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POLAND: Moscow Will Likely Continue Drone Incursions into Airspace

Summary: Moscow will likely continue to violate Polish airspace with drones as a test of security agreements between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members. Despite the drone operations, Moscow will almost certainly avoid another significant military operation.

Background: On 9 September, Polish officials reported that 19 drone-like objects breached Polish airspace near the Russian border. Polish military personnel, in coordination with NATO allies, shot down at least three of the drones, according to the BBC. Upon investigation of the debris, Polish authorities stated the drones did not carry weapons, according to *The Guardian*. Following the attack, Warsaw invoked Article Four of NATO, initiating coordination between NATO members to respond to Moscow's provocation. Moscow's ongoing military operation in Ukraine has heightened NATO's concerns of Russian territorial expansion and the threat of direct conflict, according to NATO. In recent months, Moscow deployed drones into Romanian and Lithuanian airspace on multiple independent operations and strikes targeting Ukrainian territory, receiving no direct NATO response, according to ABC News. The Russian military's ongoing operations in Ukraine have resulted in nearly 1 million casualties since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, according to CNN.

Analysis: Moscow will likely continue to test NATO coordination through drone incursions. Despite the Russian military's pressure on Polish airspace, Moscow will almost certainly not conduct a significant military operation targeting Polish territory, due to the high casualty rate recorded in Ukraine. Moscow's ongoing prioritization of attacks on Ukrainian targets will likely limit the scale of future drone operations into NATO countries. Warsaw will almost certainly continue to call on NATO support to mitigate drone incursions and prevent potential military operations.

[Michael Fritz]

KAZAKHSTAN: Likely Balancing Foreign Relations through Nuclear Ambitions

Summary: Astana is likely attempting to maintain strong, positive ties with a variety of major international powers, rather than become firmly allied with one power. This is demonstrated in, but not limited to, its nuclear plans, which involve Russian, Chinese, and German corporations.

Development: On 8 September, Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev expressed a desire to build two or three commercial nuclear reactors in a state of the nation address, as reported by NucNet. Russian state-owned nuclear corporation Rosatom is currently building Kazakhstan's first nuclear reactor, with initial site surveys underway. Moscow is also helping finance this reactor, with interstate loan negotiations ongoing and export agreements being used to purchase Russian equipment, according to the Times of Central Asia and Nuclear Engineering International. Kazakhstan has contracted China National Nuclear Corporation to build a second nuclear reactor and lead the construction of the third. On 9 September, the Kazakh Atomic Energy Association and German nuclear engineering company Nukem Technologies Engineering Services GmbH (NUKEM) signed a memorandum of understanding under which NUKEM will provide nuclear waste treatment and site remediation to the nuclear reactors once built.

Analysis: Astana is likely trying to maintain balanced foreign relations with a variety of major powers to gain economic benefits, as exemplified in its current nuclear plans. Astana has involved Moscow, Beijing, and the European Union in its plans for expanded nuclear energy, likely in an attempt to avoid becoming firmly allied to and reliant on one major power. Astana almost certainly seeks to avoid potential economic and political consequences associated with being allied to one power, such as reduced opportunity for trade with other countries and sanctions intended to harm an allied country. Kazakhstan likely will not limit this strategy to just the nuclear sector, likely using it in other economic spheres in the future.

[Christina Muchow]

NIGER: Strong GDP Growth Likely to Bolster Junta's Legitimacy

Summary: Extremely strong economic growth in Niger will likely bolster the ruling junta's legitimacy while leaving the economy vulnerable to energy fluctuations and persistent poverty.

Development: On 10 September, the World Bank projected Niger's GDP growth at 14.55% for 2025, citing the operationalization of the national oil pipeline to Benin and favorable agricultural output. In late 2024, the Economic Community of West African States eased the sanctions it imposed on Niger following the July 2023 coup, allowing oil revenues to flow again, according to Reuters. Analysts caution that high inflation, widespread poverty, and food insecurity persist and continue to affect large parts of the population, according to *Al Jazeera*. Outside observers argue that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank conditions restrict Niger's economic sovereignty, framing the institutions as obstacles to long-term sustainability, according to *Brasil de Fato*.

Analysis: Niger's economic expansion will likely enable the ruling junta to claim credit, strengthening regime stability in the short term. However, reliance on oil exports will likely expose Niger to volatility in global energy markets, while persistent poverty and food insecurity could fuel public discontent if revenues are not equitably distributed. Regionally, Niger's export corridor through Benin increases its leverage but creates a chokepoint, which is likely vulnerable to disruption. Internationally, Niger's reduced dependence on Western aid and growing ties with Russia and other non-Western partners will likely complicate IMF/World Bank engagement and reshape West Africa's economic alignments.

[Gavin Packard]

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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Christina Muchow, 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 476, a publication created by students at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona.



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