

# EURASIA DIGEST

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## **Russia Reaffirmed Support For Venezuela Amid U.S. Tensions**

Russian President Vladimir Putin [reaffirmed](#) his support to Venezuela in a phone call with President Nicolás Maduro. The call came after the United States seized an oil tanker off Venezuelan coast, the latest of several points of friction between the two countries. Russia has fostered warm ties with Venezuela and Maduro visited Moscow earlier this year, attending an annual military parade and signing a broad partnership agreement with Putin.

## **Russia Reported Steep Drop In Inflation**

Russia reported the steepest drop in annual inflation so far this year as high interest rates cool off the war economy. Annual inflation in November dropped to 6.6 per cent compared to 7.7 per cent a month prior. Last month, Rosstat said the country's economic growth was close to zero in the third quarter, while the Central Bank expected to keep interest rates higher for longer over the stubborn inflation rate. The regulator sees annual inflation to ease to its 4 per cent target only in 2027. President Vladimir Putin recently approved raising the value-added tax (VAT) to 22 per cent from 20 per cent next year.

## **Zelenskyy Said Ukraine Has No Right To Cede Land To Russia**

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy [said](#) that Kyiv had no legal or moral right to give up land to Russia in any deal aimed at ending the war. He said that the U.S. was

trying to find a compromise on the issue. Zelenskyy said that Ukrainian and European officials "are going to work on 20 points" received from the U.S. side and that counter-proposals would be sent to Washington.

## **Kyrgyz Government Defended Russian Language Amid Push For Kyrgyz-Only Policies**

Deputy Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan Edil Baisalov [has](#) publicly defended the role of the Russian language in the country's education system, stating that fluency in Russian should become standard for all schoolchildren. He rejected recent calls by members of parliament and the National Commission on the State Language to translate all scientific literature into Kyrgyz. He argued that access to educational and methodological materials in Russian and English broadens Kyrgyzstan's academic and scientific opportunities.

## **Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan Strengthened Energy Ties**

Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev [met](#) with Kyrgyz Energy Minister Taalaibek Ibrayev in Tashkent to discuss regional energy cooperation. The two countries are deepening their energy partnership as progress continues on the Kambarata-1 Hydropower Plant (HPP), one of Central Asia's most ambitious infrastructure projects. The project is a trilateral initiative involving Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. With a projected cost of \$4.2 billion, the venture has already secured

\$5.6 billion in committed financing from international financial institutions.

### **Kazakhstan Proposed Creation Of UN Water Agency To Tackle Global Resource Challenges**

Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev [has](#) proposed establishing a specialized United Nations body dedicated to the rational use of water resources. UN-Water currently functions as a coordination mechanism rather than a specialized agency, bringing together more than 30 UN entities and dozens of international organizations involved in water and sanitation. Unlike bodies such as the World Health Organization or the Food and Agriculture Organization, it has no independent mandate, budget, or enforcement capacity, a limitation long cited by water policy experts.

### **Kazakhstan Seeking To Reduce Dependence On Russian Oil Transit Routes**

Escalating drone attacks on Russian infrastructure amid the ongoing war in Ukraine, including key facilities in Novorossiysk and the Orenburg region, are [compelling](#) Kazakhstan to accelerate its search for alternative oil export routes. In this context, the Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC), which transits Russian territory, is increasingly viewed as an unreliable option for transporting the country's crude oil. The pipeline accounts for over 80 per cent of Kazakhstan's oil exports, more than 1 per cent of global production. Meanwhile, Kazakhstan [has](#) intensified efforts to launch its fourth

major oil refinery and is actively seeking international investors for the project.

### **Turkmenistan Marked 30 Years Of Neutrality**

Turkmenistan [marked](#) the 30th anniversary of a UN decision granting Turkmenistan the status of a neutral country. To celebrate the occasion, the country hosted a high-level international gathering centered on peace and trust. All the major Eurasian heads of state participated in the event. President Serdar Berdimuhamedov, in his address, [underlined](#) that peace, trust, and cooperation must become the cornerstones of the new world order. Emphasizing that Turkmenistan's permanent neutrality is constitutionally guaranteed, Berdimuhamedov reaffirmed that non-use of force, peaceful conflict resolution, and respect for human rights form the core principles of the country's foreign policy.

### **Organization of Turkic States Discussed Key Eurasian Energy Projects**

At the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of ministers responsible for energy within the Organization of Turkic States (OTS) held in Istanbul, OTS Secretary General Kubanychbek Omuraliev [outlined](#) major joint energy initiatives underway among member states. These included Major oil and gas routes such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline, Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum (BTE) gas pipeline, South Caucasus Pipeline, Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline (TANAP), Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP), and the Igdir-Nakhchivan gas pipeline; the Azerbaijan-Georgia-Turkey-Bulgaria Green Energy Corridor,

which extends the Central Asia-Azerbaijan corridor and opens new avenues for energy exports to Europe; and a planned Black Sea submarine cable to transmit renewable energy. Omuraliev emphasized that enhanced intra-OTS cooperation bolsters both the economic potential of member states and regional energy security. Founded in 2009, the OTS comprises Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. Hungary and Northern Cyprus participate as observer states.

### **Eurasia Development Bank Sought Gulf Investment**

The Eurasian Development Bank (EDB), headquartered in Almaty, [has](#) opened a representative office in Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM), marking a strategic move to connect Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) investors with high-potential projects across Central Asia. Transport and Logistics, Water Sector and Agribusiness, and Renewable Energy are the areas of focus.

### **Central Asian Republics Backed Kyrgyzstan's UNSC's Non-Permanent Membership**

In a show of regional unity, the presidents of all of the Central Asian countries [have](#) endorsed Kyrgyzstan's candidacy for a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council for the 2027–2028 term. Kyrgyzstan first announced its intention to seek a Security Council seat in 2017. Kyrgyzstan has never having served on the Council.

### **EU Sanctions Targeted Russia's 'Shadow Fleet' Backers And Disinformation Network**

The European Union [imposed](#) a new round of sanctions on 23 individuals and entities linked to Russia's so-called "shadow fleet" of oil tankers, as well as figures accused of spreading disinformation and carrying out cyberattacks against EU member states. Those targeted face asset freezes within the European Union, and EU citizens and companies are barred from conducting business with them. Meanwhile, European Union member states including Belgium have [agreed](#) to impose an indefinite freeze on Russian Central Bank assets held in Europe. The move removes a major hurdle to using the roughly 210 billion euros in Russian sovereign assets immobilized in Europe to support Ukraine. This [led](#) Russia's Central Bank to file a lawsuit seeking 18.2 trillion rubles (\$229 billion) in damages from Europe's largest securities depository Euroclear.

### **French President Visited Beijing**

Chinese President Xi Jinping and his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron have [pledged](#) deeper cooperation on global issues. Xi hosted Macron Chengdu in a rare instance of Xi accompanying a guest beyond Beijing. 12 cooperation agreements covering topics like population ageing, nuclear energy and panda conservation were signed. Macron was accompanied for his fourth state visit to China by the heads of some of France's most prominent companies.