



Volume 3 | Issue 16

# SYLLOGE ON WEST ASIA

FOCUS, NUCLEAR, MISSILES & OTHER  
SECURITY ISSUES IN WEST ASIA

16 August - 31 August 2023



MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR  
DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES

मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

## Iran

### IRGC Commander Stresses Hybrid Defense Against Enemy's Warfare

Fars News Agency, August 18, 2023

Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Aerospace Force Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh underlined that Iran has prepared a hybrid defense strategy in the face of enemy's hybrid war.

General Hajizadeh made the remarks after meeting with the Commander-in-Chief of Iranian Armed Forces and Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei with a group of the IRGC staff on Thursday.

The IRGC Aerospace Force commander further said that the armed forces commander had told them in a previous meeting that he was happy with the IRGC's progress, but he expected more.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020527000540/IRGC-Cmmander-Sresses-Hybrid-Defense-Agains-Enemy's-Warfare>

### Senior Commander: Iran Fully Monitoring Stealth US Fighters

Fars News Agency, August 19, 2023

A ranking Iranian Army general underscored the high capability of the country's radar systems to intercept all enemy airborne objects, and said Iran's air defense units have been fully monitoring US F-35 jets over the Persian Gulf in recent days.

"In the past few days, several American F-35 stealth fighter jets were flying over the

Persian Gulf and were completely monitored by Iranian radars from the moment they took off," Deputy Commander of Operations of the Iranian Army Air Defense Force Brigadier General Reza Khajeh told FNA on Friday.

"All the radars located in the South of the country were monitoring the planes every moment," he added.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020528000294/Senir-Cmmander-Iran-Fllly-Mniring-Sealh-US-Fighers>

### Military Chief: World Powers Vying to Purchase Iran's Defense Equipment

Fars News Agency, August 22, 2023

Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Baqeri praised the country's defense industry sector for its great progress in the past decades, and said that Tehran has manufactured such advanced defense equipment that the world military powers are vying to gain access to them.

Maj. Gen. Baqeri made the remarks in a message to Defense Minister Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Ashtiani, congratulating him on Iran's National Defense Industry Day on Monday.

Baqeri said Iran's defense industry has made great progress in various sectors such as the ground, naval and aerial battle, aerospace, missiles, drones, cyber and the artificial intelligence.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020531000204/Miliary-Chief-Wrld-Pwers-Vying-Prchase-Iran's-Defense-Eipmen>

### **Senior Commander Announces Iran's Readiness to Bolster Military Cooperation with Russia**

Fars News Agency, August 22, 2023

Iranian Army Ground Force Commander Brigadier General Kioumars Heidari announced Tehran's readiness to boost collaboration with Moscow in military fields.

The top commander landed in Moscow at the head of a military delegation on Sunday to discuss cooperation between Iranian and Russian ground forces.

In a meeting with the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army's Ground Forces, General Oleg Salyukov, on Monday, Brig. Gen. Heidari stated his force is ready to enhance military ties with Moscow.

Salyukov, for his part, said Russia regards Iran as one of the key countries in West Asia and a strategic partner of Moscow.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020531000286/Senir-Cmmmander-Annnces-Iran's-Readiness-Blser-Miliary-Cperain-wih>

### **Iran Showcases Indigenous Drone with 24Hrs Flight Endurance**

Fars News Agency, August 22, 2023

Iran unveiled an advanced domestically-developed drone, dubbed "Mohajer 10", which has an operational radius of 2,000 kilometers and can continuously fly for up to 24 hours.

The unmanned aerial vehicle was put on display in the presence of President Seyed Ebrahim Rayeesi on Tuesday during a

ceremony that marked the Defense Industry Day.

"Mohajer 10" has a maximum flight duration of 24 hours at an altitude of 7,000 meters and an operational radius of 2,000 kilometers. It also has a maximum fuel capacity of 450 liters and a maximum cargo weight of 300 kilograms.

The UVA, equipped with electronic warfare and intelligence systems, can fly at a maximum speed of 210 kilometers per hour and carry different kinds of ammunition and bombs.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020531000602/Iran-Shwcases-Indigens-Drne-wih-24Hrs-Fligh-Endrance>

### **DM: Iran to Send 2-3 Domestically-Developed Satellites into Orbit in Coming Months**

Fars News Agency, August 23, 2023

Iranian Defense Minister Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Ashtiani praised the country's astonishing progress in the space technology, and said that Tehran plans to launch two or three satellites by the end of the Iranian calendar year (ending in mid-March 2024).

Ashtiani stated on Tuesday that relevant organizations have been working to manufacture satellites and satellite carriers.

"We are involved in the development and launch of satellites. Under our plan, we will have 2 to 3 satellite launches this year, something we hope to be successful," he added.

Iran has taken giant strides in the field of science of technology in recent years,

despite US sanctions, and is among the world's top 10 states capable of building and launching satellites.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020601000458/DM-Iran-Send-2-3-Dmesticall-Develped-Saellies-in-Orbi-in-Cming-Mnhs>

### **Iran's Army Stages Large-Scale Electronic Warfare Drills**

Fars News Agency, August 25, 2023

Iran's Army staged large-scale electronic warfare drills codenamed 'The Shield of the Guardians of Jurisprudence' in central areas of the country.

Various divisions of the Iranian Army launched a large-scale and joint military exercise involving electronic warfare units and featuring the country's domestically designed and manufactured radars, drones, micro aerial vehicles (MAVs), and other military equipment on Friday.

Units from the Army's Ground Force, Air Force, Navy, and Air Defense participated in the joint aerial maneuver, codenamed Separ-e Hafezan-e Velayat 1402 (the Shield of the Guardians of Jurisprudence 1402), whose headquarters were located in the central areas of the country.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020603000329/Iran's-Army-Sages-Large-Scale-Electronic-Warfare-Drills>

### **Iran's nuclear organization unveils production of radionuclide**

Tehran Times, August 27, 2023

The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) on Sunday unveiled a domestic radionuclide with potential in a variety of disciplines.

Iranian nuclear specialists have successfully produced Cesium-137 radionuclide, which was previously imported.

The material, which has a variety of industrial and medicinal uses, was unveiled by Mohammad Eslami, the chief of the AEOI, during an expo in Tehran.

Radionuclides (or radioisotopes) are radioactive atomic variations of elements. They are mostly produced by exposing suitable target materials to the neutron flux in a nuclear reactor for an appropriate time.

Cesium-137 radionuclide has a half-life of 30 years and is found mostly in spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/488427/Iran-s-nuclear-organization-unveils-production-of-radionuclide>

### **N. Chief Underlines Iran's Determination to Continue Manufacturing Radiopharmaceuticals**

Fars News Agency, August 27, 2023

Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami praised Tehran's notable advancement in the nuclear industry, and underscored that his country will continue to produce radiopharmaceuticals to meet the health sector's demands. Eslami said on Saturday that radiopharmaceuticals have already helped the health staff treat patients, with these types of medicines currently being supplied to hospitals and medical centers on daily and weekly bases.

Iran has received "many demands from different countries" to provide them with radiopharmaceuticals, he added.

“Our exports have begun as well,” the nuclear chief stated without elaborating on the target countries receiving the Iranian-made medicines.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020605000494/N-Chief-Underlines-Iran's-Deerminain-Cnine-Manfacring>

### **AEOI Head: Uranium Enrichment Continues Based on Domestic Law**

Fars News Agency, August 27, 2023

Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami said Tehran carries on enrichment of uranium based on a framework established by the Iranian Parliament, and added that his country's interaction with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is in progress within the framework of the Safeguards Agreement.

On the sidelines of a Sunday ceremony where Iran showcased new nuclear achievements, Eslami dismissed speculation that Tehran has reduced the amount of uranium it is enriching.

“[Uranium] enrichment is done based on the Strategic Action Plan and within the framework of the general policies of the Establishment,” he stated.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020605000703/AEOI-Head-Uranim-Enrichmen-Cnines-Based-n-Dmesic-Law>

### **Spokesman: Europeans Willing to Purchase Iranian Drones**

Fars News Agency, August 27, 2023

Iranian Defense Ministry Spokesman Brigadier General Reza Talaei-Nik hailed the country's astonishing achievements in

defense fields, and said that several European states are seeking to buy Tehran-manufactured unmanned aerial vehicles.

Brig. Gen. Talaei-Nik told Tasnim news agency on Saturday that there is a profusion of potential customers for the Iranian-made military drones.

Iran is prepared to export military drones after taking their production capacity and domestic needs into consideration, the military official added.

Iran is ready to export its unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) provided that “political and security considerations” do not apply to any customer and the country makes sure that its drones will not be intended for inappropriate use, Talaei-Nik emphasized.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020605000149/Spkesman-Erpeans-Willing-Prchase-Iranian-Drnes>

### **France seeking to return to Iran nuclear deal: Macron**

Tehran Times, August 28, 2023

France would like to return to the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran and have clear information on Iran's nuclear activities, President Emmanuel Macron said in a speech to French diplomats on Monday, Nour News reported.

The Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was an agreement signed between Iran and the 5+1 group of countries (U.S., UK, France, Russia, China and Germany) in July 2015.

The deal limited Iran's nuclear activities under the condition that all nuclear-related economic and financial sanctions imposed

by the West against the Islamic Republic be lifted. U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew from the deal in 2018 and re-imposed sanctions against Iran.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/488469/France-seeking-to-return-to-Iran-nuclear-deal-Macron>

### **Iranian Military Official: Indigenous Air Defense Shield Capable of Hitting 12 Targets Simultaneously**

Fars News Agency, August 29, 2023

A senior military official said that the domestically-developed air defense system, ‘Tactical Sayyad’, can intercept two dozen aerial targets at a distance of nearly 200 kilometers and simultaneously deal with a dozen target.

Deputy Defense Minister for Research and Industrial Affairs Afshin Naderi Sharif described the homegrown military gear as a deployable medium-range ground-based system, with special privileges over similar ones.

The air defense system is furnished with short-range self-protection capabilities in comparison with Khordad-3 and Khordad-15 systems, he stated.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020607000687/Iranian-Military-Official-Indigens-Air-Defense-Shield-Capable-f-Hiing>

### **Iran has no nuclear weapons: IAEA chief**

Tehran Times, August 29, 2023

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Grossi said on Monday that “Iran does not possess nuclear weapons.”

“Iran does not have nuclear weapons. A distinction must be made between having nuclear weapons and being able to create them,” Grossi said at a meeting of the Swedish Institute of International Affairs.

Grossi went on to say that in 2015 Iran and world powers reached an agreement, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), but the United States withdrew from it in 2018.

Grossi also noted that “the American move triggered Iran to abandon obligations over time. Although this agreement has not been declared dead, it has become an empty shell.”

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/488506/Iran-has-no-nuclear-weapons-IAEA-chief>

### **Iran nuclear program survived 20 years of sabotage: nuclear chief**

Tehran Times, August 30, 2023

The head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) has stated that Tehran has advanced its nuclear technology despite two decades of industrial sabotage.

“The country’s nuclear science, which serves as a propeller for all industries, has come by while much industrial sabotage was committed to impede its advancement over the last 20 years,” Mohammad Eslami said on Tuesday.

“Assassination of Iran’s nuclear scientists, sanctions, psychological operations, and recourse to international organizations towards exertion of more pressure, none could impede the advancement of the country’s nuclear science,” he added.

Israel has targeted Iran’s nuclear plants several times with terrorist acts and

assassinated up to seven Iranian nuclear experts.

In tandem with its efforts to throw doubt on Iran's nuclear energy program, the regime's officials have waged a raucous propaganda campaign aimed at undermining the Islamic Republic's nuclear activities.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/488546/Iran-nuclear-program-survived-20-years-of-sabotage-nuclear-chief>

### **Top Commander: Iran Monitoring All Enemies' Movements at Their Bases**

Fars News Agency, August 31, 2023

Commander of the Iranian Army Air Defense Force Brigadier General Alireza Sabahifard praised the high capabilities of the domestically-developed radars and systems, and said that the country's air defense units are monitoring the enemies' activities at their bases in the region.

The ranking commander stated on Wednesday top-notch homemade radars and missile systems have helped Iran emerge as one of the world's strongest air defense powers.

Brig. Gen. Sabahifard noted with homegrown systems and radars, the Iranian Air Defense is monitoring each and every movement of the enemies at their bases.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020609000378/Top-Commander-Iran-Monitoring-All-Enemies'-Movements-at-Their-Bases>

### **Iran Thwarts Major Israeli Sabotage Plot Against Defense Industry**

Fars News Agency, August 31, 2023

The Iranian Defense Ministry announced on Thursday that it has foiled the largest

sabotage plot hatched by the Israeli spy service against the country's defense industry, explaining that a network of Mossad agents sought to introduce defective parts into the production of advanced missiles.

The "biggest sabotage plot" against the missile, aviation and aerospace industry of the Iranian Defense Ministry was neutralized, state media reported on Thursday.

It added that the Zionist regime's spy services and its global vassals were behind the plot, aimed at harming Iran's defense power.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020609000471/Iran-Thwarts-Major-Israeli-Sabotage-Plot-Against-Defense-Industry>

## **Iraq**

### **A number of ISIS members were killed and their hideouts destroyed by two air strikes in Kirkuk**

Iraqi News Agency, August 16, 2023

The Directorate of Military Intelligence announced the killing of a number of ISIS terrorist gangs and the complete destruction of their hideouts with two air strikes in the Zghaitoun Valley in Kirkuk. The Directorate stated, in a statement received by the Iraqi News Agency (INA), that "day after day, the clamp down on the remaining members of the terrorist gangs of ISIS, with the great efforts made by our security units, the accurate intelligence effort and the immediate handling of information, as the Military Intelligence Directorate managed, with planning and supervision the targeting cell of the Joint Operations Command was able to provide

the Air Force Aviation with accurate information on an important target.

<https://ina.iq/eng/28120-a-number-of-isis-members-were-killed-and-their-hideouts-destroyed-by-two-air-strikes-in-kirkuk.html>

### **Iraq's security council approves recent defence deal with US**

The New Arab, August 16, 2023

On Monday, 14 August, Iraq approved the outcomes of a Joint Security Cooperation Dialogue (JSCD) with the United States to form a joint high committee with the US-led global coalition against the Islamic State (ISIS).

Mohamed Shia al-Sudani, Iraq's Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, late on Monday, chaired a meeting of the Ministerial Council for National Security, in which security developments and challenges, as well as strategies for addressing them, have been discussed, Iraqi military spokesman Yahya Rasool said in a statement on Tuesday, 15 August.

A senior military and security delegation led by Iraqi defence minister Thabet al-Abbasi visited the US on 7 August and discussed the US-Iraq strategic partnership in combating terrorism and assisting and advising the Iraqi security forces.

<https://www.newarab.com/news/iraqs-security-council-approves-recent-defence-deal-us>

### **Prime Minister Adviser denies the presence of a build-up of US forces on the Iraqi land**

Iraqi News Agency, August 21, 2023

Khalid Al-Yaqoubi, Advisor to the Prime Minister for Security Affairs, denied the

presence of a build-up of American forces inside Iraqi territory, stressing that there is a replacement for the American units stationed in Syria, while revealing the details of the meeting of the Iraqi security delegation in Washington. Al-Yaqoubi said to the "Al-Ashrah" program, which is shown on Al-Iraqiya News, followed by the Iraqi News Agency (INA), that "the Iraqi leaders, in their negotiations with the American side, focused on preserving Iraq's sovereignty," noting that "Iraq obtained all its requests in Washington negotiations." He added, "The minutes of a meeting were signed between Iraq and the United States," stressing that "the agreement stipulates that drones fly in security areas with the approval of the Iraqi government exclusively."

<https://ina.iq/eng/28192-prime-minister-adviser-denies-the-presence-of-a-build-up-of-us-forces-on-the-iraqi-land.html>

### **Al-Saadi receives the British Minister of State for Security**

Iraqi News Agency, August 22, 2023

The head of the Counter-Terrorism Service, Lieutenant General Abdel-Wahhab Al-Saadi, discussed on Tuesday, with the British Minister of State for Security Affairs, Tom Tugendhat the exchange of experiences and information. A statement by the Counter-Terrorism Agency, received by the Iraqi News Agency (INA), stated that "the head of the Counter-Terrorism Agency, Lieutenant General Abdul-Wahhab Al-Saadi, received the British Minister of State for Security Affairs, Tom Tugendhat, and his accompanying delegation." The statement added that "the meeting discussed methods of joint cooperation in



the field of exchanging experiences and information in the field of combating terrorism and how to reduce it."

<https://ina.iq/eng/28212-al-saadi-receives-the-british-minister-of-state-for-security.html>

### **Interior Minister arrives in Amman at the head of a high-level security delegation**

Iraqi News Agency, August 23, 2023

A security delegation headed by Interior Minister Abdul Amir al-Shammari arrived on Wednesday in the Jordanian capital Amman. a statement by the ministry, received by the Iraqi News Agency (INA) said that "Interior Minister Abdul Amir Al-Shammari, arrived this morning in the Jordanian capital Amman, at the head of a security delegation, at the official invitation of his Jordanian counterpart, accompanied by the commander of the border forces, the director of drug control, and the director of civil status," noting that "the Jordanian Minister of Interior received Al-Shammari and his accompanying delegation."

<https://ina.iq/eng/28226-interior-minister-arrives-in-amman-at-the-head-of-a-high-level-security-delegation.html>

### **Iraq strikes Islamic State hideouts**

Al-Monitor, August 23, 2023

Iraqi forces announced a strike against the Islamic State Wednesday in another sign of the group's growing weakness.

The Iraqi National Intelligence Service said early Wednesday morning local time that Iraqi air force pilots flying F-16s struck

caves being used by IS members in the Qaraj mountains, near Tuz Khurmatu in eastern Iraq. The strikes destroyed IS hideouts in the caves and killed an unspecified number of the group's members, according to a Facebook post from Iraq's Security Media Cell.

The group posted a video of the operation on Twitter.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/08/iraq-strikes-islamic-state-hideouts>

### **Iraqi airstrike destroys Daesh hideout in Salah al-Din: INIS**

Iraqi News Agency, August 23, 2023

Iraqi National Intelligence Service INIS announced on Wednesday an Iraqi air strike that destroyed an ISIS hideout in Salah al-Din. "The heroes of the Iraqi National Intelligence Service, in coordination with the Joint Operations Command and with the support of the Air Force Command, were able to target one of the most important ISIS terrorist hideouts in Salah al-Din province," an INIS statement received by the Iraqi News Agency (INA) said. "The operation was carried out based on accurate intelligence information and field and technical tracking of ISIS elements present in one of the rest-houses located in the mountains of Tuz Khurmatu district, where an accurate air strike was launched, followed by a landing operation by the Counter-Terrorism Service," it said.

<https://ina.iq/eng/28227-iraqi-airstrike-destroys-daesh-hideout-in-salah-al-din-inis.html>

## Israel

### US Approves Historic Procurement of Israel's Arrow 3 Defense System to Germany

Israel Defense, August 17, 2023

The United States government has granted official approval to the procurement of Israel's Arrow 3 defense system to Germany.

The Israeli Ministry of Defense, German Federal Ministry of Defense, and Israel Aerospace Industries will sign the landmark \$3.5 billion defense agreement, marking Israel's largest-ever defense deal.

Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, the Director General of the Israel Ministry of Defense, Maj. Gen. (Res.) Eyal Zamir, and Director of the IMOD Directorate of Defense R&D (DDR&D), Brig. Gen. (Res.) Dr. Daniel Gold, were notified of this decision earlier today (Thursday), by the US Department of State.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59285>

### US-Israeli BIRD Foundation to Invest \$3.85M in Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity Projects

Israel Defense, August 22, 2023

While the cybersecurity industry experienced record-breaking investments and continuous growth in recent years, most cyber companies have focused on developing solutions for banking and insurance companies, defense, eCommerce, and other verticals with generous budgets. Yet, cybersecurity requirements on the national level are growing at a rate faster than the industry can support. Many

companies, utilities, and small and medium-sized ports and airports, have a constant need to adopt such enhanced cybersecurity solutions, though they must keep pace with the increasing number and complexity of requirements.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59296>

### Elbit Systems Awarded a \$55 Million Contract to Supply Counter UAS Solution to the Netherlands

Israel Defense, August 23, 2023

Elbit Systems announced that it was awarded a contract worth approximately \$55 million to supply multi-layered ReDrone Counter Unmanned Aerial Systems (C-UAS) to the Netherlands. The contract will be performed over a period of four years.

As part of the contract, Elbit Systems will supply several mobile, stationary, and deployed configurations of the ReDrone integrated Counter-UAS solution along with a logistic support package and training.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59342>

### Iran Presents New Drone, Claims It Can Fly for 24 Hours

Israel Defense, August 23, 2023

Iran unveiled its new combat UAV, the Mohajer-10, which it claims is capable of flying for 24 hours non-stop.

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi unveiled the Mohajer-10 yesterday (Tuesday), during a ceremony marking "Defense Industry Day," threatening that Tehran will

“cut off any hand involved in aggression” against the Islamic Republic.

A video accompanying the drone’s display had a text saying “Prepare your shelters” in Hebrew and Persian.

IRNA, Iran’s official news agency, says that the new drone has an operational range of 2,000 km, a maximum fuel capacity of 450 liters, a maximum payload weight of 300 kg, and a maximum speed of 210 km per hour.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59346>

### **India Introduces New Frigate with Interceptors and Radars Made by IAI**

Israel Defense, August 24, 2023

The President of India, Draupadi Murmu, launched the sixth frigate in Project 17A(Nilgiri Class) at the Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Limited shipyard in Kolkata. The frigate has been named INS Vindhyagiri. According to Reuters, the program's scope is around 8 billion dollars.

The ship launching sequence is not linear, as construction is carried out simultaneously at two shipyards. The launches began in 2020, while the launch of two more frigates in the series is planned for 2024. A total of seven frigates are planned in this series.

The frigate includes a Vertical Launch System (VLS) with 32 cells for Barak-8 missiles and an MF-STAR radar system manufactured by Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI).

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59351>

### **Major Deal for Rafael: US Navy Planning to Procure Three Iron Dome Batteries**

Israel Defense, August 27, 2023

A major deal for Israel’s Rafael Advanced Defense Systems: The U.S. Navy plans to acquire three Iron Dome batteries, including 44 launchers and 1,840 Tamir interceptors.

WAR ZONE reports that the exact value of the transaction is not known, but it is estimated to be around \$200 million. The Marines need Iron Dome for defense against rocket attacks, and these systems also have capabilities to defend against missiles and artillery.

The details of the purchase are published on the U.S. government website. The acquisition will be carried out by the Marines through Raytheon, which markets the system in the U.S. under the brand SKY HUNTER.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59380>

### **Sikorsky to Build 8 New CH-53K Helicopters for Israel**

Israel Defense, August 28, 2023

The U.S. Navy awarded Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin company, a \$2.7 billion contract to build and deliver 35 additional CH-53K helicopters – the largest procurement to date for this multi-mission aircraft.

The agreement includes 12 U.S. Marine Corps Lot 7 aircraft, 15 U.S. Marine Corps Lot 8 aircraft, and eight aircraft for Israel. Sikorsky will begin delivering these aircraft in 2026.

These eight additional CH-53K helicopters for the Israeli Air Force follow the initial production announcement in 2022 for the first four aircraft under a U.S. Navy Foreign Military Sales (FMS) agreement.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/59384>

## Jordan

### Jordan Says Shot Down TNT-Loaded Drone From Syria

The Defense Post, August 16, 2023

Jordan's army said it shot down a drone Wednesday loaded with TNT explosives trying to enter its airspace from Syria, in the latest incident of trafficking of arms or drugs. "Border guards... detected a drone trying to cross the border illegally" from Syria, it said in a statement, adding that the aircraft was "shot down over Jordanian territory." The army said the drone was carrying "TNT-type explosive material." Jordan often announces operations targeting the smuggling of arms and drugs from Syria, especially captagon, an amphetamine-like stimulant plaguing the Middle East.

<https://www.thedefensepost.com/2023/08/16/jordan-tnt-drone-syria/>

## Lebanon

### 4 Arab Israelis arrested for Hezbollah ties, smuggling Iranian explosives

Al-Monitor, August 24, 2023

Four Arab Israelis were arrested last month on suspicion of smuggling into the country munitions they received from Hezbollah, Israel's Shin Bet security agency announced Thursday.

The four, residents of Kfar Qasim village and the town of Lod, were indicted on Thursday on charges of arms trafficking.

According to the Shin Bet announcement, which included pictures of those arrested, Kafr Qasim residents Jalal Khursa, Ahmed Issa and Muhammed Issa and Lod resident Nuh Assam were caught in possession of Iranian-made explosives. The Shin Bet suspects the four were part of a smuggling ring that received and distributed illegal arms and possibly drugs from Hezbollah. The security agency is now looking into other Israelis suspected of involvement in the smuggling ring.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/08/4-arab-israelis-arrested-hezbollah-ties-smuggling-iranian-explosives>

### U.S. ramps up efforts to de-escalate growing Israel-Hezbollah tensions

Axios, August 29, 2023

The Biden administration is increasing its efforts to try to de-escalate the growing tensions between Israel and Hezbollah and prevent a breakout of hostilities on the Israel-Lebanon border, according to Israeli and U.S. sources briefed on the issue.

Why it matters: Any small border incident between Israel and Hezbollah could quickly turn into a much bigger conflict in Lebanon that would likely have wider regional implications. Catch up quick: Tensions between Israel and Hezbollah have been escalating for months over an outpost established by the Lebanese militant group 100 feet south of the border in an area recognized by the UN as Israeli territory.

<https://www.axios.com/2023/08/29/israel-hezbollah-lebanon-tensions-biden-advisers>

### **Adopting Resolution 2695 (2023), Security Council Extends Mandate of United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon for One Year**

United Nations, August 31, 2023

The Security Council today extended the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) until 31 August 2024, as speakers debated the matter of the Force being allowed access to some areas around the Blue Line.

Adopting resolution 2695 (2023) (to be issued as document S/RES/2695)—by a recorded vote of 13 in favour to none against, with 2 abstentions (China, Russian Federation)—the Security Council decided to extend the present mandate of UNIFIL for a period of twelve months, until 31 August 2024. By the text, the Council reiterated its call for the Government of Lebanon to present a plan to increase its naval capabilities as soon as possible, including with appropriate support from the international community, with the goal of ultimately decreasing UNIFIL’s Maritime Taskforce and transitioning its responsibilities to the Lebanese Armed Forces.

<https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15400.doc.htm>

### **Palestine**

#### **Security forces raid Palestinian gun workshop, seize lathes, dozens of firearm parts**

The Times of Israel, August 31, 2023

Israeli security forces on Thursday morning raided a Palestinian workshop in the West Bank city of Beitunia, which police said

was used to manufacture firearms, arresting one suspect and seizing equipment, firearms, and dozens of weapon parts in the process.

Police said the 26-year-old Palestinian resident of Beitunia had been wanted for weapons dealing and building firearms at the workshop.

Police officers, with Israeli soldiers, raided the site early Thursday and confiscated seven lathes, six handguns, three assault rifles, dozens of weapon parts, and other military equipment, police said.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/security-forces-raid-palestinian-gun-workshop-seize-lathes-dozens-of-firearm-parts/>

### **Qatar**

#### **Balancing act: Asked about China’s Middle East arms sales, Qatari PM lauds US ‘defense alliance’**

Breaking Defense, August 25, 2023

Qatar may be pursuing ever-closer economic ties with China, but today the Gulf nation’s prime minister suggested that when it comes to weapons purchases, Qatar would continue to look to the West.

Speaking in Singapore, Sheikh Mohammed Bin Abdulrahman al-Thani was asked how Qatar views the increase of Chinese defense sales in the region, and whether his country feels like it’s being forced to make a choice between Beijing and Washington.

“I have mentioned it very clearly that we have a strong defense alliance with the United States, and we believe that our armed forces and the way we built — it’s been built on based on systems from the West, mainly from US and France,” al-

Thani told the audience at an event put on by the International Institute for Strategic Studies. "We welcome any cooperation with all the countries. But as I mentioned also, none of our relation with any specific country will be at the account [expense] of the other."

<https://breakingdefense.com/2023/08/balancing-act-asked-about-chinas-middle-east-arms-sales-qatari-pm-lauds-us-defense-alliance/>

### **Qatar Hopes Recent US-Iran Agreement Leads to Nuclear Dialogue**

Asharq Al-Awsat, August 25, 2023

Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed Bin Abdulrahman al-Thani said on Friday he hopes a recent prisoners exchange agreement his country facilitated between Iran and the United States leads to a wider dialogue on Iran's nuclear program.

"With Iran, we became a key mediator with the US in the prisoner swap agreement which we hope will lead to a wider dialogue on the nuclear deal," he said.

<https://english.aawsat.com/gulf/4507381-qatar-hopes-recent-us-iran-agreement-leads-nuclear-dialogue>

### **Saudi Arabia**

#### **The US Position on Saudi Arabia's Civilian Nuclear Program**

Arab Center Washington DC, August 16, 2023

In June 2023, Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud affirmed the kingdom's intent to enrich uranium, part of its desire to develop a civilian nuclear program. Despite China

and Russia having shown interest in partnering with Saudi Arabia on such an endeavor, Riyadh once again expressed a preference for a nuclear agreement with Washington. Importantly, it also requested a US commitment to Saudi security needs and reduced arms sales restrictions in exchange for potentially normalizing relations with Israel, a strategic goal for the Biden administration.

<https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/the-us-position-on-saudi-arabias-civilian-nuclear-program/>

#### **The US is quietly warning its Middle East partners about the cost of stocking up on Chinese-made weapons**

Business Insider, August 18, 2023

US officials are warning about Chinese arms sales in the Middle East, saying they could undermine the US military's ability to integrate with its partners in the region.

China isn't offering weapons that would directly replace US arms, but the growing interest in what Beijing is selling reflects a longer-term desire by Middle Eastern countries to diversify their suppliers and their increasing concern about the US's commitment to the region, experts say.

Chinese arms sales in the Middle East have increased by 80% over the past decade, a result of Beijing's expanding relationships there and its willingness to deliver arms faster and with fewer stipulations than Washington.

<https://www.businessinsider.in/international/news/the-us-is-quietly-warning-its-middle-east-partners-about-the-cost-of-stocking-up-on-chinese-made-weapons/articleshow/102815298.cms>

### **Minister says Israel may be open to Saudi uranium enrichment under normalization deal**

The Times of Israel, August 20, 2023

Strategic Affairs Minister Ron Dermer, a close confidant of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, has indicated that Israel may be open to the possibility of acquiescing to Saudi Arabia's reported demand to build a civil nuclear power plant, as part of a US-brokered normalization deal with Jerusalem.

Netanyahu's office later issued a clarification downplaying, although a source close to the premier was quoted by Hebrew media reiterating that Israel "doesn't rule out" the idea of Riyadh enriching uranium. In an interview with PBS posted on Friday, Dermer drew the distinction between pursuing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and nuclear weapons.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/minister-says-israel-may-be-open-to-saudi-uranium-enrichment-under-normalization-deal/>

### **'Too Dangerous': Israeli and U.S. Experts Warn Against Saudi Nuclear Enrichment Capability**

Haaretz, August 22, 2023

Leading American and Israeli experts are warning the Biden administration not to accept Saudi demands for uranium enrichment on the Kingdom's soil as part of a future U.S.-Saudi-Israeli agreement.

<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-08-22/ty-article/.premium/too-dangerous-israeli-and-u-s-experts-warn-against-saudi-nuclear-enrichment-capability/0000018a-1bc5-d19a-affb-3bef72a70000>

### **A potential first-of-its-kind fighter-jet purchase could be a sign Saudi Arabia isn't happy with what it's getting from the US**

Business Insider, August 22, 2023

Saudi Arabia has spent decades building an enormous air force composed exclusively of advanced US and British fighter jets. But Riyadh's reported interest in potentially purchasing a large number of French jets may be a sign it doesn't think its longtime patrons are as reliable as before.

In December, France's La Tribune financial newspaper, citing unnamed sources, reported that Saudi Arabia was considering acquiring 100 to 200 Dassault Rafale fighters. The report came amid developments suggesting that the US and other nations might not provide military equipment to Riyadh in the future.

After Riyadh cut oil production in October, US lawmakers proposed legislation freezing all American arms sales to the kingdom, which could have grounded most of the Saudi air force and would further fray already strained US-Saudi relations.

<https://www.businessinsider.in/international/news/a-potential-first-of-its-kind-fighter-jet-purchase-could-be-a-sign-saudi-arabia-isnt-happy-with-what-its-getting-from-the-us/articleshow/102910920.cms>

### **Saudi Arabia considers Chinese bid for nuclear plant**

The New Arab, August 25, 2023

Saudi Arabia is considering a Chinese bid to build it a nuclear power plant, the *Wall Street Journal* reported on Friday, a decision that could derail U.S. plans in the

kingdom. China National Nuclear Corp, a state-owned company known as CNNC, has bid to build a nuclear plant in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province, near the border with Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, the newspaper reported, citing Saudi officials familiar with the matter.

CNNC did not immediately respond to a request from *Reuters* for comment. The foreign ministries of both China and Saudi Arabia did not respond to requests for comment on the report.

<https://www.newarab.com/news/saudi-arabia-considers-chinese-bid-nuclear-plant>

### **There should be no Saudi uranium enrichment**

Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, August 28, 2023

There is increasing talk of a United States-brokered “grand bargain” on Middle East security, the core of which would be normalization of ties between Israel and Saudi Arabia. It isn't clear what motivates Joe Biden to press for this deal now. The obvious goal would involve the eternal search for peace in the Middle East, but there are hints that such a bargain may have more to do with keeping the Saudis out of China's orbit. One thing we know, Biden's lieutenants are lobbying hard in the Senate for acceptance of some version of far-reaching demands from the Saudi crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, among them access to uranium enrichment technology that would ostensibly provide fuel for future Saudi nuclear power plants. Indeed, enrichment is a step in the

production of nuclear reactor fuel. It is also a vital part of one of two paths to the atomic bomb.

<https://thebulletin.org/2023/08/there-should-be-no-saudi-uranium-enrichment/>

## **Syrian Arab Republic**

### **Syria, Tunisia discuss cooperation in security domain**

SANA, August 16, 2023

Syria and Tunisia discussed relations of joint cooperation between the two brotherly countries in various domains, particularly in the security domain.

This came during a meeting held on Wednesday between Interior Minister Maj. Gen. Mohammad al-Rahmoun, and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Tunisia to Syria, Mohamed Al-Mahdhabi.

During the meeting, Maj. Gen. al-Rahmoun expressed the Interior Ministry's keenness on caring for the interests of the Tunisian community in Syria and provides facilitations to the Tunisian people residing in Syria.

<https://sana.sy/en/?p=315174>

### **Syria, Iran to boost cooperation in communications domain**

SANA, August 23, 2023

Syrian Minister of Communications and Technology Iyad al-Khatib discussed Dr Hossein Mirzapour, the Advisor to the Minister of Communications and Information Technology in Iran, prospects



of bilateral cooperation in the area of communications and information technology.

Minister al-Khatib noted, in the meeting held Wednesday at the building of the ministry, the importance of enhancing cooperation ties with Iran in the communication field along with the infrastructure, given that the Iranian side has an excellent experience in this area, attaching great importance to exchanging expertise for the benefit of the two peoples.

<https://sana.sy/en/?p=315490>

### **Ambassador Sabbagh: Washington still supports terrorist organizations and separatist militias to carry out its project in Syria**

SANA, August 23, 2023

Syria's permanent representative to the UN, Ambassador Bassam Sabbagh, said that the Israeli occupation persists to escalate tense situation in the region through its repeated attacks on Syrian territory and its criminal practices against citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan.

Sabbagh added at UN Security council session on the situation in Syria that the U.S. still supports terrorist organizations and recruit them along with the separatist groups as a tool to carry out its project in Syria and the region.

"Syria condemns, in the strongest terms, the Israeli aggression and criminal practices, and calls on Security council to take action and put an end to the occupation's policies, and to bring those responsible to justice," Sabbagh said.

<https://sana.sy/en/?p=315499>

### **Syria: Israeli aggression on Aleppo Int'l Airport part of the Western escalation in support of terrorism**

SANA, August 28, 2023

The Israeli aggression on Aleppo International Airport comes as a part of the Western and US escalation to support terrorism in the country and aggravate the impacts of the economic sanctions imposed on the Syrian people, Foreign and Expatriates Ministry affirmed in a statement on Monday.

"Syria calls on the UNSC to resume its responsibilities and hold Israeli occupation accountable for such crimes," the statement added.

"At 4:30 a.m. the occupation forces carried out an air attack targeting Aleppo International Airport, which led to its out of service."

<https://sana.sy/en/?p=315778>

### **Syrian-Indian meeting touches upon prospects of boosting industrial cooperation**

SANA, August 28, 2023

Development of cooperation between Syria and India in the industrial domain as well as the cross-promoting and marketing along with holding exhibitions for the industrial products in both markets were topics discussed on Monday.

That was in meeting brought together Board of Directors of the Industry chamber of Damascus and its countryside along with Indian Charge d'Affaires in Damascus, Vijay Pandey.

<https://sana.sy/en/?p=315795>

## Türkiye

### Baykar CTO highlights role of AI in unmanned technologies

Daily Sabah, August 23, 2023

Selçuk Bayraktar, the chief technology officer (CTO) and chairperson of the board of the Turkish drone magnate Baykar, noted in an interview Wednesday that the firm is conducting more research on work on algorithms known as artificial intelligence (AI) to increase flight safety and enable the aircraft to perceive and understand their surroundings.

“Of course, we are mainly conducting these studies for our unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) platforms, but at the same time, we are preparing our flying car named 'Cezeri,’” Bayraktar told Demirören News Agency (DHA).

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/tech/baykar-cto-highlights-role-of-ai-in-unmanned-technologies>

### Türkiye, S. Arabia, Pakistan convene 1st defense committee meeting

Daily Sabah, August 24, 2023

The Trilateral Defense Committee of Türkiye, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan held its inaugural meeting in Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, according to the written statement made by the Ministry of Defense of Saudi Arabia, Anadolu Agency (AA) reported Thursday.

According to the statement, Deputy Defense Minister Celal Sami Tüfekci, Deputy Minister of Defense of Saudi Arabia Talal Bin Abdullah Bin Turki Al-

Otaibi and Lieutenant General Muhammed Said from the Pakistan Armed Forces attended the meeting, which was held to improve cooperation in the field of defense.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkiye-s-arabia-pakistan-convene-1st-defense-committee-meeting>

### Türkiye, Bosnia-Herzegovina ink military cooperation plan

Daily Sabah, August 31, 2023

Türkiye and Bosnia-Herzegovina signed a military cooperation plan for 2023 to boost ties on Thursday.

The plan was signed in a meeting in Bosnia's capital of Sarajevo by Deputy Defense Minister Zoran Sajinovic and Turkish Embassy Military Attaché Col. Mustafa Sıtkı Tatar.

The Bosnian Defense Ministry said the agreement plays a great importance for future cooperation.

It expressed satisfaction with the military cooperation between the two countries that has continued.

The parties also expressed a desire to further increase joint activities within the framework of the plan.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/diplomacy/turkiye-bosnia-herzegovina-ink-military-cooperation-plan>

### Construction of 1st unit of Türkiye's Akkuyu NPP wraps up

Daily Sabah, August 31, 2023

Deputy Construction Director of Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) said Thursday

that the construction work on the first unit of the NPP, which is under construction in the Gülnar district of Türkiye's southern Mersin, has been completed.

“With the installation of the technological equipment in the turbine and pump buildings completed by the end of this year, we will move on to the stage of starting up and commissioning the first unit,” Dmitry Romanets said.

Türkiye gained the status of a country boasting nuclear energy, as its first plant, the Akkuyu NPP, received the initial batch of nuclear fuel with a ceremony held in April this year.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/energy/construction-of-1st-unit-of-turkiyes-akkuyu-npp-wraps-up>

# NUCLEAR AND ARMS CONTROL CENTRE

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