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मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

## Iran

### Iran's Military Chief Calls for Broadening of Cooperation with N. Korea

Fars News Agency, February 1, 2023

Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Hossein Baqeri called for the further deepening of relations between Iran and North Korea, and underlined that close collaborations between Tehran and Pyongyang contributes to stability and security in the region. Major General Baqeri congratulated Pak Su-il on his appointment as the new General Staff Department (GSD) of the Korean People's Army. "Mutual cooperation on the path of establishing regional peace and stability and countering any disruptive measures of global security and unilateralism should be further developed," the top commander said in his congratulatory message. He also wished the government and the nation of North Korea success and glory.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011112000626/Iran's-Military-Chief-Calls-for-Broadening-of-Cooperation-with-N-Korea>

### AEOI Chief: Iran's N. Sites Inspected by IAEA 2,000 Times in 2 Years

Fars News Agency, February 2, 2023

Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami said that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has conducted nearly 2,000 inspections of the country's nuclear facilities only in the last two years. Eslami stated on the sidelines of a cabinet meeting in Tehran on Wednesday claims that Iran has reduced its obligations are pointless when it comes to the NPT as Tehran is

committed to the non-proliferation regime. He noted that Tehran has no unfulfilled obligations in this regard. The AEOI chief has described such allegations as part of a psychological warfare against Iran. The Iranian official stressed that any visit by the head of the IAEA to the country needs to have a "specific objective". Grossi last week announced that he intends to go to Tehran in February for "much-needed dialogue" over Iran's cooperation with the UN nuclear agency and to discuss outstanding issues.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011113000069/AEOI-Chief-Iran's-N-Sites-Inspected-by-IAEA-2-000-Times-in-2-Years>

### Iran Dismisses IAEA Report on Undeclared Change at Fordow Nuclear Facility

Fars News Agency, February 2, 2023

Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Spokesman Behrouz Kamalvandi announced that Tehran has sent a letter to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in rejection of the nuclear watchdog's statement over Tehran's undeclared change to uranium enriching equipment. Kamalvandi on Wednesday rejected a report by the UN nuclear watchdog that claims Tehran made an undeclared change to uranium enriching equipment at the Fordow facility in the Central province of Qom. "The report of the International Atomic Energy Agency was based on a mistake by an inspector of the oversight body who mistakenly flagged the issue," he stated. The spokesperson added that the matter has already been resolved after previous inspectors came to the site and Iranian officials explained to them

about the issue. "The inspector who had previously reported about it also realized his mistake," the AEOI official said.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011113000329/Iran-Dismisses-IAEA-Repr-n-Undeclared-Change-a-Frdw-Nclear-Faciliy>

### **Commander: IRGC Navy Deploys Modern Military Equipment**

Fars News Agency, February 4, 2023

Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri underlined that his forces enjoy the best military equipment to be fully independent from outside powers. "We do not rely on any superpower as we are in possession of the best military equipment," Admiral Tangsiri said on Friday. He said the IRGC Navy has precision cruise missiles, adding that the IRGC also manufactures speedboats and advanced drones with very high technical capacities but "we cannot disclose their complete features and capabilities given certain considerations". Tangsiri warned enemies that if they one day dare to attack Iran, they will be stunned, stopped and crushed in the face of the true power of the IRGC forces.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011115000286/Cmmander-IRGC-Navy-Deplys-Mdern-Miliary-Eipmen>

### **Tehran Raps IAEA's Unprofessional, Unacceptable Attitude towards Iran's Nuclear Program**

Fars News Agency, February 5, 2023

Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami slammed

the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for publishing a wrong report over alleged undeclared change to uranium enriching equipment at Fordow nuclear site, and described the UN nuclear watchdog's approach in disclosing confidential and unverified information as unprofessional and unacceptable. The nuclear head made the remarks in an interview with the Iranian state TV on Friday after the IAEA's Chief Rafael Grossi in a Wednesday report accused Tehran of making an undeclared change to the interconnection between the two clusters of advanced machines enriching uranium to up to 60% purity at its Fordow plant. He said Iran objects to the political issues dictated by Grossi and has written a "letter to the agency that an inspector... who has inspected our facilities, has made a mistake and given an incorrect report".

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011116000298/Tehran-Raps-IAEA's-Unprfessional-Unacceptable-Aide-wards-Iran's-Nclear>

### **Iranian Army Unveils Strategic Underground Air Base**

Fars News Agency, February 7, 2023

Iran's Army on Tuesday unveiled a strategic subterranean base called "Eagle 44" which could be used as a center for military operations of various types of fighter jets, bombers as well as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Baqeri and Commander of the Iranian Army Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi visited first underground air force base of the Iranian Army, which is capable of accepting and operating various types of

warplanes, bombers and drones. The subterranean base will also have the ability to receive and operationally use the new fighters of the Iranian Army Air Force and prepare them for missions.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011118000647/Iranian-Army-Unveils-Strategic-Underground-Air-Base>

### **Top Commander: Iranian Army Underground Bases to Host Various Fighters**

Fars News Agency, February 8, 2023

Commander of the Iranian Army Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi hailed the country's remarkable achievements in the defense fields, and said that Iranian Army's subterranean bases will be equipped with new jets in the near future. The Iranian Army on Tuesday unveiled its first underground Air Force base, called Eagle 44 which could be used as a center for military operations of various types of fighter jets, bombers as well as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). Speaking at the ceremony, Maj. Gen. Mousavi said Eagle 44 is one of the "combined" bases of the Islamic Republic of Iran Air Force (IRIAF), meaning both manned and unmanned aircraft carry out missions from the tactical center.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011119000457/Top-Commander-Iranian-Army-Underground-Bases-Host-Various-Fighters>

### **Iranian Nuclear Chief Advises IAEA to Act Professionally**

Fars News Agency, February 9, 2023

Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami said that Tehran expects the International Atomic

Energy Agency (IAEA) to act professionally, and further warned the UN nuclear watchdog to avoid role-playing in the pressure policy of anti JCPOA-parties against his country. "We expect the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency to maintain professional behavior and not be part of the pressure campaign against our country," Eslami stated on the sidelines of a cabinet meeting in Tehran on Wednesday. The remarks came after IAEA's Chief Rafael Grossi in a report accused Tehran of making an undeclared change to the interconnection between the two clusters of advanced machines enriching uranium to up to 60% purity at Fordow nuclear site.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011120000259/Iranian-Nuclear-Chief-Advises-IAEA-Act-Professionally>

### **Official: 90 Countries Seeking to Purchase Iranian Drones**

Fars News Agency, February 9, 2023

An advisor to Iran's Intelligence Ministry underlined the country's high capability in the production of various types of Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and said 90 countries are seeking to obtain Tehran-made drones. "Ninety countries seek to buy Iran-made drones, and Westerners and the arrogant countries cannot tolerate this," an advisor to Iran's intelligence minister stated on Wednesday while addressing a local ceremony in Qazvin. Today, Western states, the US, and the Israeli regime cannot stand Iran's "defense might" in the region, he added.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011120000202/Official-90-Countries-Seeking-to-Purchase-Iranian-Drones>

### **Iran arrests elements behind sabotage at military facility**

Tehran Times, February 11, 2023

Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and the Intelligence Organization of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps have jointly announced the busting of elements implicated in an effort to commit an act of sabotage in Isfahan. The two intelligence agencies announced in a joint statement that the detainees are the main elements of a failed attempt to commit an act of sabotage at an industrial facility belonging to the Ministry of Defense. The statement said the arrests in this connection were made this month. The statement also said that Israel is complicated in the act of sabotage.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/481830/Iran-arrests-elements-behind-sabotage-at-military-facility>

### **Iran Reiterates Commitment to Nuclear Disarmament**

Fars News Agency, February 12, 2023

Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami condemned the Western states' unfounded accusations against his country's peaceful nuclear program as mere lie, and once again underlined Tehran's commitment to nuclear disarmament. Eslami stated that Iran's enemies are "spreading misleading information" about Iran's nuclear program and "they are seeking to block Iran's pathway toward progress by making excuses and baseless claims". The AEOI director added that the main issue is the new power which emerges thanks to new

technologies and end foreign domination over a nation.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011123000218/Iran-Reieraes-Cmmimen-Nclear-Disarmamen>

### **Iranian homegrown plane to fly soon**

Tehran Times, February 12, 2023

The first flight of an Iranian-built aircraft is scheduled to take place in the next weeks, according to the Civil Aviation Organization of Iran. After Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei emphasized the necessity to expand the industry, Mohammad Mohammadibakhsh, the CEO of the Civil Aviation Organization, announced on Saturday that the nation is moving forward with the construction of passenger planes. The Ministry of Defense is in charge of producing a local plane and the Civil Aviation Organization is monitoring the process, he said, adding the first phase of manufacturing the new platform of Iran-140 plane has been completed.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/481839/Iranian-homegrown-plane-to-fly-soon>

### **Senior Commander: Iran's Bavar 373 Missile Defense System Rivals Russia's S-400**

Fars News Agency, February 14, 2023

Deputy Chief of the Iranian Army for Coordination Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari praised the Air Defense Force's achievements over the past decades, and said that domestically-built Bavar-373 air defense system rivals Russia-made S-400 missile shield. Sayyari stated on Monday

that Iranian Armed Forces have many air defense systems which are all homegrown. The senior commander cited Bavar-373 as an example, which, he noted, rivals Russia's S-400. "During the Iraqi imposed war, Iran only had HAWK surface to air missiles and 23mm guns but the country now has a broad range of such arms and it's difficult to choose which weapon for use during war games," he continued.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011125000266/Senior-Commander-Iran's-Bavar-33-Missile-Defense-System-Rivals-Russia's-S>

### **Pentagon says Washington, allies infuriated at Iranian drones**

Tehran Times, February 15, 2023

The U.S. Defense Department has said that Washington along with its regional allies are in fear of Iranian state-of-the-art drones and missiles. The Pentagon reported that Iranian drones and missiles are among the most significant air defense threats facing the U.S. and its partners in the Persian Gulf region. Such a report came shortly after a meeting in Riyadh between a U.S. official and representatives of the (Persian) Gulf Cooperation Council. They acknowledged that Iranian-domestically made drones and missiles are ultramodern, being able to pulverize any air defense system.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/482006/Pentagon-says-Washington-allies-infuriated-at-Iranian-drones>

### **Official: Iran Turns into Military Equipment Exporter Amid Sanctions**

Fars News Agency, February 15, 2023

Head of the Iran Aviation Industries Organization (IAIO) Brigadier General

Afshin Khajeh Fard hailed the country's self-sufficiency in the production of various types of military equipment amid sanctions, and said that Tehran is exporting military equipment, including required pieces for manufacturing helicopters, to friendly countries. "Iran enjoys one of the most diverse helicopter fleets in the world, having a variety of Eastern, Western and European helicopters," General Khajeh Fard stated on Wednesday. "Iran is not dependent on foreign countries in this field," Khajeh Fard continued, adding, "Fortunately, we have overcome the sanctions and today we also export and provide engineering services to other friendly and allied countries."

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011126000694/Official-Iran-Trans-in-Military-Equipment-Export-Amid-Sanctions>

## **Iraq**

### **Pro-Iran group claims attack on Turkey's base in northern Iraq**

Al-Monitor, February 1, 2023

Series of rockets targeted a Turkish military base near the northeastern Iraqi city of Mosul on Wednesday, prompting retaliation from the Turkish side. A pro-Iranian group claimed responsibility but no casualties were reported. Iraqi authorities said the attackers fired eight rockets shortly before 8 a.m. local time at the Bashiqa military base. Two of the rockets struck the base grounds and the others landed in the vicinity of the base, according to a Facebook post by Iraqi Kurdistan's counter-terrorism department. The Iraqi and international media reported that a pro-Iranian group claimed responsibility for the attack. Northern Iraqi news outlet Rudaw

identified the group as The Islamic Resistance Ahrar al-Iraq Brigade.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/02/pro-iran-group-claims-attack-turkeys-base-northern-iraq>

### **Trilateral Biden-Abdullah-Sudani call reiterated support for Iraq**

Al-Monitor, February 3, 2023

US President Joe Biden and Jordan's King Abdullah II held a phone call from the White House on Thursday with Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani. Biden reiterated the US commitment to Iraq in countering the Islamic State and supporting Baghdad. Biden also "commended the prime minister's efforts to strengthen Iraq's sovereignty and independence." The two additionally discussed the Iraqi government's economic agenda, according to a readout from the White House. Abdullah, who is in Washington, was at a private lunch with the US president when the call was made. "King Abdullah stressed Jordan's support for Iraq, including through joint strategic infrastructure projects," according to the White House.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/02/trilateral-biden-abdullah-sudani-call-reiterated-support-iraq#ixzz7vgWu2ioV>

### **A senior security delegation headed by the Deputy Commander of Joint Operations arrives in Kirkuk**

Iraqi News Agency, February 5, 2023

A senior security delegation headed by Deputy Commander of Joint Operations Lt. Gen. Qais al-Muhammadawi arrived on

Sunday in Kirkuk province. "A senior security delegation headed by Deputy Commander of Joint Operations Lieutenant General Qais al-Muhammadawi and Commander of the Land Forces Lieutenant General Qassim al-Muhammadawi arrived today at the command of the advanced headquarters of joint operations in Kirkuk province," said the reporter of the Iraqi News Agency (INA). INA reporter added that "The visit came to follow up on the latest pre-emptive operations carried out by the army and federal police units."

<https://ina.iq/eng/24659-a-senior-security-delegation-headed-by-the-deputy-commander-of-joint-operations-arrives-in-kirkuk.html>

### **Russia's Lavrov in Iraq, looks for sanctions relief**

Al-Monitor, February 9, 2023

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov sought relief from US sanctions and to expand energy and trade ties with Iraq in a visit to Baghdad this week. During his two-day trip to Baghdad that began Sunday, Lavrov met with top Iraqi officials including President Abdul Latif Rashid, Prime Minister Muhammad Shia al-Sudani, Parliament Speaker Muhammad Halbousi, and his counterpart Fuad Hussein. He also met with the former prime minister and head of the State of Law Coalition, Nuri al-Maliki. The latter controls a majority of seats within the Coordination Framework, the bloc that nominated the current prime minister and formed the government in alliance with Sunni and Kurdish parties.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/02/russias-lavrov-iraq-looks-sanctions-relief>

### **Al-Araji reveals writing a national strategy to combat extremism and terrorism**

Iraqi News Agency, February 12, 2023

The National Security Adviser, Qassim Al-Araji, announced on Sunday, that he has been working on writing the Iraqi national strategy to combat violent extremism that leads to terrorism. The National Security Adviser, Qassim Al-Araji, said in a speech on the International Day to Prevent Violent Extremism that Leads to Terrorism, which was attended by the reporter of the Iraqi News Agency (INA), that "Iraq with its supreme religious reference, its national government, its constitutional institutions, its tribes, the heroes of the Ministries of Defense and Interior, the popular mobilization forces, the Peshmerga, and the Counter-Terrorism Service, Societal activities, civil and tribal organizations, were all able to defeat terrorism and stage epics and heroics for the sake of societal harmony and sustainable security."

<https://ina.iq/eng/24816-al-araji-reveals-writing-a-national-strategy-to-combat-extremism-and-terrorism.html>

## **Israel**

### **US CENTCOM pulls closer to Israeli military as Mossad tests Iran**

Al-Monitor, February 1, 2023

Training exercise represents the tightest collaboration ever, but a deputy commander of CENTCOM tells Al-Monitor the US had no involvement in recent strikes attributed to Israel in Isfahan, Iran and eastern Syria. Last week, for the

first time ever, US Air Force F-35s launched from the USS George H.W. Bush flew several hundred miles over the Mediterranean and linked up with Israeli F-35s to simulate a combined attack on surface-to-air missile batteries in the Negev desert. As they neared the target, accompanying F-16s and F-15s peeled away to attack as many as ten fourth-plus-generation aircraft posing as the defenders of an imagined enemy airspace.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/02/us-centcom-pulls-closer-israeli-military-mossad-tests-iran>

### **IDF enemy simulation: getting into Hezbollah's head**

Israel Defense, February 7, 2023

The IDF Nahal Brigade's 931st Battalion recently completed an exercise which simulated a Hezbollah attack, during which the soldiers were split into two groups and pinned against each other. One side played the part of "Hezbollah terrorists," while the remaining soldiers operated as if this were a real-life scenario of encountering the enemy. The soldiers who manned the battalion's observation posts at the training center provided the troops with simulated real-time intelligence, all for the success of the mission: uncovering the enemy as early as possible, and striking it efficiently. The mission was divided into intelligence and operational challenges, as well as different scenarios that are important for the battalion to exercise.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/57160>



### **Elbit Systems to participate in India's top aerospace and defense exhibition**

Israel Defense, February 8, 2023

Elbit Systems announced that it will participate in AeroIndia, India's premier aerospace and defence exhibition in Bengaluru, between February 13th-17th 2023 with both visual and interactive displays of its solutions. Elbit Systems is considered a trusted partner of the Indian Ministry of Defence and the Indian Armed Forces, with a technological legacy of close to 70 years, well known for its ground breaking military solutions that have supported dramatic changes on the battlefield.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/57187>

### **IAI to showcase latest defense solutions at Aero India**

Israel Defense, February 9, 2023

Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), Israel's leading aerospace and defense company, will showcase its advanced technologies, industry-leading air-defense systems and ground-combat solutions (in Booths # 5.1 & 5.2, Hall F) at Aero India 2023, India's largest defense exhibition, which will take place February 13-17. IAI is leading a strategic transformation to provide fast direct access to IAI's superior solutions in full support of India's Atmanirbhar Bharat vision of a self-reliant country. IAI will sign several Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) and joint venture agreements during the exhibition as it deepens its ties with the local defense sector.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/57172>

### **Israel's Steadicopter joins forces with Emirates Defense Technology**

Israel Defense, February 12, 2023

Emirates Defense Technology (EDT) a leading UAE-based integrator for comprehensive defense solutions, and Steadicopter – a Israeli company and leader in the Rotary Unmanned Aerial Systems (RUAS) industry, are joining forces regarding the supply of Steadicopter's advanced rotary tactical unmanned aerial systems. The two companies will adapt Steadicopter's RUAV products to meet the emerging requirements of various customers within the UAE and other specific market segments. "As EDT continues to serve its customers with innovative, novel, unique, tailor-made solutions, we had scouted Steadicopter and its Eagle family – a platform of solutions which fits synergistically with other solutions manufactured in the region," says Mohamed Bin Jabr Al Suwaidi, Owner & CEO of EDT.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/57228>

### **Elbit Systems delivers its 600,000 Operational Tactical Radio**

Israel Defense, February 13, 2023

Elbit Systems has delivered its 600,000th radio to an operational customer. This E-LynX Software Defined Radio (SDR) was delivered to the Swedish Defence Material Administration (FMV) as part of the Tactical Ground Radio (TGR) program. The 600,000th radio, delivered to the Swedish Armed Forces, is a fifth-generation tactical V/UHF SDR from the E-LynX family that provides advanced and

secure communication capabilities for the modern battlefield. It offers immediate and fast communication, the ability to transmit voice, data and video simultaneously over all terrain, and supports the innovative and multi-domain digitization systems.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/57229>

### **From Israel to Egypt, how Adani Group's downfall could reverberate in Middle East**

Al-Monitor, February 13, 2023

On Jan. 24, Hindenburg Research, a small investment firm in New York, accused Gautam Adani, an Indian business conglomerate, of “brazen accounting fraud, stock manipulation and money laundering.”

In a detailed report, the US firm claimed the conglomerate's founder, was pulling off the “largest con in corporate history.” Calling it “not merely an unwarranted attack on any specific company but a calculated attack on India, the independence, integrity and quality of Indian institutions, and the growth story and ambition of India”, the Indian consortium rejected the allegations and threatened legal action. But Hindenburg does not seem perturbed and has stood to profit as Adani shares fall.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/02/israel-egypt-how-adani-groups-downfall-could-reverberate-middle-east>

### **SMARTSHOOTER to Present multi-purpose SMASH Hopper at IDEX**

Israel Defense, February 14, 2023

SMARTSHOOTER, an Israeli designer, developer, and manufacturer of innovative

fire control systems that significantly increase small arms' accuracy, lethality, and situational awareness while reducing training costs, will participate at the IDEX exhibition and present its SMASH Hopper.

This multi-purpose light remotely controlled weapon station can be mounted on different manned and unmanned vehicles, on a pole or a tripod, and provide the force a pin-point accurate lethal capability from a safe stand-off distance.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/57244>

### **HevenDrones launches hydrogen-powered drone for commercial, defense use**

Israel Defense, February 15, 2023

HevenDrones, a leader in the development and commercialization of actionable drones, launched today its first hydrogen-powered drone for commercial use, the H2D55. With 5-times greater energy efficiency than traditional lithium battery-powered drones, the H2D55 is capable of flying for 100 minutes with a payload capacity of 7kg. The launch of HevenDrones' hydrogen product line addresses the challenge of flight endurance and payload capacity associated with lithium battery-powered drones as well as the long term environmental impact linked to lithium mining. Without the need to frequently replace batteries, hydrogen fuel cells will also lower long term ownership costs for organizations implementing drone technology at scale.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/57261>

## Kuwait

### Pakistan, Kuwait agree to boost ties in energy, trade sectors

Dunya News, February 14, 2023

Pakistan and Kuwait have agreed to boost economic ties in key areas, particularly in the energy and trade sectors. The agreement came on Tuesday during a meeting between Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Prof Ahsan Iqbal and Minister for Finance of Kuwait Abdul Wahab Al-Rasheed. It is noted that the conference on “Effective Nuclear and Radiation Regulatory Systems: Preparing for the Future in Rapidly Changing Environment,” taking place in Abu Dhabi from February, 13 to 16 organised by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and hosted by the UAE’s Federal Authority for Nuclear Regulation (FANR) of World Government Summit where Planning Minister is representing Pakistan, accompanied by Minister of State for Petroleum, Musadik Málik, said a press release issued here.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Business/699261-Pakistan-Kuwait-agree-to-boost-ties-in-energy-trade-sectors>

## Lebanon

### Egypt’s plan to export gas to Lebanon held up over Syria sanctions

Ya Libnan, February 1, 2023

Egypt is still seeking assurances that US sanctions will be waived to start exporting gas to Lebanon through Syria under a plan first announced in 2021 to help ease Lebanon’s power crisis, a senior French official said on Tuesday. The plan also has

yet to go to the World Bank board, which will assess reforms of Lebanon’s electricity sector that are preconditions for it to release a \$300 million loan to finance the gas exports over 18 months, said Pierre Duquesne, France’s envoy on international support to Lebanon. Duquesne was visiting Cairo before travelling to Jordan and Lebanon this week and to the United States later in February “to try to help as much as we can to go beyond the various statements of principle”, he told reporters in Cairo. Alongside Egyptian gas for power generation, the plan includes the export of electricity from Jordan to Lebanon via Syria and could add up to 700 megawatts to Lebanon’s grid.

<https://yalibnan.com/2023/02/01/egypts-plan-to-export-gas-to-lebanon-lebanon-held-up-over-syria-sanctions/>

### Gemayel threatens to bloc presidential election if candidate supports Hezbollah’s arms

Ya Libnan, February 5, 2023

The leader of Lebanon’s Phalange party, Sami Gemayel, on Friday threatened to “paralyze” the Lebanese presidential election if Hezbollah’s candidate plans to “protect the weapons” of the Iranian backed militant group. “Today’s battle isn’t against a certain group of Lebanese. It is against the existential threat which affects Lebanese Christians and Muslims alike,” said Gemayel, adding that the fight was against a group that is seeking to destroy the country by promoting sectarian strife. “We are witnessing a blow to the judiciary, institutions, freedom of expression and free media, and we want to preserve the freedom of our country and its identity, but we will

not succeed unless we are united,” added Gemayel in reference to the rest of Lebanon’s opposition forces. Moreover, Gemayel launched veiled criticism of Hezbollah’s Christian ally, the Free Patriotic Movement.

<https://yalibnan.com/2023/02/05/gemayel-threatens-to-bloc-presidential-election-if-candidate-supports-hezbollahs-arms/>

## Qatar

### India's Petronet seeks more LNG under long-term Qatar deal

Reuters, February 7, 2023

Petronet LNG (PLNG.NS), India's top gas importer, will seek up to 1 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) in additional liquefied natural gas (LNG) supplies when it renews its long-term deal with Qatar, the company's chief executive said on Tuesday.

"We are seeking an additional 0.75 to 1 mtpa on top of existing 8.5 mtpa contact," Chief Executive A.K. Singh told reporters on the sidelines of the Indian Energy Week conference. Petronet, which is currently purchasing LNG from Qatar at \$16 per million British thermal unit (mmbtu), has until the end of this year to renew its deal. India's LNG imports fell for the second straight year in 2022, mainly due to fewer imports by utilities as the country ramped up coal-fired power production at the expense of natural gas. The energy-hungry nation expects deeper penetration of city gas distribution to drive LNG demand in the coming years.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/indias-petronet-lng-seeking-additional-lng-qatar-ceo-says-2023-02-07/>

### US, Qatar Reportedly Discuss Talks To Revive Iran Nuclear Deal

Iran International, February 10, 2023

US Special Envoy for Iran Robert Malley met Thursday with the Qatari foreign minister in Washington over efforts to kickstart the stalled talks to revive the 2015 nuclear deal, Qatari sources said. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani and Malley also discussed bilateral relations in addition to a number of issues of common interest. Late in January, Al Thani visited Tehran where he delivered messages from world powers that are party to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, particularly the US which does not have direct contact with the Islamic Republic. "Qatar has been always passing on messages about the return of the JCPOA parties to their commitments. Today, we received JCPOA-related messages from the Qatari side," Iran's foreign minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian stated.

<https://www.iranintl.com/en/202302106883>

### The U.S. and Iran are holding indirect talks on a possible prisoner exchange, with the help of the U.K. and Qatar, sources say

NBC News, February 15, 2023

The Biden administration is holding indirect discussions with Iran on a possible prisoner exchange in a bid to secure the release of American citizens imprisoned in Iran, with Qatar and the United Kingdom playing an intermediary role in the talks, according to four sources familiar with the

matter. The negotiations have made progress, but it remains unclear if a final agreement will be reached, the sources said. The push by the White House comes after months of negotiations aimed at reviving a 2015 nuclear agreement have stalled and as the administration has announced new sanctions against Tehran over its delivery of drones to Russia.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/national-security/us-iran-indirect-talks-prisoner-exchange-uk-qatar-rcna70645>

## Saudi Arabia

### **GCC's Iran nuclear talks proposal should be taken seriously**

Arab News, February 2, 2023

International Atomic Energy Agency Director-General Rafael Grossi last week warned that “every limit that existed in the JCPOA (nuclear deal) has been violated several times” by Iran. The deal has become an “empty shell” and diplomatic activity to revive it is almost nonexistent, he said, adding that: “Nobody has declared it dead, but no obligation is being pursued.” One of those violations relates to uranium enrichment. Iran has amassed enough material for “several nuclear weapons,” Grossi told a European Parliament subcommittee in Brussels. He pointed out that Iran has 70 kg of uranium enriched to 60 percent purity and 1,000 kg to 20 percent purity, meaning that Iran is only a short distance away from reaching the critical level of 90 percent, when it can be weaponized.

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/2243756>

### **Saudi, France to boost co-operation in nuclear energy sector**

Zawya, February 4, 2023

The MoU encourages co-operation between the two countries in the fields of electricity, renewable energy, energy efficiency, energy storage, smart grids, oil and gas and their derivatives, refining, petrochemicals, and the distribution and marketing sectors

Saudi Arabia has announced the signing of an agreement with French authorities on the peaceful use of nuclear energy and future opportunities in various energy fields, including renewable energy, clean hydrogen and electricity interconnection. The pact was signed by Prince Abdulaziz Bin Salman, Minister of Energy, with the visiting French Minister of Foreign Affairs Catherine Colonna at a special ceremony held in capital Riyadh, reported *SPA*. The two leaders agreed to work for the establishment of a framework for collaboration in the energy sector. The MoU encourages co-operation between the two countries in the fields of electricity, renewable energy, energy efficiency, energy storage, smart grids, oil and gas and their derivatives, refining, petrochemicals, and the distribution and marketing sectors.

<https://www.zawya.com/en/business/energy/saudi-france-to-boost-co-operation-in-nuclear-energy-sector-j7ppuh0q>

### **Nuclear energy offers ‘a golden opportunity’ to build a clean world**

Arab News, February 7, 2023

Being a cost-effective and low-carbon solution, nuclear energy “offers a golden

opportunity” to help build a clean world, according to the director general of the World Nuclear Association. Sama Bilbao y Leon was speaking as a keynote speaker at the 44th IAEE International Conference in Riyadh on Tuesday. The top official said nuclear energy offers an opportunity to build a cleaner and more equitable world in which everyone has access to “clean, abundant and affordable round-the-clock energy and high quality of life.” “As a low-carbon energy source, nuclear power can play a very important role, decarbonizing other difficult-to-able sectors,” she said. The official said nuclear energy is certainly a cost-effective, low-carbon solution and a catalyst for economic development. It is more efficient than other sources when we think of energy transition, she added.

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/2246686/business-economy>

## Syria

### **Attia: Syria doesn't recognize OPCW (Investigation and Identification Team) or its reports**

Syrian Arab News Agency, February 2, 2023

“Syria does not recognize the OPCW (Investigation and Identification Team), nor its previous and subsequent reports, because it was established based on pressure exerted by the United States, France and Britain for special purposes in clear violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention,” Syria’s Permanent Representative to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in The Hague, Ambassador Milad Attia said. “Syria calls on the technical secretariat of the OPCW to stop its bias towards

Western positions and not to issue replica reports of those prepared for it by Western countries and “Israel” against Syria,” Ambassador Attia added during a press conference held Thursday at the building of the Foreign and Expatriates Ministry. Attia elaborated “We followed the issuance of the third report of the so-called (Investigation and Identification Team) at the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which accuses Syria of using chemicals in the alleged Douma incident on April 7, 2018.”

<http://www.sana.sy/en/?p=298631>

### **Ambassador Sabbagh: Syria warned that incorrect track of OPCW teams on alleged Douma incident will lead to false conclusions**

Syrian Arab News Agency, February 7, 2023

Syria’s permanent representative to the UN, Ambassador Bassam Sabbagh, said that Syria has repeatedly warned that the incorrect and unprofessional track adopted by The OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria on Douma alleged incident will lead to false and null conclusions. Sabbagh was regretted that the fact-finding committee had not correct the method of its work despite all the demands addressed to it to commit to the rules included in the Chemical Weapons Convention. “Syria took a strategic decision in 2013 to join the Chemical Weapons Convention and has eliminated all its stockpile in a record time despite difficult conditions the country has been passing through,” Sabbagh said at UN Security Council session on “the Chemical File in Syria.”

<http://www.sana.sy/en/?p=299466>

### **UAE's Abdullah bin Zayed visits US, days after meeting Assad**

Al-Monitor, February 13, 2023

Two days after meeting with embattled Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in Damascus, the United Arab Emirates' chief diplomat will hold talks with Secretary of State Antony Blinken in Washington. UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed will meet with Blinken on Tuesday afternoon, according to the State Department. The pair are expected to discuss the humanitarian response to the 7.8 magnitude earthquake that struck Turkey and Syria last week, killing more than 36,000 people. On Sunday, the senior UAE official arrived in Syria and met with Assad. He was the first senior Gulf official to visit the war-torn country since the Feb. 6 quake.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/02/uaes-abdullah-bin-zayed-visits-us-days-after-meeting-assad>

### **Yemen**

#### **France seizes Iran assault rifles, missiles heading to Yemen**

ABC News, February 2, 2023

French naval forces in January seized thousands of assault rifles, machine guns and anti-tank missiles in the Gulf of Oman coming from Iran and heading to Yemen's Houthi rebels, officials said Thursday. While Iran denied being involved, images of the weapons released by the U.S. military's Central Command showed them to be similar to others captured by American forces in other shipments tied to

Tehran. The announcement comes as Iran faces increasing Western pressure over its shipment of drones to arm Russia during its war on Ukraine, as well as for its violent monthslong crackdown targeting protesters. Regional tensions also have heightened after a suspected Israeli drone attack on a military workshop in the central Iranian city of Isfahan on Saturday. Previous cycles of violence since the collapse of Iran's nuclear deal with world powers have seen the Islamic Republic launch retaliatory attacks at sea.

<https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/france-seizes-iran-assault-rifles-missiles-heading-yemen-96840360>

### **Turkey**

#### **'Time to fly': Türkiye unveils domestic light attack jet**

Daily Sabah, February 2, 2023

Türkiye's domestically produced jet training and light attack aircraft, Hürjet, started its engine, Presidency of Defense Industries (SSB) head Ismail Demir said Thursday. He made the related statement on his Twitter account. "Now it's time to fly," he said. "Under the strong leadership of our president, Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, as the Turkish defense industry, our work continues at full speed in the 100th anniversary of our republic," he also noted.

Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI), which is developing the aircraft, also shared a statement on the company's official Twitter account that read: "We are happy to fulfill our promise to our nation. HÜRJET started its engine, it's almost time to take its place in the sky." The TAI aims to produce two of the aircraft each month after 2025,

according to previous statements by the head of the company.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/time-to-fly-turkiye-unveils-domestic-light-attack-jet>

### **US Congress wants to link F-16 sale to Türkiye to Nordic NATO bid**

Daily Sabah, February 3, 2023

bipartisan group of U.S. senators Thursday threatened to block the sale of F-16 fighter jets to Türkiye until Ankara agrees to ratify the NATO membership of Sweden and Finland in another setback for an already prolonged deal. The move is all but sure to vex Türkiye, which has already called for the NATO issue not to be a precondition for sale and urged the Biden administration to persuade Congress to drop its earlier objection. Sweden and Finland applied last year to join the trans-Atlantic defense pact after Russia invaded Ukraine but faced objections from Türkiye and have since sought to win its support.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/us-congress-wants-to-link-f-16-sale-to-turkiye-to-nordic-nato-bid>

### **Turkish defense industry radar saves lives in quake-hit regions**

Daily Sabah, February 10, 2023

The Through the Wall Radar (DAR) developed by STM Defense Technologies Engineering and Trade Inc. – a prominent engineering company in the Turkish defense industry – is playing a crucial role in the ongoing rescue operations following the recent catastrophic earthquakes in Türkiye. The earthquakes, with magnitudes of 7.7 and 7.6 that centered in the Kahramanmaraş province, have devastated

10 provinces in the region, as well as severely affecting neighboring Syria. The Ankara-based company, with domestic facilities, has developed DAR to assist in saving lives amid the rubble in the worst-hit province of Hatay. DAR uses cutting-edge technology to determine the presence of living beings beneath the debris and to provide search and rescue teams with their exact locations. Thanks to the device, over 20 earthquake victims have already been located and rescued.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkish-defense-industry-radar-saves-lives-in-quake-hit-regions>

### **Bayraktar UAVs provide uninterrupted support for earthquake relief in Türkiye**

Daily Sabah, February 10, 2023

Bayraktar Akıncı and Bayraktar TB2 unmanned combat aerial vehicles (UCAVs) developed by Turkish drone magnate Baykar are aiding earthquake relief efforts in Türkiye's south. In the aftermath of the 7.7 and 7.6 magnitude earthquakes that struck 10 provinces, with the epicenter in the Pazarcık and Elbistan districts of Kahramanmaraş province, the Bayraktar Akıncı UCAVs took off from Şanlıurfa and Batman for nonstop mission flights, the Presidency of Defense Industries (SSB) informed. These missions included detection, search and rescue support, and coordination activities in adverse weather conditions. On the first day of the earthquake, conventional planes and helicopters were unable to fly due to adverse weather, storms, snowfall and cloud cover.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/bayraktar-uavs-provide-uninterrupted-support-for-earthquake-relief-in-turkiye>



# NUCLEAR AND ARMS CONTROL CENTRE

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