

Middle East North Africa Action Network Stop the Spread and Misuse of Small Arms

January 2006 'The government cannot protect its own citizens'
Regional Small Arms Bi Monthly Roundup

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News

PALESTINE:

Hamas leader wants Palestinian army

Sunday 29 January 2006, 6:10 Makka Time, 3:10 GMT

Khaled Mashaal, the political leader of Hamas, has suggested that the Islamic group could create a Palestinian army that would include its militant wing. Israeli officials on Saturday condemned the plan, demanding that Hamas renounce violence. Palestinian security officers, including loyalists from the Fatah Party that Hamas defeated at the polls, said they would never submit to Hamas control. Speaking from his base in Damascus, Syria, where Mashaal has been in exile, he said his group would not disarm and said Hamas's military wing, estimated at nearly 5,000 gunmen in Gaza alone, could be merged into a Palestinian army. "We are ready to unify the weapons of Palestinian factions, with Palestinian consensus, and form an army like any independent state," he said.

One booming business in Gaza: Tunneling for the Gunrunners

By CRAIG S. SMITH

RAFAH, Gaza Strip - Yasser Qishta, 25, shows a visitor into his near-finished house, a two-story cinderblock structure with a pristine, pastel interior, all new paint and gleaming ceramic tile. The house cost him \$32,000, a fortune for a man of his age in the Gaza Strip's troubled economy. The house tells everyone in the neighborhood what he has been up to: burrowing beneath the border to help bring illegal arms into the Gaza Strip.

With Palestinian parliamentary elections on Jan. 25 and Israeli ones in March, the unraveling of public order in Gaza has become a central issue in both societies. Dozens of tunnels have been dug between the Gaza Strip and Egypt in the last quarter century, and through them have come most of the weapons that fill this narrow Palestinian territory, threatening Israel and Palestinians themselves.

<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/students/pop/articles/24GAZA.html>

Fatah, Hamas agree not to carry arms on election day

By Nidal al-Mughrabi GAZA (Reuters) - Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah movement and the rival militant group Hamas agreed on Wednesday not to bring weapons to polling stations in a bid to avoid violence when Palestinians vote next week. The deal, announced at a joint news conference in Gaza, falls short of a Palestinian Authority plan for militants to put all their weapons into storage during the January 25 parliamentary election. Fears of chaos and lawlessness in Gaza have grown since Israel's withdrawal last September intensified a power struggle among armed factions and security forces.

<http://sg.news.yahoo.com/060118/3/3xznw.html>

See also: <http://www.worldtribune.com/worldtribune/06/front2453753.1881944444.html>

Palestinian security forces vote in legislative polls

By Omar KarmiRAMALLAH — Palestinian security forces kicked off parliamentary elections yesterday, when some 60,000 members started voting early to free them up for duty when civilians go to the polls on Wednesday. The group [Hamas] also maintains that it has a right to armed resistance against the Israeli occupation. The United States and the European Union want Hamas to disarm and renounce the armed struggle.

<http://www.jordantimes.com/sun/news/news4.htm>



IRAQ: Gunmen target Iraqi poll HQ

Tuesday 17 January 2006, 11:00 Makka Time, 8:00 GMT Masked gunmen killed two people in attacks 30 minutes apart on an election headquarters and a Kurdish political party office in the northern city of Kirkuk on Tuesday, police said. The first attack was at about 7am (0400 GMT) on the offices of the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq, IECI, in southern Kirkuk, according to Farhad al-Talabani, a police spokesman. Four gunmen strolled into the offices and fired randomly at employees, killing one of them and wounding another, he said.

JORDAN: Hostage drama ends peacefully

By Rana Husseini AMMAN — Authorities are questioning a 32-year-old man, who reportedly took a young woman hostage for one hour on Friday, then injured a child in a random shooting, official sources said. The suspect reportedly stormed into the home of a family he was acquainted with in South Shuneh and held their 18-year-old daughter hostage at gunpoint, Public Security Department (PSD) Spokesperson Bashir Dajeh told The Jordan Times on Saturday. <http://www.jordantimes.com/sun/homenews/homenews5.htm>

LEBANON:

EU demands Lebanon implement Resolution 1559

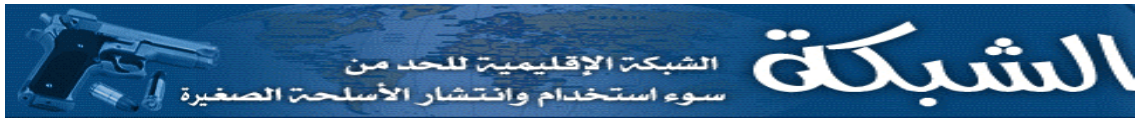
By Majdoline Hatoum, Daily Star staff, Tuesday, January 17, 2006
BEIRUT: The European Union's new president, Austrian President Wolfgang Schussel, demanded the implementation of UN Security Council 1559 on Monday, as Lebanon plunged deeper into its own internal political crisis. In a statement, Schussel said: "The European Union reiterates the importance it attaches to the Lebanese government extending its authority to the entire [national](#) territory and encourages it to continue the dialogue begun, in accordance with Resolution 1559, with a view to the disarmament of Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias." Resolution 1559, issued September 2, 2004, calls, among other things, for the disarmament of Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, namely Hizbullah and armed Palestinian factions in Lebanon. However, Lebanon has identified Hizbullah's arms as a matter of internal dialogue, according to the government's Ministerial Policy Statement. http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition_id=1&categ_id=2&article_id=21505

UN presses Beirut to disarm Hizb Allah

Tuesday 24 January 2006, 5:17 Makka Time, 2:17 GMT
A unanimous UN Security Council put fresh pressure on Lebanon to disarm the Hizb Allah group, in line with a council resolution adopted 16 months ago. A council statement on Monday also urged Lebanon to conduct free and fair presidential elections without outside interference, and called on Syria to take measures to stem the flow of arms and people across its border into neighbouring Lebanon. <http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/A060230D-DACB-4FEF-AD1E-3BD2E351DA8D.htm>

Hizbollah urges Lebanon to deflect U.N. pressure

Tuesday January 24, 7:30 PM
BEIRUT (Reuters) - Lebanon should respond to U.N. Security Council pressure to disarm Hizbollah by firmly stating it is a group defending the country against Israel, not a militia, Hizbollah's first cabinet minister said on Tuesday..."This is a continuation of the American pressure to achieve the goal of enabling Israel to continue to occupy (Lebanese and Arab)



territories and to expose Lebanon to Israeli schemes," Energy and Water Minister Mohammed Fneish said. "It is an insult to all Lebanese that the resistance is called a militia. If we tell them this is a resistance and not a militia, it'll prevent such interference in our affairs," he told Reuters in a telephone interview. <http://asia.news.yahoo.com/060124/3/2elen.html>

YEMEN:

Attempts to rein in outlaw tribes

Officials hope to reduce broad gun ownership and extend reach in lawless areas.

By James Brandon | Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

Surrounded by a group of tribesmen sporting gold-trimmed robes and daggers, Sheikh Abdul-Rahman al-Marwani speaks like a man on a mission. "The Sheikhs and the clerics have given up their responsibilities," he says. "So we have to step in and take over their tasks." Since Mr. Marwani established his organization, The House of Peace, in 1997, he has fought a lonely and dangerous campaign against Yemen's warrior culture and the tribal violence that kills about 2,000 people a year in this remote Arab country. The government's strained efforts to rein in its lawless tribes was spotlighted by the kidnapping of several foreign tourists by Yemeni tribes in the past few months... Abdullah al-Thawba, who has come to Marwani's office to seek his help in ending a war between his tribe, Wadhem, and its neighbors, the Adhamti. More than 70 people have been killed in the conflict in the past three years. "The government promised to solve the problem but did nothing," explains Mr. Thawaba, who hails from Al-Jawf, a lawless desert province. "We need our weapons because of the lack of peace and security. The government cannot protect its own citizens."

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2006/0124/p06s02-wome.html>

The Yemeni Arms Trade: Still a Concern for Terrorism and Regional Security

By [Shaun Overton](#) Terrorism Monitor, Volume 3, Issue 9 (May 06, 2005) The November 28 2002 attack on an Israeli airliner in Mombassa, Kenya, focused attention on Yemen and its arms markets. A UN report tasked with assessing arms trafficking to Somalia found that the shoulder fired missiles used in that attack likely originated from Yemen. Furthermore, follow-up reports cite Yemen's weapons availability as a significant risk factor for al-Qaeda's procurement of arms.

Yemen's efforts at internal control started after 9/11 with the new international focus on terrorism. The Yemeni government embarked upon a widely known weapons buyback program, hoping to disarm the tribes and thus neutralize the threat they posed to government control, in a non-confrontational manner. Sources connected to the markets believe the tribes have largely participated, relieving themselves of artillery, missiles, tanks and other forms of heavy weaponry. Surprisingly, the widespread rumor of American financing of the buyback program seems to exercise little impact on the tribes' willingness to participate.

<http://jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2369685>

SOMALIA: US navy captures Somali 'pirates'

The US navy says it has captured a number of suspected pirates in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Somalia... an unspecified number of sailors were taken off the vessel and a quantity of small arms was recovered, the navy said. Piracy, including hijackings and hostage-taking, has become common off anarchic Somalia, where there has been no effective central government since 1991. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/4636588.stm>

Other Security News

Guns or politics? Now Hamas must choose

By Donald Macintyre in Gaza

Published: 23 January 2006



With 48 hours to go before polling in the first Palestinian parliamentary elections in a decade, Hamas is on a roll. The armed faction long committed to destroying Israel is virtually certain to send shock waves through the Middle East by securing a major influence in the very institutions it has opposed for nearly a decade... The dilemma is partly over whether Hamas's probable success is a menacing new threat in an already unstable region, or the first stage of a conversion to the ballot box by the Islamic faction which has been responsible for the largest proportion of Israeli deaths in suicide bombings in the past five years.

War has fallen out of fashion, historians say

Posted on Sun, Jan. 15, 2006, By FRANK GREVE

Shiite Muslim rebels in northern Yemen are giving up. Islamic extremists in Algeria are, too. In Burundi, peaceful elections ended 20 years of bloody civil war. Rebels in Sumatra disarmed after 29 years to participate in elections. It seems that armed combat is falling out of fashion. According to war historians, the number of conflicts worldwide declined sharply in the last decade, and their overall lethality is the lowest since the 1950s.

http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/world/13629601.htm?source=rss&channel=miamiherald_world

Events, Campaigns, Reports

الفن من أجل التغيير / مسابقة القصة القصيرة

تنظم حملة الحد من الأسلحة مسابقة للقصة القصيرة باللغة العربية حول الآثار المدمرة لانتشار الأسلحة الصغيرة على الفرد والمجتمع

<http://ara.controlarms.org/pages/390-291105-background-ara>

Shooting in the air: turning celebration into tragedy

A gun is fired in the air during a celebration: New Year, a wedding, a religious festival. But what happens when the bullet falls to the ground? This New Year, some families around the world will not be celebrating, but remembering their loved ones, lost to bullets that had been fired with no regard for the consequences. <http://www.iansa.org/regions/aerial-gunfire.htm#lebanon>

Demanding Attention: Addressing the Dynamics of Small Arms Demand

by David Atwood, Anne-Kathrin Glatz, and Robert Muggah, January 2006

'The paper aims to inform the debates that will shape the outcomes of the 2006 Review Conference by bring what we call the *demand optic* to bear on the issue. In doing so, the goal is to broaden the factors that can be seen to underpin and drive small arms dynamics and to give exposure to a range of strategies that are essential complements to supply-side initiatives.' The study includes five focusing on the motivations and means shaping firearms demand and interventions undertaken to reduce demand.

<http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/OPs/OP18%20Demand.pdf>

"Building Peace from Ashes of War"

Gareth Evans in the Baltimore Sun

20 January 2006, Baltimore Sun

Once the guns go silent, what comes next? This is being asked around the world, not only in Iraq but also from Haiti to Liberia, from Aceh to Burundi, from Afghanistan to Sierra Leone. All too often a fragile and incomplete peace is simply the prelude to renewed armed conflict. Depressingly, the best indicator we have of future conflict within or between countries is a record of past conflict. Last month, the United Nations broke this recurring cycle by establishing a Peacebuilding Commission to help reconstruct countries after conflict and ensure sustainable peace. <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3895>



New threats to human security and their implications for development policy

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland - Ruohomäki, Olli

New threats to human security have emerged on the global scene in recent years. They all share the common characteristic of transcending national boundaries and hence have far-reaching consequences beyond individual communities. In order to tackle these new threats, new forms of cooperation are required, together with improved management of globalisation. Bad governance, terrorism, poor foreign direct investments, the informal economy, environmental degradation, AIDS and other health threats, human trafficking, and small arms and light weapons, are particularly grave threats to human security. Human security obligations do not stop at national borders; they are global. To meet the new threats to human security, policies for security, trade and development must be mutually reinforcing.

<http://global.finland.fi/julkaisut/pdf/DevelopmentSecure.pdf>

DEBATE: Is gun crime on the increase?

It is estimated that there is one gun for every 20 Africans. Is gun crime on the increase in your area? In South Africa 25 people die every day from gun related violence. In fact, after Colombia, South Africa has the second highest level of gun related violence in the world. The UN has noted that "it is far easier to buy a gun in Africa than to go to the movies, get a decent meal or a book". <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4596126.stm>

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