

These territorial disputes are not mere historical curiosities or diplomatic oddities

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By: Silas Mwaudasheni Nande

The political cartoon presents a stark visualization of contemporary geopolitical tensions: three major powers each eyeing territories they consider essential to their national security. While simplified for satirical effect, this image captures genuine strategic concerns that are reshaping international relations in the 21st century. The Trump administration's interest in purchasing Greenland, Russia's ongoing war in Ukraine, and China's persistent focus on Taiwan represent three distinct but



President Donald Trump

interconnected challenges to the post-World War II international order.

These territorial disputes are not mere historical curiosities or diplomatic oddities. They represent fundamental questions about sovereignty, security, and the balance of power in an increasingly multipolar world. Each case involves a major power seeking to extend its influence over territories it views as critical to its strategic interests, often framing these ambitions in terms of security imperatives. Understanding these situations requires examining the

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The Diaspora Times Global

Concurrently Maintainable: Why Tier III Data Centres Are The Real Play For East Africa

East Africa's digital economy is expanding at a rapid pace, driven by rising internet penetration, widespread mobile connectivity, and growing adoption of cloud services and fintech innovation. As organisations move away from informal server installations toward

standardised and/or professionally designed data centres, the reliability and resilience of these facilities have become essential to business success. Among internationally recognised standards, the Uptime Institute tier model provides a clear benchmark for assessing data centre reliability.

Tier III facilities represent the practical sweet spot for the region, offering robust performance without the cost and complexity of higher tiers. This blog explores why Tier III standard data centres have become the preferred choice for businesses and governments across East Africa, examining the technical advantages, operational benefits, and strategic drivers behind this investment.

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Why Kenyans Should Be First in Line to Own More of Safaricom



By: David Kimani
xxxxxxxxxxxx

Worth Noting:

• In contrast, selling the 15% to public investors would expand the proportion of shares held by ordinary Kenyans and local institutions. The current public float of 25% would rise to about 40%, increasing domestic investment in the NSE and reinforcing a culture of shared ownership.

• As the government weighs its options, the debate is no longer purely economic it is fundamentally about who benefits from Kenya's digital future."

• Advocates of broader public ownership point to the 2008 Safaricom IPO as a successful model. That sale of 25% of shares to Kenyans was widely oversubscribed, deepened capital markets, and gave everyday citizens a stake in one of the nation's most profitable companies. A new public offering could repeat that success, boosting investor confidence and widening the circle of ownership.



Nairobi, Kenya Safaricom has long been a symbol of innovation and economic growth in Kenya, with millions of customers relying on its networks, mobile money services, and digital platforms every day. Yet a simmering debate over who should own a larger share of the company is now drawing intense public interest. Currently, Safaricom's ownership structure reflects a mix of public and strategic stakeholders. The Kenyan government holds approximately 35% of the company, Vodacom Group also owns around 35%, the public holds about 25% through the Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE), and Vodafone plc retains about 5%. This balance reflects past decisions to blend foreign investment with local participation and has helped

make Safaricom one of Africa's most successful telecom firms.

But recent discussions in government circles have proposed the sale of an additional 15% stake. The question now is: Should this stake be sold to Vodacom, deepening its control, or should it be opened up to ordinary Kenyans through the public market?

If the 15% is sold to Vodacom, its shareholding would rise from roughly 35% to about 50%. Combined with Vodafone's 5%, this would give the foreign partners a controlling voice of about 55% in the company. While this may reassure international investors and streamline corporate decision-making, it also risks concentrating too much influence in foreign hands over a company that under-

pins Kenya's digital economy.

In contrast, selling the 15% to public investors would expand the proportion of shares held by ordinary Kenyans and local institutions. The current public float of 25% would rise to about 40%, increasing domestic investment in the NSE and reinforcing a culture of shared ownership. Pension funds, SACCOs, individual investors, and local institutions would all have the opportunity to benefit directly from Safaricom's future growth.

Advocates of broader public ownership point to the 2008 Safaricom IPO as a successful model. That sale of 25% of shares to Kenyans was widely oversubscribed, deepened capital markets, and gave everyday citizens a stake in one of the nation's

most profitable companies. A new public offering could repeat that success, boosting investor confidence and widening the circle of ownership.

Critics of expanding foreign ownership warn that while Vodacom brings technical expertise and stable leadership, granting it a controlling stake could reduce Kenyan influence over strategic decisions from pricing to investment priorities and the future of mobile money services that millions depend on.

Expanding public ownership would also support the Nairobi Securities Exchange, drawing in new investors and enhancing liquidity. A larger public float means more active trading and greater participation by local investors in corporate governance. It aligns

with long-standing national goals of promoting financial inclusion and expanding capital market access.

As the government weighs its options, the debate is no longer purely economic it is fundamentally about who benefits from Kenya's digital future. Safaricom's success has been powered by Kenyan customers, and many argue that ordinary Kenyans should be at the front of the line when it comes to ownership.

In this context, selling the additional 15% stake to the public is not just about shares it is about empowering citizens, strengthening national markets, and ensuring that the rewards of growth are shared broadly rather than concentrated in a few hands.

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Education

Education Climbs to Third Place on Africans' List of Priorities, Afrobarometer Report Shows

By: John Mathews
xxxxxxxxxxxx



Worth Noting:

• The survey highlights both progress and persistent inequalities in educational attainment. Younger Africans are generally more educated than their elders, but disparities remain pronounced among women, rural residents, and the poor. Nearly two in ten adults report having post-secondary education, while a similar proportion have no formal schooling at all.

• The largest share of respondents, 39%, identify secondary school as their highest level of education, while 26% have completed only primary schooling. Encouragingly, only 13% of respondents say girls are often or always prevented from attending school because families prioritize boys' education, though this figure rises to more than a quarter in Malawi and Cameroon.

Education has climbed to third place on Africans' list of priorities, according to the latest Afrobarometer Pan-Africa Profile released in Accra, Ghana. The report, based on nearly 51,000 interviews conducted across 38 countries during 2024 and 2025, reveals that citizens increasingly view education as a critical issue requiring urgent government attention. This marks a significant rise from its sixth-place ranking in 2021/2023, placing education alongside concerns such as the rising cost of living, infrastructure, and water supply, and just behind health and unemployment. Despite this heightened importance, governments across the continent receive mixed reviews for their performance in the sector. Only half of respondents expressed satisfaction with their leaders' handling

of education, while the other half gave poor marks. Zambia and Tanzania stand out with strong approval ratings of 84% and 81% respectively, but in countries such as Angola, Chad, Nigeria, and Congo-Brazzaville, fewer than one in three citizens believe their governments are doing a good job.

The survey highlights both progress and persistent inequalities in educational attainment. Younger Africans are generally more educated than their elders, but disparities remain pronounced among women, rural residents, and the poor. Nearly two in ten adults report having post-secondary education, while a similar proportion have no formal schooling at all. The largest share of respondents, 39%, identify secondary school as their highest level of education, while 26% have com-

pleted only primary schooling. Encouragingly, only 13% of respondents say girls are often or always prevented from attending school because families prioritize boys' education, though this figure rises to more than a quarter in Malawi and Cameroon. Yet challenges persist, particularly in the form of discrimination and harassment. Almost three in ten citizens report that schoolgirls frequently face harassment or demands for sexual favors from teachers, with striking variations across countries. In Gabon, 71% of respondents say such abuse is common, while in Cameroon the figure is 55%. By contrast, fewer than one in ten citizens in Madagascar and Mauritius report similar experiences.

The survey also reveals strong support for inclusive policies that protect

the right to education for school-age mothers. More than four in five respondents believe girls who become pregnant or have children should be allowed to continue their education, including 43% who strongly agree. This widespread endorsement reflects shifting attitudes toward ensuring that motherhood does not end a girl's educational journey and highlights a growing commitment to equity in education.

Afrobarometer, a pan-African, non-partisan survey research network, has conducted ten rounds of surveys since 1999, covering up to 45 countries. Its latest round involved face-to-face interviews in respondents' preferred languages, with nationally representative samples of 1,200 to 2,400 adults per country. The findings provide valuable

insights into citizens' experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life.

The Pan-Africa Profile paints a complex picture of education across the continent. On one hand, citizens are increasingly prioritizing education and expressing support for policies that promote inclusivity. On the other, governments face criticism for uneven performance, and persistent inequalities continue to disadvantage women, rural communities, and the poor. The report underscores the urgent need for African leaders to address these challenges and deliver on citizens' growing demand for quality education, which is increasingly seen as essential for the continent's future.

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WHO

WHO Chief Says U.S. Reasons for Withdrawal “Untrue”

By: Diaspora Times Team
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Worth Noting:

The United Nations confirmed receipt of the formal notice of withdrawal two days after Trump’s executive order. Under the UN charter, the withdrawal will take effect one year after notice is given, meaning the U.S. departure will formally be completed in January 2026. This timeline has provided a window for debate and potential reconsideration, though the administration has so far shown no signs of reversing course.

The WHO issued a statement on Saturday expressing regret over the U.S. decision and rejecting accusations made by the Trump administration. The organization emphasized that the withdrawal raises significant issues that will be considered by the WHO Executive Board at its regular meeting beginning February 2, as well as by the World Health Assembly at its annual meeting in May 2026. A WHO press official noted that the Secretariat will act on the advice and guidance of its governing bodies in dealing with the consequences of the U.S. exit.

GENEVA – The World Health Organization (WHO) has voiced strong regret over the United States’ decision to withdraw from the global health body, with Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus describing the reasons cited by Washington as “untrue.” The announcement, which follows an executive order signed by U.S. President Donald Trump on January 20, 2025—the first day of his second term—has sparked widespread concern among international health experts and policymakers about the implications for global health security.

Tedros, writing on the social platform X, commended the United States for its historic role as a founding member of WHO and for its contributions to many of the organization’s greatest achievements. However, he rejected the rationale provided by the Trump administration for the withdrawal, stating bluntly: “Unfortunately, the reasons cited for the U.S. decision to withdraw from WHO are untrue.” He warned that the move would make both the United States and the world “less safe,” underscoring the risks of weakening international cooperation in the face of ongoing and future health crises.

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World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

the U.S. exit. Financial matters have also come to the fore. According to WHO officials, the United States has yet to pay its outstanding membership dues for the biennium 2024–2025. National Public Radio (NPR) reported that the unpaid amount is estimated at approximately \$278 million. This shortfall adds to the financial strain on WHO, which relies on contributions from member states to fund its operations, including emergency responses, vaccination campaigns, and disease surveillance. The U.S. withdrawal represents a significant rupture in global health governance. As one of WHO’s largest donors and most influential members, the United States has historically played a central role in shaping the organization’s priorities and supporting its programs. From the eradication of smallpox to the fight against polio and the response to HIV/AIDS, U.S. leadership and funding have been instrumental in advancing global health. The decision to withdraw therefore raises questions about the future of international cooperation in addressing pandemics, emerging diseases, and health inequities. Critics argue that the move undermines global solidarity at a time when collective action is most needed. The COVID-19 pandemic, which exposed vulnerabilities in health systems worldwide, highlighted the

importance of coordinated responses and information sharing. WHO’s role in providing guidance, coordinating research, and supporting countries with limited resources was widely recognized, even as debates over its performance unfolded. By stepping away, the United States risks weakening mechanisms that protect not only global populations but also its own citizens from cross-border health threats. Tedros expressed hope that the United States would eventually return to active participation in WHO. “The U.S. has been a vital partner in many of our greatest achievements,” he wrote. “We hope that this decision will be reconsidered and that the U.S. will rejoin efforts to strengthen global health security.” His remarks reflect a broader sentiment among international health leaders, who view U.S. engagement as essential for sustaining momentum in tackling pressing health challenges. The Trump administration has defended its decision by citing alleged failures in WHO’s handling of recent health crises and accusations of bias. However, WHO officials and independent experts have rejected these claims, pointing to the organization’s constrained mandate and reliance on member states for information and resources. They argue that rather than withdrawing, the U.S. could have worked within

WHO to push for reforms and improvements, thereby strengthening the institution from within. The implications of the U.S. withdrawal extend beyond health. Analysts note that the move reflects a broader trend of skepticism toward multilateral institutions and international agreements under the Trump administration. Similar dynamics have been observed in areas such as climate policy, trade, and security alliances. By distancing itself from WHO, the U.S. signals a preference for unilateral approaches, raising concerns about the erosion of global cooperation in addressing shared challenges. For other member states, the U.S. exit presents both risks and opportunities. On one hand, the loss of U.S. funding and influence could weaken WHO’s capacity to respond to emergencies and implement programs. On the other hand, it may prompt other countries to step up their contributions and assert greater leadership in shaping the organization’s agenda. The European Union, China, and other major players have already indicated their commitment to supporting WHO, suggesting that the organization will continue to function despite the U.S. withdrawal. The upcoming meetings of the WHO Executive Board and the World Health Assembly will be critical in determining how the orga-

nization adapts to this new reality. Discussions are expected to focus on financial sustainability, governance reforms, and strategies for maintaining global health security in the absence of U.S. participation. The outcomes will shape WHO’s trajectory in the coming years and influence the broader landscape of international health cooperation. As the deadline for the U.S. withdrawal approaches, the debate over its consequences is intensifying. Health experts warn that pandemics and other health crises do not respect national borders, making international collaboration indispensable. The decision to withdraw from WHO, they argue, risks leaving the United States isolated and less prepared to confront future threats. For the global community, the move underscores the fragility of multilateral institutions and the need to strengthen them in the face of rising challenges. Ultimately, the U.S. withdrawal from WHO represents a turning point in global health governance. Whether it leads to greater fragmentation or sparks renewed efforts to reinforce international cooperation remains to be seen. For now, the message from WHO leadership is clear: the reasons cited for the withdrawal are “untrue,” and the consequences will make both the U.S. and the world less safe.

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Motivation

Problems In Modern Philology

By: Odilova Muborakxon
Shuhratjon

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Worth
Noting:

Philology is a field of study focused on the investigation of language, literature, and culture, comprehensively examining humanity's cultural heritage, linguistic development, and communication processes within society. At present, a number of urgent and contemporary problems have emerged in the field of philology. Philology not only studies language but also reveals complex interrelations between literature, history, and culture.

From a historical perspective, philological methodologies have evolved in accordance with the needs of society in each era. The main factors influencing this development include the rapid advancement of technology, the renewal of language teaching methods, globalization processes, and the need to preserve and develop national identity (Abdukari-mova, 2025; Baxtiyorova, 2025).

This article analyzes the main problems in the field of modern philology. It examines pressing issues in linguistic and literary studies, including the impact of digital technologies, globalization processes, the development of national languages, and the preservation of literary heritage. In addition, the article discusses philological education, increasing young people's interest in their native language, and the possibilities of applying interdisciplinary approaches to deeply analyze the interconnection between literature and culture. The research is based on theoretical and descriptive analysis.

Keywords: modern philology, language problems, literature, national identity, digital technologies, globalization.

Introduction

Philology is a field of study focused on the investigation of language, literature, and culture, comprehensively examining humanity's cultural heritage, linguistic development, and communication processes within society. At present, a number of urgent and contemporary problems have emerged in the field of philology. Philology not only studies language but also reveals complex interrelations between literature, history, and culture.

From a historical perspective, philological methodologies have evolved in accordance with the needs of society in each era. The main factors influencing this development include the rapid advancement of technology, the renewal of language teaching methods, globalization processes, and the need to preserve and develop national identity (Abdukari-mova, 2025; Baxtiyorova, 2025).

Modern technologies—particularly the Internet, artificial intelligence, digital platforms, and electronic resources—create new opportunities for philological research and education. At the same time, they often require a reconsideration of traditional methodologies, as new approaches and digital tools sometimes conflict with classical philological education. Although online learning platforms, interactive resources, and digital archives facilitate the study of language and literature, their effective integration remains a pressing issue. Therefore, the rational application of modern technologies in philology and

their thoughtful use in educational processes is of great importance (Halimova, 2025; Jabborova, 2025).

Main Part

In modern philology, technologies enable deeper and more efficient research in linguistics and literary studies, while simultaneously generating new challenges. The use of the Internet, artificial intelligence, and other digital resources allows for the creation of interactive educational platforms, the use of electronic books and digital archives, and the online analysis of literary texts. However, technological innovations sometimes conflict with traditional philological methods, requiring researchers and educators to adapt their work to new conditions.

Globalization, particularly the widespread dominance of the English language, may contribute to the decline of national languages. At the same time, global resources offer opportunities to develop philological research, digitize literary heritage, and make language more accessible to younger generations. Under modern conditions, it is essential to use technologies not only as tools for teaching and research but also as means of preserving and developing language and literature (Halliday, 2007; Jabborova, 2025).

Globalization poses a serious threat to the preservation of national languages. The worldwide spread of English has led to the weakening of many national languages and the potential loss of their literary heritage (Crystal, 2003; Rakhimova, 2025). Therefore, state insti-

tutions and research centers must develop supportive programs aimed at preserving and developing national languages. Studying bilingualism and multilingualism, as well as analyzing national and international experiences, creates new opportunities in philology and helps develop integrative solutions to global challenges.

The relationship between literature and culture also plays a crucial role in philological research. Often, literary studies and cultural studies are examined separately, which complicates the analysis of their interconnection. Applying interdisciplinary approaches enables a deeper analysis of the relationship between literature and culture, expands research directions, and allows for the reinterpretation of classical and modern literary works within historical and cultural contexts.

In philological research, comparative methods, textual analysis, and interdisciplinary approaches are widely used. These methods make it possible to analyze language and literature comprehensively while considering historical and cultural contexts. Such approaches enhance the quality of philological research and contribute significantly to the preservation of literary heritage.

Rapid changes in societal demands require the introduction of new methods and approaches in philological education and professional training. Modern technologies and the global labor market demand the development of up-to-date skills and competencies among teachers and stu-

dents. Therefore, modernizing philological education, developing interactive and distance learning platforms, and adapting curricula to global standards and contemporary conditions are essential. Encouraging young people's interest in their native language and literature through interactive methods, media tools, and modern technologies is particularly important.

Additionally, methodological differences in studying classical and modern literary works, as well as the misinterpretation of literary heritage, remain pressing issues in philology. Re-examining classical texts within their historical and cultural contexts and adapting them to contemporary perspectives improves research quality and broadens the practical significance of philology.

The preservation of national language and culture, especially under globalization, is important not only for linguists but for society as a whole. Although more than 7,000 languages exist worldwide, approximately one language disappears every two weeks (Crystal, 2003). Therefore, preserving and developing national languages through philological research and interactive platforms is of vital importance. Linguistic and cultural identity preservation projects should be implemented through cooperation among research institutions, cultural organizations, and governments.

Conclusion

The problems of modern philology are characterized by their complexity and multidimensional nature. Technologies, globalization,

national languages, the relationship between literature and culture, and changes in education systems require philological research and education to enter a new stage of development. At the same time, preserving national languages, correctly interpreting literary heritage, engaging young people with their native language, and implementing interdisciplinary approaches remain among the most urgent tasks of the field.

The effective use of modern technologies and digital resources significantly enhances the efficiency of philological research and education. Philological studies and practical applications contribute not only to preserving language and literature but also to developing intercultural communication and dialogue among societies.

In this regard, implementing modern methodologies, expanding interactive and distance learning tools, and developing integrative approaches aligned with global challenges will further advance philological education. This analysis may serve as a theoretical foundation for modernizing philology education and open new directions for scientific and practical research, fostering deeper exploration of the relationship between literature and culture, and supporting the development and preservation of national languages and their cultural heritage.

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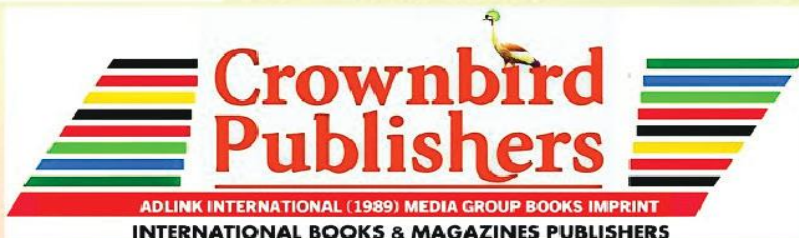
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African News

Territorial Ambitions And The Future Of Global Order: Analyzing Great Power Competition Over Strategic Territories



By: Silas Mwaudasheni Nande
@themtkenyatimes

Contd from Page 1

Worth Noting:

The territorial ambitions illustrated in the political cartoon—American interest in Greenland, Russian designs on Ukraine, and Chinese focus on Taiwan—represent more than isolated disputes. They exemplify fundamental challenges to the international order and herald an era of intensified great power competition.

Each case reflects a major power's perceived security imperatives and strategic interests, yet each also challenges principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and self-determination that have underpinned international stability for decades. The collision between these revisionist ambitions and the existing order creates risks of catastrophic conflict alongside opportunities for diplomatic engagement and compromise.

The stakes extend far beyond the specific territories involved. How the international community responds to these challenges will determine whether we can maintain a stable, rules-based international order or whether we descend into a more anarchic system where power alone determines outcomes. The choices made by leaders in Washington, Moscow, Beijing, and other capitals over the coming years will shape the global order for generations.

historical context, strategic rationale, and potential consequences of each territorial claim.

This article will analyze each situation in depth, exploring the interests driving these ambitions, the likelihood of their realization, and the broader implications for global geopolitics. The analysis will reveal that while these three cases differ significantly in their particulars, they collectively represent a fundamental challenge to the principles of territorial integrity and national self-determination that have underpinned international law since 1945.

The United States and Greenland: Arctic Strategy and Resource Competition

Historical Context and Recent Developments

In August 2019, President Donald Trump reportedly expressed interest in the United States purchasing Greenland from Denmark, an idea that was quickly rejected by both Danish and Greenlandic officials. While this proposal was widely ridiculed in international media, it reflected genuine American strategic concerns about the Arctic region. With Trump returning to the presidency in January 2025, questions about renewed American interest in Greenland have resurfaced, though any actual acquisition remains highly improbable.

Greenland, the world's largest island, is an autonomous territory within the Kingdom of Denmark. Its population of approximately 57,000 people, predominantly indigenous Inuit, has steadily moved toward greater autonomy. In 2009, Greenland gained self-government in most domestic affairs, and many Greenlanders aspire to eventual independence, though the territory remains economically dependent on Danish subsidies.

The United States has maintained a military presence in Greenland since World War II, most notably at Thule Air Base, a critical component of North American missile defense systems and Arctic surveillance. This existing relationship demonstrates America's longstanding strategic interest in the island.

Strategic Interests

Several factors drive American interest in Greenland. First, the Arctic is becoming increasingly accessible due to climate change, opening new shipping routes and making resource extraction more feasible. Greenland possesses vast deposits of rare earth elements, uranium, zinc, lead, and potentially significant oil and gas reserves. As global competition intensifies over these critical resources, particularly rare earth elements essential for modern technology and defense systems, Greenland's mineral wealth becomes increasingly attractive.

Second, the Arctic is emerging as a new theater of great power competition. Russia has substantially increased its military presence in its Arctic territories, reopening Soviet-era bases and developing new capabilities. China, despite being a non-Arctic nation, has declared itself a "near-Arctic state" and invested heavily in Arctic research and development, including in Greenland itself. This has raised concerns in Washington about Chinese influence in what America considers its strategic backyard.

Third, climate change is making the Arctic strategically important in ways previously unimaginable. The Northwest Passage through the Canadian Arctic and the Northern Sea Route along Russia's coast are becoming viable shipping lanes for increasing portions of the year, potentially transforming global trade routes. Greenland sits at a crucial position along these emerging pathways.

Finally, Greenland's geographic position makes it valuable for military purposes beyond Thule Air Base. As great power competition intensifies, the ability to project power in the Arctic and maintain domain awareness becomes increasingly important for any nation with global ambitions.

Likelihood and Obstacles

Despite these strategic interests, an actual American acquisition of Greenland remains extraordinarily unlikely. The primary obstacle is that Greenland is not Denmark's to sell. The Greenlandic people have self-determination rights under international law, and



both Greenlandic and Danish officials have adamantly stated that Greenland is not for sale. Any attempt to purchase or otherwise acquire Greenland without the consent of its inhabitants would violate fundamental principles of international law and democratic governance.

Moreover, the economic costs would be staggering. Greenland currently receives approximately \$600 million annually in subsidies from Denmark. The infrastructure investments needed to develop Greenland's resources and integrate it into American governance structures would cost hundreds of billions of dollars. The political complications of incorporating a predominantly indigenous, Danish-speaking population with its own distinct culture and aspirations into the American political system would be immense.

More realistically, the United States can and likely will expand its presence in Greenland through diplomatic and economic engagement. This might include increased investment in infrastructure, expanded military cooperation, and support for Greenlandic independence (which would potentially create a more pliable partner than Denmark). The U.S. has already reopened a consulate in Nuuk, Greenland's capital, and increased diplomatic engagement with Greenlandic authorities.

Russia and Ukraine: Imperial Nostalgia and Security Anxieties

Historical Context and the Current Conflict

Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 represents the most serious territorial conflict in Europe since World War II. The war has killed hundreds of thou-

sands, displaced millions, and fundamentally altered the European security landscape. Unlike the Greenland situation, this is not a hypothetical scenario but an ongoing catastrophe with global ramifications.

The roots of the conflict extend deep into history. Ukraine and Russia share intertwined histories dating back over a millennium, with both nations claiming Kyiv as part of their historical heritage. Ukraine was part of the Russian Empire and later the Soviet Union until declaring independence in 1991 following the USSR's collapse. However, many Russians, particularly in the leadership, never fully accepted Ukrainian independence as permanent or legitimate.

President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly expressed views suggesting he does not consider Ukraine a genuinely separate nation. In a lengthy essay published in July 2021, Putin argued that Russians and Ukrainians are "one people" artificially divided by historical circumstances and Western manipulation. This worldview, which many historians and political scientists characterize as neo-imperial, frames Ukrainian independence not as the legitimate expression of national self-determination but as a historical aberration to be corrected.

The immediate triggers for the 2022 invasion included Ukraine's increasingly Western orientation, particularly its aspirations to join NATO and the European Union, and the consolidation of a Ukrainian national identity distinct from and often in opposition to Russian influence. From the Kremlin's perspective, a Ukraine aligned with the West represents both a security threat and an ideological challenge

to Putin's conception of Russian civilization and sphere of influence.

Strategic Interests

Russia's interests in controlling Ukraine operate on multiple levels. Strategically, Ukraine provides a buffer between Russia and NATO members. Throughout history, Russia has prioritized strategic depth—distance between its heartland and potential adversaries. The expansion of NATO to include former Soviet bloc countries has steadily reduced this buffer, making Ukraine's alignment a matter of paramount concern to Russian military planners. Control of Ukraine would also provide Russia with enhanced access to the Black Sea and strengthen its position in this strategically vital region. The Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014 was partly motivated by the desire to secure the naval base at Sevastopol, home to Russia's Black Sea Fleet. Control of Ukraine's extensive Black Sea coastline would significantly enhance Russian naval capabilities and economic opportunities.

Economically, Ukraine possesses rich agricultural land (often called the "breadbasket of Europe"), significant industrial capacity particularly in the east, and potential energy resources. While Russia is itself resource-rich, controlling Ukrainian assets would enhance its economic leverage and deny these resources to competitors.

Perhaps most importantly, Putin appears motivated by ideological and legacy concerns. He views the collapse of the Soviet Union as "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century" and seems determined

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Worth Noting:

• What makes these disputes particularly dangerous is their interconnection. How the Ukraine situation is resolved affects calculations about Taiwan and vice versa. Weakness or irresolution in one area may encourage aggression in another, while effective deterrence or costly failures may promote restraint. The world's major powers are watching each other carefully, learning lessons that will influence future decisions.

• For smaller nations and the populations of disputed territories, these great power games have immediate and potentially tragic consequences. Ukrainians are already paying a terrible price for Russian ambitions. Taiwanese citizens face an uncertain future shadowed by the threat of invasion. Even Greenlanders, in the least acute of these situations, must navigate great power competition over their homeland.

to restore Russian greatness by reassembling at least part of the former Soviet space under Moscow's control. Ukraine, as the second-most populous Soviet republic and the one with the deepest historical connections to Russia, represents a crucial piece of this revanchist project.

Current Status and Future Prospects

As of early 2025, the war continues with no clear resolution in sight. Russia controls significant portions of eastern and southern Ukraine, including Crimea (annexed in 2014) and territories in the Donbas region and along the southern coast. However, Russian forces have failed to achieve their apparent initial objective of regime change in Kyiv and subjugation of the entire country.

Ukraine, supported by substantial Western military and economic assistance, has demonstrated unexpected resilience and military effectiveness. However, the war has devastated the country's infrastructure, economy, and population. The human cost has been immense, with hundreds of thousands of casualties and millions displaced.

Several potential outcomes exist. Russia might succeed in maintaining control over currently occupied territories, effectively partitioning Ukraine and creating a frozen conflict similar to those in Georgia, Moldova, and previously in Ukraine's Donbas region. Alternatively, Ukraine might, with continued Western support, liberate most or all occupied territories, though this appears increasingly difficult as the conflict has become a grinding war of attrition.

A negotiated settlement seems possible but would require both sides to compromise on fundamental issues. Russia would likely need to abandon maximalist goals of regime change and Ukrainian subjugation, while Ukraine might have to accept, at least temporarily, the loss of some territories. However, any settlement that leaves Ukrainian sovereignty compromised or territories occupied would likely prove unstable and could lead to renewed conflict.

The most concerning sce-

nario involves escalation, potentially including Russian use of nuclear weapons or direct NATO involvement in the conflict. While both sides have shown some restraint in avoiding actions that might trigger such escalation, the risks remain as long as the war continues.

China and Taiwan: Unfinished Civil War and Regional Hegemony

Historical Background

The Taiwan situation differs fundamentally from both the Greenland and Ukraine cases in its historical and legal complexity. Taiwan's status represents unfinished business from the Chinese Civil War, which ended in 1949 with the Communist Party controlling mainland China and the nationalist Kuomintang (KMT) retreating to Taiwan.

For decades, both the People's Republic of China (PRC) on the mainland and the Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan claimed to be the legitimate government of all China. This fiction was maintained internationally until the 1970s, when most countries, including the United States, switched diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing. Today, only a handful of small nations maintain formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan, though many countries maintain robust unofficial relationships.

Taiwan has evolved dramatically since 1949. It transformed from an authoritarian state under martial law to a vibrant democracy. Its economy developed into one of the most advanced in the world, particularly in semiconductor manufacturing, where Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) produces the majority of the world's advanced chips. Simultaneously, a distinct Taiwanese identity has emerged, particularly among younger generations who have never known mainland rule and identify as Taiwanese rather than Chinese.

The PRC has never renounced the use of force to achieve "reunification" and considers Taiwan a renegade province that must eventually be brought under Beijing's control. This position is central to Chinese Communist Party (CCP) legitimacy and national identity. For many



Chinese, Taiwan's continued separation represents a humiliating reminder of China's "century of humiliation" at the hands of foreign powers.

Strategic Interests

China's interest in Taiwan stems from multiple factors. First and foremost is nationalist sentiment and CCP legitimacy. The party has built much of its claim to rule on delivering national rejuvenation and restoring Chinese territorial integrity. Allowing Taiwan to remain permanently separate, let alone become formally independent, would represent a fundamental failure and potential threat to CCP rule. Strategically, Taiwan occupies a crucial position in what Chinese military strategists call the "first island chain"—the string of islands running from Japan through Taiwan and the Philippines to Borneo. This chain currently constrains Chinese naval access to the Pacific Ocean, limiting the operational range of Chinese forces. Control of Taiwan would break this chain, dramatically expanding Chinese strategic options and complicating American and allied defense planning.

Taiwan's semiconductor industry represents another crucial interest. TSMC alone manufactures approximately 90% of the world's most advanced chips, making it perhaps the single most strategically important company in the global economy. Chinese control of Taiwan would give Beijing leverage over the entire global technology sector and eliminate a key competitive advantage currently held by the United States and its allies.

Additionally, Taiwan's successful democracy represents an ideological challenge to the CCP's au-

thoritarian model. Taiwan demonstrates that Chinese culture is fully compatible with democratic governance, undermining Beijing's claims that authoritarianism is necessary or inevitable for Chinese societies. This makes Taiwan's example particularly threatening to CCP legitimacy.

Likelihood and Obstacles

Unlike Ukraine, where invasion has already occurred, Taiwan faces an invasion that has not yet happened but is widely considered possible or even likely within the next decade. Chinese leader Xi Jinping has repeatedly emphasized that the Taiwan issue "cannot be passed down from generation to generation," suggesting urgency in resolving the matter during his tenure. China has significantly expanded and modernized its military, particularly its naval and amphibious assault capabilities needed for an invasion of Taiwan. Military exercises around Taiwan have increased in frequency and scale, suggesting both preparation and coercion. Many analysts believe that China is developing the capability to invade Taiwan, though whether it will do so remains uncertain.

However, invading Taiwan would be extraordinarily difficult and risky. The Taiwan Strait's geography favors defense, and Taiwan has fortified its defenses for decades. An amphibious invasion would be one of the most complex military operations imaginable, requiring air and naval superiority, successful amphibious landings against prepared defenses, and sustained operations across the strait while under potential attack.

Most critically, a Chinese invasion would likely trigger American military inter-

vention. While the United States maintains "strategic ambiguity" about whether it would defend Taiwan militarily, several factors suggest it would likely do so. Taiwan is crucial to American interests in multiple ways: its semiconductor industry is essential to the U.S. economy and military, its fall would dramatically shift the regional balance of power, and American credibility with allies throughout the Indo-Pacific depends on demonstrating commitment to partners' security.

A U.S.-China war over Taiwan would be catastrophic, potentially involving two nuclear-armed powers and the world's two largest economies. The economic consequences alone would dwarf those of the Ukraine war, potentially causing a global depression. The risk of nuclear escalation, while hopefully low, cannot be dismissed.

China might pursue alternatives to invasion, including intensified economic and diplomatic pressure, a blockade, or more limited military operations designed to coerce Taiwan without the risks of full-scale invasion. These approaches have their own risks but might appear more attractive to Beijing than the enormous uncertainties of invasion.

Comparative Analysis: Patterns and Differences

These three situations, while distinct, reveal important patterns in contemporary international relations. Each involves a major power eyeing territory it considers strategically vital, framing its interest in terms of security imperatives while the international community largely views these claims as violations of sovereignty and self-determination.

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Worth Noting:

• Ultimately, addressing these territorial disputes requires balancing multiple imperatives: maintaining deterrence against aggression, keeping diplomatic channels open for negotiation, supporting international law and institutions while acknowledging their limitations, and managing competition while avoiding catastrophic conflict. There are no easy solutions, only difficult choices with uncertain outcomes.

• The cartoon's simplistic framing—each power wanting territory for security—captures an uncomfortable truth about international politics. Security competitions, once triggered, tend to perpetuate themselves as each side's actions to enhance its security threaten others. Breaking these cycles requires not only strategic wisdom but also empathy, restraint, and a commitment to principles beyond narrow self-interest.

Similarities

All three cases involve great powers challenging the territorial status quo established after World War II (in the case of Greenland and Ukraine) or the post-1949 settlement (in Taiwan's case). This represents a broader pattern of revisionist powers seeking to overturn what they view as unfair or unstable arrangements that disadvantage them.

Each situation involves a major power framing territorial ambitions in terms of security needs rather than conquest. American officials emphasize Arctic security and Chinese influence when discussing Greenland; Russia claims NATO expansion threatens its security in justifying operations in Ukraine; China presents Taiwan reunification as rectifying historical injustices and completing national reunification rather than aggressive expansion.

Geographic proximity and strategic location drive all three cases. Greenland's position in the Arctic, Ukraine's role as a buffer between Russia and NATO, and Taiwan's location in the first island chain make these territories strategically valuable beyond their intrinsic economic or political importance.

In each case, the population of the targeted territory largely opposes incorporation into the larger power. Greenlanders have no interest in becoming American, Ukrainians are fighting desperately to resist Russian control, and polling consistently shows declining identification with China among Taiwanese citizens, particularly younger generations.

Differences

The cases differ dramatically in their urgency and likelihood. The Greenland scenario remains largely hypothetical and extremely unlikely to occur through purchase or annexation, though increased American presence is plausible. The Ukraine situation is an ongoing catastrophe, with Russian control of significant territories already established through military force. The Taiwan situation represents a potential future crisis that has not yet occurred but looms as perhaps the most dangerous

flashpoint in international relations.

The legal and historical contexts also vary significantly. Greenland has clear status under international law as Danish territory with self-government rights, making any forced transfer illegal and politically impossible. Ukraine is a fully sovereign state recognized by the international community, making Russian invasion a clear violation of international law. Taiwan exists in legal ambiguity, with its status disputed and no international consensus on its sovereignty, complicating responses to Chinese actions.

The economic implications differ vastly in scale. Greenland's economy is tiny, making its impact on global economics minimal regardless of its political status. Ukraine's economy, while larger, is primarily regional in significance, though its role in food and some commodity exports has global effects. Taiwan, however, is central to the global technology supply chain, making its status directly relevant to the entire world economy.

International responses have also varied dramatically. The Greenland purchase idea was widely ridiculed but not treated as a serious threat to international order. Russia's invasion of Ukraine triggered unprecedented Western sanctions and military support for Ukraine, though not direct military intervention. Any Chinese move against Taiwan would likely provoke an even stronger response, potentially including American military intervention, given the higher stakes for U.S. interests.

Implications for Global Order

The collective impact of these territorial disputes extends far beyond the specific territories involved, representing a fundamental challenge to the principles that have governed international relations since 1945.

The Erosion of Territorial Integrity

The most basic principle of the post-World War II international order is the territorial integrity of states and the prohibition on acquiring territory by force. Russia's invasion of Ukraine direct-



ly violates this principle, as would any Chinese invasion of Taiwan. Even the Greenland scenario, if pursued coercively, would challenge principles of self-determination.

When major powers openly flout these principles, the entire system of international law weakens. If Russia can seize Ukrainian territory with relative impunity, or if China can take Taiwan without decisive international response, what prevents other revisionist powers from pursuing their own territorial claims? This could return the world to a more dangerous era where might makes right and borders are subject to constant revision through force.

The Return of Great Power Competition

These territorial disputes signal the end of the post-Cold War era characterized by American unipolarity and relative cooperation among major powers. We are entering a new era of great power competition, with the United States, China, and Russia openly competing for influence, resources, and strategic advantage.

This competition manifests not only in these specific territorial disputes but in broader patterns of military buildup, alliance formation, economic warfare, and technological rivalry. The world is increasingly dividing into competing blocs, with countries forced to choose sides in ways reminiscent of the Cold War but potentially more dangerous given the

higher level of economic interdependence.

Regional Stability and Alliance Systems

Each of these disputes affects regional stability in profound ways. In Europe, the Ukraine war has revitalized NATO, led to dramatic increases in defense spending, and pushed previously neutral countries like Finland and Sweden to join the alliance. The European security architecture has been fundamentally transformed, with a new emphasis on territorial defense and deterrence.

In the Indo-Pacific, the Taiwan situation is driving closer cooperation among the United States, Japan, Australia, India (through the Quad), and other regional partners concerned about Chinese assertiveness. New security arrangements like AUKUS are emerging, while traditional alliances are being strengthened and extended.

The Arctic is becoming a new arena of competition, with implications for circumpolar nations and global governance. The relatively cooperative approach to Arctic governance that characterized the post-Cold War era is giving way to greater military competition and bloc politics.

Economic Interdependence and Decoupling

The risks highlighted by these territorial disputes are accelerating economic decoupling, particularly between the United States

and China. Companies and governments are reconsidering supply chains that run through potential conflict zones or depend on potentially hostile nations.

The Taiwan semiconductor situation exemplifies this concern. Recognition that a conflict over Taiwan could cripple the global technology sector is driving massive investments in semiconductor manufacturing in the United States, Europe, Japan, and other locations, attempting to reduce dependence on Taiwan. Similar dynamics are playing out across numerous sectors.

This decoupling has significant costs, reducing economic efficiency and potentially lowering global growth. It may also reduce the moderating influence that economic interdependence has traditionally exerted on political conflicts, making war more thinkable.

Nuclear Risks and Escalation Dynamics

Both the Ukraine and Taiwan scenarios involve nuclear-armed powers, raising the stakes to existential levels. Russia has made veiled nuclear threats during the Ukraine war, and any U.S.-China conflict over Taiwan would involve two nuclear powers with substantial arsenals.

The world has not faced serious nuclear risks since the Cold War ended. These territorial disputes are re-

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Worth Noting:

- In the most optimistic scenario, these territorial disputes are resolved or managed without major war. The Greenland situation remains a hypothetical concern addressed through enhanced U.S.-Danish-Greenlandic cooperation. The Ukraine war ends in a negotiated settlement that, while unsatisfying to Ukraine, preserves its sovereignty and core territory while establishing a stable if frozen conflict. China decides the costs and risks of invading Taiwan outweigh the benefits, instead pursuing long-term political and economic integration.
- This scenario requires skillful diplomacy, restraint from all parties, and luck. It results in a world of managed great power competition, with clear spheres of influence, robust deterrence, and effective crisis management mechanisms. While tensions remain high, catastrophic conflict is avoided.

turning nuclear weapons to prominence in strategic calculations, with increased attention to doctrine, escalation dynamics, and crisis management. The erosion of arms control agreements and deterioration in great power relations compounds these risks.

Challenges to International Institutions

These disputes reveal the weakness of international institutions in constraining great power behavior. The United Nations Security Council is paralyzed when permanent members or their close partners are involved in conflicts. International law proves ineffective when major powers choose to ignore it and face insufficient consequences.

This institutional weakness could lead to further deterioration of the rules-based international order, with countries increasingly resolving disputes through power politics rather than law and institutions. Alternatively, it might spur reform efforts to create more effective governance mechanisms, though such reforms face enormous obstacles.

Potential Outcomes and Scenarios

Optimistic Scenario: Managed Competition

In the most optimistic scenario, these territorial disputes are resolved or managed without major war. The Greenland situation remains a hypothetical concern addressed through enhanced U.S.-Danish-Greenlandic cooperation. The Ukraine war ends in a negotiated settlement that, while unsatisfying to Ukraine, preserves its sovereignty and core territory while establishing a stable if frozen conflict. China decides the costs and risks of invading Taiwan outweigh the benefits, instead pursuing long-term political and economic integration.

This scenario requires skillful diplomacy, restraint from all parties, and luck. It results in a world of managed great power competition, with clear spheres of influence, robust deterrence, and effective crisis management mechanisms. While tensions remain high, catastrophic conflict is avoided.



Pessimistic Scenario: Conflict and Fragmentation

The pessimistic scenario sees one or more of these disputes escalating to major war. Russia succeeds in subjugating much of Ukraine, emboldening further aggression. China invades Taiwan, leading to U.S.-China conflict that devastates the global economy and potentially escalates to nuclear use. American actions in Greenland or elsewhere trigger confrontations with other major powers.

This scenario leads to a deeply fragmented world, with hostile blocs, collapsed global governance, severe economic contraction, and the constant threat of catastrophic war. The international order resembles the early 20th century more than the early 21st, with tragic consequences.

Mixed Scenario: Partial Resolutions and Ongoing Tensions

The most likely scenario falls between these extremes. The Ukraine situation ends in an unsatisfying compromise, with Russia controlling some territory but failing to subjugate Ukraine entirely. The Taiwan situation remains tense, with periodic crises but no invasion, as China continues military buildups while seeking political solutions. The Arctic sees increased competition

but also continued cooperation on some issues.

This mixed scenario results in a world of persistent tensions, significant military spending, economic inefficiencies from decoupling, and periodic crises, but without catastrophic great power war. It represents a managed deterioration from the relative stability of the post-Cold War era, accepting higher risks and tensions as the new normal.

Conclusion

The territorial ambitions illustrated in the political cartoon—American interest in Greenland, Russian designs on Ukraine, and Chinese focus on Taiwan—represent more than isolated disputes. They exemplify fundamental challenges to the international order and herald an era of intensified great power competition.

Each case reflects a major power's perceived security imperatives and strategic interests, yet each also challenges principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and self-determination that have underpinned international stability for decades. The collision between these revisionist ambitions and the existing order creates risks of catastrophic conflict alongside opportunities for diplomatic engagement and compromise.

The stakes extend far beyond the specific territories

involved. How the international community responds to these challenges will determine whether we can maintain a stable, rules-based international order or whether we descend into a more anarchic system where power alone determines outcomes. The choices made by leaders in Washington, Moscow, Beijing, and other capitals over the coming years will shape the global order for generations.

What makes these disputes particularly dangerous is their interconnection. How the Ukraine situation is resolved affects calculations about Taiwan and vice versa. Weakness or irresolution in one area may encourage aggression in another, while effective deterrence or costly failures may promote restraint. The world's major powers are watching each other carefully, learning lessons that will influence future decisions.

For smaller nations and the populations of disputed territories, these great power games have immediate and potentially tragic consequences. Ukrainians are already paying a terrible price for Russian ambitions. Taiwanese citizens face an uncertain future shadowed by the threat of invasion. Even Greenlanders, in the least acute of these situations, must navigate great power competition over their homeland.

Ultimately, addressing these territorial disputes requires balancing multiple imperatives: maintaining deterrence against aggression, keeping diplomatic channels open for negotiation, supporting international law and institutions while acknowledging their limitations, and managing competition while avoiding catastrophic conflict. There are no easy solutions, only difficult choices with uncertain outcomes.

The cartoon's simplistic framing—each power wanting territory for security—captures an uncomfortable truth about international politics. Security competitions, once triggered, tend to perpetuate themselves as each side's actions to enhance its security threaten others. Breaking these cycles requires not only strategic wisdom but also empathy, restraint, and a commitment to principles beyond narrow self-interest.

As we navigate this dangerous era, the fundamental question remains: Can we build an international order that accommodates great power interests while protecting smaller nations' sovereignty and preventing catastrophic war? The answer to this question will determine not just the fate of Greenland, Ukraine, and Taiwan, but the character of the 21st century itself.

WORLD

Concurrently Maintainable: Why Tier III Data Centres Are The Real Play For East Africa

By: Demos Kyriacou
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Worth Noting:

- Tier III data centres are classified as “concurrently maintainable,” a technical designation reflecting a fundamental operational principle: every critical component can be serviced or replaced without interrupting service delivery. This capability is achieved through an N+1 design approach, where additional backup components are deliberately engineered into the infrastructure beyond what’s strictly required for daily operations.
- This engineered redundancy underpins the Tier III availability benchmark of 99.982%, translating into roughly 1.6 hours of permitted downtime annually. For nearly all enterprise, financial, and government workloads, this level of resilience is more than sufficient, offering a practical balance between performance, complexity, and long-term operational costs.
- Crucially, Tier III reliability extends beyond physical systems. It is reinforced by structured operational disciplines; rigorous maintenance schedules, change control procedures, and well-trained technical teams, that collectively ensure consistent performance during both routine operations and unexpected conditions.

A Growing Market with Clear Opportunity

The East African data centre market has matured significantly over the past decade. According to Statista, the region’s market is forecasted to reach US\$1.60 billion by the end of 2025, growing at 7.25% annually to reach approximately US\$2.27 billion by 2030. By the end of 2024, the region had nearly 30 MW of live critical-IT load, reflecting significant investment in professional infrastructure.¹ While this represents significant progress, many facilities remain small-scale and lack the professional management or carrier neutrality expected globally. For enterprises, financial institutions, and government agencies, this context underscores the strategic importance of selecting facilities that meet internationally recognised standards like Tier III. For organisations navigating cloud adoption, digital payments, e-government initiatives, and data residency requirements, selecting a facility built to a recognised operational standard is no longer a technical decision; it is a strategic one.

What Sets Tier III Apart?

Tier III data centres are classified as “concurrently maintainable,” a technical designation reflecting a fundamental operational principle: every critical component can be serviced or replaced without interrupting service delivery. This capability is achieved through an N+1 design approach, where additional backup components are deliberately engineered into the infrastructure beyond what’s strictly required for daily operations. This engineered redundancy underpins the Tier III availability benchmark of 99.982%, translating into roughly 1.6 hours of permitted downtime annually. For nearly all enterprise, financial, and government workloads, this level of resilience is more than sufficient, offering a practical balance between performance, complexity, and long-term operational costs.

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control procedures, and well-trained technical teams, that collectively ensure consistent performance during both routine operations and unexpected conditions.

Why Tier III Matters for Your Organisation

For enterprises managing large-scale digital operations, Tier III facilities provide critical protection against costly service disruptions. Downtime carries far more than operational inconvenience; it directly threatens revenue generation, erodes customer satisfaction, and can trigger cascading business consequences that extend well beyond the initial outage. This is especially true for financial services and fintech companies, where interruptions in payment systems, transaction processing, or customer access can trigger immediate and far-reaching consequences. A Tier III facility ensures that these critical systems remain available even when equipment is being serviced or unexpected outages occur, preserving business continuity and maintaining public trust.

E-commerce platforms, digital service providers, and cloud-first enterprises face similar imperatives. As competition intensifies and user expectations rise, uninterrupted service operation becomes central to customer experience and brand reputation. Likewise, government agencies, from tax authorities to e-citizen platforms, depend on resilient infrastructure to uphold

data sovereignty requirements and provide uninterrupted public services. For these institutions, Tier III offers a level of engineered assurance that aligns with regulatory expectations and public policy objectives.

Regional Factors Driving Tier III Adoption

Tier III adoption across East Africa is driven by several interconnected regional realities. Power reliability remains a fundamental concern throughout the region. Although major cities like Nairobi, Kampala, Kigali, and Dar es Salaam have experienced grid improvements in recent years, outages and load-shedding continue to pose operational risks. Tier III’s redundant power systems and uninterruptible power supply infrastructure effectively shield critical services from these disruptions.

Regulatory developments further reinforce demand. Governments across the region are introducing stronger data sovereignty and cybersecurity frameworks, requiring organisations to demonstrate that sensitive data is hosted within environments that meet recognised standards. Tier III facilities provide credible assurance that these requirements are genuinely met, helping organisations navigate an increasingly complex regulatory landscape with confidence.

Operational capacity considerations also influence infrastructure decisions. The complexity of building,

staffing, and running a Tier IV facility often exceeds what regional talent pools and budgets can support sustainably. Tier III strikes a workable balance, delivering high resilience while maintaining an operational model that is feasible for most organisations in the region.

The Economics: Cost, Efficiency, and Growth

Investment in data centre infrastructure must ultimately align with business value. While Tier IV facilities offer marginally higher availability, the corresponding increase in capital expenditure, maintenance obligations, and staffing requirements is substantial. Tier IV demands full duplication of critical systems and highly specialised operational oversight, costs that are difficult to justify for all but the most extreme workload profiles.

Tier III, by contrast, delivers robust resilience within an economically sustainable framework. It supports the needs of the majority of enterprise, financial, and public-sector workloads while enabling efficient scaling over time. This architecture also lends itself well to distributed resiliency strategies: combining multiple Tier III facilities across separate geographic locations often provides superior practical redundancy compared to a single Tier IV site, while maintaining more reasonable cost structures.

For organisations focused on growth, innovation, and digital expansion, Tier III thus offers the optimal in-

tersection of performance, flexibility, and financial discipline.

The Strategic Foundation for East Africa’s Digital Future

Tier III data centres have become the backbone of East Africa’s evolving digital ecosystem because they align directly with the region’s infrastructure conditions, regulatory needs, and economic realities. They provide reliable protection against power instability, offer verifiable compliance with data sovereignty expectations, and deliver resilience without heavy capital investment associated with Tier IV facilities. As enterprises, financial institutions, and governments continue to scale their digital footprints, Tier III facilities will serve as the foundational platforms supporting business continuity, security, and service excellence. In a region experiencing rapid digital transformation, the combination of operational certainty and economic practicality makes Tier III not just a viable choice, but the strategic standard for the decade ahead.

Demos Kyriacou, Co-founder, Deputy CEO and COO, Wingu Africa

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US Top Diplomat Visits Kenya as Washington Pushes Stronger Economic Ties

By: Diaspora Times Team
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NAIROBI, Kenya – The United States is intensifying its diplomatic and economic engagement with Africa as Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau embarks on a multi-country tour across the continent. His visit to Kenya, a key partner in East Africa, underscores Washington's commitment to strengthening commercial ties, enhancing security cooperation, and supporting regional stability at a time when global geopolitical and economic dynamics are rapidly shifting. Landau's Africa tour began in Cairo, Egypt, where he met with Foreign Affairs Minister Badr Abdelatty. Following their discussions, Landau emphasized the vitality of the Egypt-U.S. strategic partnership and the mutual desire to coordinate on pressing regional developments. These included the ongoing crisis in Gaza, the conflict in Sudan, challenges in the Horn of Africa, and Egypt's water security concerns. His remarks highlighted Washington's recognition of Egypt's pivotal role in regional diplomacy and security, setting the tone for a tour focused on both bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

Kenya represents a critical stop in Landau's itinerary. During his visit, he is expected to meet senior Kenyan officials to discuss a wide range of issues, including commercial engagement, counter-terrorism cooperation, and Kenya's role in international security efforts in Haiti. The discussions will also cover broader regional concerns, reflecting Kenya's growing influence as a diplomatic and economic hub in East Africa. With Nairobi serving as a gateway to the region, the U.S. sees Kenya as an essential partner in advancing stability, trade, and investment.

The visit comes at a time when Kenya is positioning itself as a leader in regional peacekeeping and international security. Its involvement in Haiti, where Kenyan forces are expected to contribute to stabilizing efforts, demonstrates Nairobi's willingness to play a global role in peace operations. For Washington, Kenya's participation in such missions aligns with broader U.S. objectives of burden-sharing and collective security, reinforcing the country's reputation as a reliable partner. Economic engagement is



US Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau

another central theme of Landau's visit. The U.S. is keen to expand trade and investment ties with Kenya, building on existing frameworks such as the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and ongoing negotiations for a bilateral trade agreement. Kenya's dynamic private sector, growing technology ecosystem, and strategic location make it an attractive destination for American investors. By deepening commercial cooperation, Washington aims to support Kenya's economic growth while creating opportunities for U.S. businesses in sectors ranging from infrastructure and energy to digital innovation and agriculture.

Landau's tour also reflects President Donald Trump's broader goals of strengthening commercial and economic links across Africa while advancing peace and security. The administration has emphasized the importance of direct engagement with African leaders to foster trust and collaboration. "One of the great privileges of this job is to exchange views directly and frankly with world leaders—notwithstanding modern technology, there's still no substitute for meeting someone in person and looking them in the eye," Landau stated, underscoring the value of personal diplomacy in building lasting partnerships.

Following his engagements in Kenya, Landau will travel to Ethiopia, where discus-

sions are expected to focus on the country's political transition, economic reforms, and regional security challenges. Ethiopia's role in the Horn of Africa, particularly in relation to peace efforts in Somalia and Sudan, makes it a critical partner for Washington. The U.S. has long supported Ethiopia's development trajectory, and Landau's visit will provide an opportunity to reaffirm this support while addressing ongoing humanitarian and governance concerns.

The Deputy Secretary's tour will conclude in Djibouti, a country of strategic importance given its location at the crossroads of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Djibouti hosts multiple foreign military bases, including a significant U.S. presence, making it a linchpin in regional security and counter-terrorism efforts. Landau is expected to hold talks with government leaders on security cooperation, counter-terrorism strategies, and commercial relations. The discussions will likely emphasize Djibouti's role in safeguarding maritime routes and supporting regional stability, while also exploring opportunities for economic collaboration.

In addition to bilateral meetings, Landau will engage with the African Union Commission Chair Mahmoud Ali Youssouf to address shared priorities such as promoting peace, expanding commercial co-

operation, and responding to humanitarian crises across the continent. The AU engagement reflects Washington's recognition of the importance of continental institutions in shaping Africa's future. By working with the AU, the U.S. aims to align its initiatives with Africa's own priorities, ensuring that partnerships are both effective and sustainable. Landau's Africa tour highlights the multifaceted nature of U.S. engagement on the continent. From security cooperation and peacekeeping to trade and investment, Washington is seeking to build partnerships that address immediate challenges while laying the groundwork for long-term prosperity. The emphasis on direct dialogue and personal diplomacy reflects a pragmatic approach aimed at fostering trust and delivering tangible results.

For Kenya, the visit represents an opportunity to deepen ties with one of its most important partners. As Nairobi continues to expand its role in regional and global affairs, closer cooperation with Washington can provide both strategic and economic benefits. The discussions on commercial engagement are particularly timely, given Kenya's ambitions to attract foreign investment and position itself as a hub for innovation and trade in East Africa.

At the same time, the focus on counter-terrorism co-

operation underscores the shared security concerns facing both countries. Kenya has been a frontline state in the fight against extremist groups in the region, and U.S. support has been critical in strengthening its capabilities. By reinforcing this partnership, both sides aim to enhance regional stability and protect their mutual interests.

As Landau's tour progresses, the outcomes of his engagements will be closely watched. The ability to translate discussions into concrete actions will determine the effectiveness of Washington's renewed push for stronger ties with Africa. For the U.S., the tour is an opportunity to demonstrate commitment, build trust, and advance strategic objectives. For African partners, it is a chance to secure support, attract investment, and strengthen their role in global affairs.

Ultimately, Landau's visit to Kenya and other African countries reflects a broader recognition of Africa's growing importance in international politics and economics. By focusing on both security and economic cooperation, Washington is signaling its intent to be a long-term partner in the continent's development and stability. The challenge now lies in ensuring that these ambitions are matched by sustained engagement and tangible outcomes that benefit both sides.

Worth Noting:

- Kenya represents a critical stop in Landau's itinerary. During his visit, he is expected to meet senior Kenyan officials to discuss a wide range of issues, including commercial engagement, counter-terrorism cooperation, and Kenya's role in international security efforts in Haiti. The discussions will also cover broader regional concerns, reflecting Kenya's growing influence as a diplomatic and economic hub in East Africa. With Nairobi serving as a gateway to the region, the U.S. sees Kenya as an essential partner in advancing stability, trade, and investment.

- The visit comes at a time when Kenya is positioning itself as a leader in regional peacekeeping and international security. Its involvement in Haiti, where Kenyan forces are expected to contribute to stabilizing efforts, demonstrates Nairobi's willingness to play a global role in peace operations. For Washington, Kenya's participation in such missions aligns with broader U.S. objectives of burden-sharing and collective security, reinforcing the country's reputation as a reliable partner.

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Diaspora

New Risk-Sharing Tools for Startups from IsDBI and IE University

By: Jose Martins
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Worth Noting:

The initiative combines rigorous research, comparative legal analysis, and contract design to review existing risk-sharing financing models and assess their alignment with Islamic finance. It also examines the feasibility of adapting comparable mechanisms to the Spanish legal framework, with particular attention to enabling factors and regulatory constraints that may affect implementation. By doing so, the project seeks to bridge the gap between Islamic finance's ethical foundations and the practical needs of modern entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Building on this analysis, the project will develop a set of Shari'ah-compliant risk-sharing contract models fully compatible with Spanish and European Union law. These models are designed to ensure legal enforceability, economic efficiency, and adaptability for use across EU Member States and, more broadly, in non-European civil law jurisdictions.

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia – The Islamic Development Bank Institute (IsDBI) and IE University Spain, through the IE Foundation, have launched a pioneering initiative to design contract models grounded in European civil law frameworks and compatible with Islamic finance principles. The project aims to facilitate investment in startups by creating financing instruments tailored to the needs of early-stage ventures operating in civil law systems.

The collaboration addresses a critical gap in the global startup ecosystem. While common law jurisdictions have successfully deployed contractual solutions such as convertible notes, simplified convertible preferred shares, and SAFE agreements to reduce cost, complexity, and negotiation time, these instruments are not easily transferable to civil law systems. Civil law frameworks, which dominate much of Europe, North Africa, and parts of the Gulf, require further legal development to accommodate such mechanisms, particularly when ensuring compliance with Islamic finance principles. The initiative combines rigorous research, comparative legal analysis, and contract design to review existing risk-sharing financing models and assess their alignment with Islamic finance. It also examines the feasibility of adapting comparable mechanisms to the Spanish legal framework, with particular attention to enabling factors and regulatory constraints that may affect implementation. By doing so, the project seeks to bridge the gap between Islamic finance's ethical foundations and the practical needs of modern entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Building on this analysis, the project will develop a set of Shari'ah-compliant risk-sharing contract models fully compatible with Spanish and European Union law. These models are designed to ensure legal enforceability, economic efficiency, and adaptability for use across EU Member States and, more broadly, in non-European civil law jurisdictions. This includes regions such as North Africa and the Gulf, where civil law traditions prevail and where Islamic finance is increasingly seen as a viable alternative to conventional financial systems.



The scope of the project extends beyond early-stage ventures. By evaluating the potential of these instruments for broader entrepreneurial activity, the initiative aims to contribute to more ethical, inclusive, and socially responsible economic development. The emphasis on risk-sharing, fairness, and real economic activity reflects the core principles of Islamic finance, which seek to align financial transactions with tangible value creation and equitable distribution of risk and reward. Dr. Sami Al-Suwailem, Acting Director General of the IsDB Institute, emphasized the strategic importance of the initiative. "This project represents an important step in strengthening the Islamic finance industry by translating its core principles of risk sharing, fairness, and real economic activity into legally robust instruments suitable for contemporary startup ecosystems. By anchoring these solutions in European civil law frameworks, the initiative supports the development of Islamic finance in Europe and offers scalable models adaptable to Muslim countries with civil law or hybrid legal systems, reflecting IsDBI's commitment to ethical, inclusive, and innovation-driven finance at a global level."

The project also resonates with broader trends in global finance. As startups increasingly drive innovation and social value creation, the need for financing tools that are both legally sound and ethically grounded

has become more pressing. Islamic finance, with its emphasis on fairness and shared responsibility, offers principles that are highly relevant to today's entrepreneurial landscape. However, translating these principles into practical instruments that can operate across diverse jurisdictions requires careful legal and financial engineering.

Dr. Celia de Anca, Deputy Dean and expert in Islamic Finance at IE University, who is leading the development of the project, highlighted the importance of providing entrepreneurs with suitable financial tools. "Ensuring that entrepreneurs have access to suitable financial tools is essential for the success of their ventures and for the sustainable development of local and regional economies. Startups play a key role in innovation and social value creation. Islamic finance offers principles that are highly relevant today, but they require practical and flexible legal instruments that can work across different jurisdictions. This initiative responds to that need and comes at a particularly relevant moment, with the new EU-INC (European Inclusive Company) framework, which will greatly facilitate the adoption of these legal innovations across Europe."

The EU-INC framework, recently introduced, provides a supportive environment for inclusive and innovative corporate structures across Europe. By aligning the project's contract mod-

els with this framework, IsDBI and IE University are positioning Islamic finance as a credible and competitive option within European markets. This alignment also enhances the scalability of the models, making them adaptable not only within Europe but also in other civil law jurisdictions worldwide. The collaboration between IsDBI and IE University reflects a broader commitment to fostering innovation in Islamic finance. By focusing on startups, the initiative targets a sector that is both dynamic and critical to economic growth. Startups often face significant challenges in accessing financing, particularly in jurisdictions where conventional instruments are either unavailable or incompatible with local legal systems. By providing Shari'ah-compliant alternatives that are legally enforceable and economically efficient, the project seeks to empower entrepreneurs and stimulate sustainable development.

Moreover, the project underscores the role of partnerships in advancing Islamic finance. By bringing together the expertise of IsDBI in Islamic finance and the academic and legal knowledge of IE University, the initiative leverages complementary strengths to create innovative solutions. This collaborative approach not only enhances the quality of the outcomes but also ensures that the models developed are grounded in both theory and practice. As the global economy con-

tinues to evolve, the need for financial systems that are inclusive, ethical, and adaptable becomes increasingly evident. The IsDBI-IE University initiative represents a forward-looking response to this need, offering contract models that embody the principles of Islamic finance while meeting the practical requirements of civil law jurisdictions. By doing so, it contributes to the development of a more balanced and sustainable financial ecosystem, one that supports entrepreneurship, fosters innovation, and promotes social responsibility.

The project is expected to have far-reaching implications, not only for startups in Europe but also for entrepreneurs in Muslim-majority countries with civil law or hybrid legal systems. By providing scalable models that can be adapted to different contexts, the initiative enhances the global relevance of Islamic finance and strengthens its role in supporting inclusive economic growth.

Ultimately, the collaboration between IsDBI and IE University highlights the potential of Islamic finance to serve as a bridge between ethical principles and practical financial solutions. By focusing on risk-sharing and fairness, the initiative aligns financial innovation with social value creation, offering a model for how finance can contribute to a more equitable and sustainable future.

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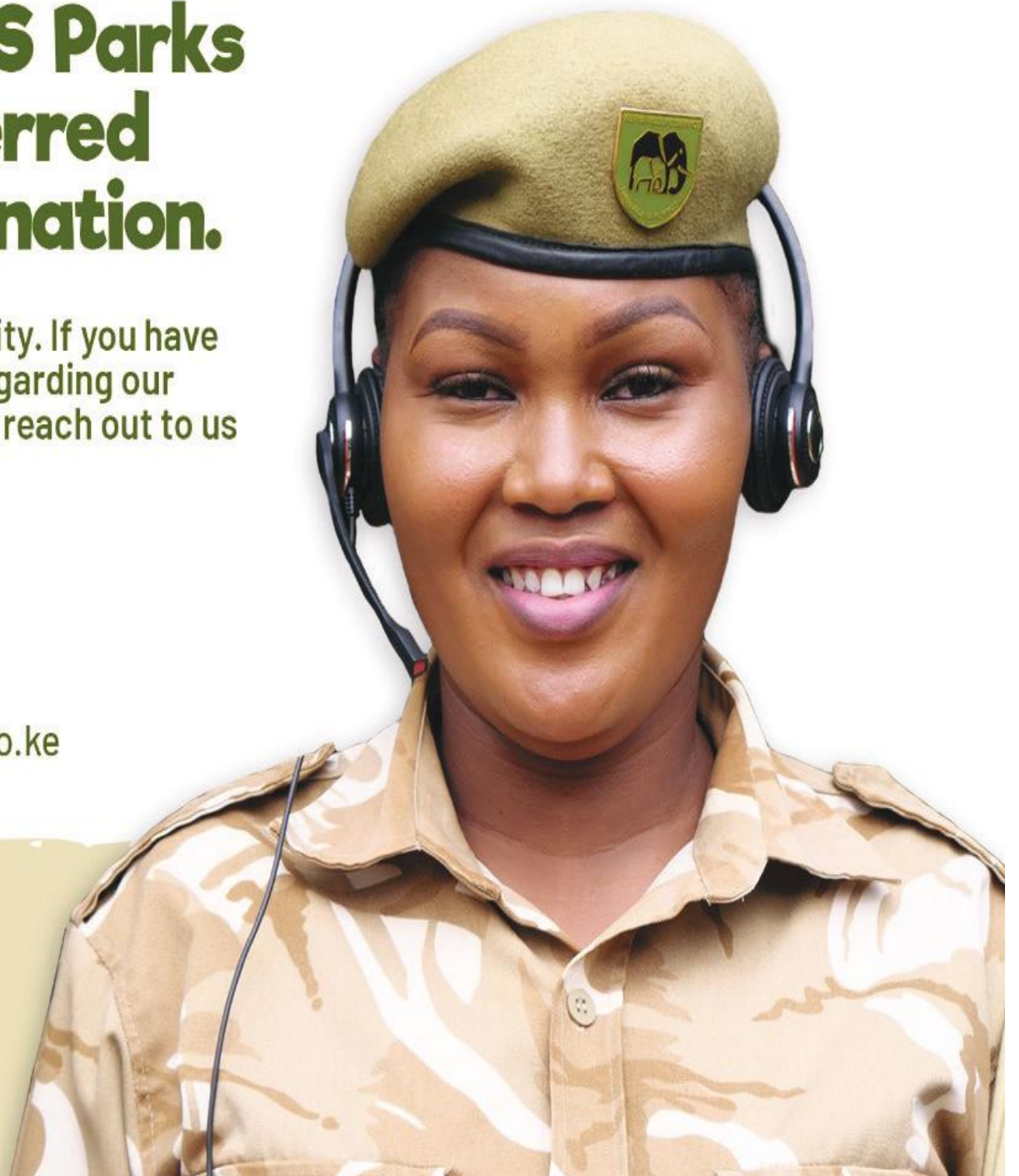
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Diaspora

Azerbaijani Poet, Scientist Tarana Turan Rahimli Participated In The Turkish World Poets Meeting At Bursa Uludag University

By: Diaspora Times Team
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Worth Noting:

• Along with poetry readings, the rich musical heritage of the Turkic world also added a special color to the event. The folk songs performed by Bursa Uludağ University graduate and Bursa Metropolitan Municipality Orchestra Department Turkish Folk Music Department musician Alim Hüseyinoğlu were met with great interest in the hall.

• Ayshe Yersinbek, a citizen of Kazakhstan studying at the University's Faculty of Education, played the dombra, the national instrument of the Kazakh people, and BUU graduate Cholpan Kambarova, played the komuz, the national instrument of the Kyrgyz people, and took the audience to their common roots by singing musical samples belonging to the Turkic world. At the same time, Azerbaijani folk dances presented by Kamala Mammadova and Amal Babayev, members of the BUU Azerbaijan Culture and Art Society, added special enthusiasm to the event.



Azerbaijani Poet, Scientist Tarana Turan Rahimli

Recently, Doctor of Philology, Associate Professor Tarana Turan Rahimli represented Azerbaijan at the Turkic World Poets Meeting held at Bursa Uludağ University. This prestigious event, which strengthens the common cultural memory and spiritual ties of the Turkic world, was jointly organized by the Turkic World and Culture Center operating under the university and the Young Pens Society. The Turkic World Poets Meeting brought together poets from five different Turkic Republics - Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan, as well as poets and artists from Turkey, and official guests, demonstrating the boundless power of words, music and culture.

At the international meeting held at the Dr. Arif Agaoglu Advanced Technologies Center Laboratory Hall located at the Faculty of Engineering of Bursa Uludağ University, poets of the Turkic world -- Tarana Turan Rahimli (Azerbaijan), Mugimjan Nurbayev, Alimjan Suyarov, Babur Sher Oglu (Uzbekistan), Akgul Jumayeva (Turkmenistan), Kadicha Akimjan (Kyrgyzstan), Karima Nadzipova (Kazakhstan), Mirjavad Ahiskali (Turkey) recited their poems in both Turkey

Turkish and their native languages, giving the audience a real literary atmosphere. The event was attended by Bursa Uludağ University Deputy Rector Professor Dr. Zakariyya Arı, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality Deputy Chairman Ayhan Sarsıcı, Osmangazi Municipality Deputy Chairman Murat Hoshgoru, Bursa Migration Department Director Hasim Ozcan, TUDAM Director Professor Dr. Ferhat Kurtuluş, as well as representatives of various public organizations.

Along with poetry readings, the rich musical heritage of the Turkic world also added a special color to the event. The folk songs performed by Bursa Uludağ University graduate and Bursa Metropolitan Municipality Orchestra Department Turkish Folk Music Department musician Alim Hüseyinoğlu were met with great interest in the hall. Ayshe Yersinbek, a citizen of Kazakhstan studying at the University's Faculty of Education, played the dombra, the national instrument of the Kazakh people, and BUU graduate Cholpan Kambarova, played the komuz, the national instrument of the Kyrgyz people, and took the audience to their common roots by singing musical samples belonging to the Turkic world.

At the same time, Azerbaijani folk dances presented by Kamala Mammadova and Amal Babayev, members of the BUU Azerbaijan Culture and Art Society, added special enthusiasm to the event. At the event, the Poets of the Turkic World were presented with a certificate of appreciation from Bursa Uludağ University and a plaque from the Bursa Branch of the Turkish Hearths Association. Doctor of Philology Tarana Turan Rahimli shared her impressions of the event: "Bursa Uludağ University is very dear to me. My first child, Shafiga, received her bachelor's degree from this university and graduated successfully. She earned her master's degree with high references from the valuable professors who taught her here. The speech of Prof. Dr. Zakariyya Arı, Shafiga's favorite teacher and a valuable scholar who taught her Constitutional Law, at the opening and closing of this event, as well as the presentation of my plaque by Professor Dr. Selçuk Kırılı, who dedicated his life to the development of science and education at Uludağ University and the chairman of the Bursa Branch of Turkish Hearths, are of particular importance to me. I would like to express my gratitude

to the management of Bursa Uludağ University, which brought together poets of the Turkic world, to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Minara Aliyeva Çınar, who made a great organizational contribution to the event and with whom I have collaborated scientifically for many years, and to Mugimcan Nurbayev, the initiator and idea leader of this project, for the magnificent event. The introduction of the collection "Turan poets", compiled by Mugimcan Nurbayev and published by "Emin Yayınları" in Turkey, and the gifting of poems to the poets included in the collection were also memorable moments. The Turkic World Poets Meeting once again confirmed that the path to Turan passes through the beauties of poetry and art. And there is no doubt that with these beauties, that path will be covered more quickly.

Within the framework of the program, some of the scientists and teachers of Bursa Uludağ University were awarded international awards for their contributions to the development of cultural and literary relations of the Turkic world. The International Kyrgyz Akın Writers' Union of Kyrgyzstan presented the "Chingiz Aytmatov" medal and a letter of appreciation,

and the "Düniye Talantları" Union of Kazakhstan presented the "Ahmed Yasevi" medal and a letter of appreciation. These awards were presented to the rector of BUU, Professor Dr. Ferudun Yılmaz, Chairman of the Bursa Branch of the Turkish Hearths Association, Professor Dr. Selçuk Kırılı, Advisor to the Turkic World and Culture Society, Professor Dr. Alev Sınar Uğurlu, Advisor to the Young Pens Society, Associate Professor Dr. Minara Aliyeva Çınar, and Director of the Alişir Navai Uzbek Language and Culture Center of BUU, Surayyo Khodjoyeva. The "Ahmed Yasevi" medal and certificate of the rector, Professor Dr. Ferudun Yılmaz, who was unable to attend the event due to a foreign trip, were later officially presented to him.

At the end of the event, souvenirs and documents of gratitude were given to the guest poets and students who actively participated in the organizational work. The "Turkish World Poets Meeting" was remembered for the rich closing speech of the Deputy Rector of BUU, Professor Dr. Zakariyya Arı, emphasizing unity, solidarity and common cultural values.

Mechanisms For Developing Students' Critical Thinking Based On Problem-Based Learning Technology



By: Xojimirzayeva Mohchehra
Abrorjon
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This article comprehensively examines the scientific and theoretical foundations of problem-based learning technology, the mechanisms for its implementation in the educational process, and its pedagogical potential in developing students' critical thinking competencies. The study substantiates, based on scientific sources, the effectiveness of lessons organized around problem situations in fostering students' independent thinking, logical analysis, argumentation, and conclusion-making skills.

Keywords: problem-based learning, critical thinking, problem situation, interactive methods, pedagogical technology, competence.

INTRODUCTION

In the context of globalization and the digital society, the education system faces the urgent task of educating individuals who are capable of thinking analytically, making independent decisions, and critically evaluating information. In modern educational concepts, understanding, evaluating, and applying knowledge in practice are considered more important than rote memorization. Therefore, problem-based learning technology is regarded as an effective pedagogical approach that activates the educational process.

MAIN PART

Scientific and Theoretical Foundations of Problem-Based Learning Technology
Problem-based learning technology is one of the modern educational approaches formed in twentieth-century pedagogy and is aimed at activating students' cognitive activity. In this technology, the learning process is organized through the creation of problem situations, and students acquire knowledge not in a ready-made form, but through inquiry and exploration. Problem-based learning occupies

an important place in the system of modern pedagogical approaches. It is focused on enhancing students' cognitive engagement and developing independent thinking. The scientific and theoretical foundations of problem-based learning are based on epistemological theory, the activity-based approach, and constructivist educational concepts. The fact that knowledge is not transmitted directly but acquired through problem situations constitutes the core feature of this technology.

In the history of pedagogy, the ideas of problem-based learning were scientifically substantiated in the works of J. Dewey, L. Vygotsky, and A. Leontiev. According to J. Dewey, the thinking process begins with the emergence of a problem, and knowledge is consciously acquired through solving it. L. Vygotsky's theory of the "zone of proximal development" explains the impact of problem-based tasks on student development. According to this theory, students acquire higher-order thinking skills while solving complex problems with pedagogical support.

In accordance with activity theory, knowledge is formed as a result of students' active intellectual actions. In the problem-based learn-



ing process, analysis, hypothesis formulation, and drawing conclusions emerge as the main cognitive activities. This process contributes to the development of students' critical thinking. From a didactic perspective, problem-based learning is based on the principles of problem orientation, conscious activity, and independence. As a result, students are formed as active subjects of the educational process. Thus, problem-based learning technology creates a solid scientific and theoretical

foundation for the development of critical thinking.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, problem-based learning technology demonstrates high pedagogical effectiveness in developing students' critical thinking competencies. The systematic implementation of this technology in the educational process promotes the development of students' independent thinking and their ability to solve problems creatively.

Health

Medicinal Properties Of Stevia Rebaudiana And Its Role In Pharmaceuticals



By: Mahammadjonova Mohlaroy
Doniyo
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The article discusses the medicinal and therapeutic properties of the stevia plant. The leaves of *Stevia rebaudiana* contain 6–7% stevioside (a diterpenoid glycoside), which provides a sweet taste. Although stevioside is 200–300 times sweeter than sucrose, it is low in calories and does not serve as a source of energy. In addition, stevia contains flavonoids (quercetin, rutin), minerals (Ca, P, K, Se, Zn, Fe, Cr, Mg, Cu, Mn, Co), and vitamins (B group, A, C, E, etc.). The plant has a general tonic and strengthening effect on the human body. Furthermore, stevioside is widely used in the confectionery industry, especially in Japan, as a sugar substitute in the production of soft drinks and sweets.

Keywords: pharmaceutical significance, *Stevia rebaudiana*, quercetin, rutin, stevioside, confectionery, flavonoids.

Introduction

Stevia rebaudiana (Bertoni) is a perennial herbaceous plant belonging to the Asteraceae family. The plant can grow up to 1 meter in

height. Its leaves are simple, oppositely arranged on the stem, and 2–3 cm long. The leaf surface is smooth, and the flowers are small (3–4 mm), white, and arranged in compound inflorescences. The fruit is 3–4 mm long. *Stevia* blooms from September to November, and its seeds ripen in October–November.

The plant is native to the tropical regions of South America. Its leaves contain 6–7% stevioside, a diterpenoid glycoside responsible for the sweet taste. Although stevioside is 200–300 times sweeter than conventional sugar, it is low in calories and does not provide energy.

Results and Discussion

Chemical Composition

Stevia contains flavonoids (quercetin, rutin), minerals (Ca, P, K, Se, Zn, Fe, Cr, Mg, Cu, Mn, Co), and vitamins (B group, A, C, E, etc.). The plant has a general strengthening and tonic effect on the body. Historically, indigenous peoples of Brazil and Paraguay used stevia as food and for the treatment of gastrointestinal and kidney diseases. In the early 20th century, French scientists identified stevioside and rebaudioside compounds in the plant.

Stevia prevents the accumulation of fats and other substances on teeth, thereby protecting tooth enamel from microbial damage. It helps regulate blood glucose levels and supports insulin activity, playing an important role in glucose metabolism. The biologically active compound stevioside acts as a natural sugar substitute.

Stevia-based products are used in the management of diabetes mellitus, obesity, and metabolic disor-

ders. The plant also exhibits hypotensive, cardiostimulant, antibacterial, antifungal, antiviral, diuretic, tonic, and wound-healing properties. Since diabetic patients are often restricted from consuming sugar, stevia effectively satisfies their need for sweetness without causing adverse effects.

In traditional medicine, powdered stevia is used to eliminate pathogenic microorganisms and strengthen the immune system. Due to the global increase in diabetes prevalence, demand for stevia raw materials has grown significantly, leading to the establishment of large stevia plantations worldwide.

Stevia is also used to reduce cholesterol levels, improve skin and hair condition, and support heart muscle function. In Japan, stevioside is widely used in the confectionery industry as a sugar substitute. India is one of the most suitable countries for stevia cultivation due to favorable soil and climate conditions, with an annual production of approximately 600 tons. In Japan, one hectare of stevia cultivation can generate up to USD 270,000 in profit. On the international market, 1 kg of dried stevia leaves costs around USD 340, liquid concentrate USD 306, and concentrated extract tablets up to USD 4,990.

Notably, even 6–7 stevia leaves are sufficient to prepare naturally sweet stevia tea.

Botanical Description

Stevia rebaudiana is a perennial plant of the Asteraceae family. It typically grows to a height of 60–80 cm. The leaves are small, green, and sweet-tasting due to the pres-

ence of stevioside and rebaudioside glycosides. These compounds are 200–300 times sweeter than sucrose while containing almost no calories. *Stevia* is safe for diabetic patients, does not cause dental caries, helps regulate blood pressure, improves liver function, and is commonly used in weight-loss diets.

However, excessive consumption may cause a bitter aftertaste or mild digestive discomfort in some individuals.

Pharmaceutical Applications

Stevia plays an important role in pharmaceuticals due to its natural origin, low caloric value, and non-toxicity.

Sugar substitute in medicines:

Stevioside and rebaudioside A are used to mask unpleasant tastes in syrups, tablets, and powdered medicines, especially for diabetic patients.

Antidiabetic preparations:

Stevia does not increase blood glucose levels and is widely used in dietary supplements for diabetes management. Some studies indicate that stevia may stimulate pancreatic function and improve insulin secretion.

Oral hygiene products:

Due to its antibacterial properties, stevia is used in toothpastes, mouthwashes, and pediatric syrups. It prevents dental caries and reduces microbial growth.

Cosmetics and medicinal creams:

Stevia extract has antiseptic, anti-inflammatory, and antioxidant properties and is used in skin-soothing creams, facial masks, and balms.

Biologically active supplements (BAS):

Stevia is used as a natural energy source and immune booster, helping regulate blood pressure, reduce stress, and detoxify the body.

Pharmaceutical forms:

Dry extract
Liquid extract (stevioside solution)
Purified powder (Rebaudioside A)
Tablets and capsules

Conclusion

Stevia rebaudiana is a valuable natural resource with significant importance in the pharmaceutical industry. The glycosides stevioside and rebaudioside found in its leaves serve as safe, low-calorie, and non-toxic sugar substitutes. *Stevia* is not only beneficial for diabetic patients but also possesses antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and blood pressure-regulating properties.

In pharmaceuticals, stevia is widely used to improve the taste of medicines, in dietary supplements, oral hygiene products, skin care preparations, and dietetic formulations. Due to its natural origin, safety, and therapeutic benefits, stevia is recognized as one of the most promising plants capable of replacing artificial sweeteners in the future.

Fergana Public Health Medical Institute Assistant of the Department of Medical and Biological Chemistry Mahammadjonova Mohlaroy Doniyorbek qizi
Scientific supervisor: Nazirtasheva Roziyakhon Mamadaliyevna
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Africa's Green Economy Summit 2026 Focuses on Turning Climate Ambition into Investment-Ready Projects

By: Jose Martin
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Worth Noting:

• Africa continues to receive a disproportionately small share of global climate finance, even as climate-related shocks intensify across the continent. Rising energy constraints, water stress, and extreme weather events are placing additional pressure on already fragile economies. At the same time, concessional finance flows are declining, and competition for private capital is increasing, accelerating a shift toward investment-led approaches. This shift requires stronger, more resilient project pipelines that can withstand scrutiny from investors and deliver both financial and social returns.

• “Global climate discussions often focus on commitments and coordination, but delivery ultimately depends on where capital decisions are made,” said Emmanuelle Nicholls, Group Director – Green Economy at VUKA Group. “Africa’s Green Economy Summit creates a space to examine which projects, in which markets, are ready to meet today’s financial realities and move toward implementation.”

CAPE TOWN, South Africa – Africa’s climate ambitions are entering a decisive phase as governments, investors, and development partners grapple with the challenge of moving from commitments to delivery. While strategies and pledges have proliferated across the continent, the central question remains: how can these ambitions be translated into bankable, investable projects that attract capital and deliver tangible results? According to the Africa Climate Finance Tracking Report 2025, current climate finance flows meet only about 25% of Sub-Saharan Africa’s annual climate financing needs, underscoring the scale of the delivery gap and the urgency of action. It is against this backdrop that Africa’s Green Economy Summit (AGES) 2026 will convene in Cape Town from 24–27 February under the theme “From Ambition to Action: Scaling Investment in Africa’s Green and Blue Solutions.” The summit is designed to bring together policymakers, investors, project developers, and development partners to focus squarely on the conditions required to move projects from planning to implementation. Unlike global climate forums that often emphasize pledges and declarations, AGES 2026 is structured around the realities of capital flows, investment readiness, and the practical constraints that determine

whether projects reach financial close. Africa continues to receive a disproportionately small share of global climate finance, even as climate-related shocks intensify across the continent. Rising energy constraints, water stress, and extreme weather events are placing additional pressure on already fragile economies. At the same time, concessional finance flows are declining, and competition for private capital is increasing, accelerating a shift toward investment-led approaches. This shift requires stronger, more resilient project pipelines that can withstand scrutiny from investors and deliver both financial and social returns. “Global climate discussions often focus on commitments and coordination, but delivery ultimately depends on where capital decisions are made,” said Emmanuelle Nicholls, Group Director – Green Economy at VUKA Group. “Africa’s Green Economy Summit creates a space to examine which projects, in which markets, are ready to meet today’s financial realities and move toward implementation.” The summit’s agenda will examine risk allocation, regulatory certainty, and investment readiness across key sectors of the green and blue economy. These include renewable energy, battery storage, climate-resilient water systems, electric mobility, waste-to-value

solutions, circular manufacturing, climate-smart agriculture, and resilience technologies. By focusing on these sectors, AGES 2026 aims to highlight where opportunities exist and what barriers must be overcome to unlock investment. “The real constraint is not a lack of projects, but a lack of financing structures that can meet projects where they are,” noted Teboho Makhobane, Head of ESG and Impact at Sanlam Investments. “Platforms like AGES matter because they bring the right partners together to design innovative finance solutions that can unlock viable projects, deliver real economic impact, and generate sustainable returns.” Reinforcing its continental mandate, the African Union will return as host organisation of AGES 2026. A key highlight will be the AU–Green Recovery Action Plan (AU-GRAP) Grand Finale Roundtable, marking the conclusion of Phase I of the programme. This session will reflect on the outcomes of five Green Investment Roundtables and set the direction for Phase II implementation. AU-GRAP is positioned as a continental mechanism for mobilising climate and nature finance, and its integration into AGES 2026 underscores the summit’s role as a platform for aligning national and regional strategies with global capital flows. Barbara Buchner, Global

Managing Director of the Climate Policy Initiative, emphasized the importance of understanding capital movements. “We can only close the climate and nature finance gap if we understand the real movements of capital, both the momentum and the constraints. There is progress, but it is uneven, and finance is still not reaching the regions and sectors that need it most. An objective view of where global climate finance is heading and how it aligns with broader development goals is essential for unlocking investment at scale and helping Africa effectively deploy capital to meet its ambitious goals.” A central feature of AGES 2026 will be its Investment Pitch and Showcase, presenting a curated pipeline of over 50 vetted African projects. These projects span diverse sectors and represent tangible opportunities for investors seeking to align financial returns with climate impact. By showcasing projects that are investment-ready, the summit aims to bridge the gap between ambition and implementation, providing a platform where capital can meet opportunity. The summit is supported by a coalition of partners committed to Africa’s green transition, including Sanlam Investments, Standard Bank, UNOPS, UNEP, FSD Africa, Wesgro, the City of Cape Town, Polyco, KULU

Eco Services, the Digital Impact Alliance (DIAL), AFD, and the Atlantis Special Economic Zone. Their involvement reflects the growing recognition that Africa’s climate transition requires collaboration across public and private sectors, as well as international and local stakeholders. By focusing on where capital meets implementation, Africa’s Green Economy Summit 2026 aims to accelerate a more grounded, investment-ready phase of climate action across the continent. The summit’s emphasis on practical delivery, financing structures, and project pipelines represents a shift from rhetoric to results. For Africa, the stakes are high: climate resilience, energy security, and sustainable development all depend on the ability to mobilise and deploy capital effectively. As the continent prepares to host this landmark event, the message is clear. Ambition alone is not enough. What matters now is action—action that translates strategies into projects, projects into investments, and investments into impact. Africa’s Green Economy Summit 2026 seeks to provide the platform where this transformation can take place, ensuring that climate ambition is matched by financial reality and that the continent’s green and blue solutions move decisively from vision to implementation.

U.S., Russia, Ukraine to Resume Talks in Abu Dhabi: U.S. Envoy

Diplomatic efforts to address the ongoing Ukraine crisis are set to continue next week in Abu Dhabi, following what U.S. officials described as constructive trilateral talks between the United States, Russia, and Ukraine.

By: Diaspora Times Team
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ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates – Diplomatic efforts to address the ongoing Ukraine crisis are set to continue next week in Abu Dhabi, following what U.S. officials described as constructive trilateral talks between the United States, Russia, and Ukraine. The meetings, hosted by the United Arab Emirates on Friday and Saturday, marked the first direct trilateral engagement since the outbreak of the conflict in February 2022.

U.S. President Donald Trump's special envoy, Steve Witkoff, confirmed the development in a post on the social platform X. "On Friday and Saturday, the United States coordinated a trilateral meeting alongside Ukraine and Russia, graciously hosted by the United Arab Emirates. Talks were very constructive, and plans were made to continue conversations next week in Abu Dhabi," Witkoff stated. His remarks signal cautious optimism that dialogue among the three parties may open new avenues for easing tensions and exploring potential pathways toward resolution.

The UAE's role as host underscores its growing diplomatic profile in global affairs. By providing a neutral venue for discussions, Abu Dhabi has positioned itself as a facilitator of dialogue between adversaries, continuing its tradition of mediating complex international disputes. The choice of venue also reflects the need for a setting outside Europe where all parties feel comfortable engaging in direct talks.

Although no concrete agreements or joint statements emerged from the two-day meetings, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky described the talks as constructive in his own post on X. His characterization suggests that, while substantive breakthroughs remain elusive, the mere fact of dialogue represents progress after years of entrenched hostility and limited direct communication. For Ukraine, participation in trilateral talks alongside both the U.S. and Russia signals recognition of its central role in shaping the future of the conflict.

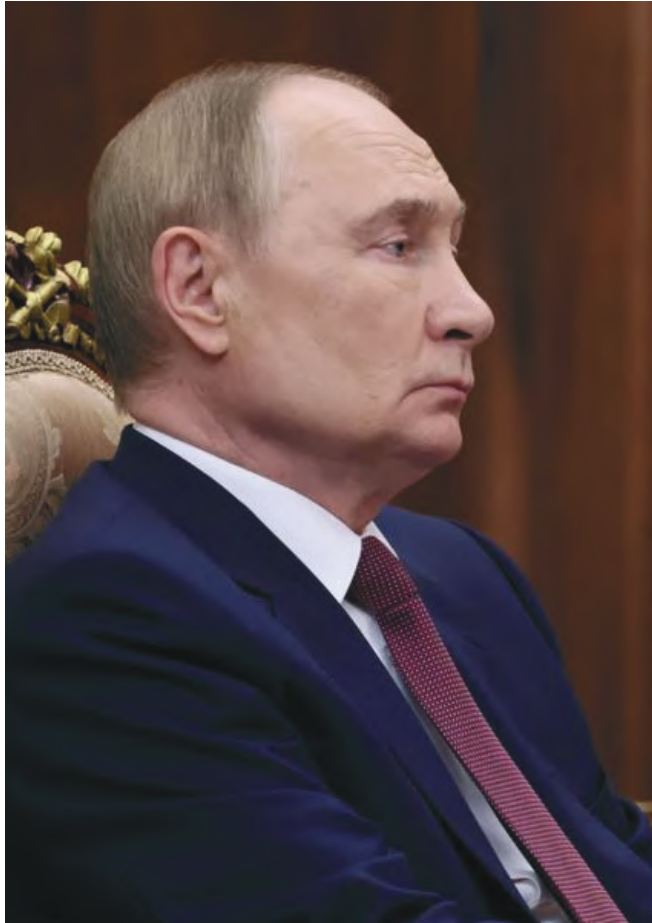
The Russian side has not yet officially commented on the outcome of the talks. Moscow's silence leaves questions about its assessment of

the discussions and its will-

as special envoy highlights

ty, security guarantees, and

of Kyiv and a global power



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky

ingness to pursue further negotiations. Analysts note that Russia's participation itself is significant, given its reluctance in recent years to engage in trilateral formats that include both Washington and Kyiv. The continuation of talks in Abu Dhabi may indicate a tentative openness to dialogue, even if substantive concessions remain unlikely in the near term.

The Ukraine crisis, now approaching its fourth year, has reshaped global security dynamics and strained relations between Russia and the West. The conflict has resulted in thousands of casualties, widespread displacement, and severe economic disruption across Ukraine. Sanctions imposed by the United States and its allies have further isolated Russia, while military aid and financial support have bolstered Ukraine's resilience. Against this backdrop, the resumption of trilateral talks represents a rare moment of diplomatic engagement amid an otherwise hardened standoff.

For Washington, the talks reflect President Trump's stated goal of pursuing stronger diplomatic channels while maintaining pressure on adversaries. The administration has emphasized the importance of direct dialogue in resolving conflicts, even with nations where relations are strained. Witkoff's role

the U.S. commitment to exploring diplomatic solutions while balancing broader strategic interests in Europe and beyond.

Ukraine's participation underscores its determination to secure international support and maintain visibility in negotiations that directly affect its sovereignty and security. Zelensky's description of the talks as constructive suggests a willingness to engage, even in the absence of immediate results. For Kyiv, maintaining dialogue with both Washington and Moscow is critical to ensuring that its interests remain central to any future settlement.

The UAE's involvement as host also reflects its broader diplomatic ambitions. In recent years, Abu Dhabi has sought to position itself as a mediator in regional and global conflicts, leveraging its neutrality and economic influence to facilitate dialogue. Hosting the trilateral talks enhances its reputation as a trusted partner in international diplomacy and underscores its role in fostering dialogue on issues of global significance.

Observers caution that while the resumption of talks is a positive step, significant challenges remain. The absence of concrete agreements highlights the deep divisions between the parties, particularly on issues such as territorial sovereignty

sanctions relief. The continuation of discussions in Abu Dhabi may provide a framework for further dialogue, but progress will depend on the willingness of all sides to make compromises.

The international community will closely monitor the next round of talks, scheduled for next week in Abu Dhabi. The meetings are expected to address key issues including humanitarian access, prisoner exchanges, and potential frameworks for ceasefire arrangements. While expectations remain tempered, the fact that dialogue is continuing offers a glimmer of hope for reducing tensions and exploring pathways toward peace.

Diplomatic analysts note that trilateral formats involving the U.S., Russia, and Ukraine are rare and often fraught with challenges. The last such engagement occurred before the outbreak of the crisis in 2022, and subsequent efforts have largely been conducted through multilateral forums or indirect channels. The resumption of direct trilateral talks therefore represents a significant development, even if immediate outcomes are limited.

The broader geopolitical implications of the talks are also significant. For the United States, engagement with Russia and Ukraine simultaneously reflects its dual role as both a supporter

seeking to manage relations with Moscow. For Russia, participation signals a recognition of the need to engage with Washington, even amid ongoing tensions. For Ukraine, the talks provide an opportunity to assert its sovereignty and ensure that its voice is heard in discussions that will shape its future.

As the trilateral talks prepare to resume in Abu Dhabi, the stakes remain high. The conflict in Ukraine continues to exact a heavy toll, and the path to resolution remains uncertain. Yet the willingness of all parties to engage in dialogue offers a rare opportunity to explore solutions, however tentative. The coming weeks will reveal whether these discussions can move beyond constructive exchanges to tangible progress, or whether they will remain symbolic gestures in a protracted conflict.

For now, the message from U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff is clear: dialogue is continuing, and the United States remains committed to pursuing diplomatic engagement alongside Ukraine and Russia. Whether this commitment translates into meaningful outcomes will depend on the next round of talks and the willingness of all sides to bridge their differences.

Worth Noting:

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Africa's Natural Gas Potential: Unlocking Opportunities Amid Challenges

Africa's natural gas potential is increasingly recognized as a cornerstone of the continent's energy future.

Worth Noting:

- Several African export projects incorporate domestic market obligations (DMOs), which require a portion of gas supply to be allocated for local power generation and industrial use. Senegal, for instance, plans to source much of its gas-to-power feedstock from DMOs tied to GTA and the proposed Yakaar-Teranga LNG project. While DMOs can stimulate early domestic demand and support electrification, they also introduce risks related to pricing and counterparty reliability. Domestic gas prices are often far below international netback levels, creating challenges for developers who must balance local affordability with the need to secure returns on investment.
- Global LNG supply is projected to expand sharply through 2030, driven primarily by the United States and Qatar.

CAPE TOWN, South Africa, January 23, 2026 – Africa's natural gas potential is increasingly recognized as a cornerstone of the continent's energy future. With more than 550 trillion cubic feet (tcf) of recoverable gas resources still undeveloped, Africa ranks second globally in terms of discovered but untapped reserves, according to the African Energy Chamber's (AEC) State of African Energy 2026 Outlook. This immense resource base, concentrated in major basins such as Mozambique's Rovuma Basin with 129 tcf and Nigeria's Niger Delta with 113 tcf, underscores the scale of opportunity available to investors and governments alike. Yet the challenge lies not only in discovering supply but in creating viable pathways to monetization, industrialization, and domestic demand that can transform these reserves into engines of growth.

Liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports remain the most established monetization route for African gas. In 2024, the continent supplied 34.7 million tons of LNG, with sub-Saharan Africa contributing 26.9 million tons. Traditional exporters such as Nigeria, Angola, Equatorial Guinea, and Cameroon have long been part of the global LNG market, while newer projects like Mozambique's Coral Sul floating LNG facility and Senegal-Mauritania's Greater Tortue Ahmeyim (GTA) project have added significant capacity since 2022. Africa's geographical proximity to both European and Asian markets provides a strategic advantage, enabling west and southwest African producers to act as swing suppliers depending on price spreads between the two regions. This flexibility positions Africa as a competitive player in global LNG trade, though competition is intensifying.

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Global LNG supply is projected to expand sharply through 2030, driven primarily by the United States and Qatar. This surge in supply could push benchmark prices in Asia and Europe down from the \$10-\$13 per million British thermal unit (MMBtu) range observed in 2024-2025 to below \$6 per MMBtu by the late 2020s. In such a competitive environment, Africa must continue to develop new projects while ensuring cost efficiency and reliability. The continent's ability to compete will depend on both infrastructure development and policy frameworks that encourage investment.

Beyond exports, domestic gas use is increasingly critical to Africa's energy and industrial future. Gas is expected to grow its share of primary energy demand globally, and African gas demand is forecast to rise by 60% by 2050. North Africa currently accounts for around two-thirds of the continent's gas output, with

Algeria and Egypt relying heavily on gas in their power mixes. In sub-Saharan Africa, gas-to-power capacity is expanding, led by Nigeria with 12.6 gigawatts (GW) of installed gas-fired capacity. Ghana and Mozambique follow with 2.9 GW and 1.1 GW respectively, while smaller plants operate in Senegal, Angola, Ivory Coast, Tanzania, and South Africa. These developments highlight the growing role of gas in addressing Africa's energy access challenges and reducing reliance on more polluting fuels.

Industrial use of gas, though limited, is also gaining momentum. South Africa stands out as the region's most advanced market for gas derivatives, including ammonia and gas-to-liquids. Angola's National Gas Plan prioritizes gas for industrial sectors such as petrochemicals, fertilizers, and metals, aiming to reduce dependence on imports and stimulate local value chains. The AEC report notes that gas has significant potential in mining and metals processing, particularly in Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo, where energy-intensive industries could benefit from reliable gas supply. Expanding industrial applications of gas will be essential for Africa to leverage its resources not just for export revenues but for domestic economic transformation.

Infrastructure remains one of the most significant bar-

riers to gas monetization in Africa. The continent lacks regional transportation networks capable of linking supply basins with demand centers, processing facilities, and export terminals. This lack of connectivity constrains both domestic market growth and the ability to move gas efficiently to export hubs. Without pipelines, storage facilities, and processing plants, Africa's vast reserves risk remaining stranded. Addressing this gap requires coordinated investment in infrastructure that can unlock regional trade and support industrialization.

Pricing is another critical challenge. Domestic gas prices are typically regulated and often set well below international levels. Nigeria's domestic benchmark price, for example, was set at \$2.13 per MMBtu in April 2025, while international LNG prices hovered around \$11-\$13 per MMBtu during the same period. While low domestic prices can stimulate demand and improve affordability, they may discourage investment in supply projects, particularly those involving non-associated gas. Striking the right balance between affordability and investor returns is essential to ensure sustainable development of the sector. NJ Ayuk, Executive Chairman of the African Energy Chamber, emphasizes the importance of policy reform and strategic partnerships in overcoming these challeng-

es. "Africa's gas sector faces a complex set of constraints, but the opportunities are substantial. Governments must balance affordability and energy access with the need to provide returns that support investment in pipelines, processing facilities, and power plants. With the right balance of infrastructure investment, policy reform, and strategic partnerships, gas can become a cornerstone of Africa's energy transition and industrialization drive," he stated.

The outlook for Africa's natural gas sector is therefore both promising and demanding. On one hand, the continent holds vast untapped reserves that could fuel economic growth, industrialization, and energy access for decades to come. On the other, it faces structural challenges related to infrastructure, pricing, and global competition. Success will depend on the ability of governments and private investors to collaborate in building the necessary infrastructure, creating supportive policy environments, and ensuring that gas development benefits both export markets and domestic consumers. If these conditions are met, Africa's natural gas could indeed become a transformative force, anchoring the continent's energy transition and driving inclusive growth across its economies.