

# February 2020

## Sources:

Dvhn, The Netherlands  
Expres, Czech Republic  
Le Figaro, France  
Les Echos, France  
Hln, Belgium  
Kresy, Poland  
Seznam Zprávy, Czech Republic  
Sputnik, Poland  
The Guardian, United Kingdom  
Vtm, Czech Republic  
Wiara, Poland

## Drones attacks destabilise Middle East

### Russia and Turkey's next moves will define the Syrian war's end

28 Feb 2020

**Martin Chulov, The Guardian, Uk**

For more than three years, Russia and Turkey have been shadow boxing on the soils of northern Syria. In the past three weeks, the stalking has turned to shooting. After the airstrike in the town of Boulian, Turkish drones obliterated Syrian positions throughout Idlib, just as their artillery had been doing in the weeks before it. Ankara's assessment had been that airstrikes carried out on its troops during that time were best avenged by targeting Russia's weaker proxy, the national army.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/feb/28/russia-and-turkeys-next-moves-will-define-the-syrian-wars-end>

### Trump appears to confirm killing of al-Qaida leader in Yemen

1 Feb 2020

**Edward Helmore, The Guardian, Uk**

Donald Trump appeared on Saturday to confirm the death of Qassim al-Rimi, the leader of an al-Qaida affiliate in Yemen,

through a series of tweets. According to a New York Times report on Friday, Rimi, 41 and the leader of the splinter-group al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, or AQAP, is believed to have been killed in a drone strike in Wadi Abedah in the centre of the war-torn country last month.

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/feb/01/trump-al-qaida-leader-yemen-qassim-al-rimi>

### **Three Turkish drones shot down in Libia**

27 Feb 2020

**Karol Kaźmierczak, Kresy, Poland**

In one day, units of Libyan National Army (LNA) shot down three UAVs made in Turkey and used by the Government of National Accord that still holds Tripoli. One of the UAVs of Bayraktar type was hit over the outskirts of Tripoli. The second one was shot down after take-off from Mitiga airport near the city, where Turks have their base. Another one, intended for reconnaissance was also destroyed.

<https://kresy.pl/wydarzenia/regiony/afryka/trzy-tureckie-drony-zestrzelone-w-libii/>

### **Israel plans "massive" drone purchase to face Iran and its allies**

13 Feb 2020

**Le Figaro, France**

Israel is betting on the "massive" purchase and development of drones in order to increase its military superiority over its enemies, Iran and its allies, and to conduct operations in urban areas. The Israeli army has announced the outline of its 2020-2024 plan.

<https://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-actu/israel-prevoit-un-achat-massif-de-drones-pour-contrer-l-iran-et-ses-allies-20200213>

### **UAVs attack near the Hmeimim air base in Syria**

2 Feb 2020

**Sputnik, Poland**

According to the Russian Reconciliation Centre for Syria, on February 1, around 11pm Moscow time, airspace monitoring tools at the Hmeimim air base detected a group of drones launched from the Idlib de-escalation zone controlled by militants. Interception and deactivation of all UAVs was carried out with the help of the air

base electronic weapon disrupting control systems. There were no victims.

<https://pl.sputniknews.com/swiat/2020020211863117-bojownicy-wystrzelili-drony-w-rejonie-bazy-lotniczej-hmeimim-sputnik/>

## The dangers of drones

### **Killer drone**

19 Feb 2020

**Tomasz Rożek, Wiara, Poland**

Iranian general Qassem Soleimani was killed by a Hellfire rocket weighing 50 kg launched from the MQ-9 Reaper drone which had flown at an altitude of several kilometres for many hours before Soleimani landed in Baghdad. At the right moment, it attacked the car carrying Soleimani - and fled. Its pilots were in a bunker in the Nevada desert. They saw their enemy through advanced optical systems.

<https://nauka.wiara.pl/doc/6134570.Dron-zabojca>

### **The US military has rules for "robot killers". But they don't say much**

27 Feb 2020

**Lukáš Marek, Seznam Zprávy, Czech Republic**

The United States has published ethical rules for military use of artificial intelligence and autonomous drones in order to alleviate the tensions and fears of "killer robots" regularly raised by leading AI experts. Nevertheless, according to many this AI warfare ethical codex is quite vague as it leaves a big room for interpretation of "exercise appropriate levels of judgment and care" by the military personnel, stipulated by the codex.

<https://www.seznamzpravy.cz/clanek/americka-armada-ma-pravidla-pro-roboti-zabijaky-moc-toho-ale-nerikaji-90026>

### **Confession of a man who navigated the murdering drones: "I killed a child, my superiors claimed it was as a dog!"**

7 Feb 2020

**Petr Večeřa, Expres, Czech Republic**

Story of Brandon Bryant, former US drone operator, who dropped a

Hellfire missile on a child in Afghanistan and his superiors claimed it was 'just a dog'. Operator's job is very psychologically demanding and personnel firing missiles at people on the other side of the world suffers often from post-traumatic stress disorder even though its is not in the center of the action and the attack resembles a video game.

[https://www.expres.cz/zpravy/drony-americka-armada-utoky-teroris-mus-pilot-zabijeni.A200207\\_125103\\_dx-zpravy\\_peve](https://www.expres.cz/zpravy/drony-americka-armada-utoky-teroris-mus-pilot-zabijeni.A200207_125103_dx-zpravy_peve)

### **Ministry of Defence Investigates Arming Drones**

11 Feb 2020

#### **Dvhn, The Netherlands**

The Dutch Ministry of Defence is researching the "concrete possibilities and costs" of arming the unmanned aerial vehicles which the Netherlands will receive next year. In november, parliament adopted a motion to have the government consider the possiblity of arming the Reapers. Though it is technically possible, the MoD has said it's not being considered yet.

<https://www.dvhn.nl/binnenland/Defensie-onderzoekt-bewapening-nieuwe-drone-25341193.html>

## **Drones in Europe**

### **Su-57 fighter aircraft and Okhotnik tested Grom**

27 Feb 2020

#### **Sputnik, Poland**

According to Izvestia daily, the Okhotnik and Altius UAVs of the Russian Air Forces will be equipped with 9-A-7759 Grom missiles that can eliminate targets over a range of 100 plus km. Tests have already been carried out through dropping large models of Grom from Okhotnik. The UAV, guided by Su-57, will be able to eliminate targets while remaining invisible to opponent's anti-aircraft defences.

<https://pl.sputniknews.com/swiat/2020022711996464-su-57-i-ochotnik-przetestowaly-grom-sputnik/>

### **The Ukrainian tactical ground drone Centaur can carry up to half a ton of cargo**

17 Feb 2020

### **Stanislav Mihulka, Vtm, Czech Republic**

The new robotic system by Ukrainian A.Drones company can carry up to 500 kilograms of supplies, equipment, material or wounded soldiers in a difficult terrain and thanks to its support ground troops would be able to operate more lightly, thus become a more effective combat force. Centaur can also operate in its firefighting version or as a mobile base for an aerial drone.

<https://vtm.zive.cz/clanky/ukrajinsky-takticky-pozemni-dron-centaur-uveze-az-pul-tuny-nakladu/sc-870-a-202461/default.aspx>

### **Defense: will the European drone remain a “dead letter”?**

26 Feb 2020

#### **Anne Bauer, Les Echos, France**

Airbus, Dassault and Leonardo have to present their final offer to carry out an eurodrone for the French government. Without an agreement, the project may be dead.

<https://www.lesechos.fr/industrie-services/air-defense/defense-le-drone-europeen-restera-t-il-lettre-morte-1175212>

### **Military drones: the Court of Auditors denounces French errors**

25 feb

#### **Anne Bauer, Les Echos, France**

The French Court of Auditors underlines the incredible failures which prevented the country from having a drone airfare. A costly gap that needs to be filled.

<https://www.lesechos.fr/industrie-services/air-defense/drones-militaires-la-cour-des-comptes-denonce-les-errements-francais-1174565>

### **French Armed Forces Takes Out Dozens of Jihadists in Mali**

7 Feb 2020

#### **Hln, Belgium**

The French armed forces deployed in mission Barkhane has killed at least 30 jihadists, France has deployed about 4500 troops in West-Africa, which are fighting extremists. They report to have deployed armed drones, a fighter aircraft and helicopters against jihadists recently, in Burkina Faso and Niger.

<http://tiny.cc/qwv7kz>