

## GLOBAL WATCH DAILY BRIEFING

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On January 19, 2026, the global geopolitical landscape is being redefined by a shift from institutional multilateralism to a "transactional realpolitik" favored by the second Trump administration.

Central to this is the unveiling of the **Board of Peace** for Gaza, a US-led body that bypasses traditional United Nations oversight by inviting over sixty nations, including **India** and **Pakistan**, to manage reconstruction through a business-centric framework.

Meanwhile, the "War of Grids" in Eastern Europe has reached a critical flashpoint, with Russian forces systematically targeting Ukraine's nuclear-linked substations to force a winter capitulation.

In South Asia, **Nepal's** strategic pivot away from Huawei toward a "standalone" 5G model—a move mirroring broader Western "digital containment" of China—demonstrates how technical infrastructure has become the primary battleground for regional sovereignty.

Collectively, these events signal a world where energy, technology, and reconstruction are no longer neutral commodities but the decisive instruments of statecraft.

### 1. US President Trump invites Pakistan PM Shehbaz to join Gaza 'Board of Peace'

Summary:

The United States has invited sixty global heads of state to join a new "Board of Peace" to oversee Gaza's reconstruction. President Trump, acting as chair, positions this body as a potential rival to United Nations oversight, emphasizing a business-led approach to regional stability.

<https://asianews.network/us-president-trump-invites-pakistan-pm-shehbaz-to-join-gaza-board-of-peace-fo/>

### 2. Ukraine war briefing: Russian attacks kill two as Ukrainian strikes trigger blackouts

On day 1,426 of the conflict, Moscow continued hammering Ukraine's energy grid with over 200 drones, killing two people. Simultaneously, Ukrainian drone strikes on occupied Zaporizhzhia left 200,000 households without power, marking an intensifying "war of grids" as winter temperatures drop across the region.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/jan/19/ukraine-war-briefing-russian-attacks-kill-two-as-ukrainian-strikes-trigger-blackouts-in-occupied-south>

### **3. Greenland tariffs have blown up the EU 'appeasement' plan**

President Trump's sudden imposition of tariffs on European goods—linked to a dispute over Greenland—has derailed Ursula von der Leyen's efforts to maintain a stable trade partnership. The move forces the European Union to choose between continued concessions or a full-scale trade war with Washington.

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2026/01/19/world/politics/trump-greenland-tariffs-eu-focus/>

### **4. Trump, oil, and the crisis in Iran**

As massive protests over economic hardship sweep Iran, the United States is weighing new sanctions targeting Tehran's oil exports. The internal instability is creating a ripple effect through South Asian energy markets, testing the resilience of regional security and global oil price stability. <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2026/01/19/trump-oil-and-the-crisis-in-iran/>

### **5. US, Taiwan to shift focus to security, former official says**

Following a breakthrough agreement to lower tariffs on Taiwanese semiconductors, Washington and Taipei are shifting their primary focus to defense cooperation. The deal involves a \$250 billion investment by Taiwanese firms in the US, aimed at deterring potential conflict in the Indo-Pacific.

<https://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2026/01/19/2003850842>

### **6. Nepal Telecom cancels Rs5 billion billing system bid, ousts Huawei**

In a move with significant geopolitical weight, Nepal Telecom has scrapped a major contract with Huawei. The decision reflects growing pressure from India and the US to exclude Chinese equipment from core 5G infrastructure, marking a major shift in the Himalayas' digital alignment.

<https://kathmandupost.com/money/2026/01/19/nepal-telecom-cancels-rs5-billion-billing-system-bid-ousts-huawei>

### **7. China hits 5% GDP target for 2025 as exports power growth**

Despite demographic challenges and a cooling property market, Beijing has successfully met its 5% growth target for the previous year. The growth is heavily driven by a surge in high-tech exports, including EVs and green tech, even as Western nations increase protectionist barriers.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Economy/China-hits-5-GDP-target-for-2025-as-exports-power-growth>

## **8. BBC given rare access to university course designed for French intelligence staff**

A unique training program for French intelligence officers highlights the evolving nature of European defense. The course focuses on aerospace and defense contracting, reflecting a broader European effort to professionalize its clandestine services amidst rising global threats from both state and non-state actors. <https://intelnews.org/2026/01/19/01-3423/>

## **9. Gaza ceasefire brings no relief to Palestinians**

While a fragile ceasefire remains in place, humanitarian conditions in Gaza continue to deteriorate with 80% of infrastructure in ruins. Reports indicate that at least eight infants have died of hypothermia this winter, highlighting the inadequacy of current aid corridors and the reconstruction process. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2026/01/19/gaza-ceasefire-humanitarian-crisis-updates>

## **10. Far Right Eyes Historic Runoff in Tight Portugal Presidential Race**

Portuguese voters are heading to the polls in a high-stakes election where the Socialist party faces a significant challenge from the far-right. The outcome will likely determine Portugal's stance on EU integration and its future role within the NATO alliance during a time of European instability.

<https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2026/01/19/portugal-election-far-right/>

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