, the military is completing a new counterinsurgency strategy that emphasizes working with and protecting civilians, U.S. defence officials said Thursday. The U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps have jointly written a new field manual that is to provide commanders with a framework for thinking about counterinsurgency missions — explaining what

they are, what to expect and how to operate in such environments. The new doctrine is scheduled to be completed this month and released next month, senior defence officials said Thursday.

MILITARY OPERATIONS

[Army, Marines Strive to Improve Personal Combat Gear](#)

National Defense Magazine – October 2006

As the Pentagon struggles to pay mounting war costs, the Army and Marine Corps are pressing ahead with efforts to provide troops with improved equipment. The list is long, including everything from better helmets and body armor to protective eyewear, winter clothing, boots, socks, even parachutes. Money, however, is tight. The Army expects that it will need \$17.1 billion in 2007 alone to repair or replace equipment that has been lost, damaged or worn out in combat. The Marines may require as much as \$12 billion. Nevertheless, the two services say they are placing a high priority on providing better personal gear to help protect war fighters against specific threats they are facing, such as roadside bombs, desert heat and cold mountain weather.

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

[North Korea Conducts First Nuclear Test](#)

Space War – 9 October 2006

Defying worldwide appeals and threats of sanctions, North Korea on Monday announced it had carried out its first nuclear weapons test, calling it a "historic event." The communist state's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said the underground test was carried out safely and successfully and there was no radiation leak. A South Korean defence ministry official quoted by Yonhap news agency said the test was carried out at Hwadaeri near Kilju on North Korea's northeast coast at 10:36 am (0136 GMT). There was no immediate official confirmation in the South of the test. But the presidential office said the state intelligence agency had detected a 3.58 magnitude seismic tremor in North Hamgyong Province, where Kilju is located. China condemned Pyongyang for "brazenly" carrying out the test.

[Sub Based Conventional Ballistic Missiles Could Trigger Nuclear Escalation](#)

Space War – 6 October 2006

A former Pentagon official and frequent critic of U.S. ballistic missile programs warned Thursday the military's plan for a submarine-launched "global strike"

conventional ballistic missile could trigger an accidental nuclear exchange with Russia. "It doesn't address a real problem and a real accident could get us all killed," said Theodore Postol, a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and former scientific adviser to the chief of naval operations.

[Iran Refuses to Halt Enrichment Despite Sanctions Moves](#)

Space War – 8 October 2006

Iran on Sunday flatly refused to suspend uranium enrichment despite moves at the [UN](#) Security Council to draft a sanctions resolution against it for failing to halt the sensitive nuclear work. "The suspension is completely unacceptable and we have rejected it," foreign ministry spokesman Mohammad Ali Hosseini told reporters. "It has no place in Iran's peaceful nuclear programme." His comments marked an unequivocal refusal from Tehran to back down in the face of pressure to suspend uranium enrichment, a process which the West fears could be diverted towards making nuclear weapons.

REGIONAL CONFLICTS

[Inside Thailand's Southern Insurgency](#)

Jane's Terrorism and Security Monitor – 12 September 2006

The ethnic Malay separatist movement has shown considerable resilience in the face of a heavy security force presence and widespread arrests. Daily assassinations and bombings have shaken confidence in the security forces, prompting many Buddhists to leave the region and intimidating Muslims opposed to the revolt into acquiescence. At the same time, reports suggest that recruitment and training continue to expand insurgent ranks and senior Royal Thai Police (RTP) and Royal Thai Army (RTA) officers expect the violence to escalate further. The decentralised and highly compartmentalised nature of the insurgency has been apparent since it gathered pace in 2004. Since then information gleaned from incidents, arrests and interrogations has helped shed some light on the workings of a separatist movement that has done its best to cloak its activities in secrecy.

[Philippines to Establish 500 'Freedom Villages'](#)

Jane's Defence Weekly – 29 September 2006

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) will utilise its Corps of Engineers to ratchet up development work in support of Manila's campaign to counter a long-standing communist insurgency, according to Chief of Staff General Hermogenes Esperon. The aim, he said, is to develop 500 'freedom villages' (*Kalayaan Barangays*) annually. This should transform communities previously affected by internal conflict into development areas. The project involves delivery of portable water together with the construction of schools, medical facilities and road

networks providing both access and economic opportunities. Co-operatives for rebel returnees are also slated to be established