

GLOBALNEXUSBRIEF



MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT: ISRAEL AND IRAN

Tensions between Israel and Iran significantly escalated in mid-June after Israel launched airstrikes on Iran's nuclear facilities, including Natanz and Fordow, which were believed to be nearing the capacity for uranium enrichment at weapons-grade levels. In retaliation, Iran fired a series of missiles at Israeli military installations, and both countries engaged in cyberattacks targeting each other's critical infrastructure, such as power grids and financial systems. This conflict raised global concerns, especially as it triggered volatile reactions from regional powers. The United States provided logistical and military support to Israel, while Russia and China expressed strong support for Iran.

EU DEFENSE AND ECONOMIC STRATEGY

As Denmark took over the presidency of the European Union in June, one of the key focuses was the EU's long-term defense autonomy. Denmark proposed the creation of a European Defense Fund, aiming to reduce dependence on NATO and U.S. military support. This initiative highlighted Europe's desire to enhance its defense capabilities and assert greater independence in military matters. Europe's push for energy independence and a self-sustaining defense strategy marked a significant shift in its policy, potentially reshaping global energy markets and defense alliances in the coming years.

U.S. STRATEGIC RE-ORIENTATION: PIVOT TO ASIA



In a major shift in foreign policy, the U.S. announced a "strategic sequencing" approach, de-escalating its military commitments in the Middle East and shifting focus to the Indo-Pacific region to counter China's rising influence. As part of this re-orientation, the U.S. began reducing troop levels in Iraq and Afghanistan, signaling a more diplomatic and advisory role in the Middle East.



Middle East

In June, Saudi Arabia and Iran took significant steps towards normalizing their relations after years of tension and proxy conflicts. Both countries agreed to resume diplomatic talks, signaling a shift in Middle Eastern geopolitics. This diplomatic thaw was partly driven by the broader geopolitical shift in the region, with the United States focusing more on its interests in Asia. The thawing of relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran could reshape the security and political environment in the region, especially concerning conflicts in Yemen and Syria, where the two nations had supported opposing sides.

Yemen's civil war continued into June, with significant battles between Houthi rebels and the Yemeni government forces, supported by a Saudi-led coalition. Throughout the month, both sides engaged in heavy fighting around key regions like Marib and Taiz. Despite several attempts by the United Nations to mediate a ceasefire, the conflict showed no signs of abating. The humanitarian crisis deepened, with millions facing severe food shortages and a lack of basic healthcare.



Iraq's Security and Political Instability

Iraq saw a resurgence in terrorist activities, particularly from remnants of ISIS. These attacks targeted security forces, civilians, and infrastructure, exacerbating the already fragile security situation. Additionally, Iraq's political instability continued to hinder effective governance, as disputes between Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi's government and various political factions, including the influential Shiite militias, resulted in delays in policy implementation and reforms.



UAE and Israel's Strengthened Economic and Defense Ties

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Israel continued to strengthen their economic and defense cooperation under the framework of the Abraham Accords. During this period, both countries signed a series of agreements aimed at enhancing collaboration in cybersecurity, defense technology, and trade. The UAE's role as a financial hub in the Gulf and Israel's expertise in defense and technology made this partnership highly strategic.

Europe



BREXIT AFTERSHOCKS – UK'S ECONOMIC WOES

By the end of June, the UK was grappling with the economic fallout from Brexit. The British economy entered a recession, driven by rising inflation and disruptions in trade with the European Union. The pound hit a record low against the dollar, exacerbating the cost of living crisis. Public dissatisfaction with the government's handling of the post-Brexit economic transition led to widespread protests in London, demanding snap elections.

EU-Canada Defense Partnership



In mid-June, the EU and Canada signed a landmark defense and security partnership, aiming to strengthen both regions' security in the face of growing threats from Russia and China. The agreement focused on joint military exercises, intelligence-sharing, and increased cooperation in countering cyber threats. Canada's role as a NATO member made this partnership particularly significant, as it aimed to reinforce European defense mechanisms while ensuring closer transatlantic ties.

German Political Crisis



Germany faced significant political instability in early June when coalition negotiations collapsed between Chancellor Olaf Scholz's Social Democrats (SPD), the Greens, and the Free Democrats (FDP). The disagreements over fiscal policies and climate regulations led to a deadlock in government functions, with key legislative actions stalled. Public confidence in the government dropped, and opposition parties, particularly the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), began gaining momentum.

EU Economic Recovery Plan

The European Union, under Denmark's presidency, continued to push forward its Green Economic Recovery Plan, aimed at achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. This plan included significant investments in renewable energy sources like wind and solar power, as well as green technology research and development. However, the economic recovery remained fragile, with ongoing structural challenges in key member states. Denmark also highlighted the need for Europe to reduce its energy dependence on Russia, further emphasizing the importance of the EU's transition to sustainable and self-sufficient energy sources.

Africa



SUDAN CIVIL WAR CRISIS

The civil war in Sudan continued to devastate the country throughout June. With over 4 million displaced persons, the humanitarian situation worsened, and violence escalated between the Sudanese military junta and rebel factions. International efforts, including economic sanctions on the junta, failed to bring about a ceasefire. Neighboring countries, especially Chad and South Sudan, faced overwhelming pressure due to the refugee crisis. Sudan's military leaders refused to engage in meaningful dialogue, prolonging the conflict and deepening the instability in the region.

Nigeria's Political Landscape



In Nigeria, opposition parties formed a new alliance to challenge President Bola Tinubu's ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) in the upcoming 2027 elections. The new coalition, the Africa Democratic Congress (ADC), was formed in response to growing concerns over corruption and undemocratic practices under the current government. Large-scale protests erupted in cities like Lagos and Abuja, calling for political reforms and an end to the government's alleged misuse of power.

China's Economic Initiatives



China announced new economic measures in Africa, including proposals for duty-free market access for African exports to China. This was seen as an attempt to strengthen its influence in the region through trade and infrastructure investments, particularly in resource-rich nations like Nigeria, South Africa, and Angola. Additionally, China pledged to boost military and economic cooperation in conflict zones like Mali and South Sudan, further cementing its role as a key player in Africa's geopolitical dynamics.

Central African Republic Peace Efforts

The peace process in the Central African Republic (CAR) made slow progress in June. After years of instability and conflict, a fragile ceasefire agreement was signed between the CAR government and several rebel factions. Despite challenges in implementation, the agreement raised hopes for a reduction in violence. However, humanitarian conditions in the country remained dire, with many displaced persons unable to return to their homes. International actors, including the United Nations, continued to push for peacekeeping support and greater political stability in the region.



Asia

On June 12, violent clashes erupted between India and Pakistan after militants, allegedly backed by Pakistan, attacked an Indian military base in Uri. This triggered a series of artillery exchanges along the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir, escalating tensions between the nuclear-armed neighbors. Diplomatic talks mediated by the UN and regional powers such as China and Russia failed to prevent further escalation, though both sides refrained from deploying airstrikes or utilizing nuclear weapons.

Myanmar's political crisis worsened in June as the military junta intensified its crackdown on pro-democracy protests, leading to the deaths of over 200 civilians by June 10. The violence sparked widespread unrest across Myanmar, with ethnic insurgent groups in regions like Shan and Kachin States engaging in armed resistance. International condemnation grew, especially from Western nations, which imposed additional sanctions on Myanmar's military leaders and key industries.



Papua Conflict

The separatist conflict in Papua escalated in June, with increased clashes between the Indonesian military and the Free Papua Movement (OPM). The Indonesian government accused separatists of attacking military outposts and infrastructure, while the OPM intensified their campaign for independence. Human rights organizations accused Indonesian forces of committing atrocities, including forced displacement of indigenous Papuans.



China's Strategic Shifts

China's response to the rising tensions in the Middle East and its growing involvement in global security matters became increasingly apparent. In particular, Beijing began reassessing its regional strategies, especially in the context of its relationship with Iran and its interests in the Middle East's energy markets. China has long been an economic partner to Iran, and with the escalation of the Israel-Iran conflict, Beijing's diplomatic stance became more assertive.



America

In June, the U.S. Federal Reserve warned that the country might face a recession by the end of 2025 due to rising inflation and increased global energy prices. This announcement caused widespread concern in global markets, with the U.S. dollar weakening against other major currencies. The potential economic downturn raised questions about the stability of the global economy, particularly in trade-dependent regions like Latin America.

Massive protests erupted in Brazil against President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's economic policies, which were blamed for the rising cost of living and widespread corruption. The protests led to violent clashes with police forces, and the opposition party called for early elections. Lula's approval ratings dropped significantly, and his administration faced increasing pressure to reform economic policies to address public dissatisfaction and stabilize the economy.



Mexico's Growing Drug War

Mexico saw an intensification of the war on drugs in late June, with violent clashes between cartels and Mexican federal forces. The conflict resulted in numerous casualties, including civilians, as cartels fought for control of key drug trafficking routes along the U.S.-Mexico border. The Mexican government struggled to address the rising violence, leading to calls for increased U.S.-Mexico cooperation on counter-narcotics and border security.



U.S.-Canada Relations on Trade and Security

The U.S. and Canada continued to strengthen their trade and security ties in June. Despite economic concerns, both countries committed to joint initiatives on border security and anti-terrorism efforts. Additionally, the U.S. and Canada worked together to enhance trade relations, particularly in the energy sector, where Canada pledged to increase oil and gas exports to help reduce North American dependency on foreign energy sources.



Heatwaves in Europe

Europe is grappling with an extreme heatwave, setting new temperature records across the continent. Countries from Spain to Germany are experiencing scorching temperatures, resulting in significant loss of life and widespread damage.

In Spain, at least eight people have died due to the heat, while wildfires in Catalonia have claimed the lives of two men. The heat is also severely affecting agriculture, with Italian farmers reporting widespread crop losses. The intense heat has prompted concerns about working conditions, particularly in delivery services, where workers are operating in dangerous temperatures.

In response to the growing crisis, the European Commission has introduced an ambitious plan to reduce emissions by 90% by 2040. However, this proposal has faced criticism from environmental groups who argue that relying too heavily on carbon offsets could undermine its effectiveness.

Meanwhile, political debates are heating up in France, where the far-right has called for expanded air conditioning access to cope with the rising temperatures. This has led to further discussions about finding a balance between comfort and environmental responsibility.

The current heatwave highlights the urgent need for global action on climate change. As Europe continues to face these extreme conditions, the situation serves as a wake-up call, urging leaders and communities to prioritize sustainable solutions, address the impacts of climate change, and build more resilient urban environments.

This summer's heatwave is a clear reminder of the pressing need to act now to mitigate future climate-related disasters.

Thank you for reading!

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