



## EURASIA SECURITY WATCH

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# Eurasia Security Watch: No. 353

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**Related Categories:** Europe; Middle East; Russia; Turkey

### **TURKEY: NO APOLOGY FOR DOWNED RUSSIAN PLANE**

Turkey refuses to apologize for downing a Russian warplane that crossed into its airspace while conducting missions in neighboring Syria. Ankara claims it has every right to defend its airspace from foreign threats. NATO supported Turkey for this stance. Russia has responded with economic sanctions but President Putin said there will be no military reprisal. Meanwhile, Russia continues to escalate its airstrikes in northwestern Syria, close to the border with Turkey, despite the lack of ISIS fighters there. (Reuters November 30, 2015; Reuters November 29, 2015)

### **EU AND TURKEY COME TO MIGRANT AGREEMENT**

Turkey has promised to help stem the flow of migrants into the European Union in exchange for an initial 3 billion euros (\$3.2 billion) in EU aid for the 2.2. Syrians already living in Turkey and a revival of discussions on Turkey's bid to join the EU. The aid is meant to improve the standard of living for refugees in Turkey and disincentivize them to try to cross into the EU through Greece. (Reuters November 30, 2015)

### **IAF ATTACKS SYRIAN ARMY, HEZBOLLAH**

The Israel Air Force recently attacked Hezbollah and Syrian Army targets around Qalamoun, Syria, near the Syrian-Lebanese border. The attack killed and wounded several Hezbollah fighters. Last week, the IAF attacked targets in the same area. Qalamoun has been a major hub for Hezbollah fighters to move equipment to and from Syria. (*Jerusalem Post* November 29, 2015)

### **FOUR EGYPTIAN POLICE KILLED IN ISIS ATTACK**

Masked gunmen opened fire on an Egyptian police checkpoint and killed four officers. The incident occurred in Saqqara, 22 miles from Cairo. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack. ISIS has been operating in Egypt for some time, but to date its attacks were limited to the remote Sinai Peninsula. (Al Jazeera November 28, 2015; BBC November 28, 2015.)

### **U.S. SENATORS CALL FOR 20,000 TROOPS IN IRAQ AND SYRIA**

Two United States senators, John McCain (R - AZ) and Lindsey Graham (R - SC), have called for increasing ground troops in Iraq to 10,000, nearly triple their current level. The senators are also calling for the deployment of the same number of troops to Syria. They criticized President Obama's strategy to counter ISIS, which relies heavily on airstrikes and local opposition, arguing that defeating ISIS will require the direct involvement of U.S. ground troops. (Reuters November 29, 2015)