

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

December 2005 **'Babies are born holding guns'**
Regional Small Arms Bi Monthly Roundup

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News

LEBANON:

Golan village divided by fear

By Harry de Quetteville in Ghajar
(Filed: 18/12/2005)

For five years, the village of Ghajar has straddled the border between two nations officially at war, marooned between the fortified lines of the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights and the armed Islamic group, Hizbollah, in Lebanon. Shielded from the guns of neither side, it is a geographical anomaly that has become a uniquely demilitarised Middle Eastern frontline, with no walls or fences, frontier posts or machine-gun nests.

<http://news.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2005/12/18/wmid18.xml>



Under pressure, Lebanon tries to disarm Palestinians

John Thorne, Chronicle Foreign Service
Friday, December 16, 2005

Sultan Yaqoub, Lebanon -- "We didn't see where the shots came from," said Karma Abdouni, 69, reclining on a red divan in her parlor. "The whole car was wrecked, and a bullet hit my head," she added, pointing to a knobby scar visible beneath her saffron-colored scarf. Abdouni and her family were driving down from their hilltop village near the Syrian border when a burst of machine-gun fire stopped the car in its tracks and sent Abdouni to the hospital. The shooters belonged to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine -- General Command (PFLP-GC), one of several pro-Syrian Palestinian militias that man outposts in the hill country along Lebanon's border with Syria... Militants protest that their weapons are for self-defense and for the "liberation of Palestine"... But tolerance for armed militias -- both outside the Palestinian refugee camps and within them -- is growing thin... He acknowledged that "everyone complains about our weapons," but added, "Look, the whole country has weapons; Lebanese babies are born holding guns. Anyway, we don't have anything heavy, just normal stuff like Kalashnikovs and RPGs (rocket-propelled grenades)."

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2005/12/16/MNGLVG84G91.DTL&feed=rss.news>

Guess Who's Coming to Iftar- A meal to remember with Hezbollah

by MICHAEL J. TOTTEN, DECEMBER 16 - 22, 2005

BEIRUT — Syrian occupation troops have withdrawn from Lebanon, but the country has not yet regained its full sovereignty. The radical Shiite Hezbollah militia still controls its own territory in the suburbs south of Beirut and along the border with Israel... It ranks high enough on Lebanon's list of problems that last year the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1559 mandating not only the evacuation of Syrian troops but the "disbanding and disarmament" of all militias, of which Hezbollah is by far the largest. Hezbollah's Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah recently said it will "cut off any hand that reaches out to our weapons" and "fight them like the martyrs of Karbala."

PALESTINE: Fighters raid Bethlehem mayor's office

Tuesday 20 December 2005, 14:31 Makka Time, 11:31 GMT

Armed Palestinians from al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades have stormed the office of the mayor of Bethlehem, in the West Bank. About 20 members of the faction, an armed offshoot of the ruling Fatah party, burst into the building on Manger Square on Tuesday. The incident was another sign of growing turmoil within Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah faction ahead of a January parliamentary election. Palestinian security forces, armed with automatic weapons, surrounded the municipal building...The fighters left the city's hall peacefully, ending a one-hour standoff after receiving a promise from the mayor to address their demands for jobs and pay.

<http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/99DF97F1-F910-4520-85F3-07947E6FDEAD.htm>

SAUDI ARABIA: police foil arms smuggling

11 December 2005

RIYADH — Saudi Arabian border guards foiled an attempt to smuggle weapons, ammunitions and explosive material from southern neighbour Yemen, according to a Press report published yesterday. Brig. Gen. Mohammed bin Abdel Rahman Al Zahrani, head of border guards of southern El Saqam region, told the privately owned Al Watan daily that smugglers were caught at the Saudi border town of Akafa, about 800km south of the capital, Riyadh. Guards seized "40 US-made guns," ammunition and more than 25kg of the 'white explosive material,' according to the government-guided paper.

http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2005/December/middleeast_December269.xml§ion=middleeast&col=



SUDAN: Uganda rebels creating havoc

By Evelyn Leopold Mon Dec 19, 7:29 PM ET UNITED NATIONS (Reuters) - Uganda's brutal rebels are interfering with UN humanitarian supplies in southern Sudan and are still getting weapons from somewhere, the UN emergency relief coordinator said on Monday. Undersecretary-General Jan Egeland told the UN Security Council that the lives of millions of Africans were at stake in conflicts in Sudan and Uganda as well as food shortages in Zimbabwe and other southern African nations... "They are getting arms from somewhere. They are getting support from somewhere, internally and externally," he told reporters after the meeting. http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20051220/wl_nm/sudan_uganda_un_dc_1

SYRIA: 'boosts accuracy' of Scud D

By Ed Blanche

Syria is believed to have introduced significant changes in its 'Scud D' surface-to-surface missiles (SSMs), providing greater guidance capability and accuracy. Quoting unidentified "Western missile experts", Zeev Schiff, military analyst of the Israeli newspaper Haaretz, has reported that this evaluation was based on an examination of fragments of an errant Syrian 'Scud D' that broke up over the Turkish province of Hatay, which borders northern Syria, on 27 May 2005.

http://www.janes.com/regional_news/africa_middle_east/news/jmr/jmr051215_1_n.shtml

Other Security News

Gulf leaders urge nuclear-free region

Monday 19 December 2005, 20:11 Makka Time, 17:11 GMT Gulf Arab leaders have called for a nuclear weapons-free Middle East, singling out Israel, not Iran, despite having voiced alarm at Tehran's nuclear ambitions during their two-day meeting. In a final statement issued in Abu Dhabi, UAE, on Monday, the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) focused on Israel's failure to join the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which Iran has signed...The GCC settled for a reiteration of a previous proposal to "turn the Middle East, including the Gulf, into an area free of weapons of mass destruction".

<http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/6AB13718-0D57-4B02-A4F5-E10B03241A7D.htm>

Jordan appoints new spy chief

Wednesday 21 December 2005, 8:12 Makka Time, 5:12 GMT

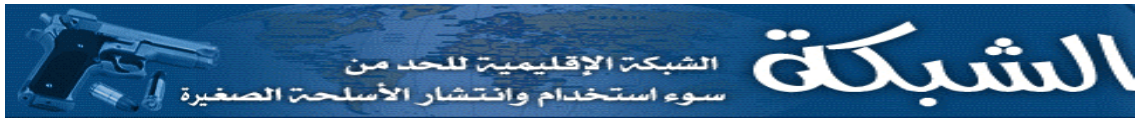
Jordan's King Abdullah II has named a new intelligence chief to replace Samih Asfoura who resigned. Major-General Mohamed al-Zahabi, a Western-trained career intelligence officer, was assigned the post of head of the General Intelligence Department (GID), the Mukhabarat, on Tuesday, reports Aljazeera's correspondent... "Security secures the citizen's main needs and guarantees the freedom of expression, work and education within the framework of the law," al-Bakhit told lawmakers, who debated his government's policies during the past three days.

<http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/9FC20CDC-244A-4C2A-ABD8-98A42C5AA378.htm>

Syria Says Too Early to Discuss Borders With Lebanon

CAIRO, 21 December 2005 — Syria said yesterday it was prepared to discuss with the Lebanese side the controversial issue of their common borders but only after bilateral relations improve. "We should not pre-empt issues on the agenda of bilateral ties between Syria and Lebanon," Foreign Minister Farouk Al-Shara told reporters during a press conference with his Egyptian counterpart, Ahmed Abul Gheit... A demarcation would defuse tension over the continued presence of Syrian troops in some disputed areas and would help reduce alleged arms smuggling from Syria to militants groups in Lebanon and elsewhere.

<http://www.arabnews.com/?page=4§ion=0&article=75026&d=21&m=12&y=2005&pix=world.jpg&category=World>



Events, Campaigns, Reports

Preparing for the UN PrepCom (9-20 January 2005)

African governmental experts have been meeting this week in Windhoek (Namibia). There has also been a meeting of South Asian government representatives in Colombo (Sri Lanka). IANSA will post reports as soon as possible on their website.

UN arms embargo on Somalia

The UN arms embargo on Somalia should remain in place, according to Crisis Group. A communiqué from the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) on 29 November proposed ending the embargo, but Crisis Group believes that this would suggest that force was an alternative to dialogue. Read more at

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3832&l=1&m=1>

Two UN reports on violence against women

Two recent UN publications feature on the IANSA Women's Portal at <http://www.iansa.org/women/>. The harrowing story of 'Elizabeth' from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is taken from a collection of testimonies from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The second publication is a set of UN guidelines on preventing gender based violence in humanitarian settings. It refers to guns as one of the facilitating factors for such violence.

Use of Antipersonnel Mines Declined in 2005

22 Nov 2005 15:05:17 GMT, Source: Human Rights Watch

ICBL) said today in its latest annual report on the global landmine problem. The ICBL removed Egypt and Iraq from its list of antipersonnel mine producers, and said that there was virtually no trade in antipersonnel mines across the world, dropping the number to 13, a stark contrast to the more than 50 manufacturers in the early 1990s. For the first time, Egypt made a formal statement that it has a moratorium on production, and Iraqi officials confirmed that production facilities were destroyed in 2003 by Coalition bombing. Iraq has made a number of statements in support of banning antipersonnel mines and indicated at the U.N. General Assembly its intention to join the Mine Ban Treaty. ..(Washington, November 22, 2005)... Today rebel forces, rather than government troops, are the primary users of antipersonnel mines. Rebel forces were reported to have used antipersonnel mines (or mine-like improvised explosive devices) in 13 countries, compared to 16 countries in the previous Landmine Monitor report.

<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/HRW/5a55e882724f4ce02ec0aa86a51bbc86.htm>

CHILDREN: Hundreds of Millions of Children Exploited Worldwide: UNICEF Report

Issue 277, Human Security Center News

Khaleej Times

Hundreds of millions of children suffer exploitation and discrimination, yet are virtually invisible to the eyes of the world, according to a report published Wednesday by the United Nations children's agency. Millions of children who are trafficked - often for sex - or forced to work in domestic servitude "disappear" from sight every year into black economies, the UNICEF report said. Other children, including those who live on the street, remain in plain sight but are denied fundamental services and protections, including schooling and health care. The report, "[The State of the World's Children 2006: Excluded and Invisible](#)," said exploited children were also often missing from public debate, from statistics and from news stories. Hundreds of



thousands of children are caught up in armed conflict as combatants, messengers, porters, cooks and sex slaves. An estimated 171 million children work in hazardous conditions, including in factories, mines and agriculture. The report said governments needed to improve research and monitoring of children's needs, introduce better protective legislation and provide better funding for programs that help children.

[Continue reading this article](#)

Links to related articles:

- [REPORT: The State of the World's Children 2006: Excluded and Invisible](#), UNICEF (Dec. 14)
- [ARTICLE: UN highlights children's plight](#), BBC (Dec. 14)
- [ARTICLE: Sudan: Thousands of children exploited - UNICEF](#), IRIN (Dec. 14)

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