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Horn Review: Weekly Report

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1. Ethiopia

Ethiopia actively participated in the 31st United Nations Climate Change Conference in Antalya, Türkiye, positioning itself as a key voice for developing nations while preparing to host COP32 in Addis Ababa in 2027. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed addressed the opening, stressing that climate action forms a core part of Ethiopia's economic policy amid recurring droughts and floods that disrupt agriculture and displace communities. He highlighted the country's heavy reliance on hydropower and the risks to its coffee sector, calling for predictable climate finance that reaches vulnerable groups before disasters strike and urging clearer, measurable pledges on funding amounts, timing, and terms.

This call for early action and accessible finance set the stage for intensive bilateral diplomacy on the summit sidelines, beginning with the host nation. Abiy met Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to strengthen ties and advance climate cooperation as the two countries prepare for consecutive COP presidencies. The leaders explored deeper partnership opportunities and reaffirmed commitment to tangible progress on shared priorities, underscoring the smooth transition of leadership from COP31 to COP32.

Building on this foundation, Ethiopia engaged partners across continents to broaden support for its climate agenda. Foreign Minister Gedion Timothewos discussed shared environmental challenges with Nepal's Foreign Minister, focusing on opportunities for collaboration ahead of COP32. Abiy similarly conferred with Finnish President Alexander Stubb on climate diplomacy and Finland's backing for Ethiopia's presidency, while also reviewing global peace and security issues to maintain partnership momentum.

These European outreach efforts extended to green investment and energy. Talks with Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre emphasized renewable energy cooperation under Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative, which has already planted more than 56 billion seedlings, and Norway's support for COP32. Parallel discussions with Barbadian Prime Minister Mia Mottley advanced aviation ties alongside joint efforts for the Ethiopian presidency, reflecting a strategy of linking practical bilateral gains to the broader climate mission.

African solidarity formed another interconnected pillar. Abiy and Botswana's President Duma Gideon Boko examined shared climate challenges and measures to address them, committing to a unified African agenda and stronger cooperation before COP32. Foreign Minister Gedion Timothewos also coordinated with Rwanda's Environment Minister on joint priorities to ensure meaningful outcomes at the 2027 summit, reinforcing regional alignment.

Further afield, meetings with the United Kingdom and development institutions deepened technical and financial backing. Ethiopian ministers discussed COP32 preparations and emissions reduction with UK Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband, who affirmed readiness to support Ethiopia's priorities. Finance Minister Fitsum Assefa similarly engaged the World Bank on e-mobility, climate finance, and carbon credits, while talks with the French Development Agency and UNDP explored expanded collaboration on resilience and investment.

High-level Gulf and Middle Eastern engagement complemented these efforts. Abiy held discussions with Qatar's Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani on longstanding ties and cooperation across mutual interests, including conference agenda items. A parallel meeting with Iraq's President focused on establishing broader bilateral relations and shared development priorities, illustrating Ethiopia's expanding diplomatic network.

Parallel economic diplomacy reinforced the climate agenda through progress on World Trade Organization accession. At the eighth Working Party meeting in Geneva on 10 November, Trade Minister Yasmin Wohabrebbi reported that 11 of 17 bilateral market-access agreements had been signed, with the remaining six nearing completion, alongside reviews of more than 460 legal instruments and reforms in foreign exchange, customs, and trade rules. WTO members welcomed the momentum under the new government, positioning membership as an anchor for export growth and regional integration that supports green development.

Regional stability remained closely linked to these climate and development goals. Abiy exchanged views with Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud on Somalia's security situation and broader Horn of Africa developments, emphasizing sustained dialogue for peace. At home, residents of Mekelle urged the federal government to accelerate reconstruction, youth employment, and security reforms in Tigray, welcoming progress on salaries and infrastructure as foundations for lasting recovery that enable fuller national participation in global initiatives.

Supporting this intensified international role, President Taye Atske Selassie appointed 32 ambassadors plenipotentiary, strengthening Ethiopia's diplomatic capacity precisely as the country advances climate partnerships, trade integration, and strategic interests

while preparing to welcome the world for COP32. Together these interconnected engagements demonstrate a coherent strategy of mobilizing finance, technology, markets, and political will so that early warnings translate into protective action for the most vulnerable.

2. Sudan

Sudan's conflict entered another volatile phase as fighting intensified across the Kordofan region, with the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) making advances against the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) while expanding drone operations contributed to mounting civilian casualties and displacement. At the same time, renewed international condemnation, reports of ethnically motivated violence and the emergence of alternative trade arrangements by the RSF-aligned administration underscored the conflict's increasingly fragmented political and economic landscape.

On the battlefield, the SAF and allied Joint Forces continued their offensive in West Kordofan, capturing El Khuwai and advancing towards Al Nahud, one of the region's largest strategic centres. The army also conducted intensive drone strikes against RSF positions across several localities, reportedly targeting supply routes and positions supporting the paramilitary group's operations. These developments could strengthen the army's position in Kordofan and potentially disrupt RSF movements between central Sudan and Darfur.

However, the offensive has come at a significant civilian cost, with thousands reportedly fleeing Al Nahud, Abu Zabad and surrounding areas. The International Organization for Migration separately reported that approximately 750 people fled Abu Zabad in a single day as insecurity deteriorated.

The growing use of drones has become one of the defining features of the war. A report by *The Guardian* highlighted the devastating consequences of recent attacks, including a double drone strike at a transport hub in Al-Dibab, West Kordofan, on October 18, which reportedly killed at least 139 people, and a subsequent attack on a market in Nyala that killed at least 103, according to Emergency Lawyers. The report noted that drones killed at least 306 people during the first three weeks of October alone, citing UN figures. On November 15, the African Union, United Nations, European Union, Arab League and IGAD jointly condemned escalating drone attacks across Sudan, including strikes affecting Khartoum, Darfur, Kordofan, Blue Nile, Gedaref, Gezira, Sennar and Red Sea states. The partners expressed particular concern over damage to power stations and health facilities, warning that attacks on civilian infrastructure were worsening the humanitarian crisis and obstructing prospects for peace and recovery.

Meanwhile, the conflict continued to expose civilians to ethnic and communal violence beyond direct battlefield confrontations. A human rights report launched in Kampala by the Darfur Victims Advocacy Organization and partner groups documented alleged atrocities in the Kambo Taiba area of Al-Jazira State during January 2025. It accused SAF and allied armed groups of killings, summary executions, arson, looting and forced displacement, reporting 43 civilian deaths and the destruction of 134 homes. The report itself acknowledged discrepancies in casualty figures and called for independent verification. Separately, clashes between the Habbaniya and Rizeigat communities in South Darfur, reportedly triggered by cattle-rustling accusations, displaced approximately 7,065 people in two days. The IOM warned that the situation remained volatile, with fears that RSF fighters could become involved through their respective community affiliations.

The political and economic fragmentation of Sudan also became more visible. The RSF-aligned Sudan Founding Alliance, commonly known as the Tasis administration, announced an agreement with Togolese officials to facilitate imports and exports for western Sudan through the Port of Lomé as an alternative to Port Sudan. Its delegation also reported discussions with Togolese banking executives about establishing branches in territories under its administration. If implemented, the arrangement could provide the parallel administration with alternative commercial channels and strengthen its efforts to establish independent economic and diplomatic relationships. However, the announcement remains an agreement reported by representatives of the Tasis administration, rather than evidence that a fully operational trade system has been established.

On the defacto government side, Prime Minister Kamil Idris announced plans to establish a joint security force to combat gold smuggling, illegal mining and the trafficking of strategic commodities. The proposed force will include police and security agencies under the supervision of the army's chief of staff. The initiative reflects growing concern over the loss of state revenue and the influence of smuggling networks, which the government says have developed powerful domestic connections. In a separate development, a Sudanese court charged former intelligence officer Lieutenant General Ali Al-Naseeh Al-Qalaa with collaborating with the RSF and undermining the constitutional system. The case highlights the continuing struggle over military loyalty and internal security as the war reshapes Sudan's state institutions.

Sudan also faced diplomatic and regional security concerns. On November 13, the Sudanese army claimed that its air defences had intercepted a long-range drone in the Dandaro area of Blue Nile State, alleging that it had crossed from Ethiopian territory. The incident adds to Khartoum's repeated accusations that Ethiopia is facilitating drone

operations against Sudanese targets. These claims remain contested and have not been independently established by the cited report. Separately, prominent Sudanese journalist and former information minister Faisal Mohamed Salih and photographer Sari Omer were assaulted by armed men in Kampala, Uganda. Both sustained minor injuries, and Ugandan police opened an investigation.

Overall, the week demonstrated how Sudan's conflict is evolving beyond a contest for territorial control into a wider struggle over infrastructure, economic access, political legitimacy and regional influence. Although the SAF's advances in Kordofan may alter the military balance, intensified drone warfare and renewed communal violence continue to impose devastating costs on civilians. Meanwhile, the emergence of alternative trade arrangements by the RSF-aligned administration raises further concerns about the institutional and economic fragmentation of the Sudanese state. Without a credible political process and stronger protection for civilians, military gains are unlikely to translate into sustainable stability.

3. Egypt

During the G7 foreign ministers' meeting in Paris on 9 and 10 November, Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty met US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot and spoke by telephone with British National Security Adviser Jonathan Powell. Discussions covered Egypt's strategic partnership with Washington, Gaza, Sudan, Ukraine & the Iran crisis. Abdelatty called for diplomatic de-escalation, political solutions and respect for sovereignty in the Horn of Africa. At a 10 November G7 session with Egypt and Saudi, ministers discussed Iran, energy and food security, and freedom of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz and Bab el-Mandeb. Abdelatty said regional escalation threatened maritime trade and energy supplies.

Egypt's Cabinet approved on 10 November a draft presidential decree concerning the second phase of its development-policy financing program with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The agreement, signed on 1 November, supports budget financing and reforms covering business competitiveness, macroeconomic resilience against external shocks and the green transition. The Cabinet statement provided no financing or disbursement schedule.

On 9 November, Health Minister Khaled Abdel-Ghaffar met Libyan Health Minister Mohamed al-Ghouj on the sidelines of the Council of Arab Health Ministers. Egypt offered expertise and training in ambulance services, emergency response, crisis management and pharmaceutical production. The meeting followed a health memorandum signed during Abdelatty's visit to Tripoli on 7 November and sought to translate it into practical programs.

Egypt's Official Gazette published a decision on 9 November permanently listing the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist entity and adding three individuals to the terrorist list. The Public Prosecution office responsible for the register issued the decision following final court rulings. Under Egypt's listing law, the designation requires the group's activities to cease, its premises to close, meetings to be prohibited and assets to be frozen.

On 10 November, the Cairo Criminal Court ordered 35 entities and 36 individuals added to Egypt's terrorist lists for five years. The decision, issued in Case 11108 of 2026 and published in the Official Gazette, included the Council of European Muslims, the Muslims of France Foundation and the Islamic Society of Britain. The ruling followed a hearing held on 10 November.

During the G7 ministerial meetings in Paris on 10 November, Abdelatty met Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha. They discussed the war in Ukraine, a diplomatic settlement, Black Sea freedom of navigation and the stability of grain supply chains. The ministers also addressed economic, trade, food-security and energy ties. Abdelatty said Egypt was interested in hosting a global center for grain storage, supply and trade.

On 11 November, Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty met Chinese government envoy for African affairs Liu Xianfa in Cairo during the envoy's first visit to Egypt. They discussed cooperation across Africa, the Horn of Africa, the Red Sea, Sudan and Somalia. Abdelatty stressed sovereignty and state institutions, maritime navigation and Nile water security, while the two sides agreed to continue coordination at international forums.

On 11 November, Egypt and Libya agreed to hold consultations over the 2019 maritime memorandum between Turkey and the Tripoli-based Libyan government. Egyptian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nader Zaki said Cairo had raised concerns that the agreement affected Egypt's maritime boundaries and exclusive economic zone. The eastern Libyan House of Representatives approved the memorandum in October, prompting objections from Egypt and other Mediterranean states.

Planning Minister Ahmed Rostom and Investment Minister Mohamed Farid met US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick on 11 November during the B20 Business Summit. They discussed bilateral trade, investment and the effects of recent US trade policies. Rostom cited 5.1 percent GDP growth in fiscal 2025/26 and annual inflation of 12 percent in October. Farid outlined a forthcoming national foreign-investment strategy and further technical talks on trade remedies.

Egypt and Turkey concluded their Friendship Sea 2026 naval exercise on 12 November

in the Egyptian Northern Fleet area. The two countries' navy chiefs attended the final phase, which included operational lectures, live-fire drills by naval special forces, boarding and inspection of suspect vessels, and counter-drone training. The exercise involved naval personnel from both countries and demonstrations of coordinated formations at sea.

Egypt's General Petroleum Corporation and Halliburton agreed on 12 November to conduct technical studies for a 50-well program in the Western Desert over 18 months. The work will assess horizontal drilling and multi-stage hydraulic fracturing to improve recovery from existing oil and gas concessions. The program is at the study and design stage, with drilling subject to the results and commercial assessments.

Egyptian lawmaker Mona Shaker said on 13 November that a state-backed company would be established under the Future of Egypt Authority to license artisanal gold miners and facilitate the release of people detained for illegal prospecting. She said exclusions would apply to people implicated in killings or drug offences. The military had reported detaining 151 Egyptians and 540 foreign nationals since June.

Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty held a series of meetings during the Sir Bani Yas Forum in Abu Dhabi from 13 to 15 November. He met Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to discuss maritime navigation, trade and grain supply chains, and held talks with Ukrainian and Syrian counterparts. In a trilateral meeting with the UAE foreign minister and US presidential adviser Massad Boulos, he discussed the Horn of Africa, Sudan and Nile water security. He also met African and European officials on regional developments. The meetings addressed the impact of regional tensions on international trade and food security.

The heads of the intelligence services of Egypt, Türkiye and Qatar held a trilateral meeting in Cairo on 13 November to discuss developments in Gaza. According to Egyptian reporting, they called for completion of the first phase of the ceasefire agreement, an immediate halt to Israeli attacks and increased humanitarian assistance. They particularly highlighted the need for aid and shelter supplies amid severe weather affecting displaced Palestinians. The three sides also called for prompt steps to advance efforts towards a lasting and sustainable ceasefire.

On 14 November, Ethiopia's Chief of General Staff Field Marshal Birhanu Jula accused Eritrea of directing a new TPLF offensive and alleged that Egypt supplied weapons and logistical support. Jula said attacks had targeted federal military positions in Amhara and Afar and that Ethiopian forces had repelled them. The allegation was made at a press conference and remained an Ethiopian military claim.

Egypt condemned the Israeli airstrike on Nasser Medical Complex in Khan Younis, which medical personnel said killed six people, including surgeon Rezik Abushira, and wounded at least 20. Cairo described the strike as a violation of international humanitarian law and called for protection of medical facilities and personnel. On 14 November, Egypt joined Turkey, Algeria, Djibouti, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and 11 other foreign ministers in a joint statement condemning the attack and calling for a halt to Israeli violations, increased humanitarian deliveries and implementation of the Gaza ceasefire. The statement also raised concerns over restrictions on shelter materials and medical supplies as winter approached.

On 15 November, Egypt and Kuwait held the 14th session of their Joint Committee in Kuwait City, co-chaired by Foreign Ministers Badr Abdelatty and Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. The delegations signed eight cooperation documents covering civil aviation, economic zones, trade fairs, education, culture, vocational training, customs and standards. During the visit, Abdelatty met Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled to discuss bilateral cooperation, regional tensions, Gaza, Sudan, Yemen and maritime security in the Red Sea and Bab el-Mandeb. The ministers said the agreements would guide cooperation until the next committee session in Cairo in 2028. The sides also discussed trade, investment, skilled Egyptian labor in Kuwait and opportunities for further Kuwaiti investment in Egypt.

On 15 November, Abdelatty held separate telephone calls with Pakistani Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan about escalating tensions between the United States and Iran. With Dar, he discussed de-escalation proposals and conditions for resuming negotiations. With Fidan, he discussed coordination through the Quadrilateral Group, comprising Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Turkey, and joint engagement with Washington and Tehran to restore dialogue and prevent further military escalation. Both calls formed part of diplomatic efforts to contain the confrontation.

Egypt condemned attacks targeting Bahrain on 15 November, describing them as violations of the kingdom’s sovereignty and threats to regional stability. The Foreign Ministry expressed full solidarity with Manama and support for measures to protect its citizens and residents. The statement followed Bahrain’s announcement that its air defenses intercepted Iranian aerial attacks and an Iranian Revolutionary Guard claim of a drone strike on a US radar site.

President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi received a telephone call from British Prime Minister Andy Burnham on 9 November. The two leaders discussed bilateral economic, trade and investment relations, the regional crisis involving Iran and efforts to prevent further

escalation. They also addressed implementation of the Gaza ceasefire, humanitarian aid and early recovery and reconstruction. Burnham thanked Egypt for facilitating British defensive operations in the Gulf and expressed support for diplomatic de-escalation and a two-state solution.

Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly reviewed preparations on 12 November for the World Economic Forum's Country Strategy Meeting in Cairo on 16 and 17 November. The meeting involved ministers responsible for electricity, finance, foreign affairs and investment, the Central Bank deputy governor and other officials. Madbouly said the forum would present investment opportunities and state incentives and highlight infrastructure upgrades. The meeting formed part of the government's preparations.

President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi met Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly and Planning Minister Ahmed Rostom on 15 November to review the 2026/27 economic and social development plan. The government set a growth target of up to 5.4 percent and planned investments of EGP 3.7 trillion. Rostom outlined proposed legal reforms to improve the investment climate and protect investors, alongside implementation of the State Ownership Policy Document and the government's initial public offering program.

4. Eritrea

Renewed clashes around Badme on November 9 have heightened concerns over a possible direct military confrontation between Ethiopia and Eritrea, amid escalating tensions and renewed fighting in northern Ethiopia. The developments follow weeks of hostilities since late September involving Ethiopian federal forces and an alliance of armed groups, including the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and its military wing, the Tigray Defence Forces (TDF). According to conflict-tracking reports, Ethiopian federal forces captured Sheraro on November 3 and subsequently established positions in nearby Adi Awala, along the route towards Badme. The Critical Threats Project (CTP), in its November 10 assessment, reported clashes around Badme on November 9 alongside military mobilisations on both sides of the border, although it could not independently establish whether the fighting occurred inside Ethiopian or Eritrean territory. Reports of Ethiopian drone strikes inside Eritrea also remained unverified, while a November 12 assessment by Frontlines questioned the extent of Eritrean military deployments and fortifications around Badme. The latest developments follow the severing of diplomatic relations in early October, after Ethiopia accused Asmara of cross-border military incursions and supporting armed groups fighting the federal government, allegations Eritrea has rejected while accusing Addis Ababa of harbouring territorial ambitions towards the Red Sea.

The escalation reflects the increasingly interconnected nature of Ethiopia's internal

conflict and its deteriorating relationship with Eritrea. The military alliance between the two countries during the 2020–2022 Tigray war failed to produce a durable security arrangement, while subsequent disagreements over Eritrea's continued involvement in northern Ethiopia and Addis Ababa's pursuit of maritime access have brought their competing interests into sharper conflict. Badme's renewed prominence is particularly consequential given its historical significance in the 1998–2000 border war and the unresolved political tensions surrounding the 2018 rapprochement. International concern has also intensified, with G7 foreign ministers expressing alarm following their November 9–10 meeting in Paris and calling for maximum restraint, humanitarian access and renewed diplomatic engagement. UN Secretary-General António Guterres similarly urged an immediate cessation of hostilities and a return to dialogue, including through the Pretoria framework. Nevertheless, the diplomatic appeals face a difficult environment in which neither the bilateral dispute nor the underlying security tensions in northern Ethiopia have been resolved. The convergence of Eritrean military involvement in Ethiopia's internal security dynamics, Ethiopia's increasingly assertive maritime ambitions and the renewed fighting in Tigray creates conditions in which local military confrontations could develop into a much wider interstate conflict.

Eritrean nationals from several European countries, alongside Sudanese, Ethiopian and Somali participants, held a demonstration in Geneva on November 13 under the banner "Yes for Peace – No for War". According to Eritrea's Ministry of Information, the gathering called for respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity and submitted a petition to the UN Human Rights Council. Mihreteab Malik, chairman of the National Committee of Eritreans, said the demonstration was organised in response to what he described as war rhetoric by Ethiopia's ruling Prosperity Party, accusing Addis Ababa of threatening the independence and territorial integrity of neighbouring countries. The demonstration comes amid renewed fighting in northern Ethiopia and growing reports of military movements around the Ethiopia–Eritrea border, including claims that TPLF/TDF elements and Eritrean forces have retreated towards Eritrean territory. These reports, if confirmed, would further complicate Asmara's position and its ability to maintain the security rationale underpinning its involvement in northern Ethiopia.

The demonstration represents another attempt by the PFDJ to mobilise diaspora communities around the regime by framing the escalating confrontation primarily as a question of defending Eritrea's sovereignty against Ethiopian aggression. The appeal to peace and territorial integrity is particularly selective given Eritrea's own record of violating Ethiopian sovereignty through military incursions and supporting armed groups operating against the federal government. Moreover, the reported retreat of

TPLF/TDF elements alongside Eritrean forces into Eritrea would expose the fragility of Asmara's longstanding security approach, which has relied on maintaining influence within northern Ethiopia as a buffer against perceived threats from Addis Ababa. The erosion of that arrangement, alongside the growing possibility of direct interstate confrontation, provides the regime with an incentive to rally domestic and diaspora constituencies around an external security threat. The Geneva demonstration should therefore be understood in the context of Asmara's broader efforts to consolidate diaspora support, strengthen its international messaging and counter criticism of its own role in the escalation. This is particularly relevant given the growing opposition the regime has encountered among younger diaspora communities, many of whom have challenged its authoritarian governance and sought to disrupt PFDJ-linked mobilisation activities.

5. Djibouti

On 3 November, a delegation from the European Union's Political and Security Committee visited the Italian naval vessel ITS Spartaco Schergat in Djibouti, which is deployed under the EU's EUNAVFOR ASPIDES maritime security operation. The delegation was hosted by Rear Admiral Vasileios Gryparis, the operation's commander, and included Political and Security Committee Chair Ambassador Lene Mandel Vensild, ambassadors from EU member states and Lieutenant General Enrico Barduani, Deputy Chair of the EU Military Committee. According to The Brussels Times on 9 November, discussions focused on ASPIDES' activities in the Red Sea and surrounding waters, particularly the protection of commercial shipping and freedom of navigation. Gryparis reiterated that the operation maintains a strictly defensive mandate, operating within its capabilities and in accordance with international law.

The visit also formed part of broader EU–Djibouti engagement on regional security. On 1 November, Gryparis met Colonel Wais Omar Bogoreh, Chief of the Djiboutian Coast Guard, to discuss maritime security cooperation and the safety of seafarers. A joint EU–Djibouti statement issued on 4 November reaffirmed their commitment to cooperation on security and stability in the Horn of Africa. The engagement reflects Djibouti's continued importance as a hub for international maritime security operations, given its proximity to the Bab el-Mandeb Strait and its position at the entrance to the Red Sea. However, the operational significance of the EU's continued presence should be assessed against the limitations of ASPIDES itself: the operation's mandate remains defensive, and disagreements among EU member states over contributing additional naval assets have raised questions about its capacity to provide more extensive protection for commercial shipping. The EU Council has extended the mission until February 2027, but sustaining an effective maritime presence will depend on member-

state commitments beyond diplomatic declarations.

On 8 November, Japan and Djibouti held their first bilateral Strategic Dialogue in Djibouti City, bringing together Misako Takahashi, Director-General of the African Affairs Department at Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Mohamed Ali Hassan, Secretary-General of Djibouti's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. According to Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, discussions covered development cooperation, bilateral business relations, security cooperation and support for Japan's Self-Defense Forces base in Djibouti, which marked its fifteenth anniversary this year. The two sides also discussed Japan's Official Security Assistance (OSA) framework, through which Tokyo provides security-related support to partner countries. Regional discussions addressed developments in Iran, the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, the Horn of Africa and East Asia, alongside reform of the UN Security Council. Both parties expressed their intention to strengthen bilateral cooperation ahead of the fiftieth anniversary of diplomatic relations in 2028.

The establishment of a dedicated strategic dialogue reflects Japan's interest in consolidating its diplomatic and security engagement in the Horn of Africa, where Djibouti occupies an important position along major international maritime routes. The discussions surrounding Japan's military base and the OSA framework are particularly significant given Tokyo's growing emphasis on maritime security and its broader Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) policy. Djibouti, meanwhile, continues to derive diplomatic and security significance from hosting foreign military installations and maintaining partnerships with external powers. The dialogue provides an institutional framework for coordinating these interests, although the announced areas of cooperation do not yet establish any new military commitments or specific security arrangements. Its longer-term significance will depend on whether the renewed engagement produces concrete cooperation beyond existing development and defence assistance.

6. South Sudan

South Sudan's political transition faced another significant setback as the government postponed its first national elections since independence for a third time, moving the polls from December 22, 2026, to February 11, 2027. The decision, announced on November 14 by the National Elections Commission (NEC), came on the same day voter registration was scheduled to begin. Although the additional time is intended to facilitate electoral preparations, the latest delay has renewed concerns over the credibility of the process, the legality of the transitional arrangements and the government's commitment to completing the transition. The revised electoral calendar provides for voter registration from November 14 to 28 at 3,161 centres across the

country’s ten states and three administrative areas. The NEC has recruited more than 22,000 registration officials and appointed constituency returning officers to oversee the exercise. However, the logistical challenges remain considerable, particularly in remote and conflict-affected areas. According to the World Bank, approximately 90 percent of South Sudan’s population lacks state-recognised identification, creating additional complications for voter registration. The commission has indicated that community leaders will help identify eligible citizens who lack formal identification documents. Nevertheless, the compressed timetable raises questions about whether the authorities can ensure an inclusive and transparent process within the available period. Beyond logistical concerns, the postponement has triggered questions about its constitutional and legal foundations. In an analysis published by Radio Tamazuj, South Sudanese governance and human rights expert Dr. Remember Miamingi questioned whether the NEC possesses the legal authority to postpone the elections nationwide under the circumstances. He argued that the electoral legislation establishes specific conditions for postponement and that the

commission has not sufficiently demonstrated that these conditions have been met. The analysis also highlights the implications of keeping the Transitional National Legislature dissolved following the September restructuring of the government. With the transition scheduled to end on February 22, 2027, the revised election date leaves only eleven days between polling and the agreed end of the transitional period. A possible presidential run-off could extend beyond that deadline, raising further questions about the legal basis for governance and the continuity of transitional institutions. These arguments represent the author's legal assessment rather than a judicial determination, but they expose important institutional uncertainties surrounding the electoral process.

Meanwhile, Amnesty International called for accountability over the March 1 massacre in Abiemnom, warning that both South Sudanese authorities and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) failed to take adequate measures despite receiving advance warnings of an impending attack. According to Amnesty's investigation, between 1,000 and 1,500 armed men from Mayom County in Unity State attacked Abiemnom, killing more than 200 people, including children, and destroying homes and property. The organisation criticised the government's failure to conduct an effective investigation and questioned UNMISS's response despite prior warnings. The findings raise serious concerns about civilian protection, early warning mechanisms and the accountability of institutions mandated to prevent mass atrocities.The incident is particularly significant given the country's continuing intercommunal violence and the fragility of the 2018 peace agreement. Security cooperation with Uganda also remained visible through the continued deployment of the Uganda People's Defence Forces

(UPDF) in South Sudan. On November 14, Colonel Kafureka Gumizamu assumed command of the UPDF battle group operating under Operation Mlinzi Wakinya, replacing Colonel Francis Aragamoi. The handover was presided over by Major General Anthony Lukwago Mbuusi, who called on the incoming commander to maintain discipline, teamwork and operational effectiveness. Although presented as a routine military leadership transition, the continued presence of Ugandan forces reflects the importance of bilateral security cooperation to South Sudan's stability, particularly amid persistent internal tensions and uncertainty surrounding the political transition.

Overall, the week's developments highlight the widening gap between South Sudan's electoral ambitions and the institutional and security conditions necessary to sustain a credible democratic transition. The postponement may provide additional time for preparations, but it does not resolve the underlying political disagreements, constitutional uncertainties or security challenges. Meanwhile, the Abiemnom massacre demonstrates that the protection of civilians and accountability for violence remain unresolved priorities. As the country approaches the revised February deadline, the central challenge will be ensuring that elections become part of a credible political settlement rather than another source of institutional uncertainty and political tension.

7. Somalia and Somaliland

Somalia

Reports indicated that the Quartet comprising the United States, United Kingdom, Türkiye and the European Union had agreed to facilitate electoral negotiations scheduled for 14–18 November in Mogadishu. These aimed to address the electoral model a joint management mechanism and the political transition with anticipated participation by Puntland and Jubaland amid constitutional disputes and the Supreme Court ruling. Security guarantees for regional leaders were reportedly under discussion though the arrangements had not been formally confirmed in a joint statement at the time of reporting.

The National Consultative Forum election talks scheduled by President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud for 14–18 November in Mogadishu did not start. The Somali Future Council including Puntland and Jubaland leaders, former President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed and others informed the international Quartet that it would not attend a meeting under Villa Somalia's terms demanding stronger international guarantees and mediation. The presidency later stated that contacts continued and the meeting would still be convened, while Nabad iyo Nolol, linked to former President Farmaajo denied accepting the invitation. This followed a Supreme Court ruling earlier in the month that the presidential and parliamentary mandates had expired, specifically the 5 November

ruling that President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud's term had expired on 15 May 2026 with elections ordered within 90 days.

Federal government security and judicial officials met members of the opposition Future Council in Mogadishu on Wednesday evening. The sides reportedly agreed to avoid politicizing national security matters, cooperate against Al-Shabaab and Islamic State and base the next elections on political consensus rather than unilateral decisions. Government participants included NISA Director Mahad Mohamed Salad, Police Commissioner Brig. Gen. Asad Abdullahi Osman, SNA Chief Gen. Ibrahim Mohamed, and Military Court Chairman Col. Hassan Ali Nur, known as Shuute. Opposition figures included former President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, former prime ministers Hassan Ali Khaire and Mohamed Hussein Roble, Abdirahman Abdishakur Warsame, and others. Senior security officials, including NISA Director Mahad Mohamed Salad, SNA Commander Gen.

Ibrahim Mohamed Mohamud, and Military Court Chairman Col. Hassan Ali Nur Shuute, held talks with opposition leaders in Mogadishu including at the residence of former Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble. Discussions occurred amid tensions over constitutional amendments, the electoral timetable, and preparations for the National Consultative Forum scheduled for 14–18 November.

UN human rights experts Margaret Satterthwaite, Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers and Ben Saul Special Rapporteur on human rights and counter terrorism condemned President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud's 4 November dismissal of Chief Justice Bashe or Baashe Yusuf Ahmed by presidential decree. They called the move a blatant interference that bypassed constitutional procedures citing the absence of a Judicial Services Commission proposal or parliamentary approval, demanded his reinstatement, and criticized the deployment of security forces around the Supreme Court, the withdrawal of judges' personal protection, and the swearing in of a replacement on 7 November.

Hawadle clan elders in Beledweyne, Hiiraan region issued a communiqué rejecting the 24 October Hirshabelle leadership elections, namely the re election of President Ali Abdullahi Hussein Gudlawe and the election of Abdifatah Hassan Afrah as vice president in Jowhar. They argued the process lacked legitimacy and sufficient consultation with affected communities, called for an inclusive regional political conference, and announced a peaceful demonstration for 15 November.

Forces loyal to former Southwest State President Abdiaziz Hassan Mohamed Laftagareen continued receiving military reinforcements in the Baidoa area. Officials aligned with the former president said a new group of soldiers, reportedly from Hiiraan,

Galgaduud, and Middle Shabelle, arrived on Saturday. The federal government was simultaneously reinforcing Baidoa and Barawe, though numbers and status could not be independently verified.

Waves of Somali National Army soldiers from the Hawadle clan left frontline positions against Al-Shabaab and returned to Beledweyne in Hiiraan responding to a call from traditional leader Ugas Yusuf Ugas Hassan. Local reports and footage described dozens to hundreds of troops assembling at the leader's residence, with some accounts citing specific unit defections. This raised concerns about military cohesion, security gaps, and Al-Shabaab exploitation amid the wider political crisis. The Hawadle desertions were tied to disputes over Hirshabelle regional leadership, including the re election of President Ali Gudlawe, and broader federal clan frictions. The traditional leader framed the call as a response to the perceived lack of a legitimate government to defend and potential federal actions against the region.

The Somali National Armed Forces reported engaging Al-Shabaab in heavy fighting while conducting pursuit operations between Leego and Lidow Jalaat also referenced as Iidow Jalaat, in Lower Shabelle. The Ministry of Defence issued a press release stating troops defeated militants and destroyed positions. Government sources later identified two key figures allegedly killed, Abdifitaah Gaalgooriyow and Abdulqadir Hussein who were said to have secured movement routes for senior Al Shabaab leaders between Leego and Buurhakaba.

The Somali National Army separately reported killing several Al-Shabaab militants including two logistics operatives identified as Abdiftah or Abdifitaah Gaalgooriyow and Abdulqadir Hussein, during fighting in the Shanta Baraako area on the outskirts of Leego in Lower Shabelle, stating the two oversaw movement of fighters and supplies along routes between Leego and Buurhakaba. On another front Suspected Al-Shabaab militants killed eight people, including police reservists and road construction workers, in an ambush in Kenya's Mandera County near the Somalia border.

AFRICOM later announced that it conducted an airstrike targeting Al-Shabaab on 12 November in the vicinity of Leego approximately 114 kilometers northwest of Mogadishu in coordination with the Federal Government of Somalia. No casualty figures or specific targets were released for operational security reasons. This aligned with earlier Somali Ministry of Defence reports of heavy fighting in the same area as part of ongoing operations.

Ugandan People's Defence Forces troops under AUSSOM together with Somali counterparts, held a Civil Military Cooperation meeting with community leaders, police, and business representatives in Aribiska, Afgoye District, where participants reaffirmed

cooperation on security, IED detection, and efforts against Al-Shabaab.

AFRICOM Deputy Commander Lt. Gen. John Brennan confirmed that most U.S. personnel had left Baledogle Military Airfield in Lower Shabelle because the runway had deteriorated to an unsafe condition with repair costs estimated in the tens of millions of dollars. He described the move as one hundred percent an economic decision with most personnel relocated to Mogadishu. Officials stressed that the departure did not reduce overall U.S. support for Somali forces against Al-Shabaab. The base had long served as a hub for intelligence, airstrike support, and Danab training.

Somalia hosted the 18th Meeting of the IGAD Committee of Permanent Secretaries on Conflict Early Warning and Response, CEWARN, for the first time. The two day gathering concluding on 12 November, reviewed progress, approved elements of CEWARN's 2026–2030 Strategic Focus, and discussed strengthening early warning, prevention, and coordinated responses across the Horn of Africa. Somalia's Permanent Secretary Hamza Adan Haadow closed the meeting, and reporting on 15 November highlighted the event as a step in Somalia's regional engagement focused on strengthening early warning, conflict prevention, and coordinated responses across the Horn of Africa.

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud requested a one day visit to Kampala to meet President Yoweri Museveni, which would be his second trip to Uganda in two weeks. The request was reported as reflecting Mogadishu's efforts to secure security and diplomatic support amid ongoing political and security challenges, including the Ugandan troop drawdown. During a prior late October visit, he had unsuccessfully asked Museveni to delay the withdrawal of bilateral Ugandan forces in Lower Shabelle.

Defence Minister Ahmed Moallim Fiqi met U.S. Embassy Chargé d'Affaires Ruth Anne Stevens-Klitz on 8 November with reporting emerging around 9 November to discuss military cooperation,, ongoing operations against Al-Shabaab and ISIS, capacity building for the Somali National Army and the handover of security responsibilities from AUSSOM. The Minister briefed on current operations and stressed the need for continued U.S. training and support.

On 9 November he also met Chinese Ambassador Wang Yu in Mogadishu with reporting on 10 November covering defence and security cooperation, counter terrorism, the AUSSOM transition to Somali National Army control, capacity building and alleged foreign activities threatening Somalia's security and stability. Fiqi thanked China for its support of Somali sovereignty. This followed his talks the previous day with the U.S. Chargé d'Affaires on similar counter terrorism and transition topics including the handover of a former AUSSOM base in Barawe.

Around the same period, the Defence Minister also met a high level Indian delegation led by Sripriya Ranganathan while separate reporting noted Deputy Foreign Minister Hassan Mohamed Ali hosting Indian officials for political consultations and discussions on consular access, including a possible visa facility in Mogadishu.

AUSSOM head Ambassador El Hadji Ibrahima Diene met Swedish Ambassador Hans Henric Lundquist in Mogadishu to review the security situation, AUSSOM's mandate of supporting Somali forces against Al Shabaab, protecting key areas and aiding the security transition,as well as continued international support for peace and stabilization. Sweden reaffirmed its commitment.

Turkish Ambassador Ferhat Alkan met Somalia's National Security Adviser Awes Hagi Yusuf Ahmed in Mogadishu to discuss military developments, counter terrorism operations especially against Al-Shabaab, bilateral security cooperation, and the changing landscape as AUSSOM troop contributing countries begin withdrawals. Türkiye reaffirmed its commitment to Somalia's stability and the Somali side expressed appreciation for long-standing support, including the TURKSOM training mission.

Türkiye's Ministry of National Defence separately rejected reports that it planned to send 15,000 troops to Somalia at Mogadishu's request. Spokesperson Rear Admiral Zeki Aktürk said the claims do not reflect the truth and reaffirmed that existing forces, namely the Somali Turkish Task Force and Air Element Command, continue training, assistance, and advisory support.

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud was participating in the UN Climate Change Conference, COP31 in Antalya Turkey which opened on 9 November and runs through 20 November. He was expected to deliver a national statement during the World Leaders Summit on 11–12 November and hold bilateral meetings including potentially with host President Erdoğan. The visit focused on climate financing, adaptation, and support for vulnerable countries, and Somalia's delegation included senior officials.

Somaliland

Somaliland’s Ministry of Finance and Economic Development held a meeting with a World Bank delegation to discuss progress on key infrastructure projects including the Haleeya–Ina Guuxa Road, described by Somaliland officials as a 94 km road under the Somalia Horn of Africa Infrastructure Integration Project (SHIIP), the NAGAAD project including Hargeisas 150 Road and Stairs2Jobs MPA. Officials reaffirmed their commitment to accelerating development. It is noted that World Bank records list SHIIP under the Federal Republic of Somali, and Somali federal budget documents have cited a slightly different length for the road, around 91 km.

UNDP Somalia Resident Representative Christophoros Politis conducted a visit to Hargeisa around 8–10 November, meeting government officials, private sector representatives including Dahabshiil and banks, academia and civil society to discuss development priorities.

Ali Adan Awale also referred to as Ali Adan Cawaale, Somalilands newly appointed Representative to the European Union and Belgium, arrived at Brussels Airport and was welcomed by the Somaliland community in Belgium including leaders of the Somaliland Association in Belgium. He is expected to strengthen engagement with EU institutions.

During a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on 10 November for State Department nominees, including Devin Kennington for U.S. Ambassador to Somalia, Senator Ted Cruz stated that Kennington's confirmation "depends on the State Department following the Presidents guidance" on Somaliland. Cruz highlighted Somalilands democratic record, relative stability, and strategic location. Kennington reiterated the standing U.S. policy recognizing Somalias sovereignty and territorial integrity, which includes Somaliland as a region and said he was not in a position to change that.

The Somaliland Ports Authority reported that its manager, Ali Dirie Ahmed had participated in the Africa Israel Economic Forum held on 11–12 November in Tel Aviv at the Yitzhak Rabin Center. The authority highlighted the participation as part of efforts to strengthen partnerships in maritime trade, logistics, and investment, emphasizing Berberas strategic location on the Gulf of Aden, its infrastructure, economic zone, and corridor to Ethiopia.

At least nine members of the Somaliland National Army had been detained over alleged links to Al-Shabaab. The arrests were attributed to the Rapid Reaction Unit (RRU) and counter terrorism investigators, primarily in southern and southeastern Hargeisa including the Masalaha area near the airport. Some accounts mentioned the seizure of military uniforms and U.S. dollars. The reporting notes that Al Shabaab has not established a lasting presence in Somaliland but maintains some networks for example in eastern Sool.

8. Yemen

The withdrawal of government-aligned forces from positions near the Bab el-Mandeb Strait on 15 November became the defining development of Yemen's conflict during 9-15 November 2026. Following Houthi advances on the western coast and mounting pressure around Taiz, the redeployment exposed the government's difficulty in holding

several fronts. Fighting in Lahij, drone interceptions in Saudi Arabia, renewed United Nations sanctions and rising displacement illustrated the conflict's wider regional implications.

Clashes continued on 9 November along the Al-Muhawala and Al-Aghbirah fronts in the Bab el-Mandeb axis. South24 Center reported that the Nation's Shield Forces launched counteroffensive operations and announced that they had retaken positions previously captured by Houthi fighters. Fighting subsequently spread towards Al-Mudharaba and Ras Al-Ara districts in Lahij, involving southern forces and local fighters from the Al-Subaiha tribes. The clashes showed that control of the coastal approaches remained contested.

The fighting intensified on 10 November when two Houthi ballistic missiles struck locations in Al-Mudharaba district. According to South24 Center, one hit the district police headquarters and the other struck the Khor Umairah area. The attacks increased pressure on forces near the western coast and demonstrated the Houthis' use of missile capabilities alongside ground operations.

According to South24 Center, the clashes also drew in local tribal fighters and prompted the arrival of additional reinforcements. This underlined the fragmented composition of the anti-Houthi forces, whose ability to coordinate operations remains central to holding the coastal corridor. The battlefront's proximity to the maritime passage gives even local territorial changes significance beyond the immediate districts.

On 12 November, the Saudi-led coalition said that its air defences had intercepted and destroyed two drones launched by the Houthis, one over the Riyadh area and another over the Eastern Province. The interceptions nevertheless highlighted the cross-border dimension of the conflict and the risks to critical infrastructure. The drone interceptions followed a series of Houthi attacks on Saudi targets during the escalation. Saree's statements referred to the East-West Pipeline, Yanbu and military facilities. On the diplomatic front, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2837 on 12 November, renewing targeted travel-ban and asset-freeze measures under the Yemen sanctions regime for 12 months. It also extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts for 13 months. The renewal came amid intensified fighting and concerns about Houthi missile, drone and maritime activities. It maintained an existing sanctions framework rather than introducing a comprehensive new arms restriction. The decision signalled continued international concern, although its immediate effect on Houthi operations remains uncertain.

The humanitarian consequences continued to grow as fighting displaced civilians and restricted access to essential services. IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix reported

that approximately 333,125 people had been displaced between 1 August and 10 November, with the largest concentrations in Taiz, Lahij and Aden. Its latest update recorded an increase of more than 24,000 people compared with the previous report. The figures cover the stated period and are attributable to IOM. Taiz hosted 141,096 displaced people, followed by Lahij with 84,714 and Aden with 66,792. This places additional pressure on host communities and already strained public services. The Soufan Center warned on 12 November that Houthi advances were increasing pressure on Taiz and could put Aden, the government's principal stronghold, at greater risk. Restrictions on food, fuel and medicine entering Taiz added to civilian hardship.

On 15 November, the Southern Armed Forces announced their redeployment from Dhubab Airport and the Bab el-Mandeb area, west of Taiz, towards Aden and neighbouring governorates. Reuters reported that the move followed a six-week counteroffensive that had retaken positions around the strait but failed to remove Houthi forces entirely from the coast or recapture Mocha. Government forces moved to al-Suqyah, south of Dhubab; they continued trying to push the Houthis away from nearby coastal positions. The withdrawal did not establish uncontested Houthi control over the entire passage, but weakened the government-aligned presence near the strait.

Reuters reported that Houthi forces were positioned near Tur al-Bahah in Lahij, about 80 kilometres from Aden, increasing pressure on the government's southern positions. The developments linked the battle for Taiz with the defence of Aden and the western coastline. Redeployment may strengthen Aden's immediate defence but leaves fewer forces available to contest Houthi advances near the Red Sea.

The week's developments point to a deteriorating position for the internationally recognised government. Houthi forces maintained pressure across several fronts, while the government faced difficult choices over troop deployments. The withdrawal near Bab el-Mandeb has maritime security implications, although Houthi control should not be overstated. Sanctions have maintained diplomatic pressure but have not halted the fighting. With displacement rising and access to Taiz constrained, preventing further escalation and protecting civilians remain urgent priorities. Without de-escalation and renewed political engagement, Yemen's fragmentation and the conflict's regional consequences are likely to deepen.

9. The Gulf Countries

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia continued to face sustained security pressure from Houthi missile and drone attacks, while expanding its diplomatic engagement to strengthen regional

coordination and secure international support. Saudi-led coalition air defenses intercepted several waves of ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and drones targeting Riyadh, the Eastern Province, and southern parts of the Kingdom. The attacks also extended to areas around Mecca and Medina, while Houthi statements claimed strikes against the East-West oil pipeline, Khamis Mushait Air Base, and other strategic infrastructure. Although Saudi defenses intercepted many of the incoming projectiles, falling shrapnel from an earlier interception caused minor damage to a Saudi Aramco building in Riyadh's financial district, with no casualties reported. The repeated attacks highlighted the continuing vulnerability of critical infrastructure and energy facilities. The U.S. Mission in Saudi Arabia maintained its security advisories and existing staffing adjustments, reflecting concerns over the possibility of further escalation.

Riyadh sought to reinforce international support through diplomatic engagement and action at the United Nations. The Security Council adopted Resolution 2837, renewing sanctions related to Yemen and extending the mandate of the Panel of Experts. The resolution also expanded the panel to include maritime security expertise and established measures intended to restrict the supply of dual-use components and precursor chemicals used in the production of Houthi drones and missiles. The Arab Parliament welcomed the resolution and called for an end to Houthi military escalation and attacks against Saudi Arabia. A separate Security Council briefing, requested by Bahrain, addressed the wider Gulf security crisis. GCC Secretary-General Jasem Mohamed Albudaiwi reported that Gulf states and Jordan had faced approximately 7,000 attacks, with disruptions affecting around 1,600 vessels and leaving more than 23,000 seafarers stranded in the Strait of Hormuz. He called for the implementation of earlier Security Council measures concerning maritime security and commended mediation efforts by Oman, Qatar, and Pakistan. The discussion also revealed divisions among Council members, with the United States and European countries criticizing Iran's role in the escalation, while Russia and China emphasized the consequences of American and Israeli military actions against Iran.

Saudi Arabia also intensified its diplomatic engagement with European and international partners. Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan participated in the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Paris, where he held bilateral discussions with counterparts from the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and South Korea. He also joined Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani and representatives of the E4 countries in discussions supporting Qatar's mediation efforts to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, protect freedom of navigation, and prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. Faisal subsequently travelled to Brussels for consultations with European counterparts ahead of the EU Foreign Affairs Council, where discussions included

maritime security and possible naval escorts in the Strait of Hormuz. These engagements reflected Riyadh's efforts to build broader international coordination around the security of regional shipping routes and the containment of the conflict.

Within the Gulf, Saudi Arabia continued to strengthen collective defense arrangements. Defense Minister Prince Khalid bin Salman led the Saudi delegation to the GCC Joint Defense Council in Manama, where member states approved the establishment of an advanced command for the GCC Unified Military Command in Kuwait and agreed to allocate joint forces to support its operations. The arrangement is intended to improve coordination among Gulf armed forces and strengthen collective defense capabilities. Saudi Arabia also continued its defense engagement with Syria, building on earlier discussions concerning military and training cooperation. Meanwhile, the Kingdom strengthened its economic and energy partnership with Turkey through a government-to-government memorandum of understanding on electricity projects, signed during the COP31 conference. In the economic sphere, the Federation of Saudi Chambers signed agreements with American business organizations to expand trade, innovation, and investment cooperation. Riyadh also maintained diplomatic communication with Beijing, following the delivery of a message from Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to President Xi Jinping. China subsequently indicated that its special envoy would undertake regional consultations involving Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Oman, with particular attention to energy supplies and maritime routes.

Saudi Arabia's regional security concerns also extended to neighboring Bahrain. Following Iranian projectile and drone attacks against Bahrain, the Saudi Foreign Ministry condemned the strikes as violations of international law and good neighborly relations, calling for measures to restore regional stability. Riyadh's position was consistent with its broader emphasis on Gulf security as a shared responsibility. The Kingdom also continued to support the security of international energy markets, emphasizing the reliability of its supplies despite regional disruptions and the importance of infrastructure, storage capacity, and alternative export routes. Taken together, its diplomatic and defense initiatives reflected an effort to protect national infrastructure, strengthen Gulf coordination, and maintain international support while avoiding further destabilization of regional energy and maritime networks.

UAE

The United Arab Emirates continued to expand its diplomatic role in international conflict-resolution efforts while strengthening its regional security coordination. Abu Dhabi hosted the third round of negotiations involving the United States, Russia, and Ukraine, aimed at finding a political settlement to the war. Deputy Prime Minister and

Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan attended the opening of the talks and welcomed the participating delegations. Hosting the negotiations reinforced the UAE's position as a diplomatic venue capable of facilitating engagement between international actors involved in major conflicts. The country also used the Sir Bani Yas Forum to advance discussions on regional security. Sheikh Abdullah held bilateral talks with Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty and participated in a trilateral meeting with U.S. Senior Adviser for Arab and African Affairs Massad Boulos. Their discussions focused on the war in Sudan, security in the Red Sea and Horn of Africa, and regional water issues. The meetings demonstrated Abu Dhabi's continued engagement with Egypt and the United States on conflicts and strategic questions affecting the wider region.

The UAE also joined regional and international diplomatic efforts concerning the conflict in Gaza and the security of neighboring Gulf states. It participated in a joint statement issued by 18 Arab and Islamic countries condemning an Israeli airstrike on the Nasser Medical Complex in Khan Younis. The statement called on the United States and the Board of Peace to press Israel to remove restrictions on humanitarian assistance and respect ceasefire commitments. Following Iranian drone attacks against Bahrain, the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the strikes as a violation of Bahraini sovereignty and expressed solidarity with Manama. Sheikh Abdullah also held consultations with Georgian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Maka Botchorishvili, reviewing bilateral cooperation and regional developments. These engagements reflected the UAE's continued use of diplomatic channels to support regional coordination and maintain relations with international partners.

Security and defense remained important priorities. During the UAE Government Annual Meetings, the government disclosed that its air defenses had intercepted 3,617 aerial threats since the beginning of regional hostilities. The figure included 2,875 drones, 705 ballistic missiles, and 37 cruise missiles. The announcement provided an indication of the scale of the security challenges faced by the country and the operational demands placed on its defense systems. The UAE also participated in the GCC Joint Defense Council in Manama, where Gulf defense ministers approved the establishment of an advanced command for the Unified Military Command in Kuwait and agreed to allocate forces to strengthen collective deterrence. These arrangements reflected the importance of closer military coordination among GCC members as threats to Gulf territory and maritime infrastructure continued.

Maritime and aviation security remained additional concerns for Abu Dhabi. Two tankers reportedly struck mines in the Strait of Hormuz, reinforcing concerns about the safety of commercial shipping and the potential disruption of energy transportation.

Aviation operations also experienced selective disruptions on routes between the UAE and Saudi Arabia, while the U.S. diplomatic mission maintained heightened security advisories for travelers using Zayed International and Dubai airports. Domestically, Dr. Ali Rashid Al Nuaimi, Chairman of the Federal National Council's Defense, Interior and Foreign Affairs Committee, warned that radicalized demonstrations in several European cities had developed into national security concerns. He emphasized the UAE's domestic policies on coexistence, while the Abrahamic Family House had temporarily closed following earlier reported targeting attempts. These developments illustrated how the regional confrontation continued to shape the UAE's domestic security posture as well as its defense and diplomatic priorities.

Qatar

Qatar maintained an active role in diplomatic efforts to prevent further escalation between the United States and Iran, while strengthening its security cooperation with Turkey and other regional partners. Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani held discussions with U.S. President Donald Trump and Vice President JD Vance at the White House, seeking to preserve a diplomatic opening and prevent renewed American military strikes against Iran. The meeting reportedly secured a diplomatic window of at least two weeks for continued negotiations. Sheikh Mohammed subsequently travelled to Paris, where he joined Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan and representatives of the E4 countries to brief European leaders on the discussions with Washington and coordinate efforts to restore navigation through the Strait of Hormuz. These engagements reinforced Doha's position as a key intermediary between Washington and Tehran, while demonstrating its efforts to secure broader international support for a negotiated settlement.

Qatar also worked to address public claims surrounding the negotiations. Its International Media Office rejected viral social media reports suggesting that Sheikh Mohammed had declared the U.S.-Iran talks a failure, maintaining that Qatari mediators remained in contact with both governments. This response reflected Doha's interest in preserving confidence in the mediation process at a time when negotiations remained sensitive and vulnerable to political pressure. At the regional level, Sheikh Mohammed hosted Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam in Doha. Their discussions covered regional de-escalation and Qatar's proposed energy assistance to Lebanon, including electricity generation and liquefied natural gas supplies. A Qatari technical team had also arrived in Beirut to advance the necessary arrangements. The initiative demonstrated Qatar's continued use of its financial and energy resources to support regional partners facing economic and infrastructure challenges.

Doha also joined Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt, Jordan, Turkey, and other Arab and Islamic countries in condemning an Israeli airstrike on the Nasser Medical Complex in Khan Younis. The joint statement called for unrestricted humanitarian access and the implementation of ceasefire commitments. Qatar separately condemned Iranian drone attacks against Bahrain and Houthi missile attacks targeting Riyadh, reiterating that Gulf security was indivisible. These positions reflected Doha's effort to maintain diplomatic balance while defending the security of its regional partners and continuing its mediation role in the wider confrontation.

In the defense sphere, Qatar strengthened its strategic relationship with Turkey through the signing of a mutual defense agreement during the meeting of the two countries' Supreme Strategic Committee in Istanbul. The agreement commits both countries to a coordinated response in the event of an external armed attack and provides for expanded military exercises, defense industry cooperation, and intelligence and threat consultations. The meeting also welcomed the Badr Memorandum involving Qatar, Turkey, Pakistan, and Indonesia, which seeks to strengthen collective defense capabilities through joint arms production, technology transfer, and closer integration of defense supply chains. Qatar also participated in the GCC Joint Defense Council in Manama, where member states approved the establishment of an advanced command for the GCC Unified Military Command in Kuwait and committed forces to the arrangement. Together, these initiatives reflected Doha's effort to strengthen bilateral and multilateral defense partnerships amid continuing regional insecurity.

Maritime security and energy protection remained central to Qatar's diplomatic and defense agenda. The targeting of Qatari gas carriers and continuing threats to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz raised concerns over the security of the country's energy exports and commercial routes. During the Security Council briefing on the Gulf crisis, the GCC Secretary-General recognized Qatar's mediation efforts alongside Oman and Pakistan to prevent further escalation and restore commercial navigation. Qatar also supported the adoption of Resolution 2837, which renewed Yemen-related sanctions and expanded the UN Panel of Experts' role in monitoring maritime smuggling of components used in drone and missile production. These developments underscored the connection between Qatar's diplomatic engagement, Gulf collective security, and the protection of energy transportation routes. Doha continued to pursue a diplomatic solution to the regional confrontation while strengthening its defense partnerships and advocating for the uninterrupted movement of commercial shipping

gion. The incident prompted diplomatic engagement between the two countries, with their foreign ministers holding discussions on the sidelines of the Russia-Africa Summit. Both governments reportedly opted to pursue diplomatic channels rather than allow the

dispute to escalate into a military confrontation. This approach indicates an effort to contain bilateral friction despite broader regional instability. At the same time, Niger continued consolidating its foreign policy alignment with the Alliance of Sahel States (AES), alongside Mali and Burkina Faso. Its distancing from ECOWAS and Western security frameworks has continued alongside closer engagement with alternative security partners, particularly Russia and Algeria.

10. Africa and The Sahel Region

Mali

Mali faced mounting humanitarian and security pressures, while continuing to strengthen its defense and economic partnerships outside traditional Western frameworks. One of the most significant humanitarian developments involved the arrival of large numbers of people expelled from neighboring Guinea following a crackdown and ban on artisanal gold mining in the Siguiri region. Malian authorities initially reported receiving approximately 160,000 people, with subsequent estimates indicating that around 100,000 had arrived in Bamako and nearly 60,000 in Kouremale. The government described the influx as a humanitarian emergency. Deadly clashes associated with the mining restrictions in Guinea continued to contribute to population movements and heightened pressure on communities receiving those displaced.

Bamako also emphasized expanding its defense and technological cooperation with Turkey. Discussions and preparations associated with the BAMEX 2026 framework brought together senior officials, including Yamoussa Camara and Lassine Doumbia. Mali highlighted the importance of Turkish military technology, including Bayraktar drones, as part of its effort to strengthen domestic capabilities and reduce dependence on external partners. The emphasis on defense cooperation reflects the transitional government's broader pursuit of greater strategic autonomy amid persistent insecurity.

The security situation remained characterized by a multi-front conflict involving jihadist coalitions, including Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM), and northern separatist and Tuareg-led factions. The government under Assimi Goïta continued relying heavily on air operations and foreign security contractors, despite reported logistical and supply constraints. The scale of foreign military involvement also came under scrutiny following an analysis of leaked Russian state statistics by analyst Janis Kluge. The analysis suggested that at least 300 Russian nationals, presumed to include personnel associated with the Wagner Group or the Russian Defense Ministry-controlled Africa Corps, had died while operating in Mali. The reported fatalities included significant increases corresponding to intense clashes during earlier phases of the conflict.

Mali's deteriorating security environment also raised concerns among neighboring countries. A study by the Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies highlighted the risk of further instability spreading across the approximately 2,200-kilometer border with Mauritania. Mauritania is already receiving substantial numbers of Malian refugees, adding to concerns about the regional humanitarian consequences of the conflict and the potential expansion of insecurity into the wider Maghreb.

DRC

The Democratic Republic of the Congo experienced significant political and diplomatic developments, particularly surrounding changes to its constitutional framework and its position in an international diplomatic contest. President Félix Tshisekedi signed Law No. 26/045 governing referendums, replacing the existing framework established in 2005. The legislation allows referendums to be held on constitutional amendments or the drafting of an entirely new constitution. Its adoption has intensified domestic political debate, with opposition groups expressing concern that the new provisions could eventually be used to alter presidential term limits.

Kinshasa also made a significant adjustment to its diplomatic position in the contest for leadership of the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF). The government withdrew the candidacy of Juliana Amato Lumumba and announced its support for Romanian candidate Dacian Cioloș. The decision reportedly followed diplomatic engagement involving French President Emmanuel Macron and reshaped the competition ahead of the organization's summit in Phnom Penh. Rwanda, meanwhile, continued supporting the incumbent secretary-general, Louise Mushikiwabo.

Security conditions in the eastern provinces remained difficult. In Ituri, MONUSCO peacekeepers evacuated three civilians, two women and one man, who had been injured in a shooting along the Plaine Savo-Gali axis. The injured were transported to Fataki Hospital with assistance from a Médecins Sans Frontières nurse. International pressure on armed groups also continued. The UN Security Council's 1533 Sanctions Committee and the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office updated sanctions targeting the Congo River Alliance, also known as the Front pour la Refondation de la Nation (FRN). The measures concern the group's obstruction of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration processes and its role in destabilizing eastern DRC. Meanwhile, ongoing armed conflict continued to obstruct public health operations, including efforts by national authorities and the World Health Organization to contain the Ebola outbreak in affected provinces.

Central African Republic

The Central African Republic experienced an important shift in its international security arrangements following the United Nations Security Council's unanimous adoption of Resolution 2836, which renewed the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) while reducing its military strength. The resolution extends the mission for another year and lowers its authorized military troop ceiling by nearly 15%, from 14,046 to 12,000 personnel. The authorized ceilings for police personnel and corrections officers remain unchanged at 2,265 and 40 respectively. The Council also introduced a gradual, conditions-based transition framework intended to transfer selected responsibilities from MINUSCA to national authorities. The mission and the government are expected to identify which tasks can be transferred immediately and which require further institutional capacity-building.

CAR Ambassador Marius Aristide Hoja Nzessioué welcomed the unanimous adoption of the resolution and indicated that an interministerial committee would coordinate the transition process with MINUSCA. However, he urged the Security Council to preserve the mission's rapid-response and aviation capabilities, particularly in light of continuing instability along the country's borders. Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Somalia also cautioned that the UN's financial difficulties should not undermine the transition or leave critical security responsibilities inadequately funded. The revised mandate further directs MINUSCA to concentrate its forces in high-risk border areas rather than maintain a broad territorial stabilization posture. It explicitly condemns cross-border incursions by Sudan's Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and their collaboration with local armed groups. The resolution also calls for support to the deployment of national security forces, including a pilot project for a garrison army, alongside existing disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programs.

Domestic political tensions were also visible in Bangui, where more than 500 demonstrators participated in an opposition-organized protest over rising fuel prices and the detention of civil society leaders. The demonstration was organized by the Republican Bloc for the Defense of the Constitution (BRDC), a coalition that includes prominent opposition figures such as Martin Ziguélé, Crépin Mboli-Goumba, and Mahamat Kamoun. The protest followed an earlier government announcement declaring the planned march illegal and threatening to prohibit it. Pro-government groups had also encouraged a boycott. However, the Ministry of the Interior subsequently reversed its position and authorized the demonstration under conditions requiring organizers to maintain public order and ensure the free movement of traffic.

Protesters called on the government to reduce petrol prices from 1,150 CFA francs per liter to the previous rate of 850 CFA francs, publish its fuel import contract with the private company Neptune Oil, and release five civil society leaders detained following the October "Dead City" strike. BRDC spokesperson Martin Ziguélé issued the administration of President Faustin-Archange Touadéra a two-to-three-week ultimatum to address the coalition's five core demands or face renewed mobilization. Despite the political tension and earlier calls for counter-protests, the march concluded without major security incidents. National police, gendarmerie units, and MINUSCA armored personnel escorted demonstrators during the event.

The humanitarian situation remained affected by displacement from neighboring Sudan. According to a UNHCR update, the country was hosting 41,039 Sudanese refugees, most of whom had entered through the volatile Am Dafock border area in Vakaga Prefecture. Of this population, 27,919 were accommodated at the Korsi settlement in Birao. The continued arrival of refugees, combined with instability along the eastern border, reinforces the importance of MINUSCA's revised focus on high-risk border areas and its support for national security institutions.

11. Middle East

Israel

President Isaac Herzog on 9 November tasked Gadi Eisenkot with forming Israel's next government after the 27 October election, and Eisenkot said he would pursue a "creative and unconventional" route to an emergency coalition. The 26th Knesset was sworn in on 10 November, with Benjamin Netanyahu continuing as caretaker prime minister. In the 120-seat parliament, Likud and its right-wing partners held 53 seats, Eisenkot's Yashar-led bloc held 48, and Arab-led parties held 19. Herzog urged lawmakers to compromise and avoid another election. Eisenkot had until 6 December to assemble a coalition, with a possible extension to 20 December. No bloc held a majority.

Netanyahu and Eisenkot's parties pursued competing unity-government negotiations between 9 and 15 November. Netanyahu called for talks without preconditions and argued that a government relying on Arab parties could not address Iran's threat. After Netanyahu's 10 November speech, Yashar cancelled a scheduled negotiation, and Eisenkot criticized the remarks as divisive. Eisenkot said Likud could join a government led by him. On 15 November, Yashar and Likud teams met in Herzliya, with Chili Tropper and Yoav Horowitz representing Yashar and Ofir Katz and Michael Rabello representing Likud. Bennett's party also sent an envoy. The parties agreed to continue talks, with the premiership, Haredi participation and possible Arab-party support among the disputed issues.

Coalition negotiations put United Arab List leader Mansour Abbas under pressure over the party's position on Hamas. Al Jazeera reported that Abbas was considering describing Hamas as a terrorist organization in exchange for a genuine political partnership, but Abbas denied making such a declaration. Eisenkot's camp was reported to have sought recognition of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state. Joint List leader Yousef Jabareen called for Jewish-Arab unity to replace the Netanyahu government, while Religious Zionism lawmaker Orit Strock advocated a unity government and warned against relying on Arab parties. Eisenkot also accused Netanyahu and members of his political camp of promoting a racist and violent campaign against Palestinian citizens of Israel, arguing that the rhetoric was aimed at delegitimizing Arab lawmakers during coalition negotiations.

Israeli police reportedly assessed that evidence supporting a Shin Bet investigation into alleged foreign interference in the October election was limited. A Channel 12 report on 9 November said an initial police review found no security offences and few potential criminal violations. The Attorney General was expected to decide whether the investigation should continue, be narrowed or be closed.

Netanyahu and Eisenkot held a security briefing lasting about two hours on 12 November at the Prime Minister's Office. A joint statement said Eisenkot received an update on Israel's security and diplomatic challenges and that the two would continue sharing information. The meeting followed Eisenkot's letter urging Netanyahu to exercise restraint over security decisions during the caretaker period. Israeli media reported that Iran was a central subject of the briefing.

Mossad director Roman Gofman returned from Washington on 15 November after briefing CIA director John Ratcliffe and senior Trump administration officials on Israeli intelligence concerning Iran. He was expected to update the security cabinet, which was meeting for the first time since the election, before meeting Netanyahu. Israeli reporting said the cabinet could consider military options, while no decision to attack Iran was announced.

Israeli police and the Shin Bet opened an investigation on 9 November after flyers bearing QR codes appeared in mailboxes in northern Tel Aviv. Police said the codes led to a webpage containing threats against power stations, oil refineries and desalination facilities. The Iran-linked Handala group claimed responsibility for distributing the leaflets, although its claims about the scale of the operation were not independently verified.

Shin Bet and Israeli police arrested an Israeli citizen from Mazra'a near Acre on 15 November on suspicion of carrying out intelligence-gathering tasks for

Iranian operatives. Investigators identified him as Wissam Ghalib Saleh Awad and said he had photographed strategic facilities, military bases and police stations before sending images and coordinates to handlers through Telegram. Police seized phones and computers, and prosecutors sought to file an indictment.

Israeli security forces arrested ten suspects in northern Samaria on 9 November. The military and Border Police operation, guided by Shin Bet intelligence, targeted people suspected of establishing a militant network and planning an attack against Israeli civilians. The suspects were detained in several locations in the Arraba area and transferred for questioning, according to the security services' announcement.

Israeli Border Police arrested three wanted individuals in the Samaria villages of Urif and Qabalan on 11 November. The operation was guided by Shin Bet and targeted people suspected of promoting attacks and activities against security forces. Police said the detainees included two Hamas operatives and a third suspect linked to activity by terrorist organizations. The arrests followed searches at several locations.

Israeli forces evacuated four unauthorized West Bank outposts on 10 November, which the military said had been sources of repeated attacks on Palestinians. Four Israelis were arrested the next day over an earlier attack on soldiers escorting a Palestinian family. Separately, settlers were accused of setting vehicles alight in al-Lubban ash-Sharqiya and attacking Palestinian olive harvesters in nearby areas. Reports also described clashes involving Israeli forces and Palestinians.

Israeli forces arrested AFP video journalist Mohammad Ateeq during a nighttime raid at his home in Burqin near Jenin on 15 November. The army said he was suspected of ties to Hamas but provided no further details. His wife said soldiers confiscated his phones and took him away blindfolded. AFP said it was concerned and requested evidence for the detention.

At least seven Palestinians were reported killed in Israeli attacks across Gaza on 10 November, according to local medics. An airstrike on a shelter roof in Gaza City's Zeitoun neighborhood killed a father and his 13-year-old son. Further deaths were reported near a school in Daraj, in gunfire in Khan Younis, and at a metal foundry in Sabra. The IDF said it targeted militants in Zeitoun and Daraj.

An Israeli airstrike hit the Nasser Medical Complex in Khan Younis shortly after midnight on 12 November. Gaza medics said six people were killed, including surgeon Rezik Abushira, and at least 20 were injured. The IDF and Shin Bet said the target was Hamas commander Muhammad Abu Ismail and other operatives, and alleged the

complex was used for Hamas military activity. The IDF said it used precision munitions and aerial surveillance.

Israel said its forces killed Hamas commander Samir Abu Younis in an airstrike in the al-Mawasi area of Khan Younis on 14 November. Hamas and the Israeli military confirmed his death. Abu Younis, 53, led the Rafah Brigade after his predecessor was killed in September. Medics said others were wounded in the strike, while Hamas said he had joined its armed wing in 1991.

The Israeli military reported several incidents involving people crossing the Gaza ceasefire yellow line between 12 and 16 November. The IDF said troops killed three armed individuals in Rafah on 12 November and later shot people it said had crossed the line and approached forces in southern and northern Gaza. These accounts were issued by the military, which described the individuals as immediate threats.

Israel's military said on 9 November that it was implementing a winter preparedness plan for Gaza in coordination with the Board of Peace, the United Nations and aid organizations. The IDF reported that more than 91,000 tents and over 8,200 trucks carrying tarpaulins, blankets and winter clothing had entered Gaza. It also cited sewage, water and health-related supplies, while saying reconstruction remained linked to Hamas disarmament.

Heavy rain caused a sand embankment to collapse onto tents at a displacement camp south of Deir al-Balah on 9 November, killing five members of one family, according to Reuters. Six other people were injured. Residents searched through sand and debris for people trapped beneath the collapse. Local authorities reported widespread flooding and damage to displacement shelters, while humanitarian organizations recorded extensive losses among families living in tents and damaged buildings.

Israeli forces carried out airstrikes, artillery fire and demolition operations in southern Lebanon between 10 and 13 November, according to reports by Lebanese state media carried by Anadolu. Reported locations included Qantara, Kfar Tebnit, Zawtar al-Sharqiyah, Khiam, Majdal Zoun and Bayt al-Sayyad, across the Nabatieh and South Lebanon governorates. The reports also described low-flying Israeli drones over Beirut and artillery near several towns. The accounts were attributed to Lebanon's National News Agency and described separate operations over several days. No consolidated casualty figure was provided in the reports.

The Israeli military said on 15 November that troops had demolished a Hezbollah tunnel in the southern Lebanese town of Majdal Zoun. The army described the tunnel as approximately 35 metres long and said it contained two rooms used by Hezbollah

operatives. The operation involved troops from the 300th Regional Brigade and combat engineers from the Yahalom unit, which carried out the demolition.

This structure keeps the election as the only section covering Israel's domestic political competition. The second captures the Iran-related military, intelligence and security developments, while the third groups Gaza, the West Bank and Lebanon developments.

Turkey

Turkey's Defense Ministry disclosed on 9 November that a naval delegation had visited Port Sudan from 2 to 5 November. Officials from the Naval Forces Command and the General Directorate of Shipyards inspected repair workshops and the slipway at Port Sudan Naval Base and met Sudanese Navy commander Vice Admiral Mahjoub Bushra Ahmed Rahman. The ministry said the visit aimed to strengthen Sudanese naval shipbuilding and maintenance capacity.

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan met Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on 10 November on the sidelines of COP31 in Antalya. The leaders discussed bilateral relations, trade, investment and regional developments. Erdoğan reiterated Turkey's support for peace and stability in Ethiopia's region and congratulated Ethiopia on preparations to host COP32 in 2027. The meeting was confirmed by the Turkish presidency.

At the opening of the COP31 Leaders' Summit in Antalya on 11 November, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan described the destruction in Gaza as genocide and ecocide, citing damage to olive groves, farmland, water and sanitation systems, and the displacement of civilians. He urged Israel to allow more humanitarian assistance and said environmental damage should be included in international consideration of Gaza. Israel's Foreign Ministry rejected the remarks as false accusations and said Hamas must disarm before reconstruction. Turkey's Foreign Ministry replied that Israel was attempting to conceal its policies, described the Israeli response as slander and reaffirmed Ankara's support for Palestinian rights. The exchange was carried in statements by both governments.

Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan held COP31 sidelines meetings on 11 November with Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa, Finnish President Alexander Stubb, Qatar's Emir Tamim bin Hamad, Libyan Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibeh and Malian Prime Minister Abdoulaye Maiga. He also met UN Secretary-General António Guterres and the foreign ministers of Ukraine and Syria. Turkish diplomatic sources confirmed the meetings but provided limited details of their agendas.

President Erdoğan met Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud on 12 November on the sidelines of COP31 in Antalya. Turkey's Directorate of Communications confirmed

the meeting but provided no details of the agenda. The encounter took place amid political disagreements in Somalia over constitutional amendments and the electoral process, while Turkey continued its security cooperation and military training partnership with the federal government.

Erdoğan met Sudan's Sovereignty Council chairman Abdel Fattah al-Burhan in Antalya on 12 November, with Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan and Defense Minister Yaşar Güler present. The Turkish presidency said the leaders discussed bilateral relations and regional developments, including the expansion of defense-industry cooperation, investment and agriculture. Erdoğan reiterated Turkey's support for Sudan's unity, territorial integrity and independence and referred to the Sudan Peace Initiative. Sudanese reporting also recorded Burhan's meetings with Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Libyan Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibeh during the summit.

Erdoğan met Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on 12 November during COP31 in Antalya. Türkiye's official readout confirmed the meeting and listed Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, Defense Minister Yaşar Güler and intelligence chief Ibrahim Kalın among the Turkish officials attending. The public readout provided no detailed agenda or announcement of an agreement arising from the encounter.

Erdoğan met Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on 12 November on the sidelines of COP31 in Antalya. Turkey's presidency confirmed the meeting, with Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan in attendance. The public statement provided no detailed agenda or announcement of agreements. The meeting formed part of a series of bilateral encounters held by Erdoğan with visiting heads of state and government at the summit.

Erdoğan met Libyan Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibeh on 12 November during COP31 in Antalya. The Turkish presidency confirmed the meeting and listed Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, Energy Minister Alparslan Bayraktar and Defense Minister Yaşar Güler among those attending. The official statement provided no detailed account of the discussions. Fidan had also met Dbeibeh separately during his diplomatic engagements on the summit sidelines.

Turkey's Defense Ministry denied on 12 November that Ankara planned to deploy 15,000 troops to Somalia. Spokesperson Rear Admiral Zeki Aktürk said reports of a deployment at the Somali government's request were inaccurate. The ministry said the existing Somali-Turkish Task Force and Air Component Command would continue military assistance, training and advisory work supporting Somalia's counterterrorism capabilities. No additional deployment was announced.

Turkish Ambassador to Somalia Ferhat Alkan met opposition figures including former

president's Sharif Sheikh Ahmed and Mohamed Abdullahi Farmaajo, and former prime minister Hassan Ali Khaire during 13 and 14 November. Embassy readouts referred to Somalia's political process, bilateral relations and the Quartet's facilitation efforts. The meetings took place as the Somali Future Council declined to attend talks convened by President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and called for Quartet mediation. The Council said it wanted an external facilitator and broader consultation over the electoral framework. Other opposition representatives said they were prepared to attend the president's proposed discussions, while the embassy continued contacts with political figures across the divide.

Four Turkish military personnel were killed when an S-70 helicopter crashed in Malatya province on 12 November. The Defense Ministry said the wreckage had been located and search-and-rescue operations launched, but gave no immediate cause for the crash. The aircraft came down near Samanköy, outside Malatya city. Police, firefighters and medical teams responded to the incident. The ministry said the cause was under investigation.

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad met in Istanbul on 13 November and oversaw a mutual defense agreement, according to the Turkish presidency and Reuters. The pact commits the parties to consultation over security threats and a joint response to an external armed attack, with plans to expand military exercises, defense-industry cooperation and personnel training. The 12th session of the Turkey-Qatar Supreme Strategic Committee also issued a joint communiqué covering humanitarian cooperation and support for Gaza recovery. On the Horn of Africa, the two governments called for respect for Somalia's sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, and for good-neighbor relations. They also reaffirmed support for Sudan's unity and diplomatic efforts towards a settlement, and called for protection of civilians and humanitarian workers in Sudan and Yemen.

Understood. You meant the Israel section of the already-prepared 9–16 November brief, not the recurring Monday task. Here is the revised section, reorganized into three thematic sections. I have retained election-related internal politics and removed unrelated domestic political developments, including routine parliamentary man oeuvres and judicial reform disputes.

12. Global Powers

On 10 November, US, Russian and Ukrainian delegations convened in Abu Dhabi for another round of trilateral negotiations aimed at ending the war. The American delegation was led by special envoy Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, while Vladimir Medinsky headed the Russian delegation. Ukraine was represented by Rustem Umerov

and senior officials from President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's administration.

The talks focused on security arrangements, the principles of a comprehensive settlement and possible measures to reduce hostilities. Moscow continued to insist that territorial and security questions must be addressed as part of any settlement, while Kyiv maintained its opposition to concessions that would compromise Ukraine. The negotiations did not produce a comprehensive agreement, although the diplomatic channel remained open.

A particularly important dimension was the disagreement over European participation. Washington sought to persuade Moscow to accept a broader negotiating format involving European governments. US envoys held discussions with representatives from Germany, France, the UK, Italy, NATO and the EU on security guarantees and Europe's future security arrangements. Russia, meanwhile, preferred to retain the trilateral format.

The Trump administration continued to defend its military operations against Iran while signalling that it did not currently see the need for a broader campaign of airstrikes. On 10 November, Secretary of State Marco Rubio argued in Paris that the US naval blockade and economic sanctions were already inflicting substantial damage on Iran's economy, making major combat operations unnecessary at that stage. He nevertheless maintained that American forces remained prepared to respond if Tehran escalated.

Rubio also sought greater international participation in securing the Strait of Hormuz. He urged G7 countries to contribute to protecting commercial shipping from Iranian attacks and supporting the removal of naval mines. The appeal exposed differences among Washington and its European allies. France and the UK indicated that their proposed maritime contribution would be more feasible after the fighting ends, while Washington wanted partners to help restore navigation during the continuing confrontation.

The G7 foreign ministers' joint declaration, issued on 11 November following their Paris meeting, strongly condemned Iran's attacks on neighbouring countries and civilian vessels and called for the restoration of safe and unrestricted passage through Hormuz. It also supported diplomatic efforts to reach a lasting settlement addressing concerns over Iran's nuclear programme. The declaration endorsed defensive activities by US Central Command to clear mines and escort civilian vessels, while recognising a separate French–British initiative to facilitate the resumption of maritime traffic.

On 10 November, a group of senators wrote to Secretary of State Marco Rubio, urging the administration to intensify diplomatic engagement over Ethiopia's internal conflicts and escalating tensions with Eritrea. The letter warned that the possibility of a new

Ethiopia–Eritrea war was high and that overlapping conflicts could destabilise the wider Horn of Africa, the Red Sea and vital international shipping routes.

The senators identified several interconnected sources of instability: renewed fighting in Tigray, continued clashes between federal forces and Fano in Amhara, the insurgency in Oromia, reported Eritrean military presence in Tigray and deteriorating diplomatic relations between Addis Ababa and Asmara. They also raised concerns about the growing diplomatic confrontation involving Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt.

On 11 November, Secretary of State Marco Rubio spoke with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi. The discussion covered Trump's forthcoming visit to China for the APEC summit, the planned visit by Xi Jinping to Florida for the G20 meeting and the possibility of a meeting involving Trump, Xi and Putin. The conversation also reflected the continuing effort to manage bilateral tensions and maintain communication between the two governments.

On 13 November, Chinese and American officials held the first meeting of their bilateral trade council, established following the September discussions between Xi Jinping and Donald Trump. The meeting addressed tariff reductions, agricultural trade and implementation of the proposed reciprocal tariff-cut arrangement covering approximately $30 billion in goods from each country. China's Ministry of Commerce described the discussions as candid and constructive, but did not announce a new agreement.

On 16 November, Beijing confirmed that Xi Jinping, Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin would meet in Shenzhen on 19 November, on the sidelines of the APEC summit. The White House and Kremlin had also confirmed the planned encounter. It will be the first formal trilateral meeting involving the leaders of the three major powers.

The proposed discussions are expected to cover major international security issues, including the Iran conflict and nuclear arms control. Trump has expressed interest in discussing a possible nuclear arms agreement involving China and Russia. Beijing, however, has traditionally resisted joining a trilateral nuclear arms-control arrangement on the grounds that its nuclear arsenal is substantially smaller than those of Washington and Moscow.

China continued its diplomatic outreach in the Middle East through Special Envoy Zhai Jun, who travelled to Iran, Oman and Saudi Arabia as part of Beijing's initiative to promote de-escalation. The visits form part of the wider diplomatic effort announced by China's Foreign Ministry on 2 November.

On 12 November, Zhai met Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan in Riyadh. The Saudi account of the meeting emphasised attacks attributed to the Houthis and threats to Saudi security, while China's public account focused on dialogue, de-escalation and the need for a political settlement in Yemen. This difference in emphasis illustrates Beijing's effort to maintain diplomatic relations with competing regional actors without publicly adopting one side's position.

Russia participated in two days of US-mediated trilateral negotiations with Ukraine in Abu Dhabi on 10–11 November, the first such round since February. The discussions addressed security guarantees, the future European security architecture and a possible prisoner exchange. The principal tangible outcome was an agreement in principle on a major prisoner-of-war exchange, although the number of prisoners and implementation arrangements remained to be settled. The talks did not produce a breakthrough on the central political disputes, particularly territorial control in the Donbas. Moscow continued to insist on Ukraine’s withdrawal from territory Russia claims, while Kyiv rejected surrendering the region.

13. European Countries

On 12 November, the UK announced a new sanctions package targeting Russia’s oil and gas revenue network. The measures include sanctions against shadow-fleet vessels transporting Russian oil and liquefied natural gas, major coal companies, and Rosneft’s Vostok Oil project. The package also targets Slavneft, making the UK the first country to sanction all ten of Russia’s largest oil producers, according to the British government. London presented the measures as an effort to restrict the revenue streams sustaining Russia’s war in Ukraine.

The announcement coincided with the European Political Community summit in Dublin, where Prime Minister Andy Burnham called for continued pressure on Moscow and stronger European involvement in negotiations over Ukraine. He also co-chaired a meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on the peace process. The UK reiterated its position that any settlement should include legally binding security guarantees for Ukraine and a full ceasefire.

On 12 November, the UK welcomed the UN Security Council's adoption by consensus of a resolution strengthening the implementation of the Yemen arms embargo. The measures address the Houthis' reliance on dual-use components and precursor chemicals used in local weapons manufacturing. British Ambassador to the UN Sarah MacIntosh said the UK would work with Council members to agree a list of dual-use items that should be subject to restrictions. London also reaffirmed its support for the internationally recognised Yemeni government and Saudi Arabia, while calling for the

release of detained UN, humanitarian and diplomatic personnel.

At the European Political Community summit in Dublin on 12 November, Burnham met European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. The two leaders discussed preparations for the forthcoming UK–EU summit, including the possibility of a closer economic relationship, as well as Ukraine and the ongoing negotiations in Abu Dhabi. They agreed on the importance of sustaining diplomatic momentum around Ukraine.

France hosted the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Paris on 9–10 November under its 2026 presidency. The joint declaration, issued on 11 November, explicitly addressed the deteriorating security situation between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The G7 warned that further escalation could affect regional stability, humanitarian conditions, international trade and Red Sea security. It called on the parties to exercise restraint, pursue diplomatic solutions, protect civilians and facilitate humanitarian access. It also expressed support for UN and African Union efforts to reduce tensions and facilitate dialogue.

On 13 November, French Foreign Ministry spokesperson Pascal Confavreux said Paris supported increasing pressure on the Houthis to end their attacks in the region, particularly against Saudi Arabia. His remarks came amid discussions over whether the European Union should designate the Houthi movement as a terrorist organisation. European governments remained divided over the proposal, partly because of concerns that such a designation could complicate future peace negotiations in Yemen.

On 10 November, Italian Defence Minister Guido Crosetto criticised the lack of concrete European commitments to strengthen maritime protection in the Red Sea. He said European governments had not responded adequately to Italy's calls for additional contributions to the EU's EUNAVFOR ASPIDES naval mission. Crosetto had previously urged the EU to reinforce the operation, which was established to protect commercial shipping from Houthi attacks. EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas had reportedly called on member states to increase their contributions, with more than ten warships needed to make the mission more effective.

14. International and Regional Organizations

United Nation

On 13 November 2026, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2838 (2026) extending the mandate of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) and its support for the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism until 15 November 2027 (13 in favour, 0 against, 2 abstentions by China and the

Russian Federation). The resolution includes sharpened benchmarks for progress by Sudan and South Sudan on Abyei's final status negotiations, security including force withdrawals and RSF withdrawal from Abyei , establishment of the Abyei Police Service and other measures. It also called for investigation into a prior drone attack on UNISFA personnel.

In November 2026 the Security Council was expected to hold a private meeting on AUSSOM with briefings anticipated from relevant officials , address the 2713 Al-Shabaab sanctions regime extension due by end-November and related Panel of Experts mandate and hold briefings/consultations on South Sudan/UNMISS and related issues. These form part of ongoing monitoring of Horn of Africa and related situations.

Africa Union

On 12 November 2026 in Addis Ababa, the African Union Commission held consultations with representatives of the Federal Government of Somalia and Troop-Contributing Countries on Somalia's security transition and the future of AUSSOM. An Integrated Security Transition Plan was presented for submission to the AU Peace and Security Council. The discussions aimed at a coordinated, orderly and sustainable transfer of security responsibilities to Somali institutions, addressing operational priorities, preventing a security vacuum and guiding future AUPSC and UNSC decisions. A parallel briefing was held with international partners to strengthen coordination and sustain support.

Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

On 9 November 2026, IGAD and Germany held their Annual Partnership Dialogue at the IGAD Secretariat in Djibouti. The IGAD side was led by Executive Secretary Dr Workneh Gebeyehu and the German side by Ambassador Frank Neumann with participation including BMZ's Horn of Africa Division. The meeting reviewed more than 30 years of cooperation, progress on flagship programmes including the Regional Migration Fund, Cash for Community Cohesion and the Peaceful and Resilient Borderlands Programme jointly financed with the EU and priorities for peace, regional integration, climate resilience, livelihoods and institutional strengthening. Both sides reaffirmed commitment to deepen the partnership during ongoing regional challenges.

On 11–12 November 2026 in Mogadishu, IGAD's Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) held the 21st Technical Committee on Early Warning and Response meeting followed by the 18th Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Secretaries. It brought together Permanent Secretaries and senior officials from Member States, the IGAD Secretariat and CEWARN. Participants reviewed implementation of

prior resolutions, CEWARN activities July 2023–October 2026, approved the Regional Conflict Profiling and Scenario Building Report and endorsed CEWARN's 2026–2030 Strategic Focus. Emphasis was placed on translating early warning into preventive action, strengthening national Conflict Early Warning and Response Units and addressing funding constraints for conflict prevention work. Somalia hosted the CPS meeting for the first time.

On 13 November 2026, the Quintet (African Union, IGAD, League of Arab States, European Union and United Nations) issued a statement expressing deep concern over the latest deadly escalation of drone attacks across Sudan including Khartoum, Darfur, Kordofan, Blue Nile, Gadaref, Gezira, Sennar and Red Sea states. The attacks caused civilian casualties and damaged critical infrastructure such as power stations and health facilities, worsening the humanitarian crisis and disrupting services. The Quintet strongly condemned the attacks, reiterated that there is no military solution, called for an immediate halt to hostilities and attacks on civilians/infrastructure including an end to external support fuelling escalation , urged support for de-escalation efforts including the Quad toward a humanitarian truce and comprehensive ceasefire, stressed respect for international humanitarian law and accountability and reaffirmed support for Sudan's sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity through an inclusive, Sudanese-led political process.

Around 15 November 2026, IGAD validated the Regional Plan of Action and Common Position to unlock the potential of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden while addressing challenges. The five year plan covers regional cohesion and cooperation, socio-economic development, maritime and terrestrial matters, research, technology, innovation and capacity building. It aims to support IGAD peace and security objectives, safeguard Member State interests, ensure freedom of navigation and trade and strengthen cooperation amid political instability and security concerns in countries such as Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia. The plan is to be presented for adoption by the IGAD Council of Ministers.

As of 15 November 2026, the revised IGAD Treaty (adopted 2023) was set to enter into force on 16 November 2026, 60 days after the required two thirds of Member States deposited instruments of ratification confirmed at the September 2026 Council of Ministers session for Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan. Uganda had not yet completed ratification alongside earlier notes on Sudan, though officials indicated internal processes were ongoing. Entry into force replaces the 1996 agreement and begins operationalisation of institutional, legal and programmatic measures.


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