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CHINA: Trade Disputes May Force Canberra into Negotiations

Summary: Canberra's reliance on Beijing's economic relationship might influence Canberra to negotiate in Beijing's favor.

Development: On 14 October, China's ambassador to Australia, Xiao Chan, requested Canberra for quiet diplomacy to mend Canberra's conflicts with Beijing, according to *SBSNews*. Beijing's current trade sanctions on Australian exports, worth \$20 billion, leave Canberra and Beijing in an unsteady partnership. Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia Penny Wong and her counterpart Wang Yi met in September to discuss the sanctions, according to *Reuters*. Xiao believes ending the trade feud would help Canberra's economy regain balance, according to *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

Analysis: Beijing could persuade negotiations by offering Canberra economic stability if trade disputes continue. If Canberra frustrates Beijing further with public statements on diplomatic issues, then Beijing will likely enact additional sanctions. China remains the leading trading partner of Australia, and further sanctions could steer the economy toward a recession. Beijing could use this leverage against Canberra to gain power over bilateral ties. Beijing's global influence could increase with bilateral relations in its favor.

[Lauren Estrada]

RUSSIA: Plans to Mass Produce Drones Likely Redirects Focus to the Skies

Summary: Moscow announced possible plans for the mass production of drones. This action will likely focus the Ukraine conflict toward the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and air defense systems.

Development: On 14 October, the Deputy Chairman of the Russian Security Council Dmitry Medvedev announced Moscow's intent to expansively produce unmanned aerial vehicles, according to *TASS*. The announcement follows the Russian Defense Ministry's motion to sign contracts for acquiring drones at the Army-2022 Forum in August, according to *TASS*. An attack by Moscow on 10 October utilized 24 drones, according to *The New York Times*. Drone nest maker Hive plans to invest more than \$1.8 million and make 100 drones each month by year-end, according to *The Moscow Times*. Kyiv seeks to destroy bases housing Tehran-made drones that Moscow used to attack infrastructure in Ukraine, according to *Defense News*. London and Paris stated both would supply air defense systems to Kyiv, according to *Euronews*.

Analysis: Moscow will likely focus conflict in Ukraine towards UAVs and air defense systems. The Russian Defense Ministry will likely make UAVs a critical component of its military efforts by striking critical ground targets behind enemy lines. Moscow's reliance on drones may shift away from foreign UAV producers. Kyiv will almost certainly adjust battlefield tactics to destroy UAV bases to prevent future mass drone attacks.

[Markus Weinzinger]

[AUSTRALIA: Data Laws Likely to Change Following Multiple Data Breaches](#)

Summary: Canberra will likely review and change data retention laws following the Medibank data breach as customer anxieties surrounding data retention increase from the rise in cyber-attacks on Australian corporations.

Development: On 13 October, an unknown attacker breached the network of the Australian insurance company Medibank. Following this intrusion, Medibank shut down many customer services to reduce the risk of data loss. Medibank reports that all customer data remains safe and that it will take services offline for the following days to investigate the network intrusion and to ensure no remaining threats exist. The attacks also breached telecommunication corporations Optus and Singtel, resulting in millions of user data at risk. As a result of frequent attacks, chief executive officer of Telstra Corp Vicki Bradley called for a review of data retention laws to protect Australian consumers.

Analysis: Following multiple data breaches, Canberra will likely review and change laws regarding data protection. Medibank's customers will likely express concern and anxiety over the breach of their private data following attacks on Optus and Singtel.

[Hayden Sapp]

RUSSIA: Cyber Attacks Likely to Escalate as Kyiv Receives Ongoing Aid

Summary: The increasing aid and weapon systems Kyiv continues to receive from its allies may increase the rate of attacks from cyber threat organizations supporting Moscow. This would likely add to tensions over Moscow's nuclear threat.

Development: On 12 October, during the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Ministers of Defense meeting, Kyiv's Western allies pledged their continued support and promised to send new weapon systems. The support of its allies continues to raise tensions between Moscow and NATO, ultimately escalating to nuclear threats made by Russian President Vladimir Putin. In response to the NATO summit, Killnet, a known Russian-aligned cybercrime organization, used distributed denial of service attacks on Western airports. Killnet claims responsibility for previous attacks on critical infrastructure and financial institutions against Kyiv and its allies, according to the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency.

Analysis: Cyberattacks from both Russia-aligned and state-sponsored cyber threat organizations will likely increase due to growing support of Kyiv from its allies. Moscow may avoid escalating toward a nuclear conflict. Instead, it may continue cyberattacks against Kyiv and its allies' key infrastructure using state-sponsored organizations. These state-sponsored agencies will likely monitor the NATO nuclear deterrence exercise and attempt to exploit any vulnerabilities. Russian-aligned cybercriminal organizations, along with Killnet, would likely retaliate against any country supporting Kyiv. These attacks may test boundaries between Moscow and NATO without escalating to war.

[Jerome Lacaden]

RUSSIA: Kidnapping of Zaporizhzhia Deputy Likely Demonstrates Power Over Ukraine

Summary: The kidnapping of deputy head of the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant Valeriy Martynyuk by Russian soldiers will likely cause increased Russian patrols, deterrence of Ukrainian troops, and increased influence of Russian troops within Ukraine.

Development: On 11 October, Russian forces kidnapped Martynyuk, according to *Reuters*. Earlier last week, Moscow announced its plan to take over the power plant that created much controversy, causing Russia to become more upset with the power plant, according to *U.S. News*. Moscow wants to force Ukrainian employees to work for its nuclear agency called Rosatom, according to AXIOS. On 1 October, Moscow attempted to show its power over Kyiv by having Russian forces kidnap the previous Director of the power plant, Ihor Murashov and releasing him several days later. During Murashov's capture, authorities announced Russian forces pressured Murashov to lie in a tape later broadcasted throughout Russia to help gain support for Moscow's actions and lift morale, according to *CBS News*.

Analysis: Moscow's kidnapping of Martynyuk will likely lead to Moscow having an advantage over Ukraine in the upcoming weeks of the war. Recently, Moscow has exhibited coerced power over Kyiv, likely allowing Moscow to have an advantage over Ukrainian people and possibly start to turn the war in their favor. By kidnapping the two deputies, Moscow probably seeks to take over Ukrainian power supply and gaining support from back home. Should Moscow keep infiltrating Ukrainian establishments and assets, it could possibly morally and physically deter Ukrainian forces from gaining back the land it once controlled.

[William Wallace]

GUYANA: Georgetown Likely to Possess Upper Hand in Oil Deal Negotiations

Summary: Georgetown's oil negotiating power strengthened due to international oil production cuts, likely producing greater profit margins and weakening other international oil companies' plans.

Development: On 11 October, Minister of State for Energy Affairs of the State of Qatar Saad Bin Sherida Al-Kaabi, expressing interest and support, met with the President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana His Excellency Dr. Mohammed Irfaan Ali in Georgetown, according to international media reports. Georgetown's auctions of the oil blocks and growing costs of Exxon's proposed pipeline bear increased pressures from engineers and leading opposition leader Aubrey Norton in re-negotiating Georgetown's contract from 2016 with Exxon, according to *Kaieteur News*. Recent Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) oil production cuts and 14 bids from 10 countries for marketing Guyanese oil demonstrate Georgetown's upper hand, according to *Stabroek News*.

Analysis: With Al-Kaabi's clear intentions in acquiring additional oil blocks and interest in supporting infrastructure and food sectors, the upcoming bidding will almost certainly contain serious competition. OPEC's decision in reducing oil production will likely lure additional bidding companies to the international stage for marketing Guyanese oil and purchasing oil blocks offshore. Increased pressure from Norton and increased costs for Exxon's pipeline plans will likely bring substantial contract changes in Georgetown's favor. Doha will probably receive a better deal in bidding than other companies because of recently strengthened relations.

[Julian Romano]

ROMANIA: Failing Relations With Moscow Likely to Result in a Diplomatic War

Summary: Bucharest and Moscow's diplomatic tensions will likely rise with the expulsion of state diplomats and Bucharest banning Russian software and civilians.

Development: On 11 October, Moscow launched missiles into the Ukrainian city of Kyiv, landing less than 100 km from Bucharest's airspace and near Moldovan industrial sites. Chişinău requested that Moscow give an explanation and halt the bombing of a neighboring country. The Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in defense of Moscow's previous actions, declared Moscow's diplomat persona non grata. Moscow later expelled Bucharest's diplomat and accused Bucharest of assisting Kyiv by secretly shipping weapons. Bucharest's safety protocols continued by banning Russian tourists, journalists, and antivirus. Bucharest also urged citizens in Russia to leave amidst the military mobilization and to register their presence while condemning Moscow's actions.

Analysis: A diplomatic war between Bucharest and Moscow will likely occur due to failing relations. The missile launches into Kyiv will most likely result in increased involvement of neighboring countries in the Russia-Ukraine war. Bucharest will likely perform a call to action for further assistance as the war affects several surrounding countries.

[Jake S. Solomovici]

CHINA: Video of Missile Tests Likely a Preventative Measure Against Missile Strikes

Summary: The video release of the missile interception test most likely shows Beijing's intent to deter preemptive missile strikes by showing off military capabilities, while also increasing public faith in the military.

Development: On 8 October, a state-run social media account affiliated with China's Ministry of National Defense released a video of a successful Inter Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) interception by China's mid-course missile interception system. The 23-second-long video lacks a date and time for when the missile test originally took place, but Beijing reported on 20 June that it conducted a successful mid-course missile interception test, according to *CNN*. The videos emerged only days before Beijing's major Communist Party gathering. Beijing conducted similar tests in 2010, 2013, 2014, 2018, and 2021 to demonstrate the reliability of the country's anti-ballistic missile umbrella, according to *EurAsian Times*.

Analysis: Beijing's intentions behind the released video will most likely work as a deterrent to any potential missile strikes against the country. The release of the video likely increased the Chinese citizen's confidence in its military's ability to defend the nation. The test will likely appear as a show of aggression to opposing Pacific actors.

[Bryan Dean]

SYRIA: Assassination of Activist Likely Carried Out by Turkish-Backed Forces

Summary: The assassination of a vocal activist in Turkish-occupied territory probably reflects an attempt by the Syrian National Army (SNA) to silence opposing views and control the citizens of occupied territory.

Development: On 7 October, unknown assailants assassinated Muhammad Abdul Latif in the town of Al-Bab outside of Aleppo. The town in the Idlib province remains under the control of the al-Hamza division of the SNA, a Turkish-backed militia comprised of anti-Assad rebels. The group faces heavy scrutiny from locals who question Ankara's motives to govern the province, according to *The Middle East Eye*. Latif, a known activist against SNA occupation and the Assad Government, organized demonstrations to highlight the corruption and malfeasance of both Ankara and Damascus. Regarded as the voice of reason by citizens who disagree with Ankara's involvement in the Civil War, Latif invigorated citizens to challenge the SNA's authority. Many locals believe the SNA carried out the assassination, sparking a city-wide strike of civil disobedience calling for the SNA to take responsibility for the killing, according to *Tasnim News*.

Analysis: The SNA likely carried out the assassination of Latif to deprive the populace of a figurehead of the opposition to its occupation. The SNA commanders, likely threatened by Latif's rhetoric, feared that if left unchecked, Latif could cause an uprising large enough to expel them from Idlib. The SNA likely expected the assassination to cause tension but may not have expected to make Latif a martyr for his cause. The assassination will likely have the opposite effect and increase dissent for Ankara and its militias in Northeastern Syria.

[Tim Sharpe]

CYPRUS: Deployment of Turkish Combat Drones Likely a Precursor to Arms Race

Summary: The Turkish military buildup in Northern Cyprus will probably instigate an arms race between the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) and the Republic of Cyprus (ROC), likely worsening the already fragile diplomatic situation on the island.

Development: On 7 October, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced the deployment of combat drones to the TRNC. This comes in response to Washington's recent removal of an arms embargo restricting the ROC from purchasing U.S.-made military equipment, according to *KNEWS*. This new development in Turkish/Cypriot relations resulted from decades of tension dating back to at least 1963, when the United Nations sent peacekeeping troops to the island. Shortly afterward, the Turks captured Northern Cyprus. The Green Line buffer zone now divides the TRNC and the ROC. "Turkey... vowed to continue taking 'all necessary steps to ensure the security of Turkish Cypriot people,'" according to *Daily Sabah*.

Analysis: Ankara's deployment of strike drones likely serves as the first step in an arms race chain reaction between the TRNC and the ROC. Lefkosía will almost certainly respond to this display of force by increasing its own military strength. Cypriot troop numbers guarding the buffer zone will probably increase, which will most likely result in an equal or even greater increase of Turkish personnel. Lefkosía will likely take advantage of the rescinded arms embargo as soon as possible to augment its resources. In response, Ankara and Nicosia will almost certainly increase the military strength of the TRNC. This anticipated arms race may lead to a heavily armed, combat-ready standoff as both the ROC and the TRNC amass troops and weapons, separated only by the Green Line buffer zone.

[Emily Tull]

About GSIS

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's (ERAU) Bachelor of Science in Global Security & Intelligence Studies (GSIS) degree program at our Prescott Campus blends both academic and professional studies to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to become future leaders in intelligence, security, and law enforcement. The program provides students with a sound foundation in the liberal arts, including international relations, foreign languages and cultures, international law, foreign policy, political and military history, and other essential topics.

About EE

Eagle Eye Intelligence (EE) is an intelligence and research organization led by the students of the GSIS program at ERAU in Prescott, Arizona.

Dr. Philip E. Jones founded EE and Embry-Riddle's GSIS program in 2002, following a career with the Central Intelligence Agency and consulting work in international development and global security. Currently, Professor Dale R. Avery, a former career intelligence analyst, serves as EE's faculty advisor.

EE strives to provide actionable intelligence and analysis to its customers during the academic year. We are driven by a number of goals – continuous development, nonpartisanship, interdisciplinary studies, global awareness, and professionalism.

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Savannah Gallop, a junior in the GSIS program, currently serves as EE's Editor in Chief. For questions or comments, contact the team at editorsee@gmail.com or Professor Avery at 928.777.4708. If you use material from this publication, you should attribute: Eagle Eye Intelligence Edition 414, a publication created by students at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona.



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