



# PROPHETIC TIMES

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## Islamic State finds safe haven in the Philippines

**November 8, 2018** atimes.com reported: "Despite Islamic State's failure last year to establish a caliphate in the southern Philippine city of Marawi, foreign militants continue to flock to the island of Mindanao, waiting in the wings to strike anew.

Security analysts and military officials say at least 100 foreign terrorist fighters are now holed up with a range of local armed groups that have pledged their allegiance to Islamic State.

Filipino troops needed five months to flush out Islamic State-allied Maute and Abu Sayyaf fighters from their positions in Marawi, which one year later has yet to rise from the ashes of the urban war that left its core in ruins.

Rommel Banlaoi, chair of the Philippine Institute for Peace, Violence and Terrorism Research, claims in an interview with Asia Times that Islamic State foreign fighters are now streaming into Mindanao and that the situation is 'getting worse.'

His claim is based on information he collected over several months from state security agencies. "The entry of FTFs (foreign terrorist fighters) to the Philippines continues despite the liberation of Marawi," Banlaoi told the Asia Times on October 30. He also says that at least 60 have been identified by state agents through their aliases, while nearly 30 others are unidentified.

The figure is significantly higher than the 48 foreign fighters that the Armed Forces of the Philippines' intelligence unit said were operating in Mindanao as of January 2018..."

## France calls for EU 'army' to contain Russia

**November 7, 2018** euobserver.com reported: "The EU needs a 'real European army' to defend itself against Russia, the French president has said. It also needs to fight populists such as Hungary's Viktor Orban and Italy's Matteo Salvini by becoming less 'ultra-liberal', he added.

'We will not protect Europeans unless we decide to have a true European army,' Emmanuel Macron told the France 1 radio station in an interview in Verdun, a WWI memorial site, in France on Tuesday (6 November).

'Faced with a Russia which is at our borders and has shown that it can be a threat ... we need a Europe which defends itself better alone, without just depending on the United States, in a more sovereign manner,' he said.

'We have been hit by intrusion attempts in cyber-space and multiple interventions in our democracies,' he added, referring to Russian election-meddling in the EU. Europe also had to 'protect itself' against the rise of China and against US policies that harmed European security, he said.

"When I see [US] president [Donald] Trump announcing that he's quitting a major disarmament treaty which was formed after the 1980s euro-missile crisis that hit Europe, who is the main victim? Europe and its security," he said, referring to Trump's recent decision to quit the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces treaty..."

## Pompeo abruptly postpones top-level US-NK talks

**November 7, 2018** spacewar.com reported: "US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Tuesday abruptly shelved plans to meet a top North Korean official in New York, the latest twist in diplomatic attempts to secure a potentially landmark peace deal.

The talks between President Donald Trump's top diplomat and the North Korean delegation, which had been due on Thursday, "will now take place at a later date," State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said.

"We will reconvene when our respective schedules permit," she added in a statement. State Department officials gave no further reasons for the delay to the meeting, although North Korea has stepped up its demands that the United States lift sanctions..."

## South Korea, U.S. resume suspended joint marine drills

**November 6, 2018** spacedaily.com reported: "South Korea and the United States on Monday resumed small-scale military training that was indefinitely suspended following an historic summit between US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

The combined marine drills were among 'select' joint exercises that were indefinitely delayed in June, after Trump met with Kim in Singapore and pledged to halt 'very provocative' and expensive joint military drills with Seoul.

But the Korean Marine Exchange Programme (KMEP), involving some 500 marines from the US and South Korea, will resume for two weeks from Monday in the South's southern city of Pohang, Seoul's defence ministry said.

'We have previously said we will conduct US-South Korea battalion-level or small-scale drills as planned,' ministry spokeswoman Choi Hyun-soo told reporters..."

## Turkey's Erdogan continues to destabilize the Middle East

**November 6, 2018** Arutz Sheva 7 reported: "Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is once again trying to stir up tensions in the Middle East in order to advance both his Islamist agenda and his Ottoman imperialistic aspirations.

The hot-headed Turkish leader is milking the Khashoggi scandal in order to shift the focus from the disastrous state of affairs in Turkey, where inflation jumped over 25 percent last week after the Turkish Lira lost more than 40 percent of its value against the dollar, and to camouflage his continuing attempts to take over eastern Syria where the Kurds have established an autonomous region.



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Erdogan is using the Khashoggi scandal to establish himself as the leader of the Sunni Muslim countries in the Middle East at the expense of Saudi Arabia – which is the custodian of the Muslim holy places in the world and has changed the Arab approach towards Israel...”

### **Sisi: Peace with Israel is ‘stable and permanent’**

*November 5, 2018* Arutz Sheva 7 reported: “Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi on Sunday hailed the peace agreement between Egypt and Israel as ‘stable and permanent.’

‘When Sadat raised his idea of peace, no one thought that this idea would be acceptable to the general opinion,’ the Egyptian president said at the World Youth forum in Sharm el-Sheikh in the Sinai Peninsula, referring to former Egyptian President Anwar Sadat who signed the peace treaty in 1979 with Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin. Sisi also said that most Egyptians supported the peace treaty.

Although Egypt became the first Arab country to sign a peace treaty with Israel in 1979, their ties have been formally cold at times, and Egypt’s political elite has remained hostile to any normalization of ties with Israel...”

### **Iranian crowds chant ‘Death to Israel’ and ‘Down with US’**

*November 4, 2018* Arutz Sheva 7 reported: “Crowds of Iranians called for ‘Death to Israel’ and ‘Down with the U.S.’ in a rally to mark the 39th anniversary of the seizing of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran during the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

The rally in the capital of Tehran comes as the United States restored all sanctions that had been lifted on Iran during the era of the Iran nuclear deal. Demonstrations also were held in other Iranian cities, The Associated Press reported.

Some 52 Americans were held hostage for 444 days in Iran. Following the hostage-taking, the U.S. halted diplomatic relations with Israel.

The White House on Friday announced that ‘all the sanctions’ relieved under the 2015 Iran deal would be reimposed, though at least eight countries — including major Iranian oil consumers India, South Korea and Japan — would get cutouts allowing them to continue purchasing Iranian oil...”

### **N. Korea warns of returning to nuclear policy**

*November 4, 2018* spacedaily.com reported: “North Korea has warned the United States it will “seriously” consider returning to a state policy aimed at building nuclear weapons if Washington does not end tough economic sanctions against the impoverished regime.

For years, the North had pursued a “byungjin” policy of simultaneously developing its nuclear capabilities alongside the economy.

In April, citing a “fresh climate of detente and peace” on the peninsula, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un declared the nuclear quest complete and said his country would focus on “socialist economic construction”. But a statement issued by the North’s foreign ministry said Pyongyang could revert to its former policy if the US did not change its stance over sanctions.

“The word ‘byungjin’ may appear again and the change of the line could be seriously reconsidered,” said the statement carried by the official KCNA news agency late Friday. At a historic summit in Singapore in June, US President Donald Trump and Kim signed a vaguely-worded statement on denuclearisation.

But little progress has been made since then, with Washington pushing to maintain sanctions against the North until its “final, fully verified denuclearisation” and Pyongyang condemning US demands as “gangster-like”....”

### **US Iran sanctions move hits European companies**

*November 3, 2018* spacedaily.com reported: US President Donald Trump’s decision to pull the United States out of the 2015 nuclear accord with Iran and reimpose a raft of sanctions puts European businesses on the spot.

While the European Union insists it will stick by the nuclear accord to allow trade to continue with Iran, European companies are wary of being caught out by the US sanctions regime and many have already cut back their presence...

The sanctions introduced in August spooked the major automakers who were already cautious about their future in Iran and mindful of their much bigger business interests in the United States. Germany’s Daimler, which was teaming up with two Iranian firms to assemble Mercedes-Benz trucks, said it had decided against going ahead.

Volkswagen had said last year it planned to resume business after a 17-year break but was very guarded in response to the latest US decision. VW “conforms with all the applicable national and international laws and regulations concerning exports,” a spokesman said.

French automakers Renault and PSA, who make nearly half the cars sold in Iran, were cautious. PSA, behind the Peugeot, Citroen and Opel brands, said in June it was preparing to suspend activities in Iran. Renault says it intends to keep its activities in Iran but stands ready “to reduce the scale very sharply” if need be.

Aviation saw large contracts reached following the 2015 nuclear accord as Iran set about modernising an ageing fleet. Airbus booked deals for 100 jets and was looking forward to many more. However, the potential loss of business in Iran would not weigh overly heavily on Airbus given its total outstanding order book of some 7,168 planes at end-June.

Oil is the key issue with global implications for all concerned as Washington aims to cut off Iran’s key source of foreign income. French energy giant Total announced in August it was pulling out of a massive natural gas project. Italian energy giant ENI meanwhile has a contract to take two million barrels of oil per month which it will not renew after it finishes this year.”...”

