

The weekly briefing | 9 June 2014

Political and security risk updates

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Africa

Hundreds killed in village raids as Boko Haram tightens grip on northeast Nigeria

A coordinated attack by the US-designated terrorist organisation Boko Haram killed approximately 300 people in Borno state, Nigeria, on 3 June. Armed men dressed in military fatigues attacked the villages of Danjara, Agapalwa and Atagara in the local government area of Gwoza, targeting residents, setting fire to homes and forcing surviving villagers to flee into the Gwoza Hills and neighbouring Cameroon. The area remains under insurgent control despite a temporary withdrawal of rebel forces following retaliatory air strikes by the Nigerian military on 4 June. A further attack took place 104 kilometres northwest of Gwoza on 5 June in the town of Bardari, on the outskirts of Maiduguri, resulting in 45 fatalities.

Both the frequency and lethality of Boko Haram operations have increased dramatically over recent months, demonstrating the growing capacity of the insurgency to conduct armed operations in the northeast of Nigeria. Furthermore, President Goodluck Jonathan's reluctance to deploy ground forces against Boko Haram due to significant operational risks is symptomatic of the growing control Boko Haram holds over the remote northeast of the country. With raids conducted by the Nigerian military on several major newspaper distribution outlets in the capital city of Abuja on 7 June, it is also clear that the Nigerian government is scrambling to respond to growing internal criticism regarding the mismanagement of the conflict.



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The Boko Haram insurgency has generated an estimated 12,000 casualties since its formation by Mohammed Yusef in 2002. The Nigerian government is experiencing growing political pressure both at home and abroad due to a perceived inability to effectively suppress insurgent activities, despite increased support from several Western countries. With Boko Haram tightening its grip on northeast Nigeria, and following the highly salient international media coverage of the abduction of more than 200 schoolgirls by the group in April 2014, Jonathan is under increasing pressure to respond effectively against the growing and increasingly well organised insurgency.

Other developments

A United Nations report has disputed claims of genocide in the Central African Republic (CAR), instead listing evidence that both sides in the conflict have committed war crimes and crimes against humanity. The commission of inquiry's preliminary report, which emerged on 5 June, appears to contradict an earlier UN human rights report warning of ethnic cleansing occurring in the confrontation between the predominantly Christian anti-Balaka and Muslim Séléka armed groups. According to the latest report, the displacement of Muslim civilians should be treated as a humanitarian emergency, not as a question of ethnic cleansing. Neighbouring countries, especially Chad, have also come under increasing scrutiny for aiding the accused groups, raising concerns over the internationalisation of the sectarian conflict.

Malian authorities arrested a group accused of plotting against President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita on 4 June. The group is thought to have been led by Lieutenant Mohamed Ouattara, an army officer in an elite unit considered close to disposed leader Amadou Toumani Toure. Mali's army is dealing with declining popular support following an embarrassing defeat by Tuareg separatists in the rebel stronghold of Kidal last month, when UN and French peacekeepers refused to intervene. In a bid to consolidate the support of the Malian armed force, the Keita government announced the introduction of compulsory national service for men and women on 5 June.

More than 300 inmates escaped from Bukavu prison in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) on 5 June resulting in six reported fatalities and the recapture 35 escapees. With an estimated 1,500 prisoners in the prison at the time of the incident, it is possible that many more could have escaped. The inmates managed to open the prison doors after seizing weapons from the guards. Escapes are common in the DRC as prisons are often overcrowded and mismanaged.

On the radar

- **The UN Security Council is to receive a long-awaited briefing on Libya by Tarek Mitri**, head of the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), on 9 June, to be followed by consultations.
- **The UN stabilisation mission in Mali (MINUSMA) is due to publish its report** on 10 June.
- **The New Patriotic Party (NPP) plan to rally in Kusami, Ghana**, on 10 June against government policies.
- **US President Barack Obama is expected to announce the first US ambassador to Somalia**, to be based in Nairobi, Kenya, following two decades of civil war.
- **A UN report on strategy in the Sahel region is due to be published this week.**

Americas

Forty-fourth general assembly of the Organisation of American States reveals growing dissension

The 44th general assembly of the Organisation of American States (OAS) took place in Paraguay's capital, Asunción, from 3 to 5 June. The OAS is a regional organisation composed of 34 member states, which addresses matters of security, with its headquarters in Washington, United States. The general assembly drew to a close with the signing of the Asunción Declaration, a set of resolutions revolving around the issues of development and social inclusion. The declaration established a commitment to eradicate hunger and poverty, and combat inequalities, discrimination and social exclusion. It also includes resolutions aimed at improving equal access to health services, and promoting an inclusive and high-quality educational system. However, the OAS member states remain highly divided over the political crisis in Venezuela, the extent of the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (ICHR), and the proposed inclusion of Cuba within the organisation. Most of the disputes oppose US-led policy in Latin American states. In 2010, a group of South American leaders founded the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), which is often perceived as a counterbalance to the OAS.

Three major resolutions were approved during the OAS general assembly. Firstly, member states have agreed that Cuba will be allowed to participate in next year's Summit of the Americas, which is to take place in Panama. This represents an initial step in the admission of Cuba into the OAS, from which it was expelled in 1962 due to US pressure during the Cold War. Only at the 39th general assembly, in 2009, was the suspension revoked. Secondly, the organisation issued a joint-declaration regarding the Falklands issue. Spearheaded by Argentine Foreign Minister Héctor Timerman, and backed by Brazil, the declaration calls for a return to bilateral negotiations between Britain and Argentina. Historically, Argentina has used the OAS as a platform to raise territorial claims on the Falkland Islands. Thirdly, a resolution was approved for a superficial reform of the ICHR. The recent change strengthens the commission's capacity to hold sessions away from its headquarters in Washington. OAS Secretary General José Miguel Insulza rejected the original motion, from Ecuador, which demanded the ICHR headquarters be moved out of the United States. Countries such as Ecuador and Venezuela are regular targets of criticism from the ICHR, especially with regard to the issue of press freedom. As a result, both countries have sought to weaken the tribunal's prowess and make it subsidiary to national jurisdictions.

In recent years, the United States has become more relaxed with regards to its policies towards the Cuban government, which have traditionally sought to marginalise the communist country both economically and politically. However, it remains unlikely that Cuba will join the OAS in the near future, as the organisation's charter demands the democratic nature of all member states. Furthermore, as demonstrated by the case of the ICHR, the OAS has proven particularly reluctant to implement reforms that empower Latin American states at the expense of US interests and the institution's autonomy. Consequently, CELAC represents an increasingly potent counterbalance to the US-founded OAS.

Other developments

Colombia's incumbent president, Juan Manuel Santos, secured the support of the left-wing party ahead of the runoff vote on 15 June. Candidate Clara López of the left-wing Alternative Democratic Pole gave her support to Santos's candidacy on 4 June, after collecting 15.2% of the vote at the first round of the presidential election on 25 May. The announcement came one week after Santos's rival, Oscar Iván Zuluaga, formed an alliance with right-wing candidate Marta Lucía Ramírez of the Conservative Party. The Green Party headed by Enrique Peñalosa, which came fourth with 8.3% of the vote, has not yet expressed its preference for either candidate. The main challenge for the two contenders will be to garner support among the share of the population that did not vote in the first round of the elections.

Subway workers have launched an open-ended strike in São Paulo, Brazil's economic capital, days before the first World Cup match. On 4 June, the subway workers union declared an open-ended strike in order to demand a 12.2% wage hike. As a result, the transport system of the country's most populated city was plunged into disarray. Several clashes between protestors and security forces have also occurred. The São Paulo metro is the main link to the city's World Cup stadium, and the strike could force organisers to search for last-minute transportation alternatives for thousands of fans. On 9 June, a judge is expected to weigh the legality of the strike. The 2014 World Cup begins on 12 June in São Paulo.

Anti-government marches were staged in Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince, on 5 June. The demonstration gathered the support of an estimate of 5,000 people, and triggered several clashes with police forces, but no serious injuries were reported. The protestors demanded the resignation of President Michel Martelly, who they accuse of corruption and mismanagement of the country's economy. Martelly was elected in May 2011 with 68% of the vote and strong support among the youth electorate; however, anti-governmental protests have grown increasingly common in recent months amid criticism from the opposition regarding the legitimacy of the electoral system. In an attempt to diffuse the crisis, Martelly has met with several senators but failed to reach an agreement with the potential new leaders of the Provisional Electoral Council.

On the radar

- **FARC announced a unilateral ceasefire from 9 to 30 June** during Colombia's presidential election.
- **Fifth BRICS summit to take place in Fortaleza, Brazil,** on 15 July.
- **Further labour strikes expected in Brazil** ahead of the World cup.
- **Protests likely to intensify in Venezuela's main cities** amid the ongoing political crisis.
- **Members of the Patriotic Force for the Respect of the Constitution (FOPARC) and the Patriotic Movement of Democratic Opposition (MOPOD) plan to stage further anti-government demonstrations** on 10 June in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Asia and Pacific

Philippine intelligence suggests China has begun reclaiming contested land in South China Sea

On 7 June, photographic intelligence depicted a Chinese vessel using a backhoe to engage in 'earthmoving activities'. The action has been seen by Philippine officials as an act of reclamation. The Chinese ship has allegedly been gathering filling materials in contested reefs near the Spratly Islands in order to allow for the construction of airstrips on disputed islands. The vessel has also reportedly been seen harvesting endangered species, specifically giant clams. A spokesman from the Philippine defence department stated that the actions were troubling not only due to the current territorial dispute but also with regard to concerns over endangered species in the reefs.

In February, the Philippine government reported it had gathered similar intelligence that the Chinese were conducting excavations in order to reclaim territory on Gavin Reef and Calderon Reef. Philippine government officials have also alleged that China has reclaimed land on Malvar Reef and Mabini Reef. Earlier this week, an international tribunal, the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague (PCA), imposed a six-month deadline on Beijing to present its case. In March, the Philippines filed an international lawsuit against China, seeking the invalidation of China's 'Nine-Dash Line', a historical line of maritime demarcation derived from ancient Chinese maps. The Chinese foreign ministry's spokesman, Hong Lei, stated on 5 June that Beijing does not accept, and will not participate in, the Philippines's arbitration against China.

Recently, China has been increasingly embroiled in territorial disputes in the South and East China Seas. While Manila argues that China's Nine-Dash Line violates the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), China maintains that it discovered many of the contested islands and reefs over two millennia ago. Indeed, China's operation of an oil rig in waters disputed by Vietnam sparked anti-Chinese protests in Vietnam, which reportedly led to the deaths of several Chinese nationals last month. This incident illustrates the increasing risks associated with Beijing's assertions of sovereignty. At the same time, the international community has been particularly prudent over China's recent actions. The United States has reaffirmed its support for the Philippines and assured Japan that the US-Japan Defence Treaty includes protection of the Diaoyu (Senkaku) Islands. Additionally, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has recently moved to expand Tokyo's security role in the region. Thus, as the international community becomes more assertive against Beijing's actions and as China ignores established international norms, such as engagement with conflict-resolution mechanisms like the PCA, tensions are likely to intensify.

Other developments

The Nepalese army is expected to finalise a military assistance deal with India. At the 11th meeting of the Nepal-India Bilateral Consultative Group on Security Issues, the Indian and Nepalese foreign ministries are expected to sign an arms deal that is set to include the transfer of lethal weapons from India to Nepal. India has not made such an agreement with Nepal in nearly nine years. Last year, India began the limited supply of non-lethal supplies to Nepal, including armoured vehicles and heavy and light military transport vehicles. India had restricted military support to Nepal following former King Gyanendra Shah's crackdown on certain democratic freedoms in 2005. This year's deal is expected to include over 26,000 weapons, including rifles, landmines, detonators and other forms of explosives. The deliveries are expected to begin reaching Nepal within one week.

Indonesian officials order military and police forces to maintain neutrality in elections. On 6 June, Indonesian media reported that an individual purporting to be a military non-commissioned officer was attempting to persuade residents to vote for the former military commander, Prabowo Subianto, in a mainly Chinese and Christian community in Jakarta. Members of the police and military are prohibited from campaigning and voting in Indonesian elections. Friday's incident followed allegations that members of the military were coercing residents in central Jakarta to pledge their votes to Subianto. Additional reports have alleged that several political parties had approached members of the military to ask for their support in the upcoming election. Indonesia's presidential elections will be held on 9 July.

Nearly 2,000 people gathered in Singapore on 7 June to protest the management of Singapore's state-run pension system. There is widespread public discontent against the Central Provident Fund's (CPF) perceived inability to meet the needs of lower- and middle-income pensioners in Singapore. Recently, one protester, Roy Ngerng, alleged that Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong had misappropriated CPF funds. The prime minister has since launched a defamation suit against Ngerng. Prominent local author Catherine Lim published an open letter to Lee regarding the protests, citing these demonstrations as an indication that Singaporean society is troubled by a 'crisis of trust', wherein the people do not trust their government. The letter has garnered widespread attention online. The prime minister's office has stated that they intend to review the pension system in the near future.

On the radar

- **Officials in the Philippines are expected to arrest and try three top officials** on charges of corruption and embezzlement this week.
- **New Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Japan** in July.
- **Top officials from Border Guard Bangladesh, the country's border security bureau, will hold talks in Burma** this week.
- **South Korea and New Zealand will hold free trade discussions** next week.
- **Leaders of Thailand's Red Shirt movement have announced that they will temporarily end protest activity to reorganise.**

Europe

G7 leaders threaten Russia with additional sanctions following Brussels meeting

Following talks between G7 leaders on 4 and 5 June in Brussels, Belgium, the G7 issued a warning to Russia threatening further sectorial sanctions if the Kremlin continues to implement its current policies towards Ukraine. The G7 countries reaffirmed that their governments would not accept Russia's annexation of Crimea in March and called for Russia to engage with the new Ukrainian president, Petro Poroshenko, and to exert Moscow's influence to stop the flow of armed insurgents over the Russian border into eastern Ukraine. German Chancellor Angela Merkel said that the G7 leaders had unanimously agreed the course of action required to address the situation in Ukraine.

Echoing his Western partners' comments, US President Barack Obama criticised recent Russian actions as having further destabilised eastern Ukraine and raised questions regarding the legality of these actions. However, despite the stark warnings of further sanction impositions by G7 member states, Obama urged his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, to hold direct talks with Poroshenko on how to end the current crisis, asserting that if the Kremlin took appropriate action, the United States and other Western countries would be willing to rebuild their relations with Russia. In a positive shift towards political dialogue, Moscow announced on 5 June that the Russian ambassador to Ukraine would return to his post and attended Poroshenko's inauguration. Then on 6 June, Poroshenko and Putin met for the first time when world leaders gathered to mark the seventieth anniversary of the D-Day landings.

It is clear that by increasing the economic costs of continued Russian interference in eastern Ukraine, G7 member states aim to portray a political resolution as a significantly more attractive option for the Russian Federation. In conjunction with the threat of wide-ranging sanctions, the United States, in particular, has pledged \$5 million in military aid to Kiev, in addition to the \$18 million in general aid offered in early March, in order to further bolster the physical cost of Russian interference in eastern Ukraine. The imposition of these wider-ranging sanctions will ultimately depend on Moscow's willingness to engage in meaningful dialogue with Kiev; however, given the mounting costs of non-cooperation a political solution to the Ukrainian crisis is more likely.

Other developments

Petro Poroshenko was inaugurated as president of Ukraine on 7 June. Earlier, during a visit to Germany on 5 June, Poroshenko announced that Kiev's priorities were fighting corruption, judicial reforms and decentralisation of the country's governance in line with the Polish model of devolution. At the joint press conference, the German Chancellor Angela Merkel pledged to support Ukraine's future economic development and to build peaceful and safe living conditions for all Ukrainian people.

On 5 June, the Azerbaijani state oil company, Socar, resumed gas supplies to Russia. Socar's CEO, Rovnag Abdullayev, announced that the daily flow of gas from Azerbaijan to Russia would fluctuate between 2 to 2.5 million cubic metres. The Russia gas company Gazprom signed a supplying agreement with Socar in October 2009, and extended the deal to a further five years in 2012. However, Azerbaijan halted gas supplies to Russia on 13 January 2014 due to technical reasons. Recently, Azerbaijan has sought to diversify the countries it exports to, with the announcement of plans for a new Trans-Adriatic Pipeline in collaboration with Albania. However, the country still depends on Russia as its main importer.

On 4 June, the European Commission announced that it has recommended that Albania be granted candidate status for the European Union. The Commission said that the European Union recognised the progress made by the country, and encouraged Albania to persevere with further reforms. It is expected that European members will vote on the candidate status by the end of June. Albania applied for the candidate status in 2009; however, the European Union had previously been unwilling to move forward with the application due to the country's tense political situation and the lack of reforms regarding the high levels of corruption and crime and the comparatively weak judicial system.

On the radar

- **European Union-League of Arab States ministerial meeting to be held in Athens, Greece,** on 10-11 June.
- **European Parliament budget committee meeting to discuss the draft European Union budget** to be presented on 11 June.
- **Prince Felipe of Spain will be crowned king** on 18 June.
- **The European Dialogue on Internet Governance will be held in Strasbourg, France,** on 12 June, discussing EU citizens' rights to privacy and expression.

Middle East

Violence flares in Houthi rebellion in northern Yemen

At least 120 people were killed on 2 June in fighting between Shia Houthi rebels and government forces in northern Omran province, Yemen. The deputy governor of Omran province, Ahmed al-Bakry, said that 100 rebels and 20 soldiers had been killed during fighting and air strikes on Houthi positions. It is thought that the clashes erupted after military officials and members of the Sunni Al-Islah party attempted to remove Shia Houthi rebels from a strategic position near the provincial capital of Omran, 28 miles northwest of the capital, Sanaa. Rebel fighters and tribal militia attacked telecommunications and a prison and set up roadblocks in retaliation. The Yemeni army carried out airstrikes that killed at least 15 fighters on 3 June. Both Houthi rebels and government forces agreed on a ceasefire on 4 June.

The Yemeni government has been fighting Houthi rebels sporadically since 2004. However, mass protests in 2011 have left Yemen in turmoil, with the military struggling to restore nationwide control as it battles against al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), separatists in the south and the Houthi rebellion in the north. The Houthi are Shia Zaidi, a branch of the Shia Imamiya of Iran. They have flourished following the removal of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh – under whom they were marginalised. They have increased their presence in the north of the country into areas closer to Sanaa in recent months, launching operations against government allied Sunni tribesmen. This coincides with the proposal made earlier this year to split Yemen into six autonomous regions.

Although the Houthi rebels have agreed a ceasefire with government forces, it is unlikely to last in the medium term. The powerful militias have been attempting to capture the Omran provincial capital for two months in order to increase their influence in the north ahead of elections next year. The Yemeni government accuses the Houthi of being backed by Iran. If the government fails to halt the Houthi expansion, confrontation between AQAP and Houthi fighters remains a strong possibility. This would further destabilise the country and reduce the ability of the government to contain any sectarian clashes.

Other developments

Egypt's electoral commission confirmed on 3 June that former army chief Abdel Fattah al-Sisi won 96.91% of the votes in the presidential election. The turnout was 47% of the country's 54 million voters, raising doubts regarding al-Sisi's ability to maintain popularity while tackling the faltering economy, high poverty levels, high unemployment and rampant corruption in order to prevent any further political crises. Al-Sisi played a key role in toppling the country's first democratically-elected president, Mohammed Morsi, last year. He introduced laws that severely restricted protests and cracked-down on supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood.

On 2 June, Fatah and Hamas announced a new government of unity that will prepare the Palestinians for elections for a new president and parliament. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas swore in the cabinet intended to reunite the West Bank and Gaza Strip following years of political and social division. Despite Israeli objections and the presence of Hamas, Washington has shown a willingness to work with the new unity government. Diplomatic tensions between the United States and Israel will likely become more stretched.

Syria's parliamentary speaker, Mohammed al-Laham, announced on 4 June that President Bashar al-Assad won the country's presidential election after securing 88.7% of the votes. Turnout was placed at 73.47% but only took place in government-controlled areas. Rebel-controlled areas in the north and the east were not included in the election. The presence of two other candidates in the election marks the first time that anybody outside of the Assad family has been allowed to take part in the process.

On the radar

- **Afghanistan's run off presidential election will take place on 14 June.**
- **Lebanon, without a president since 25 May, is expected to overcome political divisions to elect a new president in the coming weeks.**
- **Supporters of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood face more mass trials this week.**

Polar regions

Russia's Rosneft promises \$400 billion of Arctic investments

Igor Sechin, the head of majority-state-owned Russian oil major Rosneft, has promised that his company will invest \$400 billion into energy-sector developments for ongoing and proposed projects on Russia's Arctic shelf. The pledge came on 4 June during a meeting of the Commission for Questions of Strategy for the Development of the Fuel-Energy Complex and Ecological Protection, a top-level meeting bringing together public and private stakeholders in Russia's vast energy industry. As well as the leaders from both state and privately-owned energy companies, Russian President Vladimir Putin was in attendance.

The pledge of \$400 billion of investments, to be made over a 20-year period, will be received in very different ways by various stakeholders. On the one hand, the promised investments will be welcome news for the shareholders of both Russian companies and the international partners they rely on for crucial technology transfers with relevant interests in Arctic oil and gas projects. On the other hand, environmental NGOs, such as Greenpeace, who last week staged two major protest actions against drilling on the Arctic shelf, will view such a dedication to further risky development as a considerable threat to their ecological goals in the region. Greenpeace will take little comfort from Putin's assurances on 5 June that development in the Arctic will be 'transparent' and proceed with close participation from NGOs; in a thinly veiled reference to Greenpeace, the Russian president's statement was qualified by a proviso that NGOs that 'use environmental problems only for speculation' will not be invited to cooperate.

Nevertheless, neither those who would welcome nor those who would decry this massive investment currently have much immediate ground for either celebration or concern. The 4 June meeting was dominated overwhelmingly by discussions concerning the need to develop infrastructure in Russia's Far East, and the Arctic was mentioned explicitly only two times in the whole meeting. Indeed, the focus on the east of the country to the exclusion of all else is likely to continue for many years to come, as private and state companies from across the gamut of oil and gas exploration, extraction, refining and transport will be working hard to ensure the infrastructure and capacity is in place to make good on a series of vast deals with China, such as the recent 30-year Gazprom deal to supply Beijing with Russian gas. Gazprom has put several projects in the Barents Sea on hold, while Rosneft has several major offshore licenses for prospective fields in the area, yet has not taken action to develop them. While in the long term the huge volumes of oil and gas involved in the deals with China may put pressure on Russia to develop new fields in the Arctic, in the short term the attention of companies in the Russian energy sector will be primarily focused on the task of delivering the infrastructure required to meet to the commitments made to their Chinese partners.

Other Developments

A day of mourning was held on 2 June for at least 16 people presumed dead following a helicopter crash on the Kola Peninsula in the Russian Arctic region of Murmansk. Among the passengers believed to have died are a number of top-level officials for the region, including the Vice Governor of Murmansk Region Sergey Skomorokhov, Regional Minister of Natural Resources and Ecology Aleksey Smirnov and his deputy, Aleksander Alkhimchikov. The crash is believed to have been the result of bad weather conditions, and not any incompetence on the part of the crew or technical faults in the helicopter, which is said to have been in good condition.

Finland's prime minister has denied the need to launch an official investigation into the country's response to the incursion of its airspace by two Russian jets two weeks ago. The Centre Party's parliamentary delegation is calling for an official explanation of what it alleges is a failure of response, noting that accounts so far have been based on 'too many contradictory and confusing statements'. There is a concern among some military officials that Russia's military exercises demonstrate a worrying level of belligerence in the wake of deteriorating relations between the neighbouring countries. While military officials insist that no mistakes were made, the Finnish Defence Forces have promised to improve their communication procedures in cases of future airspace violations.

The General Secretary of NATO, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, has promised that in the future the alliance will watch developments in the Arctic more closely. Russian news agency Arctic-info reported Rasmussen's statement on 2 June, which was delivered during a recent speech to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly session in Vilnius, Lithuania. The General Secretary argued that NATO must keep a closer eye on relations between Arctic states, which, he alleges, may become more strained as a result of the development of natural resources and shipping in the region.

On the radar

- **The *Yury Dolgoruky*, the first of Russia's new fourth generation of nuclear deterrent submarines, is set to be ready for combat missions by the end of June.**
- **The clean-up operation for the oil spill in the Raahelampi Archipelago in Northern Ostrobothnia, Finland, is set to finish this week,** after an extension due to the greater than estimated damage.

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