



The latest news from the World of Security

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An attendant walks past EU and China flags ahead of the EU-China High-level Economic Dialogue at Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing, China June 25, 2018. REUTERS/Jason Lee/File photo [Acquire Licensing Rights](#)

# EU-China Summit: What We Can Expect?

By Sarah Cernikova

On Wednesday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, an extraordinary EU-China summit took place in Beijing. The summit was attended by Charles Michel, Josep Borrell, and Ursula von der Layen, who represented the EU and its interests during a time of complicated relations with China. This was the first official bilateral meeting between the EU and Chinese representatives in four years.

Since the outbreak of Covid-19, relations between the EU and China have been strained. The EU has expressed its intention to become more independent of goods and products imported from China, particularly supplies for critical sectors that have been under stress during the pandemic. The summit mainly focused on trade, energy, and digital affairs.

Despite their differing views on regional and global affairs, both sides of the summit agreed that there is still room for deepening and improving relations between them. The Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs stated in his pre-summit statement that, despite the tensions, both sides share a commitment to respect and dialogue, and added that the Palestinian people have the right to choose their rulers.



Smoke rises following Israeli strikes in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip, on December 4, 2023. © AFP, Said Khati

## Navigating Tensions: Drones in the Red Sea and the Israel-U.S. Relationship

By Ondrej Pragr

Escalating tensions in the Middle East capture global attention as a US warship in the Red Sea faces a reported drone attack believed to originate from Yemen. The incident highlights the evolving threats in the region, raising concerns about maritime security and prompting a reevaluation of diplomatic responses amid ongoing conflicts. The use of drones in such incidents signifies a shift in asymmetrical warfare, posing challenges for traditional military defenses and emphasizing the need for innovative strategies to safeguard international waters. As geopolitical dynamics continue to evolve, nations grapple with adapting their security measures to address emerging threats, further complicating the regional landscape.

Simultaneously, the strained relationship between Israel and the United States faces further challenges, showcasing the complexities of managing alliances during times of conflict. As tensions persist over strategies in dealing with Hamas, the nuanced aspects of this key alliance come to the forefront, emphasizing the need for diplomatic finesse to address differences and maintain unity on shared objectives. Balancing geopolitical interests, the evolving narrative explores the diplomatic intricacies required to mend the Israel-U.S. relationship amid the ongoing challenges in the Middle East.

# End of Ceasefire in the Name of Intensifying Strikes on Gaza

By Sarah Cernikova

The ceasefire between Israel and Hamas concluded on Friday, December 1st, after seven days. Throughout this period, numerous hostages from Gaza were released, reciprocated by Israel releasing dozens of prisoners back to Gaza. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu stated that the truce ended due to Hamas rocket attacks on Israeli areas near the Gaza Strip early on Friday morning, with no further agreement reached on hostage releases.

In response, Israel intensified its air and ground operations in Gaza, targeting Khan Younis, the second-largest city, on December 5th. According to Gaza health officials, many people were killed in an Israeli strike on houses, and Gaza reported that, since the beginning of the Israel-Hamas war, over sixteen thousand people have been killed. The United States, an ally of Israel, acknowledged the high number of civilian casualties in Gaza and urged Israel to avoid attacks on residential areas or crowded places to minimize civilian deaths and prevent a deepening of the humanitarian crisis.

# Strategic Seas: Australia's AI Ambitions and Taiwan's Geopolitical Resilience

By Ondrej Pragr

Australia has unveiled plans to utilize artificial intelligence (AI) for tracking Chinese submarines in the Indo-Pacific region under the new AUKUS initiative. The ambitious project aims to enhance maritime security capabilities by leveraging advanced technologies to monitor submarine movements. The announcement comes amid escalating tensions in the South China Sea, emphasizing the strategic importance of technological advancements in maintaining regional stability. As nations adapt to the changing dynamics of naval warfare, AI emerges as a key player in ensuring security in contested waters.



📷 A nuclear-powered submarine used by the Chinese navy. Aukus partners say AI will be used to improve 'anti-submarine warfare capabilities'. Photograph: China Stringer Network/Reuters

Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen has voiced concerns over China's increasing assertiveness, emphasizing the challenges posed by President Xi Jinping's expansionist agenda. In a response to China's growing influence, President Tsai highlights the need for vigilance and a proactive approach to safeguard Taiwan's sovereignty. As regional dynamics continue to evolve, Taiwan faces complex geopolitical pressures, making it imperative for the island nation to navigate these challenges effectively. In the face of geopolitical uncertainties, Taiwan remains resilient in defending its autonomy and resisting external pressures.



Map illustrating the synchronization of European Grids. The Baltics are to be synchronized in 2025. Source: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik

## Ukraine's Grid is Now Fully Synchronized

By Karolina Baldrianova

ENTSO-E, the EU body grouping European Electricity Transmission System Operators, announced positive developments, stating that Ukraine is now permanently interconnected with the rest of continental Europe. Ukraine has been actively preparing for the synchronization of the electricity networks ever since the Russian annexation of Crimea, investing more than 700 million euros in bolstering its infrastructure. As the infrastructure was built during Soviet times, one of the goals was to limit energy dependence on Russian systems.

In March 2022, shortly after the Russian invasion, an emergency synchronization of Ukrainian and Moldovan grids was conducted, signalling solidarity between transmission system operators. Now, when the electricity systems are fully interconnected, the network is set to be more flexible and reliable. Such attributes are needed, especially during winter times when Russians attack Ukraine's power generation infrastructure. Therefore, an additional capacity limit for electricity trade was added by ENTSO-E to secure more stable and secure operations. The winter attacks are now becoming more frequent, and NATO's general Jens Stoltenberg warned about further prevalence as Russia has stockpiled large amounts of missiles. President Zelenskyy informed that during last week, about 90 % of Russian drone and missile attacks were intercepted. Nevertheless, Ukraine still needs Western help to withstand the winter military campaign.

## Damaging Balticconnector Was Deliberate

By Karolina Baldrianova

Finnish authorities believe that the damage caused to the Balticconnector pipeline was intentional. On October 8th, the undersea gas and telecommunication infrastructure was corrupted, with the prime suspect being the large Chinese container vessel NewNew Polar Bear. The disruption was caused by anchor dragging along the seabed. Finnish government minister Andres Adlercreutz recently expressed scepticism about the incident, as he believes that dragging an anchor that weights 6,000 kg for over 180 km is not an accident. The NewNew Polar Bear is expected to arrive at Chinese docks soon, and Estonian and Finnish investigators hope that further investigations can be conducted.

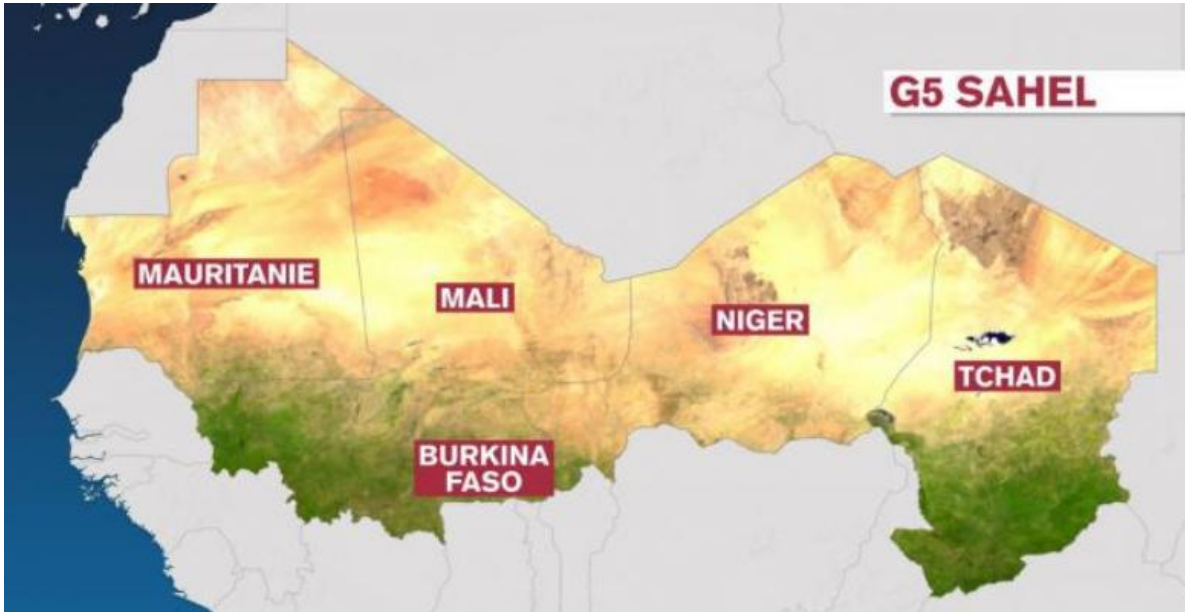
## COP28 in Dubai: Discussing Fossil Fuels

Last Thursday, the COP28 in Dubai has officially started, featuring intriguing discussions on various topics. COP28 President Sultan Al Jaber let himself heard that there is no science indicating that fossil fuels phase-out is needed to prevent climate change. With such controversial claims justifying his own fossil business, he gained the attention of prominent worlds scientist challenging his short arguments. While Sultan has chosen to advocate for the climate-denialist narrative, around 50 oil companies agreed to achieve zero methane emissions by 2030 and cease gas flaring - the burning of unnecessary gas produced alongside oil.

# Changes in the G5 Anti-Jihadist Force

By Petra Nemcova

Burkina Faso and Niger have announced their decision to quit the G5 anti-jihadist force in Africa's Sahel region, citing the failure to achieve its objectives and the institutional red tape from a previous era. The G5 Sahel, created in 2014, has only secured meagre results, with Mali quitting the original force last year. Burkina and Niger claim that the G5 Sahel cannot serve foreign interests to the detriment of their peoples and that the alliance treats them like children, denying their sovereignty.



*Author: StratComm*

*Page: EEAS – European Union*

## Deteriorating Relations between Niger and EU

Niger's junta has scrapped two key military agreements signed with the European Union to help fight violence in the Sahel region. The move follows growing political tensions between Niger and the EU since the July coup. As a consequence, the junta decided to withdraw privileges and immunities granted under the EU Military Partnership Mission and dismiss the EU Civilian Capacity-Building Mission. Most of Niger's foreign economic and security allies have sanctioned the country, including France.

The Russian delegation, led by Deputy Minister of Defense Yunus-Bek Yevkurov, met with Niger's junta leader and Minister of State for National Defense. The two sides are now discussing strengthening cooperation in the field of defense. Russia has been active in Africa through its private mercenary Wagner Group.

# New Google Cybersecurity Hub

By Petra Nemcova

Google has opened a new cybersecurity hub in Málaga, Spain, to address the growing sophistication, cost, and aggressive nature of cyber threats, called The Safety Engineering Center (GSEC). This hub will house a range of teams and experts working on developing and scaling cutting-edge research and tools using AI, speed, open source, and AI. The center will also house a dedicated training space for government officials, businesses, job seekers, NGOs, and local schools. Google has pledged \$10 million through Google.org to advance cybersecurity skills training and help local community organizations. The center also aims to build a stronger cybersecurity posture for businesses and individuals, leveraging AI to identify malicious code faster, more accurately, and for more people.



*Author: Kent Walker*

## Japan's Reaction to EU's Cybersecurity Rules

The Japan Association of New Economy (a business lobby group focused on e-business and developing new industries) has urged the European Union to revise its cybersecurity labeling rules, which could hinder access to the bloc's markets. The EU wants to establish an EU certification scheme (EUCS) to vouch for cloud services' cybersecurity and help governments and companies select secure vendors. The requirements for non-EU cloud providers to set up joint ventures with EU-based companies have sparked criticism from EU countries and foreign vendors, such as Japan.