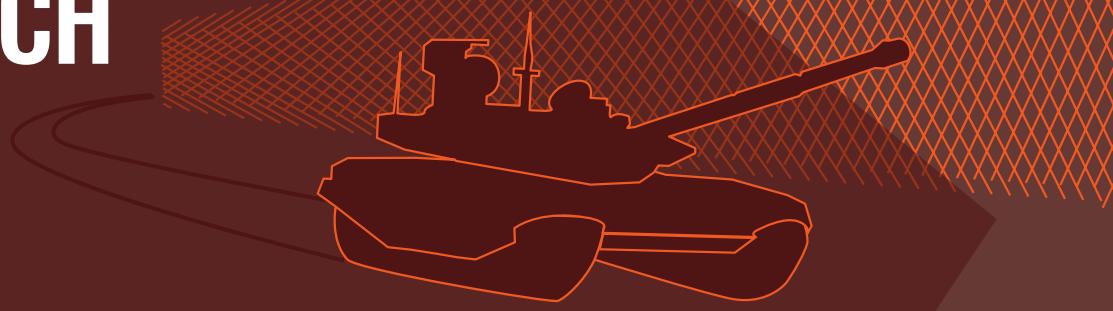




EGYPT **SECURITY
WATCH**



WEEK IN BRIEF JULY 20-26, 2019

Summary

- The Giza Criminal Court sentenced 14 people to prison on charges that they had joined the Islamic State as part of the “ISIS Students Cell” case.
- A photo published on social media purportedly shows Libyan National Army (LNA) pilots graduating from the Egyptian Air Force Academy, possibly indicating Egypt’s continued support for Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar’s LNA forces by supplementing their air capabilities.
- Egypt, the United States, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia launched joint military drills, Eagle Salute and Eagle Response 2019, in the Red Sea.
- Wilayat Sinai claimed responsibility for four attacks across North Sinai. The attacks reportedly killed at least four members of the security forces and tribal militias.
- Egypt received the final batch of 101 U.S.-made MRAP vehicles from a total order of 930. The vehicles were provided under the Excess Defense Articles Grant Program that provides surplus military equipment to U.S. allies and partners at a reduced cost.

14 Sentenced on Charges of Joining the Islamic State

The Giza Criminal Court sentenced 14 people to prison as part of the “ISIS Students Cell” case, based on charges that they had joined the Islamic State. Defendants were charged with a variety of crimes, including inciting others to commit crimes, receiving training, attacking people’s freedoms, and disturbing national unity.

LNA Pilots Graduate from Egyptian Air Force Academy

An analyst on social media published a photo of what are allegedly pilots fighting for Libyan National Army (LNA) forces graduating from the Egyptian Air Force Academy. Egypt has been a supporter of Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar’s Libyan National Army, providing weapons and training. Both the Government of National Accord (based in Tripoli) and LNA (based in eastern Libya) air forces suffer manpower shortages, and the training of new pilots is essential for LNA forces, as their attack on Tripoli is stalled. Egypt donated warplanes and helicopters along with ammunition in 2014 to LNA forces, including seven MiG-21 fighter jets and eight Mi-8 helicopters.

Egypt, U.S., U.A.E., and Saudi Arabia Launch Joint Naval Drills

Naval and air forces from Egypt, the United States, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia are participating in the Eagle Salute and Eagle Response 2019 exercises that began July 22. The joint drill is taking place in the Red Sea and is meant to boost maritime security in the area. Saudi Arabia is participating as an observer. These drills will include the participation of F-16 fighter jets, as well as exercises focused on disarming marine mines and explosives.

Egypt Receives Additional U.S. MRAPs

According to Jane’s, the Egyptian Ministry of Defense has received the final shipment of 101 out of 930 US-made mine-resistant, ambush-protected (MRAP) vehicles and has ordered an additional 1,000. The MRAPs were provided through the Excess Defense Articles Grant Program (EDA), which allows the sale of U.S. military surplus equipment to allies and partners at a reduced cost. In Egypt’s case, the MRAPs are provided at no cost, although Egypt is responsible for facilitating shipping.

Wilayat Sinai Claims Five Attacks Across North Sinai

On July 17, Wilayat Sinai claimed responsibility for an attack that killed three members of the Union of Sinai Tribes militia near Hasna. The following day, the group claimed an attack with an improvised explosive device (IED) on an Egyptian minesweeper near the village of Yamit, nearby Rafah. Wilayat Sinai claimed responsibility on July 21 for a sniper attack on a soldier in Sheikh Zuweid, as well as an IED attack on a bulldozer near Rafah. Wilayat Sinai also claimed responsibility for the July 18 suicide attack on a police checkpoint in Sheikh Zuweid. The group reported that the attack killed and injured five people when a militant detonated a suicide belt near the checkpoint.

The Islamic State released an infographic claiming 1,800 attacks internationally, with more than 8,000 killed and wounded for the first half of 2019. For Egypt, the infographic claims that 309 people were killed and injured in 112 attacks. Data collected by TIMEP falls short of this, indicating 99 reported attacks with 206 dead and wounded, including civilians.



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Egypt Security Watch provides the most comprehensive available resource to monitor Egypt's security situation, with a dataset that includes all instances of violence and state operations, state actor and terror group profiles, and expert analyses.