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About the ADIP News Bulletin

The Arab Defense Industry Papers (ADIP) is a new professional series focusing on the role of the defense industry in Algeria Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates. The focus of the series is on the establishment of national defense industrial bases in these countries and joint collaborative defense projects as well as defense exports. The ADIP News Bulletin complements the analytical papers by providing information about current and upcoming developments relevant for the Arab defense industrial establishment. The ADIP News Bulletin is available by subscription. ADIP and the ADIP News Bulletin are joint initiatives of Borchert Consulting & Research AG and Verocy. For more information about ADIP, see: <http://www.arabdefenseindustry.com>.

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The Big Picture

Renewed call to deepen GCC military cooperation

(16 Nov 2016) "Ongoing events in the region make it incumbent upon us to cooperate and coordinate our efforts to meet future challenges", Saudi Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman said during the 15th meeting of the Joint GCC Defense Council on 15 November 2016. He was also quoted saying the GCC countries were looking forward to "strengthening the military and security strategic partnership with the United States for more stability in the Gulf region," Arab News reported.

<http://bit.ly/2eEL6j4>

Turkish Air Force forced to lure back former pilots

(11 Nov 2016) Due to the purge of more than 350 airmen after the failed coup in July 2016, Turkey's air force in September 2016 made a public appeal to hundreds of former pilots to return to its depleted ranks. The call has largely gone unanswered, according to military officials and former pilots, as the deep divisions exposed by the coup attempt in Turkey's military and other institutions remain unhealed. At present the willingness to return is very low.

Turkish media have reported that only a tiny proportion of the several hundred pilots who left the force between 2010 and 2015 and would be eligible to return have actually re-registered. The numbers are "below expectations," said a military source who is not authorised to speak publicly.

Turkey's overall military strength is now under severe pressure. The depletion in air-force resources comes at a delicate time for Turkey, the second-most militarised member of Nato. Ankara is pursuing military incursions against the IS in Syria and battling Kurdish PKK militants in Turkey and northern Iraq.

Yet the former air force pilots contacted by Reuters said they felt betrayed by a military which had failed to protect them from followers within the ranks of Fethullah Gulen, the US-based cleric Turkey blames for the attempted coup and whose supporters have been jailed en masse since.

Government officials deny that the coup and its aftermath have damaged Turkey's military capabilities. They acknowledge staff shortages but say that a more loyal and focused military will ultimately emerge. The defence ministry and military command both declined to comment for this story.

Turkey does not disclose the total number of its combat pilots, but its Defence and Aerospace magazine quoted the head of the air force in March 2015 as saying overall pilot numbers were expected to rise to 1,300 that year. Turkish media have reported that the ratio of jets to combat pilots has dropped to below the 1:1.5 considered a healthy standard internationally, although there is no Nato rule on what the ratio should be. The air force has 240 F-16 jets and 49 F-4s for combat use, according to its website.

One Nato diplomat said that while there was concern about the purge of the Turkish air force, it had not yet resulted in any change to Turkey's commitments to NATO operations.

<http://bit.ly/2fV4ioX>

Analysts expect Trump to support military-backed, secular 'strongmen' in MENA

(10 Nov 2016) Analysts of British publication Jane's expect that Trump will be backing military strongmen in the Middle East and North African region. It is also expected that relations with Saudi Arabia will be under pressure. The key indicator for US-Saudi relations will be the continuation of US logistical support for the Saudi-led military campaign in Yemen. Continued US support for the Kurds will be a key indicator of Turkish willingness to engage in military action in Syria and Iraq. The risk of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) breaking down is contingent on new US sanctions obstructing non-US firms from doing business in Iran. There is a greater risk of naval incidents between Iran and the US escalating due to Iranian miscalculation. The US is also likely to support secular military 'strongmen' such as Khalifa Haftar in Libya and Abdel Fattah al-Sisi in Egypt.

Meanwhile, reactions on Trump's election as the 45th US President were largely positive across the MENA/GCC region. Egyptian President

Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi was the first Arab leader to call and congratulate US President-elect Donald Trump, and others throughout the region quickly followed suit, offering hopes of closer ties than those frayed by eight years of President Barack Obama. The Egyptian president stated that "under a Trump administration, the United States of America will be a loyal friend, not simply an ally, that Egypt can count on in the days and years ahead."

Even from the Shiite Alawite capital of Damascus, whose allies Iran, Hizbollah and especially Russia have fortified Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's hold on power despite six-and-a-half-years of bloodthirsty civil war, Trump's upset victory came as "a nice surprise," according to Waddah Abaead Rabbo, editor-in-chief of the pro-regime daily Al-Watan.

In Israel, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu congratulated "my friend" Donald Trump on his election, as did his hardline Defense Minister Avigdor Liberman, who blessed Trump's "big success." "President-elect Trump is a true friend of the State of Israel, and I look forward to working with him to advance security, stability and peace in our region," said Netanyahu in printed and video remarks widely disseminated by his office.

<http://bit.ly/2eZnHE3>; <http://bit.ly/2fV5rNa>

Brazil and Lebanon to strengthen defense ties

(10 Nov 2016) Brazilian defence minister Raul Jungmann paid an official visit to Lebanon from 2-4 November 2016 to strengthen defense ties between the two countries. Implementing a defence cooperation agreement was at the heart of his discussions, but press reports did not provide further details on the subjects addressed by the agreement. The visit also served to honor the five-year-long Brazilian contribution to the UN Interim Force in Lebanon Maritime Task Force (UNIFIL MTF). The Brazilian Navy assumed command of this in February 2011 and has provided flagships for the force since November 2011. The Niterói-class frigate Liberal, with a Super Lynx helicopter and some 270 personnel, has contributed to the force since September 2016.

<http://bit.ly/2gfTYwK>

US arms exports hit \$33.6 Billion at end of 2016

(8 Nov 2016) US arms sales during FY2016 will hit \$33.6bn, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) announced on 8 November 2016. This is down \$13bn from the previous year. DSCA announced that it had cleared \$2.9bn. of Foreign Military Financing-funded cases; \$5bn in Building Partner Capacity-funded cases; and \$25.7bn funded by partner nations.

Among sales that were cleared in 2016 were \$785m from the UAE for munitions such as the GBU-10 and \$1.15 billion from Saudi Arabia for M1A2S tanks and M88A1/A2 vehicles. Still, the FY2016 figures could have been higher if the long-awaited sale of fighter jets to Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain had been cleared in 2016, as many had expected. The total than would have been higher than the record-setting year of 2015.

<http://bit.ly/2fCqh5t>

Israel worried about Russian influence on Hezbollah

(6 Nov 2016) Notwithstanding disagreement among analysts with regard to its scope and strategic relevance, Russian defense modernization is a fact. In parallel to expanding the capabilities of its own armed forces, Russia also seems to beef up the capabilities of non-state actors operating in areas of Russian strategic interests. This development tends to be overlooked. That's why we provide a summary by Defense News of a forthcoming report written by Dmitry Adamsky¹ discussing Russia's influence on Hezbollah. The assessment is of general strategic interest as it suggests that we are likely to see a reemergence of beefing up proxy actors across different regions.

A new study, soon to be published by the research division of Israel's National Security Council, raises a series of red flags regarding Russian influence on Israel's Iranian-sponsored arch-enemy from the north. Written by Dima Adamsky, an associate professor at Israel's Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya and a research fellow at the IDF's National Security College, the 96-page Hebrew-language report highlights Rus-

¹ See also: Dmitry Adamsky, Cross-Domain Coercion: Current Russian Art of Strategy (Paris: IFRI, 2015). <<http://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/pp54adamsky.pdf>>

sian-inspired conceptual, operational and technical lessons that Hezbollah may apply in its next war with Israel.

In "Russian Involvement in Syria: Strategic Significance and Operational Lessons," Adamsky primarily draws on professional Russian literature to flag potential drivers that may help Hezbollah evolve from a well-armed guerilla movement to a more creative, "learning organization" steeped "more than ever before" in the technologies, tactics and procedures of advanced, combined arms war.

Hezbollah's close proximity over a protracted period to manifestations of Russian "operational art" — from planning and designing operations to learning and adapting while fighting — may challenge and possibly erode Israeli superiority, he writes. At the same time, Hezbollah's knowledge and capabilities of Russian cyber and electronic warfare will have increased.

Given Russia's practice of integrating local, elite forces on the ground, it is "reasonable," Adamsky writes, to expect that Hezbollah's Radwan special forces battalion has internalized the doctrine and practical lessons of joint commando operations. More than that, he writes that Hezbollah's battle-hardened special forces will serve as "knowledge agents" capable of training even more elite forces for future war with Israel.

The more Hezbollah is capable of using its special forces for cross-border raids or to seize Israeli territory, if only for a short while, it will deny the IDF the ability to deliver the so-called victory picture that is demanded by Israeli leaders. And even when waging defensive operations, lessons from Russian special forces, particularly in nighttime operations, could make it more difficult for the IDF to maneuver deep into Lebanese territory.

"Massive training in the techniques of Spetsnaz (Russian special forces) could considerably improve the general readiness of Hizbolloah and its ability to deal with Israeli special units that penetrate into different theaters," he writes, using an alternative spelling of the Lebanese militant group.

<http://bit.ly/2f2x0q0>

Defense Industry

Iran producing missiles in Aleppo

(11 Nov 2016) In the past few years, Iran's missile manufacturing capacity has been transferred to the Syrian city of Aleppo, Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Bagheri has stated to the press. Bagheri also said Hezbollah had used Iranian-made missiles manufactured in Aleppo during its July 2006 war with Israel.

It is the first time a high-ranking Iranian officer uncovers the presence of Iranian-made weapons produced on foreign territory (aka: Syria). Bagheri did not reveal details about the type or range of the missiles. He only spoke about a manufacturing zone near the industrial city of Aleppo, where fierce battles took place lately between opposition fighters and Syrian regime forces and their allies.

Last June, Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah admitted that his forces received missiles and money from Iran. Bagheri said the missiles produced in Aleppo were used against Israel during the 33-day war, referring to the Israeli war against Lebanon in the summer of 2006.

In response, Free Syrian Army Commander Col Ahmed Rahal stated "Iranian military production on Syrian soil started in 2002 as a part of a deal inked between Bashar Assad and the Iranian leadership." Rahal confirmed to Asharq Al-Awsat, that "Iranian military production in Syria is part of a comprehensive military and economic plan between the countries."

<http://bit.ly/2fU5b1Y>

Iran working on large high-speed catamaran

(10 Nov 2016) Iran is building a "much larger" version of the unusual catamaran it unveiled in September 2016, the Tasnim News Agency cited Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Navy (IRGCN) commander Rear Admiral Ali Fadavi as saying on 8 November 2016. The new catamaran was unveiled in the Gulf port of Bushehr on 13 September 2016 and was named Shahid Nazeri after an IRGCN Special Forces commander who died earlier this year. Its bridge,

passenger deck, and helicopter deck are mounted high above two narrow hulls that seem disproportionately long. The high-speed vessel is 55 m long, made of aluminum, capable of carrying 100 passengers and a helicopter, and has an operational range of 10,000 km. It is said the catamaran could handle 6 m-high waves even though it has a draught of just 1.5 m and a displacement of 240 tons (it is unclear if this referred to short or long tons). Powered by two MTU 396 engines, the vessel can reach a speed of 27 kilometers.

<http://bit.ly/2gfOq5c>

Raytheon Chief meets Saudi Deputy Crown Prince

(4 Nov 2016) On 2 December 2016, Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman met with Dr Thomas Kennedy, Chairman and CEO of Raytheon. According to Arab News talks focused on the localization of defense industrial capacities in Saudi Arabia. Sources familiar with the discussion say that two leaders also talked about Raytheon's role in ongoing projects to beef up the capabilities of Saudi Arabia's Air Force and the Navy.

<http://bit.ly/2fU7r9J>

Oman buys stake in Spanish defense manufacturer

(31 Oct 2016) The State General Reserve Fund (SGRF) of Oman has acquired a 32.2% stake in Mecanizados Escribano, a Spanish manufacturer of precision mechanical components for the aerospace, defense, and other sectors. For the Spanish company the partnership helps raise the capital. Oman considers the investment part of its policy to diversify the economy, Reuters reported.

<http://reut.rs/2fV3ShY>

Defense Exports

Israeli-Indian JV for UAVs

(9 Nov 2016) Indian company Adani Enterprises and Israel's Elbit Systems India have formed a joint venture company, Adani-Elbit Advanced Systems India (AEASIL), to manufacture

unmanned aerial vehicles in India. The Adani group will have 51% stake in the JV, and the Israeli company will hold the remaining stake. The formation of the JV follows the statement of intent signed by Adani Aero Defense Systems & Technologies Ltd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Adani Enterprises, with Elbit-ISTAR and Alpha Design Technologies in March this year to work together in the field of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) in India.

<http://bit.ly/2fEdA8B>

Turkey orders second batch of F-35 Lightning II jets

(1 Nov 2016) Turkey's Defence Industry Executive Committee (SSIK) gave the green light to order for the second batch of Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II fighters for the Turkish Air Force. The Turkish Air Force is expected to receive the initial production units in 2018 (earlier from 2021 as originally planned). Turkish officials stated that the second F-35 batch would comprise of 24 aircraft. The Undersecretariat for Defence Industries (SSM) stated that delivery of these aircraft would start in 2021 or 2022. Turkey committed to procuring up to 116 F-35 jets.

This order should help clear the uncertainties looming around Turkey's participation in the F-35 program given the failed coup in July 2016. Although Ankara is seeking to develop a home-grown fighter solution in the form of the TFX, the F-35 was always envisaged as the replacement for the Turkish Air Force's legacy F-4 Phantom II fighter-bomber aircraft. The TFX will be developed to replace the Turkish Air Force's F-16s. The technological competencies and infrastructure developed to support the Turkish F-35 program will almost certainly be directed towards the TFX once the design phase is complete..

<http://bit.ly/2fwgqzr>

Spain unblocks €40 million arms sale to Saudi Arabia

(11 Nov 2016) The Spanish government has unblocked a €40 million arms deal with Saudi Arabia. The sale of 155mm artillery ammunition had been on hold for a year due to concerns the munitions might be diverted to the Yemen civil

war. The decision to approve the sale came shortly before King Felipe's first official visit to Saudi Arabia scheduled for 12-15 November 2016. However, the visit was postponed following the death of Prince Turki bin Abdulaziz.

<http://bit.ly/2gfWBhM>

Defense Modernization and Support

Turkey presents locally railgun R&D project

(13 Nov 2016) TÜBITAK-SAGE, a Turkish munitions developer, is working on an electromagnetic railgun, Turkish media reported at the end of October 2016. The project called SAPAN aims at laying the groundwork to bring this technology to fruition in the future. The current level of maturity of this project remains vague. Although press reports showed picture of a prototype-like railgun, it is unclear if the project is still at a very early stage with initial concepts being drafted or not.

<http://bit.ly/2gfPnKI>

Israel upgrades sonar Dolphin-Class submarines

(10 Nov 2016) Israeli newspaper Globes reports that a new sonar system developed by the IDF Navy and Rafael Advanced Defense Systems significantly improves the detection capabilities of Israel's fleet of Dolphin submarines. Israeli news reports state that the development of the new sonar took three years.

Up until two years ago, the Israeli Navy's submarine missions were based on the German sonar systems. Under cover of strict secrecy, however, the Navy described to Rafael engineers its current needs, and asked for a new sonar device capable of upgrading its submarines' detection and fighting capabilities. The new sonar is operated on Dolphin submarines together with the original sonar systems installed by the German manufacturer.

With the newly developed algorithms, Israeli press reports argue, the new sonar system can ignore many of the noises that can disrupt the range of the systems' activity while detecting very distant noises. This indicates that subma-

rines can now also detect vessels with low noise signatures, press reports say.

<http://bit.ly/2g1CwuP>

FNSS and PT.Pindad present design of jointly developed tank

(3 Nov 2016) Turkey's FNSS and Indonesia's PT. Pindad have completed the conceptual design of the jointly developed Modern Medium Weight Tank (MMWT). Turkey and Indonesia started work on co-developing the MMWT in 2014. The production of the first prototype has already started. FNSS and PT Pindad will make up the prime contractors of the project, with both countries holding intellectual property rights. MMWT design comprises advanced ballistic and mine protection with broad range of firepower from close support of infantry to anti-armor.

MMWT's precision direct fire capability ensures required lethality with tactical and strategic mobility. Rear configuration power pack of the vehicle is combined with advanced electronic controlled systems and heavy-duty suspension system. The vehicle's new generation engine supplies adequate power, coupled with a fully automatic electronic controlled transmission. MMWT gets its advanced mobility capability from 6-wheeled suspension system built on torsion bars with double pinned tracks. The power pack of the vehicle is equipped with high capacity cooling pack and fuel tanks. The cooling pack is cooled by intelligent software driven hydraulic fan for optimum torque extraction and fuel economy and two separate fuel tanks provide a minimum operating range of 450km.

An auxiliary power unit enables turret operation when vehicle engine is not running, by charging the battery system. Advanced battery monitoring system is also equipped for optimum power management and Silent Watch capabilities. The MMWT is supported with battlefield management and laser warning systems, providing tactical awareness to the commander.

<http://bit.ly/2f3mUoZ>

Rafael Trophy protection system for Merkava tanks and Namer APC

(1 Nov 2016) Israeli Ministry of Defense Director General, Gen. (ret) Udi Adam, instructed the Directorate of Production and Procurement (DOPP) to purchase hundreds of additional Trophy active protection systems (APS), manufactured by Rafael. The volume is estimated at hundreds of millions of shekels.

The new order will ensure that every new Merkava 4 tank and Namer APC will be equipped with the Trophy system, providing significant additional protection for every tank and APC. In recent months, the Tank Management Program at the Ministry of Defense, together with the IDF Ground Forces, conducted a series of successful tests on the Namer APC equipped with the Trophy System. Analysts consider Trophy the best active protection system of its kind in the world, and the only combat-proven APS in operation. During Operation Protective Edge in 2014, Trophy intercepted numerous Hamas anti-tank missile attacks on IDF tanks and APCs.

Israeli sources stated that the Trophy is a situational awareness and active protection hard kill system that operates in three major stages: Threat detection and threat tracking followed by hard kill countermeasure (Multiple Explosive Formed Penetrators, MEFP) activation and threat neutralization.

<http://bit.ly/2fEBhhD>

Defense Procurement

Turkey still pursues dual track approach on missile defense

(14 Nov 2016) Ismail Demir, head of the Undersecretariat for Defense Industries (SSM) in Turkey, underlined the country's intention to continue developing its own air defense system while procuring respective solutions from foreign partners, Turkish newspaper Daily Sabah reported. For years Turkey has been negotiating the delivery of a short-range off-the-shelf surface-to-air missile from foreign partners while developing a long-range system locally. Tur-

key's initial selection of a Chinese supplier came under pressure. Ankara then turned to the Eurosam consortium, but negotiations seem to have stalled.

<http://bit.ly/2eZfOP1>

Elbit Systems orders Airbus helicopters for Israeli police

(9 Nov 2016) European company Airbus Helicopters reports that that Elbit Systems has ordered six new helicopters that will be placed into service with the Israel Police. The order is for four Airbus Helicopters H125 AStars and two H145s to support Elbit's contract to supply helicopters for the Israel Police. The new aircraft will replace Israel Police's aging fleet of single-engine helicopters. Among other things, the requirements of the Israeli Police include glass panel cockpit displays, Full Authority Digital Engine Control (FADEC), and modern safety features. The Airbus Helicopters aircraft will come with a broad package of options including thermal imagers, searchlights, moving map systems, and cargo swings for firefighting. Delivery of the new helicopters to Elbit will begin by the end of 2016.

<http://bit.ly/2fmQELx>

Reopening Russian-Iranian military arms deliveries contracts

(8 Nov 2016) Moscow and Tehran are planning to revive several contracts on deliveries of Russian-made weaponry to Iran, Alexander Fomin, director of the Federal Service for Military-Technical Cooperation, stated. Previously, Fomin stated that Russia's portfolio of arms export orders currently totals \$52bn. According to the Russian official, Russia is expected to sell about \$15 billion worth in weaponry, both in 2016 and 2017. "We have several contracts that have been signed long ago, which both sides want to revive and implement," Fomin told RIA Novosti.

<http://bit.ly/2fEAT2T>

Project Cheetah to be connected to India's Israeli-Made Drones

(7 Nov 2016) The Indian Air Force will upgrade and equip its fleet of Israeli-made Searcher and Heron drones with missiles, Israel Defense reported on 7 November 2016. Among the companies that will take part in "Project Cheetah," which will cost the government Rs 10,000 crore (\$1.5 billion), are Hindustan Aeronautics and Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI).

<http://bit.ly/2fEAltP>

Six FTC-2000 jets ordered Sudan

(10 Nov 2016) Chinese news sites have reported that Sudan has ordered six Guizhou JL-9 jets. The JL-9 is a two-seat supersonic turbojet-powered aircraft that is in service with the Chinese air force and navy training units. The export version is designated the FTC-2000 and marketed by Aviation Industries Corporation of China (AVIC). Other African countries are considering acquiring the jet.

<http://bit.ly/2fwew1M>

Saudi order for five Spanish corvettes expected

(10 Nov 2016) Saudi Arabia is likely to order five corvettes from Spanish Navantia in a deal worth over €3 billion. The contract was expected to be signed during Spanish King Felipe's visit to Saudi Arabia on 12-15 November 2016, but his visit was postponed. It remains open when the contract will be signed.

The corvettes will be built on the Avante 2200 combatant and is specially designed for EEZ surveillance and protection, Strategic assets defence, Anti-surface warfare, Passive electronic warfare and intelligence gathering. The corvettes will have a speed of 28 kt and a cruising speed of 15kt. The ships will be 98.9 m long with a full load displacement of 2,500 tonnes. The corvettes will also have flight deck and hangar for 10t class helicopter (NH-90, AB-212, AB-412, Airbus Helicopter AS-565 Panther).

<http://bit.ly/2fWCT9w>

Iranian delegation at Airshow China

(7 Nov 2016) China's biennial Airshow China exhibition is drawing in procurement specialists from around the world, including from Iran and North Korea. A group of Iranian specialists, who had arrived in Zhuhai on an Iranian air force aircraft, were seen at different stands, Jane's Defence Weekly reported. Unlike many of the other foreign military delegations at the event, they were collecting information on the various exhibited defence technologies while dressed in plain clothes instead of uniforms.

<http://bit.ly/2gfOQrs>

Military Cooperation and Training

UK opens new naval support facility in Bahrain

(10 Nov 2016) A new British naval facility to support maritime operations in the region was opened by The Prince of Wales, Prince Charles. Prince Charles opened the British Naval Support Facility's Welfare Block in the presence of Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister. The new block is part of the under-construction naval facility that shall be opened by next year.

<http://bit.ly/2ffyTgU>

Central Med NATO Operation 'Sea Guardian' launched

(10 Nov 2016) NATO launched Operation "Sea Guardian" on 9 November 2016, its new maritime security mission in the central Mediterranean. According to NATO information, three NATO frigates, Italy's ITS Aviere, Bulgaria's BGS Verni, and Turkey's TCG Gemlik and two submarines: Greece's HS Papanikolis and Spain's ESPS Mistral, are conducting the first patrols. Its core missions of maritime situational awareness - counter-terrorism and capacity building - can be expanded to include freedom of navigation and interdiction tasks, counter-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and protecting critical infrastructure. Sea Guardian could also support the EU's "Operation So-

phia" to counter people smuggling into Europe, said NATO spokesperson Oana Lungescu.

<http://bit.ly/2fF2Gkl>

Egypt and Russia step up cooperatin in war on terror

(9 Nov 2016) Bilateral military exercise "Defenders of Friendship 2016", which was a joint Russian-Egyptian counter-terrorist exercise, took place near the Egyptian cities of Alexandria and El Alamein, on 15-26 October 2016. This was the first joint Russia-Egypt anti-terrorism military exercise based on agreements both countries signed earlier.

In June 2015, Russian and Egyptian navy forces conducted their first-ever joint naval drills in the Mediterranean Sea near Alexandria. Russian sources at the Defense Ministry stated that the exercise "Defenders of Friendship 2016," involved six airfields and 15 helicopters and planes. During the drills, Russia's Ilyushin-76MD transport planes dropped five combat vehicles BMD-2 and one armored personnel carrier BTR-D and about 300 Russian and Egyptian paratroops parachuted themselves. Russian and Egyptian paratroopers practiced localization and elimination of militant groups in desert conditions.

According to the Russian Defense Ministry, a new uniform for hot climate had been developed for servicemen who were participating in military drills with the Egyptian army. The exercise has been controlled by operation groups of both countries from the joint command center, which had been formed at the El Hammam military base.

In 2015, Russian and Egyptian Navy Already conducted a joint navy exercise "Friendship Bridge." Both countries commenced their joint naval exercise off the Mediterranean Egyptian port of Alexandria, as part of efforts to strengthen the military cooperation between the countries. The Russian side was represented by the ships of the Black Sea and Baltic Fleets. The Russian vessels in the exercise included the guided missile cruiser Moskva and the catamaran missile corvette Samum, the tanker Ivan Bubnov and landing ship Alexander Shahalin. Egypt's ships in the "Friendship Bridge 2015" exercises

included the frigates Taba, Dumyat and Sharm El-Sheik, two missile patrol boats, 25 April 2016 and 18 June 2016 and two F-16 fighters.

Analysts indicated that the joint "Defenders of Friendship 2016" exercise should be seen against the background of three main strategic developments: The Russian "come back" to the Middle East as a dominant player, Egypt as a regional power, and the international cooperation in the war against terror. The "Defenders of Friendship-2016" exercise is a significant step in the fast-growing strategic alliance between Egypt and Russia. Egypt and Russia have never been that close since the era of late President Gamal Abdel Nasser, referring to the level of economic and military cooperation.

<http://bit.ly/2f3l6fO>

Saudi Arabia and China to expand anti-terrorism cooperation

(7 Nov 2016) Saudi Arabia and China have stated that they will step up cooperation in different areas including security and counter-terrorism. This was announced following talks during a meeting between Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Naif and Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and a delegation led by Chinese President Xi Jinping's special envoy Meng Jianzhu. The talks in Riyadh follow the signing of 15 preliminary agreements between Saudi Arabia and China in August 2016, touching on a wide range of fields from energy to housing, during the visit of the deputy crown prince. The Saudis and Chinese have agreed to plans for joint cooperation in counterterrorism. A five-year cooperation plan was also signed in the field of security training.

<http://bit.ly/2fWtWNF>

Cybersecurity and Space

Nigeria and Israel cooperate on cyber security

(5 Nov 2016) Nigeria is planning to collaborate with Israel in tackling cyber crimes and improving national security. Both sides have discussed

this during a meeting in Abuja. "Israel, as a country, has suffered from cyber attacks; it is not a problem for us, but a challenge (...) because we have the technology and human resources to deal with the challenge," Guy Feldman, the Israeli ambassador to Nigeria was quoted. The need to deploy hi-tech technology, surveillance cameras and security equipment to strategic sectors in Nigeria such as the financial and oil sectors, was stressed.

<http://bit.ly/2f3ncwg>