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BICC Global Militarisation Index 2014 \

For the first time five European countries ranked among the Top 10

In the 2014 GMI, Israel, Singapore, Armenia, Syria, Russia, Cyprus, South Korea, Jordan, Greece and Azerbaijan (position 1 to 10) are the countries with the highest levels of militarisation worldwide. The experts of BICC point out that the high levels of militarisation in these countries are mostly the result of comprehensive arms purchases. The Middle East remains the most militarised region. For the first time five countries from Europe are ranked under the top 10.

Middle East

“Concerning its militarisation the Middle East still is a global focal point”, Jan Grebe, author of the GMI and researcher at BICC, underlines. **Israel** continues to lead the Index in position 1 and shows the highest level of militarisation in the world. The Arab states of **Syria** (position 4), **Jordan** (position 8), **Kuwait** (position 12) and **Oman** (position 16) are also some of the most militarised countries in the region. Regional actors like **Saudi Arabia** and **Iran** can be found in position 20 and 31. The causes for the generally high levels of militarisation are manifold. They range from the defence of existing authoritarian regimes against possible internal adversaries to external conflicts and potential threats from the outside. **“Growing distrust and armed conflicts cause concerns that fatal arms dynamics will develop in that region”, Jan Grebe** stresses.

Europe

The neighbouring states **Armenia** (rank 3) and **Azerbaijan** (rank 10), both part of Europe, show very high levels of militarisation and have initiated major increases in their military expenditures over past years. **“This situation is dangerous”, Conrad Schetter**, Research Director of BICC, assesses and recommends using the GMI as an “early warning system”. **“Political actors now must become engaged to avoid further escalation”, Conrad Schetter** appeals. The high levels of militarisation in the South Caucasus must, however, be seen in the overall context. **Russia** (position 5) has been pursuing a comprehensive military reform since 2008 in which the armed forces are to be repositioned, the weapons systems to be modernised and the arms industrial capacities to be improved. Currently it delivers arms to both South Caucasian republics.

Between 2009 and 2013, expenditures for equipment and procurement in **European NATO states** fell by more than US \$ 9 billion. Nonetheless, some states show high levels

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of militarisation (Greece: 9, Estonia: 21, Turkey: 24, Bulgaria: 27, Portugal: 28). In the current GMI, **Germany** is on position 87 and thus remains in the middle of the field. With a defence budget of US \$48.8 billion, it is in position 7 of global military expenditures; nevertheless its military expenditures as a share of the country's GDP only come to a moderate 1.4 per cent.

Asia

With **Singapore** and **South Korea**, two countries from East Asia can be found amongst the ten most militarised countries in the world. Singapore has continued to increase its military spending in past years which relates to the strong position of the national arms industry. The country's procurement efforts are also a reaction to the many unsolved territorial issues, the importance of strategic waterways in the region and the Chinese anti-access / area denial strategy. South Korea's high level of militarisation must be viewed in the context of the ongoing state of war with North Korea. **"The increased importance of the navy also points to the fact that unsolved territorial issues with Japan and China in the Yellow Sea as well as the protection of navigable waters also have an influence on its procurement policy"**, Jan Grebe explains.

The GMI

The Global Militarisation Index (GMI) depicts the relative weight and importance of the military apparatus of any given state in relation to its society as a whole. The 2014 update of the GMI is based on data from the year 2013 (i. e. the most recent year for which data has been available) and covers 152 states. BICC's GMI is supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).