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In This Issue

ISRAEL: Airstrikes on Aleppo Airport Likely Targeted at Tehran’s Operations	1
TAIWAN: Opposition Factions Likely to Cooperate for Election Despite	2
Disagreements	
ECUADOR: New President Will Likely Struggle to Cease Drug-Related	3
Violence	
JAPAN: Tokyo’s Unification Church May Lose Status as Religious	4
Organization	
RUSSIA: Kyiv’s Newly Acquired Missiles Will Likely Slow Advance on	5
Ukraine	
NORTH KOREA: Kimusky Threat Actors Likely to Increase Attacks on Foreign	6
Targets	
CHINA: Russian President Vladimir Putin’s Visit Likely to Strengthen Economic	7
Ties	
RUSSIA: China Likely to Aid Moscow in War with Ukraine as Relations	8
Strengthen	
ISRAEL: Conflict with Hamas Will Likely Lead to a Regional War	9

ISRAEL: Airstrikes on Aleppo Airport Likely Targeted at Tehran's Operations

Summary: Jerusalem conducted an airstrike on Aleppo International Airport, resulting in a shutdown and five injuries. The attack will probably hinder Iranian operations and warn Iran of consequences if support for Syria continues.

Development: On 14 October, Jerusalem launched an airstrike that hit and damaged Aleppo International Airport in Damascus, according to *Times of Israel*. The strike damaged the runway and resulted in a shutdown of the airport and five people injured, according to The New Arab. The strike came after a similar act on 12 October that damaged Aleppo and Damascus International Airports, resulting in a shutdown of both, according to *Times of Israel*. Both airports are in Damascus-controlled territory, backed by Tehran. Jerusalem previously stated that it would not allow the expansion of Tehran's forces in Syria, according to Rudaw.

Analysis: Jerusalem likely conducted the airstrike to hinder Tehran's support of Damascus. Jerusalem probably expected the closure of Damascus-controlled airports to slow Damascus's and Tehran's military operations, which likely gives Jerusalem an advantage over its enemies Tehran and Damascus. Jerusalem most likely used the strikes to signal to Tehran its intolerance for further support to Damascus. If Tehran and Damascus continue operations, the two can expect further attacks from Jerusalem. The closure of the airport may very likely affect the supply of materials for Damascus, as well as civilian travel.

[Linnea Carlsson]

TAIWAN: Opposition Factions Likely to Cooperate for Election Despite Disagreements

Summary: Although two Taiwanese political parties failed to agree to a meeting to discuss cooperation against the popular party, they will likely submit a joint presidential ticket for the upcoming election.

Development: On 14 October, the Kuomintang (KMT) and Taiwan's People's Party (TPP) met to discuss a joint ticket to beat the Democratic Progressive Party's (DPP) candidate who leads polls for the presidential election, according to *South China Morning Post*. Although the two parties disagreed on determining their joint candidate, the KMT hinted at a combination of their methods, according to Taiwan News. At a political forum on 18 October, TPP candidate Ko Wen-je said that the two parties could collaborate on the legislative rather than the presidential election. Meanwhile, KMT candidate Hou Yu-ih said he felt very optimistic about a joint presidential ticket, according to Focus Taiwan. Although the TPP strongly disagrees with the KMT's proposed open primary, it also advocates for a government that represents all citizens, including KMT supporters, according to Focus Taiwan. A majority of Taiwanese voters take a pragmatic view of politics, with around 30% now non-partisan or undecided, according to *The Diplomat*.

Analysis: The KMT and the TPP likely will file a joint presidential ticket to surpass the DPP, despite surface-level disagreements over how to do so. The parties most likely will agree on a polling method and proceed to determine their joint candidate and running mate. The KMT will probably give in to more demands and has greater enthusiasm about cooperation than the TPP. A joint ticket filing probably will lead to roughly even chances for them to secure the nomination.

[Brandon Chua]

ECUADOR: New President Will Likely Struggle to Cease Drug-Related Violence

Summary: Ecuadorans elected Daniel Noboa as president until May 2025. He plans to restore harmony in Ecuador but may experience challenges due to the rapid rise of drug-related brutality.

Development: On 15 October, Daniel Noboa won the Ecuadorian presidential election and now holds the title of youngest president-elect in the country, according to Barron's. Mexican and Colombian cartels established roots in Ecuador, leading to a surge in violence. The cartels' collaboration with local criminal gangs also led to an increase in cocaine trafficking, according to the Associated Press. The murder rate quadrupled within the past four years, with at least 460 inmates killed in prisons due to gang fights. Drug criminals dangle corpses off bridges and explode car bombs near police stations to show power over other gangs. Due to the uprise in drug-related violence, Noboa plans to restore peace to Ecuadoran families in his 18-month term by creating a separate judicial system for more serious crimes and militarizing borders with Colombia and Peru, according to Barron's. He promises he maintains a "firm hand" when fighting against drug gangs, despite having more experience in business than politics, according to *The Latin Times*.

Analysis: The extreme rise of drug-related brutality in Ecuador means Noboa will likely have a difficult time returning the country to a peaceful demeanor. With multiple gangs and drug criminals gaining power, creating conflict, and increasing cocaine trafficking, he will probably struggle to regain control over the country within his short term. His plan to create different judicial systems and militarize multiple borders will likely require more time and experience than he currently upholds.

[Isabel Marley]

JAPAN: Tokyo's Unification Church May Lose Status as Religious Organization

Summary: The Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, commonly called the Unification Church, will most likely lose the privileges of a religious organization, even though the church claims of no wrongdoings.

Development: On 16 October, Tokyo's government cast a vote concerning the Family Federation for World Peace and the Unification church's possible end to their religious organization. Losing its status as a religious organization would mean that the Unification Church would lose its tax exemptions and legal protections. One of the reasons for the vote resulted from the link between the church and the assassination of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who accomplished the title of longest-serving minister. Not only did the church manipulate its members into giving large amounts of money, but it also bankrupted the minister, according to *The New York Times*. The government filed 34,818 court cases, costing the church \$856 million. Meanwhile, the church continues to deny any wrongdoing and promises to stop any excessive donations from now on, according to *The Guardian*.

Analysis: Tokyo's Family Federation for World Peace and Unification will most likely lose its ability to practice. The church may face additional lawsuits from manipulated victims on top of the amount the church owes from previous lawsuits. Tokyo's vote could have lasting results, such as the members of the organization lacking a church building to worship in. Furthermore, those issues can cause a decrease in membership since this will likely hurt the church's public image. However, the church could continue as a non-religious organization where members can practice their beliefs. On the downside, the organization most likely will not enjoy the same protection and privileges as a religious organization.

[Victoria Hinesley]

RUSSIA: Kyiv's Newly Acquired Missiles Will Likely Slow Advance on Ukraine

Summary: Kyiv's use of American Army Tactical Missile Systems (ATACMS) against Russian forces will likely undermine Moscow's recent offensive operations. Kyiv recently implemented the missiles in a strike against Russian airfields, likely crippling their air force in the region.

Development: On 17 October, Kyiv announced the first use of ATACMS in its war with Russia. Kyiv utilized the missiles in its strikes on Russian-controlled airfields in Berdyansk and Luhansk, according to *Al Jazeera*. The ATACMS produce a range of 186 miles, according to Lockheed Martin. They hold the longest range out of all American missiles given to Kyiv and expand its military's capabilities, according to *The Washington Post*. The Center for Strategic and International Studies claims Kyiv's ATACMS can strike strategic targets inside the Russian border, such as headquarters, head military personnel, and intelligence centers. Kyiv killed 31 top Russian commanders throughout the war, many with long-range missile systems, according to Business Insider. The use of these new weapons comes in response to Moscow's renewed offensive tactics in Eastern Ukraine. Moscow will attempt its largest offensive since last winter, according to *The New York Times*.

Analysis: Kyiv's implementation of American ATACMS will likely slow Moscow's advancements into Eastern Ukraine. Kyiv will probably use the increased range of these missiles to target Russian fortifications and leadership in previously inaccessible places. Moscow's loss of leadership would likely disorganize their advance. Russian President Vladimir Putin would likely call for greater aid from Beijing and Pyongyang following another ineffective offensive.

[Michael Fritz]

NORTH KOREA: Kimusky Threat Actors Likely to Increase Attacks on Foreign Targets

Summary: Pyongyang-funded advanced persistent threats (APTs) likely will expand Kimusky attacks beyond Seoul. Kimusky hackers probably aim to exfiltrate sensitive data in both private and public sectors, likely escalating its focus to counterintelligence on a global scale.

Development: On 17 October, Seoul researchers from incident response contractor AnhLab suggested Pyongyang seeks to amplify its focus on the development of Kimusky, a well-funded APT. Kimusky attacks focused on research and energy agencies in its early years but have since expanded to highly specific spear-phishing attacks on national defense, diplomatic, and academic sectors, according to AnhLab. Furthermore, Kimusky aims to commit cyber espionage on behalf of President Kim Jong-Un's nation, according to DarkReading. Kimusky threat actors primarily gain malicious access through remote access trojans (RATs), according to CyberReason. RATs pose as legitimate software with backdoors that allow hackers to collect espionage over extended periods of time. According to *Cybersecurity Asean*. Kimusky strikes increased, with over 600 malicious command centers reported in 2022, up from roughly 100 in 2019. In addition, experts believe that Pyongyang's prolific updating of tools and tactics signifies an imminent expansion of Kimusky attacks beyond the Korean peninsula.

Analysis: Pyongyang will almost certainly continue to utilize Kimusky in cyber espionage, primarily due to its capacity for unpredictable and sophisticated attacks. While Kimusky threat actors occasionally target private sectors in various other countries, they likely aim to cripple specific government defense sectors. Kimusky's rapid proliferation probably signifies increased attack capabilities and threats to diplomatic and defense sectors outside of the Korean Peninsula.

[Ian Grahn]

CHINA: Russian President's Visit Likely to Strengthen Economic Ties

Summary: Russian President Vladimir Putin recently arrived in Beijing to attend Chinese President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) forum. Beijing will almost certainly strengthen economic ties with Moscow and grow its global economic influence.

Development: On 17 October, Putin arrived in Beijing to bolster the economic alliance between Moscow and Beijing by attending Xi's BRI forum. The BRI program encourages Chinese companies to build transportation, energy, and other infrastructure overseas funded by Chinese development bank loans, according to the Associated Press. A total of 147 countries, accounting for two-thirds of the world's population and 40 percent of global GDP have signed on to BRI projects, according to The Council on Foreign Relations.

Analysis: Putin's arrival in Beijing to attend Xi's tenth anniversary of the BRI forum, almost certainly solidified economic ties between Beijing and Moscow. Increasing economic pressure on Beijing from Western countries likely led to the reinforcement of an economic relationship with Moscow. Putin's visit will likely allow Beijing to expand its global influence on Moscow-funded foreign direct investments, further increasing the economic influence of Beijing over African and Southeast Asian countries.

[Jungsoo Noh]

RUSSIA: China Likely to Aid Moscow in War with Ukraine as Relations Strengthen

Summary: Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping reunited this week to discuss current issues. Recent developments between the two nations show Beijing will likely aid in the war on Ukraine.

Development: On 18 October, Putin and Xi met in Beijing for bilateral discussions. Xi said mutual political trust among the nations continued to deepen, according to Daily Mail. Putin claimed the increasing number of disputes and threats in the world would strengthen relations between Moscow and Beijing, according to NBC News. Putin stated in a press release before the bilateral meeting with Xi that they will stay in close foreign policy cooperation under the challenging current circumstances, according to CNBC. Putin and Xi met in Beijing a few weeks before Russia invaded Ukraine in February, reaching an agreement pledging a no-limits relationship, according to AP News.

Analysis: Beijing will likely contribute to Moscow with its influence in Ukraine, as their meeting enhanced connections regarding trust and foreign policy coordination. Having strong military, diplomatic, and economic ties, the two nations will likely work together in the future.

[Konnor Hopton]

ISRAEL: Conflict with Hamas Will Likely Lead to a Regional War

Summary: The increasing airstrikes and on-the-ground violence between Jerusalem and Hamas will likely lead to a larger war developing with Hezbollah.

Development: On 18 October, airstrikes launched on Al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza killed at least 500 people, according to *Al-Jazeera*. Airstrikes and violence between Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and Hamas escalated into violent cross-border attacks between Hezbollah and Israeli fighters. Along the Lebanese border, Hezbollah launched precision-guided missiles at Israeli troops, according to CNN. Hezbollah, funded by Tehran and supported by Damascus, believes that Jerusalem does not belong to the Israeli people. Beirut and the IDF last came into conflict 17 years ago, according to *Al-Jazeera*. The current 13-day war between the IDF and Hamas resulted in the loss of 3,500 Palestinians and 1,500 Israelis but continues to grow, according to *Al-Jazeera*. Recently, aid to Gaza remains difficult and safety continues to decrease as airstrikes target the strip, according to NBC News.

Analysis: Violence in Gaza will likely continue, causing an increase in fatalities of both Palestinians and Israelis. Increasing conflict along the Lebanese border will likely push Hezbollah to increase collaboration with Hamas against Jerusalem. War will almost certainly spread into the countries of Iran and Syria if Hezbollah joins Hamas.

[Michelle Malan]

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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Sebastien Bragg, 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 437, a publication created by students at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona.



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