

## LEMURIA

### CONTEXT ANALYSIS

#### BY RISK MANAGEMENT COMPANY OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSULTING

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Lemuria is a presidential republic of 8.2 million people, roughly the size of Hungary, located on the temperate latitudes of South-West Asia. Bordered in the East by the Chalus mountain range and in the West by the Vinsee Sea, it has a mild continental climate—warm in summer, snowy in winter—and three neighboring countries: the Fee Democratic Republic of Skythia in the North, the Republic of Mykonos in the East and the Christian Kingdom of Naxos in the South. Approximately 50% of the country is made of cultivated farmland.

The quite homogeneous population is 60% urban, made of 83% ethnic Lemurians, with neighboring groups (Naxians, Mykonians and Skythians) straddling the borders. The Gorky minority, a semi-pastoral group living in the Chalus Mountains, is not officially recognized and probably accounts for up to 1,6 million people geographically split between the three borders. In addition, 220,000 Gorky refugees fleeing ethnic and political persecutions from Mykonos and Naxos live in three large Lemurian camps. Many unregistered refugees also live in cities, especially Kadisha. The Gorkys are Ismaelian Muslims and have always suffered from cultural and religious prejudice from Lemurians, Naxians and Mykonians.

The official state language is Lemurian; the majority still speaks Russian and English is becoming popular amongst the youth. The population is 55% Orthodox Christian and 40% Sunni Muslim. Although Lemuria is a traditionally secular society where communities respect one another, Christians tend to dominate the political and economic power structures while the majority of Muslims are farmers.

The educational system suffers from poor management, heavy bureaucracy and inertia. 86% of the population is literate but the number of functional schools and trained teachers is decreasing.

Lemurians trace their culture and history thousands of years back to the ancient kingdoms of Gor and Borogravia. Christianity was established as the state religion by the Romans in the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D. The area was subsequently invaded and ruled by Persians, Arabs, Mongols and Turks until its second independence in 1917. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, while ostensibly independent, it remained a client-state of the Soviet Union until 1991. In the 1990's the economy severely declined due to the derelict state of Lemuria's former major economic partners, widespread political protests and endemic government corruption. In 1999, the 22-day territorial war against F.D.R. Skythia further worsened the economy as many critical agricultural goods used to be imported from Skythia. The World Bank estimates that the population lost around 50% of its purchasing power in 15 years. In 2007 the 'Magnolia Revolution' supported by the USA and the EU elected billionaire Melchior Neumayr as the new head of state. Even though the new US-backed government engineered a series of economic and military reforms, political institutions remain heavily centralized and oligarchic.

Diplomatic relations with Skythia remain cold since the 1999 peace deal but small-scale economic trade is again flourishing between the two countries, making the prospect of a new conflict unlikely.

However, both sides made a systematic use of UXOs and landmines during the 1999 war, so roads and pathways are very dangerous. A small UN DPKO mission (UN Monitoring Mission in Lemuria) at the Northern border helps maintain the status quo.

Relations with Mykonos, which is Lemuria's larger and richer neighbor, have deteriorated since Neumayr took power in 2007: frequent minor border violations and closures keep tensions high. The Mykonian President accuses the Lemurian government of sheltering and protecting Gorky conspirators and freedom fighting groups among the Gorky refugee population, while Lemuria accuses Mykonos of regional omnipotence and spying activities—both claims are not entirely groundless.

Relations with Naxos are traditionally warm and friendly since both countries share many historical and cultural roots as well as a pro-West policy, but difficulties arose since the Naxian government started to embrace an increasingly fundamentalist view of Christian Orthodoxy, forcing many political and human rights Naxian activists to resettle in Lemuria, especially in the Southern plains and the city of Balarm. The closure of all Naxian 'heretic' universities in June 2018 particularly upset the Lemurian government, which also does not appreciate the religious fervor of Naxian clerics stirring discontent in Lemurian rural areas. However, both countries share a mutual mistrust against Mykonos.

One of Neumayr's earliest decisions was the complete reform of the national security system. He dissolved the whole police command on the ground of blatant corruption, replaced all officials, re-organized the chain of command and, through US and EU support, increased salaries and multiplied training exercises. The result is so far mitigated: corruption seems more endemic than initially assessed and many weapons belonging to discharged police units spread into the black market. On the other hand, the new Center for Disaster Response, created in 2010 to respond to sporadic floods in the grassland and to monitor seismic activities in the Chalus Mountains (the 1926 earthquake reached 7.6 on the Richter scale and destroyed most of Arados City), is regarded as one of the best managed in the region. Neumayr also maneuvered to pose as a resolute Western ally and declared the country's willingness to join NATO. He uses US military subsidies to increase and modernize the Lemurian military force. In particular, NATO helps rebuilding the Lemurian air force. This regularly infuriates the Mykonos government and Defense has now become the priority in the Mykonian ministerial budget.

The economy has less benefitted from the Magnolia revolution than what the international community initially expected. Big centralized industries often belonging to Neumayr's client base or oligarchs working with him still control most of the industry and retail services (supermarkets, gas stations, etc.). Agriculture, which has never recovered from the 1991 crash, remains one of subsistence. Extraction industries including iron, manganese and small offshore oil reserves provide a significant but declining part of the GDP. The neglected industrial infrastructure continues to cause frequent problems and incidents—e.g. electricity blackouts, sudden shortages of agricultural products in cities, road and railway accidents. Even though the Karuk Dam, which produces over half of the country's energy from the Arados River, is being maintained by a German-Lemurian consortium, other power-producing structures such as the Kadisha Nuclear Plant or the Gadir Refinery operate far below minimum safety standards. Recently, the government supported the growth of private enterprises, especially modern banking services as well as a fast-growing tourist industry on Vinsee resorts, to attract foreign investment. Last year the Ministry of Commerce showcased the opening of a few free trade zones in Gadir and Sur as a major economic accomplishment, but these areas are mostly used by IOs and NGOs.

Therefore, Lemuria's economic transition paradoxically combines post-Soviet elements with surprisingly modern and highly competitive sectors. Most Lemurian citizens have access to foreign banks and ATM machines—although credit remains scarce due to cultural habits—but only to one

government-owned mobile telephone company, which requires thorough identification, fingerprinting and unreasonable delays to issue a phone chip.

Socially, the Magnolia Revolution opened an era of unprecedented freedom of expression and the media is decidedly the freest and the most vivid in the sub-region. However, since July 2018, the government closed down several newspapers and introduced worrying 'anti-subversion' legislations, allegedly to limit negative influences from Lemurian closest neighbors. Despite a friendly attitude toward civil society organizations and NGOs, it is widely assumed that police 'monitoring' is customary. Far from being muzzled, the political opposition regularly criticizes this growing trend but knows there are limits to protests. Brutal response to the 2018 demonstrations in Gadir, which is traditionally defiant of the central government, was widely covered by the international media.

International organizations and NGOs are present in Lemuria since the 1990's. NGOs are registered at the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the Ministry of Plan. A small UNDP RCO office in Sur (United Nations Development Program's Resident Coordinator Office) coordinates UN agencies but a cluster system has not yet been established. UNOCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance) has a regional office in Alphagrad (Mykonos).

UNHCR, the largest UN agency, administrates three refugee camps in partnership with the government: the Kadisha camp in the North-East hosts 70,000 refugees, the Chalus camp in the East 100,000 refugees and the Southern camp in the South-East 40,000 refugees. UNHCR organizes support to refugees by sectors which are led by NGO Sector Leads: WASH, shelter, protection, health, education, food security and nutrition. The government officially states an open 'humanitarian policy' toward Gorky refugees but prohibits their long-term resettlement. It thus tries to limit assistance to in-kind temporary items and to push them out of urban areas, which causes sporadic tensions. The government strictly monitors the NGO use of cash grants to prevent refugees to access them.

UNICEF, UNFAO and WFP have a growing presence due to the frequency of small-scale disasters, especially periodic cycles of spring flooding and summer droughts in the Lemurian grassland, but also occasional diarrheal or typhus outbreaks. Since the recent emergency country assessment by UNDAC (UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination) NGOs currently try to organize an emergency response coordination mechanism.

UNMAL (United Nations Mine Action in Lemuria) is the coordinating body for mine and UXO monitoring in the North but is actually a very small office since little mine clearance is taking place.

Many international development agencies are present in Sur with various programs throughout the country. USAID recently updated its regional assessment and plans to triple its development program in the short-term with a focus on Democracy & Governance and Agriculture & Economic Growth. The European Union also concluded its 11<sup>th</sup> EDF programming (European Development Fund) with an emphasis on Governance and Infrastructure. Because of sub-optimal coordination, smaller donors (Swiss, Spanish, Norwegian, Swedish, Dutch and British agencies, amongst others) fund targeted projects, mostly pilots, but hesitate to establish long-term programming.



## LEMURIA MAP

BY UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SERVICES (JUNE 2020)

