

Armed drones on the European media

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IRAN AND US FIGHTING OVER DRONE ATTACK

Iran shoots down US drone aircraft, raising tensions further in Strait of Hormuz

21 Jun 2019

Tito Flavi, Il Secolo d'Italia

Iran shot down a United States military drone on Thursday, further escalating the already volatile situation playing out between Washington and Tehran in the Middle East. Iran's Revolutionary Guard said it had shot down an "intruding American spy drone" after it entered into the country's territory Thursday.

► <https://www.secoloditalia.it/2019/06/drone-usa-abbattuto-dalliran-guerra-vicina-trump-prima-attacca-e-poi-stoppa/>

Iran claims to have shot down an American drone on its territory

20 Jun 2019

Le Temps, Switzerland

Iran announced that it had shot down an "American spy drone" on its airspace. The aircraft, a Global Hawk model (US manufacturer Northrop Grumman), was shot down "in the early hours of the day" over the coastal province of Hormozgan in southern Iran. Washington denies that the drone violated the Iranian space. The aircraft was "in international airspace" and "Iranian information that the aircraft was flying over Iran is false," the Pentagon wrote in a statement.

► <https://www.letemps.ch/monde/liran-affirme-abattu-un-drone-americain-territoire>

Drone shot down in Iran: Donald Trump approved reprisal strikes before changing his mind

21 Jun 2019

Le Temps, Switzerland

According to the New York Times, the White House launched and blocked an air operation against Iran at the last moment. The White House and the Pentagon declined to comment on this information. Previously, Washington and Tehran had been engaged in a war of communication about the exact location of the US Navy drone at the time of the strike. The escalation of incidents in the Gulf region is raising fears that a spark will ignite the powder.

► <https://www.letemps.ch/monde/drone-abattu-iran-donald-trump-aurait-approuve-frappes-represailles-se-raviser>

The US will hit Iran with new sanctions after shooting

23 Jun 2019

Politiken, Denmark

President Trump announces new sanctions against Iran after the shooting by Iran of an American military drone over the Hormuz Strait. The US initially intended to retaliate with military force, but according to his own statement, Trump called off a planned attack

on Iran minutes before it was to go ahead. According to Trump, the attack was estimated to cost 150 Iranian lives, which was out of proportion with the fact the US only lost military equipment in the form of a drone.

- ▶ <https://politiken.dk/udland/art7268045/USA-vil-ramme-Iran-med-nye-sanktioner-efter-nedskydning>

Iran Embarrasses US by shooting down hypermodern drone

20 Jun 2019

Stieven Ramdharie, Volkskrant, Netherlands

Iran has embarrassed the Trump administration by shooting down a RQ-4 Global Hawk surveillance drone. Iranian leaders raised tensions with the risky shoot down of the drone. The Pentagon called it an attack without any provocation, and Trump warned that Iran had made a 'big mistake', though he will not escalate further. He suggested it might have been a mistake by an Iranian general.

- ▶ <https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/iran-brengt-vs-flink-in-verlegenheid-met-neerschieten-hypermoderne-drone-bd2do5ca/>

Putin aide: downed U.S. drone was in Iranian airspace

25 Jun 2019

Reuters, Uk

Russia has military intelligence that shows that a U.S. drone was in Iranian air space when it was shot down by Iran last week, Nikolai Patrushev, Secretary of Russia's Security Council, said on Tuesday. Speaking at a briefing for journalists in Jerusalem, Patrushev said evidence presented by the United States alleging Iran was behind attacks on ships in the Gulf of Oman was poor quality and unprofessional.

- ▶ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-iran-russia-drones/putin-aide-downed-us-drone-was-in-iranian-airspace-idUSKCN1TQoYT>

UN members cite dangers of tensions in Gulf

20 Jun 2019

El Mundo, Spain

France, Germany and the United Kingdom are warning that increased tensions in the Gulf that were heightened by Iran's downing of a U.S. drone "risk miscalculation and conflict." The three countries called for "de-escalation and dialogue" in a joint statement Monday after closed U.N. Security Council consultations on the recent tanker attacks and the drone downing. The United States has blamed Iran for the tanker attacks, which Tehran denies.

- ▶ <https://www.elmundo.es/internacional/2019/06/20/5d0bf83e21efa0be6a8b4709.html>

Iran releases new images of Us drone shot down

21 Jun 2019

Expresso, Portugal

Video footage of Iran's air defenses shooting down a high-altitude US Navy surveillance drone has been posted on social media by the Iranian military. It shows the missile launch and an explosion at the moment of interception.

The brief clip, filmed early Thursday morning and set to rousing music, shows a surface-to-air missile launch from an Iranian battery and the explosion of a target in the sky, said to be the ill-fated US spy drone.

- ▶ <https://expresso.pt/internacional/2019-06-20-Irao-divulga-novas-imagens-de-drone-norte-americano-abatido>

Trump says he pulled back Iran strike because of potential death toll

21 Jun 2019

Caitlin Oprysko, Politico, Belgium

The US president Donald Trump confirmed that he called off a strike on Iran at the last minute, saying he decided that the potential cost of human lives was “not proportionate to shooting down an unmanned drone”. “It would have made a big, big difference” if Iran's attack had targeted military personnel, said the president in the Oval office to reporters.

- ▶ <https://www.politico.eu/article/trump-says-he-pulled-back-iran-strike-because-of-potential-death-toll/>

Map reading in crisis mode

22 Jun 2019

Süddeutsche Zeitung, Germany

Iranian state television showed footage of the allegedly ranked charred remains of the downed RQ-4A Global Hawk US drone. The drone is used to collect information on water and coastal areas. It costs around \$ 130 million. According to the Pentagon, the drone did not fly over Iranian territorial waters. The Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammed Jawad Sarif answered that the drone has been found in Iranian territorial waters.

- ▶ <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/usa-iran-trump-atomabkommen-drohne-1.4493658>

Trump Explains Why He Didnt Attack Iran

21 Jun 2019

De Morgen, Belgium

The US president Trump has acknowledged that he canceled a retaliation strike on Iran at the very last moment. Trump said the attack would kill too many people, and would not be in proportion with the shooting-down of the American drone on Thursday. “We were completely ready to go, fully armed, to strike three locations tonight. But the number of victims was disproportionate to the loss of the drone.

- ▶ <https://www.demorgen.be/nieuws/trump-verklaart-waarom-hij-aanval-op-iran-afblies-150-doden-te-zware-balans-bb7debaa/>

SELLING DRONES WORLDWIDE

U.S. to sell 34 surveillance drones to allies in South China Sea region

3 Jun 2019

Mike Stone, Reuters, Uk

The Trump administration has moved ahead with a surveillance drone sale to four U.S. allies in the South China Sea region as acting Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan said Washington will no longer “tiptoe” around Chinese behavior in Asia. The drones would afford greater intelligence gathering capabilities potentially curbing Chinese activity in the region.

- ▶ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-defense-drones/u-s-to-sell-34-surveillance-drones-to-allies-in-south-china-sea-region-idUSKCN1T42ST>

India, U.S. nearing industrial security pact for defense tech transfers 24 Jun 2019

Sanjeev Miglani, Reuters, Uk

India and the United States are closing in on an industrial security agreement that will allow the transfer of defense technology, sources said on Monday, ahead of U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo’s talks in New Delhi this week to promote strategic ties. Disputes over trade and protectionist moves have escalated between the two countries in recent months, but defense ties remain strong.

- ▶ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-india-usa-pompeo/india-u-s-nearing-industrial-security-pact-for-defense-tech-transfers-idUSKCN1TP1ZH?il=0>

Arm wrestling at US Congress on arms sales to Saudi Arabia

15 Jun 2019

Marc Pasteger, Le Soir, Belgium

The Trump administration’s friendship with the Saudi regime should lead to US \$ 8.1 billion worth of US arms sales, including Patriot missiles, armed drones and laser-guided high precision bombs. Officially Riyadh and Dubai must be able to protect themselves against the “emergency situation” created by Iran in the Gulf. The Congress Democrats opposition wants to prevent these arms deliveries.

- ▶ <https://plus.lesoir.be/art/d-20190614-3UHCW0?referer=%2Farchives%2Ffrecherche%3Fdatefilter%3Dlastyear%26sort%3Ddate%2520desc%26word%3DDrones%2520arm%25C3%25A9s>

The Chinese CH-4B combat drones do not perform well in Jordan

14 Jun 2019

Mateusz Lysoń, whatnext.pl, Poland

The CH-4B designed and constructed by China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation are clearly based on the UAV MQ-9 made by General Atomics. It can carry up to 350 kilograms of ammunition - Blue Arrow 7 air-ground missiles, TG-100 laser, GPS-guided bombs, HJ-10 anti-tank missiles. It can fly for up to 14 hours. China sold CH-4B to

many countries of Africa and Asia. However, unhappy with its performance, the Jordanian government plans to sell the CH-4B Rainbow fleet after just two years of deployment.

▶ <https://whatnext.pl/bojowe-chinskie-drony-ch-4b/>

Rivals in South China Sea region buy US drones to monitor Chinese activities

4 Jun 2019

Esther Idris Beshirová, seznamzpravy.cz, Czech Republic

The United States has sold 34 ScanEagle drones to governments in Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam. The non-lethal drones should help these countries in monitoring and limiting Chinese activities in the South China Sea region which is an object of territorial disputes between Asian countries, mainly due to the strategic water trade route. The deal is a part of new US administration strategy focusing on expanding arms and military technology sales to its allies.

▶ <https://www.seznamzpravy.cz/clanek/rivalove-o-jihocinske-more-kupuji-drony-od-usa-chteji-monitorovat-cinany-73413>

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THE DRONE COLD WAR

Russians warn the US against sending drones to Poland

13 Jun 2019

Berlingske, Denmark

President Trump has announced a promise of drones to Polish president Andrzej Duda. Russian members of parliament warn that this decision by the American military to place spy drones in Poland could make Poland a target for Russian attacks. “In the event of a conflict – God forbid – Polish territory would become an obvious target for retaliatory attacks” says Vladimir Dzhabarov, first deputy chairman of the international affairs committee in the upper house of Russia’s parliament.

► <https://www.berlingske.dk/internationalt/russere-advarer-usa-om-at-sende-droner-til-polen>

Russia perturbed by the intention to deploy American UAV squadron in Poland

13 Jun 2019

Marek Trojan, kresy.pl, Poland

Sergey Ribakov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia, expressed concern over the plans for the deployment of an American UAV - MQ-9 Reaper squadron in Poland, in line with the recently signed Polish-US defence cooperation agreement. They are to be used for intelligence purposes. However, these are combat machines used in attack actions. “MQ-9 is the successor of Predator, which was a reconnaissance and combat aircraft, it detected and fought enemies.” - the Polish general Waldemar Skrzypczak said.

► <https://kresy.pl/wydarzenia/rosja-zaniepokojona-zamiarem-rozmieszczenia-eskadry-amerykanskich-dronow-bojowych-w-polsce/>

American super-UAVs in the 12th Base of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles in Miroslawiec

21 Jun 2019

Zbigniew Lentowicz, Rzeczpospolita, Poland

The MQ-Reaper has twenty-meter wingspan. The latest version with turboprop engine (950 KW) allows for take-off mass exceeding 4.7 tons and acceleration to over 400 km/h. In 28 hours of autonomous flight it can cover almost 6,000 km. The UAV is managed directly from the control post at Creech Air Force Base (Indian Springs, Nevada). It has a modern radar distinguishing details with an accuracy of 0.1 m.

► <https://radar.rp.pl/wojsko-polskie/13633-amerykanskie-reapery-w-bazie-w-mirowslawcu>

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Drones are more than just a photo drone for private use purchased in Elgiganten

20 Jun 2019

Niels-Ole Mannerup, Atlant.dk, Denmark

As the term 'drone' is used in many different contexts, the ThinkTank, Atlantsammenslutningen, would like to stress that drones can also be airplane-like flying objects, not to be confused with photo drones purchased for private use in Danish shops. Iran recently reported that they shot down an American RQ-4 Global Hawk drone – the US claims it was an MQ-4C Triton surveillance drone. Both drones are airplane-like flying objects, referred to as unmanned surveillance aircrafts.

▶ <http://atlant.dk/nyheder/2019/droner-er-andet-end-en-fotodrone-til-privatbrug-koebt-i-elgiganten/>

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MORE DRONES IN EUROPE, AND MORE CONCERN

Eurodrone is aiming for a first test flight in 2024

18 Jun 2019

Véronique Guillermand, Le Figaro, France

Airbus, the first contractor for the EuroMale program, presented a large model of drone at the Paris Air Show. With a wingspan of 26 meters and a 16-meter fuselage, this 11-tonne new-generation drone is expected to make its first test flight in 2024. Airbus and its strategic partners, Dassault Aviation and Leonardo, have submitted an offer to the Joint Armaments Cooperation Organization (Occar). They hope to sign a contract by the end of 2019.

- ▶ <http://www.lefigaro.fr/societes/l-eurodrone-futur-drone-de-surveillance-europeen-vise-un-premier-vol-d-essai-en-2024-20190618>

French army equip combat drones with bombs

18 Jun 2019

France Info, France

(Video) While the European drone project is considered too expensive according to the French Minister of Armies Florence Parly, US drones used for intelligence purposes are taking hold in France. The latter will be equipped with bombs weighing 250 kg at the end of 2019. An innovation that raises concerns.

- ▶ https://www.francetvinfo.fr/economie/emploi/metiers/armee-et-securite/aeronautique-l-armee-francaise-va-s-equiper-de-drones-de-combat-munis-de-bombes_3494745.html

Italian government under scrutiny for airstrike in Libia

18 Jun 2019

Mani Ferrucci, Tpi, Italy

On November 29 of 2018 the US Africa Command (AFRICOM) claimed responsibility for the airstrike that took place near Awainat town in southwestern Libya, killing 11 people. According to Africom, the victims were Al Qaeda and Aqim terrorists, but a human rights group said the airstrike killed 11 civilians. The drone that launched the attack was operated from Sigonella, an airbase in Sicily, in the south of Italy, so the Italian government is under scrutiny.

- ▶ <https://www.tpi.it/2019/06/18/droni-usa-libia-coinvolgimento-italia/>

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DRONE TENSIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Erdogan's lethal force: Turkey became a drone superpower. The dreaded weapon is an untouchable icon

3 Jun 2019

Info.cz, Czech Republic

Turkey is one of the countries with successful combat drone R&D program. Apart from its use in Syria and Iraq, Turkey uses combat drones the most on its territory to fight Kurdish separatists. The UAV's quickly became cultural icons in Turkey and a source of national pride when some models were even personally signed by president Erdogan. The country now uses 75 combat drones that do over 6000 flight hours per year.

- ▶ <https://www.info.cz/svet/erdoganova-smrtici-sila-turecko-se-stalo-velmoci-dronu-obavana-zbran-je-nedotknutelnou-ikonou-41816.html>

Riyadh intercepted two rebel drones from Yemen

11 Jun 2019

Le Figaro, France

In recent weeks the Yemeni rebels supported by Iran intensified attacks against the Saudi kingdom. The defence intercepted two UAV targeted the town of Khamis Mushait in southwestern Saudi Arabia. The SPA agency reported that the coalition has intensified its air raids against rebel positions in the province of Hajjah (northwestern Yemen).

- ▶ <http://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-actu/riyad-dit-avoir-intercepte-deux-drones-rebelles-en-provenance-du-yemen-20190611>

Haftar's forces say they destroyed Turkish drone in Tripoli

30 Jun 2019

Ahmed Elumami, Tuvan Gumrukcu, Reuters, UK

Eastern Libyan forces loyal commander Khalifa Haftar said they destroyed a Turkish drone parked at Tripoli's only working airport on Sunday and declared a "general mobilization" as tensions between Ankara and the eastern administration mounted. Haftar's forces said they hit the drone in an air strike on Mitiga airport, part of a series of measures meant to punish Turkey for its support of the rival, internationally recognized Libyan government in Tripoli.

- ▶ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-turkey-drone/haftars-forces-say-they-destroyed-turkish-drone-in-tripoli-idUSKCN1TVoUM>

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Yemen's Houthis target two Saudi airports with multiple drone attacks

15 Jun 2019

Reuters, Uk

Yemen's Houthi movement launched fresh drone attacks targeting Jizan and Abha airports in southern Saudi Arabia, the group's Al-Masirah TV said on Saturday, adding the installations were out of service. The Saudi-led coalition said in a statement that it had intercepted and downed a Houthi drone targeting the southwestern city of Abha.

- ▶ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-saudi-drone/yemens-houthis-target-two-saudi-airports-with-multiple-drone-attacks-idUSKCN1TG0M3>

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A SCARY FUTURE

“The UAV market is a bit of a Wild West”

17 Jun 2019

Elodie Lamer, Le Soir, Belgium

The Belgian aeronautics industry relies heavily on the government’s strategic decisions. But according to Thibauld Jongen, Executive chief of Sabca, it has often lacked of length of view in recent years. The market for aircraft components “is super competitive, everyone is hungry”, he said. About drones he added: ”We have to stay focused because, at the moment, it’s a bit like the Wild West. We must choose where to invest”.

► <https://plus.lesoir.be/art/d-20190616-3UJFZE?referer=%2Farchives%2Fcherche%3Fdatefilter%3Dlastyear%26sort%3Ddate%2520desc%26word%3DDrones>

Military drone crashes raise fears for civilians

9 Jun 2019

Jamie Toward, The Guardian, Uk

Two military drones are crashing every month on average, according to research that raises questions about the safety of the technology, both in conflict zones and civilian environments. Accidents Will Happen, a report published by the campaign group Drone Wars UK, reveals that there have been more than 250 crashes involving the large unmanned aircraft in the past decade.

► <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jun/09/two-military-drones-crashing-every-month>

Drones successfully learn to fly without a pilot. And to attack

27 Jun 2019

Matouš Lázňovský, Technet.cz, Czech Republic

An international group of scientists from University of Maryland and University of Zurich has presented first drones equipped with a software that enables them to avoid flying objects – or to shoot them down as well. The new AI control system is based on the principle of deep neural networks that can be trained via computer simulations has a double application – civilian and military/law enforcement.

► https://www.idnes.cz/technet/technika/dron-drony-letajici-prekazka-se-vyhne-lovi-jine-drony. A190625_134900_tec_technika_mla