



## Current Conflicts – new challenges

Since the withdrawal of forces from Afghanistan, where Denmark was involved as part of the international Security Forces (ISAF), international attention has turned towards other parts of the world. This issue of Contemporary Conflicts a.o. focuses on two of the conflicts that currently hold the attention of Denmark and most of the Western world. The article **Terror.com – IS's Social Media Warfare in Syria and Iraq** looks at how the terrorist organization Islamic State strategically uses social media as part of its armed activities. **The Past as Strategy – Russia and its use of history in the Ukraine conflict** examines how Russian rhetoric on Ukraine holds references to Nazism – a worrying circumstance in regards to any de-escalation of the conflict, the author argues. Also, the article **New Russia – Putin's Potemkin Village that could be** is a comment on how the situation in Ukraine can be understood with reference to historical borders.

Looking to another corner of the world, **Whither the Hybrid Threat?** draws on lessons learned from Sri Lanka's Tigers (LTTE) to examine conflicts that involve non-state actors capable of hybrid warfare. Finally, the article **National Identity in Post-Gaddafi Libya** looks at the new constitution in Libya in terms of national identity.

Ole Kværnø, dean

## Terror.com - IS's Social Media Warfare in Syria and Iraq



Like other non-state actors, for a while now the terrorist organisation Islamic State (IS) in Iraq and Syria has employed a social-media strategy in order to advance their strategic objectives. At the moment, however, IS seems to be more successful in their on-line activities than other similar organisations. This article looks at just how IS uses social media strategically as part of its armed activities in Syria and Iraq.

Author: Thomas Elkjer Nissen, military researcher, Royal Danish Defence College

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## The Past as Strategy – Russia and its use of history in the Ukraine conflict



## New Russia—Putin's Potemkin Village that could be





Ever since events started to unfold in Ukraine in February 2014, it has been a point of contention what the Kremlin's objectives in Ukraine actually are. It is also open to interpretation how the Russian government perceives the situation in Ukraine. This article approaches these questions by looking at the Russian rhetoric concerning Ukraine. The use of references to Nazism, to World War II and to genocide when the Ukrainian side is portrayed in Russian media or by official figures is a worrisome sign. It indicates that Russia is unlikely to – and probably even unable to – deescalate its conflict with Ukraine.

Author: Niels Bo Poulsen, dr., Royal Danish Defence College

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Consigned until a few months ago to the dustbin of history, this spring the old tsarist territory of 'New Russia' suddenly seemed about to be reborn. Several twists and turns in a now eight-month old crisis later, the embryonic territory still lies dormant, awaiting the breath of life from the only man who can breathe it upon it: Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Author: Matthew Dal Santo, dr.

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## Whither the Hybrid Threat?



Preparation for conflict in the 21st century requires serious consideration of the threat posed by non-state actors capable of hybrid warfare. Defined as a fused mix of conventional methods, irregular formations or tactics, terrorism and criminal disorder; hybrid warfare is unique for its synchronicity and fluidity of modes. Observers of contemporary hybrid actors like the Chechen rebels and the Hezbollah have been quick to remark upon the challenges posed by such multi-modal warfare.

Author: Piyumi Kapugeekiyana, dr.

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## National Identity in Post-Gaddafi Libya



After the international intervention in Libya and the overthrow of Gaddafi in 2011, the Libyan people are, as the summer of 2014 draws to a close, finally facing the crucial task of setting a new constitution. The main question is which Libyan national identity the constitution will set forth. Will it be an Arab and Islamic national identity? Or will it be more inclusive of the non-Arab Libyans and the secular part of the population?

Author: Anne Sofie Schøtt, Senior Lecturer, Royal Danish Air Force Academy

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## Publications

[BRICS and Coexistence: An Alternative Vision of World Order](#); Odgaard, L., Mandrup, T. & de Coning, C. (eds.)  
[Secrecy Hampers Strategic Use of Danish Special Operations](#); Ehrensvård, L  
[Danish Special Operations - Comprehensive Reorganization and Innovation are Necessary](#); Ehrensvård, L  
[Special Operations - the Central Role of Air Capabilities](#); Ehrensvård, L  
[Special Operations can Increase Denmark's Strategic Options](#); Ehrensvård, L  
[Unmanned and Unarmed: On the Future Use of Unmanned Aerial Systems in the Danish Armed Forces](#); Schaub, Kristensen, Pradhan-Blach

## Colophon

Copenhagen September 2014

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ISSN: 2246-3356  
Editor: Ole Kværnø, Dean

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