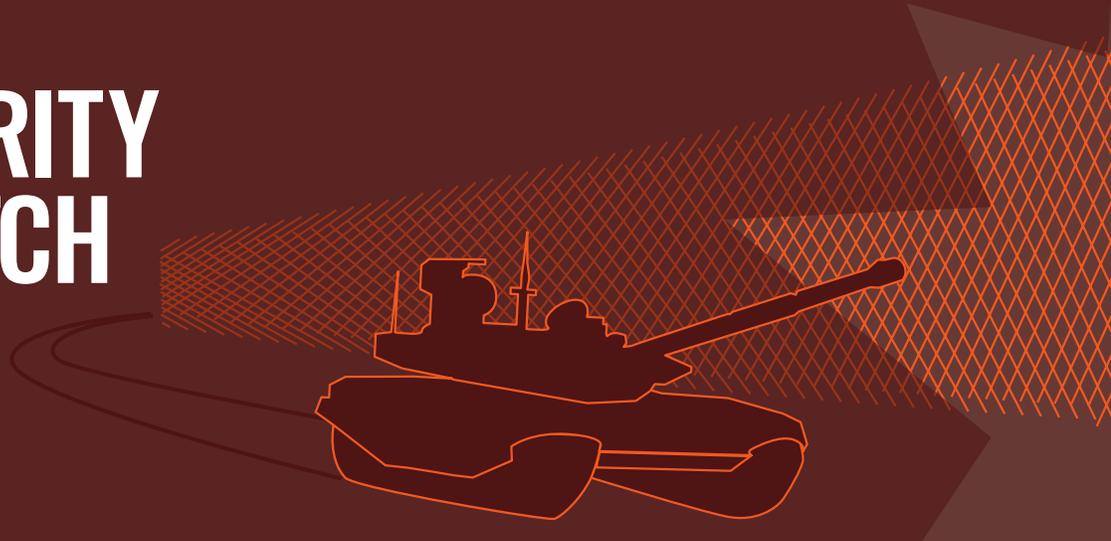




EGYPT SECURITY WATCH



WEEK IN BRIEF APRIL 27–MAY 3, 2019

Summary

- Wilayat Sinai claimed three improvised explosive device (IED) attacks in North Sinai.
- Canada renewed its contribution to the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) in the Sinai Peninsula by deploying 55 soldiers. The MFO supervises the 1981 buffer zone between Israel and Egypt.

Wilayat Sinai Claims Three Attacks

On April 28, Wilayat Sinai claimed an IED attack targeting a mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicle (MRAP) near Rafah. Wilayat Sinai claimed responsibility for two IED attacks on April 30 and May 1, which targeted military vehicles near the Arish airport. In a video of the April 30 attack released by Wilayat Sinai, a wall surrounding the Arish airport can be observed. The Arish airport has been closed to civil traffic since 2014 and to military aircraft since December 2017. At the beginning of 2018, President Abdel-Fattah El Sisi announced plans to create a five-kilometer buffer zone around the airport and construction on a wall began in June 2018. The road leading to the Arish airport is a frequent site of IED attacks but it was a December 2017 missile attack that led to its closure. The concealment of the explosive, choice of target, and timing of the detonation in the April 30 operation all highlight Wilayat Sinai's technical proficiency in conducting roadside IED attacks.

The two April attacks brought Wilayat Sinai's monthly claims of responsibility to 14. January has remained Wilayat Sinai's most operationally active month of 2019, when the group claimed 20 attacks. The group's subsequent operational tempo has slowed in comparison: Wilayat Sinai claimed seven attacks in February and 13 in March.

Canada Provides Soldiers to Sinai Multinational Force and Observers

The Canadian government extended its contribution to the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO), based in al-Gorah, North Sinai. With the renewal, Canada's Operation Calumet is slated to continue until 2022. The Canadian armed forces will deploy 55 people to the peninsula, including advisors, headquarters staff, and experts in reconnaissance, logistics, engineering, policing, and training. The MFO was established in 1981 to supervise the implementation of the 1979 Egypt-Israel peace treaty, which demilitarized the Sinai Peninsula. The total force consists of about 1,200 personnel from 12 different countries.



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