

West, Russia Clash at UN After Incidents in NATO Air Space



UNITED NATIONS (Dispatches) - Britain's foreign minister has warned that Russia's incursions into NATO territory risked triggering an armed conflict, drawing an immediate rebuke from Moscow, which dismissed Europe's concerns as groundless and hysterical.

Confronting Russia at a meeting of the United Nations Security Council, Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper said: "Your reckless actions risk direct armed confrontation between NATO and Russia. Our alliance is defensive but be under no illusion we stand ready to defend NATO's skies and NATO's territory."

"If we need to confront planes operating in NATO space without permission then we will do so," she said.

Russia's deputy ambassador to the UN, Dmytry Polyanskiy, said there was no evidence backing their claims and accused European pow-

ers of levying "baseless" accusations.

"We won't be partaking in this theater of the absurd," he said. "When you decide that you want to engage in a serious discussion about European security, about the fate of our common continent, about how to make this continent prosperous and secure for everybody, we'll be ready."

The Russian Foreign Ministry has stated that the drone allegations were fabricated for the purpose of derailing the Ukraine peace talks. Russia has long accused European NATO members of working to prolong and escalate the conflict.

Last week, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that "NATO provides both indirect and direct support to the Kiev regime."

Despite this, Moscow remains "ready and willing" to work towards diplomatically settling the Ukraine crisis, he added.

Estonia said on Friday that three Russian MiG-31 fighter jets had entered Estonian airspace without permission and stayed for a total of 12 minutes before they were forced to withdraw in an episode that Western officials said was designed to test NATO's readiness and resolve.

The Security Council convened on Monday to discuss the issue. NATO consultations were due to take place on Tuesday. The incident occurred just over a week after more than 20 Russian drones entered Polish airspace, prompting NATO jets to shoot some of them down.

Cooper's comments were echoed by other Western ministers in the Security Council, who suggested the multiple incidents could not be considered an accident.

On Tuesday, NATO warned Russia that it would use "all necessary military and non-military tools" to defend itself as it condemned Moscow for violating Estonian airspace in "a pattern of increasingly irresponsible behavior".

Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijarto said in an interview with TASS that ending the Ukraine conflict would entirely diffuse the risk of escalation between NATO and Russia.

Moscow has long characterized the conflict as a proxy war led by the U.S.-led military bloc against Russia using Ukrainian manpower.

Speaking to the Russian news agency on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York, Szijarto suggested peace in Ukraine as a way to prevent a dangerous escalation between Russia and NATO.

U.S. Lawmaker Warns of Military 'Misunderstanding' Risk With China



U.S. Representative Adam Smith, flanked by U.S. Ambassador to China David Perdue (left) and Michael Baumgartner, Republican member of House Foreign Affairs Committee during a press conference at the US embassy in Beijing

BEIJING (Reuters) - The leader of a U.S. congressional delegation to China warned Tuesday of the "risk of a misunderstanding" between the two countries' militaries as advances in defense technology move at breakneck speed.

Adam Smith, the most senior Democrat on Washington's Armed Services Committee, told journalists in Beijing that China needs to talk more about its military with other global powers "for basic de-confliction."

"We've seen this with our ships, our planes, their ships, their planes com-

ing entirely too close to one another," he said at a news conference at the U.S. Embassy.

"We need to have a better conversation about de-conflicting those things."

The four-person delegation also includes other members of the same Armed Services Committee - Democrats Ro Khanna and Chrissy Houlahan - as well as Republican congressman Michael Baumgartner, a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

The group on Monday met Chinese Defense Minister Dong Jun, with whom

they talked about the importance of "working through our differences" and more candid dialogue, according to a statement from the US side.

Dong called on the visitors to "remove disruptive and restrictive factors" between them, China's Xinhua state news agency reported.

Speaking on Tuesday alongside the other lawmakers and the U.S. Ambassador to China, David Perdue, Smith said: "AI and drone warfare and cyber and space is moving so rapidly and innovation is happening so quickly."

"The risk of a misunderstanding of capabilities on one side or the other is great," he said, adding the two sides need to talk so they "don't stumble in any sort of conflicts."

The bipartisan congressional delegation comes just days after President Xi Jinping and Donald Trump spoke by telephone for the second time since the return to the White House of Trump, who has tried to keep a lid on tensions despite his once virulent criticism of China.

Trump said he would meet Xi on the sidelines of an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in South Korea starting at the end of next month and that he would travel to China next year.

He said Xi would also visit the United States at an unspecified time and that the two leaders would speak again by telephone.

Russia, Ukraine Fire Drones, Missiles and Bombs as Zelensky Seeks Help at UN

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russia said that it shot down three dozen Ukrainian drones heading toward Moscow while Ukraine said that Russian missiles, drones and bombs killed at least two civilians, as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy persevered with efforts to bolster international support for his country at a UN gathering of world leaders on Tuesday.

With his troops under strain on the front line after more than three years of fighting Russia's bigger invading army, Zelensky begun meetings with leaders gathered in New York this week for the UN General Assembly.

Peace efforts set in motion by Trump since he returned to office

in January appear to have stalled. Trump's Alaska summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin and a White House meeting with Zelenskyy and key European leaders took place more than a month ago, but the war has continued unabated.

Zelenskyy said that he met late Monday in New York with Keith Kellogg, Trump's special envoy. Kellogg and Zelenskyy discussed cooperation agreements on the manufacturing of drones and Ukraine's purchase of American weaponry, the Ukrainian president said on Telegram.

The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights said earlier this month that Ukrainian civilian casualties increased by 40% in the

first eight months of this year compared to 2024, as Russia escalated its long-range missile and localized drone strikes.

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said that more than 40 Ukrainian drones flying toward the Russian capital were shot down between Monday evening and midday Tuesday.

Flights were temporarily halted overnight in and out of Moscow's Sheremetyevo airport, causing delays and cancellations, because of the attack.

The Russian Defense Ministry reported that it intercepted 69 Ukrainian drones over a number of Russian regions and the annexed Crimean Peninsula.

Europe to Succumb to Slowdown Driven by Tariffs, French Turmoil, Reports Show



FRANKFURT (Reuters) - Euro zone economic growth continues to hold up as Germany's budget largesse props up sentiment and offsets turmoil in France, but more weakness may be ahead as U.S. tariffs start to exert their full effect, key data showed on Tuesday.

The euro zone has been expanding quicker than economists had expected this year, sparking debate over whether the bloc is simply more resilient than thought and how much damage French political turmoil will do across the 20 nations.

Seemingly adding to the resilience case, the HCOB flash composite PMI edged up to 51.2 in September from 51.0 in August for its the ninth consecutive month of growth.

But the underlying trend was mixed and suggested that the industrial rebound may be fizzling out, leaving services to support growth.

"The details are not as rosy as the headline index suggests," Oxford Economics' Riccardo Marcelli Fabiani said.

"Sentiment was soft and incoming orders from abroad continued worsening, pointing to no strong rebound happening after the drop in exports following the introduction of tariffs," he said.

Another concern is that the steady improvement in PMI figures is solely attributable to Germany, where fiscal expansion is likely to drive growth for years to come.

"France stands out negatively," ING economist Bert Colijn said. "With heightened political uncertainty, the French economy appears to be mirroring this sense of instability."

Germany's PMI bounced to a 16-month

high of 52.4, beating poll expectations for a modest lift to 50.6 from 50.5. But in France, activity contracted for a 13th month and at the fastest pace since April, with its PMI falling to 48.4.

Echoing the euro zone number, British firms also reported a loss of momentum and confidence as the PMI fell slowed to 51.0 in September from 53.5 in August.

The euro zone is still to take the full hit from U.S. tariffs, which will slow its already modest growth rate even further, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development said in a separate report.

"The full effects of tariff increases have yet to be felt - with many changes being phased in over time and companies initially absorbing some tariff increases through margins - but are becoming increasingly visible," the OECD added.

This will slow euro zone growth to just 1.0% next year from 1.2% this year, as increased trade frictions and geopolitical uncertainty negate the boost from lower ECB interest rates and Germany's fiscal expansion.

Growth in the UK is also seen dropping to 1.0% next year from 1.4% in 2025 on a tighter fiscal stance, higher trade costs and greater uncertainty.

"Fiscal expansion is expected to boost economic activity in Germany, but expected consolidation in both France and Italy will dampen growth," the OECD added.

However, the OECD confirmed the ECB's view that inflation will now hold at or just below the 2% target, which will keep alive hopes for more policy easing, especially as consumption growth softens.

Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger Withdraw From ICC's Rome Statute



This photo taken on March 12, 2025 shows the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, the Netherlands.

BAMAKO (Reuters) - The governments of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger have announced their immediate withdrawal from the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

In a joint statement issued in Bamako on Monday, the three countries said they had ratified the Rome Statute between 2000 and 2004 and had since cooperated with the ICC under the treaty as well as related agreements.

However, over time the ICC had "become a neo-colonial instrument of repression in the hands of imperialism" and "a global symbol of selective justice," they said.

According to the statement, the court has failed to prosecute clear cases of war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and aggression, remaining "inexplicably, confusingly and complacently silent" toward perpetrators of such crimes, while targeting actors outside what it called the "institutionalized circle of impunity" in violation of its own statute.

The three governments said their

sovereign decision to quit the Rome Statute "reflects the will of the Sahel Confederation member states to safeguard their sovereignty." They pledged to strengthen peace and justice through home-grown mechanisms, while reaffirming their commitment to promoting and protecting human rights in line with their social values and rejecting all forms of impunity.

The statement also expressed gratitude to the United Nations and its member states, reaffirming that the Sahel Confederation countries would continue to cooperate in other appropriate frameworks to advance human rights and respect for state sovereignty.

In September 2023, Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger signed the Liptako-Gourma Charter in Bamako, agreeing to establish the Alliance of Sahel States (AES).

On July 6, 2024, the three countries announced the creation of the Confederation of the AES in Niamey, marking a significant step toward establishing an economic-military bloc.

News in Brief

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) - World leaders are gathering at the UN headquarters in New York this week to address pressing global issues like wars, poverty and climate change. Representatives from UN member states, including some 150 heads of state and government, are in New York for the High-level Week of the 80th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA). They will attend a series of high-level conferences and hold bilateral meetings. The 80th UNGA session, under the theme "Better together: 80 years and more for peace, development and human rights," comes at a pivotal moment to renew global commitment to multilateralism, solidarity and shared action for people and planet. This year's High-level Week highlights the urgency of delivering on the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals and reinvigorating global cooperation.

The White House on Monday dismissed a request by Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro for talks with counterpart Donald Trump to de-escalate tensions between the two arch-foes. The brush-off came as two Venezuelan opposition leaders backed a US naval build-up near the South American country, calling it critical for the restoration of democracy. Trump has dispatched eight warships and a submarine to the southern Caribbean in an anti-drug operation Venezuela fears could be the preamble to an invasion. US forces have destroyed at least three suspected Venezuelan drug boats in recent weeks, killing over a dozen people.

MOSCOW - Russia continues to lead the world in uranium enrichment for nuclear power plants, a position that the West has been unable to alter, Kirill Komarov, a senior official of Russia's state nuclear corporation Rosatom, said on Monday. As First Deputy CEO for Corporate Development and International Business of Rosatom, Komarov stated that 25 percent of U.S. nuclear power plants rely on Russian uranium supplies. "We remain the world's leader in uranium enrichment," Komarov said. "And no matter how much some of our Western partners may want to change that, they have not been very successful so far. Our share of the global uranium enrichment market stands at nearly 40 percent." He added that the United States operates the largest fleet of nuclear power plants, with a total installed capacity of nearly 100 gigawatts.

TAIPEI (Reuters) - Taiwan's fire department said on Tuesday that 30 people were missing and two people had died in the eastern county of Hualien, where a barrier lake in the mountains burst its banks in a typhoon. Taiwan has since Monday been lashed by the outer rim of Super Typhoon Ragasa, which is now on its way to the southern Chinese coast. The barrier lake, formed by landslides triggered by earlier heavy rain in the sparsely populated east of Taiwan, burst its banks mid-afternoon on Tuesday, sending a wall of water into Guangfu township. The fire department put the number of missing in Hualien following the flood at 30, with two deaths reported in Guangfu.

Windhoek (AFP) - At least 90 buffaloes died while fleeing lions Tuesday after trampling on each other and falling off a cliff in Namibia's far east, wildlife officials said. The stampede happened around 5:00 am (0300 GMT) along the Chobe River, in the Zambezi conservation area, a unique wildlife-rich zone of waterfalls, forests and marshes. The lions had chased the buffaloes from neighbouring Botswana, spokesperson for the tourism ministry Ndeshipanda Hamunyela told AFP. "It is an unfortunate incident. The animals fell from a deep cliff down into the river and some tumbled over each other," she said. Footage posted on social media by state broadcaster Namibia Broadcasting Corporation showed about a dozen men with axes chopping up the buffalo carcasses and loading the meat onto pickup trucks.