



PEACE AND STABILISATION STRATEGIES

WEEKLY MONITORING

The UN Security Council extends a peacekeeping Mission in South Sudan

On Friday, the UN Security Council has decided to extend a peacekeeping mission in South Sudan until 12th August. Decision has been taken in the light of receiving reports of recently renewed violence in the Equatorias, southern states of South Sudan. Arms embargo and sending in more troops are under consideration.

The conflict escalated in South Sudan's capital Juba this month between troops loyal to President Salva Kiir and those backing former Vice-president Riek Machar. As the consequence of ongoing violence, at least 272 people were reported as killed before the ordered ceasefire.

UN peacekeeping mission in South Sudan has been launched in 2011, when the Security Council adopted a resolution on 8 July 2011. UN peacekeepers have been deployed in the country since South Sudan gained independence from Sudan. The main goal of the mission is to consolidate peace and security and to help establish conditions for development. Currently, there are 13 500 troops and police on the ground.

Source: Reuters

South Sudan remains in major turmoil and on the brink of falling back into Civil War. The hopes which once accompanied the birth of the world's newest state in 2011 have mostly perished. Still the widespread suffering of the South Sudanese is driven by internal feuds among the elites on both sides.

Following another escalation, the neighboring states arm-twisted a regional force, with a major opposition from the Salva Kiir on one side, and the threat of an attack on Juba by Nuer rebels (led by Machar). Weapons have kept pouring into the country and only now the SC is contemplating an embargo.

The US is calling for 4000 additional peacekeepers, reading the risks. This is all late. Harsher language is pouring about widespread human rights abuses (most recently from the UN High Commissioner). And while international patience is running out – the grim fact is that any alternatives to the current establishment seem to be recipes for escalation and more bloodshed.

Marcin Buzanski



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Al-Shabaab's Attacks in Mogadishu

On Sunday, July 31st militants linked to the terrorist group of Al-Shabaab set off two car bombs outside the local police base in Mogadishu. Afterwards, a gunman opened a fire. As a consequence, 10 people are dead, and 15 are injured during the attacks. Al-Shabaab claimed a responsibility for the Sunday's incidents.

Since the guerilla war is progressing in Somalia, the anti-governmental forces confirm their anti-Western orientation and intensification of attacks is visible in the light of US drone attack and African peacekeeping forces. This week, Al-Shabaab's militants launched two car bombs at the gate of the African Union AMISOM mission, killing 13 people.

Al-Shabaab, a jihadist and terrorist group, operates mainly in the region of the Horn of Africa, namely Somalia, Kenya and Uganda, where it launched a series of attacks.

Source: Reuters

The resilience of Mogadishu residents is impressive. The city is constantly seeing a construction boom. More businesses are operating, and the mood is still upbeat, despite constant insecurity and regular attacks from Al-Shabab. The facts are that the still very fragile political settlement initiated through the 2012 provisional constitution is still holding, giving the best time for Somalia since the collapse of the State in 1990.

This is a long time, and while major clan disagreements underpin the political discourse, and the threat of renewed widespread conflict is very real – no one seems to risk breaking the current settlement yet.

The major test will be how the country deals with the planned 2016 election (selection) – process, which remains a major challenge in the country where Al-Shabab still controls a lot of territory, and when African countries are discussing of a drawdown of the 22 000 strong AMISOM force (which still de-facto guarantees security of the Federal Government).

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Issues on the watch:

Syrian al-Nusra Front declared the end of relations with Al-Qaeda

On Thursday, leader of Syrian Al-Nusra Front Mohamad al-Golani, in the video statement announced that his group ends the relations with global jihadist group, Al-Qaeda and it would re-form itself under a new name with no affiliation to any third party.

The main reason behind al-Nusra Front's move is to remove the excuses used by international community accusing al-Nusra Front of backing al-Qaeda and therefore allowed to "bombard and displace Muslims in the Levant". The group would change its name and would be called Jabhat Fatah al-Sham.

Al-Nusra Front is an armed Islamist militia force fighting against Syrian government, which has been established in the wake of Syrian civil war in 2011.

Source: Reuters

Saudi-led Coalition forces attack Houthi fighters close to Saudi border

Coalition forces led by Saudi Arabia bombed on Saturday Yemeni Houthi fighters seeking to entry the Saudi border. As reported, tens of Houthi were killed during the attack. The incident took place close to Saudi border, near the Saudi city of Najran.

Fighting, which have descended into conflict recently in the northwestern region of Yemen, mostly in the town of Hard, are recognized as the worst escalation since the peace talks began Kuwait. The Kuwait talks were established in April to reach a peace agreement between parties of a 16-months conflict. As estimated, more than 6 400 people are dead in the conflict, nearly half of them were civilians.

Source: Reuters



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United States carried out air strikes against IS in Libya

On Monday, US launched anti-IS military campaign in Libya. First strikes have been carried out in the IS stronghold of Sitre, north part of Libya. The operation was held as a response to the request of Libyan Government of National Accord, as confirmed by Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj. Air strikes were authorized by President Obama.

The US forces have formally started a frequent campaign to destroy the IS troops in Sitre. The Libyan government has launched anti-IS military operation in May last year, but only recently it had made its largest gains. According to the latest estimates, the number of the IS-oriented militants is decreasing comparing to the previously estimated number of 6000. It has been the result of the governmental operations and pressure from the other militia.

Source: Al Jazeera, BBC News

Yemen Government left the Kuwait peace talks

As officially confirmed by the Yemeni authorities, the Yemeni party leaves the Kuwait peace talks after Houthi militants dismissed a UN proposal aiming to the end the ongoing war in Yemen. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdel-Malek al-Mekhlafi stated, that Yemeni government would return to the negotiating table if Houthi agreed to sign the document presented by the UN. Yemen is not abandoning the peace talks, rather suspending the process.

Under the UN plan, Houthi fighters would quit three main cities, which they occupy, including the capital city of Sanaa. In proposed plan, the new talks would concentrate on reforming of government, which would include Houthi representatives. UN decided to continue the peace process without the representatives of Yemeni government.

The negotiations have been established in May, as the response to emerging escalation of conflict and ongoing humanitarian crisis.

Source: Reuters, BBC News



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Parliament in Pakistan passes a resolution condemning human rights violation in Kashmir

Pakistan's Parliament has unanimously passed a resolution on Human Rights in Kashmir, condemning any act of violation. The resolution demands tangible response of the UN Human Rights Commission, requesting to immediately send a fact finding mission to Kashmir to investigate the situation. Pakistan accuses the Indian security forces of alleged human rights violations. Pakistan confirms its continuing political and moral support for the Kashmir struggle.

Resolution aims to press the Pakistan's government to greater engagement in the international community level, NGOs, international media and inter-parliamentary organization in the context of ending the abusive practice of Indian security forces.

Source: Outlook India Magazine, World Affairs Journal

Burundi's Government rejects the UN police forces deployment

Burundi's government decided to reject the UN Security Council resolution adopted on Friday concerning deployment of police force to the country. As agreed by the Security Council, a new mission would help to end of political violence in Burundi. 288 officers were planned to be send, despite previous Burundi's declaration, that the government would not accept more than 50 of the unarmed personnel. Government spokesman stated, that acceptance of that decision would violate Burundi's sovereignty.

Since April 2015, when the conflict first occurred, 400 people were killed. According to the UN resolution, backed by France mainly, police forces would be located in the capital city and throughout Burundi for one-year initial period. Government spokesman commented that the security situation in Burundi is under the governmental control.

Source: BBC News

Abu Musab al-Barnawi announced as a new Boko Haram leader

The Islamic State announced on Wednesday Abu Musab al-Barnawi as a new leader of Nigerian terrorist group Boko Haram. Previously, he served as spokesman for the Nigerian Islamists. No information has been released about the former group's leader, who was last heard in August 2015.



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Little is known about Abu Musab al-Barnawi. Following a narrative of Boko Haram, he confirms his anti-Western and anti-democracy commitments and opposes the Western system of education. Abu Musab al-Barnawi maintained his close relations with IS and promised to continue fighting West African governments.

Source: BBC News

Foreign tourists attacked in Afghanistan

On Thursday, 4th August a convoy carrying tourists in Herat, west Afghanistan, was attacked by unknown perpetrators. Amongst 11 tourists 6 of them were wounded. They were citizens of US, Britain and Germany. Injuries weren't serious and tourists are now in hospital.

Identity of attackers is unknown, but Taliban fighters are suspected the most. There is ongoing conflict between government and Taliban forces, and extremists are ambushing convoys, among others to kidnap foreigners. Despite tensions tourists are still visiting Afghanistan.

Source: BBC News, Al Jazeera English

Execution of 20 Sunni militants in Iran

On Thursday, 4th August 20 prisoners labeled as "terrorists" were hanged in Iran, which is one of the biggest mass executions in this country in recent years. Convicted were accused of attacks on religious leaders and civilians in west parts of Iran.

Militants recognized as Sunni "jihadists" were executed in a country which has one of the highest annual number of conducted death penalties in the world. It is criticized by West countries, because they have concerns about human rights in Iran. Because those militants were active in the region

inhabited by Kurdish people, some say that this is another manifestation of repressions against this, mainly Sunni, minority.

Source: AFP News



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EU decided to extend civilian mission EUBAM in Libya

On Thursday, 4th August, the EU decided to extend the mandate of the civilian mission EUBAM Libya for one-year period. The EU also approved a budget of €17 million for the task. The ongoing mission, which was set up in May 2013, has been extended several times. EUBAM Libya is mandated to provide advice and capacity building related to migration, border security, counter-terrorism operations and criminal justice.

In May, foreign ministers from the Member States agreed to help Libya rebuild its navy and coastguard, which aim to be responsible for tackling migrant smugglers. The decision has been made in response to a request from the Tripoli government.

Source: Council of the European Union Press Release, Reuters