

Diplomacy Outlook 2025

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Executive Summary

Arms control and non-proliferation remain the main priority in the Indo-Pacific.

2025 sets the stage to address various challenges with shifting power dynamics, fragmented alliances, unresolved conflicts, and escalating economic vulnerabilities. The geopolitical power dynamics of Africa remain under serious threat. The withdrawal of Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger from the Western African Economic Bloc (ECOWAS) and their refusal to transition back to constitutional rule initiates an informal Alliance of Sahel States. In the Horn of Africa, Proxy confrontations may escalate with a developing Trilateral Alignment between Somalia, Eritrea and Egypt to counter Ethiopia's increasing influence over the Red Sea. Security challenges stretch in the Indo-Pacific as India advances its hypersonic defence systems, North Korea strengthens its strategic alliance with Russia and tensions in the Taiwan Strait continue to put global trade in a challenging position. North America's geopolitical landscape depends on three critical elections- the 2024 United States Presidential election, the 2025 Canadian Federal election, and the 2024 Mexican General election. The Bi-Oceanic Corridor, set for completion in 2025 along with the EU-MERCOSUR Agreement, will likely transform logistics and boost trade. Regional foreign policies may reshape Venezuela's future under Trump's presidency. The Middle East witnesses increasing tensions between Israel and Lebanon amidst the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict, geography and resources may play a strategic role in fostering peace. The climate emergency, the unending war in Ukraine, and Trump's plan to impose tariffs put the EU in a conundrum.

As these geopolitical developments unfold, the involvement of national and regional governments, multilateral organisations, private entities, humanitarian organisations and research and development institutions become fundamental in shaping outcomes and addressing challenges. Democratic governance will ensure accountability and inclusivity. For the Sahel region, the execution of the Algiers Accords (2015), constructive dialogue, military professionalism and diplomatic efforts in Syria, Yemen and Libya could foster political stability. Arms control and non-proliferation remain the main priority in the Indo-Pacific.



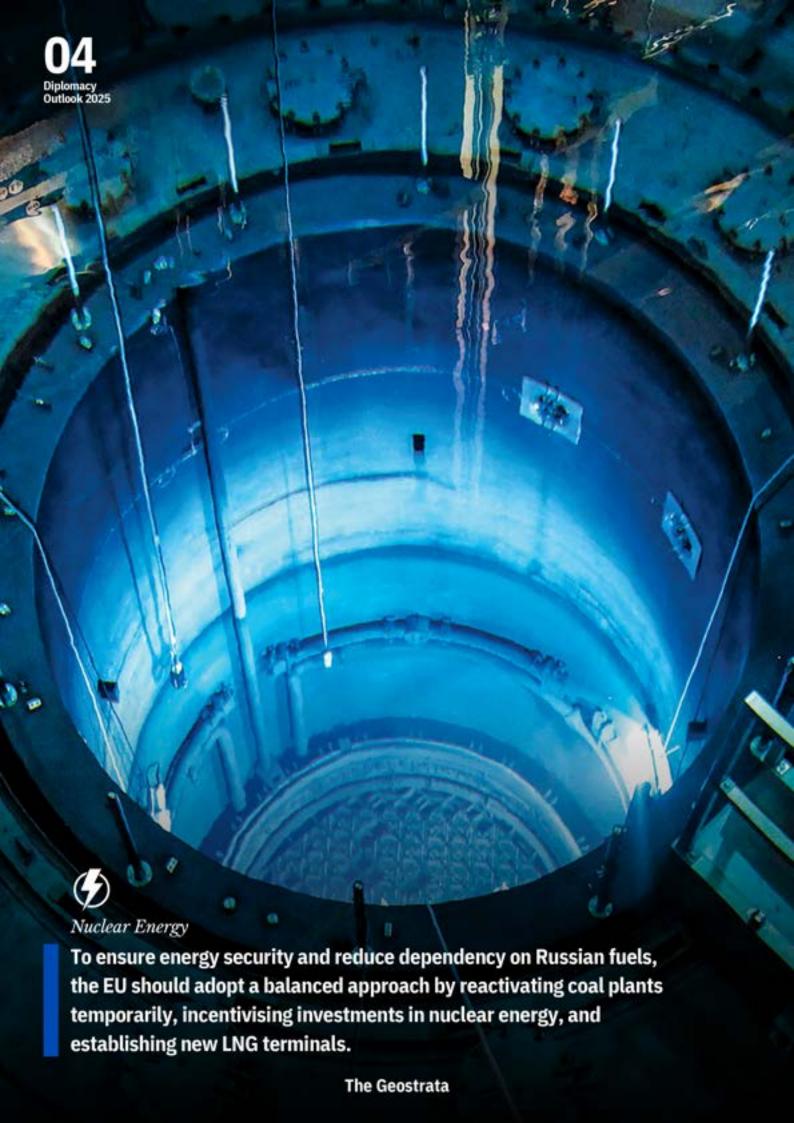
The Bi-Oceanic Corridor, set for completion in 2025 along with the EU-MERCOSUR Agreement, will likely transform logistics and boost trade. Regional foreign policies may reshape Venezuela's future under Trump's presidency.





It is an opportunity for private entities to assist development through public-private partnerships that focus on revamping structural development through infrastructure and capacity building with local entrepreneurs, universities, and small enterprises. Disruptions in global supply chains can be avoided by diversification. Canada, the US, and Mexico's engagement in trilateral economic and security cooperation should be emphasised to withstand external geopolitical pressures. The regional governments must balance the development of the Arctic with environmental protection and sovereignty. Oversight mechanisms to implement the EU-MERCOSUR Agreement, ensuring tariff reductions do not compromise local industries or undermine social and environmental gains. Using constructive engagement channels and policy tools could alleviate tensions between the U.S. and Venezuela. The EU should streamline the immigrant transition process, focusing on integrating accepted asylum seekers into society. To ensure energy security and reduce dependency on Russian fuels, the EU should adopt a balanced approach by reactivating coal plants temporarily, incentivising investments in nuclear energy, and establishing new LNG terminals.

Key stakeholders can pave the way for global stability and prosperity by balancing this intricate web of unsettled conflicts, energy transitions, and alliance formations with economic growth and security.







The climate emergency, the unending war in Ukraine, and Trump's plan to impose tariffs put the EU in a conundrum.

Overview:

The scramble of external powers and local agencies has triggered recent developments in Central and the Horn of Africa- featuring escalation of instability in the Sahel region and intensified hostilities between Somalia, Eritrea and Egypt, with Ethiopia aggravating the geopolitical power dynamics in the area. The transitional regimes in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger have weakened regional security following their withdrawal from the West African Economic Bloc (ECOWAS). Where the Western military presence has dwindled, the rise of Wagner mercenaries has crept in, increasing Russian influence) 1. Meanwhile, Ethiopia and Egypt's quest for dominance in the Red Sea in tandem with the Israel-Hamas conflict continues to strain diplomatic relations and regional tensions with readily observable supply chain disruptions.

Situation Report:

According to the 2024 Global Terrorism Index, Burkina Faso. Mali, and Niger are among the ten countries most affected by terrorism worldwide2. Consequent deferral by the military leaders to the return of constitutional rule and the worsening humanitarian crises have made the conflict practically unsolvable in the Sahel region. Violence in the central Sahel aggravates as two leading Violent Extremist Organisations -Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM) and Islamic State in the West African Provinces (ISWAP) affiliated with Al-Oaeda and Islamic State respectively, compete to position themselves as the defender of local communities and obtain their support. Power vacuum due to political unwillingness, weak governance and democratic deficits combined with poverty and social marginalisation invites international interventions to build a resilient security framework. One such example is the increased presence of Wagner Group, a private security company of Russia in Bamako, to conduct counter-insurgency operations. However, the withdrawal of French troops from the Malian territory and the conclusion of Operation Barkhane, active since 2014, the UN peacekeeping force's departure from the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation mission in Mali and the withdrawal of approximately 1500 U.S. military troops from Niger in May 2024 severely underscore the fragile state of central Africa's geopolitical equilibrium3.



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In the Horn of Africa, Somalia is growing ties with Egypt and Eritrea, another historical adversary of Ethiopia, to counter its escalating regional influence, suggesting a Trilateral Alignment in the making ⁴. It invites a more profound reflection on the history of a small but significant water body—The Red Sea. While the actors may have fluctuated over centuries, the singular significance of this water passageway to the global political economy has endured the test of time ⁵. Eritrean leadership feared Ethiopia's ambitions to reclaim access to Eritrean ports lost by it when the latter gained independence in 1993. Ethiopia's strategic pursuit to secure its maritime access and safeguard the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) has led to Cairo's increasingly assertive rhetoric and military activities, viewing Somalia as its strategic ally.

Implications:

Ali Mazrui refers to this theatre of multifarious conflicts in Africa as a "Prison of Powers". He identifies four primary gatekeepers of this power- big businesses, political party militants, bureaucrats, and international experts responsible for maintaining security regarding the risk perception. Military juntas in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger backing each other have initiated an informal Alliance of Sahel States. Business executives who yield political influence are at the heart of systematic corruption, which leads to an ever-increasing cost of election campaigns in the context of widespread poverty. Unhealthy and paralysing dependence on international aid has become an indispensable part of the political economy. sustaining inefficient public policies and disappointing economic results. Viewing Ethiopia's economic and military developments through a national security lens- GERD disrupts the flow of the Nile River, impacting Egyptian agriculture and freshwater resources. The Trilateral Joint Committee comprising Egypt, Eritrea, and Somalia will have far-reaching implications for the region's political and security landscape. Although full-scale conflict is unlikely, proxy confrontations could intensify rivalries in the Red Sea. They will continue to disrupt the supply chain of critical commercial goods- Oil, natural gas, and grains. Investment deterrence due to increased operational costs and shipment delays are evident and will continue to escalate. In addition, this water passageway is likely to be a battleground for states seeking higher positions within the global order. These high economic stakes encourage the established and emerging powers to project regional naval power.







Recommendations:

1. Institutionalising Control Over Public Resources:

Democratic governance remains a foundational mechanism for ensuring accountability, inclusivity, and sustainable development, building political institutions that inspire confidence among people, fostering efficiency among institutions that control the use of public resources, and combating corruption. Institutionalising citizen participation in public policy debates becomes integral. Effective execution of the Algiers Accords (2015) brokered by Algeria and signed between Mali and other Sahel states, which includes political decentralisation, security reforms, ethnic and tribal representation, and means of justice and reconciliation, can foster greater regional cooperation?

Regional Counterbalance For Secured Maritime Boundaries:

For Ethiopia, diplomacy is the key- both with Egypt and Eritrea. Engaging with international organisations and securing the support of the U.S., which remains invested in Egypt's Cooperation, is crucial—creating a commonly accepted framework for maritime boundaries while developing a regional counter-balance by strengthening diplomatic ties with Kenya and Sudan. Coordinated actions through the African Union's peacemaking mandate and the local expertise of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) can facilitate dialogue and mediate disputes.

3. Assisting Development Through Public-Private Partnerships:

Assisting development and engaging in public-private partnerships to focus on revamping infrastructure, rural development, digitisation, and transportation in the Sahel are the key areas where big businesses should look to enhance their operational efficiency. The renewable energy sector has significant regional growth potential, allowing companies to promote sustainable development and supplement their corporate social responsibility. However, it is best to diversify their investments and supply chains across multiple regions to reduce reliance on a single region or water passageway. Training and culturally sensitising the employees according to the region will aid the business models in better understanding the population's needs. Comprehensive geopolitical risk analysis- protecting sensitive business data from potential cyber threats and scenario planning can adapt to disruptions by building alternate supply chains.

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Public-private partnerships will be necessary to facilitate innovation and further develop technology applications other than defence.

Overview:

The importance of the Indo-Pacific region on the global geopolitical chessboard continues to be reflected in different vital economic corridors, intensifying military rivalries, and changing alliances. What is more interesting is that these developments will be used as lenses critical for evaluating the state of global stability in 2025 when the world recalibrates on interdependencies and new threats. Each has significant economic stability, technological advancement and regional and international security implications.

India's Developments in Hypersonic Defence Systems:

With the nation's rise to hypersonic power status, India's defence capability and geopolitical stance have acquired a radical turn. It has now stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the United States, Russia, and China in developing advanced hypersonic technology, thanks to the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), which marked notable achievements in the testing of the Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle (HSTDV) in 2020. This will enable India to effectively enhance her deterrence against her adversaries, mainly China and Pakistan, to an unprecedented level by providing new capabilities, such as precision targeting and avoidance of missile defence systems. In the economic aspect, India's hypersonic program is an excellent addition to the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, which enhances the indigenisation of defence production and encourages the growth of high-end sectors, including material science and aerospace. Public-private partnerships will be necessary to facilitate innovation and further develop technology applications other than defence. However, it remains to be balanced the act of defence expenditure with domestic agendas . India's hypersonic progress will add to its regional power by obstructing China's military modernisation and countervailing its dependence on tactical nuclear weapons in Pakistan, Despite these advantages, the risk of arms race and instability in the region highlights the importance of comprehensive policies prioritising international cooperation, arms control advocacy, and counter-hypersonic capabilities 10.

Missile Defence Systems

This will enable India to effectively enhance her deterrence against her adversaries, mainly China and Pakistan, to an unprecedented level by providing new capabilities, such as precision targeting and avoidance of missile defence systems.

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The Military Posturing of North Korea:

In the face of enormous progress in nuclear and missile systems and unthinkable foreign military conflicts that came into being, the military aggressiveness of North Korea intensified. The nuclear program at the Yongbyon facility was restarted, intercontinental ballistic missiles with ranges reaching the United States were tested, and mobile road missile launchers were deployed. These actions add more unpredictability to North Korea's military capabilities and pose serious challenges to monitoring and mitigation efforts11. After the Korean War, North Korea had its first overseas military deployment of 10,000 soldiers to commit to supporting Russia in Ukraine. This denied their presence from international sanctions while affording North Korea muchneeded resources like oil and military technologies. These developments further drain North Korea's resources, aggravating already dire humanitarian conditions and further isolating the country economically 12. The geopolitics of the alliance between North Korea and Russia hyperventilates the whole region, which raises the defensive posture of South Korea, Japan, and the United States. Multilateral diplomacy that includes China and other stakeholders needs to happen to contain this alliance and conditionally mitigate regional instability 13.

Tensions in the Taiwan Strait

The Taiwan Strait stands as one of the most vital geopolitical flashpoints. With such military actions as missile firing, naval blockade, and amphibious exercises, China's preparations indicated an anticipation of any battle. The stakes are even higher regarding Taiwan's importance in the global semiconductor production market. Any disruption in this sector will affect the global supply chains, from automobiles to artificial intelligence ¹⁴. Regional allies such as South Korea and Japan have stepped up joint military exercises in response. At the same time, Taiwan has concentrated on military modernisation, mainly in the context of US assistance. These, though, are no small feats in the face of Beijing's increasing military and economic clout ¹⁵.



These actions add more unpredictability to North Korea's military capabilities and pose serious challenges to monitoring and mitigation efforts.



Implications:

1. Hypersonic Technology Developments:

Hypersonic technology developments in India have a twoway face. Economically, it would spread the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative for innovation in aerospace and materials science. besides strengthening domestic defence manufacturing. Conversely, hypersonic systems exorbitantly priced and deprived of national resources even as they tout justifications for defence vis-a-vis investment in national defence as against the requirements for creating and implementing home priority components-infrastructures and health care 16. Geopolitically, India's hypersonic capabilities have fortressed its deliveries such that it augments a deterrent against China and also augments Pakistan's tactical nuclear options. Therefore, India's position gets buttressed on strategic partnerships like the Quad, particularly with the U.S., Japan, and Australia 17. However, such developments also raise the spectre of an arms race in this region, provoking foes to speed up their hypersonic programs and thereby spoil the strategic equilibrium 18.

2. Development of Nuclear and Missile Defence Systems:

Military posturing by North Korea amplifies regional instability, and its nuclear and missile technological advancements become a severe challenge. The appearance of road-mobile missile launchers and new capabilities make it difficult to track, adding more uncertainty to monitoring and raising the stakes for regional actors ¹⁹. From an economic perspective, it would enable North Korea to bypass sanctions and acquire critical resources for oil and military technology through this alliance with Russia. However, higher military expenditure stretches thinly available resources and worsens humanitarian conditions at the domestic level ^{20,21}. Geopolitically, the North Korea-Russia alliance upsets the regional balance of power, forcing neighbours to strengthen their respective defence positions and complicating multilateral diplomatic efforts at de-escalation ²².





Implications Over Semiconductor Development Systems:

The Taiwan Strait is a critical bottleneck with global implications for trade and economies, not least in the local sense. The equal weight of Taiwan in the production of semiconductors means that there would cease to be a supply of more than 60% of the global market in chips due to a conflict in that area, impacting industries from artificial intelligence to automotive. This could be militarily relevant in a decided confrontation, as it would likely draw in the direct involvement of the United States, allied with Japan and Australia, and thus increase the competition among the great powers in the Indo-Pacific 23. Such scenarios can reshape global power dynamics and stir significant geopolitical tensions, making further diplomatic resolutions more urgent. Such conflict will lead to a humanitarian crisis, considering that there would be civilian population, infrastructure destruction and even refugees streaming into neighbouring countries, with most international relief efforts complicated 24.

Policy Recommendations:

1. Prioritising Indigenous Defence Ecosystems:

Indigenous defence ecosystems must now be prioritised for stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific. Public-private partnerships, such as Atmanirbhar Bharat, demonstrate how such partnerships function in capacity building with start-ups, universities, and small enterprises. These partnerships fast-track research and development while remaining self-sufficient in critical defence technologies²⁵. Not least, regional alliances such as the Quad (India, Japan, Australia, the US) and AUKUS (Australia, the UK and the US) provide an environment to create advanced cooperation frameworks. Through standard research, intelligence sharing, and interoperability, nations in this region can work together through these platforms to face their most pressing issues in emerging technologies, such as hypersonic and missile-defence systems²⁶.





2. Arms Control and Non-Proliferation in Top Priority

Simultaneously, arms control and non-proliferation remain the main priority in a region increasingly defined by advanced military developments. The proliferation of hypersonic and strategic weapons poses a significant risk to stability, which requires multilateral discussions on regulating responsible development and usage. Such forums as the ASEAN Regional Forum can be used to hold such discussions to ensure that arms control mechanisms align with regional security priorities 27. Equally matched is the need to balance such investments with economic growth. Dual use-technologies across the spectrum of those fields, from aerospace, materials science and advanced manufacturing-can increase military capability yet perhaps also support growing economic development. The composite aid of initiatives such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) helps economic and strategic agendas in innovation and regional integration 28. In response to increased threat complexity. attention should be paid to countering hypersonic capabilities in missile defence systems by integrating Quad and ADMM-Plus initiatives into AI-driven interception technologies radar systems, among other countermeasures capable of detecting and neutralising hypersonic threats. Strategically positioned missile defence systems in vulnerable areas augment deterrence and regional stability. Meanwhile, targeted sanctions and enforcement measures need to be reinforced in tandem. Regional states, through such multilateral cooperation by platforms of the UN Security Council and ARF. can also upset illicit financial and resource networks that sustain destabilising military ambitions, according to Press UN in 202430.

3. Importance to Complementary Defence Strategies:

Complementary approaches to defence strategies diplomatic and humanitarian - are necessary for fostering
long-term stability. Multilateral diplomacy in forums such as
the East Asia Summit (EAS) and ASEAN must address
geopolitical flashpoints heading toward escalations. Inclusive
dialogues between key stakeholders could reduce the risk of
regional crises, from maritime disputes to resource conflicts.
Humanitarian aid programs, primarily through organisations
such as the Asian Development Bank and ASEAN
Humanitarian Assistance Centre, can be used to manage
crises in conflict-affected areas. Humanitarian assistance not
only helps alleviate pain but can also be an instrument of
diplomacy for contact and de-escalation³¹.





4. Global Supply Chain Diversification for Stability:

Economic resilience is another bastion of Indo-Pacific stability. Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea are critical trade lanes and, therefore, shouldering the imperative of reducing dependencies in global supply chains by diversification. Programs like IPEF can encourage the development of alternative production hubs across Southeast Asia, India, and the Pacific islands, therefore reducing dependence on single-source supply chains, especially regarding semiconductors 12. Maritime security will also be a central issue. It is critical to establish measures, such as those under the Quad Maritime Initiative, to cooperate on enforcing international maritime laws like UNCLOS to ensure sea lanes and deter coercive behaviours that undermine regional trade 33.

5. Regional Alliances in Conflict Deterrence:

Lastly, backchannel diplomacy and regional alliances address preventing conflict and deterrence. Having back-channel mechanisms instituted to allow communication secretly would reduce potential miscommunication and stop the wrong and harmful escalation. Thus, Regional alliances under Quad, AUKUS, and ADMM-Plus further heighten collective security through conjoining exercises, intelligence sharing and even coordinated defence strategies among partners. These alliances ensure preparedness in the face of emerging threats and reinforce regional cooperation as a foundation for stability³⁴.





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The shuffle of Power and changes in both the internal and external priorities of these three significant countries will bear upon trade, immigration, energy, and generally regional safety in North America.

Overview:

The results of three critical elections will influence the North American geopolitical landscape of 2025, the 2024 United States Presidential election, the 2025 Canadian Federal election, and the 2024 Mexican General election. The shuffle of Power and changes in both the internal and external priorities of these three significant countries will bear upon trade, immigration, energy, and generally regional safety in North America. These dynamics will also shape the future of Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA/USMCA), which came into existence after replacing the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) 35. The US has chosen Donald Trump as its next president. Trump's presidency will try to introduce "America First" policies, prioritising American interests and challenging multilateral cooperation on the global stage. On trade, Trump will try to renegotiate the USMCA, emphasising labour provisions and rules of origin to favour US industries. While this will strengthen American domestic production, it will create a clash with Canada and Mexico's Governments over perceived protectionism36. Immigration policies will be hardline, with renewed programs like "Remain in Mexico" and increased border controls. These policies may strain US-Mexico relations, especially as Mexico faces migration pressures 37. Trump's scepticism of multilateral organisations may impede North American unity in dealing with broader challenges, such as competition with China and Russia's aggression. In Canada, the 2025 Federal Election will be two contrasting and different paths forward for the country. On the other hand, one needs to remember that previous relations between Trudeau and the Trump administration were never particularly smooth, and such bitter experiences may make him cautious while aligning with the US priorities shortly. As an alternative perspective, a potential triumph for Pierre Poilievre will mean that Canada will further align itself with the economic agenda presented by Trump38.



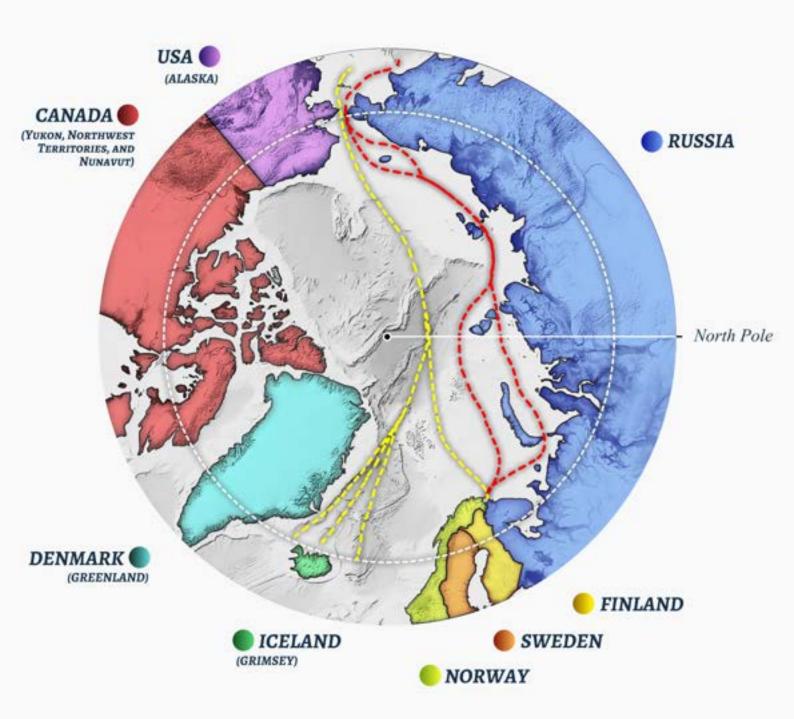
Implications:

1. Canada-US-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA/USMCA):

The future of CUSMA/USMCA as the bedrock of North American trade is uncertain, holding much turbulence. Labour and environmental standards are likely to be points of contention, as the US will enforce stricter provisions than others to protect American workers, while the latter will be pushing for balanced regulations on both sides. The automotive sector could become a flashpoint, with disputes over rules of origin and wage thresholds for electric vehicle production39. The issue of energy trade will continue to be at the forefront of contentious discussion because of the contrast between what is happening in Canada, the concentration on critical minerals, and the policies of Mexico, based around fossil fuels, which does not fit into the climate agenda put forward by the United States, Also, Trump's protectionism might lead to severe stress within the CUSMA/USMCA framework 40. It might become particularly acute if Trudeau of Canada and Sheinbaum of Mexico decide to act obstinately against the coercive efforts of renegotiating the deal 41. Immigration and border security policies will likely expose significant differences between the nations involved as the United States continues to tighten its restrictions on entry, Mexico faces an increasingly complex array of migration challenges that are growing more apparent, and Canada continues to be the most welcoming of those seeking refuge or better opportunities42. Climate and energy policies will also highlight the regional differences, as Canada and Mexico prefer renewable energy sources. At the same time, figures like Trump and Poilievre continue to place a heavy emphasis on the continued use and support of fossil fuels. Currently, fragmented leadership across North America may weaken regional responses to global challenges, such as the rise of China and Russia's geopolitical ambitions.

2. The emergence of new Arctic trade routes:

The melting Arctic ice has opened new shipping lanes, including the Northern Sea Route (NSR) and the Northwest Passage. It dramatically shortens transit time between Asia, Europe, and North America, bringing down costs for global trade. However, their emergence brings a new arena for geopolitical competition and cooperation. For the United States, the strategic importance of the Arctic is steadily increasing and becoming more pronounced. The Biden administration's National Strategy for the Arctic Region has significantly emphasised sustainable development 43.





Arctic trade routes

The dashed circle represents the outer border of the Arctic Circle. The dashed yellow line represents the Transpolar Sea Route, while the dashed red line represents the Northern Sea Route.



However, when Donald Trump returns to power in 2025, this may shift the country's focus towards extracting and exploiting valuable Arctic resources 4. Secondly, the idea of an enhanced military presence by the United States in this region would also come to the forefront as a counter-measure to the ambitions and aspirations of Russia and China that look to establish their influence in the Arctic 45. Holding sovereign authority over the strategically significant Northwest Passage, Canada is positioned to experience substantial economic benefits. However, it simultaneously confronts several complex sovereignty challenges. The capacity of Ottawa to effectively enforce its territorial claims will be of utmost importance, particularly if Pierre Poilievre secures victory in the upcoming 2025 Canadian Federal election and subsequently takes on a more assertive and aggressive political stance. It will be a matter of imperative for Canada to strike a careful balance between the interests of resource development, the rights of indigenous peoples, and the necessity of environmental protection, all the while addressing the complications arising from the increase in international shipping activity and the potential disputes that could arise with the United States concerning transit rights ... Mexico's role in the context of Arctic trade is significant in terms of logistics and energy supply. It could experience a range of new opportunities for enhancing its ports and overall infrastructure, facilitating and enabling vital connections to emerging Arctic trade routes. Furthermore, it is essential to note that Mexico's abundant energy resources could contribute meaningfully to powering various ventures and initiatives in the Arctic region.

Recommendations:

1. Renegotiating trade agreements

Canada and Mexico should ready themselves for US demands to renegotiate trade terms. A united North American posture on labour and environmental standards should be a bulwark against protectionist policies.

Encouraging Economic Development and Environmental Protection in the Arctic Region:

While balancing its renewable energy goals vis-à-vis the demand for fossil fuel in the United States, Mexico has to strengthen critical energy infrastructure for regional alignment. Manage the US border security policies through trilateral agreements for humane migration management and burden-sharing.



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that look to establish their influence in the Arctic.





Even though there are differences in leadership, trilateral economic and security cooperation should be emphasised to withstand external geopolitical pressures. Canada and Mexico should strengthen trade with Europe and Asia to minimise disruptions from U.S. protectionism.

Encouraging Economic Development and Environmental Protection in the Arctic Region:

The regional governments must balance the development of the Arctic with environmental protection and Indigenous sovereignty. Governments need to anticipate and plan for changes in leadership that impact energy, trade, and security priorities across the region.



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The policy outlook for South America 2025 is defined by a confluence of infrastructural, commercial, and geopolitical transformations. There are three events that could shape this transformation.

Overview:

The policy outlook for South America 2025 is defined by a confluence of infrastructural, commercial, and geopolitical transformations. There are three events that could shape this transformation. The Bi-Oceanic Corridor, due to be completed in 2025, promises to reshape regional logistics and supply chains. Second, the recent signing of the European Union (EU)-MERCOSUR Agreement, a historic trade deal set to reduce tariffs and enhance market access drastically. Third, the uncertain trajectory of Venezuela under a potential second Trump presidency in the United States, a scenario that could significantly influence foreign policy alignments across the region. These factors arise against pervasive infrastructural challenges that have long hindered South America's economic development. Governments and businesses must navigate the interplay of large-scale infrastructure projects, new trade regimes, and evolving geopolitical dynamics. The following comprehensive policy outlook examines the situation and recommends that these developments translate into inclusive and sustainable growth for the continent.

Situation Report:

In recent years, South America has grappled with the burden of infrastructural underdevelopment, political volatility, and uneven economic integration. These challenges have underscored the need for forward-looking policies to harmonise cross-border trade, improve connectivity, and attract sustainable investments. Completing the Bi-Oceanic Corridor in 2025 promises to take a significant step in that direction. The corridor aims to connect the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans through improved road, rail, and port facilities spanning Brazil, Paraguay, Bolivia, Chile and Peru 47. This corridor aims to reduce transportation times, diversify export routes, and stimulate local industries. Its realisation, long delayed by funding complexities and bureaucratic red tape, represents a new model of infrastructural coordination - one that calls for stronger cooperation between multiple governments and private sector entities.



In recent years, South America has grappled with the burden of infrastructural underdevelopment, political volatility, and uneven economic integration.



If the corridor becomes operational as envisioned, the region could shift away from traditional commodity export routes toward a more decentralised and innovation-focused pattern of economic engagement. This infrastructural push arrives concurrently with the finalisation of the EU-MERCOSUR Agreement, a monumental trade accord signed on 6th December of the previous year. This agreement envisions slashing tariffs on over 90% of goods exchanged between the two blocs, aiming to save EU companies up to €4 billion annually in duties48. More importantly, it sets forth provisions beyond simple tariff reductions, facilitating market access by eliminating non-tariff barriers, complex administrative procedures, and discriminatory tax treatments49. It includes rules that encourage higher environmental and labour standards, which are part of a broader vision prioritising sustainability, capacity building, and social cohesion.

The EU-MERCOSUR Agreement must be understood in terms of the evolving nature of globalised commerce. Historically, South American nations have relied heavily on primary commodity exports, often facing volatility in global prices and repeated cycles of boom and bust. The agreement offers an opportunity to diversify and upgrade local industries, encouraging them to meet international benchmarks and strengthening sectors such as manufacturing and services. The EU and the MERCOSUR states must remain attentive to such an agreement's delicate social and environmental dimensions, recognising that trade liberalisation alone cannot deliver sustainable development without robust institutions and equitable wealth distribution mechanisms.

Meanwhile, the future of Venezuela under a renewed Trump presidency in the United States introduces another layer of complexity into the regional calculus. In recent years, faced profound economic collapse, Venezuela has institutional fragmentation, and mass outmigration51. The Trump administration's earlier policies toward Venezuela were characterised by economic sanctions, diplomatic isolation, and attempts to delegitimise the Maduro government 52. Should a second Trump presidency materialise, the regional landscape may revert to a more aggressive stance, stalling any partial normalisation or negotiated settlement that had begun to surface under different leadership in Washington. This approach could further disrupt energy markets, diaspora communities, and the delicate negotiations among South American countries that have sought to mediate or at least contain Venezuela's ongoing crisis53.

The future of Venezuela under a renewed Trump presidency in the United States introduces another layer of complexity into the regional calculus.



The convergence of these three dynamics - improved connectivity through the Bi-Oceanic Corridor, the EU-MERCOSUR Agreement's far-reaching implications, and the uncertain Venezuelan future under a potentially more aggressive U.S. foreign policy - must also be understood in the context of the region's long-standing infrastructural deficits.

Despite notable efforts to bolster state capacities over the past two decades, many South American states still need stronger institutions, corruption, and an uneven record of policy implementation. Infrastructure projects may be delayed, trade benefits may not trickle down, and political tensions may prevent lasting conflict resolution if the underlying governance capacities still need to be developed ⁵⁴. The experience of various attempts at state-building and economic liberalisation in the early 2000s underscores that top-down models alone cannot guarantee stable and inclusive outcomes. Instead, local ownership, stakeholder engagement, and adaptive learning become crucial to ensure that the fruits of such grand agreements and infrastructural undertakings are shared widely ⁵⁵.

Building a corridor linking the two oceans does not foster equitable development. Consistent policies must be in place that encourage small and medium-sized enterprises to access new markets, support farmers to adapt to changing trade regimes, and enable civil society organisations to hold governments accountable. Similarly, entering into a monumental free trade agreement may lower tariffs, but without consistent environmental safeguards, labour rights protections, and measures to prevent market domination by a few large corporations, the benefits may be fleeting or even disruptive. Ultimately, the success of these initiatives will depend on their ability to reconcile grand visions of connectivity, trade expansion, and strategic alignment with the on-the-ground realities of governance, social equity, and environmental stewardship. As 2025 approaches, the elements for a transformative era in South America's policy landscape are in place - what remains uncertain is whether the region's political will, institutional capacity, and stakeholder collaboration will rise to the challenge.



Implications:

1. Economic Implications:

The economic repercussions of these developments could be profound. The Bi-Oceanic Corridor may lower transportation costs and open new trade routes, enabling businesses to diversify supply chains and target new markets efficiently 57. The EU-MERCOSUR Agreement could encourage a more dynamic export profile, compelling local industries to innovate, improve quality standards, and become more competitive internationally. An expanded free trade zone can attract greater foreign direct investment, improve technology transfers, and create synergies with the planned infrastructure 58.

Yet, without robust regulatory frameworks, there is a risk that gains from trade and infrastructure projects will remain concentrated among a small group of large corporations and politically connected elites. This scenario could exacerbate income inequalities and stunt the broader benefits of economic development. Governments must, therefore, invest in human capital, skill-building programs, and institutional reforms to ensure that new trade pathways and infrastructural linkages translate into jobs, inclusive growth, and higher standards of living.

2. Geopolitical and Political Implications

On the geopolitical stage, the interplay of these factors may alter power balances within South America and beyond. The EU-MERCOSUR Agreement signals a renewed European interest in strengthening ties with the region, offering a counterweight to China's growing influence and the U.S. legacy of hemispheric dominance. However, should the U.S. under a second Trump presidency return to more aggressive sanctions and unilateral diplomacy, the region might find itself caught between competing poles of power. In such a polarised environment, the success of the Bi-Oceanic Corridor and the EU-MERCOSUR deal could hinge on the ability of South American states to maintain strategic autonomy - leveraging these initiatives to gain policy space and negotiate from a position of strength. At the domestic level, political leaders who embrace openness, transparency, and rule-of-law governance will be better positioned to manage the challenges of regional integration and external pressures. Conversely, politicians who revert to populist or clientelist practices risk undermining stability and long-term development.





Recommendations:

Aligning Infrastructure, Trade, and Diplomacy with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

The primary policy challenge lies in forging coherent strategies that align infrastructural projects, trade agreements, and diplomatic engagements with the broader sustainable development goals. As they implement the Bi-Oceanic Corridor, states must couple physical construction with policies that promote local entrepreneurship, skill development, and social inclusion. Governments should work collaboratively to establish cross-border regulatory bodies to ensure that environmental norms are upheld, labour rights are protected, and corruption is minimised. Similar oversight mechanisms would be essential to monitor the implementation of the EU-MERCOSUR Agreement, ensuring that tariff reductions do not compromise local industries or undermine hard-won social and environmental gains.

Leveraging Trade Opportunities Through Building Partnerships and Honing Responsible Practices:

Diversifying partnerships and investing in capacity-building initiatives can help businesses exploit new trade opportunities better. Firms might consider joint ventures with European companies to facilitate technology transfer, enhance product quality, and access global value chains. Additionally, by adhering to transparent, sustainable, and responsible practices, businesses can strengthen their operating license, mitigating reputational and regulatory risks.

3. Recommending the Usage of Constructive Engagement Channels to Alleviate U.S.-Venezuelan Tensions:

More broadly, the Venezuelan question requires that governments remain engaged, seeking diplomatic channels and regional frameworks that encourage dialogue and conflict resolution. Policy tools such as humanitarian corridors, targeted sanctions aimed at leadership rather than at the population, and multilateral negotiations can offer a more constructive approach than blanket isolation. Such strategies would help ensure the region's push for stability and prosperity is not derailed by deepening political crises.



MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA (MENA)

Diptisikha Sahu, Harjeet Singh

Geography and natural resources play decisive roles in fostering peace and shaping critical strategic considerations in the current apprehensive scenario in the Middle East & North Africa (MENA) region.

Overview:

Taking tolls from the unabated violence in Iraq, the enduring Israel-Lebanon tensions and complexities of the Israel-Hamas conflict have dynamically impacted the international realm. Geography and natural resources play decisive roles in fostering peace and shaping critical strategic considerations in the current apprehensive scenario in the Middle East & North Africa (MENA) region. The MENA region is witnessing unprecedented increased volatility associated with conflicts has impacted access to resources, tourism, trade, investments, and other financial channels, thereby rerouting maritime supply chains and raising freight costs. If left unaddressed, the crisis in the MENA region could inaugurate a considerable increase in inflationary pressures for many nations. All countries need to strengthen their fiscal ties and external sustainability by confronting elevated risks, prudent crisis management, and precautionary policies shortly 61. The absence of a robust security architecture and deep-rooted intra-regional conflicts raise concerns about the viability of regional security in the Middle East. Thus, a cautious approach characterised by steadfast diplomacy between Middle Eastern nations and the international community will be considered steps in achieving lasting peace in the Middle East.

Situation Report:

Since the mid-20th century, the Middle East has been a hotspot of volatility, with multiple conflicts some erupted over domestic disputes and regional competition driving major world powers 62. Although the MENA region countries comprise over 5% of the world's population, they have received media attention far beyond what the area represents. The recent history of the Middle East and North Africa is closely associated with past traumatic experiences of the population over the last century.





The intersection of colonialism and complex decolonisation challenges, alongside the complicated process of state formation and the perpetuation of authoritarian regimes. In addition, Israel's declaration of independence and its conflicts with its neighbours, competition for regional hegemony and the interference of the major powers have created a climate of insecurity and mistrust. The conflicts and struggles in pursuit of aspirations are frequently bloody due to insufficient regional integration and limited collaborations among the different social and economic actors. The realistic theory demonstrates that when states deal with security threats, either they seek a power balance with alliance formation or bandwagoning. Israel's foreign policy that shifted prioritised normalising the peace process with Arab countries, particularly with Saudi Arabia, with whom it shares common economic interests and enemy Iran, promised to usher in a steady process of political realignment 63. A feasible strategy that appeared to be viable without making concessions on Palestine Statehood. Israel fought several wars with the Hamas-Iran-backed axis of resistance44, thought to be significantly contained. But the massive attack of October 7 shifted all the circumstances, causing growing international condemnation of Israel.

In the short run, it managed to derail the process of normalisation between Israel and Arab governments. Tehran, since then, has publicly supported Hamas by extending the networks of proxy groups carrying attacks against Israel and the United States. Sporadically, the substantial military presence of the United States came under direct threat from the Houthi Rebels' growing ambitions. Large-scale disruptions in the Red Sea & SLOC resulting from the proxy strategy give Iran a degree of plausible deniability and enable it to impose costs on Israel and the US without providing them a pretext to attack Iran directly.

Though Hezbollah proclaimed victory in 2006, it incurred heavy losses, as did Lebanon's civilians. Hezbollah, an advanced arm of Iran, has been trading fire with Israeli forces since October 7 as a powerful political entity in Lebanon. Although its leader, Hassan Nasrallah, has stopped short of formally declaring war, perhaps looking to avoid a repeat of 2006. The killing of Nasrallah by Israeli forces vacuumed the Shiite armed organisation.



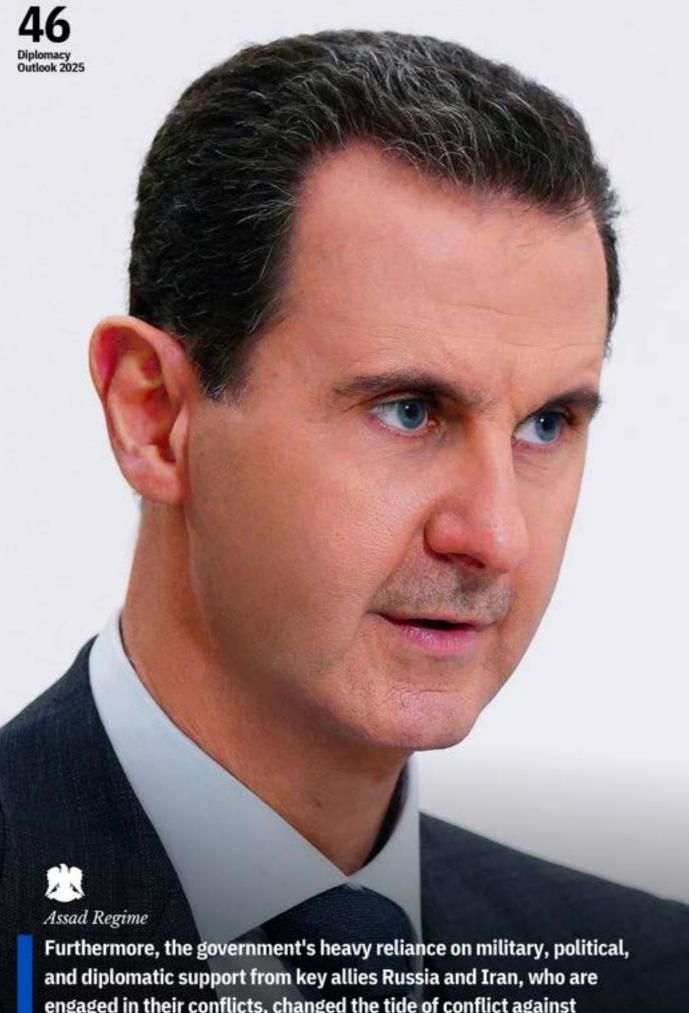
Israel fought several wars with the Hamas-Iran-backed axis of resistance, thought to be significantly contained. But the massive attack of October 7 shifted all the circumstances, causing growing international condemnation of Israel.



To reduce the significant penetration of attacks in the southern Lebanon border, both Israel and Lebanon sustained driving Hezbollah forces up to the Litani River, formally declaring a ceasefire with the Lebanese government 6. The Syrian Civil War offshoot of the Arab awakening in 2011 challenged Al Assad's initial portrayal of modern reformists. Rebels have recently shattered this perception, provoking internal upheavals in several cities, rendering noticeable socio-political effects, and putting the authoritarian regime on the defensive. The unexpected turn of events is primarily attributed to the weakening of Assad's army, which has devastated the country's economy and infrastructure 70. Furthermore, the government's heavy reliance on military, political, and diplomatic support from key allies Russia and Iran, who are engaged in their conflicts, changed the tide of conflict against the Assad regime. The leadership of Hezbollah has been further severely diminished by the overthrow, further undermining the organisation in the area. Turkey's control over the zone along the northern Syrian border facilitates support for the HTS faction, aiming to limit the influx of refugees into the country.

Implications:

One of the significant externalities of the conflict that has engulfed the MENA region for more than a decade is the economic stagnation among the countries. The continuity of protests and violence handicapped the government's abilities to maintain and promote economic affairs, as the sovereignty continues to face challenges from the non-state actors and foreign proxies in the region. The eruption of the Gaza conflict that spillover to Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen alleviated the risk to the global supply chain, especially on the route to the Suez Canal, which in recent times witnessed a sluggishness of the maritime traffic as Houthi rebels in Yemen proactively targeted the shipments embargoes in the Red Sea, causing disruptions where 12% of the world trade passes, making the region an epicentre of the international supply chain71. As per the insights provided by the London Stock Exchange Group's (LSEG) oil and shipping research team, the alternate route of the Cape of Good Hope increases the shipping cost by 35% and takes additional days from Shanghai, China, to Rotterdam, Netherlands via cape of good hopes compared to the red sea route72.



engaged in their conflicts, changed the tide of conflict against the Assad regime.



The protracted conflict has blurred the prospects of establishing the pipeline; Turkey Qatar proposal met with contestation from the Assad regime that has promoted the Iraq-Syria pipeline as an alternative; on the other hand, Israel became a hotspot for the Aspiration pipeline project stretching from the Indian coast to Europe under the name India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) at the 2023 G20 between India to Europe through India, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Greece prolonged in the eruption of Israel Hamas conflict. The geopolitical implication of this project is that by undermining Pakistan's role as a connector, India bypasses to connect with the Middle East and Europe through this pipeline that may further expand to African countries. With the abrupting violence and chaotic affairs, mass migration to neighbouring countries took place; according to United Nations estimates, in the Syrian civil war, about 6.7 million have fled, and 13 million have been displaced since 2011, compiling tremendous costs on asylum-granting countries. In the current situation, as the dust settled in Damascus with the fall of Former Syrian President Bashar Al Assad as rebel groups led by the Syrian Salvation Army took control, Germany, after the United Kingdom, took an immediate step by suspending further asylum to the Syrian refugees, sporadically strategising plans for "return of the refugees to Syria."

Syria falling into the hands of extremists poses a grave threat that could ignite a further series of persecution of minorities that may, in turn, trigger an "ethno-religious war" across the Middle East, spilling over into neighbouring nations like Iraq, Iran and Lebanon. Syria, which has been a passage for weapons and ammunition for the Iranian-backed proxies in Lebanon and Gaza in the aftermath of Assad under Sunni leadership, will frustrate the Iranian influence in the region.





Recommendations:

Prioritising Military Professionalism and Constructive Dialogue:

Shared offensive & defensive interests offer an opportunity to collaborate on common grounds; the world should focus on more modest engagements where it could make a difference". Prioritising military professionalism and diplomatic efforts with the help of fellow Gulf countries is crucial to address population transfer and prevent attacks on transient groups in Syria, Yemen, and Libya for political stability if done appropriately74. It is imperative to forge constructive dialogue that aims to stabilise current spheres of international influence in the country, including major players such as Russia and Turkey, for cessation of hostilities for the foreseeable future. Tehran's impact on regional stability and security is attributed to its support of proxy militant groups. Implementation of a comprehensive diplomatic framework encompassing non-state actors must be employed on tractable issues to engage and contain Iran's extremism.

2. Developing Technological Hubs:

The Gulf nations are increasingly becoming dynamic hubs of technological advancements⁷⁵. The Middle East is anticipated to accrue U.S. \$320 billion by 2030 through the benefits of AI. Collaborations, apart from natural resources, can be more focused on the universalisation of curriculums and internationalising educational institutions⁷⁶. They work in a more inclusive and unbiased framework combined with regional languages⁷⁷. State-led diversification can be ripe for public-private partnerships with intelligent economies for intelligent systems to modernise public services. MENA is ideally placed in terms of technological know-how and geared towards becoming a hub for technology-driven innovation.





3. Developing Opportunities in Energy Transition

Smart industrial policy design comes at a premium cost. There are opportunities for GCC economies in the global transition to roll out renewables domestically and export low-carbon industrial products and clean fuels such as blue and green hydrogen. In broader interests, India's industrial expertise could be proven helpful in renewable energies and envisioned ambitious projects such as Neom City. There's a need to craft industrial policies like Deep Carbonization pathways that acknowledge contemporary reality and cater to climate and human sustainability.

4. Developing Technological Hubs

The MENA region's heavy reliance on food imports, water crises and energy shocks during & post-COVID-19 is a structural weakness that negatively affected trade balances and foreign exchange. Policymakers should work with regional partners and international institutions on a coordinated economic response to producing goods & services and establish an early openness to competition of private initiatives, creating more employment opportunities. Infrastructure boosting can be imperative to holistic trade facilitation, such as IMEC connectivity, which tends to be advantageous from the geo-economic and political paradigm, having the potential for enhanced coordination for strong regional industrial policies and integrated two-way trade between consumer and producer surpluses 81. To stimulate economic rebound other than energy, developing new economic chains from existing waste segregation can create a more long-term financial strategy for economic growth for new technologies and entrepreneurs 22.

5. Enhancing Training Opportunities for Women

Although the FLFP rate remains too low, averaging around 20%, women's representation in the business sector constitutes just 4%, significantly reducing income and output across the Middle East⁸³. Injustice is the leading cause of conflict that tends to reduce growth by 2.3% per year, so the average civil war that lasts about seven years reduces GDP by about 15%⁸⁴.





For instance, a study found that during years of civil war, Syria's economy has been severely contracted by over 50% in real terms. Social justice and women's inclusion will galvanise the elements for utilitarian ends. When we focus on the household level, families shape individuals' behaviour through socialisation, and practices are transmitted intergenerationally. Tunisia and Morocco are positive examples of leaders in the Arab world concerning women's rights and development with a bottom-up approach. Enhancing Training opportunities for women for good jobs in educational facilities and encompassing roles such as teachers, nurses, social workers, cooks, cleaners, and bus drivers would expand the workforce of job-seeking women. This approach will likely reduce the female unemployment rate while improving healthcare delivery and outcomes. Promoting women's economic empowerment is a wise financial strategy to fully realise their potential for gender equality, citizens and family providers alike.



Enhancing Training opportunities for women for good jobs in educational facilities and encompassing roles such as teachers, nurses, social workers, cooks, cleaners, and bus drivers would expand the workforce of job-seeking women.





US President-elect Trump's plan to impose tariffs will likely exacerbate economic strains, particularly as Europe navigates trade policy uncertainty while attempting to decarbonise its industries.

Overview:

The current climate emergency and the war in Ukraine have placed climate action and migration at the top of the EU's agenda. With the advent of 2025, one can anticipate it to be another challenging year for Europe. Firstly, US Presidentelect Trump's plan to impose tariffs will likely exacerbate economic strains, particularly as Europe navigates trade policy uncertainty while attempting to decarbonise its industries. Secondly, the shift towards sustainable energy and policies will likely intensify structural hindrance in the manufacturing sector, which already faces high costs and competitive pressures from China. Thirdly and lastly, the ongoing fiscal consolidation across the EU area can limit resources needed to support the green transition and address migration challenges, both of which require significant investment and policy coordination. These factors arise against changing geopolitical priorities where Europe balances green goals and migration challenges. Therefore, governments and businesses must address these intertwined challenges of advancing green transition goals and managing migration flows by adapting to evolving geopolitical dynamics. The comprehensive policy outlook intends to delve into these complexities, providing recommendations to ensure that these developments across Europe balance environmental imperatives with social cohesion.

Situation Report:

The European Union (EU) has been at the forefront of the international fight against climate change since the late 1990s. However, the energy transition was introduced as a core component of its climate agenda in the 2000s. Since then, this agenda has been structured around three main objectives: reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, improved energy efficiency and increased use of renewable energy. In December 2019, the European Commission announced a significant shift in its environmental and climate priorities, with the publication of the "European Green Deal" (EGD) as a comprehensive policy framework and strategy that aims to transform the EU into a sustainable, resource-efficient and carbon-neutral economy by 2050.



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More importantly, in June 2021, the European Climate Law was adopted as the first legal instrument implementing the EGD, which made the 2050 climate neutrality goal and the 55%-by-2030 target legally binding 6. In line with these new targets, the European Commission also presented the "Fit for 55" package, which includes further reductions of carbon allowances for EU businesses in the Emissions Trading Systems. However, the EU energy crisis worsened in 2022 when the Russian Federation reduced its supply of gas – the only energy source exempt from EU sanctions – to some EU countries and finally halted supplies to the whole EU in September 2022. By then, the EU had already launched its REPowerEU plan, a new strategy to end EU dependence on imports of fossil fuels from the Russian Federation by 2027, stepping up climate action towards a green economy.

In this process, the transition towards renewable energy has gradually become one of the key mechanisms of the EU's environmental policy and climate action to counter the impacts of global warming and meet GHG reduction targets. Despite the various measures included in the REPowerEU have the potential to accelerate the EU's energy independence from Russia, some of them have proved to be at odds with the EU's goal of reducing GHGs, while other components conflict with major principles and priorities of the EGD, all of which may slow down or even reverse the move towards climate neutrality by 2050. Meanwhile, during the past fifteen years, European countries and institutions within and beyond the European Union have been paying increasing attention to migration in the context of climate and environmental changes affecting Europe.

European countries and institutions within and beyond the European Union have given increasing attention to migration in the context of climate and environmental changes affecting Europe. Additionally, in these last years, some African countries bordering the Mediterranean and some Middle Eastern countries have been politically destabilised, and this has created the most serious humanitarian emergency since the Second World War, generating a constant and remarkable flow of refugees about over 40 million in 2020, especially towards Italy, as the first stage of their journey to European countries.



GHG Reduction Targets

In this process, the transition towards renewable energy has gradually become one of the key mechanisms of the EU's environmental policy and climate action to counter the impacts of global warming and meet GHG reduction targets.



In virtually all EU Member States, migrants are at a greater risk of being socio-economically disadvantaged and more likely to be exposed to environmental stressors. The socioeconomic situation of the migrant population is worse in several respects than that of the native-born, particularly in education and employment. There have been several other factors responsible for the immigration flows that are to be ascribed not to war or conflicts but to population growth, poverty, and climate change. In addition, the lack of choral management of refugees' problems jeopardises European cohesion and solidarity, which already crumbled by the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union, Border management and free movement of persons are now questioned in the European Union. Some countries have come back to the restoration of temporary checks at the frontiers and to the construction of barriers. Despite that, in the current geopolitical scenario, the EU must design flexible policy frameworks to adjust its joint responses to emerging challenges at the crossroads of climate neutrality and migration.

Implications:

1. Economic Implications:

The measures taken by the EU to address the energy and immigration crisis can potentially contribute to the green transition and reduce migration pressure. However, some decisions in this context fly in the face of the EU and represent a shift in political focus on geopolitical supply security. According to economic analysis, high energy prices are increasing the cost of living across Europe, marking the uneven distribution of burdens. The energy burden is about twice as high for the poorest than the richest, although the latter consumes significantly more energy. In the short run, a supply shock translates into decreased output. However, GDP growth can continue as carbon pricing incentivises research and development, infrastructure spending and accelerated renewal of equipment and buildings. In the long run, society would achieve higher net welfare by preventing severe climate disruptions and the associated costs, indicating a trade-off between current and future welfare.





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More eminently, the REPowerEU goal of ensuring more affordable and sustainable energy has yet to be sufficiently accompanied by additional relief measures in keeping with the energy justice principles that would help preserve social cohesion and public support for the green transition.

Despite the narrative of the non-EU migrants being a strain on public finances and a threat to host countries' welfare systems, once differences in age structure, gender, family composition and educational attainment of the two groups are accounted for, immigrants can be a potential social benefit as often as natives. Including migration in the Green Deal would help to ensure that an essential part of the population in Europe could be involved in the transition process. In the short term, refugees and asylum-seekers represent net fiscal burdens with high social costs and low employment rates. On the other hand, in the long run, complete integration of accepted asylum seekers will imply an increased pool of available workers, which is large enough to put downward pressure on wages, stimulating the labour demand in all sectors in such a way. This positive impact of a rise in active workers entering the labour market will then be able to counteract the adverse supply-side effects of taxation, increasing competitiveness in all EU regions and thus boosting the economy even further.

2. Geopolitical Implications:

Specific actions undermine the EU's credibility as a leading international actor on climate change and geopolitical scenarios. In the short term, the scale and pace of the energy transformation presented in the REPowerEU plan will require the EU economy to outsource part of its mining and processing activities. For this purpose, strategic partnerships and agreements with new suppliers, such as those with Chile, Mexico, Namibia and Kazakhstan, must be negotiated or concluded. Another controversial measure is the REPowerEU plans, which call for greater diversification of energy suppliers. The EU's LNG imports and increased demand for fossil fuels are leading supplier countries to increase their production and investment in fossil fuel infrastructure, thus hindering their green transitions. For example, difficulties in achieving immediate independence from Russian fuels have led some EU countries to increase their use of coal.





The accelerated roll-out of renewable energies has increased the demand for materials and land, sparking territorial conflicts and impacting biodiversity. Therefore, the EU's new policies should include increasing the production of fossil fuels by reactivating coal plants and incentivising investments in nuclear plants and new LNG terminals. Along the lines of migration, Europe lacks convincing, persuasive and ethical criteria for distinguishing between authentic and fictitious refugees.

At the same time, Europe has sought to contain migrant arrivals through the questionable practice of outsourcing boundaries. It lacks instruments, such as humanitarian channels, which would have made it possible to manage the emergency in line with the principle of inalienable human dignity. Following this, two policy priorities emerge that align with many previous studies. To improve output trends amid the rapid ageing of the population and tight labour markets. governments need to focus on integrating migrants into the labour market and integrating them in the most productive way possible where they need to make sure that the supply of public services and amenities including at the local level keeps up with the population increase. Moreover, it gives rise to the need to restrain migration flows, reduce the number of asylums through agreements with countries and have more defined actual management of migratory fluxes.

Recommendations:

1. Enhance Data Collection and Research

The EU should prioritise funding for research initiatives to collect reliable data on climate-driven migration and facilitate sharing best practices among Member States. With accurate and comprehensive information, policymakers can develop targeted, evidence-based frameworks to effectively address the challenges posed by climate-induced migration.

2. Simplify and Support Immigrant Integration

The EU should streamline the transition process for immigrants, focusing on the integration of accepted asylum seekers into society. A well-integrated workforce can contribute to economic growth by expanding the labour pool, potentially exerting downward pressure on wages and stimulating labour demand across all sectors. This approach will promote both economic and social stability within the Union.







3. Diversify Energy Production

To ensure energy security and reduce dependency on Russian fuels, the EU should adopt a balanced approach by reactivating coal plants temporarily, incentivising investments in nuclear energy, and establishing new LNG terminals. While this strategy addresses immediate energy needs, a clear roadmap must prioritise transitioning to sustainable energy solutions to mitigate long-term environmental impacts.



S CONCLUSION

Intensified rivalries among established and rising powers have slowly begun to erode trust and challenge multilateral frameworks. At the moment, the world stands at a critical juncture as geopolitical competitions, scarcity of resources, emerging technologies, and climate pressures simultaneously reshape global stability. Intensified rivalries among established and rising powers have slowly begun to erode trust and challenge multilateral frameworks. To add to this complexity, non-state actors and private security outfits complicate a landscape already strained by political upheavals, contested maritime boundaries, and shifting alliances. There have been recent developments, from insurgencies and proxy conflicts to cyber threats and energy disruptions, signifying how insecurity in one location can reverberate through global supply chains, trade networks, and diplomatic relations.

Amidst these challenges, sustainable development, transparent governance, and equitable distribution of resources equitably have emerged as the most important solutions of our time. Building democratic institutions that promote rule of law, meaningful citizen participation, and accountability in the management of public resources can help stabilise volatile environments.

Addressing the root causes of conflict, such as historical issues, economic inequality, or environmental degradation, requires comprehensive, long-term strategies. There must be investments in infrastructure, renewable energy, education, and innovation in order to reduce vulnerabilities and create opportunities for everyone. Public-private partnerships can help the economic health of a nation, while culturally sensitive engagement can help rebuild trust in delicate areas of the world.

The global community must move beyond short-term fixes and embrace long-term frameworks that put together diplomacy, peacebuilding, and sustainable development. By doing so, nations and regions can jointly get past the disruptive forces of the coming years, setting the stage for a more balanced, inclusive, and peaceful world order in 2025 and beyond.



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