

**Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale**

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## Group 22 – Information Centre for Asylum and Migration

# Briefing Notes

27 March 2017

Summarised edition owing to reprioritisation of tasks

### Egypt

#### Bombing of University building

The branch of Cairo's al-Azhar University in al-Arish on the Sinai peninsula was destroyed in a bomb blast on 25 March 2017. Explosives were reportedly attached to the entire building with the result that all four storeys of the building collapsed.

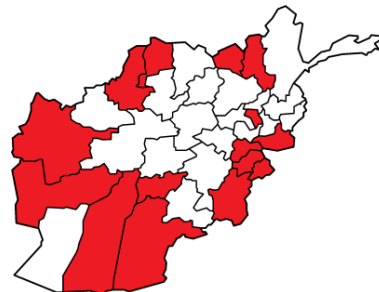
#### Ten troops killed by Islamists

Ten troops were reportedly killed in roadside bombs in fighting against ISIS. The counter-terrorism unit of the army secured half a tonne of explosives and seized two vehicles containing grenades and hundreds of mobile telephones.

### Afghanistan

#### Armed conflicts

Armed conflicts, cleansing campaigns and raids by security forces as well as attacks and bombings by rebels continue in which civilians are also being killed or wounded. According to press reports, the following provinces were affected last week: Uruzgan, Helmand (where the Taliban seized Sangin district on 23 March 2017), Kandahar (southern Afghanistan), Jawzjan (where ISIS militants were also reportedly killed in military operations, indicating that ISIS is spreading), Faryab (northern Afghanistan), Kapisa, Logar (central Afghanistan), Paktika, Nangarhar, Khost, Paktia (south-eastern Afghanistan), Takhar, Kunduz (north-eastern Afghanistan), Farah and Herat (western Afghanistan).



#### Suicide bombings and attacks

On 23 March 2017, eight security officers were killed in a suicide bombing, 14 other persons were wounded.

On 22 March 2017, a former provincial council member from Laghman died of gunshot wounds sustained.

On 23 March 2017, nine police officers were killed in a so-called insider attack in Kunduz (north-eastern Afghanistan).

### Bangladesh

#### Bomb blast in Sylhet

On 26 March 2017 a bomb exploded near a building converted by the military in Sylhet where commandoes have been trying to flush out a group of suspected Islamist militants. The bombings left four civilians, including two police officers, dead and at least 50 others wounded. ISIS has claimed responsibility for the bombing.

## **Israel / Palestinian Autonomous Territories**

### **Concern over escalation following assassination of Hamas leader**

Following the assassination of Mazen Faqha, a high-ranking member of Hamas which rules in the Gaza Strip, fear is growing that violence is once again on the rise. Israeli media reported on 26 March 2017 that Hamas had closed the border crossing to Israel for security reasons. Israel's Army announced on Israel's radio that it was preparing its troops for a potential retaliation by Hamas to the assassination.

## **Yemen**

### **Protests in Yemen against military intervention by Saudi Arabia**

On 26 March 2017, several hundreds of thousands of persons took to the streets of Sanaa to protest against the foreign military intervention led by Saudi Arabia. The demonstration was held on the second anniversary of the date on which airstrikes began.

## **Jordan**

### **Executions**

The state-owned news agency Petra reported on 25 March 2017 that 15 men convicted of terrorism charges, including ten terrorists, had been executed. The men reportedly belonged to a cell that is being held responsible for a number of attacks in the Arab country.

## **Russian Federation**

### **Mass protests in Russian cities**

Almost 1,000 persons were arrested at an anti-demonstration rally that took place in Moscow on 26 March 2017. The opposition organisation "OVD Info" say at least 933 persons had been arrested whereas the police claim around 500 persons had been arrested. Tens of thousands of persons took to the streets in Russian towns and cities throughout the day to demonstrate against corruption, leading to the arrest of hundreds of demonstrators, including top Kremlin critic Alexey Navalny. He was detained and is to be brought before a judge on 27 March 2017. Reporters from Reuters news agency had observed how Nawalny was held by police officers and was taken to a police vehicle. Hundreds of demonstrators gathered around the bus and tried to prevent it from driving away. Nawalny had urged people to take part in the demonstration in Moscow and in protests held simultaneously in other Russian towns and cities. According to the police, between 7,000 and 8,000 persons took part in the protest held in the centre of Moscow which had not been authorised by the municipal authorities. Thousands of persons also took to the streets in other towns and cities where "OVD Info" says dozens of demonstrators were arrested.

Outwardly the protests appear to be in response to a suspicion spread by Navalny that Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has assembled "a corruption empire" of luxury properties, yachts and vineyards. Nawalny had accused Medvedev of large-scale corruption in a video broadcast on the Internet in early March 2017. He also published proof of alleged bribes accepted by high-ranking government employees.

## **Syria**

### **Persons killed in airstrikes**

According to media reports, at least 32 persons were killed last week in airstrikes. Heavy fighting broke out in the East of Damascus when Islamist militants attempted to seize new areas. The Syrian Army subsequently announced it had taken back all rebel-held positions. More than 60 persons were wounded in airstrikes carried out by unknown aircraft on the outskirts of Damascus. According to human rights activists, at least 16 persons were killed (the majority of whom were prisoners and prison guards) in another airstrike in the province of Idlib which is in the grip of rebels.

### **Turkey**

#### **Referendum on EU membership**

According to media reports, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is considering holding a referendum on EU membership which could take place after the referendum on the presidential system that has been scheduled for 16 April 2017. President Erdogan has also announced that he is willing to accept international consequences for the reintroduction of the death penalty which he supports.

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