

## POST-WAR GAZA US 'wants nations to pay \$1bn to stay on peace board'

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A draft charter sent to about 60 countries by the US administration calls for members to contribute \$1 billion in cash if they want their membership to last more than three years, according to the document seen by Reuters.

"Each Member State shall serve a term of no more than three years from this Charter's entry into force, subject to renewal by the Chairman," the document, first reported by Bloomberg News, shows.

"The three-year membership term shall not apply to Member States that contribute more than USD \$1,000,000,000 in cash funds to the Board of Peace within the first year of the Charter's entry into force."

US President Donald Trump would serve as its inaugural chairman and each member state shall serve a term of no more than three years from this



A demonstrator is detained in front of the Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building during a protest in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on Saturday, more than a week after a US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agent fatally shot Renee Nicole Good. PHOTO: REUTERS

## 'We will continue to stand united'

Eight European nations back Denmark, Greenland amid Trump tariff threat

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Eight European nations in a joint statement yesterday said they stood in solidarity with the Kingdom of Denmark and the people of Greenland following US President Donald Trump's threat to annex the Arctic island.

"As members of Nato, we are committed to strengthening Arctic security as a shared transatlantic interest," Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Britain said in the statement.

"Tariff threats undermine transatlantic relations and risk a dangerous downward spiral," the statement said.

In a post on his platform, Truth Social, on Saturday, Trump said 10 percent tariffs would come into effect on February 1 for Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

He added that these tariffs would rise to 25 percent on June

1 and continue until an agreement is reached for the US to buy Greenland, reports AFP.

Trump indicated in his lengthy social media post that the tariffs were being imposed in retaliation for trips the countries' representatives took to Greenland "for purposes unknown". He

French Agriculture Minister Annie Genevard told broadcasters Europe 1 and CNews, adding any US takeover of the autonomous Danish territory would be "unacceptable".

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said a US invasion of Greenland "would make Putin



accused all eight of playing a "very dangerous game" in opposing US control over the territory.

The United States will also suffer if President Donald Trump implements threats to impose tariffs on European countries opposing his plans to acquire Greenland, a French minister said yesterday.

"In this escalation of tariffs, he has a lot to lose as well, as do his own farmers and industrialists,"

the happiest man on earth" in a newspaper interview published yesterday.

Sanchez said any military action by the US against Denmark's vast Arctic island would damage Nato and legitimise the invasion of Ukraine by Russia.

The UK's position on Greenland is "non-negotiable", Culture Secretary Lisa Nandy said yesterday.

## Russia pounds Ukraine with drone blitz

Two killed, dozens injured

REUTERS, Kyiv

Two people were killed and dozens more wounded in a mass Russian drone attack across Ukraine overnight, President Volodymyr Zelensky said yesterday, as US and Ukrainian negotiators hashed out a post-war plan in the latest round of peace talks.

Moscow has stepped up a winter campaign of strikes on the Ukrainian energy system while also waging a battlefield offensive as Kyiv faces US pressure to secure peace in the nearly four-year-old war.

Zelensky said the Sumy, Kharkiv, Dnipro, Zaporizhzhia, Khmelnytskyi and Odesa regions were targeted in an attack that included over 200 drones. The military said 30 strikes had been recorded across 15 locations.

One person was killed in the second-largest city of Kharkiv, said mayor Ihor Terekhov, who in recent days has reported significant damage to local energy facilities as a result of Russian strikes.

It was not immediately clear where the second person had died. Major cities including the capital Kyiv have faced blackouts and cuts to heating.

## Syrian forces seize major oil, gas fields

Security sources say Kurdish-led forces withdraw from Deir Zor province

REUTERS

Syrian troops fighting US-backed Kurdish-led forces seized the Omar oil field, the country's largest, and the Conoco gas field in the eastern Deir Zor province as allied Arab tribal forces advanced in the oil-rich area along the border with Iraq, officials and security sources said yesterday.

The takeover of the oil fields that lie east of the Euphrates River — a main source of revenue for the Kurdish-led forces — was a major blow to the group, which officials said had deprived the state of resources used by the militia.

The Syrian army pressed ahead into predominantly Arab-populated areas of northeast Syria controlled by the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), despite US calls to halt its advance.

A government source said Kurdish-led forces were overcome after advances led by the Arab tribal fighters, allowing the government and its tribal allies to move into a stretch of territory of more than 150 km along the eastern bank of the Euphrates stretching from Baghouz near the Iraqi border towards key towns including al-Shuhail and Busayra.

## Portugal votes in tight presidential race

Far right poised to reach runoff

REUTERS, Lisbon

Portuguese voters queued at polling stations yesterday to elect a new president, with opinion surveys showing three candidates, including the leader of the far-right Cheap party, nearly tied for a spot in a likely top-two runoff.

In the five decades since Portugal threw off its fascist dictatorship, a presidential election has only once before — in 1986 — required a runoff, highlighting how fragmented the political landscape has become with the rise of the far-right and voter disenchantment with mainstream parties.

The presidency is a largely ceremonial role in Portugal but wields some key powers, including in some circumstances to dissolve parliament, to call a snap parliamentary election, and to veto legislation.

Around 11 million voters are eligible to cast ballots. Polling stations were due to close at 7:00 pm (1900 GMT), with exit polls expected at 8:00 pm and results released during the night.

The last pre-election opinion survey released on Friday by Pitagorica pollsters put Socialist Antonio Jose Segundo on 25.1 percent, followed by Cheap leader Andre Ventura on 23 percent, and Jiao Cot rim de Figurehead, a member of the European Parliament from the right-wing, pro-business Liberal Initiative party, on 22.3 percent.

Last May, the anti-immigration Cheap, founded just about seven years ago, became the main opposition party in a parliamentary election, winning 22.8 percent of the vote.



charter's entry into force, subject to renewal by the chairman, the report said.

The panel, known as the Gaza executive board, notably includes Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan and a Qatari official and was announced by the White House on Friday.

The Board of Peace began to take shape on Saturday as the leaders of Egypt, Turkey, Argentina, Canada, Pakistan were asked to join.

The White House called the report "misleading" and said there is no minimum membership fee to join the "Board of Peace".

"This simply offers permanent membership to partner countries who demonstrate deep commitment to peace, security, and prosperity," the White House said on X.

The US State Department responded to Reuters' question on the matter by referring to previous social media posts about the board by Trump and his special envoy Steve Witkoff.

Jordan's foreign ministry said yesterday that King Abdullah received an invitation from President Trump to join the board. Pakistan has been invited to be a part of the "Board of Peace", the Foreign Office said yesterday.

- ▶▶ Trump also 'has a lot to lose': French minister
- ▶▶ US Greenland move would delight Putin: Spanish PM
- ▶▶ European nations playing 'dangerous game': Trump

## Indonesia finds wreckage of missing plane

Body of one victim found in ravine; rescuers search for nine more

REUTERS, Jakarta

Indonesian authorities said yesterday they had located the wreckage of a fisheries surveillance plane that went missing in South Sulawesi province on the slope of a fog-covered mountain and had recovered the body of one of the 10 people on board.

The ATR 42-500 turboprop owned by aviation group Indonesia Air Transport lost contact with air traffic control on Saturday at about 1:30 pm local time (0530 GMT) around the Maros region in South Sulawesi.

There were seven crew members and three passengers on board the plane, which was chartered by Indonesia's Marine Affairs and Fisheries Ministry to conduct air surveillance on fisheries. The passengers were ministry staff members.

Authorities had initially said eight crew members were on board but later revised the figure. The plane was flying to Makassar, the capital of South Sulawesi, from Yogyakarta before losing contact.

Yesterday morning, local rescuers found the wreckage in different locations around Mount Bulusaraung in the Maros region, said Andi Sultan, an official at South Sulawesi's rescue agency. The mountain is roughly 1,500 km (930 miles) northeast of the sprawling island nation's capital, Jakarta.



A person walks in front of a burning building as fire and smoke rise from a forest fire in the Biobio region where, according to local media, multiple wildfires prompted emergency evacuations, in Concepcion, Chile, yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Massive fire kills 6 in Karachi

Shopping centre destroyed

REUTERS, Karachi

Firefighters in Pakistan's largest city were fighting to extinguish a massive blaze yesterday that has killed six people and reduced parts of a shopping mall to rubble in Karachi's historic downtown.

Videos showed flames rising from the building as firefighters laboured through the night to stop the fire from spreading in the dense business district. The fire erupted on Saturday night, with rescue services receiving a call at 10:38 pm (1738 GMT) reporting that ground floor shops at Gul Plaza were ablaze.

"When we arrived, the fire from the ground floor had spread to the upper floors, and almost the entire building was already engulfed in flames," Rescue 1122 spokesperson Hassanul Haseeb Khan told Reuters.