

Regional Insights: January 29th, 2021

Africa, South & Central Asia	Americas & Australasia	East & Southeast Asia
<p>Libya nurtures a fragile peace – ISS Africa</p> <p>The October 2020 ceasefire has endured, and an oil blockade lifted. Elections have been agreed on for December 24th and the process finalised for selecting a unified transitional government until then. The agreement is partially a result of a de facto military stalemate, but also favourable shifting global dynamics among external forces. Crucial to the agreement is the withdraw all foreign fighters by the end of January. There has however, been signs of non-compliance, possibly as Ankara aims to fully exploit the gas interests offshore, to which in an apparent response, Russia and the UAE seem to be reinforcing Haftar airbases.</p> <p>Defence Secretary visits Kenya and Somalia to discuss Al Shabaab – UK GOV</p> <p>Kenya looking to order 118 Hizir armoured vehicles from Turkey – Defence Web</p> <p>Indian Army Flies 75 Drones to Demonstrate Swarm Capabilities – Defence Post</p> <p>Boeing gets U.S. approval to offer F-15EX to India – Reuters</p>	<p>Biden re-examining US arms sales to Saudi Arabia, UAE – Wall Street Journal</p> <p>The Biden administration has imposed a temporary freeze on U.S. arms sales to Saudi Arabia and is scrutinizing purchases by the United Arab Emirates as it reviews billions of dollars in weapons transactions approved by former President Donald Trump, according to U.S. officials. The review, the officials said, includes the sale of precision-guided munitions to Riyadh, as well as top-line F-35 fighters to Abu Dhabi, a deal that Washington approved as part of the Abraham Accords, in which the Emirates established diplomatic relations with Israel.</p> <p>Chinese warplanes simulated attacking US carrier near Taiwan – Financial Times</p> <p>Australian military to continue patrolling South China Sea as Beijing warns Taiwan independence ‘means war’ – The Guardian</p> <p>Australia invests in advanced maritime weapons, minehunters – Defense News</p>	<p>How China’s defence law changes pave the way for greater global military influence – South China Morning Post</p> <p>On January 1, an amended National Defence Law came into effect after having been approved by the National People’s Congress Standing Committee. The seemingly technical, legalistic change would normally be unremarkable, but the amendments that were included could have profound effects on China’s legal standing and willingness to deploy its military overseas. By providing legal support for China’s future overseas adventurism, the law both underlines Beijing’s intent to be a more activist military power and expands the reasons it might project its power overseas. As such, the little-reported amended law might be the most significant event in global politics for years.</p> <p>Japan’s space defence policy charts its own course – East Asia Forum</p> <p>UK, South Korea deepen defence ties – Janes</p> <p>Indonesia seeks stronger defence posture, geopolitical leverage – The Star</p>
Eastern Europe	Middle East	Western Europe & The Nordics
<p>Getting Back on Track in Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans – Carnegie Europe</p> <p>The United States and Eastern Europe have a history of cooperation which dates back to the end of the Cold War. The transatlantic partners have collaborated by extending institutions and alliances to embrace newly sovereign countries, pursuing diplomatic and military engagement to prevent and end conflict, and providing financial support for Euro-Atlantic integration. After a challenging four-year interlude, the election of Joe Biden as U.S. president offers the Europeans and Americans an opportunity to restore their cooperation.</p> <p>Turkey, Europe, and the Eastern Mediterranean: Charting a way out of the current deadlock – Brookings</p> <p>Washington should encourage Ukraine to opt for greater economic freedom – The Heritage Foundation</p> <p>Under Biden, Balkans to remain flashpoint in US-Russia relations – Balkans Insight</p> <p>The impossible statement: how the Belarus face-off could go on and on – European Council on Foreign Relations</p> <p>Corruption Perception Index 2020: Eastern Europe – Transparency International</p>	<p>Iraqi premier says top Islamic State figure killed by security forces – The Times of Israel</p> <p>Iraq’s premier announced that the military had killed a man identified as the top Islamic State group figure in the country, a week after an IS attack in Baghdad killed more than 30 people. Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhemi said “wali” (governor Abu Yasser al-Issawi) was killed in an “intelligence-led operation” by Iraqi security forces. Issawi was killed on Wednesday in a remote swathe to the west of Iraq’s northern Kirkuk province in an operation backed by the US-led coalition.</p> <p>UAE responds to Biden administration's freeze of F-35 deal - Middle East Monitor</p> <p>UK bans UAE flights, closing world’s busiest international route - Al Jazeera</p> <p>Iran says U.S., not Tehran, should act first to resolve nuclear deal row - Reuters</p> <p>Saudi crown prince unveils plan to make Riyadh one of world’s 10 largest city economies - Arab News</p> <p>Lebanese central bank governor charged with dereliction of duty - Al Jazeera</p>	<p>Rheinmetall, MBDA building high-energy lasers for Germany’s Navy – DefenseNews</p> <p>Rheinmetall and MBDA Deutschland have officially been tasked to build, test and field a high-energy laser weapon system for the German Navy over the next year. The consortium, dubbed ARGE, was awarded a contract “in the low double-digit million euro range” by Berlin’s military procurement office, the Federal Office for Bundeswehr Equipment, Information Technology and In-Service Support (BAAINBw). Work will be conducted through the end of 2021, with trials scheduled for 2022 aboard the Navy frigate Sachsen, per a joint press announcement released Thursday.</p> <p>New European Parliament report calls for hemming in use of military AI on battlefield – Janes</p> <p>Greece and France ink \$3 billion contract for Rafale fighter jets – Defense News</p> <p>Norway Cancels Arctic Manoeuvres With NATO Allies Over Virus Fears – Defense Post</p> <p>Saab signs two contracts for next generation of surface ships and corvettes for Swedish Navy – Navy Recognition</p>

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