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SOUTH SUDAN REBELS REJECT CREATION OF 28 NEW STATES

Rebels in South Sudan have condemned President Salva Kiir's creation of 28 new states. The rebels claim that the creation of new states violates a peace agreement and signals that the president is not committed to the peace process. President Kiir argues that South Sudan's Transitional Constitution allowed him to create the states, and that the new states would decentralize power and ensure rural populations better access to resources. The rebels argue that agreements signed in August clearly refer to the creation of 10 states, not 28. Meanwhile, civilians who live in Unity State, the area most intensely affected by recent violence, are facing potential famine conditions. (Voice of America, October 5, 2015; Al Jazeera, October 4, 2015)

ISIS MILITANTS ATTACK MAIN LIBYAN OIL PORT

ISIS militants attacked one of Libya's key oil ports, Es Sider, with guns and a car bomb in an escalation of their campaign to control the state. ISIS has gained ground in Libya by exploiting a civil war between two rival factions, each with their own government. Militants attacked guards at a gate near Es Sider, which is under the internationally-recognized government's control. One guard was killed and two more were wounded. In a second attack involving a car bomb four militants were killed. (Reuters, October 1, 2015)

ISIS EXECUTES 70 SUNNI TRIBESMEN

ISIS militants executed 70 members of the Al Bu Nimr tribe in Khanizir, Anbar province, because they had relatives working in the Iraqi defense forces, according to Sheik Naeem al-Gaoud. The tribesmen were executed via firing squad. The Al Bu Nimr have played a key role in fighting jihadists for years. In 2014, ISIS militants killed more than 500 members of the tribe, but its leaders were undeterred and continued to combat ISIS. (BBC, October 5, 2015)

EGYPT SUPPORTS RUSSIAN MILITARY MOVES IN SYRIA

Egyptian foreign minister Sameh Shoukry claims that Russia's recent military intervention in Syria will stem the spread of terrorism and help cripple ISIS. Egypt has avoided directly showing support for Assad, even as the relationship between Russia and Egypt warms. In June, the two nations held their first-ever joint naval exercise. (Al Arabiya, October 4 2015)

MILITARY SITUATION IN SYRIA CONTINUES TO ESCALATE

A Russian plane violated Turkish airspace on October 4 during operations in Syria. Russian authorities claim that the incident was due to a navigational error. This incident was part of a Russian airstrike campaign in Syria to support Assad's regime. Russia's public intervention on Assad's behalf has prompted the Gulf states to plan their own boost in support to Assad's enemies. Meanwhile, some analysts speculate that Russian bombing in Syria has the potential to elevate global oil prices, which would help support Russia's faltering economy. (BBC, October 5, 2015; The Guardian, October 3 2015; The Telegraph, October 4, 2015)