

## Western Europe & The United States

**Washington (US).** Leaders of the G7 advanced economies [pledged unity](#) on their conditional engagement with the Taliban regime. The announcement and speedy withdrawal of the remaining US troops in Afghanistan was followed by a lightning-fast takeover of the country by the Taliban this month. President Ashraf Ghani fled the country as Taliban forces closed in on the capital, Kabul, eventually ending up in the United Arab Emirates, reportedly via Uzbekistan. A panicked evacuation of embassies and a mass exodus of Western nationals and Afghan citizens that had worked for NATO countries ensued.

Recognition is a political act taken by sovereign states with important consequences, including access to humanitarian aid, the country's central bank reserves, and access to the network of Afghan embassies around the world.

While G7 leaders have pledged to take in thousands of Afghan refugees, Greece has erected a new border fence with Turkey; in turn, Turkey stepped up construction of a border wall with Iran. The situation has sparked fears among European leaders of another large-scale influx of refugees, following the 2015 refugee crisis fuelled by Syria's war.

## Russia & Eastern Europe

**Warsaw (Poland).** Defence Minister Mariusz Blaszczak [announced](#) that Poland is to erect a new 2.5-metre-(8.2-foot)-high fence along the border with Belarus. Poland and fellow EU member states Lithuania and Latvia have reported sharp increases in migrants from countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan trying to cross their borders. Not unlike Turkey and Morocco, it is thought that Minsk is trying to instrumentalise migrant flows to gain leverage vis-à-vis the EU.

## Middle East

**Idlib (Syria).** Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), an alliance of jihadists groups, [celebrated](#) the Taliban "conquest" in the streets of Idlib. Islamists of various shades have hailed the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan as a major victory for global jihad. HTS calls for the creation of a more



“righteous” society founded on religious values. The group’s primary objective is overthrow the Assad regime.

**Cairo (Egypt).** Egypt [will close](#) its Rafah border crossing with the Gaza Strip, following the weekend’s violent clashes along Gaza’s border with Israel. The Egyptian-run Rafah crossing is the sole passageway from Gaza that is not controlled by Israel. Despite the fragile ceasefire, militants in Gaza continue to direct incendiary balloons across the border that set fire to swathes of Israeli farmland and nature reserves. Israel has responded by carrying out airstrikes on what it says are Hamas’ weapons manufacturing and storage sites in Gaza.

**Sanaa (Yemen).** The UN’s outgoing special envoy for Yemen, Martin Griffiths, [told the UN Security Council](#) that roughly two-thirds of the war-ravaged country’s population – about 20 million people – rely on humanitarian aid for their day-to-day needs. In March, Saudi Arabia offered a nationwide ceasefire in Yemen, but the Houthis rejected the proposal, calling for a complete end to the Saudi-led blockade on the country’s ports and Sanaa airport first. Since 2014 the violence has spurred a serious humanitarian crisis that has killed at least 233,000 people, according to UN estimates, and left millions on the verge of starvation.

## Asia

**Beijing (China).** China's ambassador to the United Nations [stated](#) that US and allied military forces should be held accountable for alleged rights violations in Afghanistan. US President Joe Biden is under increasing pressure to extend an August 31 deadline to pull out American forces, with Britain being the most fervent advocate of that request.

## Africa

**Bosaso (Somalia):** Al-Shabab fighters [stormed a military base](#) in central Somalia. The militants launched an attack on a government base in the town of Amara. Government-backed Danab and the Darawish of Galmudug militias withdrew from the area, with al-Shabab gaining control over Amara. Amara is a strategically significant town overseeing access to the coast and is key for the security of the coastal town of Harardheere, already an al-Shabab stronghold. In 2011 Harardhere was considered a prominent pirate base before the EU stepped in to provide maritime security guarantees off the coast of the Horn of Africa.