

## CHRONOLOGY

### January – May 2016

#### **January 3**

Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin endorsed a document entitled “About the Strategy of National Security of Russian Federation”, which designated the US and NATO as national security threats to Russia.

#### **January 4**

The EU took unprecedented steps against Poland media law, and announced to launch inquiry into rule of law in Poland.

#### **January 8**

The heads of French and German central banks has proposed a eurozone finance ministry to look into the matters of the ECB and sustainable growth in the eurozone.

#### **January 10**

According to Kristina Nikolayeva, the spokeswoman of Ukraine’s infrastructure ministry, “The transit of Ukraine goods has not yet begun”. Russia has blocked the transit of Ukrainian goods heading to other countries.

#### **January 11**

Thousands of Kosovars mostly ethnic Albanians began protest in Pristina in opposition to EU-brokered agreement to give Serbs more autonomy in Kosovo.

#### **January 12**

Russia has reportedly sent heavy weapons directly to Hezbollah commanders fighting in Syria.

#### **January 14**

With the help of a senior negotiator from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Ukrainian and pro-Russian rebels agreed in the Belarusians capital Minsk, to a new truce deal that would come into immediate effect.

**January 15**

The EU extended its sanctions against Iran for another two weeks till the United Nations certifies that Tehran is following the terms of the historic nuclear deal.

**January 16**

The EU and US officially lifted sanctions against Iran, as UN and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) declared that Tehran “has kept nuclear promises”.

**January 18**

The EU announced that it will send officials to Iran to explore business deals in all sectors focusing on cooperation on nuclear and energy sources.

**January 20**

The EU envoy to China condemned the arrest of EU nationals who involved in human rights activities in China.

Hundreds of protesters broke into Moldova’s parliament, shortly after MPs approved the nomination of a new, pro-EU prime minister.

**January 21**

British PM David Cameron attended the World Economic Forum in Davos emphasizing on a proposed EU deal to ban on in-work benefits for EU migrants for four-year in Britain. He also stated that he could delay a referendum on the UK exit from the EU till the end of 2017, if he would get a right EU deal in next EU Summit in February.

**January 22**

The Council of Europe published a report on Romania, rated it among the highest corruption status in Europe.

The first meeting German-Turkish ‘government consultations’ held in Berlin to discuss the mode of burden sharing of Syrian refugees in the two countries.

**January 26**

Iranian President Rouhani arrived in Europe on a five-day visit to Italy and France to develop economic relations and the EU Countries.

Speaking at the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), Dr. Guven Uckan, the Head of Delegation of Electronics and Services Exporters Association, Turkey stated that “Turkish companies want to enhance business with Pakistan”.

**January 27**

The EU complained to Pakistan about difficulties in deporting illegal Pakistani immigrants having no documentation and stressed that their return should be facilitated.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi invited French Prime Minister Francoise Hollande as a chief guest at India’s annual Republic Day parade, where both the leaders agreed to counter terrorism. French troops participated in the Indian military parade.

The Danish parliament approved a controversial bill to curb asylum applications and allow the relevant authorities to confiscate asylum seekers’ valuables.

**January 28**

In an economic report, Germany trimmed its economic forecast of 2016 but stressed that its economy remains in a “good shape” despite the refugee influx.

EU trade commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom signalled to recognize China as a market economy, but also seeking for some rules which could protect European businesses from excessive dumping of Chinese cheap goods.

**February 1**

The EU rejected US criticism of its crackdown on American companies, Apple, Starbucks and McDonald’s in tax cases.

**February 2**

In Elysee Palace-France, the Cuban President Raul Castro on his official tour visited European Union for the very first time to rebuild bilateral relationship.

In Jerusalem, a disputed military zone of the West Bank, twenty four Palestinian buildings were demolished by Israel, the structuring of which were funded by the EU, the UK and Denmark under the UN programme.

In Washington, US Defense Secretary, Ashton Carter announced an increased military budget amounting to \$583 billion, to counter Russia.

**February 7**

In Sarajevo, around 2,000 Bosnian people protested against a recent ban on wearing the hijab in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In Brussels, a Joint Readmission Committee (JRC) meeting was held between the EU and Pakistan to discuss the issue of readmission of illegal immigrants. The EU Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Dimitris Avramopoulos and his Pakistani counterpart Minister for Interior, Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan represented the two sides.

**February 10**

NATO defence ministers in a meeting in Brussels approved a new multinational force for Eastern European countries to counter Russian adventurism.

**February 12**

The EU upbraided China for unfair competition threatening European industry due to the cheap goods inundating EU markets. The EU launched a new probe into imports to Chinese steel.

Ambassadors of the EU states held a meeting of the political and security committee in Brussels and decided to dissolve Belarus sanctions for strategic reasons. It also ended visa ban on President Alexander Lukashenko to the EU.

**February 15**

Prime Ministers of the Czech Republic Poland, Hungary and Slovakia, also known as Visegrad Four (V4) hold a meeting in Prague seeking to ramp up border control in the Balkans to control migration inflows from Greece. Germany condemned the V4 planning of blockades which would put Greece under stress.

**February 17**

The Hungarian Prime Minister paid a visit to Moscow to meet his counterpart. They jointly expressed a hope for resumption of cooperation and normal ties. The two states agreed on to build joint gas storage facilities and a nuclear power plant in Hungary.

**February 18**

At the EU summit held in Brussels, the leaders of the European Council achieved a deal which strengthens Britain's special status in the EU, after addressing British concerns. David Cameron will now begin campaign to keep Britain in the EU for June referendum in his country.

**February 19**

In Brussels meeting hosted by the EU council head Donald Tusk with the Presidents of Macedonia and Serbia and the Prime Ministers of Slovenia and Croatia to discuss their demand to get access to the EU's asylum database to enable Balkan police checks on migrants at borders.

**February 20**

The United Nations Security Council rejected the Russian plea to halt Turkey's cross-border shelling and military action in Syria.

As authenticated by Germany's statistics office, the US had left behind France to become Germany's top trading partner due to an upturn in the US economy and a weaker euro.

British Prime Minister David Cameron after a two-hour cabinet meeting in London, announced that the referendum on the UK's continued membership of the EU would be held on June 23, 2016.

**February 25**

In Brussels NATO has brought an agreement between Greece and Turkey to finalize the modalities of the NATO operation, aiming to help the EU in migration management by guarding Mediterranean and Aegean Sea.

The European Parliament called on the EU to impose an arms embargo against Saudi Arabia, accusing it of targeting civilians in Yemen.

**February 27**

At the G20 summit in Shanghai, ministers from the biggest economies expressed their will that the UK should not exit from EU, as it would harm world economy.

**March 2**

The UN Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2270 against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea over its latest nuclear and missile test programme. Sanctions include inspection of all cargo passing to and from North Korea and prohibition of all weapons trade with the country.

**March 3**

European Council President Donald Tusk visited Greece and Turkey to discuss ways to reduce the flow of migrants towards the west.

**March 4**

Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu arrived in Tehran to strengthen Turkey's bilateral relations with Iran.

**March 7**

The EU heads of state and government held a meeting in Brussels with Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu to discuss the implementation of the EU-Turkey joint action plan to return of all migrants crossing from Turkey to Greece.

**March 10**

French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault met with his Egyptian counterpart Sameh Shoukri in Cairo to exchange views on the situation in the Middle East situation.

**March 13**

US Secretary of State John Kerry held a meeting with French Foreign Minister Jean Marc Ayrault in Paris to discuss the crises in the Middle East.

**March 15**

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg held a meeting in Kabul with Afghan President Dr. Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Dr. Abdullah and Kabul to discuss Afghanistan's security situation and the government's reforms.

**March 18**

EU Heads of State and Government and Turkey agreed to end the irregular migration from Turkey to the EU and replace it instead with legal channels of resettlement of refugees in the European Union countries.

**March 19**

Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida met Italian Foreign Minister Paolo Gentiloni in Rome on the occasion of the celebrations of 150 years of diplomatic relations between Italy and Japan. They agreed to expand cooperation to prevent North Korea's nuclear and missile development programmes.

German President Joachim Gauck paid a five day official visit to the People's Republic of China to strengthen political ties with Beijing, which is considered an important economic and strategic partner of Germany.

**March 22**

Turkey and Pakistan signed framework for the free trade agreement in Islamabad to reduce barriers in bilateral trade and investment.

**March 24**

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry held a meeting in Moscow with Russian President Vladimir Putin and discussed the crises in Ukraine and Syria.

**March 28**

China's President Xi Jinping and his Czech counterpart Milos Zeman, signed a strategic partnership agreement in Prague to bolster economic ties.

**March 30**

The 13th EU- India summit was held in Brussels. The EU and Indian leaders endorsed the EU-India Agenda for Action 2020 to strengthen the India-EU Strategic Partnership. The agenda covers a wide range of areas for cooperation such as foreign and security policy, trade and investment, economy, global issues as well as people to people contacts.

**March 31**

U.S. Vice President Joe Biden met with Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko on the sidelines of a nuclear security summit in Washington. President Poroshenko updated the Vice President on negotiations to form a new Ukrainian coalition government, while Biden informed him about the US plan to provide Ukraine an additional \$335 million in security assistance.

**April 6**

A referendum was held in the Netherlands, on the ratification of the association agreement between the EU and Ukraine.

**April 10**

Italian Foreign Minister Paolo Gentiloni and his Japanese counterpart Fumio Kishida met on the sidelines of a Group of Seven foreign ministers' meeting in Hiroshima and agreed to strengthen bilateral cooperation in the security and defence fields.

A G-7 foreign ministers' meeting was held in Hiroshima.

**April 11**

French Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian arrived in Baghdad to confer with Iraqi officials on the war against ISIS.

**April 13**

French President Francois Hollande met with Chinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi in Paris to broadening of bilateral cooperation especially in the fields of civil nuclear energy, agricultural products, tourism and culture, and to promote investment and trade.



**April 16**

German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier and his French counterpart Jean-Marc Ayrault visited Tripoli to show their support for Libya's UN – backed unity government.

**April 17**

French President Francois Hollande held a meeting with his Egyptian counterpart Abdel Fattah El-Sisi in Cairo. The two presidents discussed the latest developments in the Middle East region and the fight against terrorism.

**April 18**

Greek Prime Minister, Alexis Tsipras, held a meeting with European Commission Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness Jyrki Katainen in Athens to discuss Greece's financial reforms, which is a condition for the release of more bailout money to the country.

**April 20**

Nato-Russia Council talks we held in Brussels for the first time since the Ukrainian crisis erupted.

**April 23**

In the aftermath of the release of the Panama Papers, the EU finance ministers met in Amsterdam to review the European Commission's proposal to publish the tax and financial data of large companies.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and top European Union officials arrived in southeastern Turkey to inaugurate the EU aid programme that was signed last month between Brussels and Ankara to help alleviate the refugee crisis.

**April 24**

President Obama met with German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Hannover, Germany to discuss the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) agreement.

Presidential elections were held in Austria.

**April 26**

Minister for Interior Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan met his British counterpart Theresa May in London and discussed regional security issues as well as ways to strengthen bilateral relations.

**April 27**

President of the European Council, Donald Tusk met with the President of Albania, Bujar Nishani, in Brussels. The leaders discussed the key role of the Balkan countries in the current migration crisis.

**April 28**

The Austrian parliament approved asylum laws in response to the migrant crisis in Europe. New law limits the right of asylum and allows most claimants to be rejected directly at the border.

Italian Interior Minister Angelino Alfano and his Austrian counterpart Wolfgang Sobotka reached an agreement in Rome to reduce tensions, that flared up after Austria announced its plan to build a fence at its border with Italy, at the Brenner pass to curb migrant flows.

**April 29**

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi held a meeting with his Russian counterpart, Sergey Lavrov in Beijing. The two leaders expressed their concern over the US proposal to deploy a missile defence system in South Korea.

**April 30**

German police arrested around 400 protesters after clashes which erupted outside a meeting of the right-wing populist Alternative for Germany (AfD) party.

Russia rejected the US claim that one of its jets had intercepted a US reconnaissance plane over the Baltic, and accused Washington of sending spy planes into Russian airspace.

**May 1**

Members of the right-wing populist AfD party of Germany backed an election manifesto that says Islam is not compatible with the constitution and calls for a ban on minarets and the *burqa*.

Under extra security, the Brussels Airport reopened its departure hall for the first time since the deadly extremist attacks in March.

A car bomb struck the Turkish city of Gaziantep, killing at least two policemen and wounding 22 people.

**May 2**

France's National Human Rights Commission (CNCDH) published a report according to which anti-Muslim acts in France tripled in 2015, with peaks in activity coming after the deadly Paris terror attacks.

**May 4**

The European Commission proposed that Kosovo citizens be allowed to travel to the EU's passport-free Schengen zone without a visa.

**May 5**

Turkey's Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu announced that he would step down in two weeks as ruling party chief and premier.

**May 6**

Sadiq Khan, the son of a bus driver and a seamstress became London's first Muslim mayor, beating Zac Goldsmith by nine percentage points.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe met Russian President Vladimir Putin in a rare visit to Moscow. The two sides sought to bolster ties and make progress on a decades-long territorial dispute.

**May 9**

Austrian Chancellor Werner Faymann quit office, bowing to intense pressure two weeks after the opposition anti-immigration far-right dealt his coalition a historic defeat in the first round of presidential elections.

Belgium started trial of seven men linked to terror attacks in Paris and Brussels in a Brussels court.

As the campaign for next month's crucial referendum gathered steam after regional elections, British Prime Minister David Cameron warned that a British exit from the EU would threaten peace on the continent.

The French prime minister announced that de-radicalization centres would be created in all the twelve mainland regions of France.

**May 10**

Germany decided to raise the number of its troops for the first time since 1990, ending a quarter of a century of successive cuts in the army since the end of the Cold War.

London Mayor Sadiq Khan blasted Donald Trump for his ignorance about Islam, after the Republican presidential contender suggested Khan could be exempted from a proposed temporary ban on Muslims entering the United States.

**May 11**

Despite Russian warnings, the United States' European missile defence shield was activated almost a decade after Washington proposed protecting the NATO area from Iranian rockets.

British Prime Minister David Cameron dubbed Nigeria and Afghanistan "possibly the two most corrupt countries in the world".

**May 13**

Germany's secret service accused Russia of being behind a series of international cyber attacks that also targeted the German parliament last year.

Six Turkish soldiers were killed in a clash with Kurdish militants in the southeast of the country while two more lost their lives when a military helicopter sent to the scene crashed.

While hosting leaders from five Nordic countries at the White House, US President Barack Obama warned Russia about its military build-up in northern Europe.

**May 15**

In an interview which unleashed a wave of criticism, former London mayor, Boris Johnson claimed that the European Union was behaving like Hitler by trying to create a superstate.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan lashed out at Europe's silence over the execution of a veteran Islamist leader in Bangladesh, accusing the West of 'double standards'.

**May 17**

French President Francois Hollande vowed to stick to his controversial attempts to reform the labour market despite the new round of violent protests which broke out in France.

**May 18**

Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic arrived in Iran to sign economic cooperation agreements between the two countries.

**May 19**

A man charged with a double murder in the northern English city of Bradford has been extradited to the UK from Pakistan despite the lack of a formal extradition treaty between London and Islamabad.

Turkey's ruling party named a loyal ally of Recep Tayyip Erdogan as the new prime minister.

The French prime minister threatened to use force against rioters as the country was disrupted by a third straight day of strikes and demonstrations.

**May 20**

The US and European governments announced that they would no longer prevent international companies from doing business with Iran, if they followed all applicable rules.

Sparking fresh domestic and international concern Turkey's parliament adopted a highly controversial bill that would lift immunity for dozens of pro-Kurdish and other MPs and could see them evicted from parliament.

Almost 300 actors, writers, musicians and other cultural figures appealed for British voters to stay in the European Union.

**May 23**

Libya has given the European Union permission to begin training its coast guard, as increasing numbers of migrants left the country bound for Italy.

**May 26**

As an escalating wave of industrial action against labour reforms rocked France, masked youths clashed with police in Paris, and striking workers blockaded refineries and disrupted nuclear power stations.

Two pro-Russian rebels were killed and another injured in fresh clashes with government forces in eastern Ukraine.

**May 27**

Turkey accused the United States of hypocrisy after US commandos in Syria were photographed supporting a major ground offensive against the Islamic State (IS) by Syrian Kurds.

**May 29**

UK Conservative party members seeking a British exit from the EU launched increasingly personal attacks on Prime Minister David Cameron over his leadership of the campaign to keep Britain within the 28-nation bloc.

Five Ukrainian soldiers and two rebel fighters were killed in fresh clashes between government forces and pro-Russian separatists in the country's east.

**Dr. Shaista Shaheen Zafar**  
**Mr. Sajjad Ahmad**  
**Ms. Jaweria Tahir**