

U.S Observer Daily Briefing

By Kaswar Klasra

On **January 15, 2026**, the international order faces a dual crisis as the United States aggressively asserts a new "hemispheric security" doctrine.

The most volatile flashpoint remains **Greenland sovereignty**, where a diplomatic rupture between Washington and Copenhagen has prompted a historic deployment of European troops to Nuuk to deter potential U.S. annexation. This Arctic standoff is mirrored in the Middle East, where the administration's "maximum pressure" on Iran oscillates between threats of military intervention and transactional diplomacy, exemplified by the U.S.

personnel drawdown at Al Udeid. Concurrently, Beijing is leveraging this Western fragmentation to position itself as a stabilizing mediator, framing U.S. actions as a return to "the law of the jungle." Collectively, these events signal a definitive shift toward a multipolar reality where traditional alliances are secondary to raw territorial and energy interests.

Here are ten articles from elite publications and specialized policy outlets published on this date:

Trump Says He ‘Can’t Rely’ on Denmark to Protect Greenland

President Trump told reporters in the Oval Office that Denmark is incapable of defending Greenland against Russian and Chinese interests. He asserted that U.S. "ownership" of the island is a national security imperative to install missile defense systems.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/world/morning-briefing-jan-15-2026/3799775>

Iran Warns of Defense Against ‘Foreign Threat’ as Trump Claims Killings Ceased

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi warned that Tehran will defend itself against any military intervention. This follows President Trump's claim that he received "a very good statement" suggesting the Iranian regime has halted the execution of domestic protesters.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2026/jan/15/trump-iran-protests-usa-response-airspace-killings-live-updates>

European Troops Arrive in Greenland After High-Stakes Nuuk Meeting

Military personnel from Germany, Sweden, and Norway landed in Nuuk today to join Danish forces. The deployment is a direct response to U.S. rhetoric regarding a potential forced acquisition of the territory, which Denmark calls an "unacceptable breach."

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1967090>

Renaming Defense Department to ‘Department of War’ Could Cost \$125M

A Congressional Budget Office report released today estimates that President Trump's executive order to rename the Pentagon would cost taxpayers millions. The change reflects a more aggressive U.S. posture following recent military operations in Venezuela and Greenland threats. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/jan/15/department-of-war-renaming-taxpayer-cost>

Exiled Crown Prince Pahlavi's Plan for Iran Aimed at Securing Trump's Support

Reza Pahlavi laid out a vision for a secular, pro-Western Iran that includes recognizing Israel and increasing oil exports. Experts suggest the timing is meant to convince the Trump administration to back a regime change from the top.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2026/01/15/iran-protests-reza-pahlavi-trump-shah/>

U.S. Begins Withdrawing Personnel from Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar

Citing "regional tensions" and potential Iranian retaliation, the U.S. military has begun a "posture change" by pulling some staff from its primary Middle East hub. Qatar confirmed the departures as a precautionary measure to safeguard residents.

<https://www.justsecurity.org/128825/early-edition-january-15-2026/>

Mummified Cheetahs in Saudi Caves Reveal Ancient Climate and Ecosystems

Scientists published a study in *Communications Earth and Environment* today detailing the discovery of 1,800-year-old cheetah mummies. The find provides critical data on how the Arabian Peninsula's environment has shifted from a lush habitat to desert.

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/sci-tech/article/mummified-cheetahs-found-in-saudi-caves-shed-light-on-lost-populations/>

China's Wang Yi Urges Restraint in Call to Iranian Counterpart

Beijing's top diplomat expressed opposition to the "law of the jungle" in international relations. China is positioning itself as a mediator, urging dialogue between Washington and Tehran to prevent a full-scale war in the Middle East.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2026/jan/15/trump-iran-protests-usa-response-airspace-killings-live-updates>

Ten Conflicts to Watch in 2026: The New U.S. Expansionism

Chatham House launched its flagship annual report today, ranking the U.S.-Denmark standoff over Greenland as a top global risk. The analysis warns that U.S. intentions toward the island could lead to the permanent collapse of the NATO alliance.

<https://www.chathamhouse.org/2026/01/greenland-venezuela-iran-chatham-house-analyses-how-us-power-reshaping-new-world-order>

Israel Sent Secret Messages to Iran to Avoid War During Hezbollah Campaign

New reports reveal that Israeli officials used Russian intermediaries to assure Tehran they would not strike Iranian soil if Iran remained out of the conflict with Hezbollah. The back-

channel reflects a desperate effort to contain regional escalation.

<https://www.justsecurity.org/128825/early-edition-january-15-2026/>