

# Weekly Intelligence Brief

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## US to Aid Ecuador in Maintaining Internal Security

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On 22 JAN, President Biden met with President Noboa to express the United States' support for combatting Ecuador's recent increase in violence. The United States is going to send Ecuador over 20,000 bulletproof vests and more than \$1 million in defense and emergency equipment. While the United States is not going to send troops, the Department of Homeland Security is deploying people to help aid Ecuador with its police training and forensic analysis. Additionally, the Federal Bureau

of Investigation will be increasing its personnel to support the Ecuadorian National Police.

On 08 JAN, Ecuador declared a 60-day State of Emergency following notorious drug lord José Adolfo Macías Villamar's escape from prison. The State of Emergency includes a curfew imposed nationwide from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. However, there are exceptions for those traveling to and from the airport or essential workers. Following Villamar's escape, President Noboa designated 22 different gangs as terrorist organizations. Ecuador's military is currently being deployed internally to

regain control of prisons after several guards were taken hostage. On 16 JAN, the military claimed they regained control of the prisons and freed the administrative personnel and guards who were being held hostage.

We can assess with high confidence it is likely that the United States will continue to support Ecuador, but it is unlikely the United States will send troops for support. We can also assess with moderate confidence that it is likely the internal conflict will continue even with the military acting internally.

# Kata'ib Hizballah Announces the Suspension of Their Attacks on US Forces

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On 30 JAN, the Iran-backed foreign terrorist organization, Kata'ib Hizballah (KH), announced that it would suspend military and security operations against the occupation forces, referring to the United States and its allies in the Middle East.

On 20 JAN, KH attacked the al-Asad Airbase in Iraq and injured several United States personnel. In response, on 24 JAN the United States conducted airstrikes on three KH facilities that

served as headquarters, storage, and training locations.

On 28 JAN, KH conducted a one-way drone attack on the Tower 22 United States military base in Jordan. This attack killed three United States soldiers and injured at least 48 others. At the time of KH's announcement on 30 JAN, the United States had not militarily responded to the attack. The chairman of the United States House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Mike Turner, stated that Iran supports KH and was responsible for the attack.

We can assess with moderate confidence that it is likely that KH announced the suspension of their attacks on United States forces to avoid a military retaliation. At this time, we cannot assess how the United States will respond to the 28 JAN attack or the 30 JAN announcement.



# The Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) on Burma's Military

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On 31 JAN, the United States Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctioned individuals and entities linked to Burma's military. These sanctions came in response to the violent treatment of the citizens of Burma. The OFAC and the United States sanctioned the Shwe Byain Phyu Group of Companies and the Myanmar Five Star Line Company Limited for their connection to Burma's military and the Myanmar Economic Holdings Public Company Limited (MEHL).

Burma's military took control of the state in FEB 2021 and overthrew a democratically elected government. As a result of the coup, political figures were arrested, approximately 10,000 homes were burned, and almost 2.6 million people were displaced. In response, the OFAC and the United States sanctioned MEHL in MAR 2021.

From the response of the OFAC and the United States, we can assess with moderate confidence it is likely that OFAC and the United States will continue to increase sanctions on materials that assist Burma's military.

We can also assess with low confidence that the current sanctions will influence Burmese operations related to internal issues.



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