



# CUTS International *Global Affairs*

News Wrap #98, November 2025– First Fortnightly

## Multilateralism at the Crossroads

The first half of November 2025 reveals a global order wrestling with fundamental questions about cooperation, sovereignty, and shared responsibility. As the world prepares for two pivotal summits this month; COP30 in Belém, Brazil, and the G20 in Johannesburg, the tension between nationalist impulses and collective action has never been more pronounced. UN climate chief Simon Stiell emphasised that finance is the "lifeblood of climate action", capable of turning "plans into progress". The G20 Leaders' Summit in Johannesburg faces its own legitimacy questions, with confirmed absences from the United States and China. President Cyril Ramaphosa insisted the summit "will go on", emphasising that "boycott politics never work", yet the symbolic absence of top leaders of the world's two largest economies during what should be a U.S. presidency handover raises fundamental questions about multilateral institutions' relevance.

The trade landscape is experiencing tectonic shifts. In response to the Trump administration's aggressive reciprocal tariffs pushing U.S. import duties to levels unseen since the early twentieth century, the Philippines and United Arab Emirates have formally applied to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). The UAE's application marks the first Middle Eastern nation to seek CPTPP membership, signalling that regional trade blocs are becoming essential bulwarks against economic nationalism.

This trend extends beyond Asia: South Korea announced enhanced economic cooperation with the United States focused on shipbuilding investments, while simultaneously exploring CPTPP membership hedging its bets in an increasingly fragmented trade environment.

The question now is whether these regional arrangements can maintain coherence while absorbing diverse economies, or whether they merely create new exclusive clubs that fragment global commerce further?

In Africa – demands renewed attention as youth-led movements reshape the continent's political landscape. Madagascar's protests evolved from electricity shortages into a nationwide uprising that, within three weeks, toppled President Andry Rajoelina ironically, the same leader who had come to power through youth-backed protests in 2009.

Tanzania presents an even darker picture: President Samia Suluhu Hassan's 97.66 percent re-election victory, following opposition candidate disqualifications, triggered protests that opposition sources claim resulted in over 1,000 deaths. Once celebrated as an "island of stability", Tanzania now exemplifies how democratic erosion accelerates when leaders underestimate digitally organised youth movements. These movements which are extending to Kenya, Morocco, and Cameroon share common characteristics: digital organisation through platforms like Facebook and Discord, demands for pragmatic governance rather than ideological change, and sustained pressure despite violent crackdowns.

From the Philippines and UAE seeking refuge in the Trans-Pacific Partnership to escape Trump's tariff regime, to Generation Z protesters toppling governments across Africa, the message is clear: the old certainties are crumbling, and what replaces them will define the trajectory of international relations for decades.

**P.S.:** *As artificial intelligence transforms labour markets and threatens widespread job displacement, how should the Global South approach AI governance to protect workers while capturing economic benefits? Will COP30 and the G20 demonstrate that implementation can triumph over empty promises?*

### Message for our Readers

This is the 98th edition of the fortnightly news wrap from the Centre, which carries select published news or comments on a relevant issue. There are equally important issues that may have been overlooked to keep the news wrap short and swiftly readable.

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### U.S.-South Korea Deal Details Released

The U.S. and South Korea unveiled details of a new agreement aimed at enhancing Korean investment in American shipbuilding, while also strengthening trade ties and cooperation across key strategic industries, underscoring both nations' commitment to deepening their economic and security partnerships.



- [Why Did Asian Countries Give Trump So Much on Trade? | Foreign Policy](#)
- [Ghana overhauls its mining sector, set to scrap mineral exploration tax | Business Insider Africa](#)
- [JPMorgan Targets Dubai to Win Over Middle Eastern Startups | Finimize](#)
- [Top diplomats from G7 countries meet in Canada as trade tensions rise with Trump | The Hindu](#)

# Strategic Issues

## U.S. Approves US\$330mn Arms Sale to Taiwan

The U.S. has approved a US\$330mn military sale to Taiwan, marking the first such deal under the Trump administration. The package includes spare parts and equipment to strengthen Taiwan's air defence capabilities, reinforcing U.S. support amid rising tensions with China.



- [Twin Blasts Raise Fears of Renewed India-Pakistan Tensions](#) | Bloomberg
- [Pakistan parliament approves more powers for army chief, curbs top court](#) | CNN World
- [Australia-Indonesia Treaty on Common Security](#) | Australian Naval Institute
- [Turkey says two-state solution is the most realistic option for Cyprus](#) | DD News

# Energy and Climate

## India's Climate Strategy for COP30

India is expected to play a pivotal role at COP30 by championing the priorities of the Global South, advocating for equitable climate finance, and accelerating the adoption of renewable energy. Balancing coal dependence with ambitious green targets, India must assert leadership amid China's influence and the U.S. absence



- [Arun Maira: Bill Gates has changed how he thinks climate change should be tackled – Here's what's different | Mint](#)
  - [Liberal Party formally abandons net zero by 2050 climate target | Australian Broadcasting Corporation](#)
  - [Oil and Gas Demand Could Grow Until 2050, IEA Says | The Wall Street Journal](#)
  - [COP30: How the world plans to pay its rising climate costs | Reuters](#)
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### **G20 Summit to Proceed Despite Absences**

President Cyril Ramaphosa confirmed that the G20 Leaders' Summit in Johannesburg will proceed despite the absence of the U.S. and China. He emphasised that boycott politics "never work," highlighting the summit's importance for global decisions, the symbolic U.S. presidency handover, and continued engagement with major economies.



- [Russia offers rival proposal as US presses for approval of UN resolution on Gaza | The New Arab](#)
  - [Iran says US is not ready for 'equal and fair' nuclear talks | The Strait Times](#)
  - [EU foreign ministers to discuss training 3,000 Palestinian police officers from Gaza | The Times of Israel](#)
  - [Seoul's backing of UN resolution on North Korea's rights abuses tests limits of dialogue push | SCMP](#)
  - [US Vice President Vance plans Kenya visit | The Indian Express](#)
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### **U.S.-Japan-Korea Partnership Boosts Prosperity**

The U.S., Japan, and South Korea have strengthened their trilateral partnership to advance economic prosperity by focusing on resilient supply chains, clean energy, and emerging technologies. The initiative underscores their shared commitment to innovation, sustainable growth, and regional stability in the Indo-Pacific.



- [Decoding The Reasons for the US' Six-Month Chabahar Sanctions Waiver](#) | Andrew Korybko's Newsletter
- [Vietnam's plan to ease high-tech subsidies worries South Korean investors](#) | The Star
- [DBS, Ant International deepen ties to enhance cross-border payments](#) | The Asian Banking and Finance
- [Saudis to host investment summit in D.C. during bin Salman White House visit](#) | CBS News



### **Combating Hate against Indian Americans**

The article highlights rising online hate against Indian Americans, often spread by anonymous accounts on platforms like X. It stresses that such racism, including “go back” slurs, demands urgent attention and collective action to protect diaspora communities and uphold civil rights.



