



The latest news from the World of Security

INSIDE

Question of Post-War Gaza

NATO's Cyber Security Cooperation

Biden-Xi Meeting and Loss in Eastern Mediterranean

Taiwan's Espionage Struggle and Chinese Tech's Role

Ukraine and EU Accession Talks

Sahel's Recent News

The Gas Supplies Affecting Energy Security

US and AI: Statement and Strategy

Israel-Hamas War



EU's chief diplomat Josep Borrell attends the EU-Israel Association Council in Brussels, Belgium, 03 October 2022. [EPA-EFE/OLIVIER HOSLET]

Josep Borrell: Question of Post-War Gaza

By Sarah Cernikova

The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, is scheduled to visit Israel, Palestine, and other Arab countries this week. This marks the first time Borrell will visit Israel since becoming the EU's top diplomat four years ago. His visit comes after the European Parliament president Metsola and the president of the European Commission von der Leyen visited Israel in October following the Hamas attack.

During his visit, Borrell will hold talks with regional leaders on humanitarian access, assistance, and political issues to find a solution for post-war Israel and Palestine. Borrell believes that the only way to end the Israel-Hamas conflict is to establish two states with the help of regional leaders.

In a pre-visit statement after an EU foreign ministers meeting in Brussels on Monday, November 13th, Borrell introduced his aims to achieve during meetings with regional leaders. European diplomacy shares the same view as the USA, as Borrell insists on the withdrawal of Israeli troops from occupied territories in Gaza. He also rejects any re-occupation or reduction of Gaza territory by Israel.

Borrell emphasized the importance of the involvement of leaders from Arab countries and intends for the EU to be more involved in the discussion about the Israel-Gaza question. According to Borrell, the EU is too distant from the issue and relies too much on solutions and actions from the United States.



The Rise of NATO's Cyber Security Cooperation

By Sarah Cernikova

The German foreign minister Annalena Baerbock hosted the first annual Cyber Defence Conference in Berlin on November 9th and 10th. During the conference, NATO's Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg stressed the importance of alliance cooperation in cyber security. He highlighted the increasing activities of authoritarian regimes like China and Russia in cyberspace as a significant concern.

Stoltenberg pointed out that cooperation in sharing information, spreading innovation, and coordinating collective defence in cyberspace is crucial to deter and defend against cyber-attacks on NATO allies. To illustrate his point, he used the example of Ukraine, where massive cyber-attacks preceded the Russian invasion in 2022. Therefore, NATO needs to take action, such as joint cyber exercises and training, to strengthen its cybersecurity capabilities.

Stoltenberg's essential message was to collaborate with reliable private sector partners to avoid cooperating with authoritarian regimes, mainly China, which could jeopardize NATO's technological independence. This is particularly important, as evidenced by the Russian dominance of European energy supplies.

Biden-Xi Meeting Preview and Tragic Loss in Eastern Mediterranean

By Ondrej Pragr

In a highly anticipated event, US President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping are set to meet on November 15 in the San Francisco Bay area during the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) summit. This marks their second face-to-face meeting during the Biden presidency, covering various topics. The agenda includes discussions on the Israel-Hamas war, the situation in Taiwan, the conflict in Ukraine, and concerns over election interference. The deteriorating US-China relations, highlighted by incidents such as the spy balloon controversy and the freeze in military communications, will likely contribute to the tone of the discussions. While some modest achievements, such as restoring military contacts and addressing the flow of Chinese-made Fentanyl, may result from the summit, both sides remain cautious about expecting breakthroughs to reset their relationship.

Simultaneously, tragedy struck in the eastern Mediterranean as five American service members lost their lives in a helicopter crash during a routine training exercise. The mishap occurred while refueling, and the incident underscores the increased US military presence in the region amid the Israel-Hamas conflict. The US has deployed two aircraft carriers, ships, and jets to the eastern Mediterranean, aiming to prevent the conflict from expanding to other parts of the region, particularly concerning the involvement of Lebanon's Hezbollah, supported by Iran, a key backer of Hamas. The crash has prompted President Biden to pay tribute to the fallen service members, emphasizing their dedication to putting "their lives on the line for our country every day."

Taiwan's Espionage Struggle and Chinese Tech's Role in Israeli Surveillance

By Ondrej Pragr

In a significant development, Taiwan intensified efforts against alleged Chinese spies ahead of a crucial presidential election. Accusations of espionage have risen in the past ten months, indicating an escalation in Beijing's espionage strategy beyond elite military circles. The upcoming election, where Taiwan's stance toward Beijing is a crucial factor, has seen increased scrutiny on individuals, with retired military personnel facing charges. Amid heightened tensions and China's growing military and political pressure, Taiwan's response to alleged espionage plays a crucial role in shaping its relationship with the mainland. In response to the espionage accusations, Taiwan's National Security Bureau is focusing on the military, with several cases involving retired military personnel accused of spying for China.



A statue of a soldier with its gun pointed toward Xiamen on the Chinese mainland across the Taiwan Strait on Liefu Island in Kinmen, Taiwan. Kinmen was once the site of fierce fighting. (An Rong Xu/Bloomberg News/Getty Images)

On a different note, Hikvision, a Chinese firm blacklisted by the US for its role in the repression of Uyghurs, is implicated in aiding Israeli surveillance in the West Bank. The company, known for its presence in Xinjiang, is accused of contributing to what Amnesty International calls "digital repression." Surveillance cameras manufactured by Hikvision are reported to be widely deployed, raising concerns about privacy and human rights. This revelation comes at a time of increased violence in the region, with implications for the daily lives and long-term freedom of movement of Palestinians under Israeli occupation. Concerns over Hikvision's involvement in Israeli surveillance extend beyond privacy issues, raising questions about the ethical implications of international collaboration with a company linked to human rights abuses.

The revelation underscores the intersection of technology, geopolitics, and human rights, prompting renewed discussions on the responsible use of surveillance tools in conflict zones and territories marked by long-standing geopolitical disputes.



Ursula von der Leyen and Volodymyr Zelenskyy shaking hands.
Source: *Sergei Supinsky/AFP/Getty Images*

Ukraine Recommended for EU Accession Talks

By Karolina Baldrianova

After nearly two decades of negotiations, Ukraine is on the verge of becoming an EU member. The journey began in the early 2000s and faced many backlashes – such as former President Yanukovich’s U-turn on accession talks in 2014, sparking the Maidan Revolution. In 2016, former European Commission (EC) President Jean-Claude Juncker proclaimed that Ukraine would not enter the EU in the next 20 years. Yet, after the Russian invasion, President Zelenskyy emphasized the importance of Ukraine’s membership, thus starting a new era of negotiations.

Earlier this year, Ukraine was granted candidate status by all 27 EU states, and in November, the EC adopted the Enlargement package, recommending starting accession talks with Ukraine and Moldova. EC President Ursula von der Leyen noted that Ukraine has made excellent progress despite fighting an existential war. The EU members will make the final decision during the summit in mid-December. As all members must support the decision, the spotlight is on Hungary’s President, Viktor Orbán, known for maintaining close ties with Russia. Moreover, if all agree, the accession process is far from simple, especially considering Ukraine is still a war-torn country. Nevertheless, the message to Russia is clear: Ukraine is a sovereign country with the right to determine its future.

Togo as Niger's Mediator

By Petra Nemcova

The military regime in Niger has requested Togo on November 6th to act as a mediator in negotiations with the international community. Niger's Minister of Defense, General Salifou Moby, held talks with Togolese President Faure Gnassingbé. The central countries which Niger wants to negotiate with are in West Africa (members of Ecowas) since they sanctioned Niger in the summer of 2022 following the coup d'état in July. The sanctions imposed are mostly financial sanctions. Togo has taken several bilateral initiatives to engage in dialogue with the military regime in Niger, and France has requested Togo to be a guarantor for the withdrawal of its troops. However, the ruling junta in Niamey has rejected Ecowas' requests to restore order and insists on a transitional period of up to three years.

Russia-Burkina Faso Cooperation

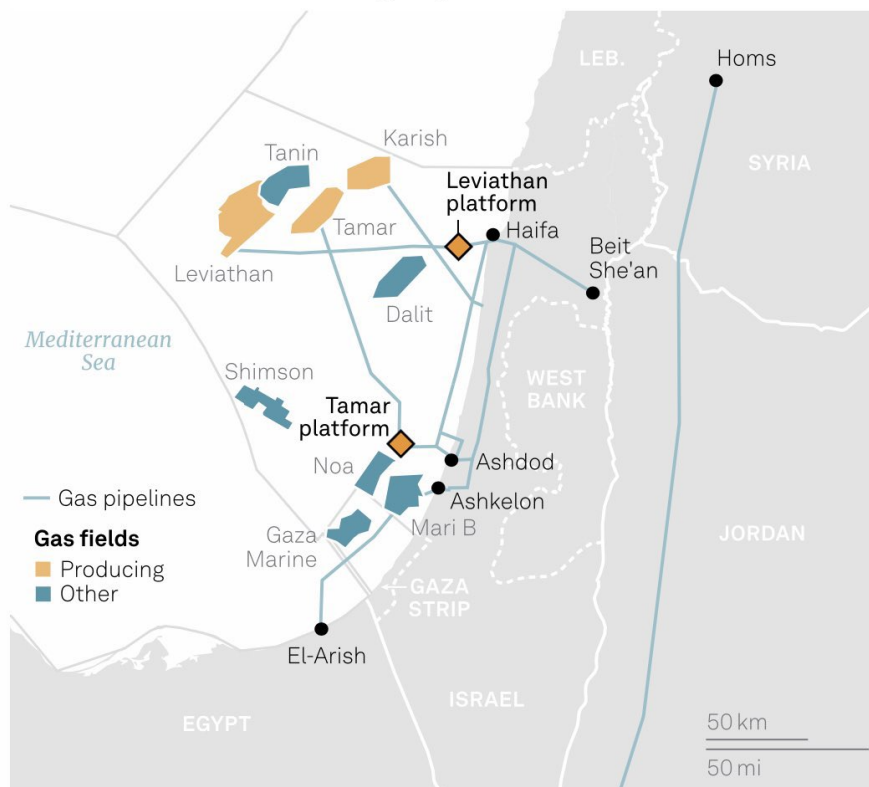
Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoygu met with Burkina Faso's Col. Kassoum Coulibaly in Moscow to discuss military cooperation. Shoygu praised Coulibaly's prompt arrival and expressed the importance of increasing cooperation in the defense sector and economy. Shoygu also met with Nicaraguan counterpart Julio Cesar Aviles Castillo, where military and military-technical topics were discussed.

Israel-Hamas War: The Gas Supplies Affecting Energy Security

By Karolina Baldrianova

Israel has resumed operations at the offshore Tamar gas field, signalling positive development for the regional gas supplies. The Tamar field, managed by U.S. company Chevron, contributes to nearly 40 % of Israel's gas production. Besides Tamar, Leviathan and Karish gas fields in the Mediterranean Sea are also essential sources of Israeli gas production.

Chevron shuts in Tamar gas platform offshore Israel



Source: S&P Global Commodity Insights

Following the events on 7th October, Israel's Ministry of Energy halted Tamar field operations and suspended exports to Egypt through the subsea East Mediterranean Gas (EMG) pipeline. Despite using an alternative pipeline through Jordan, stopping the operations negatively affected the energy security of both Jordan and Egypt. While multiple shortages occurred throughout Egypt, the government has constrained gas consumption. Consequently, Egypt decided to halt LNG exports to the EU and Turkey. It is important to note that Egypt has increased LNG exports after Russia invaded Ukraine, substituting some of the Russian gas supplies to Europe.

Restarting operations at the Tamar field positively impacts the region's energy security. However, whether the volumes to Europe will also increase remains uncertain amid the ongoing Hamas-Israel war. Especially if Israel opts to prioritize domestic consumption over exports. In addition, all the fields are susceptible to military attacks, imposing more difficulties for regional energy security.

Joint Statement Between the US and Paraguay

By Petra Nemcova

In November 2023, U.S. and Paraguay's Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment, Jose W. Fernandez, met to discuss cybersecurity and digital cooperation. Both countries agreed to strengthen cooperation to prevent and respond to cyber threats, promote a trusted digital ecosystem, and work towards achieving digital infrastructure goals. Also, both governments agreed on promoting a safe, secure, and reliable internet to enable people to engage openly, to enhance economic growth, and to exercise people's freedoms and human rights. The U.S. government plans to broaden collaboration with like-minded partners.

The US Enterprise AI Strategy

The Department of State has released its first-ever "Enterprise Artificial Intelligence Strategy FY 2024-2025: Embracing Diplomacy through Responsible A I" (EAIS) on November 9, 2023. The EAIS aims to establish a centralized vision for AI innovation, infrastructure, policy, governance, and culture, focusing on responsible and ethical design, development, acquisition, and application of AI. One reason why the Strategy has been released is that AI capabilities present opportunities for public diplomacy, language translation, management operations, information proliferation, task automation, and code generation.



Image: Shutterstock / Built In

The EAIS focuses on four goals: leveraging secure AI infrastructure, fostering a culture that embraces AI technology, ensuring AI is applied responsibly, and innovating. The implementation of the EAIS builds on the success of the Department's Enterprise Data Strategy and its associated data campaigns. Its success will be monitored and measured over the following 2 years.

Israel-Hamas War



Palestinian children fill containers with water in Rafah. There has been little water to drink or wash with since Israel's bombardment began on October 7. [Mohammed Abed/AFP]

Fuel Shortages as Beginning of Humanitarian Crisis?

By Sarah Cernikova

In response to the recent attack by Hamas on October 7th, Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant has issued a directive to tighten the Gaza blockade by restricting fuel and other supplies. The Israeli government's argument for implementing this blockade is that Hamas uses these resources for their violent attacks and military equipment, and the blockade will help prevent this.

However, the question remains: Is this blockade stopping or limiting Hamas? Israel has faced accusations of violating international law by cutting off Gaza's access to fuel and electricity, which has had severe consequences for the region. Hospitals and humanitarian organizations struggle to provide aid without fuel, and the situation is becoming increasingly dire. The UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) has warned that their operations will cease in just 48 hours without access to fuel.

Moreover, hospitals cannot save lives due to the lack of fuel and electricity, and humanitarian trucks cannot distribute aid to the millions of civilians who depend on it. Despite efforts by various organizations and officials, including the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, the Israeli government does not appear willing to end the blockade.