

Global Watch Daily Briefing: U.S. Foreign Policy – January 13, 2026

BY KASWAR KLASRA

President Trump's aggressive unilateralism dominates early 2026, with the January 3 raid capturing Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro in Caracas marking a bold escalation.

Framing it under a revived "Donroe Doctrine," Trump asserts U.S. control over Venezuela's vast oil reserves—redirecting flows from China—while promising American firms will rebuild infrastructure for profit and stability.

Maduro now faces U.S. trial on narco-terrorism charges; interim leadership under Vice President Delcy Rodríguez releases political prisoners amid ongoing U.S. oversight.

Trump's rhetoric extends threats to Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, and beyond, signaling hemispheric dominance to curb migration, drugs, and rival influence.

Parallel pressure on Greenland intensifies: Trump demands acquisition for Arctic security against Russia and China, rejecting Denmark's sovereignty and dismissing NATO concerns.

Greenland's leaders decry the threats as unacceptable; European allies warn of alliance fracture. Concurrently, 25% tariffs target Iran's trading partners—chiefly China—amid Tehran's anti-regime protests, where Trump vows harsh intervention if crackdowns worsen.

This high-stakes mix of military intervention, resource grabs, and economic coercion prioritizes U.S. energy leverage and regional control over multilateral norms, unsettling allies and risking broader instability as domestic economic pressures mount ahead of midterms.

HERE are Top Ten Stories Today shaping the Globe:

Title: Greenland Would Be the Largest U.S. Land Acquisition, if Trump Got His Way

Description: The article explores President Trump's renewed interest in acquiring Greenland, highlighting its strategic size and implications for US Arctic policy amid tensions with Denmark.

Link: <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/13/world/europe/greenland-trump-size.html>

2- Title: Greenland PM prefers Denmark over the US ahead of Vance meeting

Description: Greenland's Prime Minister reaffirms ties with Denmark as US Vice President Vance prepares for talks, amid Trump's threats to pursue territorial acquisition for geopolitical advantage.

Link: <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/denmark-greenland-foreign-ministers-meet-vance-rubio-wednesday-amid-trumps-2026-01-13>

3- Title: Trump's exercise of raw power upends world order, sending friends and foes reeling

Description: Trump's aggressive foreign policy shifts, including tariff threats and territorial ambitions, disrupt global alliances, with experts noting impacts on US relations with China and Europe.

Link: <https://www.reuters.com/world/trumps-exercise-raw-power-upends-world-order-sending-friends-foes-reeling-2026-01-13>

4--Title: A World Without Rules

Description: Authors argue Trump's disregard for international law, through actions like Greenland bids and trade wars, risks eroding global stability and US credibility in geopolitics.

Link: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/world-without-rules>

5--Title: Trump's Greenland Bid Won't Make the US Richer or More Secure

Description: Editorial critiques Trump's pursuit of Greenland as misguided, emphasizing it offers little economic or security benefit amid broader US foreign policy challenges in the Arctic.

Link: <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2026-01-13/trump-s-greenland-bid-won-t-make-the-us-richer-or-more-secure>

6---Title: Trump's Iran tariff threat risks reopening China rift

Description: Trump's proposed 25% tariffs on Iran's trading partners could strain US-China relations further, affecting global energy markets and oil trade dynamics.

Link: <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/trumps-iran-tariff-threat-risks-reopening-china-rift-2026-01-13>

7--Title: Davos begins new era grappling with global order shaken by Trump

Description: World Economic Forum discusses Trump's "America First" policies disrupting trade and geopolitics, with leaders assessing impacts on alliances and economic stability.

Link: <https://www.reuters.com/business/davos/davos-begins-new-era-grappling-with-global-order-shaken-by-trump-2026-01-13>

8--Title: EU-Mercosur trade pact signals limits of Trump's hardball diplomacy in Latin America

Description: The new EU-Mercosur deal highlights constraints on Trump's aggressive tactics in Latin America, influencing US trade strategies and energy ties with the region.

Link: <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/eu-mercotur-trade-pact-signals-limits-trumps-hardball-diplomacy-latin-america-2026-01-13>

9--Title: On Greenland and Venezuela, Trump Means What He Says

Description: Analysis asserts Trump's serious intent on acquiring Greenland and dominating Venezuelan oil, reshaping US geopolitics and foreign relations in the Americas and Arctic.

Link: <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2026-01-13/on-greenland-and-venezuela-trump-means-what-he-says?srnd=phx-opinion>

10--Title: Can Trump Make Venezuelan Oil Great Again?

Description: Podcast examines Trump's plans to seize Venezuelan oil assets, discussing potential boosts to US energy dominance and geopolitical risks in Latin America.

Link: <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/13/podcasts/the-daily/trump-venezuela-oil.html>