

Armed drones on the European media

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DRONES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Drone attack on oil installation in Saudi-Arabia escalates crisis

14 May 2019

Ritzau, Denmark

According to Saudi-Arabia, armed drones have attacked and destroyed 2 oil pump stations in Saudi-Arabia. The Minister of Energy emphasised the importance of reacting to attacks, mentioning amongst others the Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen. The attack happened at a time of increased tension between the two major powers in the Middle East, Saudi-Arabia and Iran, and increasing tension between the US and Iran around American sanctions and increased presence in the Middle East.

- ▶ <https://jyllands-posten.dk/international/mideast/ECE11381225/droneangreb-paa-olieanlaeg-i-saudiarabien-oeger-krise/>

Yemen: Gulf coalition pounds Sana'a after rebel drone strikes in Saudi

17 May 2019

Bel Trew, The Independent, Uk

Gulf coalition warplanes have pounded Yemen's Houthi-held capital Sana'a after rebels struck Saudi oil installations, in a surge of violence that threatens to shatter a peace deal. Among the dead were as many as five children, a United Nations humanitarian coordinator added. The strikes on Houthi targets in the capital were launched after the Iran-backed rebels claimed responsibility for an armed drone attack on two oil-pumping stations in Saudi Arabia two days earlier.

- ▶ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/yemen-violence-saudi-arabia-sanaa-attacks-strikes-peace-deal-iran-latest-a8918306.html>

Yemen's Houthis say they attacked Saudi's Najran airport by drone

23 May 2019

Reuters, Uk

Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthi movement on Thursday launched a drone attack on a Patriot missile battery in the airport of the Saudi city of Najran near the Yemeni border, the group's Al-Masirah TV said on Thursday. The Saudi-led coalition fighting the Houthis said the drone was intercepted and destroyed by the kingdom's air defenses.

- ▶ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-saudi-drone/yemens-houthis-say-they-attacked-saudis-najran-airport-by-drone-idUSKCN1ST1HJ>

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Saudi Arabia accuses Iran of ordering drone attack on oil pipeline

15 May 2019

Sissi Bellomo, Il Sole 24 Ore, Italy

Saudi Arabia accused Tehran of being behind a drone strike that shut down a key oil pipeline in the kingdom, and a newspaper close to the palace called for Washington to launch “surgical” strikes on Iran, raising the specter of escalating tensions as the U.S. boosts its military presence in the Persian Gulf.

- ▶ <https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/finanza-e-mercati/2019-05-14/droni-contro-petrolio-saudita-monito-stati-uniti-all-iran-215010.shtml?uuid=ACB9jiC>

Saudi Arabia says drones attacked its oil pipelines

14 May 2019

Correio da Manhã, Portugal

Saudi Arabia said drones attacked one of its oil pipelines as other assaults targeted energy infrastructure elsewhere in the kingdom on Tuesday, shortly after Yemen’s rebels claimed a coordinated drone attack on the Sunni power. The assaults marked the latest incidents challenging Mideast security after the alleged sabotage of oil tankers off the coast of the United Arab Emirates earlier this week amid heightened tensions between the U.S. and Iran.

- ▶ https://www.cmjornal.pt/mundo/detalhe/drone-ataca-oleoduto-na-arabia-saudita?ref=Pesquisa_Destaques

Yemeni rebel missiles fired at Mecca intercepted

21 May 2019

Le Figaro, France

Tension rises in the Gulf Area because of Yemeni rebel missiles intercepted at Mecca. Colonel Maliki, representing Saudi Arabia, said that the Houthi had recently attacked a “civil installation” of the southern Saudi province of Najrane with a drone loaded with explosives. There were no casualties.

- ▶ <http://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-actu/des-missiles-de-rebelles-yemenites-tires-vers-la-mecque-interceptes-20190521>

Saudi Arabia’s raid on Yemeni Houthi rebels in Sana’a

16 May 2019

Die Zeit, Germany

Two days after drone strikes in a Saudi Arabia’s oil pipeline, claimed by pro-Iranian Houthis rebels, Saudi Arabia responded with an anti-rebel raid on Sana’a (Yemeni capital, controlled by Houthis). They attacked nine rebels’ bases and, according to the tv channel Al-Arabija, hit rebels’ armories.

- ▶ <https://www.zeit.de/politik/ausland/2019-05/jemen-drohnenangriff-sanaa-saudi-arabien>

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Raid on Idlib

14 May 2019

Junge Welt, Germany

Onu has analyzed Idlib's situation, in the north-west of Syria. The zone, controlled by the jihadist group HTS, was attacked by Russian and Syrian air force. The attack was a response to two drone strikes made by HTS on Russian military base of Latakia Hmeimim, on May 4th.

▶ <https://www.jungewelt.de/artikel/354655.syrien-angriff-auf-idlib.html>

THE DRONE RACE

“The Peace Project” is major exporter of weapons for conflict countries

25 May 2019

Arbejderen, Denmark

The EU is the world's 2nd largest arms exporter, responsible for 27% of the world's arms trade, only exceeded by the US (34%), according to numbers from Swedish research institute SIPRI. The EU exports weapons and other equipment to Saudi Arabia, who is heavily involved in the ongoing conflict in Yemen. Since 2015, UK arms industry sold fighter jets, helicopters, drones, bombs and missiles to a value of DKK 40 mio to Saudi Arabia. It is impossible for the EU to be a peace project while arming human rights violating regimes, says the Campaign Against Arms Trade.

► <https://arbejderen.dk/indland/fredens-projekt-er-storeksport%C3%B8r-af-v%C3%A5ben-til-konfliktlande>

Analysis and recommendations on the escalating crisis between Iran and USA

14 May 2019

Lars Bangert Struwe, Atlantsammenslutningen, Denmark

There are rumours of a potential American attack on Iran after a drone attack on Saudi oil installations. The article provides a brief analysis of the situation in bullet form, listing key actions taken so far, key reasons behind the current escalation (the drone attack on Saudi oil installations amongst other things), possible military plans by the US and Iran, respectively, and recommendations on how Denmark ought to respond to the situation.

► <http://atlant.dk/nyheder/2019/kort-analyse-og-anbefalinger-om-den-tilspidsede-krise-imellem-iran-og-usa-efter-dagens-droneangreb-paa-saudiarabiske-olieinstallationer/>

What do we know about the first flight of the Russian combat drone ‘Volunteer’?

30 May 2019

Sputnik News Polska, Poland

The prospective Russian UAV S-70 ‘Volunteer-B’ will carry out its first flight, ca. one hour in the air, in June-August 2019. It already underwent the so-called ‘jumping tests’: take-off to the altitude of several meters and landing. It has been tested on the ground since 2018. It is designed as a ‘flying wing’. Its planned take-off weight – 20 tons; range – 6,000 km; speed – 1,000 km/h.

► <https://pl.sputniknews.com/swiat/2019053010480705-Sputnik-ochotnik-dron-testy/>

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Americans impressed by the Polish intelligence system. The army will not buy it

9 May 2019

Jakub Palowski, Defence24, Poland

The Polish UAV FlyEye is an essential part of the TOPAZ fire-control system developed and produced by WB Electronics. According to a US army report, it is 'unique'. Some of its solutions, much more advanced than those used by Americans, are still being developed. It's fully automatic. FlyEye indicates targets and, on the basis of the observation of exploding projectiles, corrects artillery fire.

- ▶ <https://www.defence24.pl/amerykanie-pod-wrazeniem-polskiego-rozpoznania-wojsko-go-nie-kupi>

Combat drones will help pilots. A new project of American aviation

23 May 2019

Dziennik Gazeta Prawna, Poland

US Air Force is starting a new program - Skyborg. F-35 or F-15EX will be provided with the support of combat drones XQ-58 Valkyrie controlled by artificial intelligence. Drones will carry both armaments and additional sensors and they will also become "pilot's assistants". A typical combat unit of 4 aircrafts will consists of 3 UAVs and one manned aircraft.

- ▶ <https://wiadomosci.dziennik.pl/nauka/artykuly/598531,drony-lotnictwo-f-35-usaf.html>

How Sicily quietly turned into the base for Us drone operations

8 May 2019

Margherita Furlan, The Vision, Italy

In the past few years, the Italian government quietly began allowing armed American drones to fly out of an air base in Italy for military operations against Islamic State in Libya and across North Africa. Now Rome could face severe scrutiny for its role in the Libyan war that could lead to legal troubles, as victims of the airstrikes are beginning to challenge in court not just the Us army but also the governments that host the drones.

- ▶ <https://thevision.com/attualita/sicilia-usa-droni/>

Trump approves additional deployment to Mideast to counter Iran

21 May 2019

La Vanguardia, Spain

President Donald Trump is sending an additional 1,500 US troops to the Middle East as part of a "mostly protective" effort to deter Iranian threats, he said. The CENTCOM deployment request also includes both manned and unmanned aircraft for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance to monitor the movement of Iranian forces, including their increased readiness.

- ▶ <https://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20190521/462402461577/el-congreso-de-eeuu-sostiene-que-el-despliegue-en-oriente-medio-es-disuasorio.html>

General Marc Compagnol: “We must bring the Belgian army into a new era”

15 May 2019

Le Soir, Belgium

An interview with General Marc Compagnol, Belgian Defence’s Chief. He claims that significant investments were made on Belgian army, but an extra budget is needed to use the new equipment. He also wants to change the way army works, increasing the use of drones.

- ▶ <https://plus.lesoir.be/224418/article/2019-05-15/le-general-marc-compagnol-chef-de-la-defense-il-faut-faire-entrer-larmee-belge>

The French company Parrot hopes to sell his drones to the US Army

29 May 2019

Le Monde, France

Parrot, a French company focused on security, announced that it has been selected by the US Army as part of a project for developing a new generation of short-range reconnaissance drones. According to the company, that recorded an operating loss of €111 million in 2018, it’s a “great symbol of trust”.

- ▶ https://www.lemonde.fr/economie/article/2019/05/29/parrot-espere-vendre-ses-drones-a-l-armee-americaine_5468951_3234.html

DRONES SHOULD SCARE YOU

“Every Us administration wants secrecy on its drone operations”

7 May 2019

Yorgos Boskos, Open Democracy, Uk

Open Democracy publishes an exclusive interview with Daniel Ellsberg, a former military analyst who leaked 7,000 pages of top-secret documents, the so-called Pentagon Papers, exposing the lies of the US administrations about the Vietnam war. Regarding to Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, Ellsberg says: “Every administration from now on, in terms of its drone operations, wants as much secrecy and silence as can be achieved. They don’t want revelations like Julian’s. Apart from the period before the election, when Trump was happy to see leaks that would hurt his opponent”.

- ▶ <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/digital liberties/daniel-ellsberg-trump-is-challenging-the-first-amendment-on-assanges-case/>

U.N. report finds likely use of armed drone in Libya by Haftar or ‘third party’

8 May 2019

Michelle Nichols, Reuters, Uk

United Nations sanctions monitors are investigating likely use of an armed drone by eastern Libyan National Army (LNA) forces or a supporting “third party” in an attack last month on troops affiliated with Libya’s internationally-recognized government, according to a confidential report to the U.N. Security Council. The report, seen by Reuters on Wednesday, found that a Blue Arrow air to surface missile (BA-7) was likely used in the attack near Libya’s capital Tripoli on April 20, and that such a weapon is designed to be fired by a Wing Loong drone.

- ▶ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-un/un-report-finds-likely-use-of-armed-drone-in-libya-by-haftar-or-third-party-idUSKCN1SE2RF>

Armed drones’ spectre worries armies

17 May 2019

Le Matin, Switzerland

Drone strikes against the Saudi Arabia’s oil pipeline made by pro-Iranian Houthis rebels revive the fear of attacks committed with aircraft without pilot. Le Matin has collected some opinion about it: “The drone war is the asymmetrical threat par excellence”, said the former head of a French intelligence service.

- ▶ <https://www.lematin.ch/monde/Le-spectre-des-dronestueurs-inquiete-les-armees/story/23550000>

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Bundeswehr stops training in Iraq

15 May 2019

Süddeutsche Zeitung, Germany

Because of the tensions in Gulf Area, the Bundeswehr doesn't want to train any more military in Iraq. One of the causes is the conflict between US and Iran, worsened by recent armed drone raid made by Yemeni Houthi rebels on two pumping stations of oil in Saudi Arabia.

▶ <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/bundeswehr-iran-usa-krieg-1.4447271>