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An initiative of NIAS and KAS-India office

Cover Story

Europe and China in the 2020s

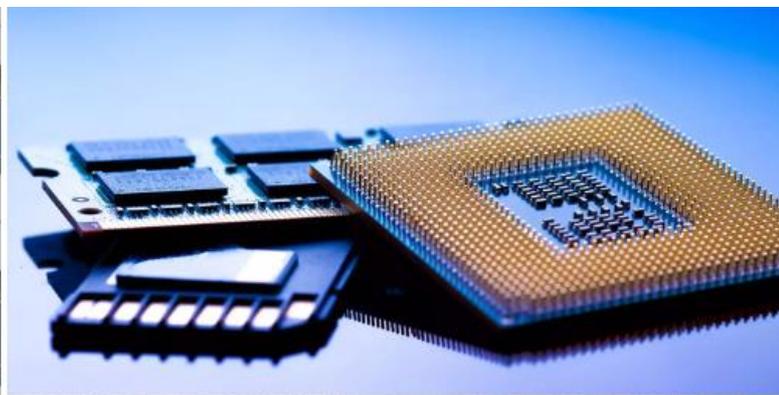


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About NIAS Global Politics

Global Politics is a primary focus of the NIAS Programme on Science, Technology and International Relations (STIR). The primary focus is on contemporary world affairs. The Programme publishes *The World This Week*, and *NIAS Fortnightly on Science Technology and International Relations*.

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As a part of pursuing global politics, the programme has started area studies. Europe is a part of the NIAS area studies initiative. With an aim to nurture a pool of scholars working on issues related to Europe, the scope of the studies would range from regional/sub-regional cooperation to new technology and innovations and include gender studies, migration issues, and climate change.

NIAS Europe Studies will focus on capacity building amongst the young scholars, expert lectures by prominent academicians and diplomats, monthly discussions on Europe, and a Monthly Dispatch – *Europe Monitor*.

About Europe Monitor

Europe Monitor is an academic initiative by NIAS Global Politics and the KAS India Office.

The Monthly is an integral part of NIAS Europe Studies. It includes focused commentaries on Europe, short notes, and daily updates on contemporary Europe.

Editor

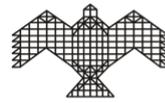
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About NIAS

National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) was conceived and founded in 1988 by the late Mr JRD Tata, who sought to create an institution to conduct advanced multidisciplinary research.

The objective is to nurture a broad base of scholars, managers and leaders who would respond to the complex challenges that face contemporary India and global society, with insight, sensitivity, confidence and dedication.



About KAS India Office

The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) is a political foundation. Established in 1955 as “Society for Christian-Democratic Civic Education”, in 1964, the Foundation proudly took on the name of Konrad Adenauer, the first Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany.

With 16 regional offices in Germany and over 120 offices abroad, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation is committed to achieving and maintaining peace, freedom and justice through political education. KAS promotes and preserves free democracy, social market economy, and the development and consolidation of the value consensus. KAS also focus on consolidating democracy, the unification of Europe and the strengthening of transatlantic relations, as well as on development cooperation.

EM COMMENT

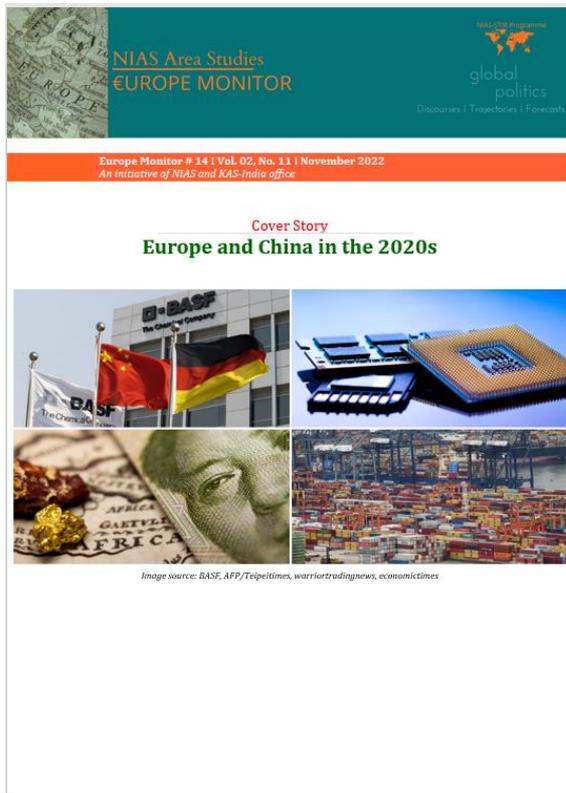
**Putin’s address in the Valdai
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UK Growth Plan: Objectives and reactions
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Europe Monitor

Europe Monitor # 14, Vol. 02, No. 11,
November 2022



COVER STORY

**Europe and China in the 2020s: Interview
with Professor Heribert Dieter**
*By Padmashree Anandhan, Madhura S
Mahesh, and Sai Pranav*



Source: AP Photo/Rui Vieira, AP Photo/Kin Cheung, AP Photo/Kin Cheung, Himars, Kongsberg, Bayraktar TB2/Baykartech, Neptune/Military today, S-300/Wikimedia, Wikimedia, mot.gov.sg

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WAR IN UKRAINE: DAILY UPDATES



Source: Kremlin.ru, vk.com/myfeo_ru/via Globallookpress.com/RT, WSJ/IMF, Sergei Fadeichev/TASS, Stephanie Lecocq/EPA-EFE/POLITICO, mil.in.ua

War in Ukraine section covers the everyday developments from Day 219 to Day 249 in four dimensions. First, The The War on the Ground:. Second, The Moscow View: Claims by Russia. Third, The West View: Responses from the US and Europe. Fourth, The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war.

By Padmashree Anandhan, Rishma Banerjee, Sai Pranav, and Madhura S Mahesh

EM SHORT NOTES



Source: LUDOVIC MARIN (AFP), UCD/BBC, Mannfjöldi Konur/Iceland Review, Bo Amstrup/Ritzau Scanpix, BBC, Euronews

EM Short Notes provide a brief overview of the latest developments in Europe in political, economic, security, climate, maritime, and science and technology aspects. The daily developments cover from the UK, western Europe, Nordic, Baltic, Balkans to the far east Russia

By Padmashree Anandhan, Rishma Banerjee, Sai Pranav, and Madhura S Mahesh

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COVER STORY

Interview with Prof. Dr. Heribert Dieter, Senior Associate, SWP

Europe and China in the 2020s

Padmashree Anandhan, Madhura S Mahesh, and Sai Pranav

Equation between the MNCs in Western Europe and China

Padmashree Anandhan: German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's visit to China, with 12 other businessmen accompanying him, from BASF, Merck, Bayer, Wacker and others. Most of these companies seem to be either pharmaceutical or chemical industries. Could you tell me which major industries in Europe are most dependent on China?

Heribert Dieter: Well, first of all, it has to be pointed out that, of course, Germany is Europe's largest economy. However, even considering that Germany is by far Europe's largest exporter to China. German companies instead export more to China than the next nine European countries combined. So, there is an above-average interest of German policymakers to have a friendly and positive relationship with China. At the same time, the interest of German and other European companies in China is not equally distributed. You mentioned a few companies. Some have a significantly higher exposure to China than others. In Germany, many companies have high exposure to China. However, we have seen in recent years that larger companies like Mercedes, Volkswagen, BASF, and BMW, continue to do a lot of business in China. In comparison, smaller and medium size companies have started to reduce their exposure to China.

There is a range of reasons for that. Covid is one of them, and the inward-looking nature of the Chinese government in recent years is another. The rising influence of the communist parties is the third one. So, whereas in the past, the interest of German and other European companies was relatively homogeneous, we now see a big division. Big car makers in chemical companies favour continuing to do business with China. Smaller players are looking elsewhere, and this is a new phenomenon. The President of the Association

of German Machine Tool Manufacturers is an important part of the German export industry. However, it is not characterized by huge companies but by medium-sized companies. The President of that association in 2018, way back four years ago, already said that China is an increasing risk rather than a continued opportunity.

In other European economies, there has never been that fascination with China as in Germany. Of course, Italy exports to China, and Italian companies do export to China. However, their exposure is much smaller. And whereas four years ago, German companies would have been happy to report that they are so heavily exposed to China, today, they are reluctant to mention that they are so exposed to China. So, we have a picture which is changing. We have a picture where a handful of players continue to be necessary, and we do have a broader view of increasing interest to invest elsewhere, not in China.

Padmashree Anandhan: What is driving these big MNCs towards China or what are the factors that sustain them in China? Is it the less compliance or the beneficial tax treatment?

Heribert Dieter: The former Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott, some eight years ago, when Australia was hosting the G20 Summit, was asked by then-German Chancellor Angela Merkel, "what is driving Australia's China policy?" and Tony Abbott replied in a typical Australian very brief sentence "greed and fear." Now the fear component refers to the military domain, but greed is, of course, what drives German companies and what drove German companies to China.

It is the interest to make money, and that as a matter of fact, nothing illegitimate or nothing one should complain about. They are there to make money. They made a lot of money in China, and they continued -those companies, those large corporations that produce in China, for China, they continue to make a lot of money. The figures are well known;

Volkswagen is a company that makes at least 40 per cent of its price in China. Some may argue more that Mercedes sells their cars like hotcakes, and they don't have to argue about discounts. That doesn't apply.

As a footnote, a colleague of mine in Hong Kong wanted to buy a Mercedes from the Hong Kong dealership of Mercedes Benz operational in Hong Kong. He had previously lived in America, and he asked for a discount. There was no discount. They gave him two umbrellas. So, they make a lot of money. They are torn between a rock and a hard place, and some companies have come out in favour of continuing to do business with China, and that is their current position, continue to make money in China as long as possible.

There has been a double taxation agreement between China and Germany, I think, since 1985, which means that profits will not be taxed twice. So that is favourable, but that doesn't mean they are not taxed. They are just not taxed twice. Compliance is also high in China. You have different forms of compliance. You have to deal with the Communist Party in your factory. So, you don't have that kind of compliance regulation in other parts of the world.

It is, put differently, not simple to do business in China. It is different than doing business, you know, in other countries, but apparently, at least for those large operations, it seems to make sense to continue. The Chinese Government, for instance, concerning the large 10 billion Euro investment of BASF in Guangdong, emphasized the need for BASF to continue, and they did everything they could to make this investment come forward. It would have been a loss of face if BASF had said, "we will not implement the planned investments." So it's a win-win situation for China, but that win-win is limited to the big players.

Padmashree Anandhan: We are seeing predictions of China's economy heading towards recession due to the property crisis, and slow post Covid-19 recovery. What would be the impact on these big MNCs? Would you think that there would be a reduction in their investments? Will there be a setback, or will the MNC's looking for other alternatives?

Heribert Dieter: This is, of course, a very interesting question. What is the future of the Chinese economy? For the time being, the big players are betting on a continuation of the past trajectory or at least a continuation of the success story. They have not spent much time thinking about a potential crash in China, and an increasing number of observers are concerned that the odds are stacked against China in two particular areas. One is housing. It is the mother of all speculative bubbles, it's the biggest speculative bubble that mankind has ever seen, and no forces will, over time, be able to maintain that overvaluation in real estate. This is the first thing.

The second thing is, China is ageing rapidly and is confronted with not just a stagnating but a declining population. Birth rates have come down to a figure of 10,000,000 per year, which is half of what they had been 15 years ago. There will be fewer Chinese in the future, and fewer Chinese will mean smaller businesses, smaller profits and, of course, there would be an avenue out of that. China could solve this problem if it wanted to, and the solution would be mass immigration, say, from Africa. It is unrealistic to expect something like that because the Communist Party and the Chairman of the Communist Party, Xi Jinping, have prioritised political stability and do not want immigration. They will not have immigration.

So, at the end of the day, those two factors of the real estate crisis will last for a long time, and the demographic decline will contribute to making China a much smaller and potentially more inward-looking place. So, if I were to advise those large German corporations, I would suggest to them, don't put any fresh money into China. Go elsewhere. Go where future population growth is and limited exposure to China.

Europe-China relation in the phase of EU-Taiwan supply chain collaboration

Madhura S Mahesh: Recently, the European Parliament asked the European Commission to set up a so-called "non-China" trade supply chain route for semiconductor chips from Taiwan to Europe to avoid possible

blockade by China at the Taiwan Strait. It saw the result of what Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan did to the supply chain of semiconductors to Europe. So, is this concept of having two supply chains, one going through China and the other going through Western allies, realistic and feasible in a larger economic context?

Heribert Dieter: Well, for the time being, it is realistic, but we don't know what a blockade of Taiwan would look like. I'm coming from Berlin, where, before my time, there was a blockade by the Soviet Union. You could not enter West Berlin by land, but of course, you could enter West Berlin by air. Now, if the Chinese government were to close the airspace above Taiwan, that would be different cattle of fish. Still, if they only block the sea routes, that is not a problem for semiconductor transportation because, by their very nature, they are small and lightweight. So, you could even transport them in a helicopter if the helicopter has sufficient range. So, this is based on the assumption that China will, in any case, not block the airspace, and I'm pretty sure that the US government would resist any manoeuvre in that regard.

So, for the time being, I think the supply of semiconductors from TSMC is safe. At the moment, we have a mood in Europe and other societies that emphasizes the security of supply, from "just in time" to "just in case." It is a dangerous development at one level because it brings back thinking in categories of autarky and self-sufficiency, and that has not made the world a better place. Autarkic thought was widespread in the 1930s. The Germans did it, and the Japanese did it. Even John Maynard Keynes advocated national self-sufficiency in 1933. The point is that we have all, I emphasise, all benefited from international trade, from the exchange of goods and services, and if we fall back to this thinking of the 1930s, that will harm us all. The European Parliament is not immune from that kind of thinking, and they have been tempted to define European sovereignty in terms of European self-sufficiency, and as I said, I don't think it's a good idea.

One should, of course, not underestimate the geopolitical context, and in that context, I think it is useful, it is important that the West, broadly defined, does not strengthen its geopolitical rival, which is China. So, in plain English, it doesn't harm to buy T-shirts and pine nuts from China, but one should stop to supply them with the latest technology, and Americans are doing that. The American government has banned the export of the last generation of semiconductors to China, and I think that it is a relatively smart move.

Madhura S Mahesh: With the US move to block the supply of such important technologies to China, is there a possibility that Europe will follow the same, and how will that affect the larger trade route relations between mainland China and Eastern European countries?

Heribert Dieter: Well, for starters, we do not have those latest semiconductors. We have semiconductors. About 10 per cent of the world's production of semiconductors takes place in Europe, but these are not the latest ones. These are the ones that you use to operate washing machines and cars. You need them, but they are not the latest versions, and the Americans are very good at developing those semiconductors, most of them manufactured by TSMC. What we are currently seeing is that the European Commission has been embracing a plan to upgrade European capability in semiconductor manufacturing, and I think they are spending EUR 42 billion in that context, which is a significant amount of money.

Whether this is smart again remains to be seen because this is an awful lot of money. Invested in a highly cyclical industry, semiconductor prices and semiconductor demand is swinging wildly, and some of the current shortages- it is often forgotten- some of the current shortages are caused by companies who switch from- I used the term before- "just in time" production to "panic," so they bought everything they could get their hand on and this of course even deepened the shortage.

So, it was irrational behaviour or perhaps microeconomic rationality, but it certainly never had macro-economic rationality. Companies have made this worse. Now semiconductor producing companies are laying off workers as we speak in November 2022. We already see that the secretive nature of semiconductor manufacturing bites again, and I emphasise that any significant amount of taxpayers' money that is sent through subsidised semiconductor manufacturing should have been evaluated with greater scrutiny.

Madhura S Mahesh: In September, a Taiwanese delegation conducted a tri-lateral tech diplomacy along with Latvia and Lithuania regarding semiconductor development and R&D investments. Taiwan announced that it is investing USD ten million in semiconductor R&D investments in Lithuania. How will this add to Europe's motive to reduce dependency on others especially Asian countries' semiconductor chips and technology?

Heribert Dieter: If the chips are manufactured in Lithuania, this reduces dependency a little bit, but I am a little bit allergic to the term dependency. I think that interdependence is a good thing, not a bad thing, and so we should not aim to reduce our "dependency" on the rest of the world. We should, perhaps, reduce our "dependence" on the People's Republic of China. But by and large, I think it would also be a flawed model for the rest of the world if Europe embraced this kind of self-sufficient thinking and stops to purchase products or reduced the purchase of products that they get elsewhere. This position is rather exotic these days, but it is the policies of post-war that the economic growth which has largely been on trade, international exchange, specialization, on an international division of Labour, and we are currently in an odd mood that could bring us to inferior economic results.

Madhura S Mahesh: Keeping the growing closeness between Europe, Taiwan and Europe's acceptance of the One China policy, how does this affect the larger geopolitical landscape?

Heribert Dieter: This is an excellent question. I've just been talking about this very question this morning. The problem in particular for Germany is that the current German Foreign Minister, Annalena Baerbock, emphasizes a value-driven foreign policy. Now, if you implement a values-driven foreign policy, you should enhance the trade relations with a significant democracy in East Asia, which on top of that, is a market economy, and we are not doing that. We are only applying this values-based foreign policy when it suits us and when it suits the German Foreign Minister. And I think this is a big problem. We are not putting our money where our mouth is. We continue to ignore the human rights abuses in China. I would like to point out I'm not talking about Uyghurs exclusively. I mean, 1.4 billion Chinese citizens are deprived of basic human rights. They can't say what they think, and they don't have even limited freedom within society. So, we continue to ignore what is taking place in China, and we should indeed deepen Europe's relationship, both in political and economic terms, with Taiwan.

Europe's dependency on Chinese rare earth metals

Sai Pranav: Will Europe's dependency on China for rare earth metals follow the same path like Russia's energy imports?

Heribert Dieter: The Middle East was found to be having oil wealth. That was many years ago, and it shows that the Chinese leadership are well aware of the strategic importance of rare earth. Like with oil, rare earth can also be found elsewhere. The problem here is that China is the cheapest provider. They could also be mined in Australia, in Utah, I think, in the United States. This will require a political decision to emphasize a diversification of sources when it comes to rare earth. One instrument would be a tariff on rare earth from China to make rare earth production elsewhere more viable and normative,

Sai Pranav: The same scenario can be seen with Russia being the cheapest energy supplier to Europe. Will it be the same?

Heribert Dieter: Exactly. The irony is that Germany, by large, continues to think of itself as a long-term thinker. But when it came to energy supply, we were anything but that. The German media laughed at Donald Trump when he wanted to sell us liquefied natural gas in 2018 or 2019, which he in his typical Trump style, labelled as "Freedom gas". We should have listened to him rather than laughed at him. But it's too late for that now, and as you point out, we could see a similar development happening with rare earth, although to convince after Russia, it's the job of companies to organise their supply chains. Companies hire these days, and they look for where they can diversify their supply of rare earths.

Sai Pranav: Will Europe technologically devolve if China disrupts the supply of rare earth?

Heribert Dieter: What we always have to take into consideration is human ingenuity. People invent things. We should not take the need for rare earths for granted. An example of that is, in 2010, China reduced the exports of rare earths, and they did so with particular emphasis on doing harm to Japan. Toyota used a lot of quite rare earths in the production of hybrid cars. What they did within a year, they developed a method to power hybrid cars without using rare earths. So, this is always a tendency, and it's always a risk for suppliers of raw materials. Of course, China assumes that they are in a monopoly position. But what they always underestimate is the ability of the consumers and their raw materials to find alternatives. Time and again, this has happened. And obviously, an example, of course, oil would be a \$250 a barrel today we will quickly find a replacement for it. The suppliers of raw materials have to strike a very fine balance between sufficiently expensive to really make a nice profit and not being expensive enough because then the development of alternatives would be better.

Sai Pranav: The environmental concerns among the locals are increasing over ecological, biodiversity harm and groundwater pollution from mining rare earth within Europe. What will be the future

of mining in Sweden, Finland and Greenland which hold abundance of rare earth materials?

Heribert Dieter: This is a question I struggle to answer because it is difficult to forecast how flexible European citizens will be in the future. In the past, they have emphasized the protection of the environment. However, as we have seen in 2022, many things can change. Also, that can change. So, it is possible that the resistance, the objection of citizens to the mining of rare earths will disappear. But it's not so now.

Sai Pranav: To cut across the high cost, Europe depends on China for processing the extracted rare earth metals. In the phase of inflation, will Europe consider processing it independently?

Heribert Dieter: Here, that is, inflation is there, higher inflation is primarily driven and, for the time being, by energy prices and agricultural products, but that does not have to continue. The inflation environment as such does not stop Europe and European companies from investing in the processing of rare earth. That said it is not a sufficient obstacle. What is an obstacle? It is the High Energy Council in Europe. So. The companies that would produce rare earths within would have to ask themselves whether it is worthwhile to do the processing in Europe or whether it is cheaper to do it in Africa, Australia, the United States. But this is a micro economic calculation that I have not heard evidence of.

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COMMENT

Putin's address in the Valdai International Discussion: Six takeaways

By Padmashree Anandhan

On 27 October, the Valdai International Discussion Club held its regular conclave in Moscow on - A Post-Hegemonic World: Justice and Security for Everyone. The four-day meeting was attended by representatives from different fields from Russia and 40 countries across the globe, including Afghanistan, China, France, Germany, India, Kazakhstan, China, the US, and Iran. The key highlight was the address of Russia's President Vladimir Putin; he discussed the changing liberal ideology, the US model of international order, Russia's stand on the world order, Ukraine's statehood, nuclear policy, and the energy sector.

Six takeaways

First, focus on dominance as a rule for the West. In the address, Putin highlighted the aggressive nature of the West, which has escalated the Ukraine war, and the situation in Taiwan destabilized the food security and energy markets. He termed the cultural value claimed by the West as "Cancel culture," and criticized it for showcasing itself as a "guardians of liberalism and progress" but it only removes the other existing cultures, and restricts free thoughts in economics and politics. Putin pointed out how under "new global interdependence" the West role-plays monopoly in setting in the financial and technological sectors to practise the Western model of globalization and dominance in the global economic and political fora. Apart from this, he also brought out the need for new social models and the rights of Asia, Islamic states, and monarchies of the Persian Gulf to have their socio-political system. He criticized the West on the same, stating it suffered from a "doctrinal crisis of the neoliberal American-style model of international order," which provides no space for progress and contradicts the multipolar world by preserving its dominance.

Second, emphasis on traditional values over liberal ideologies. On the liberal ideology, Putin pointed to the changing nature of liberalism, where classic liberalism, which was once seen as freedom for a person to think and act, is now seeing enemies within the said open society and wanting to restrict the freedom of the enemies. He accused Western ideologists and politicians of making the world believe that there was no alternative to democracy since the colonial period while it rejected all other forms of government. According to Putin, the West's way of undermining the "liberal rules based order," has only resulted in trade wars, sanctions, embargoes, colour revolutions, and coups. On the same, he said: "They killed Soleimani, an Iranian general. You can think whatever you want about Soleimani, but he was a foreign state official. They killed him in a third country and assumed responsibility." Criticizing the western liberal order, he focused on the importance of the emerging neo-liberal ideas and highlighted its unique nature in terms of culture and history. Giving the examples of traditional societies such as East, Latin America, Africa, Eurasia, and minorities within the West, he stressed that the traditional values, and cultural identity they hold must be respected in the interest of the people, and civilization than being overpowered by the neoliberal elites.

Third, Russia's approach as independent and inclusive. Highlighting Russia's efforts to build collective security with the West, Putin expressed that the West always stood against cooperation and supported nurturing of terrorists in Russia. He said that Russia's aim was not to challenge or replace the Western domination or the Western elites, but to uphold its right to exist and develop. The major plan is to broaden the space for other countries, increase interaction with neighbors and

pave way for an economic multipolar world order, but he accused the West of being the barrier to its development and pushing it to become a tool to achieve its geopolitical goals. He later brought out how Russia has been successful in strengthening its economy, dealing the internal and external terrorism, and traditionally developing its foreign technology policy to provide a platform by creating an industry by building plants, training personnel in other countries to create competencies rather than the West's approach to bankrupt the firms and deprive them of any advancement.

“The major plan is to broaden the space for other countries, increase interaction with neighbors and pave way for an economic multipolar world order.”

Fourth, on Ukraine's statehood. On the lines of achieving Russia's geopolitical goals, Putin highlighted how NATO was fortifying the Donbas region in the last eight years and how Ukraine's statehood was shaped by Bolsheviks giving away “Malorossiya (Little Russia), the entire Black Sea region, and all of Donbas” (Russian historical lands) without the consent of the people to the nationalist-minded Bolsheviks. After the Bolsheviks, former leader Joseph Stalin joined Polish, Hungarian, and Romanian territories into Ukraine which became its sovereignty. With Poland's influence gaining ground, language change began, ethnic Russians and Russian Orthodox Christians who wanted to join back Russia were put off by the European under the

“divide and conquer rule,” which according to Putin became the first step of Europe to divide Russian unity. He said: “It is all part of our history. But it is also a historical fact that Russians and Ukrainians are essentially one ethnicity.”

Fifth, possibility for Russia to use the nuclear weapon, Putin' criticised, the US, the UK for being on the front to deploy tactical nuclear weapons in Europe and being provocative in uniting the international countries to form collective defence. Putin stressed that Russia's statement was only a hint and not a direct threat to use nuclear weapons. He affirmed Russia's cooperation for IAEA investigations and accused Ukraine for playing under cover. On the usage of nuclear weapons, Putin highlighted the “Military Doctrine,” which provides the rules for Russia to used WMD's under threat to sovereignty, territorial integrity and protection of Russians.

Sixth, future scope of Eurasian cooperation. Russian integration into the Europe has been a basis for the conflict in Ukraine. According to Putin, it was due to systemic mistakes of European leaders in the energy, food, and monetary sector that has led to inflation, whereas the Eurasian Economic Union which operates at the interest of the member countries to fill the gap between the North-South transport corridor to boost growth. He assured to create a “collective west,” with the population from Eurasia.

COMMENT

UK Growth Plan: Objectives and reactions

By Madhura S Mahesh

The growth plan or the mini budget looked at ways to increase investment in the economy while at the same time helping the people tackle rising energy bills and cost of living.

On 03 October, The Chancellor of Exchequer, Kwasi Kwarteng, announced that the government is scrapping the 45 per cent rate of income tax on income over GBP 150,000 tax-cut plan in response to widespread criticism. On 26 September, the pound fell to USD 1.03 as a response to the growth plan announced on 23 September and investors started to demand a high rate of interest.

On 23 September, Kwarteng presented to the parliament a Growth Plan to pull up the declining British economy by addressing the issues contributing to it. His speech talked about the importance of lowering energy costs, reducing inflation, helping the public tackle the cost-of-living crisis, and helping businesses. He projected a 2.5 per cent growth rate as the goal and introduced ambitious policies to help the government achieve this.

Three objectives of the Growth Plan

The growth plan or the mini budget looked at ways to increase investment in the economy while at the same time helping the people tackle rising energy bills and cost of living. To achieve this the government proposed a series of tax cuts.

First, tax cuts. The government proposed to reduce the income tax rate to 19 per cent from April 2023 and to slash the 45 per cent rate of income tax on income above GBP 150,000. A proposal was also put forth to cut the proposed increase of corporation tax from 19 per cent to 25 per cent in April 2023. The government included a plan to cut Stamp Duty Land Tax which is paid when people buy new homes. According to Kwarteng, this will encourage the public to invest more in the residential sector, increase spending on household goods and

create and help jobs in the property sector. Kwarteng proposed to finance this ambitious plan through borrowings. The Tax cuts proposed will cost the government GBP 72 billion in new borrowings. He did not outline the effect of the tax cuts on borrowings and said that the same will be done in the mid-term November 2023 budget.

Second, energy price cap. The plan proposes to put a price cap on per unit price that people pay for electricity and gas through the Energy Price Guarantee. This will be helping them save GBP 1,000 on energy bills and another GBP 400 through government intervention in winter. It also plans to introduce the Energy Bill Relief Scheme which aims to reduce the energy bills of businesses and the public sector. All of this is to ensure that inflation will reduce by at least five percentage points.

Third, improve businesses. Kwarteng emphasised that this is a supply-side budget with plans to increase the supply of industries to meet the growing demand and boost the British economy. He said that the government is looking to set up investment zones in 38 local areas to increase investment and innovations. These zones will offer tax benefits, no stamp duty, and other such incentives to attract investors.

What have been the market, domestic reactions?

First, drop in the value of pound and UK stocks. With the government's plan to increase the number of borrowings, investors became sceptical and as a result, there was a huge drop in UK stocks. At the same time, the value of the pound fell to a 37-year low of USD 1.09 and EUR1.12. These numbers dropped further on 26

September to USD 1.03 and finally to USD 1.08. This led to goods being traded in dollars like oil becoming even more costly and increasing the cost-of-living crisis. This drop in the pound has a direct effect on inflation rates pushing up the prices of commodities in the UK's economy.

“It is viewed that many ministers will not support the government if it introduces any more reforms to cut welfare benefits to pay for the plan.”

Second, the Bank of England offer to buy bonds. On 28 September, the Bank of England stepped in and announced that it would be buying government bonds to soothe the financial turbulence and keep a check on borrowing interest rates. The interest rates which were set to hit an all-time high of five per cent were reduced to below four per cent by the investors. At the same time, the Bank cautioned that it was a short-term, time-limited step and had plans to sell off all the bonds. The Bank also

announced that it will increase the rate of interest if required.

Third, internal opposition within party and public. The growth plan drew a lot of criticism within the conservative party, where former Conservative Chancellor Lord Kenneth Clarke expressed his worries that this would risk increasing inflation rates. There is a rising fear that the party will not come into power in 2024 due to these policies. It is viewed that many ministers will not support the government if it introduces any more reforms to cut welfare benefits to pay for the plan. This led to a divide in the party with Prime Minister Liz Truss loyalists backing the plan and accusing the dissidents of staging a coup and undermining the authority. Domestically there has been an opposite reaction to what the government wanted. Mortgage lenders seeing the fluctuating interest rate have withdrawn a lot of products to re-evaluate the prices. This has created a fear in the public on the affordability factor.

EM Daily Focus



Source: AP Photo/Rui Vieira, AP Photo/Kin Cheung, AP Photo/Kin Cheung, Himars, Kongsberg, Bayraktar TB2/Baykartech, Neptune/Military today, S-300/Wikimedia, Wikimedia, mot.gov.sg

FINLAND

Finland: Ministry of Foreign Affairs report on the removal of Nordic border barriers

By Padmashree Anandhan

On 17 October, Finland’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs posed a request to the government to review its report on the steps taken in removing the cross-border barriers between the Nordic countries. The removal of the border barrier work began in 2012 and became part of the government programme under Prime Minister Sanna Marin. The work aims to integrate the Nordic and promote mobility, as part of the programme, the leaders of the Nordic countries signed a “joint vision” to collaborate with the Nordic governments. According to Minister for Nordic Cooperation and Equality Thomas Blomqvist: “Free movement is one of the cornerstones of Nordic cooperation, and removing cross-border barriers is a key to facilitating integration and movement in the Nordic countries. Removing cross-border barriers will benefit everyone, individuals and companies alike.”

Border Barriers Council: A brief note

The Border Barriers Council was formed in 2014 under the Council of Ministers which consists of one representative from each Nordic country along with Åland, the Faroe Islands, and Greenland. It includes a representative from the Nordic Council and the Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers. The key task of the Council is to “identify, prioritise and propose solutions,” to help the capable authorities in carrying out the removal of the border barriers. Since the council cannot act as a body to resolve the problems relating to the cross-borders, it only operates to identify the problems and propose solutions for the national authorities to implement action. Every year the Council identifies priority issues that form part of the border barrier database and will be brought back for discussion if it remains unresolved. Till now 80 such obstacles in the removal of the border barriers have been put forward by the Council and of which between 2019 and 2021, 50 border barriers were prioritized and 20 were resolved. For 2022, the focus areas of the Council are: “...digitalisation, mutual recognition of Nordic vocational

qualifications, tax matters and cooperation with population registers.”

From Nordic countries to the EU: A brief review of the major actors

First, among the Nordic countries, Finland is one of the major actors in the border barriers work, where the management is not centered on one ministry but works based on “Interministerial cooperation,” where each ministry and the authority will be responsible for the obstacles rising from their respective branch.

Second, the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Prime Ministers of the Nordic Cooperation look into the policy areas, work towards a vision of an integrated Nordic region, and act as a link between the countries and the national governments. The Secretariat of the Council plans meetings, updates the database of border barriers, and helps in coordinating the cross-border barrier cooperation between actors.

Third, the Pohjola-Norden's Advisory Board works as Finnish border barrier network consisting of representatives from ministries across the Nordic countries, the Nordic Norden Council, and the Nordic Council's Border Barriers Group. This network promotes the exchange of information, prevents border barriers, and helps in conducting a meeting at the national level before the Border Barriers Council meetings.

Fourth, Info Pohjola is a joint Nordic advisory service operating in all five Nordic countries including the islands. It promotes mobility by providing information in more than seven languages spoken in the Nordic on studies, work, and businesses to promote students, start-ups, and job exchanges.

Fifth, the EU. Norway and Iceland are not EU member states yet are part of the European Economic Area (EEA). Any regulations passed by the EU will influence the Nordic and implementations of such directives can cause border barriers. To avoid, carrying out the regulations in a

uniform way across the Nordic and work dually with the EU for smoother mobility and coinciding laws to resolve the border barriers between the Nordic countries. Therefore, at the EU level through SOLVIT the representative of all the EU member states and the Nordic including Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein will meet to discuss the application of the EU legislation to align it with the Border Barrier work for an integrated Nordic region.

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LATVIA

Latvia Elections 2022: Three takeaways

By Padmashree Anandhan

On 02 October, the New Unity party was declared winner by the Central Election Commission upon the majority of votes in the Saeima elections. On 01 October, 14th parliamentary elections were held in Latvia to elect the leader and the Members of Parliament. In total 19 political parties competed in the election with at least 1800 candidates running for four-year term, out of 1800, 100 members will be elected by the people. The parties include, New Unity, Union of Greens and Farmers, National Alliance, Socialist Democratic Party “Harmony” and United List are some of the parties contesting the election.

Election results

For a party to become a member of the Saeima should have more than five per cent of the total vote share. The results announced by the Central Election Commission showed the vote share of the parties, the New Unity led by Krišjānis Kariņš won the most with 18.97 per cent, which had received only 6.7 per cent in

2018. The Union of Greens and Farmers led by Armands Krauze increased to 12.44 per cent from 9.9 per cent in 2018, posing as the opposition party. In the third place, the United List received 11.01 per cent, which did not exist in the 2018 elections. Followed by National Alliance with 9.29 per cent, For Stability! with 6.8 per cent, Latvia First with 6.24 per cent, and Progressives with 6.16 per cent. The Socialist Democratic Party "Harmony," The Conservatives, Development/For! and National Alliance who topped the 2018 elections, were observed to have lost their majority to the newer parties. Especially Harmony which is a party that represents Latvia's ethnic Russian minority that had received 20 per cent of votes in 2018 but has declined to seven per cent in 2022.

Three takeaways

First, political stability to continue. The centre-right party of Karins has proved its ability to manage the COVID-19, stand against Russia and most importantly held the coalition of National Alliance, the Conservatives and Development/For! along with other small parties together for full four years without preventing the split like the previous governments. With the party's win, Latvia's political stability and support for Ukraine is expected to remain intact.

Second, decline of the social democratic party. The Harmony party which consists of Russian speaking minority has seen an abnormal shift down due to growing support for Ukraine, and the New Unity's coalition success in ensuring safety for Latvia from Russia through closer engagement with NATO crumbled the vote share for Harmony.

Third, an advantage for the EU and NATO. In the 2022 elections occurring across Europe, the right-wing parties are observed to be on the rise in case of France, Sweden, and Italy posing a threat to the unity of the EU. Latvia will be an exception and a relief with the centre-right winning the elections. The New Unity coalition in place means a boon for NATO to continue its military cooperation in the Baltic Sea and for the EU to implement its sanction. Winning of

Harmony in Latvia would not only shun this down but could have threatened the Baltic posture against Russia.

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THE UK

UK: Three Challenges to Rishi Sunak, the new Prime Minister

By Padmashree Anandhan

On 25 October, Rishi Sunak was appointed as UK's Prime Minister formally after being asked to form the government by King Charles. In his first address he said: "I will place economic stability and confidence at the heart of this government's agenda. This will mean difficult decisions to come." The UK will now have its third Prime Minister for the year after turbulent political and economic turns. In the case of the conservative party which pulled down Boris Johnson after the party scandal and Liz Truss after the cluttered economic budget, the upcoming months will be a testing ground for Prime Minister Rishi Sunak to hold the party, and prevent economy from worsening. This will also be a decider for the conservative party to save its reputation for the 2025 elections.

What are the campaign promises?

Tax cuts

Sunak during his campaign has always stood against immediate tax cuts, since he saw it as a trigger to inflation and hike in government borrowing costs. Cutting down inflation and lowering incomes tax remains the top priority of Sunak's tax agenda. Apart

from this increasing of corporate tax and national insurance which were scheduled to be scrapped off in Truss's mini-budget U-turn are yet to be confirmed.

Energy

The members of the Conservative party are known for bouncing off climate goals, this can be seen from the vote taken on fracking which was backed by Sunak for extracting shale gas. With the energy subsidy package of GBP 10 billion proposed by Truss not giving a positive effect, and energy crisis being at the rim, a major question remains if Sunak will replace or reverse. His promises to remove "VAT on domestic energy bills," and UK's promise to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 will remain in the climate change cards of Sunak.

Brexit

Since the 2016 referendum, the trade tussle has been real between the EU, the UK and the Northern Ireland. UK's new proposal submitted during Boris Johnson administration to alter significant provisions to the agreed Northern Ireland Protocol threatens the existing political stability of the Northern Ireland, and trade relations with the EU. Sunak also falls in the same line being a staunch supporter of Brexit, maintains a stance favourable to the UK, while aims to avoid a trade with the EU. Overall, the debate over the Northern Ireland Protocol is expected to narrow further.

What are the challenges ahead?

First, a quick save for the Tories. The conservatives may have closed the gap to calling an early general election but the major question remains if the unity will be struck under Sunak's leadership. With differences over economic, healthcare, energy, and immigration policies, if the party members split over the existing cracks UK will go through its worst economic instability induced from the internal political imbalance. Second, UK's equation with the EU is expected to fade further. With the previous Prime Ministers economic strategies to boost UK's economy resulting in

heightening of inflation and pound value, Sunak is tasked to bring back the economy from the spin. With Sunak's strong stance on Brexit, the relations with the EU are set to go down and divert into other countries. Earlier Sunak was criticised by Truss for engaging in closer trade with China, therefore possible alternatives could be increased trade with China and the US to boost reset UK's economy from downfall.

Third, decline in defence aid Ukraine. UK's stance for Ukraine is not observed to change but with economic crisis at center the defence spending can be expected to take a setback. Initially Truss had promised for an increase in defence budget by two to three per cent which was subject to change as per the GDP, with domestic agenda on priority for Rishi Sunak, Ukraine cannot expect more defence aid in the coming days from the UK.

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REGIONAL

Missile systems in Ukraine war: A profile

By Padmashree Anandhan

The Ukraine war which began in 24 February nearing 250 days of war has led to expansion and escalation in different fronts. While humanitarian violations, economic fallouts, food insecurity and energy shortage and refugee crisis have impacted the globe. The main trigger to the advancement of war is the involvement of the West and aggressive approach of Russia that led to the emergence of the missiles, weapons, and new technologies. The following commentary provides a profile of the missile systems and drone technologies

used by the US, the UK, Russia, and remaining European member states in the Ukraine war.

Drones

Kamikaze drones have been used by Ukraine and Russia in different forms. In September, Russian forces were observed to be using the Shahed -136 suicide drones imported from Iran to launch attacks in Odesa command post of Ukraine. Similarly, Ukraine has also been supported by the US and Turkey with Switchblade and Bayraktar TB2 drones to counter Russia. The three drone models categorised as loitering drones can precision strike the target, of which the Shahed-136 is considered the most lethal with a highest range capacity of 2500 kilometres (kms) whereas Switchblade and Bayraktar TB2 drones ranges at 300-400 kms.

Shahed-136

The drone was first launched by Iran Aircraft Manufacturing Company (HESA) in 2021 has a conventional two-stroke piston engine which acts as power to the propeller. Weighing close to 40 kilograms (kg), has a delta wing, with a capacity to carry a warhead ranging 30 to 50 kg and travel at 185 kilometres speed per hour. Although the Shahed-136 drone has a “slow and low flying” feature and faces a limitation of GPS jam, it is fixable and an cost effective option instead of cruise missiles costing GBP 17,800.

Switchblade drones

Switchblade 600 and 300 version are featured for its high-precision strike, loitering endurance and anti-armour warhead to engage larger targets from longer distance. The Switchblade 600 has a better range of 40 kms compared to 300 of 10 kms, endurance of up to 40 minutes, with a next generation technology where the targets can be set of from the “touch screen tablet based fire control unit.” It comes with a flexibility to be deployed from any air vehicle, ground vehicle, water craft and multipack launcher. The production has now been ramped up by the US to support Ukraine forces.

Bayraktar TB2 drones

Bayraktar TB2 is produced by a Turkish based company Baykar which excels in UAV and AI technology. The drone is a Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE), which used for intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and armed attack missions. Key feature of the drone being Baykar Real Time Imagery Transmission System (BGAM) giving a real time image and allows multiple users to monitor the area. Unlike Switchblade drones, its endurance beats out with 27 hours and three minutes to stay up in air with triple redundant avionic system. It is one of highly deemed aircrafts exported by Turkey to Qatar, Ukraine, and Azerbaijan, functionable with four laser guided ammunition and a capacity to carry 700 kgs to carry out “surgical-precision strikes with lesser damage to areas nearby. It will be a costly option for Ukraine as one Bayraktar costs GBP 1.7 million.

Air defence systems

Iris-T

The manufacturing of IRIS-T air defence system began in 1990's by the Diehl Defense company in Germany conducted the final tests in 2021. One system costing EUR 140 million has a capacity to provide medium-range, high-altitude cover for smaller cities and armies. The IRIS-T surface launched missile (SLM) system consists of three vehicles including, a missile launcher, a radar, and a fire-control radar with integrated logistics. Key feature of the missile system includes, a multifunction radar with 250 km range, and elevatable up to 90 degrees. A SLM launcher with high-firing capacity, multiple-targeting, and 40 km range. Apart from this it provides airspace surveillance, “threat evaluation, weapon assignment and multi-datalink capability.” Out of four systems promised to Ukraine, one has been delivered by Germany.

NASMAS system

The National Advanced Surface to Air Missile System is a product of Kongsberg, Norway which provides a medium range ground-based air defence system. It consists of command post, an active 3D radar, electro-optical, infrared sensor and missile canisters with AMRAAM missiles. The

important feature of NASMAS is its unique “hard-realtime” communication grid which ensure minimum delay maximum utilization of the missile system and similar to drone, it provides a flexibility to protect “Air Bases, Sea Ports, Populated Areas, other High-Value Assets and Army Forces.” NASMAS has been currently used by 12 country’s air force and extremely depended by the US since 2005.

F-35

One of the supreme air fighter jets produced by the US, after the fourth generation F-16s and F-15Es, it is the F35 edition which has added strength to national security and global partnership. The F35s are designed with the most powerful engine of Pratt and Whitney F135 to operate at a speed of Mach 1.6 that can be launched at a long range while carrying JASSM or LRASM internally with ability to dissuade near opponents. With its advanced sensor suite and fusion capacity, it can locate the enemy forces, jam radars, disrupt strikes and augments the survivability. Currently the F35’s along with the fourth generation fighter jets are used part of NATO’s Steadfast Noon exercise.

Missiles

S-300 missiles

A soviet era, surface to air missile operating since 1978 can be loaded in aircraft and UAV’s to improve the missile defence capability. It was produced to meet the challenge of long-range cruise missiles and was put to halt in 2016, after the Crimean annexation, Russia was seen to be deploying the S-300 missiles. Its shelf life being 40 years, so far it has used 5V55K, 5V55R, 48N6 modes and can carry four missiles at a time. The operation is carried out using “high-explosive fragmentation warheads” to activate the attack and destroy targets. After the Crimean annexation, the Ukraine war has brought these missiles back into ground.

HIMARS

Similar to IRIS-T, it forms part of the Multiple Rocket Launch System (MRLS), capable to carrying six GMLRS rockets and one TACMS missile. With advanced technology, can target at a range of 300 to

500 km to carry out long range precision strikes. Compared to other western artillery such as M777 Howitzer and Russia’s BM-30 Smerch, 2A36 Giatsint-B howitzer, HIMARS system exceeds the in terms of range and target precision. For a higher range capacity, its mobility and survivability are done easy through shoot and scoot approach. The HIMARS rocket system has been the game changer for Ukraine since August to launch offensive against Russia.

Cruise missiles

Neptune anti-ship missiles

The Neptune anti-ship missile gained its popularity after taking down the Maersk Ship of Russia. A Ukraine made cruise missile like Russia’s Kh-35U was first tested in 2016. Its key features being its target range of 280 km, deploy ability from sea, land and air, inbuilt navigation system with radar and travels at a subsonic speed. Overall Ukraine has developed the Neptune missile system along with the Ukrainian coastal defence system equal to Russia, but faces limitations in terms of developing a radar and financial restrictions.

Kh-101/KH-102

Kh-101 are the conventional cruise missiles with nuclear capability produced by Russia. The main aim of this built is to counter defeat air-defence systems using a low-fly range, “terrain-hugging altitude” to prevent radar system detection. Kh-101 has the capacity to carry warhead and Kh-102 is predicted to carry 250 kt of nuclear load. These cruise missiles have been part of Russian air force since 2012 taking part in many combat operations such as ISIS attacks in 2015. The features of the missiles are TRDD 50A turbofan engine which gives it up to Mach 0.78 speed, a massive range of 2500 to 2800 km and has an endurance of 10 hours which are less compared to switchblade drones. it’s accuracy is also seen as an advantage due to its operability using electronic GLONASS satellite navigation which was designed by the Soviet engineers.

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The Baltic states ban over entry of Russians: Three reasons

By Padmashree Anandhan

On 21 September, Russia's President Vladimir Putin signed the decree calling for partial mobilization. The Defence Minister, Sergei Shoigu, stated that 300,000 men would be called to serve in the army with military experience. Upon the announcement, many young men fled to Turkey, Germany, Serbia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Finland. With Russian trying to enter the borders, Turkey and Serbia which has lesser visa restriction allowed the influx. Finland imposed ban on entry on Russians who hold Finland issued or Schengen issues visas, while Germany stated that it will take in those Russian's who oppose Putin's invasion. The Baltic States along with Slovakia took a strong stance declaring a complete ban on Russians to enter.

Three reasons

First, Latvia's demography and security concern. Latvia's Foreign Minister Edgar Rinkevics said that Latvia will not grant entry even under humanitarian base for Russian. The Russian population problem is present similar to Estonia, but the numbers and the influence is more. Close to 1.8 million, 30 per cent of Latvia's population

are Russian speaking who have exploited the financial markets, infrastructure through connecting with Russian oligarchs. The intrusion does not stop to finance but extend to influencing Latvia's politics, society, with Russia expanding into Ukraine has furthered the risk of Latvia of being indirectly invaded by the Russian within its territory. The highest fear is disruption of the elections, where the centre-right New Unity Party which has strong anti-Russian stance is expected to win.

Second, Estonia's socioeconomic division threat. The Foreign Minister of Estonia, along with Lithuania and Latvia agreed to ban Russians from entering the border after Russia declaring the mobilization recruitment. The reason behind Estonia strong stance against Russian come due to its existing internal problem. A former USSR country, contains a minority of Russian speaking immigrants of 1.3 million which has led to first, "ethnic residential segregation," Second, damage to social integration and ethnic identities, where the minority group residing in Estonian predominant areas tend to portray as Estonian but identify them as Russians. When such ethnic seclusion crosses with socioeconomic create major challenge for Estonians making them to leave the neighbourhood. With Ukraine war, entry of more Russians into Estonia is seen as threat to widen the socioeconomic division, due to which Estonia stands strong on the ban.

Third, united stance with the Estonia and Latvia. Lithuania compared to Estonia and Latvia, the population strength and the ancestral link of the Russian speaking people is much lesser. In terms of gas and oils imports, Lithuania has managed to keep it at 37 per cent as of 2020, while Estonia and Latvia imports 50 per cent. Another important factor is the majority of the population (77 per cent) are catholic and only 4.1 per cent are Eastern Orthodox. In case of Estonia and Latvia it ranges from 20 to 28 per cent. But due to shared policies, history, geography, and as preventive measure to keep the Russian population in control Lithuania joins with the Baltic states

in standing against Russian from entering its borders.

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EU's eight package of sanctions on Russia: Three takeaways

By Padmashree Anandhan

On 06 October, the European Commission released a statement on the eight package of sanctions imposed on Russia. The move was triggered after the signing of the referendums to annex parts of Ukraine. The key target of the package are the individual entities helping Russia and to isolate Russia's economy, deteriorate its military capacity, and technologies.

Three takeaways

First, narrowed energy price cap. The European Commission ruled the ban to import Russian oil through tankers from 05 December 2022 to 05 February 2023. It will be applicable to only the EU member states along with the G7 countries, leaving out Russia. In case of Greece, Cyprus and Malta which are known for having huge tanker shipping, will be allowed to transport, but under the given price cap. The rule will also apply to the EU ships operating overseas in Panama or Liberia to abide by the price limit. Although the price is yet to be finalised, it is expected that it would not be lesser than the amount before the invasion began. Another issue is Balkan states and

Serbia which does not have a seaport, imports Russian oil through Croatia, the EU is yet to decide if it can allow the exports. However, oil exported through pipeline will not be come under the price cap, this is beneficial especially for Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Second, specific target on individual entities that help Russia in oil exports. The entities subject to the sanctions include state-owned enterprises, IT Consultancies, financial firms and other Businesses. Any enterprise transacting with "Russian Maritime Register," in form of crypto-assets, consultancy, legal advisory, engineering any services that add capacity to Russia's industrial ability. In the earlier sanctions, up to 10,000 EUR was allowed for the companies, but with the latest package, a complete ban has been imposed on such services, which are most relied by Russia.

Third, extended import and export restrictions product list. The previous sanction packages of the EU have also targeted Russia's military, industry components, but the eight package furthers the list of products included in the ban list. It has included, specific electronic components used by Russia in its industrial units, aviation and small arms under the export restrictions. Under the import ban, it has now included semi-finished steel products, "...appliances, plastics, vehicles, textiles, footwear, leather, ceramics, certain chemical products, and non-gold jewellery."

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INTERNATIONAL

US Inflation Reduction Act 2022: Four issues for Europe

By Madhura S Mahesh

On 26 October, the European Commission Head of Cabinet to Pres. von der Leyen and the US Deputy National Security Adviser Mike Pyle at their meeting in Berlin launched the “EU-US Taskforce on the Inflation Reduction Act.” The task force was established to address the concerns of the EU regarding the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

On 16 August, US President Joe Biden signed the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) into law. This act was introduced to combat climate change and is the largest investment in the US’s social safety net. The continuation of premium subsidies of the Affordable Care Act and caps on drug prices are some of the policies introduced under this act. The policy that caused an uproar in Europe and the rest of the world was that of the change in subsidies plan for electric vehicle production. The European Commission spokeswoman Miriam Garcia Ferrer said: “The European Union is deeply concerned by this new, potential, trans-Atlantic trade barrier. We think that it’s discriminatory, that it’s discriminating against foreign producers in relation to U.S. producers.”

Four issues for Europe

First, the change in subsidy plans towards electric vehicles. The US offered USD 7500 worth of subsidies for all-electric vehicle buyers irrespective of the company and where it was produced. The IRA act changes this and now the incentive is offered only to buyers of electric vehicles assembled in North America only. It was done to encourage the people to “buy American” and boost domestic production, but affects Europe especially Germany in a bad way. Germany is a hub for automobile manufacturing with vehicles of Mercedes Benz, BMW and Volkswagen having manufacturing centres in Germany. With this new change, European-assembled vehicles will be more expensive compared

which will lead to a decrease in sales. If they do go on to open production facilities in North America, it will decrease production in Europe and lead to a decrease in revenue for European nations.

Second, the possibility of a legal complaint to the WTO. After this law came into effect, electric vehicle manufacturing countries have considered approaching the WTO to address the issue. The countries that have expressed this option are all allies of the US. It is being considered as a last step as many think the new law is violating the WTO’s principle of fair and undistorted competition. With the law only providing subsidies to vehicles manufactured in North America, critics are saying this will lead to skewed competition in the American market and has ramifications in economies around the world. The law will make all the non-American produced electric vehicles more expensive in the US market. This will lead to a decrease in demand and a subsequently a decrease in revenue for the car manufactures. If the companies do open a production unit in North America it will take away the revenue from the companies origin country. If the matter is raised and taken to the WTO then it will be a long drawn-out affair for both sides and may start a pseudo-trade war between the opposing nations and the US. The EU which had launched an investigation looking at whether the new law will violate WTO rules said that they will be raising this concern at the joint US - EU Trade and Technology Council meeting in December.

Third, BASF's to decrease its presence in Germany. BASF is a German multinational company and the largest chemical producer in the world. On 26 October, it announced its third-quarter results where it outlined how its earnings have reduced due to a high gas and power prices. This has led to the company announcing that it would be reducing its presence in Germany by reducing business activities and jobs in Germany. This lands a huge blow to the German economy as BASF is a large company and this reflects the competitiveness in the European market. It stated how gas is six times more expensive

in Europe compared to the US and with the US Inflation Reduction Act, which has provisions for climate change and increasing incentives for production may lead to BASF and similar companies to open production units in US. This will become an alternative source of production wherein the output price will be cheaper compared to the output produced in Europe due to lesser production cost.

Fourth, the possibility of a “Buy European Act.” On 26 October, French President Emmanuel Macron advocated for a “Buy European Act” to counter the growing competition from China and the new IRA bid to increase domestic production. In the meeting between Macron and German chancellor Olaf Scholz, discussed the IRA and plan to push European Commission to introduce a plan which would counter the IRA and boost domestic production. The EU has always veered away from policies that are protectionist in nature which has worked for it to build a free and competitive market. Macron’s statement opens the door for these policies and addresses the larger issue of dwindling influence of Europe when it comes to market competitiveness. EU’s history of depending on other nations for production has hampered its own growth market and has led to domestic production being expensive. The IRA and Macron’s statement is forcing Europe to rethink its strategy.

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ASEAN and the EU sign first-ever region-to-region air transport agreement: Five takeaways

By Padmashree Anandhan

What happened?

On 17 October, ASEAN and the EU signed a Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement (CATA) at the 28th ASEAN Transport minister’s meeting held in Indonesia. The agreement marks the world’s first region-to-region cooperation on air-transport regulation, which is expected to promote opportunities for airlines and cargoes between both regions in the post-pandemic recovery. Apart from aviation, the regional collaboration is also aimed to boost technical assistance, climate change, and carbon offsetting arising from aviation, and endorse the EU-South East Asia aviation partnership.

Five takeaways

First, multilateralism through the EU lens, In the era of state-to-state cooperation and blurring regional unity, the EU centers its founding principle and foreign policy on multilateralism. It’s striving for multilateral cooperation to address the global problem has been the root of its external relations. The signing of the CATA not only aims to improve the international aviation system and establish a competitive and fair environment for the airlines to provide the best service but also to strengthen the political, and economic equation.

Second, regional aviation fluidity. The agreement breaks the barriers of limited

flights and increases the flexible movement of people, and cargo, improves aviation safety, and traffic management, and also takes in the environmental and social matters in focus. It provides no area for complex rules and varied regulations as per the country and offers a common set of rules for both regions' air industries, thereby avoiding red tape. Through the aero-political agreement, the third, fourth, and fifth freedoms of the air are relaxed where the flight does not necessarily have to board passengers from where it's taking off but will be allowed to go to the second country take in passenger/cargoes and de-load in another third country. The larger aim of the agreement is to create a single sustainable aviation market.

Third, delayed the signing of the agreement was due to different institutional nature. The first set of talks began in 2016 between the EU and ASEAN and prolonged till 2022 to become a written agreement. The major reason behind the delay is due to the different nature of both organizations, the ASEAN countries operate on a sovereign basis, while the EU member states follow uniformly the rule levied by the European Commission. After the first round of talks, the EU announced the suspension of 140 individual bilateral deals between the AMS (ASEAN member states) and the EU member states. EU's aim remained to use the CATA platform to improve consumer protection and establish large aviation cooperation, but it prompted eight rounds of negotiations. Till 2019, ASEAN and EU remained unsettled in terms of security, safety, and operation of the aircraft. This prolonged the agreement process and COVID-19 brought more pressure to recover the aviation industry as it incurred a total loss of USD 47.7 billion in 2021.

Fourth, increased economic cooperation between Indonesia and Benelux countries. The deal is a boon for Indonesia and Benelux countries especially due to the opening of market opportunities to compete with other airlines and provide airline services to AMS and the EU member states. Key examples of the boosting of economic and aviation cooperation could be the KLM

(Netherlands airlines), and Brussels Airlines, which have a "codeshare" cooperation with Bangkok Airways, Malaysia Airlines, Vietnam Airlines, Singapore Airlines, and Thai Airways saw a decrease in the air traffic in 2019 will now have the possibility to boost back with the deal and also increase the number of destinations in Asia. In the case of Luxair, which does not have any codeshare cooperation with any of the ASEAN countries nor has any external destination other than Egypt and Tunisia, will now be able to advantage of the agreement and expand its market and services into the ASEAN region.

Fifth, more than aviation cooperation. The deal is not only aimed at establishing a single aviation international market but also to boost its economy through the exchange of people, and tourism to lead towards more multilateral agreements. It also provides a space to re-work the existing initiatives such as the Enhanced ASEAN Regional Integration Support from the EU (ARISE Plus) programme, EU-South East Asia on Cooperation on Mitigating Climate Change impact from Civil Aviation, and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (EU-SEA CCCA CORSIA). The success of this cooperation will showcase a model for the global powers to unite under the regional umbrella and paves way for multilateralism.

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War in Ukraine: Daily Updates

By Padmashree Anandhan, Rishma Banerjee, Sai Pranav, and Madhura S Mahesh



Source: Kremlin.ru, vk.com/myfeo_ru/via Globallookpress.com/RT, WSJ/IMF, Sergei Fadeichev/TASS, Stephanie Lecocq/EPA-EFE/POLITICO, mil.in.ua

War in Ukraine: Day 248 & 249

War on the Ground:

On 30 October, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy reported on a meeting with the 27th meeting with the Staff of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief. Ukraine's war efforts on the frontline, strategies for further liberation of occupied territories, ammunition and equipment supply and coordination of the defence forces was discussed between the parties. Zelenskyy also mentioned that Russian forces were continuing their efforts in Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Donbas, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Mykolaiv and the surrounding regions. He also mentioned that Ukraine has finally been able to restore energy supply internally and thus no emergency blackouts had been reported. However, since generation deficits are still prevailing, he urged the citizens to practice "...extremely frugal electricity consumption and stabilization restrictions." He criticised Russia for suspending the Black Sea Grain Deal and reported that 218 vessels were waiting in Ukrainian ports to be sent to the global markets. He accused Russia of pushing the world into a food shortage again and the resultant rise in prices.

On the same day, the Ukraine's General Staff of the Armed Forces reported that units of Russian forces were being deployed to Belarus, exacerbating the threat of missile strikes and drone attacks from Belarus to Ukraine. It also warned against the use of unmanned aerial vehicles from Belarus on Ukraine's territory. Forces stationed at the border with Belarus are thus preparing for a possible attack amidst intermittent shelling in the region. Spokesperson Halyna Shekhovtsova told *Sky*, that her unit was preparing for additional fortifications due to the perceived rise in risk.

On 30 October, New Jersey-based non-profit organization Hope For Ukraine (HFU) which supports and rehabilitates the poorest individuals and communities in Ukraine announced in a press release that since February, 36 million meals have been delivered in Ukraine. Additionally medical supplies to 18 hospitals, housing, and medical attention to 1300 refugees, and clothing and hygiene products to 52,000 people have also been given. On this issue, HFU Founder Yuriy Boyechko said: "The war is not over and the situation on the ground gets worse each day... We are improving life, one breath at a time. You can count on our

organization to bring hope to many hopeless situations in the Ukraine.”

On 28 October, people from the Iranian diaspora in Ukraine protested in the Maidan Independence Square in Kyiv against Russia’s aggression in Ukraine and Iran’s support of the same. The organizer of the protest, Goreshi Mansour said that they do not support the actions of the Iranian authorities and are against the destruction caused by Iranian Kamikaze drones used by Russia.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 29 October, Russia’s defence ministry reported that Ukraine had launched an unsuccessful attack with nine aerial and seven naval drones on Russia’s Black Sea Fleet stationed in Sevastopol in Crimea. However, Russia’s army was able to “destroy” the drones. The ministry accused UK of training the Ukrainian 73rd Special Center for Maritime Operations, which had carried out the attacks. Terming it as a “terrorist attack,” the Governor of Sevastopol Mikhail Razvozzhayev said that it was the “most massive” drone attack by Ukraine since the beginning of the war.

On the same day, Moscow’s ambassador to Washington, Anatoly Antonov responded to the criticism against Russia for suspending the Black Sea Grain Deal. He said that the reason behind the suspension was Ukraine’s drone attacks on the Sevastopol fleet but also because of “Washington’s reaction to the terrorist attack on the port of Sevastopol” and the “complete disregard” the US showed towards Russia’s allegations of Ukrainian attack. Antonov also responded to the accusations that Russia is exacerbating global hunger and stated that ever-since the brokering of the deal, it has repeatedly emphasized on sending the grains to the poor countries Somalia, Ethiopia, Yemen, Sudan and Afghanistan, even though only received only three per cent of the total products.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 30 October, the US, the UK and the EU along with Ukraine and the international

community responded strongly to the Russia suspending the Black Sea Grain Deal. Due to the deal, so far, nine million tonnes of food and grains from Ukraine and Russia had been made available to the global market, thus bringing down soaring food prices by 15 per cent since March. NATO Spokesperson Oana Lungescu said, that Putin was once again “weaponizing food” and urged him to reconsider his decision. On the same issue, UN Secretary General mentioned he was deeply concerned about Russia’s actions and he be postponing his departure to attend the Arab League summit to try and revive the deal. Russia has requested a UNSC meeting on 31 October on the same issue.

On 28 October, tens of thousands of Czechs reached the capital to demonstrate their solidarity for Ukraine. The rally happened in the context of three anti-government displays where protestors exhibited agitation against the pro-Western Czech Prime Minister. The organisers of the previous rallies were known to be pro-Russian as well. The people on 28 October waved the Czech, Ukraine and EU flags, and cited, “Czech Republic against fear.” Organised by a group named Million Moments of Democracy, the rally expressed that the anti-government protests “exploited fear in inflation” and was undermining democracy.

On 29 October, Poland’s Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki announced that US based Westinghouse had received the contract to build Poland’s first nuclear power plant. The move is to reduce Poland’s reliance on coal and to increase its energy independence. Morawiecki assured that the technology to be used would be “reliable and safe.” US’s Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm appreciated Warsaw’s decision and said: “This announcement also sends a clear message to Russia: We will not let them weaponize energy any longer.”

On 29 October, European Central Bank (ECB) President, Christine Lagarde said that the Bank will have to raise interest because of inflation caused by Russia’s war in Ukraine. On 27 October, the ECB had raised its interest rates to a record high since 2009.

She said: "That's what he [Putin] is trying to do, cause chaos and destroy as much of Europe as he can... This energy crisis is causing massive inflation which we have to defeat."

The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 28 October, at an address to the UNSC, International Atomic Energy Agency Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi referred to the "extremely fragile and dangerous" nuclear safety and security situation at the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP). He mentioned that considerable progress had been made in the establishment of a nuclear safety and security protection zone around the ZNPP, and because of high-level consultations with Ukraine and Russia, IAEA was "not far from" setting up the safe-zone.

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War in Ukraine: Day 247

War on the Ground:

On 28 October, a spokesman for the Ukrainian Air Force Command Yurii Ihnat reported that they have downed more than 300 Shahed-136 kamikaze drones. Ihnat said: "Since September 13, when the first Shahed-136 kamikaze drone was shot down in Kupiansk, Kharkiv region, until today we have more than 300 downed Shahed-136 kamikaze drones" HE highlighted that the use of these drones has slowed down. Ihnat suspects that Russia does not have the same stock of drones it had back in September. He added that Russia is monitoring the performance and damage caused by the drones to Ukraine's air defence and using them only at night when they can only be shot down by weapons with radar systems. Ihnat said that they do not know the total amount of drones received by Russia and if they are being able to manufacture them. On 28 October, Ukraine's General Staff of the Armed Forces reported that the Ukrainian air force launched 24 strikes on Russian positions. These strikes hit 20 Russian ammunition and military equipment clusters and four air defence missile system. The strikes also hit a Russian command post and six soldiers.

On 28 October, the Donetsk Head of Regional Military Administration Pavlo Kyrylenko reported that in all the de-occupied regions

preparations for winter are taking place. Kyrylenko said that in 15 territories gas supply was restored, and key infrastructure and social infrastructure were restored in 10 communities. He update that the power supply between Lyman and Sviatohirsk has been connected and that the Administration is restoring the internal supply lines.

On the same day, Ukraine's Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal said that LLC Gas Supply Company Naftogaz Trading will start acquiring gas to help Ukraine survive winter. Shmyhal outlined that the purchase will be made keeping in mind the allocated budget of UAH 12.7 billion. Currently, Ukraine has pumped 14 billion cubic meters and stored winter use. Shmyhal noted that this would have been enough if it was a normal winter, but with the uncertainties of war, additional reserves are needed to prevent a shortage in winter.

On 28 October, the Kherson region's Deputy Head of the Administration Kirill Stremousov said that the Russian forces in the region are stopping all attempts by Ukrainian Armed Forces to enter the region. Stremousov reported that fighting between the two forces is ongoing in the northern Kherson region and in the Nikolaev direction. He said that Russian forces are in control of the situation and that: "We are defending. So far, no one is moving anywhere."

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 28 October, the Central Bank of Russia estimated that the partial mobilization policy will have a disinflationary effect on the economy but will increase inflation in the supply side of the economy. The disinflationary effect is due to the decrease in consumer demand and acts as a deterrent to inflation. When the supply-side inflation is looked at, the Central Bank said that due to increased restrictions on manufacturing and lack of labour will drive up inflation and turn the disinflationary effect into a pro-inflationary one. The Central Bank announced its projection for the key inflation rate to be 7.5 per cent. the Bank also announced that there need not be compulsory conversion to rubles from

foreign currency. It is of the view that: "Citizens should have a choice - to leave their funds in foreign currency or convert them into rubles."

On 28 October, Russian Defence Minister Sergey Shoigu informed President Vladimir Putin that the partial mobilization exercise has come to an end. Shoigu stated that the 300,000 personnel target has been reached and there have been no new conscriptions and no additional assignments planned. Shoigu reported that now enlistment offices will replenish the military with volunteers and candidates for service under contract. Currently out of the total 300,000, 218,000 are in training centers and 82,000 have been deployed to fight in Ukraine. He highlighted that all of them who have provided their service to the forciers will be designated as combat veterans and get social protection benefits.

On 28 October, Russia's Foreign Ministry published a report looking into the alleged abuse of the humanitarian corridor under the Black Sea initiative. The Ministry noted that despite a few initial struggles, the movement of cargo has increased at a rapid pace. It said: "If three weeks were needed to transport the first million tons, now it takes slightly more than a week to ship the same volume. Such high rates and efficiency are largely achieved at the expense of the extreme load on our specialists."

The Ministry addressed the blockade and congestion of ships in the corridor are being done to create pressure on Russian officials to speed up the checks and not be through in its measures. the ministry also included that the ongoing investigations of the attack on the Crimean Bridge are a sign that the corridor is being abused as the bridge served as a delivery route to the ports. The report highlights how the distribution of cargo does not line up with the agreed humanitarian goals. It states how: "Half of all deliveries went to the European Union and such developed countries as the UK, Israel and South Korea, while the needy countries, particularly, Somalia, Ethiopia, Yemen, Sudan and Afghanistan, received only 3% of food products, mainly via the UN World Food Programme (WFP). Due to this, the UN

leadership even re-categorized this humanitarian initiative as a commercial one, stressing the importance of stabilizing global food prices." It criticized these shipments by comparing them with their own where Russia has delivered: "About 10.5 mln tons of grain (77% wheat) have already been sent to Asian (62%) and African (33%) countries."

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 28 October, The Pentagon announced a new military assistance package to Ukraine to support its fight against Russia. The package includes USD 275 million High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) launchers, small arms and satellite systems. The US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin said that these weapons would make "such a difference to the battlefield" and that this support would continue. This package currently entails the US's overall security assistance of more than USD 18.5 billion, since the beginning of the invasion of Ukraine by Russia.

On 28 October, the executive director of the International Energy Agency (IEA) Fatih Birol said that Russia would lose the energy battle it is citing against the West if it continues its aggression against Ukraine. Commenting on the loss of the European oil market, Birol mentioned that Russia lost its "biggest client" and acknowledged that Russia would not be able to recover this "big chunk" of the market anytime soon. Speaking of the international gas crisis, he said that the issue is driven by the overdependency of Russia's reserves. Warning that the winter might prove costly for the European states, he remarked that if the European countries could "emerge as a strong buyer", they could sustain customers from around the world.

On 27 October, the CEO Haluk Bayraktar of the Baykar defence company stated that the construction of the drone plant in Ukraine will finish in two years' time. The Bayraktar TB2 played a crucial role in the initial attacks by Russia by helping Ukraine defend itself. Speaking to *Reuters* at the SAHA defence expo in Istanbul, the executive said: "Right now we have architectural design. The detailed

design phase is finished. And we will move ahead with construction actually... within two years we would like to finish it."

On 28 October, Norwegian Security Services formally charged a man of allegedly being a Russian Spy. Earlier this week the police arrested a university lecturer for being a spy and have now revealed that he has lied about his identity. According to security services he has adopted an alias as a 37-year-old man called José Assis Giammaria from Brazil. In reality, he is a 44-year-old man named Mikhail Valerievich Mikushin. He is being accused of collecting illegal intelligence linked to state secrets. The lawyer of the accused says that her client has denied all the charges. When the media asked the Russian Embassy in Oslo for a comment, it said that they do not know the man in question is and did not comment on the new information released by the security services.

On 28 October, Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said that Canada will raise funds for Ukraine by selling bonds. The bonds will be government-backed five-year bonds that will be available for purchase in sovereign banks. Canada is the first country to take this route to raise funds. There has been no additional information regarding the date of the sale and if the government has put a cap on the number of bonds that can be purchased. Additionally, Canada has imposed new sanctions on 35 senior officials from the Russian energy sector which includes officials from Gazprom.

On 28 October, Poland's Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki announced that the tender for Poland's first Nuclear Power Station will be awarded to Westinghouse, a US-based firm. The entire project is USD 40 billion and Westinghouse will be taking over the first part of it. Morawiecki stated that this will be formally passed by the cabinet on 02 November. The government has expressed its desire to have this running by 2033 and simultaneously look into expanding this project to open more power stations. The US has applauded this decision and has said that this is a major step in expanding the two countries relations. US Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm said: "I

think it sends a clear message to Russia that the Atlantic alliance stands together to diversify our energy supply... and to resist Russian weaponisation of energy,"

The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 27 October, International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) Director General, Rafael Grosso said that engineers were working at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) to stabilize the plant's external power supplies. He assured that even though the plant was still vulnerable, it had received the power required for reactor cooling and other operations for the last ten days without any interruption. The switchyard of the nearby thermal power plants are also prepared to provide backup emergency power if necessary. However, Grossi elaborated on the vulnerability of the plant as only one 750 kilowatts external power line is currently operational instead of four, as had been before Russia's invasion. Grossi said that he considers ZNPP as a Ukrainian plant, even though Russia has claimed complete control over it, and it has more Russian people working at the plant. Grosso also addressed that the IAEA is looking into the 'dirty bombs' claim by Russia at the behest of the Ukrainian government. The IAEA officials will be visiting two nuclear plants under the IAEA safeguard to conduct investigations regarding this claim. Speaking at the closed-door UNSC meeting, Grosso said that the results of the investigation will be analysed and promptly published to the public

On 29 October, *Global Times* reported that China and Russia will strengthen their bilateral ties. In a recent report on this issue, Putin said: As for Russian-Chinese relations, they have reached an unprecedented level of openness, mutual trust and effectiveness over the past years, past decades... I am sure that based on that strong foundation, we will steadily move forward. At a media briefing, China's Foreign Minister, Wang Wenbin reiterated that sentiment and said that China appreciates Putin's positive remarks. He also said that China will continue to share governance experience, enhance corporations in various fields and support each other in the path of development.

On 27 October, the Russian embassy in India said that Indian Foreign Minister Subramanyam Jaishankar will be visiting Russia on 08 November. He will meet Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. The embassy said that the two leaders will "discuss the current state of bilateral relations and the international agenda."

On 27 October, Saudi Arabia's Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz Bin Salman held meetings with the Energy Ministers of France and Greece. Abdulaziz and French Minister, Agnes Pannier-Runacher discussed the importance of increasing the stability of the international oil market and continuing their close cooperation to address the upcoming challenges, especially in the fields of clean hydrogen and renewable energy. The two sides reaffirmed their faith in the 2011 Bilateral Cooperation Agreement in Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy and also discussed the opportunities in petrochemicals, electricity, energy efficiency, innovation, decarbonization technologies and other areas of mutual interest. Abdulaziz, along with Greece's Energy Minister Kostas Skrekas established a bilateral High-Level Working Group that will facilitate the implementation of an MoU signed between the two countries in July 2022. The two leaders expressed the desire to stabilize the international oil market, continue close communication and ensure secure and reliable supplies of energy in the international market.

On 27 October, UNESCO reported with the assistance of the UN Satellite Centre UNOSAT that it has been keeping track of the on-ground damage to cultural sites in Ukraine with the help of satellites. So far, 207 cultural sites in Ukraine have been damaged since the Russian invasion. UNESCO's cultural and emergencies director, Krista Pikkat said that while the situation is bad, it might get even worse and that it was imperative for UNESCO to have information on the sites ready for recovery.

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War in Ukraine: Day 246

War on the Ground:

On 27 October, Ukraine's Defence Minister Oleksiy Reznikov thanked Spain's Defence Minister Margarita Robles for providing military aid through the Ministry's *Telegram* post. Both Defence Ministers discuss powering up Ukraine's defensive capabilities. Ukraine received Hawk systems, an air defence system from Spain.

On 27 October, the Ukraine Army's Deputy Chief of the Main Operational Department of General Staff, Brigadier General Oleksii Hromov, said that the Russians had launched ten suicidal Shahed-136 drones from Belarus. Russians had also deployed its troops to airfields in Belarus and were seen conducting active operations on the training grounds. He added that Ukraine is monitoring Russian activities in Belarus and will deal with any threats that Russia poses, irrespective of the direction it comes from.

On 26 October, around 70,000 people and 19,000 vehicles crossed Ukraine's border with the EU and Moldova during the day. 37,000 people exited Ukraine, 23,000 crossed over to Poland and the rest to other EU states and Moldova. 33,000 people had travelled to Ukraine. 68 trucks containing humanitarian aid were provided to the people who have come to the country. The influx of traffic was heavy on the western border of Ukraine.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 26 October, Russia complained to the UNGA First Committee about the possibility of the US using its commercial satellites to help Ukraine in the war. Foreign Ministry's non-proliferation and arms control department, Russia's Deputy Director, Konstantin Vorontsov, said at a meeting of the UNGA First Committee that using civilian infrastructure facilities in space for the war would endanger the stability of civil space activities and various socioeconomic processes that decides people's wellbeing on earth.

On 27 October, *Lenta.ru* reported that Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Grushko remarks on Europe. He warned that it was heading towards an energy suicide at the fifteenth Verona Eurasian Economic Forum. He said, "Effectively, we are witnessing the economic, military and ideological enslavement of Europe by the EU. Meekly and voluntarily, the EU has traded its energy freedom, the basis for economic development, which has been based upon energy cooperation with Russia, unaffected by any political conjuncture, for decades - for dependency on the US," and that the EU had lost its energy freedom in exchange for economic growth. According to Grushko, the EU had shifted its energy imports from Russia to the US.

On 27 October, Russia's Foreign Ministry's spokesperson, Maria Zakharova, said at a briefing that Russia would fight back if the EU decides to confiscate its frozen assets. She compared the EU's action to "thieving" and that it will harm the bloc's reputation. Russia announced it would take action against the EU if its government reserves were seized.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 26 October, European leaders finalized plans to place a cap on Russian oil prices despite the World Bank's warning that the plan will need the effective participation of growing market economies. The price cap would cut Russia's major funding source for the war while oil production would continue to avoid an energy price hike. The price cap will be decided to be in the USD 60 per barrel range. The price cap will go into effect from 05 December and will be undertaken by Europe and the US.

On 27 October, the UK's Defence Ministry's Intelligence update on the war in Ukraine stated that Moscow's Mayor Sergey Sobyenin would head the development of security measures in Russian territories following the decree by Russia's President Vladimir Putin to introduce a new regimen of security alert levels. Russia plans to involve regional governments in its national security system to organize its society. The close relations with regional officials will

also partially deflect public criticism away from the Russian regime. A similar strategy was used to escape the blame for the COVID-19 pandemic by Putin. However, he will find it difficult to hide from the criticisms of the impacts of the special military operation in Ukraine.

On 27 October, Germany requested Switzerland to approve its re-export of Swiss-made ammunition to Ukraine. Germany's Defence Ministry had written a letter requesting the right to re-export the ammunition. The Swiss government replied that it "...will respond to this letter in a timely manner." In April 2022, Switzerland denied the same request on the grounds that it would violate its neutral stance in international politics.

On 27 October, the US pledged it would provide a USD 275 million package of weapons and other aid to Ukraine to increase its capabilities to chase out the occupying Russian forces. The focus of the package is to restock the ammunition for weapons available in Ukraine. Details of the aid are yet to be published.

The Global Fallout: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 27 October, *RT* reported on India's plans to continue importing Russian wheat to process it into flour and other materials like pasta and re-exporting it to the neighbouring countries. India sees it as a way to increase its exports. India had previously stopped purchasing wheat from Russia, Ukraine and Australia to support its domestic producers. However, India plans to resume the imports to re-export it by establishing a joint venture with Russia amid the ongoing war.

On 27 October, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said in a statement that the reduced export of Russian fossil fuel would pave the way to a global green energy transition. Russian energy trade is predicted by IEA to fall from 20 per cent in 2021 to 13 per cent in 2030. IEA also projects through its history of modelling that the demand for fossilfuel will hit the peak by 2025 and will start to stagnate from 2030. The war in Ukraine has changed the global energy policy, and the world is now looking at

cleaner and more affordable sources. IEA said that global clean energy investment will increase more than USD two trillion a year by 2030 as the international community will be accustomed to Russia-Europe energy fallout.

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War in Ukraine: Day 245

War on the Ground:

On 26 October, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that the Ukrainian Armed Forces are strengthening their positions on the frontline and are decreasing the Russian army's capabilities by destroying their logistical ability. He said that while there have not been any significant changes, the battle in Donetsk is still going on and is their fiercest one yet.

On 26 October, Ukraine's Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk urged Ukrainian refugees to not return back home during winter to avoid stress on energy resources. Previous Russian attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure had stretched the remaining ones causing frequent blackouts to save up for winter. Vereshchuk requested the refugees to continue their stay until spring when the demand for energy would decrease drastically and energy infrastructure would be back.

On 26 October, Ukraine's Security Service (SUB) posted a video on *Facebook* showing the demolition of a Russian observation post and assault group. This retaliation was

conducted by SBU's Alpha Special Ops Centre in an overnight scouting exercise where the observation and assault group were discovered.

On 26 October, Zaporizhzhia's Regional Military Administration, Head Oleksandr Starukh reported that 540 people have been kidnapped and captured in the Russian-occupied territories of the Zaporizhzhia region. Starukh further detailed that out of the 540 captured 208 still remain in captivity and the rest have been released. Dniprorudne mayor Yevhen Matveyev and Enerhodar's first deputy mayor Ivan Samoydiuk are still in captivity, and there has been no update about their whereabouts.

On 26 October, Ukraine's press service of the National Police released the documentation of the 28 Russian strikes in Donetsk. They reported that Russia had shelled 13 settlements in Donetsk targeting civilian and residential buildings. The report outlined

that the strikes hit eleven civilian objects, six residential buildings, a coke-chemical plant, a technical school, a garage and farm buildings. The Police reported that Bakhmut was attacked four times and a civilian was killed in one such strike.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 26 October, Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu reported on Russia's nuclear force exercise. Shoigu said that "In accordance with the Russian Armed Forces' training schedule an exercise is being held to practice command and control of the Armed Forces, including the tasks of carrying out a massive nuclear strike by the strategic nuclear forces in retaliation for the enemy's nuclear strike." In the exercise, the Yars intercontinental ballistic missile and the Sineva ballistic missile were launched along with cruise missiles from two Tu-95MS. The Kremlin website confirmed that the missiles hit all their targets and the set-out tasks for the exercise were completed.

On 26 October, Russia's Deputy Permanent Representative Dmitry Peskov told the press that Russia presented evidence regarding Ukraine's plan to use 'dirty bombs.' Though he declined to elaborate on the outcome of the session, Peskov expressed that they will continue to bring the attention of the international community to this and hope to stop Kyiv.

On 26 October, Russian President Vladimir Putin expressed his concerns regarding alleged black market weapons sales in Ukraine. At the 51st meeting of The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) council, Putin said that these black market arms deals encouraged cross-border criminal groups to smuggle weapons to other regions. Putin elaborated on the types of arms being smuggled saying "We are not only talking about small arms. Risks remain that more powerful weapons may fall into the hands of criminals, including portable anti-aircraft missile systems and high-precision weapons."

On 26 October, Russia's Minister of Defence Sergei Shoigu held talks with Chinese Defence Minister General Wei Fenghe and

Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, where the two discussed the matter of Ukraine and Shoigu updated Singh on Russia's concern regarding Ukraine's plan to use 'dirty bombs.' In the talk with he discussed Russia's concern on Ukraine's plan to use 'dirty bombs.'

On 26 October, the Russian Defence Ministry published a report on the special military operation in Ukraine. The Russian Armed Forces have taken down 326 airplanes, 162 helicopters, 2,349 unmanned aerial vehicles, 383 anti-aircraft missile systems, 6,084 tanks and armoured fighting vehicles, 874 combat vehicles with multiple rocket-launching systems, 3,527 field artillery cannons and mortars, and 6,791 units of special military hardware. The Ministry reported that they have curtailed Ukrainian forces in LPR, DPR, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia region from advancing and have destroyed their military posts and equipment.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 26 October, Lithuania's Defence Chief Valdemaras Rupšys expressed his disagreement with providing PzH 2000 howitzers and NASAMS air defence system to Ukraines. Rupšys said that they will honour their commitments to NATO, but not at the cost of their security. According to him providing Ukraine with military aid should be replaced by making purchases of new military equipment so that the military capability of Lithuania and its security is not compromised. When Lithuania's Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis was asked about the military aid, he said the decision will be taken by the State Defence Council but reiterated that any aid given to Ukraine should include military aid.

On the same day, the EU implored its member nations to plan for the collective purchase of military equipment in order to get a better price and replenish their stock of stocks of air and missile defence, ammunition, anti-tank and artillery systems and drones after providing military aid to Ukraine, the sudden rise in demand has led to the equipment becoming more expensive. The head of EU's diplomatic service's security and defence division Stijn Mols

urged member states to keep their differences aside and come together to maintain the security of the continent. According to Mols European investment in defence was lacking when compared to the US or China.

On 26 October, *AP News* reported on the recent fall in prices of gas and electricity in Europe. It outlined the fall was due to warmer climate and the filling up of gas reserves by European countries through alternative sources after Russia decreased gas supply. According to energy experts from the Center for European Studies the volatility of energy markets due to new sanctions and policies and the unknowns regarding the demand from Asia might change this reduction. They also cautioned against a potential backlash from the people during winter if they are asked to limit their energy consumption.

The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 26 October, Latvian Speaker of the Saeima Ināra Mūniece was given a state award “the Order of Prince Yaroslav the Wise, II degree, in the First Parliamentary Summit of the International Crimea Platform in Zagreb, the capital of Croatia” from Ukraine. The decree was issued by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy saying that the award was for “significant personal accomplishments.” The awardee added that it was in great honour and a high commendation for Latvia to receive constant support from Ukraine and that Latvia would sustain its help in giving Russia “the just punishment for the crimes it has committed.”

On 26 October, Saudi Aramco reported that the oil markets are adapting to the sanctions imposed on Russia by redirecting crude flows to Asia from Europe and other players switching their production. The CEO of Saudi Aramco Amin Nasser said that there is a realignment that is occurring, Saudi Aramco said that the Russians are able to place their crude in various markets and that the discounts they are making use of are helping them overcome the challenges in securing insurance and shipping for oil. Adding that there are logistical issues, the head of

Aramco said that Russia is able to handle these issues with the right discounts.

On 26 October, Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh held talks with Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu. The meeting was requested by Shoigu to address Russia’s concerns regarding Ukraine’s plan to use ‘dirty bombs.’ Singh reaffirmed India’s stance that the conflict should be resolved through diplomatic talks and that the nuclear option should not be considered by both sides.

On 26 October, Mercedes announced its deportation from Russia, becoming the latest Western company to pull out from the country. The German-based firm halted its manufacturing and exporting in early March, and has said that it “will withdraw” from the Russian market and sell shares to a local investor. This pull-out comes after Ford confirmed on 26 October that it had finalised a deal to leave the Russian market as well. Along with Japan’s Nissan leaving the market and experiencing a USD 700 million loss, the chief financial officer of Mercedes added that this exit would not have any real effect on the company’s profits.

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War in Ukraine: Day 244

War on the Ground:

On 25 October, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Germany's President Frank-Walter Steinmeier discussed peaceful and democratic cooperation to increase their bilateral cooperation, a municipal partnership was announced. They agreed upon the partnership between Germany and Ukraine at the municipal level.

On 25 October, Ukraine's National Security and Defence Council, Secretary, Oleksiy Danilov, said in an interview with the UK *Sky news* channel that Russians were planning to attack the Kakhovka dam in Crimea to prevent the Ukrainian troops from advancing towards Kherson. If the dam is

destroyed, Danilov fears that Crimea will have water problems and scarcity that will remain for 10 to 15 years. He stated the involvement of Belarus in the Special Military Operation by Russia in Ukraine. They have supported Russia, and Danilov speculated that Russians have a special attack base in Belarus.

On 25 October, Ukraine's Defence Ministry's Main Directorate of Intelligence warned in a *Telegram* post that Russia is planning to spread misinformation on heads of the nation and national liberation movements. The main goal of Russia was seen as to discredit western countries and their leaders in the campaign. They advised the public to be cautious of such misinformation and not to believe any discrediting information. The goal of the campaign was found to be disrupting the support received from the international community in Ukraine. On the same day the first Crimea Platform Parliamentary Summit was held at the National University Library in Zagreb. The Chairman of the Ukrainian parliament, Verkhovna Rada, Ruslan Stefanchuk, Speaker of the Sabor of the Republic of Croatia, Gordan Jandrokovic.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On October 26, TASS reported that Russia submitted a draft UNSC to set up a commission consisting of all UNSC members to investigate the activities of the US biological labs in Ukraine. The investigation is to find whether the US and Ukraine are overstepping their obligations under the Biological Weapons Convention. The draft document will be considered during the Security Council's 27 October session.

On 25 October, TASS reported that the presidential spokesperson, Dmitry Peskov, said that the relations between the UK and Russia would not change even if the Prime Minister changed. The UK appointed Rishi Sunak as the new Prime Minister after the other Conservative candidates withdrew due to lack of support. Peskov said, "...we do not see any preconditions, grounds or hopes for some positive shifts in the foreseeable future," commenting on the change in the UK leadership.

On 25 October, *RT* reported on Russian officials, including Defence Minister Sergey Shoigu, accusation of Ukraine for preparing to use a dirty bomb. The dirty bomb is a device that combines traditional explosives with radioactive material. Russia has accused Ukraine of hiding these bombs before the International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors visit. Ukraine denied the accusations and alleged that Russians were the ones who were planning to use nuclear weapons.

On 25 October, Russia responded to the new package of sanctions by increasing the stop list that does not allow those individuals entry into the country. The list was expanded to accommodate more EU representatives supplying military equipment to Ukraine. The sanction was to confiscate Russian assets instead of freezing them.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 25 October, at a reconstruction conference for Ukraine in Berlin, European Commission chief, Ursula von der Leyen reiterated that there was “no time to waste,” and that the EU should be prepared to coordinate reconstruction measures. She mentioned the World Bank estimate of around EUR 350 billion of damages in Ukraine and said that the Commission should launch reconstructions efforts “..preferably before the end of the year or early at the beginning of next year.”

On 25 October, the Norwegian domestic security agency made known that it had arrested a “visiting academic”, who entered Norway as a Brazilian, under the lens of being a Russian spy. Amid enhanced panic over energy security, internet, and infrastructure, the Norwegian secret service alleged that the man was in the country working for a Russian intelligence service, under a fake name and identity. Confirming that the case was “huge”, the agency said that the academic would be barred from the country, as he represents a “threat to fundamental national interests.” While a court has placed the researched under a four-week detention order, the agency said that the man had neither Russian nor

Norwegian citizenship, and had been researching the northern regions, hybrid threats, and Norway’s Arctic Policy.

On 25 October, Romania announced to increase its defence procurement and boost talks with Turkey, Bulgaria, and Georgia, to the potential aftermath of Russia’s war in Ukraine towards the Black Sea. Critical for shipments of grain, oil, and oil products, the Black Sea is shared by Bulgaria, Romania, Georgia, Turkey, Ukraine, and Russia. While these powers have been disseminating mines from Russia in the Sea, Romania has included in its proposals to strengthen its armed forces and ramp up its military procurement programs. Not providing details of the procurements, Romania said that these proposals were to “maintain peace in the Black Sea region” and to avoid the expansion of the conflict.

On 25 October, Lithuania said that its supermarkets would deliver and phase out Russian and Belarusian goods, expressing their discontentment to “replace” certain commodities. Adding that no new products are being imported from Russia and Belarus, Lithuanian markets said that commodities like alcoholic beverages were easy to replace, but finding suppliers to counter that void was a tough task. Russian baking soda, for example, was difficult to procure, including countries like Italy and Poland pitching in to fill the racks. The market owners reassured that Lithuanians prefer domestic goods and western products and that the Russian-Belarusian products made up a “small percentage.” Moreover, a poll conducted by Lithuanian National Radio and Television (LRT) said that about 62 per cent of the people said that all European Union countries need to stop issuing visas for Russians and bar them from entering their territory. While Lithuania has reiterated its bid to close borders to Russians, it has added that Luxembourg should show “a strong backbone” to the issue and urged them to ban entry to Russians who hold a permissible visa regardless of the country.

On 25 October, Serbia pronounced it will not be taking part in the Crimea Platform, a Ukrainian-organised international summit organised to support the return of the occupied regions back to Ukraine’s control.

Not commenting on their non-participation, Serbian officials are expected to not attend the meeting as per Russian sentiments, saying that they “expressed the expectation” that Serbia would not participate in the summit. Even though the summit is received well in Croatia, the Croatian President made known that Croatia would be exempt from the meeting. He said: “... as long as Croatia is not attacked and is not at war, I will not participate.”

The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 25 October, South Africa’s President Cyril Ramaphosa, spokesperson Vincent Magwenya said that South Africa saw no reason to comply with Western sanction. Thus, South Africa will allow a Russian oligarch and Putin-ally Alexei Mordashov who had been placed under sanctions to dock his superyacht in Cape Town. Echoing Ramaphosa’s stance of not criticizing Russia directly, Magwenya said that the only sanctions South Africa is obligated to comply with are ones imposed by the UN.

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War in Ukraine: Day 241, 242, and 243

War on the Ground:

On 24 October, Ukraine’s Air Force Command reported that they had shot down three Russian Ka-52 helicopters in Beryslav, Kherson. From around 13:00 to 13:30, they shot down two of the helicopters and the third was shot down around 21:30. This coter offensive was carried out by the Odesa and Kherson anti-aircraft missile brigades of the "South" Air Command of the Air Force. The Air force Command also informed that these helicopters might be fitted with Ukrainian engines after Moto Sich JSC President was arrested on account of abetting Russia.

On the same day, Ukraine’s Ministry of Defence reported that they had freed over 90 settlements from Russian control in Kherson. This comes as Russia announced evacuations in the region specifically around the left bank of the Dnipro River. The spokesperson of Ukraine’s Army General Staff Vladislav Seleznev said that they are suspecting that Russian Forces are preparing

for a large-scale conflict in the region, especially near the Kakhovka dam. This comes amid the reports of Russia allegedly resorting to blackmailing Ukraine by mining the Kakhovka HPP and threatening to detonate it.

On 24 October, Ukraine's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Digital Transformation Mykhailo Fedorov announced that the Armed Forces of Ukraine will be acquiring 11 PUMA-LE unmanned aircraft systems. This purchase worth UAH 540 million is a part of the Army of Drones project by the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the Ministry of Digital Transformation. The PUMA-LE drones are a part of 18 countries' armed forces and are equipped with thermal imaging systems, and antennas with an operational range of 60 kilometres, 6.5 hours of flight capability and can fly as low as 3 km from the ground.

On 24 October, the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry released a statement asking the International Community to ask Russia to cease artificial and politically motivated delays in the Black Sea grain corridor. According to the Ministry, Russian officials are conducting a prolonged inspection of vessels either arriving or leaving Ukraine which is causing a slowdown of grain shipment to the Global South. The statement highlights that more than 165 vessels are stuck in the Bosphorus Strait. It also added that the export of around three million tonnes of grain has been delayed and that more than 10 million people all over the globe are not receiving food on time due to Russia's delay. The Ministry suspects that these delays are politically motivated to renew the deal to benefit Russia more and that these actions are undermining global food security, especially that of the Global South.

On 24 October, in an interview with *"We - Ukraine"* Ukrainian Energy Minister Herman Galushchenko reported that the majority of Ukraine's wind and solar energy have been decommissioned. This is because 90 per cent of wind and around 50 per cent of solar energy plants are located South of the country which has suffered from repeated Russian aggression. This renewable energy

contributed to about 10-11 per cent of Ukraine's total energy consumption. Galushchenko also said that Ukraine's goal of increasing this share to 25 per cent will be revised once the total damage by Russia is counted.

On 23 October, the Head of Kyiv Regional Military Administration Oleksiy Kuleba reported that 147 locals were illegally deported from the region when Russia occupied it. Kuleba notes that they would have been deported to either Belarus or Russia. Out of the total 147 people, 43 are said to be in captivity and the rest 89 status is unknown.

On 23 October, Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal announced that Ukraine has enough gas to get through winter. He reported that their gas storage has about 14.2 billion cubic meters of gas which will help the country survive winter sustainably. This comes amid repeated Russian attacks on energy infrastructure. Shmyhal said that Russia has not been able to break the energy system and that workers are working 24/7 to ensure the damage is repaired at the earliest.

On 23 October, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba responded to Russia's claims that Ukraine is planning to use "dirty bombs". Kuleba dismissed these claims in a tweet and added that such claims are dangerous. He stated that Ukraine is a signatory of the NPT and that they do not possess any 'dirty bombs' nor are they acquiring any. Kuleba said that such accusations often reflect the future plans of Russia. Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy also dismissed these claims and reiterated that this is a reflection of Russia's plans and a sign that Russia is ready to raise the stakes of the war. Zelenskyy called for a tougher international response against a nuclear threat by Russia.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 24 October, Russia's Defence Ministry alleged that Ukraine is planning to deploy a "dirty bomb" which along with conventional explosives is used to spread radioactive material and frame Russia in the process.

According to the Ministry, this move would serve three purposes- first, portray Russia as a “nuclear terrorist;” second, initiate a refugee exodus to the EU; and third intimidate the residents. On the same issue, Russia’s ambassador to the UN, Vassily Nebenzia wrote a letter to UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, saying that the UN should attempt to “prevent this heinous crime.” Nebenzia mentioned that if Ukraine uses the bomb, it will be viewed as an “act of nuclear terrorism.” He has also called for a Security Council meeting on the issue. However, on the same day, the Foreign Ministers of France, the UK and the US released a joint statement saying that they do not accept Russia’s transparently false allegations and the NATO Chief, Jens Stoltenberg dismissed the narrative as “absurd.”

On the same day, the chief of Russia’s Radiation, Chemical and Biological Protection Troops, Lieutenant-General Igor Kirillov said that Ukraine had been making continuous efforts to usurp control of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP). He alleged that since the beginning of Russia’s invasion, Ukraine has shelled the plant 39 times and that now, the troops were trying to get across the Kakhovka reservoir to take over the plant. On the same issue, the Defence Ministry revealed the countries that would be worst affected in case of an accident at ZNPP. Publishing a pollution map for such an eventuality, it said that 38.4 thousand square kilometers of area in Belarus, Poland, Romania, Germany and Slovakia will be the worst hit.

On 24 October, the Coordination Council, tasked with outlining the federal and regional efforts for the war in Ukraine held its first meeting. The Council is being headed by Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin, and the Chief of the Government Staff, Dmitry Grigorenko, and Industry and Trade Minister, Denis Manturov will serve as deputies. While Grigorenko will look into regulatory and financial issues, Manturov will coordinate the delivery of weapons and military equipment to Ukraine. The Council will also look into the security of critical infrastructure like energy supply, transport, telecoms and communication facilities.

Mishustin said that the Council plans to report the activities and developments to the President once a week. On 25 October, Russia’s President Vladimir Putin will convene a special Coordination Council meeting to discuss the needs of the Russian armed forces in Ukraine.

On 23 October, Russia’s Ministry of Emergency Situations reported that a Russian Su-30 two-seat multirole fighter jet crashed into a two-story house in Irkutsk. The ministry confirmed that the crash came during a test flight and the two pilots commandeering the aircraft died in the clash. However, no civilian casualty was reported. Russia’s Investigative Committee has initiated a criminal case on the issue, as this is the second time an aircraft has crashed into residential buildings in recent times. On 17 October, a Su-34 aircraft crashed in Yeysk, killing 14 people and injuring 42. According to the Department of Defence, an engine fire caused that crash during take-off, while the aircraft was on a training flight.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 24 October, the UK’s Ministry of Defence released an update on the situation in Ukraine with regard to the repeated drone attacks being carried out by Russia. The update stated that Russia was continuing to use Iranian-made Shahed-137 drones. The drones reportedly are slow, fly at low altitudes and are noisy which makes them easy to take down the report added that Ukraine has been successful in taking 85 per cent of the drones launched by Russia. The Ministry suspects that Russia is using these drones to penetrate Ukraine’s air defence which is getting better by the day. They also suspect that it is being used instead of Russia’s indigenous long-range precision weapon which is becoming scarce.

On 24 October, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen pressed the need for the development of a Marshall Plan for Ukraine. Marshall Plan was a post-World War II initiative by the US to increase investments in West Germany. The two leaders called the reconstruction of Ukraine

a “generational task” which should start as soon as possible. This call comes before the start of the German-Ukraine business forum in Berlin where discussions are said to take place regarding rebuilding Ukraine.

On the same day, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Ukraine's Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal opened the German-Ukraine business forum. Speaking at the forum, Scholz backed the membership bid of Ukraine to the EU and added that this would open doors for more investors and the use of already-in-place EU infrastructure to rebuild Ukraine faster. He also emphasised the importance of transparency, rule of law and a tougher fight against corruption on the Ukraine side. Scholz also promised continued military aid and air defence equipment for helping Ukraine counter Russia. Scholz also highlighted that the rebuilding efforts should surpass the agenda of repairing energy infrastructure to make sure that they are efficient and that they are adaptable for a climate transition.

On 24 October, Western and NATO countries denounced Russia's claim that Ukraine is allegedly planning to use ‘dirty bombs’. This was announced through a joint statement by France, the UK and the US where their Foreign Ministers reject the claims and that they will continue their support to Ukraine. These claims were made by Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu on 23 October when he contacted his Western counterparts. The ‘dirty bomb’ is reportedly a bomb that has been laced with nuclear material. The statement said that these claims were just a reason that Russia will use to justify an escalation in the conflict. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg also rejected the allegations and added that Russia itself should not use such bombs as a pretext for escalations. The US State Department also added that irrespective of the use of a nuclear weapon or a ‘dirty bomb’ by Russia will have consequences.

On 24 October, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) said that they will give up to EUR 3 billion over 2022-2023 to support Ukraine's businesses and economy to sustain. Mentioning the bank's resilience to help Ukraine in its defence, they added that the primary focus would be to help the “real

economy”, which includes maintaining energy and food security, reconstruction of infrastructure, and to revitalise energy security. With an investment of up to EUR 500 million in liquidity support, the EBRD is the largest institutional investor in Ukraine and adds its focus to triple its aid to Ukraine by the end of 2023.

On 24 October, Norwegian police placed two Russians into custody on the account of taking photos of restricted military installations. This incident occurred in Bjerkvik in northern Norway which houses Norway's Armed Forces military facility and barracks. The pair, a man and woman were arrested on Saturday when a car with a Russian number plate was allegedly spotted taking pictures near the base. This adds to the rising cases of Russians being arrested for taking photos or flying drones illegally.

On 24 October, *Euractiv* reported on a major crisis that holds Poland back from transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable energy. Poland's continuous reliance on coal and the global system's current economic recession could throw the country's energy transition off course and would lead to a nearly EUR 135 billion costly endeavour by 2030. Amid the EU's push for ambitious climate action for 2030, Poland's energy sector is dominated by fossil fuels, which tripled in expense and dependency since the invasion of Ukraine. Soaring coal and gas prices would mean an increasing reliance on coal, which leads to an array of issues for Poland. Renewable energy being Poland's partial solution to its energy transition, the country is also setting up nuclear alternatives, with its first plant not scheduled until the mid-2030s. With a share of 23 per cent of renewables set to reach gross final energy consumption by 2030, Poland needs to ramp up its power generation amid increased demand.

On 24 October, the new right-wing government led by Giorgia Meloni reaffirmed its support for Ukraine. This move comes amid concerns that Italy will support Russia as two of the coalition partners Silvio Berlusconi and Matteo Salvini are known Russian sympathisers. Italy's new Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani in a tweet

on 22 October said that in his call with his Ukrainian counterpart Dmytro Kuleba he reiterated Italy's support for Ukraine's defence against the Russian invasion.

On 24 October, *The Hill* reported that US Speaker Nancy Pelosi will be meeting Ukrainian officials during a summit in Croatia later this week. Pelosi will be a part of bilateral meetings with top-level officials from Ukraine and Croatia at the First Parliamentary Summit of the International Crimea Platform. Pelosi will be speaking at the summit regarding "America's unbreakable commitment to Ukraine." Reaffirming that the US would stand with Ukraine in their fight for "freedom", Pelosi said that the US would "hold Russia accountable".

On 23 October, over 7,000 protestors gathered in the capital of Moldova for their sixth consecutive day of protests against the high gas prices, especially of those supplied by Russia. These protests are backed by the opposition parties of Moldova led by Ilan Shor and are calling for the resignation of President Maia Sandu. This comes at a time when Moldova is facing difficulties in procuring gas from Russia through Gazprom. Previously the Moldovan government reported uncertainty regarding the volume of gas that will be supplied by Gazprom as the gas giant reduced supplies by 30 per cent and pressed Moldova to pay its outstanding debt of USD 709 million.

On 22 October, Spain announced that 14 fighter jets will be sent to Bulgaria and Romania to increase NATO's eastern line of defence. With six Eurofighter jets and 130 soldiers to Bulgaria, Spain means to send these jets by mid-November and early December to train local forces. Spain will be deploying eight F18M fighter jets and 130 air force personnel to Romania between December and March 2023. These are a part of NATO's reaction and deterrence strategy and will help Spain to form an "aerial shield" by increasing its air force missions in the area.

The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 24 October, the World Bank announced

that an additional USD 500 million would be sent to Ukraine to meet its urgent spending needs. The World Bank's main lending arm, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development authorized the loan. World Bank Group President David Malpass released a statement on the issue and said: "The Russian invasion continues to cause massive destruction of Ukraine's infrastructure – including water, sanitation, and electricity networks... The new portion of financing disbursed today will be used to maintain essential government services." With this additional package, the total emergency financing sent to Ukraine is USD 13 billion, of which USD 11.4 billion has been fully disbursed.

On the same day, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director-General, Rafael Grossi confirmed that to respond to Russia's claims of Ukraine making "dirty bombs", security inspectors of IAEA would visit two locations in Ukraine. Russia had specified two institutes in Ukraine, which were allegedly making the bombs and Grossi assured that these sites were under IAEA's constant supervision and inspections. In an official statement, Grossi said, "The purpose of the safeguards visits is to detect any possible undeclared nuclear activities and material.

On 24 October, Iran's Foreign Minister, Hossein Amir-Abdollahian spoke about the claims of Iran supplying drones to Russia and said that if proved, Iran would "not remain indifferent." He said that Iran is "strongly opposed to the war" and denied the veracity of the claims. The statement comes after the EU, the UK and the US introduced sanctions against three military commanders and a defence company of Iran, in connection to the reported supply.

On 21 October, UN's Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo and the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Ukraine, Denise Brown briefed the UNSC on the current situation in Ukraine. They warned against the use of nonconventional weapons like nuclear weapons in the battlefield and highlighted the risks of the military activity around the ZNPP. Di Carlo also criticized Russia's recent

strategy of targeting civilian infrastructure like the targeting of power stations and water lines. She also urged the UN to ramp up their efforts to extend the Black Sea Grain Deal beyond November to ensure that the world's access to Russian and Ukrainian food grains. Brown spoke about the severe humanitarian impact of Russia's continuing offensive and mentioned that other than the displacement of people, Ukrainians are also having to deal with extremely traumatic and psychologically devastating conditions.

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War in Ukraine: Day 240

War on the Ground:

On 21 October, Ukraine’s Deputy Head of the President’s Office Kyrylo Tymoshenko updated the press on their efforts to liberate Kherson and Kharkiv. According to him 88 settlements in Kherson and 551 settlements in Kharkiv have been liberated. Tymoshenko also outlined the actions being taken to restore normalcy in these settlements. Along with humanitarian aid, power lines and mobile services are being restored, and roadways are being cleared. He also highlighted the number of war crimes that have been reported in Kherson to be 156 and 1685 in Kherson.

On 21 October, Intelligence Directorate of Ukraine’s Defence Ministry (GUR) reported that mines have been placed at the Kakhovska Hydroelectric Power Plant by Russia. According to the report, the agency suspects that this has been going on since April and mining efforts have ramped up recently as Ukrainian Forces are making headway in Dnipro in Kherson. The GUR stated: “During this week, the locks and pillars of the Kakhovska HPP were additionally mined. Two tented KamAZ trucks have been parked on the dam, with no drivers in them. Both cars are fully loaded with boxes of explosives.” The agency also said that if these mines were to be set off then the resulting disaster would not just affect Europe but also spill over to the entire Black Sea region.

On the same day, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and members of the House of Representatives of the U.S. Congress Mike Turner, James Himes and Eric Swalwell had a meeting. The two discussed matters related to the needs of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, increasing aid and the importance of air defence systems to protect Ukraine from Russian drones. They also discussed Ukraine’s assimilation into the larger Euro-Atlantic network and the inadmissibility of nuclear threat by Russia. Both parties also looked into furthering the sanctions placed on Russia in light of its recent attacks on key civilian infrastructure.

On 20 October, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba and Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid held talks regarding Israeli air and defence systems and technology. Kuleba in a tweet detailed his call with Lapid, where he mentioned that the latter was briefed about the destruction and devastation caused by Russian attacks using Iranian technology. He also talked to the Prime Minister in detail about Ukraine’s request for Israeli air and defence systems and asked for Israel’s support in training the Ukrainian Armed Forces to operate the technology.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 21 October, the temporary head of DPR Denis Pushilin told *TASS* that the martial law imposed by Russian President Vladimir Putin would not change the already in-place curfew rules. Martial law was introduced to increase security in the newly annexed regions. According to Pushilin, no amendments will be made to the rules as they currently do not restrict the movement of citizens outside the republic. Back in January 2022, a curfew was placed in DPR which was removed only during the weekends to allow citizens to move freely.

On the same day, DPR’s human rights commissioner Daria Morozova announced that they had sent an appeal to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the UN Human Rights Committee (UNHRC). This appeal comes after the interview of newly released Prisoners of War (POWs) from Ukraine reported that they were tortured. These POWs were a part of the exchange on 17 October when 110 Russians were released. Morozova also said that the Russian Investigative Committee and the Russian Military Prosecutor’s Office were also notified.

On 21 October, the head of the LPR mission in Russia Rodion Miroshnik expressed that any international intervention in the Kakhovka HPP will be biased and politicised. This comes after Ukraine asked the UN and EU to establish a monitoring mission in the region due to concerns about man-made disasters. Miroshnik also said that the mission should not only focus on the Russian stronghold near the region but also on the

Ukrainian stronghold where the Ukrainians have been shelling as that will also contribute to a potential disaster.

On 21 October, Russia's State Duma Committee on International Affairs reported that the Russian delegation from Rosatom and Rostekhnadoz for the international IAEA conference was not issued American visas. Speaking to *Lenta.ru* the First Deputy Chairman of the Committee Dmitry Novikoy said that this was a clear disregard for international relations and also brings into question the location of the UN headquarters. The delegation from Rosatom stated that their visas were blocked by the US and that this move made the IAEA conference lose its meaning. There will be a video message from the General Director of State Corporation Alexey Likhachev on the topic "Nuclear Energy in the XXI Century." Novikoy said that he was not surprised as there was an issue with visas for the delegation attending the UNGA also. Hence, he said that it was time to shift the headquarters to either Europe, Latin America or Asia where the US will not be able to influence decisions and strongarm member nations.

On 21 October, Russian President Vladimir Putin met with the Governor of the Magadan region Sergey Nosov who not only briefed him on the development in Magadan but also on the work of the Eastern Military District in the newly annexed regions. Nosov said that all the tasks given to them were completed and outlined the work they have done particularly in Donbas. The force has repaired key facilities to ensure heating for winter, and they have also repaired schools and kindergartens. Nosov assured that all those who have been conscripted and their families living in Magadan have been provided support.

The West View:

Responses from the US and Europe

On 21 October, the US Secretary of Defence Lloyd J. Austin III and Ukraine Minister of Defence Oleksii Reznikov spoke on matters regarding Ukraine's efforts to defend itself from Russian aggression. Austin expressed the US's continued position for the support of Ukraine. He also reiterated the support of

the international community in helping Ukraine survive the war and continue to help it build its defences.

On 21 October, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen at an EU leaders summit announced that the EU will be sending a total of EUR 18 billion to Ukraine in 2023 to cover its basic budgetary needs. The total package will be divided into EUR 1.5 billion per month and von der Leyen said that more details will be released later. This comes after the IMF estimated that Ukraine will need almost USD 4 Billion in international aid per month to ensure public services are still up.

On 21 October, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced that he will be meeting Sweden's Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson regarding the latter's bid to join NATO. This comes in the background of Finland and Sweden applying for NATO membership considering Russia's aggression towards Ukraine. Turkey had expressed doubts about the two joining the alliance as they believe that Sweden and Finland are safe havens for Kurdish Militants. When asked about this Kristersson said that both countries are ready to work with Turkey on this.

On 20 October, Bundesnetzagentur, Germany's federal network regulator released a report which highlights that gas consumption in German households last week was down 31 per cent when it was compared to the consumption during the same period in 2018-2021. The agency attributed this to people contributing to the German government's efforts to save gas considering the recent shortage due to the Russia-Ukraine war. They also have outlined that relatively hot weather in Germany has also contributed to this change in consumption.

The Global Fallouts:

Implications of the Ukraine war

On 21 October, the IMF released the report of its mission in Ukraine. The Mission Chief Gavin Gray in a statement highlighted that the IMF team conducted its mission between 17-20 October in a meeting with Ukrainian authorities in Vienna. Some of the findings

include a shrinking of Ukraine's GDP, an increase in inflation, a disruption of trade and a significant increase in Ukraine's fiscal deficit. Gray discussed these with Ukraine's Finance Minister Serhii Marchenko and Governor of the National Bank of Ukraine Andriy Pyshnyy. They also investigated new macro-financial developments, the 2023 budget, external financing, issues of the financial sector and policies that should be introduced for stabilising Ukraine's economy. The authorities are now said to ask for a Program Monitoring with Board Involvement (PMB) which will investigate the matters that were discussed and help to implement it.

On 21 October, Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr announced that they will be buying US military helicopters instead of Russian Mi-17 helicopters. The USD 215 million deal with Russia is being terminated due to fear of sanctions from the west and the Philippines is now looking into partial repayment of a down payment that was given to Russia for securing the initial deal. The US deal has matched the same price and includes further incentives such as service and maintenance for the helicopters. When the Russian ambassador to the Philippines was asked about the same, he told local outlets that they had not been informed of the same and believed that the contract was still valid.

On 21 October, Indonesia's envoy to Russia reiterated that Russia's invitation to the G20 summit will not be withdrawn despite pressure from other nations. Tavares said that the G20 summit can be an "opportunity for big economies to come together and solve the common problems we face now."

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War in Ukraine: Day 239

War on the Ground:

On 20 October, Energoatom President Petro Kotin spoke about the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant and elaborated on why it was necessary to ensure its protection. He accused Russia of trying to seek control of the plant, thus threatening a global disaster. Kotin also said that on 15 September, Russia's forces broke into the chief engineer's office and declared that Russia would control the plant. He then went on to outline why it was imperative to keep at least one power unit functional, as the steam from the unit is the only way to keep operating conditions of the equipment in optimum condition. He also mentioned that

the plant switches to diesel generators if disconnected from the power grid. However, there is a chance of a Fukushima-like disaster, if the diesel generators stop or fail.

On 20 October, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy asked the forces in the Russian occupied areas of southern and eastern Ukraine to "avoid" being recruited into the Russian army. Mentioning his meeting with the European Commissioner for Crisis Management, he added that the humanitarian needs of Ukrainians were supported by other EU member states. He requested the people to leave the temporarily occupied territories "as much as they can."

On 20 October, Zelenskyy introduced electricity saving-measures following Russia's attack on several power grids across the country. 30 per cent of the country's power stations were affected due to the drone and missile strikes, and thus, Ukraine has asked its citizens to restrict their electricity consumption drastically. On this issue, Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said that even a small saving or reduction in energy usage would be helpful for the national energy system.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 19 October, *RT* reported on Russia's President Vladimir Putin's Martial Law in Donetsk, Lugansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia Regions. With these provinces accepting to be a part of the Russian territory, Putin said that they "accepted" their bids and that the Russian law would "ratify" the law quickly. Second, Alert regimes. In another decree, Putin announced a "medium action level" in other regions of Russia, including the Crimean Republic, Sevastopol, Krasnodar, etc. The regime gives officials in the region extra authority to assure security and react immediately in case of emergencies, with the additional four regions having a "maximum" level of authority. Third, Government coordination. Putin directed the federal government to formalize a special coordination centre to address wider aspects of the Ukraine crisis, starting from weapon system repairs to the provision of medical treatment to injured persons. He

said that Russia would assist the officials in handling new tasks and powers. Fourth, support of mobilized reservists. Among a set of directives given to the Defence Ministry, Putin mentioned the need to ensure that individuals enrolled in active military service under the partial mobilization decree are to be paid their dues. Setting a minimum monthly wage of 195,000 rubles, Putin added that he's "reacting" to cases of postponement of wages being paid, and stressed providing the military "what it needs to do its job properly." On the same, presidential spokesperson Dmitry Peskov clarified Vladimir Putin's stance on the introduction of martial law in the four former Ukrainian regions. He said that Russia was not planning to close the borders.

On 20 October, Kherson's Deputy Governor, Kirill Stremousov said that the relocation of civilians in the area was under control. He described the process as organized and was progressing as per plan and hailed the martial rule initiated by Putin as a measure that would further ensure the safety of civilians.

On 20 October, the Russian Military of Defence used a tank reserve to curb their offensive in Kherson. Near the village of Sukhanovo in Kherson region, the military thwarted Ukraine's charge. A representative of the department made known that the Ukrainian forces "fled randomly" from the front after the disruption of their offensive. Saying that Russian troops near the Sukhanovo village were "ambushed" but recovered quickly. Adding that the position of the Russian forces on the front line of defence has been "fully restored." The Ministry of Defence also reported on the "attempt" of the Armed Forces of Ukraine to cross the Stallion River in the Red Limansk direction.

On the same day, Russian First Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN Dmitry Polyansky denied the veracity of the West's claim about Iran's drone exports to Russia. He said that this was a disinformation campaign to target both Iran and Russia with the same narrative.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 20 October, US federal prosecutors in Brooklyn charged five Russian nationals for evading sanctions imposed against them and shipping military technologies bought in the US to buyers in Russia. A federal prosecutor in Brooklyn, Breon Peace commented on the development and said, "We will continue to investigate, disrupt and prosecute those who fuel Russia's brutal war in Ukraine, evade sanctions and perpetuate the shadowy economy of transnational money laundering". Of the five Russian nationals, Yury Orekhov and Svetlana Kuzurgasheva had purchased semiconductors, radars and satellites, and had used a German company to ship the military technology.

On the same day, German newspaper *Bild* reported that Germany's President Frank-Walter Steinmeier had cancelled his trip to Kyiv to meet President Zelenskyy, due to the recent escalation in missile and drone attacks on the capital. While the strategically important trip had been planned for months, Steinmeier's security authorities have advised against the trip. A presidential spokesperson said that the trip had been important for both sides, and for now a phone call has been arranged for the two presidents.

On 20 October, Lithuania's Education, Science and Sports Ministry allocated funds for Ukrainian athletes who had moved to Lithuania. EUR 81,500 will be distributed to the athletes via the corresponding sporting foundations of seven sports- swimming, tennis, athletics, hockey, handball, bodybuilding and Kyokushin karate.

On 21 October, *BBC* reported on Defence Secretary Ben Wallace's comments on a "potentially dangerous" incident of Russia deploying a missile from their aircraft near an unarmed RAF plane over the Black Sea. He alleged that Russia was not beyond using the "wrong calculations" and posing an attack, and that this incident should serve as a reminder of how volatile it can be when "...you choose to use your fighters in the manner that the Russians have done." However, Wallace said that this was not being viewed as a "deliberate escalation" by

the UK. Russia said that the incident had occurred due to technical malfunction.

On 20 October, *The Washington Post* reported on the US government examining the damages caused by Iran-made drones that have been shot down in Ukraine. The objective is to better understand the drone's structure and technology that would help the US and Ukraine identify the level of threat from these drones. It is however unclear how the US accessed the drone wreckage. Earlier, on the same lines Estonia's Defence Minister Hanno Pevkur said: "We all have to understand that we all have to put our efforts to that. To understand how it works, and to understand how to take it down... Because it's not only the question of Ukraine at war at the moment, but it's a question of all of us who are in the situation where we are."

On 19 October, EU leaders and social partners met at the tripartite social summit. They primarily discussed the cost of living crisis and the energy crisis that is affecting the EU. They also spoke about the impact of the Ukraine war. Europe Council President Charles Michel said that while the EU has taken some measure, more needs to be done soon, for the EU to avoid severe crisis. Europe Commission President Ursula von der Leyen spoke about the initiatives put forward by the Commission to help alleviate the pressure on the economy, but urged everyone to be "on board." The General Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) Luca Visentini called for energy price caps and a windfall tax on excess profits for emergency payments.

The Global Fallout: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 20 October, *Euronews* reported that Madagascar's president had fired his Foreign Affairs Minister for his vote at the UN General assembly against Russia's referendums. Minister Richard Randriamandrato had voted in favour of not recognising the occupied regions of Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, DPR AND LPR as parts of Russia. However, this was not aligned with Madagascar's official neutral stance. Thus, Randriamandrato was fired for voting in favour.

On 20 October, India's government issued an advisory to its citizens in Ukraine. Announced through the Indian embassy in Kyiv, the advisory referred to the worsening security conditions in Ukraine and urged citizens and students to leave the country at the earliest.

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War in Ukraine: Day 238

War on the Ground:

On 19 October, Ukraine's General Staff of the Armed Forces reported in a *Facebook* post that Russia was trying to suppress the Defence Forces in all directions while holding on to the temporarily occupied regions in Ukraine. The report also said that the Defence Forces Unit had struck down 10 of the 14 Iranian-made Shahed-136 suicide drones. Russia is also trying to hide the logistics of military equipment and personnel. They had blocked mobile and internet operators from working as a measure to hide their movement in the Kherson region. Russian troops had also destroyed Ukrainian heritage sites, robbed museums, and burned their books and literature printed in Russian. Russia still has the support of Belarus and it helps launch Russia's missiles from its territory.

On 19 October, Ukraine's Cabinet Ministers approved the procedure to send the soldiers fighting in the war to foreign countries for treatment. People from the defence and security forces will be given treatment in foreign countries if they fulfil mandatory conditions like a referral for treatment abroad and a notification from the Emergency Response Coordination Center of the European Commission. The transportation of said soldiers to the hospitals abroad will be organized by the Health Ministry with the assistance of the Defence Ministry, the Internal Affairs Ministry, the Administration of the State Border Service and the Foreign Affairs Ministry.

On 19 October, according to Melitopol's Mayor Ivan Fedorov, Russia was forcing the residents of the Kherson region to flee to their country with a promise of money and housing. The reason for the forcible deportation was that Russia wanted the residents to be protected from enemies. However, Fedorov thinks that Russia is seeking to make Kherson its outpost in the south of Ukraine.

On the same day, the National Republican Army sent evidence of hacking important information from Russia's defence and intelligence contractors. The NRA had breached important files of Technoserv, which Russia uses as a defence consultancy service. The bank that Technoserv own, Promsvyazbank, was also the victim of the hacking. According to the UK government intelligence, 70 per cent of the state contracts signed by Russia's Defence Ministry are serviced by Promsvyazbank. The hackers had sent 1.2 terabytes of documents, files, and screenshots to *Kyiv Post* and had left a note to Technoserv informing them of hacking their servers. The NRA is opposed to Russia's President Vladimir Putin and is trying to stand against the ruling regime.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 19 October, *RT* reported that Putin issued a decree to imposing martial law on the four occupied regions, Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia. The martial law will be put into effect from midnight of 20 October. The decree orders the Russian government to submit action plans for these regions within three days and a three-level security across Ukraine and Russia. First, he also signed a decree ordering a "mid-level response" state in other Russian-occupied parts such as the Crimean Republic, the city of Sevastopol, Krasnodar, Belgorod, Bryansk, Voronezh, Kursk and Rostov regions. Second, a "heightened readiness," in the central, southern parts of Russia, where a tight search on vehicles and public order will be carried out. Third, the last level of security will be applied in the northern Russia, Serbia, and its far-east.

On 19 October, *TASS* reported that the attack on Kakhovskaya hydroelectric power station may be fatal to the Kherson region as it will be subject to flooding from the Dnieper River. The residents were asked to evacuate from the right side to the left side for safety due to the flood warning.

On 19 October, Russia's President Vladimir Putin held a virtual meeting of the Security Council of the Russian Federation. Putin

discussed the recent referendums and problems faced by Russia during the special operation in Ukraine. Through the presidential decree a special coordination council was set up under the head of the cabinet of ministers, which will ensure close interaction with every district in the country. He also addressed the issue on payment of monetary allowance by announcing 195,000 rubles per month to those recruited under the partial mobilization. In the council meeting they also discussed on ways to improve the State Migration Policy.

On 10 October, Russian oil company Rosneft expanded its tanker chartering business ahead of the EU sanctions on Russia's oil export. The EU had placed sanctions on Russian oil tankers, which will make Russia redirect 25 per cent of its oil exports to new markets. Rosneft will deliver the oil export before the embargo comes into effect. The Russian oil company had used the free-on-board (FOB) scheme in oil sales that lets the buyer bear the costs of charter tankers, freight, insurance and delivery. Rosneft through the charter tankers, will help customers who are not subject to the sanctions in handling freight and shipping. Rosneft offering charter tankers will help customers who are inexperienced with handling freight and shipping.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 19 October, Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said that his country could become a hub for gas to Europe through supplying Russian gas. Putin had said that he would make Turkey a hub for natural gas by redirecting the fossil fuel supplied through Nord Stream pipelines to the TurkStream pipeline. The pipeline aims to supply gas to the European states through the Thrace region bordering Greece and will also provide service to Serbia and Hungary. Erdogan said that Turkey could become a relief factor to Europe's energy crisis following the gas leaks in Nord Stream pipelines.

On 19 October, in an address at the European Parliament, the European Commission's President, Ursula von der Leyen, accused Russia for committing war

crimes through attacks on civilian infrastructure aimed at cutting water and power supplies to the region. She called the attack an “Act of Pure Terror”.

On 19 October, the UK government’s intelligence in its daily update reported on how the change in Russian military’s leadership did not benefit the Russians and has resulted in more confusion within the army. The shortage of capable leaders in the country, as most died. It has caused disruption within the army and has weakened its strength. Consecutive defeats in the battlefield and weakening of leadership has reduced the morale of the Russian troops. The troops also lack coordination among them in many areas.

On 19 October, the EU agreed to impose a new set of sanctions on Iran, especially its generals and officials, for providing Russia with Iranian-made Shahed-136 drones. These suicidal drones were used in the recent attack on Kyiv by Russia. The sanctions were imposed on Shahed Aviation Industries, the company that manufactures the drone, along with Maj Gen Mohammad Hossein bagheri, who is significant in Iran’s defence cooperation with Russia, Gen Sayed Hojatollah Qureishi, head of Iran’s supply and research at its Defence Ministry, Brig Gen Saeed Aghajani, the commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps aerospace for UAV command, in the form of travel bans and freezing of assets.

The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 18 October, *Reuters* reported on India and Russia’s joint venture BrahMos Aerospace which aims to make USD five billion by 2025. It signed its first deal with the Philippines for USD 375 million in 2022. The joint venture includes Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam for further weaponry export orders. India owns 50.5 per cent, while Russia holds 49.5 per cent of the partnership, complying with India’s Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s make-in-India programme. The joint venture looks to provide funds for Russia amidst the ongoing war.

On 18 October, UAE’s President Sheikh

Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan announced to allocate of USD 100 million as humanitarian assistance to Ukraine. UAE has provided a series of aid to war-torn Ukraine after the UN appeal and the regional refugee response plan with an aim to support Ukraine.

On 19 October, *DOHANEWS* reported that Qatar’s Energy Minister and Qatar Energy CEO Saad Sherida Al Kaabi cautioned that the energy crisis of Europe would last till 2025. He said that Russia’s gas and oil contributed to Europe’s energy storage significantly and that it would suffer once that supply finished off. Qatar could only fill 10 to 15 per cent of Europe’s gas storage in the future.. According to him, Europe should look at cleaner fossil fuels as a long-term solution, as renewable sources may take longer duration and it would be impossible for Europe to fully phase out of Russian gas. On 19 October, Israel offered to aid the Ukrainians in developing civilian air attack alerts. Israel will help Ukraine in countering Iranian-made drones used by Russia. However, Ukraine had asked for defence systems to destroy the incoming kamikaze Shahed-136 drone. Israel has been reluctant to help Ukraine, although they had condemned Russia for invading it. Israel wanted to give an early warning system that sets off sirens or mobile phone alerts to warn people to seek protection via a radar network. Israel said that it would help Ukraine with humanitarian aid and not with military aid because it wanted relations with Russia for its help in Syria.

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War in Ukraine: Day 237

War on the Ground:

On 18 October, Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko reported on the casualties of the Russian attacks on Kyiv, where three people who worked at the energy facility were killed. The attack was launched by Russia targeting the power supply facility.

On 18 October, the Ukrainian government issued a nationwide warning regarding outages of water, electricity and food. This came after the Russians launched attacks on key energy infrastructure in the regions of Kyiv, Kharkiv, Mykolaiv, Dnipro and Zhytomyr resulting in blackouts except for Mykolaiv, the other regions face power outages. Ukraine's President Volodymyr

Zelenskyy in a tweet said that "Since October 10, 30 per cent of Ukraine's power stations have been destroyed, causing massive blackouts across the country." These blackouts have forced hospitals to run on backup generators and the supply of drinking was halted. DETK the energy company told the press that they are "...doing their best to restore electricity supply after the destruction of a critical infrastructure facility in Kyiv city."

On 18 October, Ukraine's Air Force Command gave an update regarding the counterstrike on Russian ariel attacks. The Air Force of the Armed Forces of Ukraine reportedly shot down a SU-25, six Shahed-136 kamikaze drones, a Kh-101/X-555 cruise missile and five Kalibr cruise missiles. This was carried out by the Air Command of South and the Air Command of East of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

On 18 October, the National Resistance Center with Ukraine's Special Operations Forces accused Iran of helping Russia launch drones which hit key energy infrastructure in Ukraine. According to the National Resistance Center, Russia is launching kamikaze drones from the regions of Kherson and Crimea. In these bases around 20 Iranian instructors were spotted by the Ukrainian Guerrilla assets who are said to have delivered the drones to the Russians.

On the same day, the SBU Security Service of Ukraine released reports about how Russia is using convicts as cannon fodder and putting them on the frontlines to survey the land. Talking about an interrogation with a Russian Prisoners of war (POW) who is one such convict, the SBU tells us how the convict has only been fighting for two days. They are recruited by promising that their criminal records will be wiped out and that they will fight alongside the soldiers. Promises were made that they would be trained by the military but would not be sent to the front lines of the war. According to the convict, this was not the case as they were often sent as scouts and headfirst into Ukrainian territory.

On 18 October, Zelenskyy in a video address ensured Ukrainians that all PoWs will return home. This comes as 108 women POWs were

brought back home after a successful exchange. This was an all-women POW exchange and ensured that many such would follow. He thanked the exchange team and all those who donated to the exchange fund which will make sure that enemy soldiers are captured. This will help by acting as leverage and ensuring the return of all Ukrainian POWs.

On 17 October, Ukraine's Infrastructure Ministry reported that five ships have left from the Odesa port. Carrying 122,300 tons of agricultural goods, the ships have left to Africa, Asia and Europe as a part of the Black Sea Grain Initiative.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 18 October, *TASS* reported that the death toll due to the Su-34 accident in Yesek had risen to 14. The accident occurred on 17 October when a Su-34 crashed into a residential building when one of its engines caught fire. An investigation is on and for now, the accident is classified under breach of flight rules and flight preparations. The pilots and the tarmac staff are being questioned regarding the same.

On the same day, the city administration of Novaya Kakhovka located in the Kherson region reported fatalities due to Ukrainian armed forces' continued shelling. The authorities reported that two people were killed and one wounded when a rocket hit the Energy Stadium. A transformer was also hit at the same time leading to an oil leak.

On 18 October, the Russian Ambassador to Germany Sergey Nechaev talked about how the sanctions placed by the EU are backfiring. In an interview with *TASS*, Nechaev talked about how with each new set of sanctions people of the allied countries are facing a greater risk of increase in fuel prices, cost of living crisis and inflation. Nechaev said that "the facts show that the European Union continues experiments on the population of its own member countries."

On 18 October, Russian Defence Ministry spokesman Lieutenant-General Igor Konashenkov briefed the press about the

Russian Armed Force's precision attacks in Ukraine. According to him, the strikes hit all the designated military commands, energy infrastructure and foreign weapons stock. He also reported that the forces were able to stop the Ukrainian army from crossing the Zherebets River in the Krasny Liman area. They were also able to stop Ukrainian forces from breaking the defence line in Bruskinskoye in the Kherson region.

On 18 October, a programme was launched in the Zaporizhzhia region which looked at flashing Ukrainian drones. Launched by the "We are together with Russia" movement it was proposed to the Russian Army who accepted it. The leader of the movement said that the drones "...will no longer be harmful, but for the benefit of us to work, that is, these drones will fly back, in that direction."

On 18 October, *Lenta.ru* interviewed political analyst Alexander Asafov who said that Estonia's decision to classify Russia as a sponsor of terrorism is meaningless. According to him such classifications are a part of US Law and have no legal consequences outside of it. The Estonian parliament took this move in light of the Russian annexation of four Ukrainian territories. Asafov said that this move by Estonia and other Baltic nations will just push the US government to do the same.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 17 October, EU member states expressed support to impose fresh sanctions on Iran for its military aid to Russia in the Ukraine war, upon evidence. Ukrainian officials have claimed that Russia's usage of Iranian drones has increased in recent weeks, alleging links to the Shahed 136 'kamikaze' drones as well. EU has said that they are "following very closely" and that with evidence, they will react accordingly. The EU leaders meeting later are expected to agree on steps to counter the development, where sanctions on Iran would not only lead to blacklisting individuals but could move further if their involvement is proven.

On 18 October, the Chief of Germany's national cybersecurity agency has been dismissed upon possible links to Russian

intelligence. The Interior Ministry said that the Head of the Agency was accused to have damaged the “necessary confidence” of the public. Arne Schoenbohm, the founder of a cybersecurity group, when a Russian intelligence agent was found to be a member, led to the dismissal and questioned the integrity of the cyber management. Authorities said that preliminary investigations and allegations would be evaluated thoroughly and that the head had no “feedback” on the claims.

On 18 October, the EU leaders plan to stabilise runaway energy prices and short supplies and to resist their economies from falling and aggravating unrest. While trying to keep the 27 members of the EU together in their opposition towards Russian President Vladimir Putin. The EU’s executive commission is extending a blueprint that would accommodate the gap between proponents and opponents of the gas price cap.

On 18 October, Greece received the first batch of infantry fighting vehicles known as “Marder” from Germany as a part of a swap deal, in return for 40 Soviet-designed tanks to Ukraine. Delivering six of the 40 armoured vehicles, Germany is set to receive 14 more by 21 October. The arms deal swap is helpful to Greece in terms of recognising the equipment and would lead to the modernization of the Greek military. Germany confirmed that the tanks would not be stationed in the Greek Islands to cite violence, but is running a bid to help Greece establish a more progressive military establishment.

On 18 October, the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC) Executive Council announced that Russia and Belarus can participate in the ANOC General Assembly. The Council said that as the two nations are still a part of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) NOCs they are eligible to attend the General Assembly. The IOC has only barred the athletes from the two countries but has not removed or sanctioned the officials of Russia and Belarus. Following this announcement, Latvia Olympic Committee said that they would not be participating if the officials

from the two countries attended. This was followed by NOCs of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Norway and Sweden writing a letter to the ANOC asking them to re-evaluate the presence of Russia and Belarus in the General Assembly.

The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 18 October, *Reuters* reported on Iran’s consent to supply Russia with surface-to-surface missiles and more drones. The information was traced from two senior Iranian officials and diplomats who said that an agreement was signed between the two countries on 06 October. The armaments include the Fateh-110 and Zolfaghar missiles and the Shahed-136 missiles. When the diplomat was asked about the allegations of the West regarding a breach of the 2015 UN agreement the diplomat denied it. It is not the seller’s issue on where it is being used and asserted that they do not take sides and want the conflict to end through diplomatic means.

On the same day, *Reuters* also reported about the growing voices of Central Asia against Russia. This was seen in a recent summit in Khazaksitan where Putin was subject to a critical speech by Tajikistan President Emomali Rakhmon who demanded respect for the nation. According to political analyst Rustam Burnahsev, the Central Asian countries are looking to have an equal partnership with Russia and urged Russia to give up its ‘older brother’ role. This was seen when a meeting between the Leaders of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan mediated by Putin to resolve a border dispute between the two was unsuccessful. Similarly, the Khazakstan President did not have a bilateral meeting with Putin despite the summit being hosted by Kazakhstan.

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War in Ukraine: Day 236

War on the Ground:

On 17 October, Kyiv Post reported on Russian attacks on Ukraine with Iran-manufactured kamikaze drones, hitting homes, businesses, and national power grid infrastructure in Kyiv. The strikes caused a series of fires and firefighters were deployed to rescue victims. On the same, Ukrinform reported on death of a woman as a result of a building collapse.

On 17 October, Ukraine’s Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal briefed the public on Russian strikes on important energy infrastructure. Shmyhal posted in Telegram that the strikes happened in Kyiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Sumy. Majority of houses in these regions were observed to be out of power. The Prime Minister urged the people in these regions to moderately consume electricity especially in the peak hours and follow the anti-response plan introduced in each region. Ukrainian air force released a report which outlines the number of Russian drones destroyed since 16 October. As per the report 37 out of 43 drones sent by Russia were destroyed.

On 16 October, President Zelenskyy commemorated the World Food Day by appreciating the Black Sea Grain Initiative and thanked it’s the collaborators, the UN and President Erdogan of turkey for facilitating the supply of Ukraine’s grains to the global market. He said that in the coming days, Ukraine will aim to expand the export further.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 17 October, a draft bill titled “A Just Russia - Patriots - For Truth,” was submitted to the lower house of the parliament. The bill deals with the abolition of the deferment from conscription for senators of the Federation Council and deputies of the State Duma. The document also outlines the categories of citizens, who would be called up first for conscription. The list includes the members of the Russian Guard, the SVR, the FSB, the military prosecutor's office, the Investigative Committee, military units of the federal fire service, rescue military formations and those people retired military servicemen who are part of the Armed

Forces reserve.

On the issue of conscription, the Mayor of Moscow, Sergey Sobyenin said that the mobilization of soldiers, had been completed in Moscow. Sobyenin expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the volunteers and those mobilized. Though he did not clarify on the nature of welfare measures, he assured the safety of the family members of the volunteers involved in helping the Ministry of Defence.

On 16 October, Russia's presidential spokesperson Dmitry Peskov alleged NATO had "de facto become involved in the Ukraine conflict." He stated that even though NATO's involvement makes Russia's task in Ukraine harder, it would not affect Russia's military goals in Ukraine. Peskov mentioned that Russia's military potential was sufficient to continue its "special military operation" and that "internal mobilization in the field of economy and other spheres," would ensure Russia's success in the long term.

On the same day, Gazprom CEO, Alexey Miller referred to the possibility of setting up a gas hub in Turkey as indicated earlier by Russia's President Vladimir Putin. He said that redirecting gas supplies stopped due to the explosions on the Nord Stream pipelines through a Turkish hub would be possible. Miller said that the groundwork for the route was already completed for the South Stream pipeline project, which was replaced by the TurkStream. On 15 October, the Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Committee on Economic Policy Mikhail Delyagin said that Turkey would have to cease the supply of Bayraktars and weapons to Ukraine.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 17 October, the UK intelligence released a video on how the Ukrainians from different background such as taxi drivers, students, and chefs are being trained from "weapon handling, urban warfare, trench warfare, importance of armed conflict, battlefield first aid, and drills needed to face the frontline." The intelligence also reported on how Russian forces have been challenged with logistical issues in Kherson from the Kerch Bridge attack. It observed that with difficulty

in Kherson, supply narrowed in Crimea, the Zaporizhzhia was becoming an important area to sustain Russian occupation.

On 17 October, the Foreign Ministers of the EU member states met in Luxembourg announced the launch of the Ukraine soldier training mission and financial aid to Ukraine. The budget to the training mission was EUR 105 million by the EU, which will include training of 15000 Ukraine soldiers for a two-year term. The Ministers also discussed on the claims against Iran supplying drones to Russia and are expected to impose measure if the claim is proved.

On the same issue, the European Council adopted measures to assist Ukraine under the European Peace Facility to support Ukraine's Armed Forces. The sixth set of aid to be given to Ukraine under the European Peace Facility (EPF) is worth EUR 500 million and will bring the total EU contribution to EUR 3.1 billion. Of the EUR 500 million, 10 million will be to cover equipment like first aid kits, personal protective equipment, and fuel while the remaining will be for weapons and ammunition.

On 16 October, Foreign Ministries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania issued a joint statement to the EU to assist Ukraine in setting up a special Tribunal. The tribunal will be tasked with trying the "crimes of aggression" and "ensure Russia's accountability for its aggression against Ukraine." They said that Russia's actions like targeting civilian infrastructure are threatening the rule-based international order and the special tribunal would complement the International Court of Justice's efforts to bring Russia's military and political leadership to trial for their actions.

On the same day, the *Wall Street Journal* released a report on economists from University of Michigan, Jefferies LLC, KPMG and other firms predict a recession for the US, since it is facing high inflation, job losses, and the contraction of the economy, which might slip into recession in the upcoming months. In July, a similar survey estimated the probability of recession at 49 per cent, but the recent survey estimated

that there was an increased chance of 63 per cent. In the first quarter of 2023, economists are expecting the GDP of the US to shrink at 0.2 per cent annual rate and at 0.1 per cent in the second quarter. This is in contrast to the July forecast of 0.8 percent and one per cent growth in the first and second quarters respectively. 58.9 per cent of the economists taking part in the survey said that Federal Reserves will raise interest to help ease the inflation, causing further weakening of the economy. Unemployment rates are expected to rise from 3.5 per cent in September to 4.3 per cent in June 2023. However, economists are of the opinion that a recession if it occurs will be a shorter one of about eight months, than the post-war average of 10.2 months.

The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 17 October, *South China Morning Post* reported that Chinese nationals residing in Ukraine were signing up for evacuation, on continuing attacks. On 15 October, China's Foreign Ministry urged its people to leave Ukraine, following which the embassy released registration forms on its WeChat account for all nationals to avail necessary assistance to exit. So far, 186 people have registered for organized evacuation.

In the China's National Development and Reform Commission, directed PetroChina, Sinopec and CNOOC Ltd. to stop selling gas to Europe and Asia and instead use it for their domestic use.

On 16 October, to commemorate the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, *UNICEF* published a study on the impact of the war in Ukraine on poverty in children. The study says that the war has pushed four million children across Eastern Europe into poverty, marking a 19 per cent increase since 2021. The study which considers data across 22 countries in the region shows that children account for 40 per cent of the total 10.4 million people that have slipped into poverty in 2022. Apart from bad quality of life due to dire financial distress, child poverty also led to increased infant mortality and school dropouts. UNICEF Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia Afshan Khan said: "Children all over the region are being swept up in this

war's terrible wake. If we don't support these children and families now, the steep rise in child poverty will almost certainly result in lost lives, lost learning, and lost futures."

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War in Ukraine: Day 234 & 235

War on the Ground:

On 15 October, Russia and Ukraine exchanged explosive missiles across the country. Close to 16 explosions near the airport in Belgorod in Russia were witnessed by the locals resulting in a fire at an electrical substation in Belgorod. On the same day, the head of the Komyshuvakha community, Yuriy Karpetian, reported on the Russian shelling of 20 settlements in the Zaporizhzhia region with cluster bombs. The bombs were dropped using parachutes which damaged critical infrastructure.

On 16 October, Ukraine’s Infrastructure Minister Oleksandr Kubrakov met with Turkey’s Defence Minister Hulusi Akar at the Joint Coordination Center (JCC) to discuss the extension of the grain deal. Turkey and Ukraine have now proposed to work on the extension of the grain deal signed on 22 July, which is about to expire in November. Kubrakov stressed increasing the pace of the ship inspection process which will allow a significant rise in grain export to Asia, Africa, and Europe without any queue. According to Kubrakov, the resumption grain corridor has stabilized food prices and in tackling food insecurity.

YASNO’s General Director Serhiy Kovalenko, a private energy industry investor in Kyiv, said that the city was safe from electricity cutoff due to the resumption of power supply. The statement comes after Russian soldiers attack one of the energy infrastructure facilities. Ukraine has urged Kyiv’s residents to limit their power consumption and cautioned of emergency blackouts after the Russian missile attack. On 15 October, Ukraine’s head of the President’s Office, Andriy Yermak, in a meeting with ICRC President, Mirjana Spoljaric Egger, discussed the ways to reach

out to the Ukrainian prisoners of war (PoWs) in Olenivka. Yermak requested Egger to send an ICRC team to the prison in Olenivka to investigate the conditions of the prisoners. Egger responded by agreeing and said that ICRC is waiting to get access to prisoners in Olenivka penal camp.

On 14 October, Ukraine’s Finance Minister Serhiy Marchenko was elected as the Governor of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund by the Board of Governors for 2023. With the new role, Marchenko will act as chair for next year’s annual meeting of both organizations.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 15 October, Russia launched a classified satellite named Kosmos-2560 from the Plesetsk Military Cosmodrome in the Arkhangelsk region in the northern part of the country. According to the Defence Ministry, the rocket is a part of the Angara family and has successfully reached the Earth’s orbit. The Angara-1.2 light launch vehicle with the spacecraft was launched successfully. The details and purpose of the satellite are yet to be disclosed by the Ministry.

On 15 October, the first batch of Russian soldiers arrived in Belarus under the new deal signed the Russian President Vladimir Putin and Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko. The Joint Force of Russia and Belarus will be deployed at the borders of Belarus with Ukraine and Lithuania as there were increased NATO activities. According to the Belarusian Defence Ministry, the main purpose of the joint forces was to protect and defend the borders of the Union State, Russia and Belarus. Ukraine and the West’s aggression also resulted in the deployment of the joint troop. The combined force will consist of 1,000 Russians and 70,000 Belarussians to fight against Ukraine in the ongoing special operations.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 14 October, Lithuania’s Ministry of National Defence announced that the presence of the US Battalion in the country will continue till 2026. Since 2019 the

Batallion has been in Lithuania as part of a NATO initiative to secure the Eastern flank of NATO. This announcement comes after the NATO defence ministers meeting in Bucharest. Lithuania will continue to provide the Host Nation Support to the forces as part of NATO requirements.

On 15 October, Elon Musk reassured that SpaceX will support the Starlink internet service in Ukraine. This comes amid the backlash he received on 14 October when he said in a tweet that he could no longer fund the programme as it was proving to be expensive. Musk has filed a request to the Pentagon for funding which according to a spokesperson is being discussed. Starlink has been a major asset for Ukraine after key communications infrastructure was destroyed by Russian attacks.

On 16 October, Latvia's Minister of Foreign Affairs Edgars Rinkēvičs in a tweet said that he would be attending the EU Foreign Affairs Council meeting in Luxembourg taking place on 17 October. The agenda is expected to be on framing the ninth sanctions package against Russia, to support Ukraine, this will include the seizure of frozen Russian state assets and setting up a special tribunal for the crime of aggression by Russia.

On the same day, Ukraine's Infrastructure Minister and Turkish Defence Minister met and discussed the implementation of the Grain Initiative and extending it beyond the initial date of 22 November. This is an initiative that was launched by the UN to transport Ukrainian Grains to the rest of the world. Turkey was the mediator and ensured the safe passage of grains and food products from Ukrainian ports.

On 16 October, *Helsingin Sanomat* published the results of a survey conducted by them on the views of the Finnish people on a possibility of a nuclear war. The results show that four in ten respondents were concerned that the current crisis in Ukraine will spill over to Finland. The worry about nuclear was mostly seen in female responders and rural responders. The survey also asked if Finland can normalize ties with Russia for which the majority said that it was impossible until Russia's

President Vladimir Putin remains in power. The survey also found that 84 per cent expressed that the nuclear threat would end only with the Russian forces leaving Ukraine and another set of people see arming Ukraine with heavier weapons as a viable option.

The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 16 October, all the OPEC+ members came together to defend the decision agreed by all members to cut production. This comes after the US accused Saudi Arabia of forcing the members of OPEC+ to agree to the steep cuts. They also accused Saudi Arabia of showing support to Russia as the cuts would boost the price of Russian oil thereby increasing their foreign income. This has been refuted by Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz who said that they took this decision keeping the stability and balance of the oil markets in mind. This was supported by fellow OPEC+ members Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, Algeria, Iraq, and UAE. The Energy Minister of the UAE also clarified that this was a unanimous decision with no political intentions whatsoever. King Salman in a meeting with the Shura Council called the claims baseless and talked about the Kingdom's role as a mediator in a Prisoner of War exchange.

On 16 October, *Washington Post* reported on Iran's supply of a series of short-range ballistic missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles in support of the Russian military. Although Iran has denied the claims, Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said that Iran will not supply any weapon that can be used in the war and that such supplies will only prolong the war.

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War in Ukraine: Day 233

War on the Ground:

On 14 October, Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in a phone call with Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman discussed on humanitarian aid. USD 400 million was announced by Saudi Arabia

after the call.

On 13 October, Ukraine’s Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba met IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi in a Kyiv bomb shelter. They discussed the agency’s progress toward establishing a nuclear safety and protection zone around the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. According to Kuleba, the ZNPP’s nuclear safety lies in quickly withdrawing Russian troops from the region and ending terrorizing the power plant’s Ukrainian employees.

On the same day, Ukraine’s Minister of Defence, Oleksii Reznikov, tweeted on Spain’s supply of four hawk air defence systems after Ramstein meetings in Brussels. Air defence has become a priority of the war and France’s President Emmanuel Macron announced that he would send radar and air defence systems to Ukraine in the future.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 14 October, *LENTA RU* reported on the Vice-President of Russia’s International Affairs Council, Yevgeny Buzhinsky, remarks. According to Buzhinsky, the special operations are expected to last in Ukraine for another six months and will continue until its goals are achieved. He said that Russia’s goals were to reach Odessa, connect with Transnistria, capture the Kharkiv region and completely take control of the Donbas region. The ultimate goal of Russia would be to get rid of the regime in Kyiv.

On 14 October, Russia’s President Vladimir Putin in his address stated that the partial mobilization that he had previously decreed was coming to an end in two weeks. He estimated that 222,000 out of 300,000 reservists were called up for military service. He said there would be no more mobilization as it might not be needed. He also added that the database with outdated registration methods was the reason for the mistakes during the military conscription calls. He promised to update the database to a modern basis and improve its quality.

On the same day, during the Central Asia summit, Putin proposed Central Asian countries to agree to Russia’s import

substitution programme to build new manufacturing and market chains and grow alternative logistical ties with Central Asian countries. He stated that Russia was open to strengthening its multi-aspect cooperation with Central Asian countries. He claimed "Russia is the leading investor in the economies of Central Asian countries," and had an increase in trade turnover by 16 per cent in the first half of 2022.

On 14 October, Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak spoke at a forum on the world's dependence on fossil fuel energy for at least five more decades. He said that the usage of fossil fuels would continue despite the transition to green energy. The transition has taken a step back due to the energy crisis, but the process is slowly occurring. He added that IAEA and leading scientists had not forecasted anything on the energy balance of the future containing only clean energy. He also said that the usage of coal, oil and gas has not decreased in recent years but has gone up due to the supply crisis.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 13 October, *Deutsche Welle* reported on the difficulty faced by the Ukrainian refugees who were trying to enter Estonia. The refugees are observed to be delayed by the Russian authorities by making them wait in horrendous conditions and thoroughly checked in the border with Estonia to detain those escaping the conscription call. Estonia's Border Guards are also monitoring strictly in the Narva border to restrict the entry of refugees. Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, Estonian Border Control has restricted at least 1,091 Ukrainians from entering their country. This is due to Estonia's fears over public order and national security.

On 14 October, the US proposed to provide weapons and military vehicles as a part of a new security assistance package worth USD 725 million. The package includes high-speed anti-radiation missiles (HARMS), precision-guided artillery and medical supply. The package was the first aid by the US since the recent civilian attacks by Russia.

On 14 October, *Ukrinform* reported that the Netherlands' Minister of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation tweeted about the country's aid to Ukraine. She said the Netherlands would provide EUR 70 million for heating in the winter season. Defence Minister Kajsa Ollongren said that the Netherlands would send anti-aircraft missiles worth 15 million to Ukraine as military aid.

The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 14 October, the East Mediterranean countries, Cyprus and Egypt, announced their readiness to help the EU after Russia disrupted Europe's oil and gas supply. The East Mediterranean region has a high potential for the extraction of gas and hydrogen. Egypt can export liquefied gas that is being sent from Israel to Europe. The Mediterranean region being a hub of hydrogen fuel, can also help the EU relieve the energy crunch through the extraction of renewable energy by Egypt and Cyprus.

On 14 October, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was frustrated by Russia for not letting them see the prisoner-of-war camp in Olenivka prison. It specified Russia by name but said it had rights to access prisoners of war according to the Geneva conventions. The Russian-controlled prison was attacked in July, killing 53 Ukrainian prisoners of war, including some Azovtol fighters. Zelenskyy called out to Russia to let ICRC enter Olenivka prison and claimed that Russia was allegedly trying to cover up the torture and murder of Ukrainian prisoners of war.

On 14 October, International Monetary Fund (IMF) called out to Russia to stop the war. It said the war is driving inflation and slowing the global economy. The conflict has caused energy crises, food insecurity, cost of living, and financial instability.

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War in Ukraine: Day 232

War on the Ground:

On 13 October, the Prime Minister of Ukraine, Dennis Shmyhal announced that Ukraine has received additional emergency financing from the IMF. He said that the funds would finance the budget’s priority needs like strengthening defence capabilities, paying governmental pensions, supplementing social welfare programs, and supporting the economy. So far, the IMF has given USD 2.7 billion since the beginning of the war and will also start a new special program in collaboration with the Ukraine government in 2023.

On 13 October the escalation of Russia’s aggression in sporadic parts of Ukraine continued. A drone attack again hit Kyiv. The chief of the regional military administration, Oleksiy Kuleba reported that the drones

were Iran-made Shahed 136 drones, and hit critical civilian infrastructure in Kyiv. Residential buildings in Mykolaiv were shelled and missiles hit military targets in Lviv. The Mayor of Lviv, Andriy Sadovyy said that Ukrainians should reconcile with not having electricity, central heating, and running water because of the recent Russian strikes.

Also on the same day, *Kyiv Post* reported on Ukraine’s recent counteroffensive efforts and West support for the same. Ukraine reclaimed more territory in the country’s south and President Zelenskyy said that the pledge by the US, the UK, and other G7 countries will contribute to the success of Ukraine’s troops in the region. He welcomed their decision to supply more air defence systems and said that for Europe protecting the sky was “one of the most important humanitarian tasks for Europe.”

On 12 October, *Kyiv Post* reported that Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba’s Africa tour was cut short because of the escalation of aggression by Russia, on 10 October. Referring to his tour, Kuleba said that while his trip was fruitful, Ukraine cannot meet their expectation of weapons supply as Ukraine’s armed forces are using all their stock for their war efforts against Russia. He also highlighted that while African nations thought positively of Ukraine, there was considerable fear of Russia too, which made the necessity of dialogue important. He also said: “I urge Africa not to stay neutral. Neutrality will only encourage Russia to continue its aggression and malign activities across the world, including in Africa.”

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 13 October, the Kherson region’s acting Governor, Vladimir Saldo, requested Russia to help evacuate the residents to other regions as the region has been under constant attacks. The shelling of civilian infrastructure has increased for the past few weeks. Saldo said that Kherson, Novaya Kakhovka, Holaya Pristan, and Chernobaevka are shelled every day, causing critical damage to the residents. He requested Russia’s President Vladimir Putin to organize a safer way for the residents to

migrate to the regions of Crimea, Rostov, Krasnodar and Stavropol to escape the rocket attacks by Ukraine's military.

On 12 October, Putin said at the Russian Energy Week Forum in Moscow that the US benefits more from sabotaging the Nord Stream pipelines than any other country. He added, "One can now force the liquefied natural gas from the US onto European countries on a much larger scale." He believes that the US thrive on instability and conflict. The US is also looking to remove cheap Russian oil and gas as a rival to its expensive ones in the European market.

On October 14, Russia banned the entry of Montenegro's Foreign Minister Ranko Krivokapic, Defence Minister Rasko Konjevic and former National Security Agency Chief Savo Kentere. The Russian Foreign Ministry notified Montenegro's embassy in Moscow about the ban stating that it was to retaliate to its adverse action of declaring Russian embassy diplomats in Podgorica as unwelcoming and unacceptable people. Six Russian diplomats were declared as *personae non-gratae* by Montenegro's Foreign Affairs Ministry on 28 September 2022.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 13 October, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said announced that NATO will be holding its "Steadfast Noon" exercise in the coming week. This exercise involves fighter jets that carry nuclear warheads but no live bombs. However, on the issue of nuclear warheads, he said that Putin will be "crossing a very important line" if he ordered the usage of nuclear weapons in Ukraine. According to Stoltenberg, in case Russia launches a nuclear attack, it would have consequences of "fundamentally changing the nature of the conflict." On the issue of Russia's upcoming military exercise, he warned that NATO will be monitoring it closely. On 12 October, on the issue of providing more support to Ukraine at the NATO Defence Ministers' meeting, Stoltenberg reiterated that NATO needs to help Ukraine more and thus ramp up the support from its allies.

Also on 13 October, the UK said that it will provide Ukraine with new air defence missiles. UK's secretary of State, Ben Wallace said that the new supply is in response to Russia's "indiscriminate strikes on civilian areas" in Ukraine." Thus, AMRAAM anti-aircraft missiles will be sent. Along with the US NASAMS surface-to-air missile systems, UK's support will strengthen Ukraine's ability to defend its skies.

On 12 October, on the same issue, France said that it would deliver air defence systems to Ukraine to protect itself from Russian drone attacks. However, the number or type of missiles to be delivered has not been revealed yet. Regarding the issue, President Emmanuel Macron also said that this new delivery should assist Ukraine's war efforts even though France cannot deliver as many weapons as Ukraine wants, as it also has to boost NATO's eastern flank by sending more tanks to Romania, Rafale fighter jets to Lithuania and infantry to Estonia.

Global Fallout: Implications of war in Ukraine

On 14 October, the UN General Assembly convened to vote to condemn Russia's attempt to annex the Luhansk and Donetsk People's Republic, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions of Ukraine. An overwhelming vote by 143 countries to condemn Russia for trying to annex the four regions was seen in the UNGA. India, China and 33 other countries abstained from voting. Russia, Belarus, North Korea, Syria and Nicaragua rejected the vote. The overwhelming vote against Russia has been the first since the start of the war. The resolution urged the international community not to recognize the Russian annexation and demanded Russia reverse the illegal referendums immediately. Many states from Asia and Africa, including India, China, Ethiopia and Uganda, had abstained from voting. Ukraine demanded that Russia return all the land that it had occupied.

On 13 October, Palestine's President Mahmoud Abbas met with Russia's President Vladimir Putin at the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) in Kazakhstan. Abbas had said to Putin that Palestine does

not trust the US in resolving their conflict with Israel as they both have closer relations. He thanked Putin for Russia's role in mediating the conflict between Palestine and Israel. Out of the four mediators, the US, the UN, the EU and Russia, Abbas said that the US is the only party Palestine won't trust or accept in any situation. This comes amid the ongoing war in Ukraine.

Chinese envoys to the UN criticized the organization's action for conducting the emergency session calling it "bloc politics". According to China, the emergency special session, for voting to condemn Russia in an attempt to annex the four Ukrainian regions it had occupied, was "irresponsible and dangerous" and displays a cold war mentality. China abstained from voting, stating it would only create more divisions and further confrontation. It will steer away from the path of peace.

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War in Ukraine: Day 231

War on the Ground:

On 12 October, the report of Ukraine's General Staff of the Armed Forces on *Telegram* Ukraine launched strong counter-offensives to Russia in Bakhmut and Avdiiv directions. Although Russia was attacking with one ballistic and 28-wing missiles, Ukraine struck down 20 of them using air defence systems. Ukraine also condemned Russia for destroying civilian infrastructures and violating International Humanitarian law. The report also mentioned that Belarus had supplied Russia with 20 T-72 tanks and repairing the military equipment of Russia. The shortage of doctors in the temporarily occupied region of Luhansk was also highlighted in the report.

On the same day, Ukraine's Finance Minister Serhiy Marchenko met with the US Finance Minister during the IMF and the World Bank Annual Meeting. They discussed additional financial assistance to Ukraine, and the imposition of stricter sanctions on Russia through energy price cap. He thanked the US for being the highest provider of financial assistance of USD 8.5 billion. The fund is used to stabilize the economy and protect state spending, such as payment of salaries, pensions, and social benefits during wartime.

On 12 October, Ukraine's Defence Minister Oleksii Reznikov tweeted that Ukraine had received IRIS-T air defence systems from Germany. He also added that Ukraine is expecting the US-Norwegian NASAMS air defence system.

On 12 October, Ukraine's Security Service (SBU) discovered another torture chamber in the Donetsk region. Tools used for torture and sharp instruments were found in the chamber. An official investigation about the chamber has been launched by the SBU, who are trying to identify the victims of the chamber and the Russians involved in torture. The chamber was similar to the ones used by Russian soldiers that have been found in other parts of Ukraine.

On 12 October, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy requested that the UN Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization add Odessa as a world heritage site. He urged UNESCO to remove Russia from the chair as it is an aggressive state that attacked Ukraine. He called Russia "...an enemy of culture, an enemy of history, an enemy of education, an enemy of science." According to him, the port city of Odessa is one of the most significant cities in Ukraine and has a rich history behind it.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 12 October, Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) accused Ukraine's Defence Ministry's Main Intelligence Directorate (GUR) of being responsible for the explosion of the Kerch Bridge. FSB alleged that Commander Kirill Budanov was the mastermind of the attack. The agency suspects 12 accomplices for the attack, out of which eight were arrested. Those who were arrested were Russians, Ukrainians, and Armenians.

On 12 October, the head of the local military-civilian administration, Vladimir Rogov spoke about the power supply to the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP). The ZNPP has been disconnected from the external power supply twice in five days, but the supply has since been restored. Rogov mentioned that before the restoration of power, the plant had to be sustained by temporary diesel generators for less than an hour.

On 12 October, the Press Secretary of Russia's President Vladimir Putin, Dmitry Peskov, confirmed that there was no new wave of mobilization. The comment came as a clarification to the announcements made

on 11 October by the governor of the Rostov region, Vasily Golubev claiming that his region had received a new mobilization call. In this regard, Peskov said that Russia will require to clarify "with each specific governor what they have in mind," to prevent the spreading of such misinformation.

On 12 October, the Russian oil company Zarubezhneft said that a complete temporary shutdown of fuel production was possible after the sanctions imposed by the EU come into effect on 05 December. The head of the company, Sergei Kudryashov said that the state oil company will thus face critical challenges due to the sanctions, but assured that he had a plan to restore production within two weeks. On a similar note, Russia's Deputy Finance Minister Alexei Sazanov said that he expects a five per cent reduction in oil production in Russia in 2023 due to European embargos. Sazanov also mentioned that due to the sanctions, Russia's oil industry will face considerable logistical difficulties,

On 12 October, in an address at a Russian Energy Week conference in Moscow, Putin said that Russia plans to create a natural gas hub by redirecting the gas flow to the Black Sea instead of the Nord Stream pipelines. Putin also mentioned that Russia would be able to repair the damaged pipelines in the Baltic Sea. Plans to transform Turkey into the largest gas hub in Europe was also floated by Putin. He added that there are no economic benefits to repairing the Nord Stream pipelines for Russia unless Europe lowers the sanctions and cooperates with them.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 12 October, through its automated detection systems, the Polish pipeline operator PERN reported a leak in one line of the Druzhba pipeline, which carries oil from Russia to Europe. The leak was located around 70 kilometers from Plock, in Poland, and was on the main route transporting crude oil to Germany. While the causes of the leak are still being investigated, Poland's Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki said that it was too early to ascertain whether the

leak was accidental damage or was caused by sabotage.

On the same day, at the NATO headquarters in Brussels, US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin expressed his confidence in Ukraine being able to battle through the upcoming winter months. Austin said that with the assistance of additional air defence systems and international aid, Ukraine should be adequately equipped to carry on its counteroffensive. He mentioned that around 50 countries had pledged military support to Ukraine and that the US would also do “everything it can throughout the winter” to help Ukraine regain territories under Russia’s control.

Russia’s offensive through missile attacks on Ukraine and the leaks in the Nord Stream pipeline has increased Finland’s concerns about the spillover effect of the war. Due to such developments, Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto confirmed that Finland would receive support from its NATO partners in case of a direct threat by Russia. Even though Finland does not yet fall under the jurisdiction of NATO’s Article 5 enshrining the principle of collective defence, NATO Chief Jens Stoltenberg also reiterated NATO’s mission to strengthen the critical infrastructure of its allies.

On 12 October, Turkey’s Energy and Natural Resources Minister Fatih Donmez said that Turkey was prepared to play an important role in the global transportation of energy. He mentioned that Turkey is a major player in its neighborhood when it comes to the transportation of energy resources, as the Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline (TANAP), the Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) and the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum pipelines have remained functional due to Turkey’s efforts. Donmez also said: “Considering Türkiye’s success in international energy projects, its reliability as an energy partner, and its advanced natural gas infrastructure, our country can play critical roles in the delivery of natural gas from neighboring countries to markets in the West, as well as in the future.”

The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 12 October, *WAM* reported on the meeting between UAE President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Russia’s President Vladimir Putin in St. Petersburg. The two discussed the present Russia-Ukraine conflict and the importance of talks between the two. Putin informed the Sheikh of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant condition and Russia’s efforts to secure it. He also expressed his gratitude to the UAE for its role in the prisoner exchange between Russia and Ukraine. The Sheikh on his part spoke about Ukraine’s view on a number of issues and asked Putin to keep a dialogue open with Kyiv.

On 12 October, *The Korea Times* reported that five yachts carrying 23 Russians fleeing from the partial mobilization were denied entry into South Korea. Two Russians were admitted into the country, while the rest were denied due to no clarity on the purpose of their visit. South Korea is turning down Russian refugees from entering their country.

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War in Ukraine: Day 230

War on the Ground:

On 11 October, President Zelenskyy addressed the G7 members in a virtual meeting. He said it was impossible to negotiate with Russia unless they toughen their sanctions. Zelenskyy also met with the Staff of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief to discuss information about the situation on the front and the next steps regarding the de-occupation of territories under Russia's control. The Minister of Internal Affairs, Denys Monastyrskyi, reported on the recent missile strikes by Russia and spoke about the mitigation of the destruction and protection of critical infrastructure facilities.

On 11 October, Russia launched missiles and drones with munitions at Ukraine again, following the recent attacks in Kyiv and 12 other regions on 10 October. Russia's recent attacks resulted in air raid across the country. Government officials requested everyone to store water and energy as it was apprehended that power and water lines might be affected by the missiles.

The Main Directorate of Intelligence of Ukraine's Defence Ministry informed that Russia had been preparing for the massive missile strikes on Ukraine's civilian infrastructure since the beginning of October. Thus, seven Tu-160 strategic bombers were transferred from Olenya airfield and equipped with Kh-101 missiles. Additionally, six cruise missiles with 40 Kalibr missiles were deployed to Sevastopol. The Directorate alleged that the main aim of Russia was to destroy the thermal power plant there.

Ukraine and Russia successfully negotiated the transfer of the bodies of 62 Ukrainian soldiers. Most of these soldiers were killed in the Olenivka prison, where many Ukrainian prisoners of war had been detained. Both Ukraine and Russia have accused the other of shelling the facility, but Ukraine has denied targeting civilian infrastructure or prisoners of war.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 11 October, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov addressed the recent missile attacks in Ukraine. He stated that the initial goals of the special military operation in Ukraine had not changed. Speaking to *Rosaya-1*, Lavrov criticized Ukraine for not granting citizens identifying as Russian the right to do so. He said: “It should not be a country that's allowed everything, and whose impunity crosses all boundaries and leads to murders of journalists, political figures, and deputies of the Verkhovnaya Rada.”

On 11 October, President Putin signed a decree extending 2014 anti-sanctions involving a food embargo. In 2014, Putin signed a decree banning food imports from the US, the EU, Norway, Australia, and Canada. Because of the ban, meat and dairy products, fish, vegetables, and fruits from these countries were restricted from entering Russia. In 2015, the ban was extended to Albania, Montenegro, Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Ukraine. Now, as per the signed decree, the ban has been extended till 31 December 2023, to “ensure the security” of Russia.

On 10 October, Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Marat Khusnullin gave an official update about the repair efforts on the Kerch Bridge. He said that a pillar and the rail track of the bridge has been destroyed by the explosion and will require repair. However, he assured that the damages do not pose any threat to vehicles using the bridge. Sergey Aksyonov had said that the damaged pillars are expected to be repaired by the end of this week, even though earlier the head of Crimea, and the repair work could take up to two months. According to Khusnullin, around 150 people were involved in the clean-up and repair efforts and the asphalt on the damaged part of the bridge had already been successfully removed.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 11 October, Canada announced it would send 40 combat engineers to Poland. This will support Poland's effort to train Ukraine's forces as a part of its commitment to assist Ukraine's military against the war. The deployment also marks the resumption of training provided by the Canadian Armed Forces to Ukraine's military. Since 2015, over 33,000 military and security personnel have received training from Canada, but the training effort had been paused since February 2022.

On the same day, Germany's government proposed increase in support to areas struggling to accommodate over 1.1 million refugees that have arrived in the country in 2022. While a considerable section of the refugees come from Syria and Afghanistan, the numbers have been exacerbated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the resultant exodus of refugees. Interior Minister, Nancy Fraser said that earlier in the year, the government had allocated federal real estate to set up tents for tens of thousands of refugees but given the current crisis, property for around 4000 more refugees will be provided. She also said that additional financial support will also be given, but the amount has not been declared yet. Moreover, Fraser said that providing good care for refugees from Ukraine was a "big humanitarian effort" and that Germany was expecting more people from Ukraine because of Russia's recent escalation in

Ukraine.

On 10 October, US President Joe Biden reiterated his commitment to Ukraine's war efforts. Following Russia's recent missile attacks, he pledged more advanced air defence systems. However, he did not provide any other details about what the new pledge might entail. Regarding air defence; he said that it was the primary priority in Ukraine's defence cooperation with the US.

On the same day, Sweden's prime minister Magdalena Andersson said that Russia will not be allowed to join the investigation on the causes of leaks in the Nord Stream pipelines. The announcement came after Sweden invited an EU probe to look into the leaks. It also said that the findings of the investigation will be kept confidential.

The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 11 October, Japanese car company Nissan announced that they will withdraw their business from Russia. According to Russia's Industry and Trade Ministry, the company will also sell its factory in St. Petersburg. Russian car manufacturer, AutoVaz will take over the supply of spare parts and maintenance of Nissan cars plying in the country. In a separate statement, Nissan said that the deal with AutoVaz will be finalized soon, and the company will take a loss of around USD 686.5 million.

The IMF released its World Economic Outlook. The report says that global economic growth in 2023 is expected to slow down more than initially. The IMF said that the additional slowdown could be attributed primarily to the effects of the war in Ukraine on the global economy, coupled with a slow recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and a slowdown in China's economic output. The expansion of the economy in 2023 is expected to be at 2.7 per cent, which is a 6 percent reduction from 2021, and a 3.2 per cent reduction from 2022. The estimate also marks the weakest growth profile since 2001, excluding the 2008 financial crisis and the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On 11 October, UN General Assembly voted

against Russia's call for holding secret ballots to vote on the constitutionality of Russia's annexation of four regions of Ukraine. With 107 votes in favor, the UNGA decided that the vote deciding on the "illegal so-called referenda" and the "attempted illegal annexation" of Zaporizhzhia, Kherson, LPR, and DPR will be public. 13 countries voted for a secret ballot and 39 countries including Russia and China abstained from voting.

Also on 11 October, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ravina Shamdasani released a statement about the escalation of Russia's recent attacks on Ukraine. The timing and locations of the missile attacks have increased concerns that Russia is deliberately targeting critical civilian infrastructure. Shamdasani criticized the attacks and said that the strikes may have violated international humanitarian law. She called on Russia to cease such attacks and ensure that civilian casualties are prevented.

On 10 October, The UN High Commission for Refugees chief, Filippo Grandi also referred to the damages caused to civilian areas in Ukraine and said that as is the nature of war, civilians were paying the highest price. Moreover, he spoke about the refugee situation in Ukraine. Urging for an "all hands on deck approach," Grandi called on experts, stakeholders, and organizations with the relevant resources to increase their efforts to support their respective government's plans to accommodate the refugees. He praised the EU's move to provide Ukrainians fleeing the war with temporary protection permits, allowing them to cross international borders within the EU and avail services where they have "support networks."

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War in Ukraine: Day 229

War on the Ground:

On 10 October, Ukraine's military intelligence reported on Russia's plan to launch attacks in Sevastopol, where it observed movement of Russian military, deployment of warships and placing of bombers in cruise missiles sent through Olenya air base. The key targets are expected to be the infrastructure in the main Ukrainian cities.

On 10 October, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy called a meeting to assess the damage and ways to restore energy supply and communications. Minister of Energy of Ukraine Herman Halushchenko assured about the supply back of electricity.

There was consensus among all the participants to decrease energy consumption during peak hours. This is to ensure that there is no extra load on the power grid. The energy supply shortage had affected mobile communications in areas causing disruptions. Proposals were put forth to supply network providers with fuel for generators and provide connections to Starlink stations to prevent further interruptions.

On the same day, Zelenskyy tweeted about a call with French President Emmanuel Macron. In the call they discussed on bolstering Ukrainian air defence and increasing the pressure on Russia. They also discussed the necessity of tougher European and International reactions.

On 10 October, Romanian Foreign Minister Bogdan Aurescu reported on an explosion near the Romanian Embassy in Kyiv. Aurescu assured that people working in the embassy were not hurt. The explosion is seen due to a Russian missile strike which exploded nearly 850 meters away. He criticized the missile strikes and called it as a “blatant violation of international humanitarian law, resulting in loss of human lives.”

On 10 October, *Ukrinform* reported on Ukraine receiving the first batch of the IRIS-T SLM air defence system from Germany’s Ministry of Defence. It was confirmed by the ministry in an official tweet on its aim to protect Ukraine’s air space to counter Russian missile strikes. The IRIS-T SLM is a ground-based air defence system by Diehl Defence.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 10 October, Russian President Vladimir Putin warned that they will retaliate strongly if attacks on Russian territories continue. The State Council of Crimea, Head Vladimir Konstantinov proposed an amendment regarding mandatory conscription. According to him no Crimean of eligible age should be allowed to flee the country. A federal law will be introduced as an amendment on mobilization.

On 10 October, Gazprom bank in a statement announced that it will be suspending business activities on the Swiss Financial Markets. The Switzerland branch of the bank published this statement on its website. They have outlined that any present businesses in the trade sector will be closed off or moved to other partners. The Chairman of the Board of Directors, Ivan Dun said: “The decision is the result of an in-depth strategy analysis and is being taken in close consultation with the Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority FINMA.”

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 10 October, Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko accused Kyiv of trying to open an alternative war front with Minsk. He announced that the “formation of a joint unit” between Belarusian military and the Russian forces. The details of the military partnership is still unknown. With the collaboration, there are possibilities of attacks to be launched from Belarus front.

On 10 October, EU Foreign Policy Chief Joseph Borrell criticised the bloc regarding its slow response to Ukraine military training missions. While addressing the ambassadors of member nations, he spoke up about the plans that the EU had for Ukrainian Military training missions months prior to the war. He criticised the EU for delaying the training even after the war broke out. The EU is said to take up this matter on 17 October in a discussion with foreign ministers.

On 10 October, Latvian Prime Minister Krišjānis Kariņš urged the EU leaders to stop giving Russians tourist visas. He criticized his counterparts on the idea of allowing Russians to weaken the Russian Armed forces. Instead, he remarked that it will in turn create an insecurity in the EU. Kariņš agreed under screening of individual case.

On 10 October, *Reuters* reported on the upcoming meet between Putin and Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan in Kazakhstan. The discussion is expected to be on a proposal for Turkey to act as a mediator between Russia and Ukraine although the negotiations seem to have no potential.

On 10 October, the Hungarian government released that they are building a pipeline with Serbia to supply oil. Serbia is facing high costs for crude oil due to new sanctions on Russia by the EU. Hence, this new pipeline aims to supply cheaper Russian Urals crude via the Druzhba oil pipeline. Hungary will be connecting Serbia to the Friendship pipeline through this initiative.

The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 10 October, *Deutsche Welle* reported on UNGA's plan to open a debate for a draft resolution against Russia's annexation of Ukrainian cities. Since the vote has been continuously vetoed by Russia in the UNSC resolution, the attempt is seen as way to take measure against Russia. According to Swedish diplomat Olof Skoog on failure of the UNGA to act on Russia would mean: "...carte blanche to other countries to do likewise or to give recognition to what Russia has done."

On 10 October, a Chinese spokesperson reported on the Foreign Ministry note of the reports about the explosions in Kyiv and is expecting a de-escalation of the conflict. It expected that the tensions would "ease as soon as possible." The spokesperson added that the Ukrainian conflict remains undeterred and expecting a resolution through peaceful talks.

On 10 October, India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar told a joint news conference that the Russia-Ukraine war "does not serve the interests of anybody." He refused to comment on the stance his government would take regarding a UNGA motion that condemns Russia's annexation of Ukrainian territories. Speaking of the issue with Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong, Jaishankar added that the Indian government has been clearly opposing the conflict, and that "neither the participants nor the international community" benefit from this aggression.

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War in Ukraine: Day 228 & 227

War on the Ground:

On 09 September, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy reported on the continued strike in Zaporizhzhia. In the report, close to 49 were injured and 17 were

dead. The attack is seen in response to the missile strike on the Crimean bridge.

On 08 September, the Head of the National Police of Ukraine, Ihor Klymenko, in a statement announced that about 20 bodies, including that of children, civilians and Ukraine's servicemen were dug out in Lyman of Donetsk region. The newly discovered site stretches 40 meters long, where the victims were buried in a single grave. Some had plaques about information about the deceased, but most of the bodies were unidentified. The Police have taken biological samples to identify the nameless bodies and determine the cause of their death.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 09 October, *RT* reported on the Russia's Federal Security Service report on the attacks on the Crimean Bridge on 08 October. According to the national Investigative Committee of Russia, Head, Aleksandr Bastrykin claimed that Ukrainian Security Services with the help of Russian had demonstrated the attack targeting its "critical infrastructure." On the damages, Bastrykin reported that the explosion caused an obstruction to both road and railway and stated that it was resumed the same evening. On the same Russia's President Vladimir Putin said: "It was ordered, planned and carried out by the Ukrainian security services."

On 08 October, Putin called the Crimean Bridge attack as an "Act of terrorism." Prime Minister, Mikhail Mishustin was instructed to set up a government commission to investigate the incident. As per Putin's instruction, the Transport Minister and the Emergency Minister of Russia have left for the Kerch Bridge to inspect and till now no party has taken responsibility for the explosion. *RT* claims Ukraine to be responsible for the attack.

On 08 August, Russia appointed a new general to lead the Ukraine offensive. General Sergei Surovikin has combat experience in the 1990 conflicts in Tajikistan and Chechnya and also served terms in Syria where Russia intervened in 2015. The new

appointment coincides with several setbacks for Russia with Ukraine mounting a rapid counteroffensive in Kharkiv, and the explosion damaging major parts of the Kerch Bridge. Surovikin is known to be a tougher general than his predecessor Army General Alexander Dvornikov and is expected to revitalize Russia's military actions in Ukraine.

On 08 October, Russia's Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov spoke about the sanctions and economic measures taken by the West. He said that Russia's response to the "economic aggression" had been restrained. He also added that the sanctions have failed to affect Russia's economy adversely, and had backfired on the West, initiating high inflation and energy shortages. Lavrov mentioned that to deal with the western measures, Russia would strengthen its "economic and technological sovereignty" with states in Asia, Africa, South America and the Middle East, and thus establish "alternative financial and logistical chains to facilitate foreign trade." On 07 September, the Head of Chechnya, Ramzan Kadyrov announced the joining of the additional 70,000. Kadyrov expressed his solidarity for Russia's actions in Ukraine.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 09 October, the UK Intelligence provided an update on the Kerch Strait Bridge damage. In the report, it stated how the bridge serves as a link to Crimea and Krasnodar in Russia. It estimated two roadways to have collapsed, the damage to rail line is unclear but it stated that any dent to the rail capacity will hinder Russia's ability to maintain its forces in Southern Ukraine.

On 09 October, a *Bloomberg* delved into the success of Ukraine's army, against Russia's troops who are expected to be a stronger force. The primary reasons behind Ukraine's success are modern weapons provided to Ukraine by its allies, along with military training, more cohesive and efficient command structure, better planning and intelligence aid which helps in better strategy formation.

On 08 October, *Reuters* reported that the UK has rejected Russia's call for a secret ballot in the UN General Assembly. The vote is to condemn Russia's "illegal so-called referenda" in DPR, LPR, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia that the international community has denounced. Moreover, the UK has urged the 193-member body to vote publicly, instead of on a secret ballot. Citing rule 87b of the Charter, The UK's U.N. Ambassador Barbara Woodward said: "To conduct a secret ballot on a General Assembly decision would go against decades of precedent and undermine the practices of the world's most representative deliberative body." The vote has been scheduled for 11 October 2022.

The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 09 October, Kyrgyzstan independently cancelled joint military drills amid the six nations of the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), less than 24 hours before it started. While the Kyrgyz Defence Ministry did not state a reason for the abandonment of the exercises, these drills were meant to involve army personnel from CSTO members, including Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and centre itself on securing ceasefires. This decision has indicated the increasing tensions within the alliance with Armenia skipping a two-week drill in Kazakhstan, criticising the CSTO for failing to support the country in its fighting with Azerbaijan. Russia and the CSTO countries turned down Armenia's request for military aid and limited their response to sending fact-finding missions to the border.

On 08 October, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Head, Mariano Grossi informed that because of renewed shelling near the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) facility, it has lost its last remaining power sources. It was relying on emergency diesel generators for "essential nuclear safety and security functions." The generators are being used to cool and conduct safety operations for the nuclear reactors to prevent a meltdown. The 750-kilovolt power line was cut because of the continued attacks and engineers are trying to repair the damages it has sustained.

On 07 October, the IMF executive board approved additional aid of USD 1.3 billion to Ukraine under the food shock window Rapid Financing Instrument. The new disbursement will assist Ukraine in meeting their balance of payment needs. The press release by the IMF announcing the new aid appreciated Ukraine for being able to maintain micro-financial stability while dealing with a war. The IMF also announced that in collaboration with Ukrainian authorities, it will initiate discussion on Program Monitoring with Board involvement (PMB), to provide strong macroeconomic policies, catalyze donor support and facilitate easier access to its loans.

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War in Ukraine: Day 226

War on the Ground:

On 06 October, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy met the IAEA, Director General Rafael Grossi. He thanked Grossi for coordinating the release of the Director General of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) Ihor Murashov, who remained in capture with the Russia's forces. Grossi said that the decision by Russia's President Vladimir Putin to consider the ZNPP to be under Russia's ownership was a violation of international law. He added that the IAEA will mediate the situation.

On 06 October, Zelenskyy also mentioned that since 01 October, more than 500 square kilometers of territory in the Kherson region have been deoccupied from Russian control. On 07 October, Ukraine's Operational Command South, Head, Natalia Humeniuk confirmed the same on the freeing of 29 settlements. In Kharkiv, Ukrainian police provided an update about the evidences of torture found in Kharkiv. According to the head of the investigative department, bodies of 266 women and 19 children were found.

On the same day, Ukraine spokesperson Kyrylo Tymoshenko took part in the "Ukraine During the War, Economy, Security, Energy, Recovery Prospects" conference in Warsaw. Citing inadequate funds, Tymoshenko called for further financial help and emphasized the need to hasten the reconstruction of infrastructure in Ukraine as a part of the "Fast Recovery Plan," so that Ukrainians can return home from evacuation.

On 07 October, *Kyiv Post* reported that many Ukrainian soldiers who were a part of the Azov Regiment gave statements about the torture they faced while in Russian captivity. They gave statements to government investigators for future prosecutions, if the Russian army and officials should be tried for war crimes.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

The Deputy Prime Minister, Dmitry Chernyshenko attended a meeting regarding the partial conscription. He announced a new scheme, where Russian women willing

to participate in the operation in Ukraine could be sent to work in hospitals or as volunteers. However, he added that while women could volunteer; it was not necessary for them to be part of the reservist force.

On 07 October, Russia's foreign minister, Sergey Lavrov responded to Zelenskyy's comment about a "pre-emptive strike on Russia." Lavrov said that the comment further warranted Russia's military operation in Ukraine. Speaking at Russia's party commission, he pointed out that Ukraine's request for nuclear weapons strengthened the justification for Russia's invasion. He said: "We cannot turn a blind eye to the reckless actions of the Kiev regime which are aimed at creating risks of using various kinds of weapons of mass destruction." Lavrov also criticized, Ukraine was stockpiling illegitimate military-biological weapons and criticized the move.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 07 September, Germany reported on the total number of Ukrainian refugees who accounted more than one million. The Interior Minister expressed the growing difficulty in accommodating the refugee influx.

On 07 October, US President Joe Biden made stark comments about the renewal of the nuclear debate. He said that the world would face an "Armageddon" if Putin went through with his threat of using tactical nuclear weapons. He invoked the example of the Cuban Missile Crisis and said: "We have the threat of a nuclear weapon if in fact things continue down the path they are going... He's not joking when he talks about potential use of tactical nuclear weapons or biological or chemical weapons because his military is, you might say, significantly underperforming."

On 06 October, *AP News* reported on two different economic futures given by the managing director of International Monetary Fund, Kristalina Georgieva and the US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen. Georgieva said that the economic outlook of the world is likely to get worse before it gets better, as recession rates are rising. She also said that

due to the Ukraine war and the remnant fallouts of the COVID-19 the current economic environment was going through a "period of historic fragility." Yellen said that the US was now focusing on making longer-term investments to bolster the global economy. She also promoted ambitious policy solutions.

The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 07 October, Japan's Cabinet approved a new set of sanctions for Russia, after its annexation of four regions in Ukraine. On this issue, Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Kihara Seiji said that the referendums are a violation of international law and infringe on Ukraine's sovereignty. As per the new sanctions, 81 additional people and nine more organizations will be added to the list of those whose assets will be frozen.

Also on 07 October, the UN Human Rights Council approved a motion to appoint a new expert to examine the alleged human rights violations by Russia in Ukraine. Accusing Russia of installing a "climate of fear," 17 members of the UN body voted in favor, six members voted against it while 24 abstained. The motion marks the first time that the UNHRC has appointed a Special Rapporteur to examine the rights record of a permanent member of the UNSC.

On 07 October, the Nobel Peace Prize for 2022 was announced. Jailed Belarusian activist Ales Byalyatski, Russian rights group Memorial and Ukraine's Centre for Civil Liberties won the award. This year's recipients can be viewed as a criticism of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and is in line with the Nobel prizes awarded during the Cold War era, when Soviet dissidents Andrei Sakharov and Alexander Solzhenitsyn won for peace or literature. Norway's Nobel Committee chair Berit Reiss-Andersen said: "We believe that it is a war that is a result of an authoritarian regime, aggressively committing an act of aggression," and thus the prize had been given to "three outstanding champions of human rights, democracy and peaceful co-existence."

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War in Ukraine: Day 225

War on the Ground:

On 06 October, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in his video address in the European Political Community meeting in Prague, stressed on the need for more weapons for Ukraine to win the war against Russia. He also urged to intensify the sanctions by the international community. In the meeting, close to 44 countries expressed their support to Ukraine in the war.

On the same day, the chief of the joint coordination press centre of Ukraine's Operational Command South Natalia Humeniuk gave an update on the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the Kherson region. At a press briefing, she updated that to date the Armed Forces have freed more than 400 square kilometres from Russian hold. Without giving any specific direction, Humeniuk said that the Forces are moving further to liberate more parts of the region.

The Moscow View:

Claims by Russia

On 06 October, Russia's Ministry of Defence reported on the gains of the Russian armed forces over the Ukrainian armed forces. As per the report, eight Ukrainian command forces were targeted and destroyed by the Russian Armed Forces in a joint effort by the combat aircraft, missile and artillery troops. The attack also destroyed military equipment, 63 artillery units at firing positions and Ukrainian manpower in 173 areas.

On 06 October, Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova accused Kiev of attacking the people in the annexed regions. Zakharova is of the view that Kiev's attacking the civilians due to their decision to become a part of Russia. She also doubled down on Russia's commitment to protect these regions and restore normality in these regions and continue its rebuilding efforts. She also mentioned about a proposal sent to the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan. This was a broad proposal for a peace treaty between the two countries. The details of the proposals were not revealed as Russia believes it to be a sensitive topic.

On 06 October, the Joint Ceasefire Coordination and Control Center's (JCCC)

mission to LPR released its report on the damage caused by Ukrainian aggression in this region. The report stated that 101 people had died and 314 wounded since 17 February in LPR when the Ukrainian aggression began. Additionally, seven children died and 27 more were wounded due to shelling. It also report that 2,950 houses and 273 civilian infrastructures have been damaged. The mission said that "In total, the enemy used over 10,000 munitions of various calibers, including Tochka-U tactical missiles (37 rockets) and US-made HIMARS (348 rockets), multiple launch rocket systems (BM-21 Grad, BM-27 Uragan, BM-30 Smerch): 2,497 shells, artillery guns of 155 mm (69 shells)."

The West View:

Responses from the US and Europe

On 06 October, the Head of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) Samantha Power announced additional funding of USD 55 million to aid in repairing necessary infrastructure to provide heating to hospitals, schools, homes and businesses in Ukraine. Apart from this USIAD will also provide power generators and fuel sources to give the Ukrainians access to warm shelter. The aid is also expected to help centres for internally-displaced persons, and shelters for socially vulnerable citizens to bear the winter.

On 06 October, *BBC* reported on the increasing reliance and importance of space in the current Russia-Ukraine conflict. The head of the US Space Force, General Jay Raymond told *BBC* in an interview about how this is the first major conflict in which commercial space infrastructure has been used by both sides. Ukraine despite not having any commercial satellites, has been helped by its allies with information regarding Russian military movement and warnings of any attack by them. Space has helped both sides in providing information, restoring communication and in precision attacks by weapons. UK's Chief of Defence Staff, Admiral Tony Radkin has expressed concerns about a possible space front war. This was also echoed by General Raymond who outlined the possibilities of a ground strike on space infrastructure and that such a possibility opens doors for space militarization.

On 06 October, the first-ever meeting of the European Political Community (EPC) in Prague. An initiative of French President Emmanuel Macron was introduced right after the Russia-Ukraine conflict broke out. Composed of 44 members, Macron hopes that the EPC will be instrumental in bringing the European continent together and protecting the security of Europe. In a press conference after the summit Macron told the reporters, "We have very clearly displayed the unity of 44 European leaders in condemning Russian aggression and expressing support for Ukraine." The same sentiment was echoed by Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki who said that "This summit confirms that Russia is in complete isolation."

On the same day, Sweden cleared three ports in the north of the country for Russian fishing vessels. The Foreign Ministry announced that Kirkenes, Troms and Botsfjord ports will be the only ports where Russian fishing vessels can dock. It also added that on arrival the ships will be checked before being allowed to dock.

On 05 October, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz discussed closer cooperation specifically on energy and security issues during their first meet in nine years. Later the two countries emphasised the importance of expanding the interconnection capacity of the Iberian Peninsula to deliver energy to the continent. This includes the connectivity of electricity and gas between countries. On the same day, Sánchez called on French President Emmanuel Macron to adhere to his promise to the EU of increasing the expansion of the electricity and electricity grid.

The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 06 October, the Managing Director of the IMF Kristalina Georgieva said that the IMF will be decreasing its projections for the global growth rate. In a talk at Georgetown University, she said that the projection for global economic growth was decreased by USD four trillion through 2026. The reason for this decrease was the Russia-Ukraine crisis which led the IMF to reconsider its

projections back in February 2022. The official figures for global growth for 2022 stand at 3.2 per cent and 2.9 per cent for 2023. This comes before the yearly meeting of the IMF and the World Bank next week.

On 06 October, *Reuters* reported on the ground situation of Russians in Kazakhstan. With a sudden influx of people, money and job troubles are being experienced by the Russians. The locals have seen an increase in housing costs, causing many to leave their homes and seek alternative options. There also has been an increasing concern about a security risk expressed by the Kazakhs with respect to the Russians. They are being called "draft dodgers" as they have only entered the country to flee the military conscriptions. Kazakh politician Mukhtar Taizhan expressed his fear that "Tomorrow, they might unite into a group, start demanding something here," and "This might turn into a concern for our security and, God forbid, territorial integrity."

On 05 October, *Reuters* reported that Russia is urging a secret ballot when the UNGA will meet next week. After the West failed to pass a resolution condemning the annexation of four Ukrainian territories in the UNSC, the matter is now being put forth in the UNGA. Russia is looking for a secret ballot to prevent lines from being drawn due to Western lobbying. The 193-member body will be voting on the same before the resolution is presented.

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War in Ukraine: Day 224

War on the Ground:

On 05 October, the Ukraine Air Force reported on launching more than 10 strikes targeting nine Russian ammunition and military equipment spots. The attacks took place in Kherson, across the Dnieper River and as per their observation, Russia has been “regrouping” in some directions, launching offensives in Bakhmut and Avdiivka and has been struggling to keep up

its temporary occupied zones. It also reported on deployment of Iran’s drones, Shahed-129 and Shahed-136 by Russia which do not cost much. This deployment is seen as a way to save its resources to purchase high-precision missiles like Kh-101, Kalibr, and Kh-555.

On 05 October, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy declared the capturing back the the villages of Novovoskresenske, Novogygorivka and Petropavlivka in Kherson region.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 05 October, Russia President Vladimir Putin signed a decree to bring Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant under control of Russia. The order mandates the plant to be run by Russia’s state-owned firms Rosatom. On the same day, Putin remarked over vote results of the referendums where he expressed his surprise over the increased support to join Russia.

On 05 October, Gazprom issued a statement on resuming its gas supplies to Italy. The gas supplies are sent through the Trans Austria Gas Pipeline (TAG) to northern Italy through border of Austria, due to transit issues the supply was paused. Upon regulatory changes the energy has been resumed. The same was confirmed by Eni an Italian energy firm.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 05 October, the ground advance by Ukraine was confirmed by the UK intelligence. In a statement: “Politically, Russian leaders will highly likely be concerned that leading Ukrainian units are now approaching the borders of Luhansk Oblast, which Russia claimed to have formally annexed last Friday.”

On 05 October, Bulgaria’s Foreign Minister, Nikolay Milkov criticized the statement of the eastern and central European leaders on support to Ukraine joining NATO. He stated that mere expressing of support would not “fast-track” the accession process. President Rumen Radev said: “...decision on Ukraine’s accession to NATO should be made only after the development of clear parameters for the peaceful settlement of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.”

On 05 October, *Reuters* revealed the results of an opinion poll conducted asking Americans if the US should continue to provide military aid to Ukraine despite the Russian nuclear threat or action. The outcome of the poll was that three out of four Americans were of the opinion that the aid should continue. Out of a total of 1,005 respondents, 73 per cent were for the support. This was not just restricted to Democrats, the Republicans also voiced the same view. The poll also revealed that 58 per cent feared that the US and Russia will engage in a nuclear war. 65 per cent are of the view that if Ukraine acquires long-range weapons that can hit Russia the war will escalate.

On 05 October, *The Guardian* wrote a piece outlining Australia's military contribution to Ukraine. Australia at the beginning of the war was called "the largest non-NATO contributor" to Ukraine's defence, this has now evolved to "one of the largest" as it is becoming tough to authenticate information coming about each nation's contribution and compare it according to Kiel Institute of military support. They also reported Ukraine's bid to various allies to "adopt" a region of Ukraine to concentrate all its efforts to help Ukraine rebuild.

On 05 October, EU member nations give their support to the eighth package on sanctions. Proposed by the European Commission on 28 September, which targets to restrict Russia's income by extending the ban list on Russian imports and EU exports to Russia. This is said to cost Russia EUR seven billion. The other main component of this package is that the EU agreed to a price cap on Russian oil maritime trade. Russia's main source of income at this juncture is its oil exports. The price cap aims to target the service providers of Russian commercial oil tanks. They are insurance and shipping companies that are largely based in Europe and UK. The main discussion on the price cap was to look into the concerns of Greece, Cyprus and Malta which play an important role in Russian oil transportation to the rest of the world. This proposal will now be addressed by the G7 who will look into the matter in detail and see how it will affect the rest of the world.

The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 05 October, Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi expressed that Iran, Russia and China will be instrumental in opposing the unipolar world order. In an interview with *CGTN* Raisi said that through the SCO, the Eurasian Economic Union EAEU and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) the three nations will be able to create a new power centre that will lead the multipolar world order.

On 05 October, the OPEC+ announced a uniform cut in the oil production by two million barrels. The cut in the quantity will lead to rise in oil price which can affect in two ways. Deter those energy reliant economies more since they have to afford the high energy prices, two it might give Russia the leverage to earn more thereby increasing the chances to spend more towards war.

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War in Ukraine: Day 223

War on the Ground:

On 04 October, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy signed a decree [No. 687/2022](#) announcing the decrees signed by Russia's President Vladimir Putin on recognising LPR, DPR, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions as "null and void." The decree emphasized the sovereign territory and the territorial integrity of Ukraine in the internationally acknowledged borders.

On 04 October, Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal announced UAH four billion as rapid recovery fund to reconstruct the most affected war zones such as "Kharkiv region, Kyiv region, Chernihiv region, Sumy region." It is aimed to bring back the critical infrastructure in terms of energy and part of crisis response.

According to the National Guard of Ukraine, a "russian ammunition depot," of Russia was taken down in the Kharkiv region, where close to 483 areas have been restored from the Russian occupation. Mala Oleksandrivka was reported to be freed by the Ukrainian forces in the Kherson region. These areas were earlier part of Russia's referendums.

On 04 October, the Head of the Zaporizhzhia Regional Military Administration, Oleksandr Starukh reported on Russia setting up a "state border" in the Vasylivka of Zaporizhzhia region. He said: "The occupiers try to build a 'border' as they once did in Crimea and Donbas." On the same day, Zelenskyy held a call with India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the possible partnership between Ukraine and India, global food security, implementing the grain exports and nuclear safety.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 04 October, the Russian Parliament ratified the "unification of treaties" of DPR, LPR, Kherson, and Zaporizhzhia. Upon Russia President Putin signing the treaty, it was lawfully accepted by the Constitutional Court with a uniform voting. The last step will be to make changes to the constitution to finalize the annexation.

On 04 October, Russia's Defence Minister

Sergey Shoigu claimed that more than 200,000 personnel have been recruited for the Russian Armed Forces. He stated that the recruits will be provided equipment, training and combat coordination skills, only upon the completion they will be deployed on the special military operation in Ukraine. Those who do not complete the mandatory services will be sent home as per his remarks.

On 04 October, *RT* reported on the Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko remarks on the Belarus's role in the military operation of Russia. In his address Lukashenko said: "Our role is to prevent this conflict from spreading into the territory of Belarus, first of all. And, secondly, it is to prevent a strike against Belarus from Poland, Lithuania and Latvia under the cover of the special military operation." He maintained Belarus stance to be neutral for Russian and Ukrainian refugees, countered the claims on Belarus helping Russia militarily by saying that Belarus would not be involved in the Ukraine war beyond a limit and use its national forces only to guard Belarus.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 04 October, the EU Finance Ministers announced EUR 20 billion as funds to reduce the dependency over Russian energy. The fund will aim to invest in those where energy can be produced quickly and simultaneously the increasing energy prices can be brought under control.

The US announced to provide USD 625 million to Ukraine as a security aid, which will include, four HIMARS systems, rocket launchers, artillery, ammunition, and armoured vehicles to up bridge the attack capacity.

The Ministry of National Defence of Turkey reported on the total Ukraine grain exports count. It stated that close to six million tonnes of grain had been exported through the agreed grain corridor, where corn, wheat, sunflower meal, sunflower oil, sugar beet, soybeans, peas and barley were reported to be shipped.

The Global Fallout: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 04 October, Ukraine Minister of Finance

Serhiy Marchenko and Regional Director of the World Bank for Eastern Europe agreed to provide USD 529.9 million. The fund is given under the joint implementation with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) to help Ukraine's public expenditure and to assure a sustainable administration. In a statement: "The loan proceeds will be directed to the general fund of the State Budget of Ukraine for the reimbursement of payments to employees of the budget sector, provision of pension payments and certain state social assistance programs, support for low-income families."

On 03 October, *Islamic Public News Agency* reported on Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Nasser Kanaani response on Ukraine war. In the press address, he stated that Iran was ready to settle the conflict peacefully and on the question of Russia's referendum's, he said that Iran would support the move under the international laws of the UN.

On 04 October, IAEA Head, Rafael Grossi reported on the release of Ihor Murashov, who was earlier detained by the Russian forces in the Zaporizhzhia. *The Guardian* reported on North Korea becoming the only country to recognise the referendums of Russia taken in parts of Ukraine. In case of the relations between Japan and Russia, it continues to decline with the Japan Foreign Minister calling back the Russian Consul back to return Japan before 10 October. In a statement released by Modi after his call with Zelenskyy said: "...there can be no military solution to the conflict and conveyed India's readiness to contribute to any peace efforts. Reiterated the importance of respecting the UN Charter, International Law, and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states."

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War in Ukraine: Day 222

War on the Ground:

On 03 October, Ukraine's Security Service reported in a telegram post that the Russians had counted the votes of those who had left the regions, especially in Zaporizhzhia and Kherson. An SBC intercepted a phone call from a Russian soldier to his wife discussed that the votes for those who had left the occupied region of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson were taken into account for the referendums. He also said that in Kherson, people were bribed into voting by offering to buy a Lada-Granta car.

On the same day, the Czech Republic collected over EUR 1.22 million to fund the upgraded T-72 Avenger tank as military aid to Ukraine. The fundraising campaign was named "A Gift for Putin" and had the slogan "A gift from the Czech Republic!". The fundraiser started at the beginning of

September. All collected funds for the campaign are transferred to Ukraine's Embassy in Prague account. The details for the purchase of the tank and its logistics were consulted with Ukraine's servicemen before the start of the campaign. The T-72 Avenger is an upgraded version of the Soviet T-72 tank with improved combat capabilities, comfort and efficiency. It has modern features that were absent in the Soviet-era tank.

The Moscow View:

Claims by Russia

On 04 October, *LENTA RU* reported that the Director General of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, Igor Murashov, was discovered to have a connection with Ukraine's Security Service (SBU). Murashov confessed that he communicated with an SBU employee through messengers to update the situation in the ZNPP. He confirmed that Ukraine had been attacking the NPP from the cities of Nikopol and Marganets. He was detained by a Russian patrol on 01 October and was later released. He also said that the man from SBU did not allow him to appeal to Russia, Ukraine, the UN and the IAEA to stop the shelling as it did not "align with Ukraine's interests". The shellings continue in the ZNPP, and IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi is said to visit Russia and Ukraine to negotiate the situation and help create a security zone around the power plant.

On 03 October, Russia's State Duma unanimously passed draft constitutional laws that recognize the annexation of Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions as well into Russia. The law states that the residents of the territories will be recognized as Russian citizens from 30 September. A month is provided for the residents to reject their citizenship and acquire it by submitting applications and swearing in as Russian citizens. After joining Russia, DPR and LPR will continue to be republics, while Zaporizhzhia and Kherson will be addressed as regions. The transition period of the territories acceding to Russia will be till 01 January 2026. The new territories will have representatives in the State Duma and will mandatorily have to change their currency

to roubles. The State Duma ratified the unification of four regions into Russia.

In a statement by the presidential spokesperson Dmitry Peskov, he said that the demarcation for the regions of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia is yet to be determined. According to him, there have been issues with identifying proper boundaries for these regions as they are partly occupied by Ukrainian forces. He said that he will clarify the precise boundaries for the two territories later

The West View:

Responses from the US and Europe

On 03 October, billionaire Elon Musk tweeted polling a proposal for a plan to end the war in Ukraine was met with different responses. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy replied with his poll asking whether Musk supports Ukraine or Russia. His four-point plan was to let the UN conduct another referendum in the four regions to see whether they wanted to join Russia or not. He also proposed that Ukraine should be neutral, Crimea should belong to Russia, and the region should get its water supply resumed. Musk replied to the tweet by Zelenskyy that his company SpaceX had donated USD 80 million to Ukraine and none to Russia. He also said that he is with Ukraine and will provide the Starlink satellite internet terminals to Ukraine, which help access people's internet through satellite.

On 03 October, the UK's Defence Intelligence updated that Russia is facing difficulty in following the new partial mobilization decree as chaos has spread in implementing it. Local officials are unclear about the instructions and goals of the mobilization. Wrong people are conscripted into the army and the Russian officials find logistics and training of the new soldiers difficult. Europe is at "unprecedented risks" regarding its gas supply in winter. Amidst the fear of a total Russian gas cut-off, Europe is facing one of the worst energy crises in its history. It has fulfilled its 80 per cent energy storage in winter ahead of time currently holding 88 per cent, however, the International Energy Agency suggests that 90 per cent of energy should be stored for Europe to get through winter if Russia

completely stops its supply. The EU took up measures to mandatorily reduce the consumption of energy by five per cent during peak price hours and a voluntary ten per cent reduction overall. It was mainly to be followed by regular consumers and businesses. The EU also advised consumers to turn down thermostats by one degree and adjust boiler temperatures as well as industrial and utility conservation. The EU also aims to cap excessive revenues made by energy companies and tax surplus profits of fossil fuel companies. The energy crisis has led to extreme conditions in Pakistan, Bangladesh and the rest of Asia.

On 03 October, Sweden provided “advance diving missions” capable vessels to the Baltic Sea to investigate the undersea explosion that led to leakage in Nord Stream 1 and 2 pipelines. The leaks methane leak occurred near the economic zone of Denmark and Sweden in the Baltic Sea. On 30 September Russia accused the West of sabotaging the pipelines to which the West strongly denied any allegation. Swedish Coast Guards have reported that major leaks in the pipelines have stopped, however, Nord Stream 2 has increase in smaller leaks. Denmark, Germany and Sweden are leading a joint international investigation team to find who is responsible for the explosion and the subsequent leaks. They are trying to stop the leakage of the pipelines.

On the same day, the Czech government cautioned its citizens who also hold citizenship in Russia to leave the country amidst the partial mobilization call. It warned that the Czechs who hold Russian citizenship will also face the risk of military conscription. They were advised to flee the country. The government announced that its citizens would not be provided with necessary, full consular protection by the Czech Embassy in Moscow.

The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war

Following the partial mobilization call by Russia’s President Vladimir Putin, many Russians have fled to Istanbul, Turkey which still hasn’t imposed sanctions on Russian travellers. Russians are flying to Turkey to go to other places as it is accessible easily. The large influx of Russians after the

mobilization call to Istanbul is being compared to “white Russians” escaping the Bolsheviks in 1917 by Eva Rapoport, the coordinator of the Ark, a group helping Russians flee their country.

An investigation by the Associated Press and the PBS series “Frontline” discovered that the bulk cargo Laodicea was owned by Syria and is used by Russia to smuggle stolen Ukrainian grain worth USD 530 million. The ship is docked in Lebanon and its prosecutors supported Russia allowing the ship to unload. AP used satellite imagery and marine radio transponder data to determine that Russia is stealing grains from Ukraine and unloading them in the ports of Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and other countries. Russia has denied the allegation calling them baseless and false.

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War in Ukraine: Day 221 & 220

War on the Ground:

On 01 October, the World Bank announced USD 530 million fund for Ukraine to address its critical, economic, and social needs. The fund will address the critical needs which are important government services and the consequences of the war on the economic and social sectors of Ukraine. This will be financed by the UK and the Kingdom of Denmark. The World Bank in total has provided aid worth USD 13 billion to the Ukraine Government.

On 02 October, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and French President Emmanuel Macron discussed on the nuclear blackmail threat by Russia, the problem at Zaporizhzhia NPP and increasing support for Ukraine's defence in a call.

On 02 October, the application for accelerated membership of Ukraine to NATO was supported by Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and the US were the members who extended their support to Ukraine's bid for membership.

On 02 October, Zelenskyy hailed the success of the launch of Ukraine's first corvette Hetman Ivan Mazepa. This was launched when the First Lady of Ukraine, the head of the President's Office and other representatives visited Turkey. The corvette is built with the help of Turkey which was started in 2021. The Ukrainian delegation in Turkey also met the Chairman of the

Baykar's Board and visited the factories of the Baykar company that manufactures Bayraktar UCAVs which are supplied to Ukraine. Zelenskyy also revealed the plans to collaborate with the Bayraktar company to open a training centre and a subsidiary in Ukraine and to manufacture aircraft engines together.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 01 October, the Ministry of Defence announced the casualties of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the strike carried out by the Russian Aerospace Forces (VKS) in Krasnolimansk. The Armed Forces are reported to have lost 200 people, 320 wounded, and 10 tanks and 25 infantry fighting vehicles were destroyed. Additionally, the Armed Forces also lost over 100 servicemen and 12 units of military gear when the Russian forces launched a missile near the 92nd and 14th mechanised brigades.

On 02 October, Russia's Ministry of Defence reported that the Russian Armed Forces had demolished warehouses containing military equipment of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The warehouses were based in Sadovod, Kalinovka, Zaliznichnoye, Rivenpilye, Skogoshnoye, Kramatorsk and Volnoye Pole. The armed forces were observed to have demolished the guidance radar of the S-300 anti-aircraft missile system in New Kaluga.

On 02 October, the Russian Constitutional Court published its review of the annexation treaties. The Court announced that the Donetsk and Lugansk regions will be allowed to keep their position as republics in the Russian Federation, whereas the regions of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia will be known as Russian regions. Officially the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) and Lugansk People's Republic (LPR) will be a part of the Russian Federation with Russian as their state language. They will be able to preserve their mother tongue and continue to develop it.

On the same day, the Constitutional Court also asked the administration to appoint interim heads to the four annexed regions. The President will appoint the interim officials within 10 days of the annexation

and they will be in power until a formal election. The heads of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson will be known as governors and that of DPR and LPR will be called heads due to their republic status. The period of transition for the four new regions was announced by the Court to be until 01 January 2023 wherein they should be fully integrated into the Russian Federation.

On 02 October, State Duma Speaker Vyacheslav Volodin said that the lower house will discuss the matters related to the integration of the four new regions annexed. In an interview with the “Moscow. Kremlin. Putin” show, the Duma will investigate amendments that need to be introduced to adopt the treaties and litigation that needs to be introduced which will award the people of this region the same rights as that of a Russian. This will be discussed in a plenary meeting on 03 October.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 01 October, *AP News* reported on the veto by Russia in the against a UN resolution which condemned the referendums held by Russia in Ukraine. The UNSC resolution was sponsored by the US and Albania and the council was divided 10-1 with abstentions from India, China, Brazil, and Gabon. The resolution was aimed at bringing the Russian invasion to an end and the withdrawal of all its forces. With Russia continuing to veto, US Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield outlined their next move which is to take up the matter in the UNGA where there is no veto power.

On 01 October, Germany's Defence Minister Christine Lambrecht visited Odessa and met the Ukrainian counterpart Oleksii Reznikov. This was her first visit since the war began and comes at the time when Ukraine is asking Germany to supply battle tanks to aid in its fight. Lambrecht observed the status of Ukraine's military equipment and commended the strength of Ukraine's air defence and artillery. She also observed how the people were distressed by the drones flying closely. On battle tanks, she reiterated the view of Chancellor Olaf Scholz that is it “We will always confer with our partners about what Ukraine needs.” This visit comes after the annexation of four Ukrainian

regions which has been condemned by Germany. On 02 September Lambrecht announced the supply of 16-wheeled armoured howitzers, costing EUR 92 million, which will be built in Slovakia with funding from Germany, Denmark, and Norway. On the same day, US President Joe Biden rejected Russia's claim on US to be behind the Nord Stream pipelines leak. According to the West, Russia is making these claims only to draw attention away from the annexation of Ukrainian territories.

On 02 October, the Polish President's Office published a statement outlining the position of nine Central and Eastern European countries on the annexation of Donetsk, Kherson, Lugansk, and Zaporizhzhia by Russia. The presidents of all the countries came together to denounce the annexations and reaffirmed their support for Ukraine's sovereignty. Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia were the nine signatories to this statement, demanding for the withdrawal of Russian troops. They also voiced their support of Ukraine becoming a member of NATO and encouraged all the allies to increase the military supply to Ukraine.

The Global Fallout: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 02 October, Canada announced that it will help Ukraine in rebuilding its railway infrastructure, together with the specific projects and programs that would revitalise Ukraine's railway system. Ukraine has faced a deadly amount of railway tracks, worth 6,000 kilometres, being wrecked and destroyed beyond measure. A joint working committee in collaboration with Canada has ensured assistance in setting up installations. The Canadian Pacific Railway Company (CP) and the Canadian National Railway (CN) have lodged support in logistics and railway management, along with infrastructure and reconstruction. Negotiations led by the Transport Ministers of both countries resulted in the ignition of a much-required rehabilitation of Ukraine's primary transport services.

On 02 October, *AP News* looked at the consequences of that the Russia-Ukraine war

on the climate goals of Asia. Europe has lost its largest oil supplier Russia and in its search for alternative sources, it is dipping into suppliers whose main clientele are Asian nations. This is leading to a price rise as there is increased competition for a valuable resource. There are two blocks in Asia, one that is looking at energy security and the other that is looking at climate goals. Countries like Sri Lanka, Indonesia, China, and India are focusing on energy security while South Korea and Japan are focusing on climate goals. The first block is going back to coal to support their energy requirements and keep inflation down in their economies. China and India are still buying cheap oil and gas supplied by Russia despite western sanctions to supplement the need that rises due to their large population. This is not to say they are not focusing on their climate goals. The first block is alternatively looking at resources and innovations to increase the supply of clean energy. The second block of South Korea and Japan are feeling the burden of rising prices and to combat this they are turning towards nuclear energy as an alternative source. This has faced a lot of doubt, especially in Japan as they do not want another Fukushima incident.

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War in Ukraine: Day 219

War on the Ground:

On 29 September, Ukraine's Defence Ministry's Main Directorate of Intelligence (HUR) reported that the 20,000 conscripted Russian would be accommodated in Belarus to be deployed in Ukraine. The new soldiers were hosted on the premises of abandoned farms, warehouses, and hangars. The deployed soldiers were provided with Russian arms and ammunition from

Belarussian warehouses. Logistics of soldiers and military equipment are done through Belarus' railway and mobilized civilian trucks and cars.

On 30 September, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky urged the Swiss people to increase their support for Ukraine and to stop being a neutral country. He invited Switzerland to participate in supporting Ukraine's Fast Recovery Plan with technical and financial aid.

Ukraine's Operational Command South reported through a Facebook post that the Ukraine had received 16 new drones as a part of the Army of Drones initiative. The military showed gratitude to the project and the Ministry of Digital Transformation for its support and those who donated the drones. The drones will be used to conduct reconnaissance missions and destroy enemy forces.

Head of the Zaporizhzhia Regional Military Administration, Oleksandr Starukh, posted on his telegram that Russians launched a rocket attack on a humanitarian convoy while it was out of a regional centre. Rescuers, medics and other services are helping at the site of the attack, where one woman was reported to be injured.

The Moscow View: Claims by Russia

On 30 September, LENTA RU reported that Russia's President, Vladimir Putin, held a meeting with the Members of the Russian Security Council on the topic of mistakes made during mobilization. He demanded the council rectify the errors immediately and calmly. Putin said that those that were mistakenly called for military conscription would be returned. He also added that he would not tolerate any more mistakes, and that those made must be corrected.

On 29 September, Putin signed a decree that recognized the regions of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia as independent, which would be accepted as a step toward acceding to Russia. The document stated that the two regions had referendums according to the principles and norms of international law. The decree also contained that the regions had overwhelming support from the local

residents and should be recognized as independent territories. On 30 September, He signed four agreements of admission of Donetsk People's Republic, Luhansk People's Republic, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson as new territories to the Russian Federation at a special ceremony at the Grand Kremlin Palace.

On the same day, Russia's Permanent Mission to the UN accused the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, of being a double standard. The Russian Permanent Mission said that Guterres had voiced concerns only over Ukraine issues but remained silent about Ukraine's actions in Donbas since 2014, the crisis in Kosovo and the US and NATO occupying part of Syria. They accused Guterres of being influenced by the western agenda and not discussing other issues.

On 30 September, the Head of Russia's Security Council, Nikolay Patrushev, blamed the US for the incident as it would be the most beneficial due to the Nord Stream 1 and 2 pipeline explosion. He said that the US immediately started assigning blame for the explosion. He also compared the incident with the CIA's attack on Nicaragua's oil infrastructure in Puerto Sandino in 1983 for its benefits. Russia blames the US for being the mastermind of the explosion as it would sell its more expensive oil to Europe if Russian oil were out of the picture. However, the US blamed Russia for sabotaging its pipeline.

On the same day, Belarus's President Alexander Lukashenko confirmed his country's alliance with Russia at the credentials presentations ceremony involving ambassadors of foreign countries. He said Belarus would stand firm with Russia. Their relations will be much tighter than that of NATO states. He also announced that Belarus would not be involved in direct conflict with Ukraine.

The West View: Responses from the US and Europe

On 28 September, European Commission, President Ursula von der Leyen announced eighth set of sanctions on Russia in response to Russia's continuing referendum calls, posing nuclear threat and mobilization efforts. The Commission termed the referendum as a sham and that it would not

be acknowledging the outcome of it. The focus of the sanctions imposed are, first, an updated list of individuals and organizations. Second, is banning more Russian imports, decreasing exports to Russia, and prohibiting services available to Russia, and stop EU citizens from holding positions in the governing bodies of Russian public enterprises. Third, a price cap on Russian oil to keep the market stable and to target Russia's oil revenue. Last, creation of a list of individuals who are helping Russia navigate around the sanctions.

On 30 September, the European Commission issued new guidelines on issuing visas for Russian citizens and regulations to be followed at external borders. The guidelines were presented upon gathering of Russians at the European border after mobilization decree. It includes stricter scrutiny of visa applications for Russians such as short-term visas, inspect issued visas at borders and cancel if required, adopt a synchronised approach in handling Russian citizens at the borders to avoid entry of the barred individuals. Commissioner for Home Affairs Ylva Johansson announced the new guidelines, highlighting Europe's commitment in providing asylum to those in need of protection.

On 30 September, Finland closed its border for Russians holding tourist visas. Finland's border with Russia is the longest one among all EU members and is the easiest route for Russians who were fleeing the mandatory conscription. Due to this measure, checkpoints along the border witnessed long lines which remained till midnight.

On the same day, US President Joe Biden refused to acknowledge Russia's referendum and its result. Russia's annexation of four territories of Ukraine after the referendum has been met with further economic sanctions from the US. The sanctions target shell companies which are helping Russia evade sanctions and families of top Kremlin officials have been included in the list of sanctioned individuals.

On 30 September, Jamie Lee Henry and her wife Anna Gabrielian were accused of conspiracy and release of health information of patients at a military hospital. Henry is a US army major doctor and Gabrielian is a

civilian doctor. Gabrielian is said to have approached the Russian embassy in the US after Russia invaded Ukraine and had proposed to share information with regards to US military training to help Ukraine and how army hospitals are set up in conflict zones. She was able to access this information through her wife. Henry later met their contact and extended support and even thought of joining the Russian army. Both are charged with violation of HIPPA and if found guilty they would each serve a total of 15 years for all the charges. The lawyers of the couple and Russian authorities have not responded to this yet.

The Global Fallouts: Implications of the Ukraine war

On 29 September, UN Secretary-General António Guterres expressed his views on Russia's annexation of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia. Guterres condemned this move citing the UN Charter which states that "Any annexation of a State's territory by another State resulting from the threat or use of force is a violation of the Principles of the UN Charter and international law.". He also referred to the "Friendly Relations Declaration" of 24 October 1970 which outlines that a region cannot be annexed by another State using force and such a move will not be recognised and will be considered illegal. Guterres also reminded Russia of its position as a permanent member of the UNSC and its duty to uphold the charter. He said that the annexation will be considered illegal and that it goes against what the international community stands for.

On 30 September, Japan Prime Minister Fumio Kishida criticized Russia's annexation of four regions of Ukrainian a telephone call with Ukraine President Zelensky and assured Japan's support in the war along with the G7 nations to further sanctions on Russia. and He proposed to initiate a discussion on rebuilding Ukraine and reopen its embassy in Kyiv to promote cooperation.

On 30 September, the Uzbekistan government assured to not deport Russians fleeing the mandatory conscription. The

Foreign Ministry expressed its support towards the principle of territorial integrity and respecting one's sovereignty and peaceful resolution of the Ukraine conflict. In a statement, it said, "...Foreign citizens who have not broken the law are not subject to forced deportation." While official numbers have not been released, it is expected to be over a thousand if we look at the numbers from Uzbekistan's neighbours.

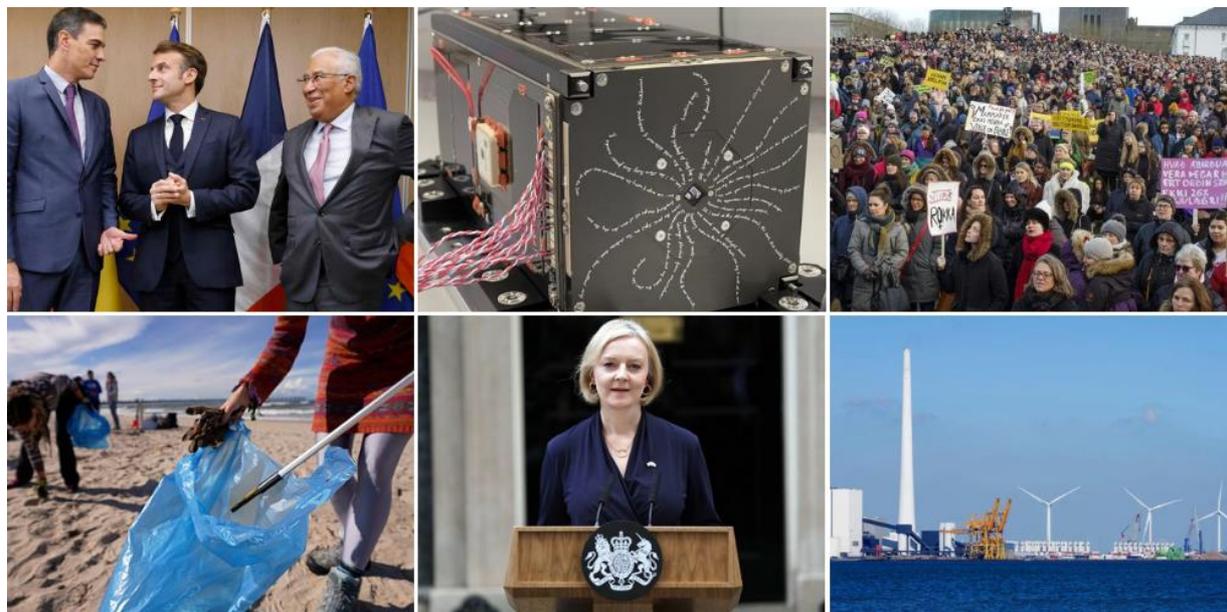
A report published by BBC on 30 September talks about how lower prices of Russian oil are acting as an incentive for Asian countries to buy in a time of high oil prices. India and China now collectively import more than half of Russia's seaborne oil exports. Myanmar has said that it would be buying Russian oil and Sri Lanka has had three deliveries during the time of its financial crisis. Whereas Japan and South Korea have significantly decreased oil and crude imports from Russia. At such a juncture the G7 proposal of a price cap is putting a shadow on oil prices and Russia has taken a stance to not export oil to those who support the price caps. While the amount exported is significant to Russia, it is a very small part of the overall energy imports of both China and India. China has signed various deals to increase imports of LNG from Russia and the completion of the Power of Siberia pipeline will make Russia China's largest gas supplier. As of now one of the main challenges to buying Russian oil is the mode of payment.

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EM Short Notes

By Padmashree Anandhan, Rishma Banerjee, Sai Pranav, and Madhura S Mahesh



Source: LUDOVIC MARIN (AFP), UCD/BBC, Mannfjöldi Konur/Iceland Review, Bo Amstrup/Ritzau Scanpix, BBC, Euronews

ALBANIA

Teachers' protests continue amidst renewed salary hike demands

On 18 October, *EURACTIV* reported on the protests by teachers and students from public universities in Albania against the government's inaction to their higher salary demands. When the academic year started in Albania on 17 October, the protestors demanded a 50 per cent pay rise. The government responded with a promise to increase it only by 17 per cent. While the protest took place in Tirana, teachers and practitioners from Durres, Elbasan, Shkodra, extending to Vlora and Korçe. On the issue, Education Minister, Evis Kushi said similar to other European countries, Albania was also suffering from the impacts of the war in Ukraine and had done its best to provide scholarship to exempt some students from fees. (Alice Taylor, "[Albanian teachers stage protest, demand 50% wage increase](#)," *EURACTIV*, 18 October 2022)

AUSTRIA

President Alexander Van der Bellen to be re-elected

On 09 October, the Interior Ministry announced the preliminary results of the Austria Elections which revealed the

possibility of the incumbent President Alexander Van der Bellen to be elected again. Van der Bellen won a majority of 54.6 per cent with no opposition and support from bigger parties except the far-right Freedom Party. The opposition candidate, Walter Rosenkranz, of the far-right Freedom Party, received only 19.1 per cent votes due to decline in the support from the previous corruption scandal. ("[Austria elections: President Van der Bellen reelected, projections show](#)", *Deutsche Welle*, 09 October 2022)

BELARUS

Lukashenko urges to protect critical infrastructure from cyberattacks

On 25 October, in a meeting on cybersecurity, Belarus's President Aleksandr Lukashenko warned against increasing instances of cyberattacks, which especially target important facilities, government agencies, enterprises and the banking system. Terming the attacks as a form of hybrid warfare, to harm the economy and destabilize society. Lukashenko said that Belarus's Operations and Analysis Center had been instructed to involve experts and a proposal has been submitted to prepare for counteraction against cyberattacks. He said

that Belarus should first understand what infrastructure might be more vulnerable to such attacks. ([“Lukashenko calls to ensure security of vital infrastructure against cyber attacks,” BELTA, 25 October 2022](#))

BOSNIA

Protests rise against Milorad Dodik for ballot rigging scandal

On 10 October, thousands of people protested against the Russia-favouring Bosnian Serb leader, Milorad Dodik, for allegedly rigging the general election to his favour. The demonstration was the second in a week. The opposition claim that Dodik had rigged the ballot and their candidate Jelena Trivic was robbed of her victory. The government had asked for rechecking of every ballot in the country and recounting of 1000 polling stations before the final tally. He had denied any allegation about the possible cheating in the election. Dodik was one of the key figures behind the separatist movement asking for Republika Srpska to be separated from the Bosnia. He has close ties with Russia, which fuels the instability in the country. The country suffers from corruption and ethnic tensions between the Bosniak Serbs and Bosniak-Croat. ([“Bosnia election: Vote-rigging allegations spark more mass protests,” euronews, 10 October 2022](#))

BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA

Dodik supporters protest election commission's order of recounting votes

On 25 October, thousands of people in Bosnia and Herzegovina protested the election commission's decision to recount the votes cast in the presidential election in Republika Srpska. The protestors alleged that the election commission was trying to silence the will of the Serb people in electing the pro-Russian Milorad Dodik. The votes are being recounted as Dodik's main contender; independent candidate Jelena Trivic alleged that Dodik's SNSD party had rigged the election. So far, the election commission has informed the judicial authorities in the country about a few dozen fake ballots that have been found. ([“Bosnia: Thousands protest recount of vote in Serb-run region,” ABC News, 26 October 2022](#))

Activists demand hydropower plant company to drop lawsuits

On 19 October, *EURACTIV* reported on activists in Bosnia & Herzegovina protesting against the Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation (SLAPP) lawsuits filed against them for their stance on the harmful impacts of a hydropower plant on the Kasindolska river. In 2017, the hydropower plant was built by Bosnian construction company Buk Promet d.o.o, where private Belgian company, dealing with renewable energy production, Green Invest is a shareholder. However, since then, two Bosnian activists started to spread awareness about the negative impacts of the plant on the river and its natural ecosystem. In response, BUK d.o.o filed three defamation lawsuits seeking EUR 7,500 in damages with the threat of further legal action against the activists. Now, following the lawsuits, 140 organisations and groups from Europe, especially Bosnia & Herzegovina and also the US have signed an open letter which will be sent to the diplomatic representatives of Belgium, the Head of the EU Delegation in BiH, and other relevant international institutions asking to condemn the company's recent activities. ([“Belgian-based company causes environmental uproar in Bosnia and Herzegovina,” EURACTIV, 19 October 2022](#))

BULGARIA

Caretaker government to not present 2023 budget plan

On 25 October, Bulgaria's Finance Minister Rositsa Velkova announced in the parliament that they would not be presenting the 2023 budget plan. Instead, they are proposing to extend the budget period of the 2022 budget till a new regular government comes into power. This is a shift in the position of the caretaker government which presented a 2023 budget draft on 20 October. The draft outlined a 6.6 per cent fiscal shortfall and a revised debt estimate of about BGN 16 billion. Velkova suggested that the new government can use this estimate and draft to build the new 2023 budget plan. This comes amid Bulgaria's plan to adopt the euro by January 2024. The caretaker government said that they would neither be presenting a budget that would breach the EU's fiscal stability rules nor a budget that

would be within the EU's deficit limit of three per cent as it would mean huge spending cuts. All of this comes as there is a political impasse in the country after the election held on 02 October. ("Bulgaria's caretaker government gives up on 2023 budget plan," *Euractiv*, 25 October 2022)

Former Prime Minister Boyko Borissov looks for a narrow victory in the snap election

On 02 October, Bulgaria held its fourth election in less than two years, with former Prime Minister Boyko Borissov's GERB party set to win narrowly with 23.6-25.5 per cent of votes. People hope his predictability and stability will help the country ease the high inflation and problems from the war in Ukraine. Former Prime Minister Kiril Petkov's reformist party, We Continue the Change, lies in second place with 19.5-19.9 per cent of the vote. Petkov's cabinet collapsed in June 2022, leading to instability in fragile Bulgarian politics. Borissov should make a difficult decision on coalition talks which might lead to a hung parliament or even another election. The sentiment toward Russia is mixed as Bulgaria went along with the West to condemn Russia for invading Ukraine but also is trying to renew its relations after the war ends. (Tsvetelia Tsoleva, "Bulgarian GERB ahead in election, but coalition outlook uncertain," *Reuters* 03 October 2022)

Support for GERB party increases before elections

On 30 September, opinion polls conducted by Alpha Research, Trend and Gallup International in Bulgaria showed the centre-right GERB party widening the gap with its main rival the reformist "We Continue the Change (PP) party." Former Prime Minister Boyko Borissov's GERB party has seen an increase in support to 25-26 per cent from the 22.7 percent when it won the elections in November 2021. However, support for the PP party has fallen from 25.7 per cent to 16.6 per cent. Bulgaria's fourth parliamentary election in less than two years is scheduled to be held on 02 October. So far, opinion polls have indicated a fractured parliament with up to eight political parties without clear majority. ("Bulgaria's GERB party expands lead ahead of Sunday's

election," *Reuters*, 30 September 2022)

CROATIA

Small distributer protest against the government's energy policy

On 19 October, Croatia's small oil retailers filed a lawsuit at the country's Constitutional Court against the government's recent policies to align with the EU's energy policy. On 17 October, the government set a fresh price cap on oil derivatives despite a rise in fuel prices. This is leading to the retailers having to sell fuel at one Kuna less per litre. Thus, the protestors warned that given the current energy situation, such a policy will lead to a shortage of fuel and further destabilize the energy market. They allege that the cap set by the government will also make recovery from the current crisis even more difficult. (Zoran Radosavljevic, "Small Croatian distributors file constitutional suit against price caps," *EURACTIV*, 18 October 2022)

DENMARK

Three candidates fight against Frederiksen to become the next Prime Minister

On 30 October, *THE LOCAL dk* provided profiles for the four candidates of the Prime Ministerial election in Denmark, which will be held on 01 November. The major candidates are the centre-left Social Democrats Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen, the liberal Jakob Ellemann-Jensen, the conservative Soren Pape Poulsen and the centrist moderate Lars Lokke Rasmussen. Frederiksen was the second female Prime Minister of Denmark after Helle Thorning-Schmidt. She has implemented tougher migration policies to defend the welfare state. She lost her popularity because she illegally handled the culling of the minks population due to the fear of mutation of the novel coronavirus. Ellemann-Jensen had a family of members of parliament and succeeded the former Prime Minister Rasmussen to lead the Liberal Party, whereas Pape Poulsen is considered the wild card on the right wing. However, a scandal involving the lineage of his husband led to the fall of his popularity. His party is now faring at six per cent, while it trailed 16.5 per cent of votes two months ago. Rasmussen formed a new party named the

Moderates which rose from polling 1.8 per cent a month ago to 11.5 per cent now. ("Three candidates for PM in Denmark, and one wild card," *THE LOCAL dk*, 30 October 2022)

New offshore wind power farms to be constructed

On 25 October, *THE LOCAL dk* reported that Denmark's Partially owned power company Orsted is planning to build four offshore wind power farms that could increase Denmark's current wind power capacity by 100 per cent. The company will agree with the investment firm Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners (CIP) to build turbine facilities capable of producing 5.2 gigawatts of wind power. Two turbine farms will be located off the west coast of Jutland and two near the coast of Bornholm, a Baltic Sea Island. The construction is hoped to be finished by 2027 or 2028. The increase in energy will help Denmark focus on producing green hydrogen and fuels. Although the agreement is yet to be approved by the authorities, Orsted and CIP hope it will be granted by the end of 2022. ("Danish offshore wind energy deal could double country's capacity," *THE LOCAL dk*, 25 October 2022)

Border control with Germany extended

On 24 October, Denmark extended the border control at their border with Germany. Denmark's Justice Minister Mattias Tesfaye confirmed the extension through a note to the parliamentary Justice Committee. All border controls should be temporary, including the one introduced in 2016 in Denmark. However, it was extended for eight years, the latest starting from 12 November. The security and migration situations in Denmark were said to be the reason for the extension of border control by the government. The border petrol creates long queues for crossing Denmark to Germany by road. The left-leaning parties, the Red-Green Alliance, Socialist People's Party and Social Liberals, opposed the extension of border control. They responded that it would be a waste of resources and men that could be used elsewhere. ("Denmark confirms latest extension of checks at German border," *THE LOCAL dk*, 24 October 2022)

Private sectors hope for a new policy to

counter labour shortages

On 21 October, *THE LOCAL dk* reported on the decrease in the number of employees in Denmark's private sector. The private industry waits for the November elections to propose for upskilling more employees to the new government. So far, labour shortages can be seen across private, public, health and social care sectors, lack of skilled employees has resulted in the reduction of private industries revenue. ("Danish companies demand political pledge for 50,000 new staff," *THE LOCAL dk*, 21 October 2022)

The Moderates secure a chance to win 17 seats in the upcoming elections

On 19 October, a poll by Voxmeter institute showed that the Moderates had increased from 4.1 to 9.2 points. Mette Frederiksen's ruling party, the Social Democrats, are the top as per the poll with 87 seats, and the opposition liberals are in second place with 71 seats. In case of Denmark's former Prime Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen's Moderates are expected to get 17 seats out of 179 in the parliament. To secure a majority 90 seats are required. ("Denmark's former PM Rasmussen on course for election surprise in poll," *THE LOCAL dk*, 19 October 2022)

Discriminatory remark from Nye Borgerlige party's member of parliament

On 18 October, Denmark's far-right party Nye Borgerlige (New Right) was accused of being anti-Semitic and homophobic after one of its MPs, Mette Thiesen, had responded to a question on DR's P1 Morgen radio programme. She suggested that it was acceptable for an elderly person to refuse care from a Jewish or a gay person in their home. The remark created a huge backlash to the party. The left-wing Red-Green Alliance (Enhedslisten) party and Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen criticized Nye Borgelige for having such thoughts that are destructive to society. The comment followed a discussion on allowing carers who wear hijab and also a refusal by elderly people. The opposition of the far-right party criticised the party for spreading discrimination among people. Nye Borgelige responded that it was the right of the elderly to choose their caretaker and allow people into their homes. The party's head, Pernille

Vermund, said that there was no ill intention behind the statement and the far-right part was not anti-Semitic and homophobic. ("Danish far-right party accused of antisemitism over elderly care remarks," *The Local dk*, 18 October 2022)

Elections to be held ahead in November

On 05 October, Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen announced fresh elections for 01 November 2022. Seven months before her term ends, Denmark is going to the polls to elect the members of the Folketing. With 179 seats up for grabs, opinion polls project that the ruling party and the opposition are neck-to-neck which feeds into Frederiksen's reason for calling an early election. She has previously worked with the opposition to navigate the pandemic and recently in the case of increasing Denmark's defence expenditure. The decision to call for early elections comes after a Parliament-appointed commission criticised the government's move to cull millions of healthy minks during the pandemic. The government defended itself by saying it was to reduce the risk of virus mutation. When the early elections were announced, Frederiksen hoped that the new government will include members of the current opposition party for a diverse diaspora to help tackle various issues. ("As support sags, Danish prime minister calls Nov. 1 election," *AP News*, 05 October 2022)

ESTONIA

Reinsalu proposes to reinstate internal Schengen border controls

On 27 October, Estonia's Minister of Foreign Affairs Urmas Reinsalu (Isamaa) expressed the need for the reinstatement of border controls at Estonia's internal Schengen borders. Reinsalu added: "The Foreign Ministry's unequivocal view is that we need stronger controls and greater clarity." According to him with the influx of over 100,000 Ukrainian citizens into the country and many of them treating Estonia as a transit country, it is imperative to know their status. At the same time, the Minister of the Interior Lauri Läänemets (SDE) disagreed stating that it will not only drive-up spending to EUR 7.3 million a month, but has the potential to weaken Estonia's guard of its eastern border. Estonian Law

enforcement agencies have backed Läänemets saying that "...there's no need to start carefully examining Latvian plates at the expense of internal security." Läänemets believes that there should be talks with other European nations to accept war refugees if the war continues for another year and said that "I'm relying here on robust action from the Foreign Ministry." ("Estonian FM wants to reinstate border controls at internal Schengen border," *news.err.ee*, 27 October 2022)

Social Affairs Ministry reports a surge in food aid beneficiaries

On 26 October, Estonia's Social Affairs Ministry reported that there has been a surge in the number of food aid recipients in the second quarter of the year. The Ministry recorded a 65 per cent increase which is approximately 14,000 more beneficiaries. The Estonian Food Bank added that in August and September 35,328 food parcels were distributed by them. A volunteer at the Food Bank Liisa Rebane-Mäe told that more parcels have been distributed in the first nine months of 2022 when compared to all of 2021. The recipients are decided based on applications for and beneficiaries of subsistence allowance and government benefits. The food aid package includes dry goods, tea, honey, tinned meat, muesli bars, raisins, nuts and biscuits. ("A huge increase in food aid recipients in Estonia," *Estonian world*, 26 October 2022)

Proposed representative to the European Court of Auditors under scrutiny

On 24 October, former chairman of the EKRE party in Estonia, Mart Helme said that he will submit a complaint to the EU, against the government's plan to designate former Finance Minister Keit Pentus-Rosimannus as the representative for the European Court of Auditors. Helme alleges that Pentus-Rosimannus broke the application process. Helme, who heads the Special Anti-corruption Committee filed a draft of the complaint with the committee and said that he will send the letter in a personal capacity if the committee did not agree to his stance. On the same issue, former Defence Minister and committee member, Kalle Laanet said that no decision should be taken before the prosecutor's office released its decision by the end of this week. (Anne Raiste, "EKRE

planning EU complaint over Estonia's ECA application process," news.err.ee, 24 October 2022)

Begins trail for four men accused of crypto currency fraud

On 19 October, *news.err.ee* reported on the investigation on four Estonian citizens in relation to a cryptocurrency fraud, who profited EUR eight million. As per the district prosecutor Kristiina Laas, the four are suspected to have provided false information to sell the Dragcoin cryptocurrency. Laas mentioned that the four had pegged their currency to their user base. It meant that the price of the cryptocurrency would increase where there were more users. The four thus inflated the number of users falsely to increase the price of the cryptocurrency. The Head of the central criminal police's economic crimes office said that the accused had taken advantage of a time when cryptocurrency sector was unregulated. As per Estonia's norms, the proceedings will be conducted by the Central Criminal Police's economic crimes bureau and be directed by the Southern District Prosecutor's Office. ("Four suspected in €8-million cryptocurrency fraud," news.err.ee, 20 October 2022)")

Plans to install a nuclear power plant by 2035

On 17 October, *Aktuaalne kaamera* reported that the country is considering the establishment of one nuclear power plant by 2035. A government working group on the same issue released a report which analyses 19 issues surrounding the introduction of nuclear energy as per the United Nation's International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) guidelines. The report is an in-progress one and is scheduled to be completed in 2024, after which recommendations as per the study will be presented to the Parliament for acceptance. If accepted the nuclear power plant project will cost around EUR two billion, have small modular reactors with a 300 megawatts capacity and will be built by private investors and Fermi Energia. (Thomas Pott, "Estonia could get nuclear power plant by 2035," news.err.ee, 17 October 2022)")

Joins NATO-level European air defence system

On 17 October, Estonia's Defence Minister, Hanno Pevkur, in an interview with *ERR* said that Estonia had joined the European air defence system created by Germany, which would protect Estonia from ballistic missiles in future. The European states are working together to integrate air defence systems, which consists of only 15 members. Germany, which is promoting the NATO-level defence agreement aims for joint tender or integration to convince the 15 member states agree to a common interest. The initiative will integrate Estonia's upcoming medium-range capability and Estonia's short-range capability that it shares with Poland. ("Defense minister: European air defense initiative could benefit Estonia," news.err.ee, 17 October 2022)")

Refused admittance to Ukrainian refugees near the border

On 13 October, Estonia turned Ukrainian refugees away after enduring gruesome waits and long-drawn rejections. People being forced to wait in harsh weather conditions at the Kunichina Gora checkpoint on the Russian border with Estonia has led to an acute amassing of dissent for Russia. When Russian President Vladimir Putin attacked Ukraine in 2014 which he called the "Russain World", refugees admitted that their struggles to find a secure home dissipated. Calling this a "deliberate" attempt, refugees have been incessantly trying to escape Russia and the partial mobilization. Also rejecting them at the Narva border crossing, Estonian authorities have denied entry to around 1,091 refugees, and have cited that they could be "endangering national security". ("Estonia turns away Ukrainian refugees at EU border after harrowing wait," Deutsche Welle, 13 October 2022)")

FINLAND

New abortion law introduced

On 26 October, Finland's Parliament voted for a new law to ease the process for women to get an abortion. The voting ratio for the new abortion law by the MPs was 125:41. One abstained, and 32 were absent from the voting. The law enabled women to abort their pregnancies without the opinion of two

doctors. Abortion procedure can be done up to 12 weeks of pregnancy. The law states that a pregnant woman's request and consent are sufficient to undergo an abortion unlike the rule that allows abortion only if the health of the mother or the foetus is in danger. While all MPs of the Christian Democrats voted against the new abortion law, MPs from the centre and basic Finns introduced the proposal for the law. (Anne Orjala, "Getting an abortion is getting easier - see how your MP voted," *yle.fi*, 26 October, "Parliament approved the new abortion law," *yle.fi*, 26 October 2022)

The EU's nature restoration proposal faces differences in opinion in the government

On 23 October, Finland's Prime Minister Sanna Marin announced that Finland would vote against the EU's nature restoration regulation. She welcomes the restoration regulations but said, "...it has to be done in places where it's functional and sensible." The proposal was to restore 20 per cent of land and sea across the EU member states to their natural form by 2030. The coalition was divided over the discussion to reject the nature restoration regulation. The government will decide what's good for Finland and evaluate the best option. The National Coalition said that the vote for not supporting the proposal would reflect poorly on Finland's forest policy and national interests. (Aleksi Teivainen, "Marin: Finland could vote against EU's restoration regulation," *Helsinki Times*, 24 October 2022)

Reception system to increase its capacity to accommodate Ukrainian refugees

On 24 October, Finland's Immigration centres due to the increase in Ukrainian refugees. New reception centres are built to provide accommodation to refugees fleeing from Ukraine to Finland. Finland has 86 existing ones with secondary branches and service points and eight reception units for minors. Approximately 50 per cent live in private accommodation, and 10 per cent in municipalities provided accommodation for temporary protection. The number of applicants for the reception centres has been increasing as the war in Ukraine prolongs. The Finnish Immigration Service looks after

directing, planning and supervising the workings of the reception system. ("Finnish Immigration Service to establish new reception centres on 24 October," *Helsinki Times*, 24 October 2022)

The amendment to Climate Act focuses on implementing joint climate plan in municipalities

On 20 October, Finland's government approved the proposal for revising the Climate Act. Mission targets are set for 2030, 2040 and 2050 by the Climate Act, where it aims to make Finland carbon-neutral by 2035. The new amendment focuses on municipalities across Finland drawing up their own climate plans or collaborating with other municipalities to draw a joint climate plan through an annual budget of EUR 2.6 million. The climate targets provided by municipalities are much more efficient than the national ones making it easier for the country to become carbon-neutral. The municipality plans will quickly boost Finland's climate work to achieve the targets and also targets reducing greenhouse gas emissions in municipalities and measures to control the emissions. ("Government proposal: Municipalities obliged to draw up climate plans in future," *Helsinki Times*, 21 October 2022)

Probe over drone activities in Southwestern part of the country

On 20 October, drones were sighted in Southwestern Finland, which houses important infrastructures such as water plants. The Chief Rescue Inspector of Southwestern Finland's Regional Administrative Agency, Unto Usvasalo, said there was no information on the perpetrators or reason for the drone flights. Citizens were advised to report any suspicious activities. The Committee that investigated the matter speculates that drones could have aimed at the security of water supply amid the harsh economic conditions. The only concern is over social peace and the spread of misinformation. However, the preparedness committee assured the safety of the water supply. (Hannu Vahamaki, "Suspicious drones have been seen in the vicinity of the waterworks in Southwest Finland," *yle.fi*, 20 October 2022)

New amendment to real estate acquisition act to ensure national security safety

On 20 October, Finland's government has submitted a proposal to the parliament for supervising real estate ownership. The Act changes licence requirements in real estate acquisition. A new section will be added to the act so that real estate acquisitions would not harm national security. A licence application will be rejected if the stated purpose does coincide with real estate acquired. The Defence Ministry has the right to investigate and enquire about the real estate acquisition if they find it unsuitable. To ensure the national security, the state would have the right to buy pre-emptively if the real estate acquisition becomes a threat. State's pre-emptive rights prevail over municipality rights. The amendment will take effect from early 2023. ("Government proposal to Parliament: Real estate purchases must not endanger national security," *valtioneuvosto.fi*, 20 October 2022)

President Sauli Niinisto gives a speech at the Rose-Roth Seminar

On 18 October, Finland's President Sauli Niinisto addressed the Rose-Roth Seminar attended by NATO member states, parliamentarians and ally countries held in Helsinki. They discussed on changing security environment in Northern Europe, which included the war in Ukraine and climate change. Niinisto supported Ukraine in its fight for sovereignty and urged China, the US and the EU to help prevent the war from escalating further. He urged the countries present not to force the peace agreement. ("Finnish President addresses Nato parliamentary seminar in Helsinki," *yle.fi*, 18 October 2022)

FRANCE

Macron uses constitutional power to push 2023 budget through

On 19 October, *the Guardian* reported on French President, Emmanuel Macron using of special constitutional powers to force through the France's 2023 budget. Far-right National Rally and left coalition Nupes accused Macron's government practicing authoritarianism. The government's pro-business budget was forcefully pushed through even though it received opposition

from other parties. The Ministers justified the budget as way to protect people from the cost-of-living crisis and avoid tax increases. Marine Le Pen of the National Rally and Jean-Luc Melenchon from the left coalition wanted no-confidence motion against Macron. The right-wing and left-wing parties had voted against the budget leaving Macron to use the constitutional decree to push it through. Macron's government justified that they had to take the decision due to intentional obstruction of passing the budget by the opposition parties. (Angelique Chrisafis, "French government to use constitutional powers to force through budget," *The Guardian*, 19 October 2022)

Fresh protests on rising living costs

On 16 October, thousands of protestors assembled at the Place de la Nation to protest against the rising living costs. These protests come amidst an already tense political atmosphere in France due to strikes by workers at oil refineries and nuclear plants. Other than tackling the cost of living crisis, another demand from the protestors was the reduction of pension age from 62 to 60. Even though the left-wing alliance in France known as the New Ecological and Social Popular Union (NUPES), comprising of France Unbowed (LFI), France's Socialist Party, the Greens and the Communist Party did not officially join the protests, many top members from the alliance were seen in the protest. LFI's former presidential candidate Jean-Luc Melenchon who participated in the protests said that the gathering marked the first phase of a cycle of protests. He also hinted at fresh strikes from 18 October, where teachers' unions, employees in the energy sector, the railroad company SNCF's employees as workers at Paris's metro company RATP are expected to participate. (Lisa Louis, "France: Is the cost of living protest movement about to erupt?," *Deutsche Welle*, 16 October 2022)

Authorities demand the end of strike by energy company employees

On 11 October, France's Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne ordered Esso-ExxonMobil and TotalEnergies oil refinery workers who are on a strike to resume work. The strike has led to the closure of around 30 per cent of service stations across France, prompting

Borne to instruct the return of employees to service stations across the country. The government which has released strategic stockpiles of oil to ease the supply called for negotiation and an agreement between the government and the unions to put an end to the strike. However, the General Confederation of Labour (CGT) trade union, which is coordinating the strike amongst the workers rejected the recently proposed pay rise and said that they are prepared to go to war if France's government forces them to return to work. ("France orders energy companies to resolve strikes amid fuel shortages," *Euronews*, 11 October 2022)

Trial for 2009 crash begins for Airbus and Air France

On 10 October, *Deutsche Welle* reported on the commencement Airbus and Air France's trial for the Paris-Rio crash that occurred in 2009. The two companies have been accused of involuntary manslaughter after flight AF 447 crashed into the Atlantic Ocean killing 228 people on board, including 12 crew members. Aviation experts, pilots and family members of victims are expected to give testimony in the hearings that will last over two months. Air France has been accused for not providing adequate training in the event of a crash due to bad weather and Airbus is accused of knowing that the pilot tubes of the flight were faulty and not informing the airlines and the crew about it. If convicted, each company faces a maximum fine of EUR 220,000. ("Airbus, Air France to go on trial for 2009 Rio-Paris crash," *Deutsche Welle*, 10 October 2022)

Annie Ernaux becomes the country's first female Nobel laureate for literature

On 06 October, the Swedish Academy awarded the Nobel Prize in literature to French author Annie Ernaux, who won the accolade for her "courage and clinical acuity" in her books. Ernaux's books are mostly autobiographical and address the various disparities and discrimination arising out of gender, language and class. The 82-year-old author calls writing a political act which elucidates social inequality. Ernaux's first novel came out in 1974 called "Les Amores Vides," but she gained wider recognition after "Les Annes" was published in 2008 and translated to "The Years" in English in 2017.

applauded the author and said: "she uses language as 'a knife', as she calls it, to tear apart the veils of imagination." (By Justyna Pawlak, Simon Johnson and Elizabeth Pineau, "France's Ernaux, who long scrutinised self, wins Nobel literature prize," *Reuters*, 07 October 2022)

Macron encounters crucial strike as pensioners refuse reform

On 29 September, the French government witnessed strikes against President Emmanuel Macron proposal on raising the retirement age from 62 to 65. The opposition and unions rejected the pension reforms and demanded for pay rise put forward by the French government. According to Macron, these reforms were the only way to push back on taxes without decreasing revenues amidst declining deficits and staggering public debts. Around 200 protests were organized nationwide and was staged by 400,000 people in Paris. (Luke Shrago, "Macron faces first major strike since re-election as unions oppose pension reform," *France24*, 29 September 2022)

GERMANY

Cooperation with France in jeopardy

On 25 October, *Deutsche Welle* reported on the widening gap between France and Germany upon the recent announcement to postpone the ministerial meeting. France and Germany which are seen as centric force to the EU, the cooperation in terms of joint air defence programme, granting emergency energy package, nuclear energy and building a new hydrogen and gas pipeline, both have been consciously leaving out from the collaborations. According to Deputy Director of the German-Franco Institute: "German and French heads of state have often had to go through a learning curve to understand that the EU cannot function without the Franco-German couple." (Lisa Louis, "France-Germany tensions 'hamstring EU's capacity to act'," *Deutsche Welle*, 25 October 2022)

Dispute over Hamburg port terminal settled

On 26 October, German cabinet in a clash with China's shipping company Cosco in buying a stake in a Hamburg port terminal, Germany agreed for a compromise which

allows China's Cosco to hold a small share of 24.9 per cent instead of 35 per cent as per the earlier plan. It was done to continue its economic ties with China and to avoid higher dependency. According to a Germany's ministers, the caution signal remains as they fear it might lead China to influence the activities of the port and have a larger effect on its long-term economic stability.

("Germany agrees on compromise over China port bid: reports," Deutsche Welle, 26 October 2022)

Union conducts strikes in Amazon at different locations

On 11 October, German trade union Verdi announced that workers at nine Amazon distribution centres would strike to pressure the company into multiple agreements. The workers were planning to strike on Amazon's two-day Prime Early Access Sale so that it would disrupt the company's profit. The strikes happen at different locations and at different timing, making it difficult for Amazon to stop them. Although Amazon had increased the wages of logistical employees, it was little compared to the rising inflations. The union looks to bargain numerous agreements with these strikes. ("German union calls on Amazon workers to strike during sale," Reuters, 11 October 2022)

Investigation launched to check links of Head of the National Cybersecurity

On 10 October, Germany's Interior Ministry announced that it is investigating the Head of Germany's national cybersecurity agency over her links with Russia's intelligence. President of the Federal Office for Information Security, Arné Schonbohm, who heads the BSI agency co-founded a group that includes public and private companies' stakeholders in Germany's cybersecurity sector. On 08 October, Germany's rail company, Deutsche Bahn suffered a failure of the digital train radio system, which raised concerns about compromise of Germany's critical infrastructure, especially in the context of the Ukraine war and Germany's opposition to Russia. On this issue, the Transport Minister Volker Wissing said that Germany's Federal Police was investigating the incident. ("German cybersecurity chief investigated over Russia ties," AP News, 10 October 2022)

Social Democrats win the Lower Saxony elections adding advantage to the Chancellor

On 09 October, the Social Democrats from the current coalition of Germany won the regional elections held in Lower Saxony despite the critics over economic recession and energy crisis. The vote includes the SPD party led by Stephen Weil won with 33.4 per cent which was slightly less than the 2017 elections where it won 36.9 per cent. In case of the opposition, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) was able to get only 28.1 per cent with decrease of five per cent from the 2017 elections. The coalition probabilities are likely to be between the SPD's and the Greens which came third in the elections with 14.5 per cent. Another takeaway to look at the election result is the doubling of vote share of the AfD (far-right Alternative for Germany party) which increased to 10.9 per cent. ("Germany: Lower Saxony election a boost for Chancellor Olaf Scholz," Deutsche Welle, 09 October 2022)

Six Parliamentarians visit Taiwan to further bilateral ties

On 06 October, six parliamentarians from Bundestag concluded a five-day visit which focused on to further bilateral ties with Taiwan. The Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU) emphasized that the visit, was an effort to better relations between the two parliaments than reflecting the official position of the German government or the Foreign Ministry. Representatives from Social Democratic Party (SPD), the Green Party and Free Democratic Party (FDP) were also part of the delegation. The parliamentarians of Germany and China both the countries talked about ways to address common problems like housing shortages, scientific challenges, trade, and energy dependency. Marking the first German visit since 2019, this delegation marks the first of the upcoming bilateral meetings between the two countries. In the next few weeks, the Bundestag's Human Rights Committee is expected to visit Taipei, followed by a delegation of young parliamentarians in 2023. (Jon Shelton, "German lawmakers call for deeper ties with Taiwan," Deutsche Welle, 06 October 2022)

Interrogates the people linked to IS from Syria

On 05 October, Germany's Foreign Minister, Annalena Baerbock announced the deportation of 12 people with connections to the Islamic State from Syria. The group includes one man, four women, and seven children, who had been staying in the Roj camp in Northeast Syria, under Kurdish control. The five adults will be subject to detainment and questions upon reaching Germany. However, Baerbock mentioned that she was especially relieved about the repatriation of the children, as they were innocent and "victims of IS." Till now 26 women and 76 children suspected to have links with the IS, have been repatriated from Syria, and some amongst them have been tried and jailed for the war. ("Germany repatriates 12 IS-linked citizens from Syria," *Deutsche Welle*, 06 October 2022)

Coal used as a short term measure to secure the energy supply

On 04 October, Germany's energy company RWE made a deal with the government that it would phase out coal by 2030. The energy firm is looking to temporarily increase the production of energy in the lignite-fired power stations, Neurath D and E power plant units to ensure supply security in amidst the ongoing energy crisis. The coal powered power plants which were scheduled to be shutdown by 31 March 2024. To secure the supply of energy, coal usage is increased, but RWE said it would ensure that all the fossil fuel powered energy plants would be closed by 2030. The company looks to reduce the damage done to the environment by using fossil fuels as soon as possible after the short-term usage. ("Germany's largest power producer to end coal use by 2030," *Deutsche Welle*, 04 October 2022)

Report finds algae bloom to be the cause behind the death of fish in Oder River

On 30 September, the German Environment Authorities (UBA) issued a report on the mass kill-off of fish in the Oder River, which borders Poland and Germany. UBA said that the death of the fish had likely been caused by the algae *Prymnesium parvum*, which releases toxins into the water they grow in. The algal bloom was caused because the

components of the water was favourable for its growth, like a high concentration of salt. UBA ruled out contamination from industries and herbicides as the cause behind the deaths as the amounts found in the water of Oder is not enough to cause such acute poisoning of the fish. The report also recommended conducting more research and mitigating similar catastrophes in the future and increasing cross-border warning systems. ("Germany: Oder River mass fish deaths most likely caused by algae, authorities say," *Deutsche Welle*, 30 September 2022)

New deal to protect consumers and businesses

On 29 September, Germany's government announced that up to EUR 200 billion will be allocated to consumers and businesses to deal with rising energy prices. Chancellor Olaf Scholz said that the government will reactivate the economic stabilising fund and will "do everything it can" to bring the prices down. The fund is expected to restrict the price that Germans have to pay for gas and help in relieving inflation. A similar "defensive shield" was used support Germany's economy during the COVID 19 pandemic and the resultant global financial crisis. So far, the government has unveiled EUR 100 billion in support measures to respond to the crisis. ("Germany to spend €200 billion to tackle high energy prices," *Euronews*, 29 September 2022)

HUNGARY

Unblocks Sweden and Finland's accession process

On 22 October, Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban's Chief of Staff, Gergely Gulyas, announced during the government's regular press brief that Hungary would stop delaying Sweden and Finland's NATO membership. Turkey and Hungary are the only countries that have been blocking the Nordic countries' accession process. He said the accession process would be completed by mid-December. The NATO accession process will be discussed in the autumn session of the Hungarian parliament. Even after the Socialist suggested scheduling a vote in the Parliament about Finland and Sweden, Orban rejected it due to being forced by the opposition party on the crucial

matter. He also added that Hungary is trying to reach NATO's pre-requisite level of two per cent of GDP spent on the annual defence. (Daniel Deme, "[Hungary to Ratify NATO's Northern Expansion](#)," *Hungary today*, 24 October 2022)

The Interior Minister points out the drawback of the EU's migration policy

On 18 October, Interior Ministry's Parliamentary State Secretary, Bence Retvari spoke about EU member states introducing more border control measures which are detrimental to the EU's values of "free movement of people, goods, and capital, and thus the EU economy." He said that Hungary is opposed to the EU's migration policy as it creates the opportunity for illegal migrants to apply for asylum while being inside the EU as it is difficult to deport these migrants whether they have official documents or not. Retvari also mentioned that action was taken on 15,000 illegal migrants in 2022, of whom 10 per cent are imprisoned on human smuggling charges. He also highlighted that since Hungary was under-construction of a border fence to secure the EU, it proposed to the EU to consider funding half the construction costs. ("[Hungary Opposes EU Migration Pact](#)," *Hungary Today*, 18 October 2022)

Viktor Orban faces largest anti-government protests since re-election in April

On 05 April, people gathered in Budapest to protest against the working conditions for teachers in Hungary. The demonstrations, grew to be the biggest anti-government protests since Prime Minister Viktor Orban's re-election in April. It started with students forming a chain across Budapest, stretching for kilometres due to the mass firing of teachers from their posts. One of the campaign signs read as "I want to teach" to demand better working conditions and higher wages for teachers. However, the government stated that the teacher's demands can be only met once the EU COVID-19 recovery funds are released. ("[Large Demonstration In Budapest Demands Better Conditions For Teachers](#)," *rferl.org*, 06 October 2022)

ICELAND

Women get time off after 1515 hours following the Women's Day Off demonstration

On 24 October, the women in Iceland are allowed to be relieved from work at 1515 hours. The decision was made following the Women's Day Off demonstration, which started on 24 October 1975. 90 per cent of women workers walked out of their workplaces in 1975, and the rally continued six times, the latest being in 2018. Alongside encouraging women to leave the workplace early, the government is also trying to close the wage gap between genders by 2045. Arborg municipality in Southern Iceland achieved equal pay between 1000 male and female employees. The government is trying to give women more rights and freedom. (Margret Adamsdottir, "[Women encouraged to walk out from work at 15:15](#)," *ruv.is*, 24 October 2022; Erik Pomrenke, "[No Gender Pay Gap in Árborg](#)," *Iceland Review*, 24 October 2022)

Minister of Justice proposal to revise the Foreign National Act rejected

On 21 October, Iceland's Justice Minister Jon Gunnarsson proposed a bill in the parliament to amend the Foreign National Act, which looks at authorization to enter, stay and their right to international protection. Gunnarsson's revision in the act is that a foreign national whose application of international protection was denied should be stripped of their rights such as healthcare, education and housing after 30 days of rejection. The asylum seekers will then be deported. The bill was equally rejected by opposition parties and the Prime Minister. They deem the amendment unnecessary and blamed the war in Ukraine for the increase in the number of refugees. (Ragnar Tomas, "[Bill to Amend Foreign Nationals Act Distributed Among MP's](#)," *Iceland review*, 21 October 2022)

IRELAND

High-profile trial to be held over murder of Byrne

On 16 October, *The Guardian* reported on the impending trial of Gerry "the Monk" Hutch in Ireland. A special criminal court will be trying Hutch and the workings of his cartel, after he orchestrated the murder of David Byrne, a member of the Kinahan cartel in

2016. This attack was allegedly in response to the murder of Hutch's nephew by members of the Kinahan cartel in 2015. Byrne's murder triggered a massive and lethal feud between the rival gangs, resulting in 18 deaths between 2015 and 2018. However, Hutch has denied the murder charge. The case, which is expected to run for months, will bestow a life sentence on Hutch, if found guilty. Police protection and security has been increased manifold at the court, where the trial is set to be conducted. (Rory Carroll, "[Ireland's gangland trial of century set to begin in Dublin](#)," *The Guardian*, 16 October 2022)

ITALY

New government to be set up by 26 October

On 19 October, the process to form a government to replace Mario Draghi's administration began. With the Giorgia Meloni from Brothers of Italia winning the major share of votes is expected to carry out the negotiations with the right alliance parties in terms of ministerial appointments to form the government and is probable to become the first female Prime Minister. Sergio Mattarella as speaker of the parliament will invite the opposition parties and the new government will take charge between 22 -24th October upon winning a vote of confidence in the parliament. ("[Italy begins negotiations on forming new government](#)," *Deutsche Welle*, 19 October 2022)

Economic crisis looms, reducing household spending capacity

On 09 October, *La Repubblica* reported that according to the data by Confesercenti, an Italian trade association representing firms in trade, tourism, services, crafts and small services, Italians have reduced their purchasing power due to the rising energy prices. The soaring energy costs have made Italy's citizens to spend money from their savings thereby diminishing it. The spending capacity has fallen by almost EUR 12.1 billion. High energy tariffs and inflation has increased the cost of living among the citizens. Italians are not looking for credits due to the high interest rates. However, tourism in Italy has started to revive slowly from the COVID-19 economic crisis. (Carlotta Scozzari, "[The high cost of life burns 12.1](#)

[billion of Italians. And families use the savings](#)," *La Repubblica*, 09 October 2022)

Outgoing government announced new LGBTQ strategy

On 07 October, Equal Opportunities Minister Elena Bonetti of the outgoing government announced a new strategy to counter discrimination against LGBTQ. The move is seen as tactical as the new government of Giorgia Meloni will be coming into position soon. Brothers of Italy party has been against the LGBTQ and gender fluidness since it's evolution, considering the threats the community might challenge, the outgoing government has taken the step. The new strategy 2022-2025 proposed "specific anti-LGBTQ discrimination clauses" into the state's labour agreement. In *la Repubblica* (Italy daily) Bonetti said: "The strategy makes rights concrete with a series of actions against violence and marginalization." ("[Italy adopts new LGBTQ rights plan before right-wing takeover](#)," *Deutsche Welle*, 07 October 2022)

KOSOVO

Refuses to extend deadline for vehicles to have Kosovo license plates

On 27 October, the leader of the Serbian List party, Goran Rakic said that the Kosovo Serbs in the norther part of Kosovo will again block the roads, if authorities in Pristina start confiscating cars without Kosovo license plates. As per decision taken by Kosovo's government in July, after 31 October, vehicles with Serbian identity documents and license plates would not be valid in Kosovo territory. On this issue, Prime Minister Albin Kurti said: "We already delayed the deadline.... The last date is October 31 when all Kosovo citizens who have old automobile plates, which are a legacy of the Milosevic era, will be able to convert them into legitimate ones." Rakic said that the protest by the Kosovo Serbs will "use all democratic and peaceful means" to resist the move. ("[Kosovo Serbs Warn They Will Again Block Roads If License-Plate Deal Not Extended](#)," *rferl.org*, 28 October 2022)

LATVIA

Three-party coalition to form the

government

On 24 October, Latvia's President Egils Levits indicated that a three-party coalition would form the government after the recent Saeima elections. The elections were held on 01 October, and now, three parties, New Unity, National Alliance, and United List will be forming the government. The Progressive Party, which was to be the last party in Latvia's four-party government model, will now have to come to an agreement with New Unity to proceed with collaboration talks. Even though the President did not clarify the exact date, he said that the parties will sign a memorandum of cooperation and soon decide on the division of duties. ("New Latvian coalition to consist of three parties," *Eng.LSM.lv*, 24 October 2022)

Investigation against ex-NATO chief begins

On 19 October, an investigation was opened against ex-NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen by Latvian police. He is accused of playing a role in bankrupting PNB Banka where over EUR 140 million worth of assets went missing. Rasmussen served as the Danish Prime Minister before assuming his role in NATO. His spokesperson did not comment on this issue. Adding that the former deputy chairman of PNB's independent steering group was acting "irresponsibly" the administrators said that EUR 140 million led to "gaps" in the bank's assets. With former executives also being a part of the investigation, Rasmussen's case was set aside in Denmark when the bank's lawyer unsuccessfully tried to have it brought before the country's Supreme Court. ("Latvian police probe former NATO chief," *aa.com.tr*, 19 October 2022)

Potential coalition partners reach agreement on Administrative Territorial Reform

On 18 October, the potential coalition partners of New Unity and Combined List in Latvia held a meeting, where they reached agreements on Administrative Territorial Reform and the sea port reform and also discussed the way forward. New Unity's leader, Krisjanis Karins said that discussion on these issues at this point of Latvia's government formation was crucial. He mentioned that the topics discussed at the

meeting would be positive news for his upcoming meeting with President Egils Levits on 24 October. Combined List politician and head of Liepaja Party Uldis Sesks spoke about the issue. She said that the new government must not backtrack from the improvements discussed on the sea port reform. Sesks reiterated that the Combined List and the New Unity agreed on Latvia's need to create a state-owned LNG terminal with a connection to the Inčukalns gas storage facility. ("Coalition partners in Latvia agree on state reforms; government composition not discussed," *bbn news*, 19 October 2022)

10,000 Latvian homes have household electricity generation systems

On 19 October, *ENG.LSM.lv* reported that Latvia was making great progress in terms of self-generation of electricity in households. Earlier, the number of Latvia's micro-generators, mostly in the form of solar panels reached 10 000, with 80 megawatts of capacity. It can thus account for almost 10 per cent of the country's energy needs. Latvia's electricity distribution network, Sadales tīkls, (ST) said that the Marupe municipality has the greatest number of microgenerators with around 1020, followed by Rīga with 860. In a statement, ST said: "We have been lagging behind the development of the RES for many years in the Baltic States, but in the first half of this year, we outperformed Estonia at microgeneration development rates and are continuing this rapid rise. In fact, we've run a marathon like a sprint." ("Electricity-generating homes hit 10,000 mark in Latvia," *Eng.LSM.lv*, 19 October 2022)

Rejects Amnesty International report

On 13 October, Latvia's Foreign Ministry rejected Amnesty International's claim of migrant abuse. The organisation had accused the Latvian border guards of abusing migrants from the Middle East. They accused the Latvian government of housing the migrants in detention camps, strip-searching them, taking away their cell phones and making them sign a document which outlined that they would be returning to their home country voluntarily. They also outlined the difference in treatment between Ukrainian migrants and Middle East

migrants. The Latvian government has vehemently denied these claims and has questioned the credibility of Amnesty International. Latvian Interior Ministry told *AP News* "We do not support the efforts of Amnesty International to equate the malicious instrumentalization of migration and intentional threat to the EU's external border by Belarus, on the one hand, with genuine asylum seekers and persons in a vulnerable situation, on the other hand." (["Amnesty International reports alleged migrant abuse in Latvia"](#), *Deutsche Welle*, 13 October 2022)

Krisjanis Karins and his party win for the second time

On 02 October, The result from 95 per cent of Latvia's districts showed that the centre-right New Unity Party won the state election body, held on 01 October, with Prime Minister Krisjanis Karins reelected for the second time. The party won with 18.9 per cent of the vote beating the centrist and environmentalist United List Party, which had 11.5 per cent. The election occurred amid an economic crisis, soaring energy prices, communal division and the effect of the war in Ukraine plaguing Latvia. The Baltic state's majority is shunning the Russian-speaking minorities due to Russia invading Ukraine. The Russian-supporting opposition, Social Democratic Party Harmony, did not fare well in the recent election due to its friendly nature with Russia. Prime Minister Karins said he would again form the same coalition government that he had formed in 2019 if he wins the recent election. (["Latvia election: Karins wins reelection amid Russia-Ukraine war"](#), *Deutsche Welle*, 02 October 2022)

LITHUANIA

Signs four year defence contract with Saab

On 27 October, the Lithuania Defence Material Agency signed a four-year contract for the RBS 70 surface-to-air missile with the Saab, a Swedish aerospace and defence company. Through this contract, the Defence Ministry can order the missiles till 2026. The first order under the contract worth SEK 350 million is expected to delivery between 2023-2024. The order also includes extra missiles for Saab's RBS 70 surface-based

defence system which has been a part of Lithuania's military since 2004. The new purchase will help expedite Lithuania's short-range air defence capabilities in the short term. (["RBS 70 Missiles for Lithuania"](#), *Estonian Free Press*, 27 October 2022)

Kaunas installs its first diagonal crossing for pedestrians

On 19 February, *LRT.lt* reported that X crossings have been marked in Lithuania's second-biggest city, Kaunas for the first time. At such crossings, all vehicular movement is stopped from all directions at the same time, to make it easier for the pedestrians to cross in all direction, including diagonally. They are installed in places, which record heavy pedestrian footfall, like the world's busiest pedestrian intersection at Shibuya, Tokyo. The head of the Transport and Traffic Organisation Division at Kaunas Municipality spoke about the benefits of such crossings and said: "It is also comfortable and safe for disabled people, with lowered kerbs to make it easier to move." He also added that the city might consider more diagonal crossings in the future. (["Kaunas installs Lithuania's first X crossing"](#), *LRT.lt*, 19 October 2022)

Conducts national cyber security exercise

On 18 October, the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) conducted the Cyber Shield exercise in Lithuania. Participants in the exercise are expected to train remotely from their workplaces and will be asked to specify the number of issues that are to be addressed by instructors. In 2022, exercise participants will have to tackle websites, internal servers and remote workplace hackers and phishing. In June, around 100 organizations have taken part in a preparatory event for the exercise, which will also see participation from the Lithuanian Armed Forces and people from the Zemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania, the Core Center of State Telecommunications, and the Information Technology Service under the Ministry of Defence. (["Major national cyber security exercise kicks off"](#), *delfi.lt*, 18 October 2022)

MALTA

Reviews the validity and success of the

“golden passport” scheme

On 27 October, *EURACTIV* reported on Malta's golden passport scheme by which wealthy foreigners can buy citizenship in exchange of an approximate investment of around EUR one million. A Maltese passport automatically grants the people access to live and work in any EU country, and thus has been strongly criticized by the EU. The European Commission says that the programme violates EU law, and has contributed to a rise in financial scandals like fraud, money laundering and embezzlement. Moreover, the recently published state budget suggests that the scheme will bring EUR 40 million less in 2023 than the last cycle. Malta had profited EUR 61 million from this scheme in 2021, but 2022 estimates indicate a drop to EUR 30 million. While the government has no intention of scrapping the scheme, the validity of the scheme will be examined by the EU Court of Justice, where it has been accused of infringement by the Commission. (Alice Taylor, “Malta's cash-for-passport scheme is on the rocks, government ploughs ahead” *EURACTIV*, 27 October 2022)

EU grants JTF to promote climate neutrality

On 25 October, Malta's Territorial Just Transition Fund (JTF) was allocated. Malta will get EUR 23 million from the EU grant to transition into climate neutral systems, especially in the maritime sector. On this issue, Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal, Frans Timmermans spoke “Greening the transport and maritime sector is one the biggest challenges for Malta's transition to a climate-neutral future.” Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms, Elisa Ferreira highlighted on the issue and said that it was imperative to transform into carbon neutrality as the maritime transport sector accounts for 6 per cent of Malta's economy but is a significant contributor to the country's greenhouse emissions. As an initiative under the fund, Malta's international ports will be decarbonized and install electric power supply to ships on shore. (“EU Cohesion Policy: €23 million for a just climate transition in Malta,” *ec.europa.eu*, 25 October 2022)

Prime Minister hails its economic growth**and governmental stability**

On 18 October, Malta's Prime Minister, Robert Abela said that Malta's government provides stability to the state for its economic success. Abela stated how the government brought back stability through subsidies and highlighted the need for digitization, change in tax provisions, and aims to improve the cost-of-living index. He also stated the challenges in terms of the energy crisis, environment, sustainability and the worsening quality of life leading to lesser investments. However, he appreciated the success of FDIs related to science, remote gaming, and communication, which had reached EUR one billion. (Semira Abbas Shalan, “Malta's economic success is due to the stability offered by government” – PM,” *independent.com.mt*, 18 October 2022)

NGOs and charities accuse armed forces of ill-treatment of migrants, maritime and international laws violation

On 18 October, *Malta Today* reported that international NGOs like Alarm Phone, Mediterranean Saving Humans, Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders (MSF) and Sea-Watch were accusing Maltese armed forces of sending migrants on a boat to Egypt in September. Malta's Rescue Coordination Centre is said to have issued the order to send the 23 migrants to Egypt instead of the nearest port of call to provide humanitarian assistance. The international organizations claim that the migrants had already been at sea for quite a few days when they were rescued and thus were suffering from poor health and dwindling resources. Unnecessary delays and unclear guidance of Malta's part also exacerbated the risks faced by these people. The NGOs have jointly released a statement, which says: “As organisations engaging in SAR activities at sea, we denounce the forcible transfer of these 23 people to Egypt and call for consequences to Malta's blatant violations of maritime and international law.” (Matthew Vella, “Malta sends rescued boat migrants to Egypt despite nearest port of call,” *Malta News*, 18 October 2022)

MOLDOVA**Germany to supply air-defence system**

On 18 October, Moldova's Defence Minister, Anatolie Nosatii said that the country is

considering the acquisition of air defence system components and military drones from Germany in 2023. However, even though Moldova's defence budget is higher than last year's allocation, it still is not enough to afford an anti-aircraft defence system. In 2022, the defence budget for Moldova was 0.3 per cent of its projected GDP, while in 2023, 0.5 per cent of the GDP has been allocated for defence. Thus, Nosatii asked for the international community's assistance with Moldova's defence project and said: "Previously, all the purchases were made in a short term and in a very small volume, and there was no talk of missiles or planes. In this sense, without assistance from foreign partners, it will be difficult to obtain this kind of capability. (Nicoleta Banila, "Moldova considering purchase of air defence system components – minister," *SeeNews*, 18 October 2022)

NORTHERN IRELAND

To hold another election after the government devolved

On 28 October, BBC reported that Northern Ireland's Secretary of State, Chris Heaton-Harris, said that he would call an assembly election within 12 weeks as per the legislation. Since the election in May, the government was devolved due to the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) refusing to take up the position in the government in Belfast. The DUP had blocked the election result due to the uncertainty in the Northern Ireland Protocol, which was signed following Brexit. DUP leader Sir Jeffrey Donaldson said that his party would not participate until the issues around the protocol were resolved. The region's government has a joint-authority system which enables multiple parties to form the government. Heaton-Harris said that an election must be conducted again in Northern Ireland to move forward. The exact date of the election is yet to be confirmed by Northern Ireland's Secretary of State. ("NI Assembly election to be called but no date set," *BBC*, 28 October 2022)

Negotiation over implementation of Northern Ireland Protocol prolongs till 28 October

On 06 October, the EU and the UK held talks about the Northern Ireland Protocol via a

video link. In the meeting, a timetable for further negotiations was decided on, and UK Foreign Secretary James Cleverly pledged his commitment to work with Ireland on the Protocol. On the same issue, Ireland's Foreign Minister Simon Coveney said that the meeting would concentrate on the identifying the issues where negotiations can be conducted "sooner rather than later." However, he mentioned that progress on implementation of the protocol was unlikely before 28 October, after which the Northern Ireland Secretary Chris Heaton-Harris is obligated to set a date for a fresh Stormont election. (Jayne McCormack, "NI Protocol dispute will not be resolved by 28 October, says Coveney," *BBC*, 07 October 2022)

NORWAY

Equinor rakes sizeable profits amid energy crisis

On 28 October, *THE LOCAL no* reported on profits of Norway's energy company Equinor earned between July to September as a result of the energy crisis in Europe. Its net profit for the third quarter grew from USD 1.4 billion in 2021 to 9.4 billion in 2022. The price of a single oil barrel was estimated to be 34 per cent higher than in the 2021 third quarter. Norway has been the primary supplier of fossil fuels to Europe after Russia stopped supplying it. Due to the high demand, Norway has increased its annual production by 11 per cent more than in 2021. The partially state-owned company does not face windfall taxes as most of the profits go to Norway's treasury, and the Nordic countries rely on their energy as the main source of revenue. Equinor is also heavily taxed under Norway's laws. ("Norway's Equinor sees profits jump due to soaring oil and gas prices," *THE LOCAL no*, 28 October 2022)

The Socialist Left Party becomes a budget partner to the government

On 24 October, Norway's government found itself without majority support to pass the budget through the parliament (Storting). The ruling Labour (AP) and Centre (SP) parties are looking at the Socialist Left Party (SV) as their budget partner. The three parties agreed on providing NOK 1.2 billion as an electricity support scheme for businesses and the most vulnerable in

society. The agreement also included support in housing benefits for NOK 194 million, food banks for NOK two million and students for NOK 210 million. Additional housing benefits and electricity support will be provided to citizens till April 2023. The supportive budget is presented due to the rising energy costs and high cost of living. (Robin-Ivan Capar, "[Norwegian government secures parliamentary majority for new crisis support measures](#)," *THE LOCAL* no, 24 October 2022)

The Food Centre gets funds from Oslo municipality after government cuts

On 18 October, Oslo municipality pledged funds of NOK 150,000 to the Food Centre in 2023 after the government cut its budget. The government supported the Food Centre with NOK 7.8 million in 2021. However, it plans to decrease the budget for the association by NOK 600,000 in 2023. The Food Centre facilitates the redistribution of surplus food from the industries to NGOs that are then supplied to the underprivileged. Oslo municipality is keen to maintain the operation of the Food Centre in the future. ("[Oslo municipality gives money to the Food Centre](#)," *aftenposten.no*, 18 October 2022)

Ormen Lange gas plant evacuated

On 13 October, Norway's Ormen Lange was evacuated after an alleged bomb threat. The entire facility was evacuated and all operations were stopped. Located onshore in Nyhamna, the plant supplies 20 per cent of UK's gas requirements. This threat comes at a time where security on energy infrastructure in Europe has tightened because of the Nord Stream pipelines leaks. The police later updated that the threat was not credible and the perpetrator has carried out such acts before and that the matter is being investigated. The facility is owned by Norwegian branch of Shell who later said that the had workers returned to the facility and all operations had resumed. ("[Bomb threat leads to evacuation of Norway gas plant](#)," *AP News*, 13 October 2022)

POLAND

Ministry of National Defence leases US based drones ahead of purchase

On 21 October, the Polish Ministry of

National Defence leased a US made MQ-9A as it gets ready to buy MQ-9B drones. This is one of Poland's latest moves to arm itself after the invasion of Ukraine. The contract for MQ-9B drones will include a training facility until the Polish Armed Forces and if it goes the, Poland will become the first NATO ally in the Eastern Flank to have a medium-altitude-long-endurance drone. ("[Poland leases MQ-9A Reapers ahead of drone buy](#)," *DefenseNews*, 21 October 2022)

SCOTLAND

England's charity reports Salmon farming practices far below required stipulations

On 17 October, *The Guardian* published an article on a study by WildFish that alleged that salmon farms in Scotland were not adhering to required safety and health standards. As per the investigation, conducted through open data, salmon farms are allegedly covering up evidences of environmental harm and presence of sea lice and other parasitic infestations in the fish. WildFish says that in some cases, the infections are 20 times the industry's prescribed limits. Terming the practice as an "antithesis of ethical farming," investigators identified loopholes like harvesting that farms are using to avoid providing mandatory sealice counts to marine Scotland. The report also says that the mortality rates for farmed salmon in marine cages have also risen due to the poor standard of farming. Thus, on an average 24.1 per cent of the salmon stocked in Scottish marine farms are dying before harvest. (Sandra Laville, "[Scottish farmed salmon industry using loopholes to cover up harm, report alleges](#)," *The Guardian*, 17 October 2022)

SERBIA

New government to be elected seven months after the election

On 25 October, Serbia's President

Aleksandar Vucic announced that a new government led by Prime Minister Ana Brnabic will be voted on by the parliament later this week. This will be Brnabic's third term as Serbia's premier. Speaking at the parliament, Vucic said that the new government will have 25 ministries with three new ministries of the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Technological

Development, the Ministry of Tourism and Youth, and the Ministry of Public Investment. He said that the voting process will be a long one and hopes that the new government will be formed by 27 October. Serbia went to polls on 03 April to elect a new president and the members of the parliament and local authorities. ("Serbia to form government 7 months after elections," *Anadolu Agency*, 25 October 2022)

SLOVENIA

Goes into second run-off round in presidential race

On 24 October, *EURACTIV* reported that Slovenia, which is amidst its presidential elections will be going into a run-off second round. None of the seven candidates contesting the election got outright majority and thus the top two candidates will be facing each other again in another election on 13 November. In the first round, former Foreign Minister under the third conservative Janez Jansa cabinet, Anze Logar led the race with nearly 34 per cent. He is a member of the eurosceptic, anti-immigrant Slovenian Democratic Party (SDP). Following closely behind in the presidential race is lawyer and rights advocate Natasa Pirc Musar with 27 per cent, who is vying to become the first female president of Slovenia. ("Former foreign minister wins first round of presidential election," *EURACTIV*, 24 October 2022)

Presidential election results in an inconclusive result

On 23 October, the presidential election was held in Slovenia, resulting in no clear winner. In a pre-election poll, the right-wing candidate Anze Logar was leading with 30 per cent, followed by the centrist independent Natasa Pirc Musar with 20 per cent and Social Democrat Milan Brglez with 17 per cent. The victory of former Foreign Minister Logar will upset the current government, as they had tried hard to remove Janez Jansa in April 2022. Logar plans to get out of the populist image and wants to become a unifier. The inconclusive results will result in a runoff vote that will be held in three weeks, having the top two candidates. The runoff voting will thin Logar's chance as Musar will have the advantage of having a merged constituency

of hers and Brglez. The outgoing President Borut Pahor will be unable to return to the race as he has completed his two terms in Office. ("No clear winner predicted as Slovenians elect new president," *euronews*, 23 October 2022)

Geoplin gears up to get natural gas from Algeria

On 21 October, Slovenia's Infrastructure Minister announced that Geoplin (Natural gas company) will be signing a contract with Algeria's Sonatrach to buy natural gas. Though the terms of the deal is yet to be revealed, Geoplin is expected to buy 300 million cubic metres of natural gas, thus accounting for third of the country's requirements. Prime Minister Robert Golob indicated that the contract would be for a minimum of three-years. The gas would be imported through Italy via an existing pipeline that has sufficient capacity. (Sebastijan R. Maček, "Slovenia on cusp of signing gas supply deal with Algeria," *EURACTIV*, 21 October 2022)

Whistleblowers are protected under the new act passed

On 19 October, *EURACTIV* reported that Slovenia's government introduced a bill that protects whistle-blowers. The bill is applicable in protecting those that report breaking of the EU laws and state laws as well. The bill also forbids employers from retaliating or terminating employees over whistleblowing. The employees who are retaliated receive free legal aid, unemployment benefits and counselling to pursue a case against their employers. Those that have been terminated are protected by the judicial system and receive needed supportive measures. Even though corruption is not prominent in Slovenia, organizations fighting corruption has been asking the government to pass a legislature protecting whistle-blowers. (Sebastijan R Macek, "Slovenia adopts whistleblowers act," *EURACTIV*, 20 October 2022)

UNHCR releases factsheet on refugee situation

On 19 October, the UNHCR released a factsheet on the condition of refugees in Slovenia for September. The report said that due to the additional 8000 people from

Ukraine along with 5000 new asylum applications from other countries, Slovenia's reception capacity is under stress. Until September 7768 of the 8117 Ukrainian refugees were registered under temporary protection. Monitored closely by the UNHCR, 39 per cent of the children were also enrolled in primary and secondary education. Of the refugees from other countries, Afghanistan remained the top country of origin for new arrivals and record numbers of people also arrived from India, Burundi and Cuba. (["UNHCR Slovenia Factsheet, September 2022," reliefweb.int, 19 October 2022](#))

On the road to get a first female head of the state

On 17 October, *EURACTIV* reported on pre-election polls in Slovenia. The country will be voting in the presidential election on 23 October, and polls say that no candidate is likely to win more than 50 per cent seats. Thus, a run-off between the top two candidates is also expected to be held on 13 November. Centre-right to right-wing candidate Anže Logar of Slovenian Democratic Party (SDS-EPP) is leading the polls with 30 per cent of voters and his followed closely by Nataša Pirc Musar, an independent candidate, supported by Slovenian Pirate Party and SMS (European Greens) with 27 per cent. Even though the President in Slovenia only has limited powers, if elected Musar will become the country's first female head of the state. (Tobias Gerhard Schminke, ["Slovenia's presidential elections could return first female head of state," EURACTIV, 17 October 2022](#))

SPAIN

Announces EUR three billion aid for energy bills

On 13 October, Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez announced the government's new EUR 3 billion aid. This aid will help boost public protection by helping them cope with their energy bills. They have set aside 2.3 per cent of Spain's GDP to help 40 per cent of Spanish households. Critical to the budget is the price of gas for residential buildings with a shared gas central heating system. This will remain in place till the end of 2023. They also announced an increase in energy

discounts and an increase in the heating subsidy to EUR 375 for vulnerable households. (["Spain to help 40% of households with rising energy bills", thelocal.es, 13 October 2022](#))

Set to withdraw from Energy Charter Treaty

On 12 October, Spain's Environment and Energy Minister Teresa Ribera announced that Spain will be pulling out from the Energy Charter Treaty of 1994. The treaty was introduced to shield energy infrastructure financing in post-Soviet nations. It protects investors from government intervention. This has hindered the government's ability to introduce climate-friendly policies. This withdrawal has been hinted at by Spain since 2020 when they said that if there is not a major change introduced regarding the treaty they would be leaving. (["Spain pulls out of energy treaty over climate concerns", Politico, 12 October 2022](#))

Head of Supreme Court steps down nudging deadlock between top parties on new appointments

On 10 October, the head of Spain's Supreme Court, Carlos Lesmes Serrano stepped down. His mandate had ended in 2018, but he stayed on as the tribunal's acting president, as the two main political parties, the People's Party and ruling Socialist party failed to end a four-year long stalemate on judicial appointment. Lesmes said: "Remaining in the post from now on would only make me complicit in the situation I abhor and is unacceptable." Following his resignation, Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez and the leader of the opposition Alberto Nunez Feijoo held a meeting marking the first step to appoint the new General Council of the judiciary which selects judges to Spain's Supreme Court. (["Spanish supreme court head set to quit after four-year stalemate, Reuters, 10 October 2022](#))

Tax imposed on those earning above three million per year

On 29 September, Spain's Finance Minister, María Jesús Montero announced a tax for the wealthy. The temporary tax will affect the 0.1 per cent of taxpayers, whose income exceeds EUR three million per year for 2023

and 2024. Citizens with income of EUR 3-5 million will be taxed 1.7 per cent and those whose income is in the EUR 5-10 million bracket will be taxed 2.1 per cent. People whose holdings exceed EUR 10 million will have to pay an extra 3.5 per cent in taxes. Montero said that these were solidarity measures to deal with increasing inflation and soaring energy prices. The taxes are likely to bring in EUR 3.1 billion in two years and the government aims to use it to introduce measures for people in lower income brackets. (Rodrigo Orihuela, "[Spain to Increase Tax on the Rich With \\$2.9 Million in Assets](#)," *Bloomberg*, 29 September 2022)

SWEDEN

Swedish Meteorological Institute predicts a rise in temperature in winter

On 28 October, Kristianstad city in Southern Sweden experienced 19.5 degrees Celsius, making it the highest recorded temperature in Sweden in late October. It is not the highest recorded temperature for October. However, it is the highest during the period of late October-early November. A meteorologist at the Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute (SMHI), Erik Hojgard-Olsen, said that 2022 October had been warmer than usual by a few degrees in Sweden and that the meteorologists have continued to observe high temperatures with a warmer climate in 2022. ("[Sweden sees record heat for this late in the year](#)," *THE LOCAL se*, 29 October 2022)

Energy subsidy is planned to be introduced for Southern Sweden

On 27 October, Sweden's Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson and Energy and Business Minister Ebba Busch announced an energy subsidy package for those hit by high prices. The energy subsidy aims to lessen the burden on all households and businesses, which consumes less energy. The subsidy is aimed at the most affected citizens, especially in Southern Sweden. Sweden's General Director of Svenska Kraftnat (the Swedish National Grid), Lotta Medelius-Bredhe, announced that the subsidy plan would provide SWK 55 billion to five million energy customers in Southern Sweden. The subsidy was promised to begin from 01 November by Kristersson before the election. Kristersson did not mention the

beginning of the promised subsidy after the election. ("[Sweden's new government announces 55bn kronor power price subsidy](#)," *THE LOCAL se*, 27 October 2022)

The new government replaces Environment Ministry with Climate and Business Ministry

On 18 October, Sweden's new government scrapped the environment ministry and created a Climate and Business ministry. Climate and Environment will be headed by the country's youngest-ever Minister, Romina Pourmokhtari. Sweden's new Minister of Energy, business and industry, Ebba Busch, is assigned to be the supervisor of Pourmokhtari stating that changing industries and the transport sector will solve the climate issue. The Green party and the left are against abolishing the ministry established in 1987. The department was not mentioned in Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson's speech. The reason that they gave was that business and the environment go hand in hand. The solution that the government has come up with is nuclear energy, although it might not sustain short-term and medium-term needs. The country currently stands with no environmental policies and no power. ("[Sweden's new government to abolish stand-alone Environment Ministry](#)," *The Local se*, 18 October 2022)

Kristersson becomes the new Prime Minister

On 17 October, the conservative Swedish Moderate Party's leader, Ulf Kristersson, was elected as Sweden's Prime Minister with the support of the far-right Sweden Democrats. He will form a minor coalition government with the Christian Democrats and Liberals. Out of 349 parliamentarians, 176 voted in favour of Kristersson becoming the new Prime Minister, meanwhile 173 voted against him. With the help of Sweden Democrats, the right-wing coalition has presented their plan for their governance ahead. The plan includes raising police funding, building new nuclear reactors and stricter immigration policies. Restricting immigration laws and benefits and deportation of non-integrated immigrants are also included. The far-right Sweden Democrats will not be a part of the

government but will remain to back the coalition. ([“Sweden: Lawmakers elect Ulf Kristersson as prime minister,” Deutsche Welle, 17 October 2022](#))

The Moderates forms coalition along with the Christian Democrats and the Liberals

On 14 September, the Swedish Moderates leader, Ulf Kristersson, said that his party would form a minor coalition government with the Christian Democrats and the Liberals. He would be the next Prime Minister heading the coalition government if the Swedish Parliament, the Riksdag does not vote against his appointment. The far-right, anti-immigration Sweden Democrats are not part of the coalition, however, it said that it will support the government. The Sweden Democrats are the second-largest party elected in the recent election. Even though the current Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson lost by a tiny margin, she remains in Office as a caretaker until the new government is formed. ([“Swedish parties agree to form coalition with far-right support,” Deutsche Welle, 14 October 2022](#))

Formation of the coalition government delayed

On 12 October, *Euronews* reported that Sweden’s right-wing parties had asked for more time to form a coalition government following its general elections on 11 September. On this issue, Moderates leader Ulf Kristersson said: “..have reached the goal, and we are in agreement, but there are details that need to be sorted out.” Kristersson, who has been given two additional days by the Speaker to present a potential cabinet, said that he expects to be ready by the end of 14 October. Sweden’s parliament will have to vote its confidence in Kristersson’s proposed government before it can assume office. (David Mac Dougall, [“Sweden election: Right-wing parties miss deadline to form new government,” Euronews, 12 October 2022](#))

SWITZERLAND

MCTR chair shifts from Russia

On 19 October, members of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MCTR) met in the plenary meeting, where Switzerland replaced Russia as a chair of the MCTR. Ambassador Benno Laggner was appointed

as the Swiss chair who will head Switzerland efforts towards control the WMD and the delivery system. In a statement the government said: “Switzerland is assuming the chair of the MCTR at a sensitive time, especially as the current international context and recent security developments have made multilateral consensus-building efforts more difficult.” Although MCTR has the power to decide on the nature of materials and equipment’s used in ballistic missiles, it lacks the legal power.

([“Switzerland replaces Russia as chair of ballistic missile body,” Swissinfo, 19 October 2022](#))

THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The three main threats to the country’s security

On 17 October, the Security Information Service (BIS) of Czechia identified Russia, China and radical Islam as the main international security threats to the country. Russia’s threat while decreasing, it is still existing in the form of pro-Russian political agenda touted by journalists. After Czech expelled over 100 Russian embassy staff in 2021, the threat has declined but the recent support to Ukraine has made BIS keep a close eye on any potential threats. China is an emerging yet important threat according to the BIS. With relations being strained between the two countries, the BIS has found that Chinese intelligence has kept an active interest in developments in Czechia. This is seen with them recruiting journalists to speak on Czechia. The BIS has also found that there are two “unofficial police stations” that assist Chinese citizens in Czechia. This direct connection with the Chinese state has put the BIS on edge due to Chinese law that urges all citizens to help in intelligence activities. Lastly, with respect to radical Islam, the BIS fears that there will be an increase in the number of people influenced by propaganda and future threats to the state. They are also keeping a close eye on ex-Islamists who were expelled from Czechia regarding their entry and exit from the country. ([“China, Russia, and radical Islam: Security service details threats to Czechia,” expats.cz, 18 October 2022](#))

European Commission aims to give additional funding

On 03 October, the European Commission announced its plans to provide the Czech Republic with additional funding of EUR 4.5 billion. The funding will be given as a part of the SURE instrument of the EU which focuses on job and workers protection in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. Czechia with this injection will have received a total of EUR 4.5 billion through SURE. The fund will be given as loans to address expenditures of 2020 and 2021 and maintenance of the measures adopted to handle the socio-economic crisis that rose due to the pandemic. ("[Commission proposes to provide additional €2.5 billion to Czechia under SURE](#)", *ec.europa.eu*, 03 October 2022)

THE NETHERLANDS

Migration facilities court-ordered to provide better living conditions

On 06 October, Netherlands civil court announced the order on a case brought in by the Dutch Council for Refugees regarding the inhuman conditions of the immigration and asylum facilities. The case was lodged after over 700 immigrants had to sleep outside while their paperwork was being processed. The situation at the Ter Apel migration facility also led to the first deployment of a Doctors Without Borders delegation to the country. Now, the court has found that the condition at the facility did not meet basic European standards in terms of hygiene and sanitation and has ordered the government to ensure that all migration facilities across the country provide "...a safe, covered place to sleep, food, water and access to hygienic sanitary facility... immediately." The chairman of the Dutch Council for Refugees, Frank Candel said that while the court's decision was a step forward, it was disappointing that provision of basic humane conditions had to be court ordered. He said: "We will not rest as long as asylum-seekers have to sleep in a tent, gym, or event hall." ("[Dutch court orders government to clean up inhumane immigration centers](#)," *Deutsche Welle*, 06 October 2022)

THE UK

Liz Truss resigns as the Prime Minister

On 20 October, the UK's Prime Minister Liz Truss resigned from office due to pressure from her fellow conservative party

members. She is the shortest-serving Prime Minister in the history of the UK, and it is the first time the UK has had two elections in four months. The withdrawal of the tax cut scheme caused economic instability in the UK. She said: "I recognise that I cannot deliver the mandate on which I was elected by the Conservative Party," her mandate being to cut taxes and boost the economic growth of the UK. She added that the conservative party leader and the Prime Minister would be elected within the next week. Former Prime Minister Boris Johnson is expected to participate in the snap election. (Joshua Nevett, "[Liz Truss exit sets off another Tory leadership race](#)," *BBC*, 20 October 2022)

Prime Minister under pressure from the Tory MPs

On 19 October, UK parliament witnessed drastic set of events in one day with member of the Tory urging Prime Minister Liz Truss to step down and Suella Braverman resigning from her Home Secretary position on concern of "direction of the government." An immediate replacement was Grant Shapps former transport secretary. Followed by the resignation the vote conducted on fracking upon the Tory ministers request to verify whether it was done in confidence of the government, where 326 voted against the ban, 230 were in favour, and 40 avoided to vote. With the increased pressure two ways Truss can survive would be due to unavailability of an alternate leader to head the Tory and secondly the worry amongst the parliament over UK's economy slide. ("[Crisis for Truss deepens after day of chaos](#)," *BBC*, 20 October 2022)

Liz Truss faces criticism over Jeremy Hunt reversing the mini-budget

On 17 October, the UK's Chancellor of Exchequer, Jeremy Hunt, discarded Prime Minister Liz Truss' "mini" budget. Truss recently removed former Chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng for failing to keep the UK's economy from sinking. After replacing Kwarteng, Hunt said he would discard the Truss' tax cut package. He gave the reason that it would cause more debts to the government and would not elevate the country's overall economy. He promised to make a plan to cut the UK's national debt in

his fiscal statement on 31 October. Truss was not seen at the House of Commons, however, she sent Penny Mordaunt in her place to address the economic fallout of her abandoned mini-budget. Several Conservative MPs request Truss to step down from Office due to her worsening already bad economy. ("Liz Truss news – live: PM cannot survive any more mistakes, minister warns," *Independent*, 17 and 18 October 2022)

Louise Casey reports on getting away of police officers with no charge

On 17 October, a report by a former government official, Louise Casey, on London's Metropolitan Police Force suggested that many officers do not face any charges after committing crimes. The police force was noted to have been filled with law-breaking, racist and misogynistic officers. The officers had been escaping punishments and getting away with their criminal behaviour. Law enforcement is especially tough on Black or Asian officers than Caucasian ones, which makes the racial disparity seen within the force. The police were criticized for their handling of police-involved crimes. London Police Chief, Cressida Dick, resigned after being found incompetent in leading law enforcement the right way and garnering public support from London Mayor Sadiq Khan. Sir Mark Rowley replaced Dick and brought new rules to set things straight in the police force. He said, "The public deserves a better Met, and so do our good people who strive every day to make a positive difference to Londoners." He has plans to remove corrupt and crime-committing police officers from the force. (Jill Lawless, "Scathing report says UK police getting away with lawbreaking," *AP news*, 17 October 2022)

Jeremy to replace the current Treasury Chief

On 14 October, Prime Minister Liz Truss announced that Kwasi Kwarteng will be replaced by Jeremy Hunt as Chancellor of the Exchequer. She also said that the reversal of the cut of the intended increase of tax corporations. Truss said that a detailed economic plan with a breakdown by the independent Office for Budget Responsibility on 31 October. This move has been seen by

the public and politicians to secure her position amid scepticism in the Conservative party. ("UK's Truss drops tax cuts, axes Treasury chief amid turmoil," *AP News*, 14 October 2022)

Former Brexit Minister warns against ECJ involvement in Northern Ireland Protocol dispute

On 11 October, the former Brexit minister spoke about the Northern Ireland Protocol. He said that Liz Truss should maintain her stance and not give the European Court of Justice (ECJ) a chance to interfere in the disputes regarding the Northern Ireland Protocol. Speaking at the House of Lords during the second reading of the government's Northern Ireland Protocol Bill, Frost said that the fragility and sensitiveness of the Protocol would make it difficult for the European Court of Justice to deliberate on the issue. According to Frost: "The court of justice cannot have a jurisdictional or arbitrational role in the future arrangement. I can't see how they will be stable while that remained the case. I think better if that was acknowledged sooner rather than later." (Lisa O'Carroll, "ECJ must have no role in Northern Ireland protocol, David Frost says," *The Guardian*, 11 October 2022)

Bank of England to keep the finance stable

On 11 October, Bank of England (BOE) proposed to spend up to GBP five billion per day to keep the inflation from rising. This will through purchase of government debt bonds, especially the index-linked gilts to boost UK's bond market. The market fluctuation was the result of the UK's recent government budget announcement. Finance Minister Kwasi Kwarteng had announced earlier in September that there would be tax cuts and lot of borrowing to compensate that. The BOE plans to act as a backstop to restore the market. The buying of government bonds is seen as a measure to keep the UK's finance from becoming unstable. ("Bank of England widens action on financial stability fears," *Deutsche Welle*, 11 October 2022)

Heathrow become the busiest airport in Europe again

On 11 October, *BBC* reported that according

to the latest passenger data, Heathrow became the busiest airport in Europe again. Heathrow was dethroned due to the COVID-19 pandemic and was the 10th busiest airport in Europe in 2021. Even though it regained its title as the busiest airport in Europe, Heathrow is still 15 per cent behind its before pandemic level in passenger number. The airport has brought in cap on number of departing passengers to 100,000 per day in July. The cap will end on 29 October. It successfully handled 18 million passengers over summer. Heathrow still face the problem of staff shortage that has led to demands of surging passengers not being met. However, it recovered from the Covid slump and is steadily regaining the passenger flow. ("Heathrow regains crown as Europe's busiest airport, data shows," *BBC*, 11 October 2022)

Fiscal plan to be released earlier

On 10 October, *POLITICO* reported that UK Chancellor, Kwasi Kwarteng will reveal the government's economic plans on 31 October. The economic and fiscal forecast and UK's medium-term fiscal plan will be released before 23 November as had been initially planned, due to pressure from Conservative MPs. Kwarteng announced the rescheduling of the date via a letter to the common's Treasury Committee Chairman Mel Stride. Kwarteng's initial proposal termed as the 'mini budget' led to a sharp fall in the pound's value, forcing him to withdraw his plan to lower taxes for UK's top earners. According to him, the government will conduct an "an in-depth assessment of the economy and public finances" before publishing its decision. Stride welcomed the development saying that if the government's plans are well-accepted, it could lead the Bank of England to raise its interest rates by a lesser margin than expected, thus helping mortgage holders. (Graham Lanktree, "UK Chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng to unveil fiscal plan October 31," *POLITICO*, 10 October 2022)

Continuing transport worker strike stalls local travel

On 08 October, *BBC* reported on the ongoing rail worker strike in the UK. Close to 40,000 rail, maritime, and transport employees part of 15 unions have stepped out against demands on increase of pay, and job

conditions. With only five train services running, the government has instructed the people to restrict travel and have announced that only on return of the workers the services are expected to resume. Similar strikes were held under the RMT, TSSA and drivers' unions which closed down 90 per cent of services in the previous week. ("Rail strikes: Only one in five trains running in latest action," *BBC*, 08 October 2022)

Migrants to be deported under the Rwanda Plan despite court intervention

On 05 October, Home Secretary Suella Braveman assured the conservative party that the Rwanda Plan is still on. The plan consists of deporting illegal migrants crossing the English Channel to Rwanda if they do not return back to their home country. The European Court of Human Rights intervened in June to stop the first flight from taking off. Braveman said that the plan needs to work in order to deter migrants from crossing the English Channel. The latest records show that 33,500 people have entered the UK through the Channel this year. Braveman hopes that this will act as a deterrent to stop illegal migrants from taking advantage of the Modern Slavery Act. ("Home Secretary Suella Braveman to change law to stop channel migrants," *BBC*, 05 October 2022)

Government reverses tax cuts for the top earners

On 03 October, Treasury chief Kwasi Kwarteng announced the decision to scrap the controversial tax cuts for the top bracket of the UK. Announced on 23 September, Kwarteng had proposed tax cuts on those earning over GBP 150,000 a year who were currently paying a 45 per cent rate of income tax. The move to scrape this policy had a positive effect on the value of the pound which rose to USD 1.13. At the annual conference of the Conservative Party, Kwarteng announced that the plan for the rest of the tax cuts will not be scrapped. He also accepted that the budget had a negative effect and that they were open to criticisms and solutions. At the same time, he urged the need to move on and deliver the outlined plan. Despite the value of the pound bouncing back, the market, investors and the public are still wary of the future

ramifications of the budget and the growing cost-of-living crisis. ([“UK scraps tax cut for wealthy that sparked market turmoil”](#), *AP News*, 03 October 2022)

TURKEY

Central Bank initiates measure to reinforce Lira deposits

On 18 October, Turkey’s Central Bank laid fresh steps to enhance lira deposits, increasing the ratio of bonds that banks compulsorily hold for foreign exchange deposits and requiring deposits which are less than 50 per cent to acquire more from next year. Raising the securities maintenance ratio required for forex deposits from three per cent to five per cent, the bank’s “liraization strategy” is a part of its 2023 agenda to assist an unorthodox policy of interest cuts in the midst of staggering inflation. Requiring lenders to hold an additional 80-100 billion lira of bonds, the individuals now hold 46 per cent deposits, with Turkey snapping up dollars to protect itself against deep currency depreciations and exhaustive inflation of 83 per cent in the previous month. By 2023, banks will be holding securities-based lira-deposit share targets with the lira shedding 29 per cent versus the dollar this year. (Nevzat Devranoglu, [“Turkish central bank takes another step to boost lira deposits,”](#) *Reuters*, 18 October 2022)

Records the highest inflation rates since 1998

On 03 October, Turkey’s statistics officially announced the inflation rates for September at 83.45 per cent. Such high rates were last seen in 1998 and some independent groups such as the Inflation Research Group project the rate at 186.27 per cent. These rising inflation rates hit the transportation sector the most with an annual price increase of 117.66 per cent and the food and non-alcoholic drinks sector at 93 per cent. The rising inflation rates have led to an increase in the price of goods which will have a direct effect on the already burdened public. This increase is said to have been a result of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s view that high prices are caused by high borrowing costs. Due to this, the Central bank of Turkey has been slashing interest rates to act as an incentive to increase production and

exports. This cut in rates has led to a decrease in the value of the Turkish Lira. ([“Inflation in Turkey tops 83% as lira drops and Erdogan promises more interest rate cuts”](#), *euronews*, 03 October 2022)

UKRAINE

Finance Minister projects an increase in inflation due to a lack of fiscal funding

On 25 October, Ukrainian Finance Minister Serhiy Marchenko projected a grim future for rising inflation in Ukraine while speaking at the Ukraine Reconstruction Conference. According to Marchenko, the country is facing a USD 37.9 billion shortage in fiscal needs for 2023 and an inflation rate of 30 per cent which will spill over to 2023. Till now the largest macroeconomic monetary funder has been the National Bank of Ukraine which has stepped into increasing liquidity and printing more money. The West and other international allies have provided minimum macro financial aid to Ukraine. Marchenko has expressed that the government cannot handle more spending cuts and this was echoed by the head of German Council Foreign Relations and Economist Guntram Wolff who added that such budget cuts would hamper the growth of Ukraine. ([“Ukraine’s finance minister warns of inflation if \\$37.9bn fiscal needs not funded,”](#) *EURACTIV*, 25 October 2022)

REGIONAL

Sweden’s Prime Minister’s first bilateral visit to Finland

On 28 October, Sweden’s Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson met with Finland’s Prime Minister Sanna Marin in Helsinki, discussing bilateral relations between the two countries and their future in NATO. Marin and Kristersson had discussed strengthening their cooperation to respond to hybrid threats or creating supply security for both countries. Finland and Sweden are closed due to access to NATO simultaneously. The Prime Ministers also condemned Russia for violating the UN Charter by invading Ukraine. Marin and Kristersson agreed to continue supporting Ukraine in the ongoing war. They also discussed the technological sector and the scope of business in network technologies. Kristersson met Finland’s President Sauli Niinisto, and it will be his first time abroad as a Prime Minister has

been to Finland. ([Prime Minister Marin and Swedish Prime Minister Kristersson highlight importance of cooperation between Finland and Sweden,](#) *valtioneuvosto.fi*, 28 October 2022)

EU asks Kosovo to extend the deadline for change of license plates

On 29 October, European Commission's spokesperson for foreign affairs and security at the Nabila Massrali said that Kosovo should extend the deadline for the phase-out of old Serbian license plates. These license plates are still being used by ethnic Serbs in Serbia. Massrali added: "This has been the consistent advice of Kosovo's closest partners, including the EU and the U.S. It is disappointing to see it has not been followed." The EU agreed that Kosovo has the right to phase out old license plates but said that the way it is being done violates an agreement from 2016 which calls for a 12-month period for the process. Massrali's statement comes after Kosovo's Prime Minister Albin Kurti introduces a new plan relating to the new license plate registration rule which promotes a gradual phase-out of the old license plates. Starting from 01 November, drivers will be issued warnings for three weeks. Following this for the next two months fines will be levied and after which for two-months temporary licence plates will be valid. All of this is done to ensure that by 21 April 2023 all the vehicles will have the new licence plates and failure to do so will lead to confiscation of vehicles. ([EU Urges Kosovo To Allow More Time For Conversion Of Serbs' License Plates,](#) *rfel.org*, 29 October 2022)

EU to provide new grants to Serbia towards energy prices and infrastructure

On 28 October, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced that Serbia will be providing EUR 165 million in grants to Serbia. von der Leyen announced EUR 165 million to support the budgetary requirements regarding energy provision for the vulnerable population and businesses. This is a short-term solution and not a sustainable one according to the President. President von der Leyen also announced an additional 500 million in grants for investment in energy infrastructure which will benefit and

diversify Serbia's energy sources. some of the projects under this will be the Trans-Balkan Electricity Corridor, a gas interconnector between Serbia and North Macedonia. and a new, modern and more energy-efficient University Children's Hospital in Belgrade. During her visit to Serbia, von der Leyen visited the construction site of the Serbia-Bulgaria gas interconnector which was 80 per cent funded by the European Commission and the European Investment Bank. ([Statement by President von der Leyen on the occasion of her official visit to Serbia,](#) *ec.europa.eu*, 28 October 2022)

The EU imposes ban on import of combustion engine cars

On 27 October, European Parliament and the Council members agreed on an emission limit on new cars. By 2035, all new cars and vans sold in the EU should be emission-free. Under the rule, the new cars sold in the EU in 2030 should have 55 per cent fewer emissions than in 2021. The production of combustion engine cars is being replaced by the manufacturing of electric cars by many car manufacturers. The ban on combustion engine cars will make electric cars cheaper, and people are going after cleaner and greener leading to decrease in the emission rate over the years and help reduce global warming. (Elli-Alina Hiilamo and Timo-Pekka Heima, [An agreement was reached in the EU: The sale of new combustion engine cars will be banned from 2035,](#) *yle.fi*, 28 October 2022)

Rishi Sunak first phone conversation with Macron

On 28 October, the UK's new Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, held a phone call with France's President Emmanuel Macron to discuss deepening both countries' relations in defence, energy, the war in Ukraine, climate change and migration. Sunak and Macron agreed to form a decisive package to stop illegal human trafficking in the English Channel. The details of the package were not mentioned in the conversation. The predecessors of Sunak had rough relations with Macron in discussing the issue. Downing Street and the Elysee predict that Sunak and Macron will have an amicable relationship going forward. (Jessica Parker,

"Rishi Sunak and Emmanuel Macron vow to co-operate on Channel crossings - No 10," BBC, 28 October 2022)

Orban and Garibashvili discuss on energy crisis in Budapest

On 27 October, When Hungary's the Prime Minister of Hungary Viktor Orbán met his counterpart from Georgia Irakli Garibashvili in Budapest, the two leaders signed a strategic partnership agreement. In a joint statement released they stressed that increased supply in the energy sector can drive down prices, Orbán said, "...is fighting inflation, which is largely due to high energy prices.". The plan is to build a huge electricity pipeline system to bring energy from Azerbaijan to Hungary via Georgia and Romania. This move would help Hungary to replace large quantities of natural gas and gas that is currently used to generate electricity in Hungary. He also added that it's a very discriminatory decision was made in Brussels when Moldova and Ukraine were granted EU candidate status, but Georgia was not and stated that Hungary would continue to support the granting of candidate status to Georgia as soon as possible. (Barbara Bene, "Viktor Orbán Calls for Energy Diversification," *Hungar today*, 28 October 2022)

Estonia urges Rishi Sunak to raise defence spending

On 27 October, Estonia's Foreign Minister Urmas Reinsalu urged the UK's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak to raise defence spending to match two per cent of the UK's GDP. As a fellow NATO member, Reinsalu said that it was important for all NATO members to increase their defence spending. . Currently, the UK has a defence spending of a little more than two per cent of its GDP. Estonia is said to have spent around 2.3 per cent of its GDP on defence expenditure in 2022 and the Estonian government hopes to increase this to three per cent by 2024. According to Reinsalu: "To defend our values - the rules based order - we need also to invest to the weapons," When asked about the presence of the UK-led battle group and its planned withdrawal of 900 soldiers, Reinsalu believes that the withdrawal must not happen and instead it should be increased. The UK Ministry of Defence responded saying: "Our commitment to Nato

and Estonia in response to Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine is absolute." ("Rishi Sunak urged to raise defence spending by Estonia," BBC, 27 October 2022)

Latvian parliament approves amendments for annulling mandates of MEPs

On 27 October, the Latvian parliament passed amendments to the law that outlines conditions for annulling the mandate of elected members of the European Parliament (MEP) from Latvia. The new amendment says that if the MEP is found guilty of a Criminal Act they will lose their contest for seat. Previously the law stated that it would be annulled if "found guilty of a crime of a specific category" with the category being a severe crime, especially in Latvia and if their criminal record is not erased. The new amendment extends this to any person who has served in USSR, this includes Latvian SSR security, intelligence or counter-intelligence service (with exceptions), members of the PSKP (GCP), the Latvian SSR Workers' International Front, the Joint Council of Labour Collectives, the War and Labour Veterans Organisation, the Latvian Public Rescue Committee or its regional committees after 13 January 1991. ("Latvian MEPs found guilty of criminal acts to lose their mandate," *Baltic News Network*, 27 October 2022)

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz to discuss Greece-Turkey relations with Mitsotakis

On 27 October, Germany's Chancellor Olaf Scholz met Greece's Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis marking the beginning of an official trip. The primary issues that will be discussed are the tank swap deal, the energy crisis and Greek-Turkish tension. In terms of the tank swap deal signed, Greece expects to receive 40 Soviet-era tanks of which the first six have been sent by Germany. These tanks are scheduled later for Ukraine. Scholz and Mitsotakis will aim to enhance their bilateral economic relations, so far, in the first eight months of 2022, German exports to Greece has risen by 16.3 per cent than the same period last month. (Tasos Kokkinidis, "Greece-Germany Deepen Ties in Chancellor Olaf Scholz Visit," *Greek Reporter*, 27 October 2022)

Hungary and Georgia's Prime Ministers meet to enhance bilateral relations

On 27 October, the Prime Ministers of Hungary and Georgia, Victor Orban and Irakli Garibashvili met and signed a declaration on strategic partnership and strengthening bilateral cooperation. Garibashvili thanked Orban for Hungary's vocal support to Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration and its territorial integrity. He also thanked Orban for Hungary's contribution to the EU monitoring missions in areas adjacent to Russia occupied Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Also at the meeting, the two leaders discussed the issue of electricity and securing enough supply of the same. Orban said that he would be interested in receiving electricity from Azerbaijan through Romania and Georgia, and that high capacity transmission liners would be used for them. He also mentioned that if this electricity comes in by next year, Hungary will be able to stop buying natural gas for electricity. ("Georgian PM thanks Hungarian counterpart for "vocal support" for Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration, territorial integrity," agenda.ge, 27 October 2022; "Hungarian PM says country interested in receiving electricity from Azerbaijan through Georgia, Romania," agenda.ge, 27 October 2022; "Georgian, Hungarian PMs sign strategic partnership declaration," agenda.ge, 27 October 2022)

Belarus's trade with Russia's Astrakhan grows to USD 48 million in 2022

On 26 October, *BELTA* reported on Belarus's Prime Minister Roman Golovchenko meeting with the Governor of Russia's Astrakhan Oblast Igor Babushkin. Between 2021 and 2022, the trade had grown by 2.5 per cent to more than USD 48 million. Golovchenko said that in trade in agricultural machines grew but identified that there is potential for cooperation in the field of municipal vehicles too. He welcomed the "attractive terms" of an agreement on transshipping and storing large volumes of timber, sawn timber, chemical substances, mineral fertilizers, trucks etc. from Belarus, through ports in the Astrakhan Oblast. Golovchenko and Babushkin also discussed the establishment of a logistic hub within the special economic zone frameworks of these ports. ("Prime minister pleased with growing trade

between Belarus, Russia's Astrakhan Oblast," BELTA, 26 October 2022; "Ways to advance Belarus' cooperation with Russia's Astrakhan Oblast discussed," BELTA, 26 October 2022; "Belarus to ship timber, chemicals, fertilizers, trucks via Astrakhan ports," BELTA, 26 October 2022)

Frontex to assist border control in North Macedonia

On 26 October, *euronews* reported that the EU had signed an agreement with North Macedonia on cooperation and management efforts at the country's borders. The signing of the accord involving EU's frontier agency, Frontex, was witnessed by European Commission's President, Ursula von der Leyen, and North Macedonia's Prime Minister, Dimitar Kovačevski. As per the agreement, Frontex will be able to assist North Macedonia manage their migratory flows, counter illegal immigration and deal with cross-border crime. On this issue, Von der Leyen, who appreciated North Macedonia's progress for their EU negotiation process said: "I promised you that we would get the Frontex agreement signed and translate it into the Macedonian language... And today we delivered." ("The EU and North Macedonia sign migration agreement," euronews, 26 October 2022)

Norway and Russia agree on fish quotas despite the Ukraine war

On 26 October, The Norwegian-Russian Joint Fishery Commission agreed to cod quotas of 566,784 tons in the Barents and Norwegian Sea for 2023. Norway will get a share of 260,782 tons. Russia had agreed to share the Barents Sea fishing if Norway did not impose further sanctions on Russia-owned trawlers to port in northern Norway. The Russian part of the Barents Sea has always been a difficult spot to fish for Norwegians due to military activities of Russia. Commercial fishing was closed off without prior announcement in the Russian areas. The joint commission has enabled easy fishing for the Norwegians and has kept the Barents Sea as one of the best sustainable fishing areas in the world. (Thomas Nilsen, "Norway, Russia seal deal on fish quotas amid growing tensions," The Barents Observer, 26 October 2022)

First LNG Terminal with Estonia direct investment starts operating in Finland

On 26 October, *Baltic Times* reported that an LNG terminal, where Estonian energy company Alexela has the largest direct investment has started operations in Finland. The terminal which at Finland's largest port, the HaminaKotka, and is the country's first LNG terminal to be connected to the national gas network. The LNG cargo arriving at the terminal is sent to the high-pressure Finnish transmission network, which then transfers the LNG through trucks and the Baltic connector. The project was started in 2015 and is seeing completing before Europe's impending energy crisis. On this issue, the Chairman of the Management Board of Alexela AS, Martin Haal applauded the inauguration of the terminal and said: "... not just a coloured dot on the map, but it marks the creation of a new supply chain independent of Russian gas in our region." ("Estonia's largest direct investment in Finland: Alexela brings the first LNG carrier to Hamina," *The Baltic Times*, 26 October 2022)

UK's Border Force reports increasing influx of migrants from Albania

On 26 October, UK's Home Affairs Committee was informed by Border Force officials that one to two percent of the male population in Albania, accounted for around 10,000 men and an additional 2000 women and children who arrived to UK in small boats. The Home Office's clandestine Channel threat commander, Dan O'Mahoney reported on the increase of Albanian migrants and said that this influx was catalysing both the illegal migration issue and the asylum problem in the UK. He also mentioned how some of these Albanians seeking asylum have include themselves in criminal gangs dealing with Drug smuggling, human trafficking, guns, prostitution. MPs on the Committee were also informed that only four per cent of the total asylum applications have been processed in 2021 and the cost of housing the rest in hotels and detention centres rising to EUR 5.6 per day. (Faye Brown, "Exponential rise' in Albanian migrants crossing the Channel this year, MPs told," *Sky News*, 26 October 2022)

France and the Netherlands plan to exit

from the Energy Charter Treaty

On 25 October, *Deutsche Welle* reported that France and the Netherlands revealed their intention to leave the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) due to it not coinciding with their climate goals. Spain and Poland defected earlier in 2022, and Italy in 2016 from the ECT. Fossil fuel investors have submitted lawsuits against European countries for changing to renewable energy sources as they will incur losses. The ECT, pressured by litigations, has allowed fossil fuel usage and slowed down the green energy transition in Europe. The energy crisis related to the war in Ukraine also made Europe decide to use coal and reactivate coal power plants. Spain, Italy, Poland, France and the Netherlands do not comply with the usage of fossil fuels as it will increase the CO2 emission and thereby delay their climate goals. (Stuart Braun, "EU states 'revolt' against controversial energy treaty," *Deutsche Welle*, 25 October 2022)

EU members projected to not reach 2030 targets to reduce Roma poverty

On 25 October, the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) published the results of a survey conducted to understand the plight of the Roma community and the effects of the 2020 EU agreement to lift the community from poverty by 2030. The survey was conducted in Croatia, Czechia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Spain, North Macedonia and Serbia. The results published showed that while some have seen better living conditions, the poverty rate in the community has seen no change in the past few years. The FRA referenced the 2020 agreement and called the implementation to be slow. The FRA projects that the EU will not reach their 2030 target as there is little to no progress in educating the community and the employment rate of the Roma remains low. Except for Hungary and Italy which have achieved their 2030 target for employment, the rest of the nations are nowhere near the target. The FRA revealed that 33 per cent of the responders reported anti-gypsyous attitudes which have only increased since the pandemic. FRA Director Michael O'Flaherty called out the surveyed nations saying "These findings underline how EU and national laws and policies still do not deliver on the fundamental rights of Roma that will

change their daily lives.” ([“EU countries far from reaching 2030 targets to cut Roma poverty, survey finds,” EURACTIV](#), 25 October 2022)

Defence Ministers of Turkey and Hungary sign new Military agreement

On 24 October, the Defense Ministers of Hungary and Turkey met in Turkey to sign a new military agreement. The new agreement includes the fresh purchase of military equipment by Hungary, intelligence sharing, joint exercises, training and logistics and defence sector cooperation. Hungarian Defence Minister Kristóf Szalay-Bobrovniczky said that through this new deal Hungary will be buying 40 Turkish Ejder Yalçın armoured combat vehicles and future purchase of Turkish military drones. Turkish Defence Minister Hulusi Akar expressed that the agreement was based on the relations between the leaders of the two countries and that development of relations between Hungary and Turkey will only move forward. On 25 October, the two Ministers inaugurated the Hungarian Gallipoli Monument which commemorates the fallen Hungarian soldiers who fought alongside Turkey in the Dardanelles Wars. ([“Turkey deepens ties with Orbán’s Hungary,” Nordic Monitor](#), 26 October 2022)

Austria’s Energy Minister warns against gas price caps as EU Energy ministers meet

On 25 October, the EU energy ministers met in Luxembourg to discuss issues like a “dynamic price corridor” and the ways to tackle the impending energy crisis in Europe. However, as gas price caps come with its own set of risks like affecting the security of supply and impacting existing and long-term contracts. On this issue, Austria’s Energy Minister, Leonore Gewessler said: “If enormous price jumps happen with small volumes during the day, then the market is suspended. The same thing must now be done on the gas market.” Moreover, on the same day, Europe’s leading trading hub Dutch Title Transfer Facility (TTF) said that gas prices had fallen from EUR 100 per megawatt-hour to EUR 95 per megawatt-hour for the first time since June 2022. Gewessler also mentioned that a similar mechanism like the Iberian cap by which

Spain and Portugal have subsidised gas burned for electricity should be applied to other EU countries. (Nikolaus J. Kurmayer, [“Austria concerned as EU executive continues work on gas price cap,” EURACTIV](#), 26 October 2022; Jorge Liboreiro, [“Energy crisis: Europe’s gas prices fall below €100 MWh for the first time since mid-June,” euronews](#), 25 October 2022)

Defence Minister of Georgia and Lithuania discuss on strategic cooperation

On 24 October, Georgia’s Defence minister Juansher Burchuladze and Lithuania’s Defence Minister, Arvydas Anušauskas met to discuss the challenges to security in the Black Sea region. Burchuladze appreciated Lithuania’s constant support to Georgia. With the upcoming NATO summit in Vilnius, Georgia informed Anušauskas about the reforms initiated to comply more with NATO and EU standards. On a bilateral level, improving education, cybersecurity, and installing better strategic communication were discussed. Additionally, in terms of increasing military cooperation, mandatory military service, rehabilitation of wounded soldiers, exchanges between national defence academies, and joint exercises were also discussed as potential areas of cooperation. Following the meeting, the minister released a joint communique. ([“Georgian, Lithuanian defence chiefs review cooperation, security challenges in Black Sea region,” Agenda.ge](#), 24 October 2022)

Albania and Israel’s Prime Ministers meet to discuss Iranian threat

On 23rd October, *Arab News* reported that Albania’s Prime Minister Edi Rama arrived in Israel for an official visit. He met Israel’s caretaker Prime Minister Yair Lapid, and the two discussed bilateral ties and the ways to overcome challenges faced by both the countries. Special focus was given to the threat both the country faces from Iran. Rama is also scheduled to meet the head of Israel’s National Cyber Directorate, which is the state’s apex cybersecurity authority. Albania’s increased attention to cyber security issues comes after two cyber attacks on government websites and systems, which have been traced to an Iranian source. ([“In Israel, Albanian PM to meet cyber chief after](#)

Iran hack," Arab News, 23 October 2022)

Hungary and Turkey discuss strengthening their relations

On 24 October, Hungary's Defence Minister, Kristof Szalay-Bobrovniczky, met with Turkey's Defence Minister, Hulusi Akar, in Ankara to discuss the continued partnership between the countries regarding trade, culture and defence. They want to promote peace in Ukraine, and Szalay-Bobrovniczky appreciated Turkey's efforts in mediating the grain deal between Russia and Ukraine. Turkey was noted to have provided humanitarian aid to Ukraine and Hungary in assisting people fleeing the war. The two countries agreed to cooperate in arms deals. Hungary is aiming to replace its old military equipment with new NATO-compatible technology with the help of Turkey. Turkey had supplied military weapons and is manufacturing ten Gidran combat vehicles for Hungary. ("Defence Minister: Turkey 'important strategic partner'," The Budapest Times, 24 October 2022)

Azerbaijan's President visits Georgia

On 24 October, Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev completed his visit to Georgia following his discussion with Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili on strengthening their relations and strategic partnership. The two exchanged dialogue on politics, cooperation in trade and economy. At a press conference in Mtskheta, Garibashvili and Aliyev talked about facilitating friendly cooperation between South Caucasus countries. Aliyev was shown around Georgia by the Prime Minister, introducing its culture, history and art. Garibashvili was present till the farewell of Aliyev in Tbilisi, from which he departed. ("Azerbaijani president ends visit to Georgia after discussing "special relations"," agenda.ge, 24 October 2022)

Greece to collaborate with Austria and Germany for renewable energy cable

On 22 October, *Ekathimerini* reported that Greece's Energy Minister Kostas Skrekas suggestion to build an electricity cable that would produce electricity from renewable sources connecting Austria and Germany to Greece. At a renewable energy conference in Athens, Skrekas said that a proposal for the same has been submitted to Austria's Energy

Minister. The project aligns with Greece's efforts to expand its renewable energy capabilities to 70 per cent by 2030. Running through Albania and other Balkan countries, initially the cable would have a capacity of three gigawatts which could be increased to nine gigawatts. Discussions with Austria and Germany are being conducted for the funding of the project. ("Greece proposes power link to Austria and Germany," *Ekathimerini*, 22 October 2022)

Cross-border control to be made permanent, Ulf Kristersson

On 21 October, in an interview with the *Sydsvenskan* (Sweden newspaper) Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson said that the border control between Denmark and Sweden along the Oresund Bridge would remain permanent. Border control is placed to reduce cross-border crimes and migration problems. However, the border control measures go against EU law. The EU permits cross-border control for only six months, not as a permanent solution. The opposition says there should be more cooperation between the Nordic countries rather than cause division. The first border control was placed in 2015 by Sweden's Social Democrats. ("Swedish PM calls for 'permanent border control' with Denmark," *THE LOCAL dk*, 21 October 2022)

Scandinavian and Baltic states advised to be mindful of electricity usage

On 21 October, *Eng.LSM.lv* reported on the electricity storage of the Scandinavian and Baltic States. The transmission system operators of the countries released a report analysing the amount of electricity that can be supplied to the region. As per the report, the upcoming winter is likely to be one of the most challenging ones in recent years. Even though the reserves are full, they are limited in capacity, which exacerbates the crisis. The analysis also does not instruct any citizen or organization to cut down on their consumption. However, transmission operator, "High Voltage Network" provided a statement to Nasdaq Riga on the same issue and said that given the size of the storage capacities, the countries should consider implementing supply constraints and be mindful of the amount of electricity being used by the consumers. ("Baltic, Scandinavian authorities warn of low

electricity capacity reserve,” Eng.LSM.lv, 21 October 2022)

Spain, Portugal and France agree to build a green corridor pipeline

On 20 October, France’s President Emmanuel Macron, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez and the Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa agreed on replacing the MidCat gas pipeline project with a cleaner green energy corridor at a meeting held in Brussels. France has been opposing the MidCat project for strategic and environmental reasons. The concerns that the MidCat pipeline will not be environmentally and economically viable by France has led to the demise of the project. France has agreed for a more ecological alternative pipeline between itself and the Iberian peninsula. The new green energy corridor will carry clean hydrogen that will be more ecological than the natural gas. The link between Barcelona and Marseille will be named as BarMar connects Spain and France through a sea link. Portugal and Spain will also be linked through green interconnectors between Celourico da Beira and Zamora (CelZa). The pipeline will connect the energy island to the rest of the Europe through France. Gas will be transported through this pipeline for a short-term European energy market needs during the transition period to green energy. (Carlos E Cue and Silvia Ayuso, “Sánchez, Macron and Costa agree on a green energy corridor between Barcelona and Marseille instead of MidCat,” el pais, 20 October 2022)

Exempted from following the gas price cap

On 21 October, in the European Council summit held to discuss on imposing of energy price cap, Hungary Prime Minister Victor Orban said that the European Commission’s proposal posed an energy risk, threatening its gas supplies despite supply from Europe. He highlighted that Hungary was not alone in opposing the price and in face of keeping the gas supplies intact, defending Hungary interest was priority. Therefore, Hungary will be exempted from the application of energy price cap. (“Hungary Receives Exemption from the Gas Price Cap,” Hungary Today, 21 October 2022)

Second compromise on Chips Act circulated by Czech Republic’s EU Presidency

On 18 October, *EURACTIV* reported that the EU Council under Czech Republic’s presidency circulated the second draft of the Chips Act. The Act is intended to assist the EU in maintaining smooth supply chains for semiconductors, and other electronic components. The new compromise text, which comes with several changes, focuses on several outstanding issues and is slated to be discussed by the Council on 19 October. As per the new text, a European Chips Infrastructure Consortium will be set up to facilitate the coordination of funding along with cutting-edge fabrication plants. Moreover, the European Commission will monitor potential crises and trigger emergency status in consultation with the European Semiconductor Board if required. (Luca Bertuzzi, “Czech Presidency tries to close in on the Chips Act,” EURACTIV, 18 October 2022)

MEPs urge for faster Schengen accession for Romania and Bulgaria

On 18 October, the members of the European Parliament passed a resolution urging the European Council and the Schengen member states to consider their decision for Romania and Bulgaria’s accession to the Schengen free movement area. The MEPs said that the creation of the Schengen area was one of the EU’s “greatest achievements” and given that Romania and Bulgaria fulfilled the necessary conditions long ago, the Council should seriously consider the status of their membership. Last week, several Schengen member states sent inspectors to Bulgaria and Romania to ascertain their progress and the results of the inspection are expected to be released on 26 October. On this issue, the Czech Presidency has said that they are pushing for a vote on the membership bids at the EU Home Ministers’ meeting in December and the subsequent EU Summit. As Croatia is on its way to joining the Schengen zone, the only EU member states not a part of it are Bulgaria, Romania, Cyprus and Ireland. (“End ‘discrimination’ and admit Bulgaria and Romania to Schengen, MEPs demand,” EURACTIV, 18 October 2022)

Italy to command Bulgarian NATO battlegroup

On 17 October, Bulgaria hosted Italian Defence Minister Lorenzo Guerini, and the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), General Christopher G. Cavoli for the change of command of NATO's multinational battlegroup. The battlegroup in Bulgaria is now under the command of Italy's Colonel Francesco Alaimo. Italy will now command the 1,100 troops from several NATO countries based in Bulgaria specialising in manoeuvring, infantry, air defence, anti-tank and engineering. Established in March in Bulgaria, the group will fight with the host nation in times of need outlining the collective defence principle of NATO. ("Italy takes command of NATO's multinational battlegroup in Bulgaria," *nato.int*, 17 October 2022)

EU sets 2023 catch limits in the Baltic Sea

On 17 October, the EU's Agriculture and Fisheries Council came to a political conclusion on the total allowable catches (TACs) and quotas for fish stocks in the Baltic Sea in 2023. Based on the advice of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) the council set limits for fishing vessels working in the region. The agreements outlined largely include a decrease in the quantity of fish that can be caught except for Central Baltic herring and plaice whose population has increased. This is also in line with the EU's Common Fisheries Policy. ("Baltic Sea: Council agrees catch limits for 2023," *consilium.europa.eu*, 17 October 2022)

Cyprus gets EU approval for undersea power cable with Greece

On 15 October, *EURACTIV* reported on Cyprus's collaboration with the EU, on the newly launched project to link the island with an undersea power cable. The EU has approved EUR 757 million in funding to Cyprus for the 1,200-kilometre cable connecting the island to Greece. This cable will end Cyprus's energy isolation. According to EU Energy Commissioner Kadri Simson, the project has been fast-tracked due to the rising energy crisis and cost catalysed by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and will help

Europe in diversifying its energy sources further. The cable, which Cyprus's president Nicos Anastasiades hailed as "historic," will have a capacity of 1,000 megawatts, expandable to 2,000 megawatts. Its construction is scheduled to begin in 2022, and the project is expected to be completed by 2027. ("Cyprus, EU launch project to link island to European electricity grid," *EURACTIV*, 15 October 2022)

NATO Military Committee Chair attends Arctic Circle Assembly

On 14 October, the Arctic Circle Assembly was held in Iceland. The NATO Military Committee Chair, Admiral Bauer discussed the importance of the Arctic to North America and Europe. He added that the Arctic is pivotal for global security and should remain free and open. After Finland and Sweden become NATO members, seven out of eight countries in the Arctic Council will be an ally of NATO. ("Chair of the NATO Military Committee highlights strategic importance of the Arctic," *nato.int*, 16 October 2022)

NATO to conduct aircraft "Steadfast Noon" exercise from 17 October

On 14 October, *NATO* reported that it would begin the "Steadfast Noon" exercise involving 14 countries. The exercise involves fourth and fifth-generation fighter jets, surveillance, tanker aircraft and other types of 60 aircraft. No live weapons were used for the training, which takes place in Belgium, the North Sea and the UK. The training exercises are conducted annually with different states hosting every year to ensure that NATO's nuclear deterrent remains safe and secure. The alliance's main goal is to maintain peace, prevent coercion, stop aggression and create a safer world. The exercise will start on 17 October and will continue till 30 October. ("NATO's annual nuclear exercise gets underway," *nato.int*, 14 October 2022)

Serbia faces increased pressure from the EU and Germany over visa conditions

On 14 October, Germany and EU officials increased pressure on Serbia to tighten its visa conditions for migrants. Serbia has visa-free agreements with India, Tunisia, Syria, Burundi and even the EU. This has led many

to travel to the EU illegally through Serbia and stay there without visas. EU Home Affairs Commissioner Ylva Johansson said that Serbia needs to keep a check on its borders and its visas to be considered to be a part of the EU. She also said that if they don't the EU will have to take drastic steps and cut Serbia's visa-free agreement with the EU. Frontex an EU border agency told that over 19,160 migrants have come to the EU illegally through Serbia in 2022 alone. (["Germany, EU pressure Serbia to curb illegal migration"](#), *Deutsche Welle*, 14 October 2022)

Ahead of the annual summit, Estonia becomes co-chair of Open Government Partnership

On 12 October, *news.err.ee* reported that Estonia will be taking over as the co-chair of the Open Government Partnership (OGP). The OGP is a multilateral initiative for the promotion of open and strong government focusing on citizen empowerment and fighting corruption. So far, there are 77 national partners and 106 local partners in the group. Ahead of the organization's summit next year in Tallinn, Estonia's State Secretary Taimar Peterkop will be representing civil society in the organization along with Uruguay's Institute for Communication and Development Director, Annabel Cruz for the next year. Estonia has been a part of the OGP since its inception in 2011 and was selected by other member states and civil society representatives to be the co-chair for the upcoming season. (["Estonia takes on Open Government Partnership co-chair role,"](#) *news.err.ee*, 12 October 2022)

European Commission recommends Bosnia and Herzegovina for candidate status

On 12 October, European Commission released its annual enlargement report recommending candidate status for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The country has been a potential candidate for the EU since 2003 and formally applied for membership in 2016. In 2019, the Commission provided 14 key priorities for the country to fulfill before the EU accession negotiations could be facilitated. While the Commission's recommendation will not immediately

change the country's chances of getting candidacy, it could catalyze the reforms necessary for the country to begin its accession process. The report identified eight areas like rule of law, the country's courts, election law, public procurement law, and public financial management, where further progress reports were required. It is expected that Bosnia and Herzegovina could make quick progress in the implementation of 14 conditions initially mentioned by the Commission if it could deliver on the eight elements. However, despite the Commission's recommendation, Bosnia and Herzegovina would have to get affirmation from the EU member states before it is granted candidate status. (Alexandra Brzozowski, ["EU Commission to recommend Bosnia-Herzegovina be granted candidate status,"](#) *EURACTIV*, 12 October 2022)

EEA reports identifies five issues impacting sustainable development of urban sectors

On 10 October, the European Environmental Agency (EEA) updated its report titled 'Urban sustainability in Europe — Post-pandemic drivers of environmental transitions.' The report outlined the impact of the COVID-19, the war in Ukraine, climate change, environmental degradation, and the impending energy crisis that is plaguing Europe's cities. Published during the European Week of Regions and Cities, the report also identified a lack of affordable housing, urban sprawl, road congestion, demographic change, and social exclusion as pressing issues for Europe's urban sectors. It emphasized the need to ensure green policies for cities, which will be tailored as per the requirements of each, instead of blanket policies. The report also identified specific issues like climate resilience, quality of life, accessibility, healthy environment, food security, circularity, clean energy, and sustainable buildings as verticals where future work was needed. (["Post-pandemic recovery offers European cities chance to boost shift to sustainability,"](#) *eea.europa.eu*, 10 October 2022)

Low demand and lesser industrial production reduce Europe's gas prices

On 10 October, *euronews* revealed that Europe's gas prices had reached a three-

month low. The fall in prices has been ascribed to a decrease in demand. It also comes after the European Commission announced that EU's gas storages had reached 90 per cent capacity, before November as had been decided by the bloc earlier. One of Europe's main trading hubs, Dutch Title Transfer Facility (TTF) reported that the price was hovering around EUR 150 per megawatt-hour, which was an improvement from the EUR 349 it had hit in August. However, prices still remain exceptionally high as in 2021, the price of gas was around EUR 38 per megawatt-hour. (Jorge Liboreiro, "[Europe's gas prices reach three-month low as consumer demand and industrial production decline](#)," *euronews*, 10 October 2022)

EU leaders hail the success of Cohesion Policy

On 10 October, the 20th European Week of Regions and Cities began. The event which will continue until 13 October will have over 15,000 participants across 300 sessions on issues like green transition, territorial cohesion, digital transition and youth empowerment. At the press conference arranged to commemorate the event, Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms, Elisa Ferreira and the President of the Committee of the Regions spoke about the importance of EU's Cohesion policy. Ferreira said that the Cohesion Policy is the "glue that holds Europe together." According to the eighth Cohesion report published recently, the policy, representing one third of EU's budget has impacted regional growth significantly. It had halved the GDP gap of Central and Eastern countries that became members after 2004 and has fostered green energy transition. It has also assisted the countries to deal with the COVID 19 pandemic and the fallouts Russia's invasion of Ukraine. ("[20th European Week of Regions and Cities – Cohesion Policy makes a real difference](#)," *ec.europa.eu*, 10 October 2022)

MED 5 push for EU intervention amid migration fears

On 08 October, MED 5 consisting of Mediterranean countries pushed the EU to intervene to curb the increase in migration. Ministers of Cyprus, Greece, Malta and Spain

met for their fourth meeting to discuss the surge in migration in the region. Italy is also a part of this group but no representative attended the meeting. The group called upon the EU to step up and ensure the Ankara-Brussels agreement in 2016 on returning migrants is upheld. They also talked about how the Ukraine war will increase the number of migrants fleeing to Europe as things escalate there. The group also called for a holistic approach to dealing with the migration crisis and for other EU members to help with the same. ("[MED 5 calls for more EU support fearing a possible migration spike due to Ukraine war](#)," *euronews*, 08 October 2022)

Albanian gang caught smuggling migrants

On 08 October, Spanish police caught members of a gang accused of smuggling Albanian migrants. They were said to be smuggling them to the UK through the channel from Spain. This was a joint mission with the help of the British National Crime Agency. It is suspected that they have been smuggling migrants since 2014 and the total amount of migrants is unknown. They were collecting payment between EUR 3,000 and EUR 15,000 for the journey from Albania to the UK through Spain. ("[Spain arrests Albanian gang involved in smuggling migrants to UK](#)", *Reuters*, 08 October 2022)

NATO-UK conduct Joint Warrior maritime exercise in North Sea

On 07 October, NATO reported on the "Joint Warrior" bi-annual exercise held along with UK in the North Sea. The exercise is scheduled from 01 to 12 October using 45 ships, 30 aircrafts, submarines, crew and naval forces. European member-states including Denmark, France's FS Somme, German Navy FGS Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Italy, Latvia, Royal Netherlands Navy flagship HNLMS Tromp, Norway's HNoMS Roald Amundsen and auxiliary vessel HNoMS Maud, Poland, and the US from the trans-Atlantic took part in the exercise. The exercise mainly aimed at improving the maritime capabilities in case of multi-threat scenario, protection against ground and air attacks, and involved experimentation of unmanned systems. ("[NATO Ships Participate In UK Exercise](#)

Joint Warrior 22-2, *nato.int*, 07 October 2022)

NATO on including gender in military spectrum

On 07 October, the NATO reported on the proceedings of the gender inclusivity session held during the committee meeting.

Lieutenant-Colonel Diana Morais stated the reasons to integrate gender into the NATO and outlined the steps taken by NATO to bring gender inclusivity in the military spectrum. According to Morais, including of gender in terms of analysis, and planning process helps in improving the understanding of the society and to detect threats. Therefore, it was key in recruiting both men and women into the allied armed forces. Till now NATO has used education and training, leadership development, and recognition of resources as aspects to integrate the gender perspective. ("The people behind the policies: integrating gender perspectives into the military," *nato.int*, 07 October 2022)

EU to send mission to smoothen the tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan

On 07 October, Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev and Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan settled on EU's decision to send its mission in the border region between both countries. The agreement was negotiated in the European Political Community meeting in Prague. EU's plan on sending mission is aimed at reducing Russia's influence in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, bring confidence between both, and install border cooperations. ("Armenia, Azerbaijan agree to EU mission along their border," *Deutsche Welle*, 07 October 2022)

European Parliament Members vote for resolution supporting protests in Iran following Amini's death

On 06 October, the Members of the European Parliament voted in favour of a resolution condemning the death Mahsa Amini, after her arrest, abuse, and torture by Iran's 'morality' police. The text supports the peaceful protests organized across Iran and also suggests sanctions on officials involved in the crackdown against these protestors. So far, over 100 people protesting against

the treatment of Amini have been killed. The text was adopted by a show of hands thus leaving no official record for how many MEPs voted in favour but the chair of the Parliament's Delegation for Relations with Iran, Cornelia Ernst said that the 'vast majority' agreed to the text. After the votes, in a statement, she said: "Human rights are not negotiable. The longing for a free and democratic Iran is gripping more and more people in Iran. The European Parliament stands by their side." On 05 October, in protest of the same, Iraq-born Swedish MEP Abir Al-Sahlani cut her hair in the Parliament in a show of solidarity with Iran, where, many women have been staging similar protests. (Wilhelmine Preussen, "EU Parliament slams Iran over repression of women's rights protesters," *POLITICO*, 06 October 2022)

European Commission to update the rescEU fleet

On 05 October, the European Commission proposed an expansion to the rescEU fleet and make it more efficient. It is looking to allocate EUR 170 million from the EU budget to strengthen the fleet from 20223. It is looking to expand the ground and aerial assets to a total of 22 planes, four helicopters and more ground support. The Commissioner for Crisis Management Janez Lenarčič explained how this year's wildfire showed the unpreparedness of the rescEU fleet to deal with the emerging climate crises. The injection is expected to lead to a faster response at multiple places at once. ("Forest fires: €170 million to reinforce rescEU fleet," *ec.europa.eu*, 05 October 2022)

The gas price cap is a temporary measure says Ursula

On 05 October, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in her speech at the European parliament said that a price cap will only be a temporary solution. LNG, which is an alternative source of energy for Europe is comparatively costlier alternative. Von der Leyen is expected to introduce a new EU price index, a proposal on the same will be sent to heads of states of EU members before the 07 October summit. This is a proposal would reduce the price of electricity and a wider measure to improve

the electricity market. The President also introduced more funds under the REPowerEU plan for members to access to increase investment in energy infrastructure. There was also a plea from von der Leyen to not rush to stock up on gas which led to a global increase in price through a bidding situation. ([“EU chief open to gas price cap as ‘temporary solution’ to energy crisis,” EURACTIV](#), 05 October 2022)

Moroccans dissent against visa policies

On 04 October, a group of Moroccans led a demonstration outside the European Union's Office in Rabat against the “racist” and “humiliating” handling of visa applications, targeting France. One of the protestors said that, the visa applicants are subject to rejection, without having any right to ask for justification for the rejection, or face refusal for a refund of processing fees. Pointing out France's decision to limit the number of visas provided to Moroccans and Algerians by half, activists protesting against this have said that the legitimacy of travel to EU countries is being questioned, and is “unacceptable and unjustified.” Public anger and wide resentment in Morocco and France, have led to a counterclaim by a French official who pronounced that the issue was exaggerated on social media, persisting that the number of student visa issues was similar to 2021. ([“Moroccans protest ‘racist’ French, EU visa policies,” EURACTIV](#), 05 October 2022)

EU's energy architecture under fire

On 05 October, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen spoke of the target etched at the EU's critical infrastructure and announced that the EU should make efficient use of its surveillance satellites to prevent sabotage and destruction. Referring to the wreckage of the Nord stream pipelines and the “vulnerability” of the EU's energy structure, the president explained the detection of leaks in the Nord Stream pipelines that connect Russia to Germany through the Baltic Sea, and how an inquiry against the issue is underway. Citing that these pipelines were the “lifelines of data and energy” for European citizens and businesses, von der Leyen reiterated that the EU is currently in the process of updating its directive for critical infrastructure would and cover 11

risk areas, which include natural hazards, terrorist attacks, sabotage and public health emergencies. Extending her proposals to impose a curb on the prices of gas used for electricity, she also added that other member states need to reach a consensus on such measures. Addressing Ukraine's situation and praising its “successes,” the president ended her speech by extending support to Ukraine, asking it to “stay the course.” the EU would be on their side “for as long as it takes.” ([“EU infrastructure a ‘target’ for first time in recent history, says von der Leyen”](#), *euronews*, 05 October 2022)

EU launches new Youth Action Plan

On 04 October, the EU introduced its first Youth Action Plan under the EU External Action for 2022-2027. Celebrating the European Year of Youth, the EU hopes to harness the changing demography and empower the youth for them to emerge as partners to help build a sustainable future. The action plan rests on three pillars, partnership to engage, partnership to empower and partnership to connect. The EU hopes to connect the Youth Action Plan with the Global Gateway strategy to connect youth across the globe and provide them with various opportunities. This strategy looks to break down barriers and combat various challenges faced by today's youth. The Action Plan also introduces three new initiatives under it, the Youth and Women in Democracy initiative, the Youth Empowerment Fund and the Africa-Europe Academy. The EU hopes that through this plan it can achieve its international commitments such as the Paris Climate Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals of 2030. ([“European Year of Youth 2022: EU adopts the first Youth Action Plan in EU External Action to strengthen engagement with young people worldwide”](#), *ec.europa.eu*, 04 October 2022)

Increase in the number of deportation in the EU states in second quarter of 2022

On 03 October, Eurostat, the EU's statistic body, released figures that showed a spike in number of deportation orders issued in the EU in 2022's second quarter. A total of 96,550 non-EU citizens were ordered to deport from the EU states in second quarter of the EU and 23,110 deportation took place,

including within the EU states. There has been a 15 per cent increase in deportation orders and 11 per cent increase in the deportation when compared to the second quarter of 2021. France has the largest number of deportation orders with 33,450. Greece takes the second place with 8,750 orders and Germany gave out 8,275 orders. The actual deportation figures constitute France deporting 3,590 and Germany carrying out 2,765 deportations. Sweden came in third after France and Germany in deporting 2,380 people. The majority of people who are being deported are Albanians followed by Georgian, Russians and Turks. (["EU countries again carrying out more deportations," Deutsche Welle, 03 October 2022](#))

European Commission outlined a failsafe in case of a natural gas shortage

On 03 October, the Commission announced its back-up in the event of a natural gas shortage. It has accepted a German proposal to revive lignite-fired power plants in face of a shortage because of the Russia-Ukraine war and help Europe survive winter. With a cost of EUR 450 million, the measure looks to prepare these plants to handle the load when the demand arises. The plants will be kept under a lignite supply reserve from 01 October 2022 to 31 March 2024 and will help in protecting natural gas availability. The Commission accepted this measure as a part of EU State aid rules which allows for funding of certain sectors or companies in times of need. (["State aid: Commission approves €450 million German measure to replace electricity generation amid Russian natural gas shortages," ec.europa.eu, 03 October 2022](#))

Poland asks for World War II reparations

On 03 October, through a diplomatic note, Poland asked for compensation from Germany for World War II. Polish Foreign Minister Zbigniew Rau in a press conference said that "[The note] expresses the position of the Polish minister of foreign affairs that the parties should take immediate steps to permanently and effectively... settle the issue of the consequences of German aggression and occupation." This comes at the same time German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock is said to visit Poland to participate in the German Unity Day

festivities in Warsaw. The reparations are estimated at around EUR 1.3 trillion. Rau is said to talk to Baerbock about the same. (["Poland demands €1.3 trillion in WWII reparations from Germany," Deutsche Welle, 03 October 2022](#))

Six countries propose new sanctions against Iran

On 03 October, new proposals were submitted to the EU regarding sanctions against Iran for its violent response to the ongoing protests. Germany, France, Denmark, Spain, Italy, and the Czech Republic have put forth 16 proposals for new sanctions which are said to target institutions and individuals primarily involved in the suppression of the protests. These proposals will be discussed by the EU foreign ministers on 17 October. Germany's Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock called the crackdown due to the fear of the power of education and freedom. She also expressed the limitations of their actions in a tweet which said, "It is also difficult to bear that our foreign policy options are limited. But we can amplify their voice, create publicity, bring charges and sanction. And that we are doing." These protests erupted nationwide due to the death of women in police custody over the issue of hijab. (["Germany, others in EU plan Iran sanctions over protests crackdown," Reuters, 03 October 2022](#))

Sweden lifts arms export ban on Turkey

On 30 September, Sweden's Inspectorate of Strategic Products (ISP) lifted a ban on export of military equipment to Turkey. The ban had been instituted in 2019 after Turkey's crackdown on Syria against the Syrian Kurdish YPG militia. However, as a result of Sweden's impending accession to the NATO, the countries are aiming to better bilateral relations. Turkey and Sweden reached an agreement regarding the export permits on the sidelines of the NATO summit in Madrid in June. ISP said that the defence and security policy conditions in Turkey have changed considerably leading Sweden to take the decision. While ISP states that the export permits are being given from the third quarter of 2022, it did not specify which companies or products had been approved so far. (["Sweden resumes arms](#)

exports to Turkey after NATO membership bid," Reuters, 30 September 2022)

EU energy ministers introduce measures to tackle rising energy price

On 30 September, the EU energy ministers approved a set of emergency measures to deal with soaring electricity prices and coordinate the responses by the member-states. The new package includes three major aspects. First, a pan-EU plan for power saving measures by which a five per cent target has been set for peak hours along with a voluntary 10 per cent reduction in overall electricity demands. Second, a cap on excess revenue, by which any earning beyond EUR 180 per megawatt-hour will be collected by the governments. Third, a mechanism to capture extra profit made by fossil fuel companies, whereby a 33 per cent tax will be imposed on profits made by the companies in the 2022 fiscal year. According to the package, the funds obtained from the second and third measure will be redirected as subsidies, reduced tariff and income support to households and companies under stress. On this issue, Czech Republic's Industry and Trade Minister, Jozef Sikela said: "We completed another part of the puzzle but definitely not the last one... This is an immediate patch." (Jorge Liboreiro, and Alice Tidey, "EU approves mandatory energy savings and cap on company revenues," euronews, 30 September, 2022)

Croatia and the Netherlands reach 90 per cent gas storage

On 30 September, Croatia said that its only gas storage had reached 90 per cent storage capacity. Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic said that the rate of storage was going "according to plan." Dutch energy company Gasunie that told *BNR Newsradio* that Netherlands's gas storage is also 90 per cent. A spokesperson from the company assured that no gas shortages are expected in the upcoming winter. Both Croatia and the Netherlands have thus surpassed the EU's compulsory minimum requirement of hitting 80 per cent of storage before November 2022. (Zoran Radosavljevic, "Croatia's sole gas storage at 90%, PM says," EURACTIV, 30 September 2022; Sofia Stuart Leeson, "Dutch gas storage above EU target, now at 90% capacity," EURACTIV, 30 September 2022)

CLIMATE

Austria sue EU on labelling gas and nuclear power as sustainable sources

On 10 September, Austria is suing the EU over labelling gas and nuclear energy as green. The inclusion of gas and nuclear energy as climate-friendly sustainable resource was deemed to be risky by Austria. Austria pointed out that the nuclear power can cause severe harm to the environment such as in the case of Chernobyl and Fukushima nuclear disasters. Austria is trying to garner support among the member nations to pursue a legal challenge against the EU to exclude gas and nuclear power as sustainable investment options. The EU reasons the inclusion gas and nuclear-power as a sustainable energy source can attract investments and also does not cause extreme environmental problems. ("Austria files case over EU's 'green' gas and nuclear label," Duetsche Welle, 10 October 2022)

Increased plastic pollution and presence of harmful bacteria found along the Latvia-Lithuania coast

On 10 October, *euronews* reported on increased levels of plastic and bacteria found along the Latvia-Lithuania coastline. The study was conducted by "My Sea Campaign" volunteers who combed a 100 meters section on four beaches to collect and identify litter. The project was budgeted at EUR 449,574, 85 per cent of which was financed by the European Cohesion Policy and other participating project partners gave the remaining 15 per cent. The group found 736 pieces of litter in 100 meters of beach, which is 36 times the European standard for good environmental status (GES) of 20 litter items per 100 meters of beach length. The increased level of plastic has been linked to an increase in bacterial growth of *Vibrio*, which can be harmful for humans. A senior microbiologist and scientist, Marija Katarzyte explained the phenomenon and said: "Due to climate change, the *vibrio* coastal infections are increasing in the Baltic Sea region and plastic is one of the ways how those bacteria might be transported." *Vibrio* has been found in 67 per cent of the samples collected from the Amber Coast, where people dig up the beach for amber, thus exposing

themselves to the dangerous bacteria. (Aurora Velez, "[Dangerous bacteria found in plastic pollution on Latvian and Lithuanian coastline](#)," *euronews*, 10 October 2022)

ENERGY

Romania was found guilty of violating the Energy Charter Treaty

On 25 October, a panel of the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) ruled against the Romanian government and found it guilty of violating the Energy Charter Treaty. This was concerning a case launched by ten investors in Romania's solar power plants led by Austrian company LSG Group in 2018. The investors were from Austria, the Netherlands, Germany, and Cyprus. This decision is not final and the ICSID has asked the two parties to negotiate compensation. This case was launched when the Romanian government decreased the number of incentives given to investors in the solar power plant. The incentives were a green certificate scheme in 2008 for encouraging renewable sources of energy in Romania. The government from 2013 onwards started to reduce the number of green certificates and delayed payment. This was done by the Romanian government to allegedly combat the rising energy prices in the country and reduce over-compensation. ("[Romania loses arbitration versus investors in solar power](#)," *Balkan Green Energy News*, 25 October 2022)

Decreasing gas prices in Europe are making electricity in Finland cheaper

On 25 October, *yle.fi* reported that due to decreasing gas prices in Europe, electricity in Finland is becoming cheaper. Finland does not produce any electricity with gas yet stability in the energy market is being reflected in Finnish prices. The decrease in gas prices is being credited to warmer weather than expected and increasing gas stocks. Finnish electricity is imported from Norway and Sweden who source it from Baltic and Central European Countries. These countries produce electricity with gas and fluctuating gas prices had increased the price of Swedish and Norwegian electricity which in turn increased the electricity rates in Finland. The price decrease is expected to be a long-term one with new EU policies

being introduced to source gas from alternative suppliers. ("[The price of gas is now falling sharply - it also makes electricity cheaper in Finland and Europe](#)," *yle.fi*, 25 October 2022)

ECONOMY

SWIFT releases findings of Central Bank Digital Currency

On 05 October, SWIFT released its findings of an eight-month test looking at various digital currencies and technologies. This experiment was done to create a centralised Digital Currency which Central Banks can use for payments. The participants of the trial were the Central Banks of France and Germany and global vendors such as Standard Chartered, USB and HSBC. The Head of Innovations of SWIFT, Nick Kerigan explained how they are aiming to create a system where all the parties involved can connect to a main-hub and conduct all their transactions in digital currency. This is to increase efficiency of transactions and prevent a clutter of networks. A parallel test is also being conducted to see if they can convert digital assets like stocks and bonds into tokens that can be traded. ("[SWIFT sets out blueprint for central bank digital currency network](#)", *euronews*, 05 October 2022)

GENDER

New rule on balanced gender representation on company boards to be adopted by the EU

On 17 October, the European Council approved the rules to promote gender representation balance on company boards. It gave the EU the green light to proceed with the rules. The rule states that 40 per cent of the non-executive director positions in a listed company should be given to members of the underrepresented gender by 2026. If the member state applies the new rule to executive and non-executive directors, 33 per cent of all positions should be held by the underrepresented sex by 2026. According to the rule, those firms that do not follow gender equality should change their selection process. The selection process should be fair, unbiased and transparent. When there are equally qualified candidates for the same position, the underrepresented gender should be

given preference. A member state close to accomplishing the gender balance goals or having similar rules does not have to make the companies change their appointment or selection process. Every year member states should publish the list of firms that achieved balanced gender representation on their company board. ("[Council approves EU law to improve gender balance on company boards](#)," *consilium.europa.eu*, 17 October 2022)

Slovenia legalizes same-sex marriage and adoption

On 04 October, Slovenian parliament legalized same-sex marriage and adoption through a constitutional amendment. Through this Slovenia becomes the first East European country to do so. This move comes after a constitutional court recognized the need for such an amendment to protect the rights of same-sex couples. The bill was passed with 48 votes in the parliament. ("[Slovenia becomes first East European country to legalise same-sex marriage and adoption](#)", *euronews*, 05 October 2022)

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Slovakia and Poland hit with cyber attacks

On 29 October 2022, the Polish and Slovakian parliaments were hit by cyber-attacks affecting the functioning of the Senates. Slovakia's Deputy Speaker Gabor Grendel said that the Parliament was hit around 1100 hours when the parliament was set to vote on several bills. Grendel said that the parliament was informed by the head of the administrative department that the entire parliament's computer system was down due to a cyber attack on its IT system. Slovakian parliamentary speaker Boris Kollar said that the attacker has not been identified and that technicians are looking into the source of the problem and getting the system back up. The Polish parliament's entire IT infrastructure was attacked and the authorities are of the view that Russia is behind this attack. The Polish Senate issued a statement saying: "The attack was multi-directional, including from inside the Russian Federation. Polish Senate Speaker Tomasz Grodzki called the Russian government a "terrorist regime". ([A massive](#)

[cyberattack hit Slovak and Polish Parliaments](#)," *Security Affairs*, 29 October 2022)

Hyundai Motor Group to build electric vehicles in Slovakia from 2025

On 31 October, Hyundai Motor Group announced that they will be producing electric vehicles in Slovakia. The Kia Corporations Slovakian plant will now mass-produce pure battery electric vehicles (BEVs) for Europe from 2025. No further details have been reported regarding the nature of production. Built-in 2006, the plant currently has exceeded four million units in cumulative production. Slovakia has come up as a major player in the production of EVs with automobile production consisting of 13 per cent of Slovakia's GDP. ("[Hyundai Motor Group to Produce EVs in Slovakia from 2025](#)," *Business Korea*, 31 October 2022)

German banks collaborate with Austria over crypto trading

On 20 October, Germany's online bank N26 had started allowing customers in Austria to trade in Austrian cryptocurrencies in its first foray into the asset class. The German bank said it would enlarge its service abroad to facilitate the trade of almost 200 cryptocurrencies. N26 has joined hands with Austria-based cryptocurrency. The problem for N26 is that, it does not have licence to be traded in Germany. Cryptocurrencies which have been falling due to it being a risky investment but the EU is planning on voting new rules for crypto assets in December or early 2023. Even though cryptocurrencies are higher risk investments, N26 says that there have been growing requests for them. ("[German online bank N26 to launch crypto trading in Austria](#)," *Reuters*, 20 October 2022)

Hungary inaugurates new 5G-logistics terminal

On 18 October, Hungary became the first European country to have a land-based intermodal logistics terminal using 5G technology. Located in Fenyestitke, it was built by Vodafone Hungary with network support from Huawei. The entire project cost more than HUF 40 billion and is the largest facility in Europe in its theoretical capacity and area. The main function of the terminal

is to help tranship rail shipments and has the potential to become the largest rail hub for Ukraine's food exports. (["Europe's first 5G-operated logistics terminal opens in Hungary," CGTN](#), 19 October 2022)

Turkey to use blockchain technology for new services project

On 19 October, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan outlined his plans for the e-Human project to be powered by blockchain technology. Unveiled at Turkey's national blockchain summit, it will be used to enhance the protection of the system's capabilities, data and services. The e-Human project was introduced to help people access key government services regarding jobs, education and talent acquisition. It looks forward to increasing employment and growth of citizens. This new move comes when the Turkish government promotes an anti-crypto stance but at the same time, it promotes using technology in building infrastructure and expanding its ecosystem. (["Turkey taps blockchain for e-Human project, President Erdoğan announces," cointelegraph](#), 19 October 2022)

EU to fund USD 1.15 billion Fibre Optic Cable connecting Europe and Asia via the arctic

On 14 October, *EURACTIV* reported that the EU is planning to fund a fibre optic cable project that connects Europe to Asia via the Arctic. The Far North Fibre project was built by an Alaskan Company named Far North Digital and Finland's Cinia. The length of the cable is 14,000 kilometres connecting Scandinavia and Ireland to Japan passing via Greenland, Canada and Alaska. The project was formed due to failing relations with Russia as the existing optic cable was created in partnership with Russia's telecom operator MegaFon. Russia responds to the Far North Fibre Project with its own Arctic cable named Polar Express, planned to be launched in 2026. The total estimated cost of the cable is USD 1.15 billion. The project will be the first cable to connect Europe to Asia without passing through Suez Canal. (Luca Bertuzzi, ["EU eyes Arctic internet cable to connect Europe to Asia via Alaska," EURACTIV](#), 14 October 2022)

Single charger devices across the EU approved by the parliament

On 04 October, European Parliament press release reported that the EU consumers will have a single charger for every device by the end of 2024. The parliament approved the decision that all the mobile phones, tablets, cameras and other devices sold in the EU will be equipped with type-C port by the end of 2024 and Laptops by 2026. The single charger rule will help in reducing e-waste due to disposed chargers and decrease unnecessary purchase of chargers. No new charger will be required when buying new devices. All devices will have fast charging capabilities. It will also get rid of "lock-in" effect where a consumer depends on a single manufacturer for all the products. (["Long-awaited common charger for mobile devices will be a reality in 2024," europarl.europa.eu](#), 04 October 2022)

UK and EU witnessed the largest occurrence of avian flu

On 03 October, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the EU Reference Laboratory for Avian Influenza reported that 48 million birds were culled in the last year due to the avian flu. This is the largest outbreak of the avian flu in the UK and Europe and is still spreading. Spreading very easily, UK's Chief Veterinary Officer Dr Christine Middlemiss said that the reason behind the increased cases in commercial farms was the persistence of the flu in wild birds. These numbers are expected to rise with the migration season near. The latest figure only maps the damage done from October 2021 to 09 September. (Malcom Prior ["Record avian flu outbreak sees 48m birds culled in UK and EU"](#), *BBC*, 03 October 2022)

Swedish Scientist receives Nobel Prize

On 03 October, Svante Paabo, a Swedish scientist was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his study on human evolution. The Prize committee congratulated him and explained how his research has been instrumental in mapping human evolution and the migration of humans around the planet. Paabo's work explained how there are two different groups of modern humans Neanderthals and

Denisovans who were based in Eurasia. He worked with old, tainted and ruined genetic material to understand our history. After identification, he compared these with the genetic material of Homo sapiens and explored what are the common factors between them. His work is said to help us understand what makes us “uniquely human” according to the prize committee. ([“Nobel Prize goes to Svante Paabo for Neanderthal work”](#), *BBC*, 03 October 2022)

SPACE

UK Space Agency allocates fund for satellite communications

On 17 October, UK’s Science Minister Nusrat Ghani announced a new fund for businesses to transform satellite communications technology. The total amount of the fund is GBP 15 million which will help ideas and innovations presented by various businesses to transform satellite communications. This is a part of the European Space Agency’s (ESA) Advance Research in Telecommunications Services (ARTES) programme. This programme is important for the growth of the UK Space Agency and a recent report published by the ESA highlights how for every GBP 01 invested the UK economy sees a return of GBP 11.80. ([“£15 million investment in satellite communications from UK Space Agency,”](#) *gov.uk*, 17 October 2022)

First Skyrora space launch ends up in the sea

On 13 October, British rocket company Skyrora was looking to send its Skylark L vehicle above 100km in a flight from the Langan peninsula in Iceland. The company, however, observed technical deficits and saw the 11-meter-long rocket fall back into waters lesser than 500 meters away from the launch pad. Aiming to begin orbital launches from Scotland from next year, the founder of the company said that, “while the launch did not go entirely as we expected, it has been a valuable learning opportunity,” and said that they are “confident” of achieving a full orbital launch from the UK in 2023. ([“First Skyrora space launch ditches in the sea off Iceland”](#), *BBC*, 13 October)

"EIRSTAT-1" Ireland's first satellite

On 05 October, *BBC* reported that Ireland's first satellite was ready for launch. EIRSTAT-1 or Educational Irish Research Satellite 1 was built by the University College of Dublin (UCD) and will be launched in the time between mid-January to mid- February. The satellite was built to understand the formation of the universe. It is going to be put into Earth's orbit 520 kilometers from the ground and after its mission, it will return back to UCD. As the first ever satellite being built it has to be recognized by the Irish government and be registered at Educational Irish Research Satellite. ([“Ireland's first satellite close to lift off,”](#) *BBC*, 05 October 2022)

INTERNATIONAL

The Inflation Reduction Act threatens Europe's transatlantic trade relations

On 26 October, the US introduced the Inflation Reduction Act, which offers tax cuts and energy benefits for companies in the US. The Act was disagreed by German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and French President Emmanuel Macron. The US encourages its consumers to buy all products, including cars from its own manufacturers. The “Buy American” protectionist sentiment fueled by the Act has resulted in companies vacating Europe to move towards the US. Europe is criticized for its expensive energy rates than the US. Macron has called against the Inflation Reduction Act and said that Europe should start the “Buy European Act”, which the EU and Scholz disagree with. The EU also formed a new “EU-US Taskforce on the Inflation Reduction Act” to discuss the issue amicably with the US. (Hans Von Der Burchard and Clea Caulcutt, [“Scholz and Macron threaten trade retaliation against Biden,”](#) *POLITICO*, 27 October 2022)

Taiwan delegations visiting Latvia and Lithuania

On 27 October, the *South China Morning Post* reported on the Taiwanese delegation’s visit to Latvia and Lithuania. Reportedly the delegation visited Latvia on 24 and 25 October and is in Lithuania for the rest of the week. The delegation led by Taiwan’s Deputy Minister of the National Science and Technology Council Lin Minn-tsong is meeting the education and technology

officials from Latvia and Lithuania. The three countries are looking to improve relations in the technology sector. Taiwan produces around 60 per cent of the world's semiconductors and this meeting will be instrumental in solving the supply chain crisis of chips in Europe. China has not yet reacted to this visit but the assistant professor of diplomacy and international relations at Tamkang University, Taipei Chen Yi-fan is sure that China will not be quiet. Latvia and Lithuania's relations with China over the past year have soured as the former two countries are developing closer relations with Taiwan. Chen Yi-fan said that this visit shows that "Taiwan is trying to expand its international influence in terms of technology by helping small or developing countries build foundations." (Ralph Jennings "[Taiwan delegation looks to build tech ties with Latvia, Lithuania amid China tensions](#)," *South China Morning Post*, 27 October 2022)

Israel and Turkey restore defence ties after a decade

On 27 October, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Turkish Defense Minister Hulusi Akar met with Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz in Ankara where the two nations restored their security ties after a decade. In the meeting, both Erdogan and Gantz expressed their commitment to "promote stability, prosperity and security" in Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. After the meeting between the two Defence Ministers, at a joint press conference, Gantz said that this visit "is a clear signal for positive developments ahead." The relations between the two countries fell apart when Turkey continued its support for Hamas. At the same time, the two countries' security agencies were collaborating to ensure the safety of Israelis and Jews in and travelling to Turkey from "Iranian Plots". Gantz said that "We are thankful to President Erdogan, Minister Akar and the security agencies involved in this crucial, life-saving cooperation." Gantz added that this cooperation shows the potential collaboration between the two countries when they renew their ties. ("[Gantz restores security ties with Turkey during visit](#)," *The Jerusalem Post*, 27 October 2022)

US Sanctions Moldovan individuals for influencing political systems with Russia

On 26 October, the Biden administration imposed sanctions on over 20 Moldovan and Russian individuals and organizations. They have been accused of helping Russia's efforts to manipulate the political system in Moldova. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken released a statement on the same and singled out two Moldovan oligarchs, Vladimir Plahotniuc and Ilan Shor who allegedly have tried to capture and corrupt Moldova's judiciary and law enforcement institutions. Blinken referred to the two men as "fugitive oligarchs" who were prominent in Moldova's politics will 2014 till they were accused to be involved in a money laundering scheme which stole USD 1 billion from Moldovan banks. The sanctions will freeze their assets in the US and also deny them or their families US visas. (Michael Crowley, "[New U.S. sanctions target Russian efforts to manipulate the politics in Moldova, a neighbor of Ukraine](#)," *The New York Times*, 26 October 2022)

Lithuania and Japan mark 100 years of friendship, vows to increase bilateral cooperation

On 26 October, Lithuania's Prime Minister, Ingrida Simonyte and Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida met in Tokyo and decided to upgrade their bilateral relations to a strategic partnership. The leaders discussed three main issues. First, marking 100 years of friendship between Lithuania and Japan, a new security dialogue was launched by which knowledge and information about international security issues will be shared. Kishida hailed the success of the "Visa for Life" of SUGIURA Chiune and committed Japan's support to Lithuania given Russia's war in Ukraine. He also invited Lithuania to the 2025 Osaka-Kansai Expo where bilateral economic relations would get priority. Second, the two leaders discussed on regional issues alluding to the war in Lithuania's neighbourhood and condemned Russia's threat of using nuclear weapons. The issue of China trying to change the status-quo in the Indo Pacific by force was also discussed, and both Japan and Lithuania committed to an "open and free Indo-Pacific." Third, they reiterated their support for the United Nations and welcomed a restructuring of the UNSC, following Russia's

aggression in Ukraine. (“Joint Statement on Strategic Partnership between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania,” *mofa.go.jp*, 26 October 2022)

Chinese centers to be investigated for the illegal treatment of dissidents in the Netherlands

On 26 October, the Netherlands' Foreign Ministry announced that it would investigate reports on Chinese centers for illegal conduct towards Chinese dissidents in the country. The Chinese government did not inform the Foreign Ministry of the Netherlands about the centers. Services such as renewing Chinese driver's licenses or declaring changes in marital status are legally undertaken by the centers. However, they have been putting the dissident Chinese under pressure to return to China by various heinous means, such as harassment, torture, abuse and threats to the family members and those charged with crimes in China are sent back home to be tried for their crimes. The centers located in Rotterdam and Amsterdam are directly connected to the police force in the Lishui prefecture of China's Zhejiang province and Fuzhou city in Fujian province. (“Netherlands probes 'illegal' Chinese police stations,” *Deutsche Welle*, 26 October 2022)

Slovenia and Algeria hold bilateral talks

On 25 October, Slovenian Prime Minister Robert Golob and the President of the People's National Assembly of Algeria Ibrahim Boughali held talks during the latter's official visit to Slovenia. The two discussed the pressing bilateral issues with a special focus on the Energy Cooperation Treaty which is being signed by the two countries. The Treaty outlines the supply of Algerian natural gas to Slovenia. They discussed how this will open doors for a long-term alliance with the Algerian gas suppliers. Golob also expressed his intentions to open an embassy in Algeria. Boughali expressed Algeria's stand on considering Slovenia as an important partner and expressed cooperation between the two in the field of digitalisation, AI, renewable energy and new technologies. (“Prime Minister Robert Golob: Strategic partnerships with friendly

countries such as Algeria are very important for Slovenia,” *gov.si*, 25 October 2022)

Turkey and Libya extend the 2019 maritime border agreement

On 25 October, Turkish Defence Minister Hulusi Akar and Libyan Prime Minister Abdulhamid Dbeibah signed two new defence deals extending the 2019 maritime agreement between the two nations. This was announced by the Libyan administration through a statement which did not include details on the two new deals. The deals are said to help increase the capacity of Libya's air force and implement protocols for the security agreement. These deals are based on the 2019 agreement which received opposition from European nations like France and Greece and Egypt. The agreement allowed Turkey to access the gas-rich areas of the Eastern Mediterranean through Libyan waters. (“Libya, Turkey sign defense deals building on 2019 maritime border agreement,” *The Times of Israel*, 25 October 2022)

Poland to buy military equipment from South Korea

On 18 October, Polish Defence Ministry released a statement outlining its purchase of rocket launchers from South Korea. The deal will arm Poland with 18 new 288 K239 Chunmoo multiple rocket launchers in 2023 and be installed on Polish Jelcz vehicles. Poland is also receiving its order of K2 tanks and K9 artillery from South Korea made in early 2022. These deals reflect Poland's move to ramp up its weapons stock after Russia invaded Ukraine. This new deal has made Poland the largest buyer of arms from South Korea. (“Poland To Buy 288 Multiple Rocket Launchers From South Korea,” *Barron's*, 18 October 2022)

Germany imposes EUR five million on Telegram over illegal content reporting practise

On 17 October, the Telegram app was fined by Germany due to not establishing a legal way to report illegal content or naming an institution in Germany to regulate the messages. Failing to comply with German digital law, Telegram was fined EUR 5.125 million. Germany has attempted to sue the Dubai-based company multiple times but failed. However, this time, the Federal Office

of Justice has staunchly stood by its decision to fine the messaging app. According to German federal police, Telegram lacks screening of messaging contents and is becoming a tool for radicalization.

(“Germany slaps messaging app Telegram with \$5 million fine,” AP news, 17 October 2022)

ASEAN and the EU sign the Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement

On 17 October, the EU and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) signed the Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement between member states of both organization at the 28th ASEAN Transport Ministers’ Meeting in Bali, Indonesia. The ASEAN-EU CATA marks the first bloc-to-bloc air transport agreement. The agreement will help fasten the recovery of air connectivity between two parts of the earth after the COVID-19 pandemic. Each country of a bloc can travel up to 14 weekly passenger services within a week to countries in the other bloc. The ASEAN-EU CATA also strengthens cooperation and relations between the two blocs, especially in aviation safety, air traffic management, consumer protection, and environmental and social matters. It also brings a single set of rules instead of multiple ones and helps to rejuvenate the global economy. (“ASEAN and the EU sign the world’s first bloc-to-bloc Air Transport Agreement - joint press release,” consilium.europa.eu, 17 October 2022))

Discovery of 92 migrants under inhuman conditions in Greece initiate UNHCR investigation

The UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) said that the discovery of 92 migrants, under inhuman conditions at the border between Greece and Turkey was “deeply distressing.” While both countries have denied responsibility for the migrants, Greek police who discovered them said that in collaboration with officials from Frontex, it has been found that the migrants crossed the Evros river into Greek territory in rubber dinghies from Turkey. Greek authorities said that the migrants who were discovered naked and with injuries were given clothing, food and first aid. The UNHCR condemned the cruel treatment of the migrants and has

called for a full investigation with the hopes of speaking to group soon. In response to the recent flare ups in migrant arrivals, Greek minister for civil protection, Takis Theodorikakos announced that Greece will build a 25-mile fence along its northern border with Turkey. (“UN condemns ‘deeply distressing’ discovery of 92 naked migrants at Greece-Turkey border,” BBC, 17 October 2022))

EU and US to increase collaboration on sustainable energy in Africa

On 14 October, the US and EU signed an agreement to boost collaboration on green energy in Sub-Saharan Africa. This includes helping the region get access to affordable modern energy and supporting the energy transition. This will help in the reduction of poverty, increasing inclusiveness, fighting climate change and promoting sustainable economic growth. Speaking on this Commissioner for International Partnerships, Jutta Urpilainen, said, “Together, we can electrify even more schools and health centres, and fight even more efficiently the inequalities linked to energy poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa.” (“Global Gateway: EU and US boost cooperation on green energy in Africa”, ec.europa.eu, 14 October 2022))

Germany and Mongolia to deepen cooperation

On 14 October, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Mongolian Prime Minister Luvsannamsrain Oyun-Erdene talked to the press about the expansion of relations between the two countries. Discussions between the two included strengthening ties and building partnerships on sharing resources, fighting climate change, and transforming the energy sector. Germany hopes to tap into Mongolia’s inherent wealth of copper, rare earth metals and other such important resources and Mongolia hopes to increase sustainable energy production with the help of Germany. This will be an important step for Germany which is looking to diversify sources to reduce dependency on China and Russia. (“Germany hopes to get key raw materials from Mongolia”, AP News, 14 October 2022))

IMF opposes EU energy price cap

On 14 October, *EURACTIV* reported that IMF

chief Kristalina Georgieva does not agree with the EU on an energy price cap. Disapproving the price cap idea she said that it has the potential to be unsustainable spending from their treasuries. She instead proposes a constant open channel between central banks and ministers of various countries to come together and tackle the rising inflation. This will also prevent clashes between the monetary and fiscal policies of countries. Georgieva emphasised that it should benefit the most vulnerable and needs to be well-targeted and temporary. ([“IMF chief tells EU to drop energy price caps idea”](#), *EURACTIV*, 14 October 2022)

China accused of developing the tech sector for international control

The Head of the UK's cybersecurity agency the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), Jeremy Flemming alleged that China was using its economic and technological clout to change the rules of international security. He said that while the war in Ukraine was an important geopolitical event in Europe, China's growing technological prowess was the defining national security issue in the future. He mentioned how technology was gradually transforming from an area of opportunity, competition, and collaboration to a battleground for “control, values, and influence.” On this issue, he alleged that China was trying to “gain strategic advantage by shaping the world's technology ecosystems” for its benefit. (Jill Lawless, [“UK spy chief says rise of China world's top security issue”](#), *AP News*, 12 October 2022)

Biden signs new executive order for transatlantic data-privacy partnership with the EU

On 07 October, the US President Joe Biden announced the establishment of the Data Privacy Framework collaboration between the US and the EU. Through the executive order, the party will ensure to set-up a legal basis for the “data flow,” and strengthen the existing privacy and civil liberties especially for US intelligence. As part of the transatlantic partnership, individuals of both countries will be allowed to seek redressal if they think the personal data was collected in any violation to the US laws. This deemed to benefit the small business enterprises which heavily depend on the “cross border”

information to increase their participation in the digital economy and enlarge their economic landscape. ([“FACT SHEET: President Biden Signs Executive Order to Implement the European Union-U.S. Data Privacy Framework”](#), *The White House*, 07 October 2022)

French cities say no to outdoor viewing of Qatar World Cup

On 04 October, *Deutsche Welle* reported that Paris will join Marseille, Bordeaux, Nancy, Strasbourg, Lille and Reims in prohibiting fanzones with large TV screens inside cities during the World Cup in Qatar. Qatar is facing widespread criticism over the treatment of migrant labourers building stadiums and other infrastructure facilities in the hot desert. Many countries have joined in criticizing the Arab country for its migrant labour abuse and exploitation ahead of the football World Cup. Another reason for prohibiting the outdoor fanzones is that the tournament will take place during winter, which is not a ideal weather for viewing outside. As a show of criticism, Denmark unveiled muted jersey for the World Cup and many European football federation express their support to issues like LGBTQ+ rights. ([“Paris ditches big screens for Qatar World Cup”](#), *Deutsche Welle*, 04 October 2022)

EU and Israel hold talks after a decade

On 03 October the EU and Israel held talks after a gap of 10 years where the former asked Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid about a possible solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict. EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell participated in these talks and reiterated the EU stance to put an end to this conflict in a peaceful manner. He also conveyed the EU's concerns about the situation on the ground plagued with violence and security issues. Lapid in a statement expressed, “It is an important milestone in our improving relations. This past year has seen some vast progress in our ties — and there is still so much more that we can do.” The future of these talks is uncertain as Israel heads to the polls on 01 November where it is said that there is a high chance that the parliament will consist of anti-Palestine supporters. ([“EU, Israel hold high-level talks for first time in a](#)

decade", *AP News*, 03 October 2022)

Bulgaria finds gas supply through the new Greece-Bulgaria pipeline

On 01 October, a pipeline connecting Greece and Bulgaria was launched. The Interconnector Greece-Bulgaria (IGB) will supply Azeri gas to Bulgaria, whose gas supply was halted by Russia for its failure to pay in roubles. The pipeline connects the northern Greek city of Komotini to the Bulgarian city of Stara Zagora. The pipeline will be linked to the Southern Gas Corridor pipeline which supplies Azerbaijan's gas to Europe. The inaugural ceremony of the launch was attended by the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen and leaders of Bulgaria, Greece, Azerbaijan, Romania, Serbia and North Macedonia in Sofia. The pipeline could also provide Azeri gas to Serbia, North Macedonia, Romania, Moldova and Ukraine. It was a joint venture between Bulgaria's state energy company BEH, Greek gas utility DEPA and Italy's Edison worth EUR 240 million. ("Greece-Bulgaria pipeline starts operations to boost non-Russian gas flows", *euronews*, 01 October 2022)

Turkish warplanes neutralized 23 Kurdish militants

On 02 October, Turkey's Defence Ministry reported that 23 Kurdish Militants were eliminated by Turkish warplanes in the Asos region of Northern Iraq. The regions

controlled by the autonomous Kurdish regional government in Iraq are warned to expect a growth in the number of casualties by the Turkish Defence ministry. The ministry said that it is conducting operations to prevent the Kurdish militant group, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), from attacking its border with Turkey. Operation Claw-Lock launched ground and air forces to battle against the Kurdish militants. PKK is considered a terrorist organization by the US, the EU and Turkey. ("Turkey says 23 Kurdish militants killed in Iraq airstrikes", *apnews*, 02 October 2022)

Protesters gathered in front of the Iranian embassy dispersed by Swiss police

On 01 October, demonstrators gathered in front of Iran's Embassy in Bern to protest against the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in Tehran over an improper way of wearing a hijab. She was killed by the morality police for wearing her hijab, an Islamic headscarf loosely. The protest started with two men entering the embassy's premises unauthorized and bringing down the Iranian flag from a flagpole in the yard. It was followed by other people attempting to access the area. Swiss police dispersed the protesters with rubber bullets, which did not cause any injuries. ("Swiss police violently disperse anti-Iran protest at embassy", *apnews*, 02 October 2022)

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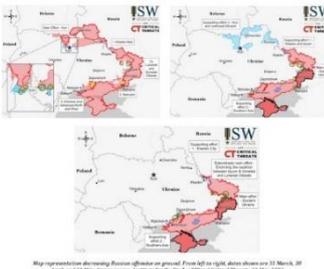


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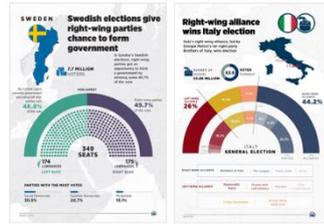


Image source: The 2022 election performance of Sweden and Italy, Analysis Agency

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