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The demonstration was called by several associations supporting the Palestinians © Odd ANDERSEN / AFP

Pro-Palestinian Protests Took Over Europe

By Sarah Cernikova

On Saturday, the 4th of November, pro-Palestinian protests took place in major European cities, including Paris, London, Berlin, and Duesseldorf, among others. The protests, which drew around 80,000 people, were organized in cities with significant Muslim populations, and all the participants were demanding an immediate end to Israel's bombing of the Palestinian Gaza Strip. The main message of these protests was to urge the governments of the cities mentioned above to stop supporting Israel's attacks on innocent people, including hospitals and residential areas in the Gaza Strip. Some of the slogans that appeared at the protests referred to statements made by the Hamas-run Health Ministry in Gaza, which claimed that the Palestinian death toll in the Israel-Hamas war had reached 9,448.

The governments of Germany, France, and Great Britain supported Israel's right to defend itself after the Hamas attacks on the 7th of October. However, the protestors believed that this was a significant mistake on the part of Western governments, and instead of supporting these attacks, they called for a ceasefire and a peaceful solution with two states - Israel and Palestine.

The Paris protest was taken seriously, particularly due to the previous ban on pro-Palestinian events announced by French authorities. The authorities had declared that all events planned after the Hamas attack on the 7th of October were banned due to concerns about public disorder.

Israel's media noticed these protests and labeled them as anti-Israeli and the largest anti-Israel protests in years.



Turkey's President Tayyip Erdogan holds a news conference during the NATO summit at the Alliance's headquarters in Brussels, Belgium June 14, 2021. REUTERS/Yves Herman/Pool/File Photo [Acquire Licensing Rights](#)

US Military Involvement: From Gaza to Taiwan

By Ondrej Pragr

The United States is strategically shifting its military involvement in two distinct regions. The Pentagon has acknowledged the use of unarmed surveillance drones over Gaza. These drones support hostage recovery efforts, responding to the October 7 attack by Hamas on Israel. Although initially spotted on flight-tracking websites, these drones are primarily used for surveillance, not for coordinating Israeli military operations. In addition to this development, the US Navy recently tested the firing of lethal munitions from an unmanned surface vehicle (USV) in the Arabian Sea, enhancing American military capabilities in the Middle East. The US has also deployed two aircraft carriers to the eastern Mediterranean to contain the conflict between Hamas and Israel.

Another significant policy shift appeared in the US's approach to Taiwan. In this case, the US has granted an \$80 million foreign military finance (FMF) program to Taiwan, marking the first time in over 40 years that the US is using its own funds to provide weapons to a region it doesn't officially recognise. The focus is on redefining the relationship between the US and Taiwan, addressing Taiwan's increasing vulnerability as the military balance across the Taiwan Strait tips in China's favour. Washington is pushing Taiwan to re-arm and retrain its forces to adapt to this changing security environment, emphasizing a "fortress Taiwan" strategy that relies more on ground troops and artillery.

Is Sweden Really Close to NATO Membership?

By Sarah Cernikova

Two weeks after Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced the submission of Sweden's NATO bid to parliament for ratification, it seems the process won't be as smooth as expected. Last week, the Turkish parliament's foreign affairs committee chair said they would speed up ratifying Sweden's NATO membership. However, approval of the committee is necessary to advance the process so that the full general assembly can vote on Sweden's NATO membership. With the approval of both institutions, Erdogan can sign it into Turkish law.

On his return to Turkey from the Kazakhstan summit on Friday, November 3rd, Erdogan told reporters he would try to facilitate Sweden's NATO bid ratification. However, he also pointed out that while Sweden had taken some steps regarding protests organized by the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party in Sweden, they still did not take specific action against Kurdish militants. This statement suggested that there could be a further delay from the Turkish side in Sweden's NATO membership.

The situation changed after the visit of United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken to Turkey at the beginning of this week. Blinken told reporters that he and his Turkish counterpart had agreed to progress on Sweden's NATO membership bid in connection with the Turkish parliament's foreign affairs committee chair ratification.

Insights from Albanese's China Visit and the Pacific Islands Forum

By Ondrej Pragr

Albanese's recent talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping offer a glimpse into evolving diplomatic dynamics. His visit to China signifies Australia's pivot towards engaging with China, despite previous tensions. The discussions revolved around trade, climate change, and regional stability, underlining the importance of the economic relationship between the two nations. Climate change took centre stage in their talks, with a shared commitment to addressing this pressing global issue. This reflects the growing recognition of climate change as a mutual concern.



📷 Anthony Albanese with China's President Xi Jinping at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China. Photograph: Lukas Coch/AAP

Meanwhile, the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) in 2023 has brought vital developments to the forefront. The forum highlighted the escalating climate crisis, with Pacific nations, notably the Solomon Islands, emphasizing the urgency of tackling environmental challenges. This shift underscores the critical need for global action on climate change. The growing influence of China in the Pacific region was a notable theme at the PIF. The Solomon Islands' security deal with Beijing has raised concerns about its implications for regional stability and power dynamics in the Pacific.

These insights provide a snapshot of changing diplomatic relationships and the increasing significance of climate change on the global agenda, as well as the growing influence of China in the Pacific and its impact on regional security.



Chinese and Iranian representatives after signing the 25-year cooperation deal in 2021. Source: *Farsnews.ir*

War in Ukraine: Positional Warfare?

By Karolina Baldrianova

Last week, Ukrainian military forces' Commander-in-Chief, Valerii Zaluzhnyi, emphasized the complex reality of the Russia-Ukraine war in an interview with *The Economist*. While Ukraine's defensive efforts may appear successful, Zaluzhnyi revealed a more intricate military situation. The conflict has shifted towards positional warfare, a more static type of combat that exhausts resources and often leads to a stalemate. These conditions favour Russia as it gives them more time to rebuild their military capabilities.

When addressing how to reverse the situation, Zaluzhnyi highlighted the paramount role of technology. Control of the skies is vital for ground operations, making technology like missiles, shells, and drones crucial. So far, the artillery, rocket, and missile fire have constituted a significant portion of military operations. However, the initial advantage of new technologies is diminishing as both sides rapidly develop countermeasures. To address this challenge, Ukraine must bolster its air defence systems by upgrading technology, harnessing international intelligence while gathering data, and acquiring technologies with more developed GPS systems. Technologies must enable targeting enemy positions while neutralizing their capabilities before they can strike.

As Russia rebuilds its military arsenal, and the potential of stalemate threatens Ukraine's efforts to regain control of its territories, NATO allies must prevail with their military, diplomatic, economic, and technological support.

Middle Eastern Oil: Forging Alliances

By Karolina Badrianova

In October, Iran surpassed Saudi Arabia as China's primary supplier of seaborne crude oil. While Russia doubled its oil exports after Ukraine's invasion, thus fostering its position as the top pipeline supplier, seaborne imports play a crucial role in meeting Chinese demand. Historically, China heavily relied on Middle Eastern oil and maritime transport, mainly through the narrow and threat-prone Malacca Strait. This route presented various security challenges, including piracy. Moreover, the presence of US military vessels raised concerns about a potential blockade, especially if the situation between China and Taiwan escalates.

To enhance energy security, China has pursued diversification by seeking new suppliers, investing in pipeline infrastructure, or reducing the overall demand. Additionally, China has adopted a diplomatic approach, strengthening its presence in the Middle East and Africa. Given the Western sanctions on Iranian oil, China has emerged as a valuable customer, especially when the oil purchased comes with a favourable discount.

Nevertheless, the increased Chinese presence in the region is not limited to Iran alone. China has also bolstered its diplomatic and economic ties with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. This led many to question China's intentions, as the Middle East holds historical significance for the United States.

Morocco's Initiative to Support Sahel

By Petra Nemcova

King Mohammed VI has called for an international initiative to help Sahel countries access the Atlantic Ocean. He emphasized that these issues will not be solved by security and military measures alone but by cooperation and shared development. The King highlighted the challenges faced by African countries, particularly those bordering the Atlantic, citing a significant deficit in infrastructure and investment. He vowed to provide Morocco's transport and logistics infrastructure to Sahel countries, aiming to transform their economies and guarantee energy supplies for European countries. The initiative aims to create an institutional framework promoting security, stability, and shared prosperity among the 23 African countries bordering the Atlantic.



Burkina Faso: Des groupes armés commettent des crimes de guerre dans des localités assiégées. Photograph: Kenzo Tribouillard/AFP via Getty Images

Jihad Threats in Burkina Faso

Amnesty International has warned that armed groups are committing war crimes and human rights abuses in Burkina Faso by besieging towns. Jihadists have prevented residents from farming their land and grazing cattle, limiting access to health and education, forcing tens of thousands to leave their homes. Militants took control of at least 46 locations across the country in July, preventing access to food and drinking water and abducting women. Crimes include killings of civilians, abductions of women and girls, attacks on civilian infrastructure, and attacks on supply convoys. The tactic of besieging towns has increasingly been used since last year, namely by armed groups affiliated with Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State. The northern Sahel and western Boucle du Mouhoun regions have been particularly affected.

Will AI Remove Jobs?

By Petra Nemcova

The executive chairman of X and CEO of Tesla and SpaceX, Elon Musk, has warned that artificial intelligence (AI) has the potential to become the "biggest disruptive force in history." Also, he predicted that work would become unnecessary and that AI might surpass human intellect for the first time. Musk has called for a halt to AI research beyond Open AI's GPT-4 software and has frequently warned of AI threat to humanity.

In addition, Musk demanded international agreement on how to handle difficult problems relating to AI, such as how to develop and govern it safely.

A two-day summit in UK regarding AI

An AI summit occurred in Bletchley Park in England on November 1st. World leaders from the US, UK, EU as well as China met and decided on a global statement about the risks associated with AI. It has been agreed upon during this summit that AI is a major threat to humanity. China, despite being also labelled as a threat to technological safety, agreed to cooperate with the fellow leaders.



The summit has been held at Bletchley Park, where top British codebreakers worked during World War Two. Getty Images

The opinions regarding the job's replacements differed. For instance, the prime minister of the UK, Rishi Sunak, has stated during the summit that education reforms will increase skills, so there should be no worries about how AI will affect jobs. According to him, AI tools should serve as assistance rather than a replacement. Moreover, Sunak proposed the creation of a new qualification that would require all school dropouts in England to complete up to 18 credits of math and English. He also recommended initiatives to enhance technical training and strategies to expand adult education.

Israel-Hamas War



IDF radar captures Hamas striking a humanitarian corridor set up by the IDF on Saturday
(photo credit: IDF SPOKESPERSON'S UNIT)

Humanitarian Corridor in Gaza Under Attack

By Sarah Cernikova

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) on Saturday opened a corridor from the northern Gaza Strip to the south for civilians to get to a safer place to stay. At the same time, the fighting between the Israeli army and Hamas terrorists continues. The humanitarian crossing was limited to a particular time and road, which the residents of the northern Gaza Strip could use for leaving. The corridor was set up between 1:00 and 4:00 p.m. (local time) on Salah al-Din Road.

Nevertheless, Hamas terrorists took advantage of the openness of the road and the presence of Israeli military troops. They launched mortar and anti-tank missiles at the troops during the period when civilians were on the way to the south. Later, it was reported that Israel did not record any injuries or loss of any forces. Some analysts have highlighted the concerning strategy of Hamas terrorists using civilians as shields, emphasizing the urgency to cease this practice immediately.

However, even though Hamas terrorists attacked the corridor on Saturday, the IDF later decided to re-open this corridor again on Sunday. The IDF spokesperson for Arab media, Avichay Adraee, later at night on X, urged residents of the northern Gaza Strip who had not evacuated yet to do so now. The IDF has been calling for civilian evacuation from the northern part of Gaza for a longer time since they have intensified their air and ground assault in widely populated areas where Hamas militants are actively operating.