



MAIN TAKEAWAY of the month

The month of June brought a major shift in NATO's defense posture. At the 2025 Hague Summit, alliance members agreed to increase defense spending to 5% of GDP by 2035, citing Russia and terrorism as enduring threats. The new framework allocates 3.5% to core defense capabilities and 1.5% to broader needs, including continued support for Ukraine, which is seen as vital to the alliance's security. Members also reaffirmed their commitment to collective defense under Article 5 and pledged to remove internal trade barriers in the defense sector.

Peace talks between Russia and Ukraine made little progress in June, with negotiations marked by rigid Russian demands and minimal common ground. While both sides agreed to a prisoner exchange prioritizing vulnerable detainees, Moscow's proposed terms—requiring Ukrainian withdrawal, neutrality, and recognition of annexed territories—remain unacceptable to Kyiv. Statements from senior Russian officials calling for Ukraine's total capitulation highlight the ongoing diplomatic deadlock and reinforce the unlikelihood of a near-term resolution.

In June 2025, Ukraine launched its most extensive drone and hybrid attacks to date, launching 117 drones in an operation called "Spider Web," targeting four Russian air bases and damaging around 40 aircraft, including 34% of Russia's cruise missile-carrying bombers and carried out a third successful underwater sabotage of the Kerch Bridge. In retaliation, Russia escalated its air and ground offensives, unleashing tens of thousands of aerial attacks and advancing in eastern Ukraine. Ukraine advanced key domestic reforms to strengthen wartime governance, attract investment, and deepen international ties. These efforts were matched by substantial Western support: the UK, EU, and other allies delivered major military, financial, and humanitarian aid packages, while progress was made on EU accession and defense-industrial cooperation.

President Putin condemned the attacks as terrorism and hinted at halting peace talks, while Russia relocated strategic bombers and intensified nuclear weapons development, including serial production of the Oreshnik missile system. Satellite imagery and infrastructure changes indicate Russia is reinforcing its military presence near NATO borders and reviving nuclear capabilities in Kaliningrad, Belarus, and the Arctic. Economically, the wartime growth model is faltering amid inflation, labor shortages, and declining industrial output, prompting interest rate cuts and foreign labor recruitment.

Moldova is facing increasing internal and external pressures, prompting authorities to strengthen border controls and advance key infrastructure projects to enhance national resilience. Political tensions are rising ahead of upcoming elections, with growing polarization between pro-European and pro-Russian forces. At the same time, Moldova continues to deepen ties with the EU and Romania, despite ongoing efforts by external actors to destabilize its European trajectory.

In the Balkans, the European Parliament delayed North Macedonia's EU accession vote due to Bulgarian MEPs' objections over language and identity, though the Foreign Affairs Committee later approved the. Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić visited Ukraine on June 11 but refused to sign a declaration backing aid to Ukraine and rejecting Russian support, maintaining Serbia's neutral stance. Romania strengthened NATO ties by hosting the Sea Breeze exercise and moving forward with receiving 18 F-16s from the Netherlands for future F-35 integration and Ukrainian pilot training.

Ukraine has intensified its long-range and hybrid operations against Russia in June, carrying out its largest drone attack since the war began. A total of [117 drones were launched](#), targeting four Russian air bases and damaging around 40 aircraft, including 34% of Russia's cruise missile-carrying bombers, as part of an operation called “Spider Web” by the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU). Additional strikes [damaged two A-50 surveillance planes](#), a [military drone factory in Taganrog](#), and [the Atlas oil depot in Rostov](#). Ukrainian forces also hit a missile base near Klinty, destroying [an Iskander launcher](#), and conducted a third successful underwater sabotage [operation against the Kerch Bridge](#) in Crimea. Cyber [units breached the Tupolev](#) aircraft design bureau, exfiltrating 4.4 GB of confidential data, while Ukrainian partisans sabotaged a [Russian military truck in occupied Melitopol](#). Explosions [were also reported](#) near drone assembly and defense facilities in Yelabuga, Nijnekamsk, and Stavropol. Such actions [have sparked renewed criticism from Russian military bloggers](#) about Moscow’s inability to secure key infrastructure far from the frontline. Consequently, Russia’s March 2025 offensive in the Sumy region, [aimed at creating a buffer zone near the Kursk border and bringing Sumy within artillery range](#), failed to secure meaningful territorial gains. Ukrainian Armed Forces Commander [Oleksandr Syrsky confirmed the front has stabilized](#), with Ukrainian troops regaining tactical ground in some areas.

In response, Russia escalated its air campaign with unprecedented intensity, launching approximately [48,600 aerial attacks in 2025](#) so far. President Zelensky stated that 27,700 aerial bombs, 11,200 Shahed drones, and 9,000 other drones have been used this year, along with over 700 missiles. One of the heaviest assaults occurred on 1 June, with a record 472 drones, and again on 17 June, [when 472 weapons](#) – including 280 Shahed drones and Kinjal ballistic missiles – hit Kyiv in a nine-hour barrage. Russia also attacked Zaporizhzhia, [destroying 100 tons of humanitarian aid](#) and injuring three people, and [bombarded Poltava](#) and [Odesa](#), with casualties reported. In Kharkiv, there were [two people killed and over 60 wounded](#). Another instance of large Russian drone and missile strike [against Kyiv came overnight on 22–23 June](#), with 368 munitions launched, of which 354 were intercepted by Ukrainian air defense systems. Meanwhile, Russian forces expanded their ground offensive, [claiming control over Dylivka](#) (Donetsk) and [advancing into Dnipropetrovsk for the first time](#) since the full-scale invasion began. Intelligence reports suggest [Russia aims to seize the entire Donbas and isolate](#) Ukraine from the Black Sea by autumn, backed by increasing drone production capacity with Chinese support.

In June, Ukraine adopted several key domestic measures aimed at addressing wartime challenges and advancing strategic partnerships. Facing stalled negotiations with creditors, President Volodymyr Zelensky [postponed a \\$665 million payment on GDP-linked](#) debt, extending a moratorium until a fair restructuring aligned with IMF targets can be reached. In parallel, the Ukrainian parliament [passed a law allowing multiple citizenships](#), a major shift intended to combat demographic decline and reconnect with the global diaspora. On the economic front, lawmakers approved budget code amendments [crucial for implementing a U.S.-Ukraine strategic](#) minerals agreement, which gained momentum with the government’s decision to begin [preparing an investment tender for the Dobra lithium deposit](#), one of the country’s largest. Additionally, in a move to strengthen rights protection within the armed forces, the first reading of [a bill to create a Military Ombudsman](#) was adopted by the Rada, signaling progress in institutional accountability during wartime mobilization.

Ukraine continued to receive significant military aid from Western partners. The United Kingdom committed to a [tenfold increase in drone deliveries, aiming to provide 100,000](#) drones by the end of the fiscal year, while also [announcing a £70 million aid package](#) funded through interest on frozen Russian assets. This includes 350 air defense missiles and five additional Raven systems, raising Ukraine’s total to 13. The Netherlands [pledged €175 million](#), including 100 drone detection radars and 20 medical evacuation vehicles. France [provided the MV-25 OSKAR](#) stealth drone, while Denmark, Sweden, Canada, Norway, and Iceland [allocated €1.3 billion \(starting with a €428 million tranche\)](#) to produce artillery, anti-tank systems, drones, and missiles under the “Danish model.” [Norway further pledged \\$400 million for Ukraine](#)'s domestic defense industry and began developing

joint production capacities for air defense systems, with Kongsberg Defence & Aerospace opening an office in Ukraine. Italy [committed €1.5 million for humanitarian demining](#), and the [EU confirmed a €50 billion program](#), partly supporting Ukraine's defense sector.

Ukraine's fiscal resilience was bolstered by continued financial aid flows. The European Union [disbursed €1 billion under the ERA \(Extraordinary Revenue Acceleration\) initiative](#), marking the fifth tranche from the €7 billion total generated through profits from frozen Russian assets, while [agreeing to extend sanctions](#) on Russia for another six months until at least early 2026. The EU also proposed increasing returns by [investing €200 billion of those assets into](#) higher-yield financial instruments to support a €45 billion G7 loan package.

Meanwhile, as a result of the 2025 NATO Hague Summit, [alliance members agreed to increase their annual defense spending](#), ultimately up to 5% of their gross domestic product by 2035, noting Russia and terrorism as long-term threats to the alliance. Under the revised framework, 3.5% [will be directed toward core defence capabilities](#), while the remaining 1.5% will cover broader defence-related costs—including support for Ukraine, which is recognized as vital to the overall security of the Alliance. Progress toward this target will be reviewed in 2029. On top of that, member states reconfirmed their commitment to Article 5 and will work to eliminate defence trade barriers. President Donald Trump hailed the alliance's new 5% GDP defense spending target as a "big win," crediting his influence for pushing allies beyond the long-standing 2% goal. He praised leaders for responding to the threats posed by Russia and terrorism and criticized countries like Spain for refusing to meet the new benchmark, warning of trade consequences.

In parallel, humanitarian and reconstruction aid for Ukraine saw major international support in June. On 23 June, over 525 million USD [was allocated from partners like JICA and the EU for healthcare, education, demining, agriculture, and port repairs](#). Norway [pledged to cover a potential €1 billion gas shortfall](#) to safeguard Ukraine's winter energy needs. Meanwhile, 26 of 27 EU states support advancing Ukraine's accession talks, [with formal decision to be adopted at the 26–27 June summit](#). Airbus and Ukroboronprom also [signed a cooperation deal to train Ukrainian technicians](#) in aircraft maintenance, boosting integration with Europe's defense industry.

PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

The peace negotiations between Russia and Ukraine have not evolved significantly this month, marked by intermittent discussions and limited tangible progress. On June 2, 2025, Russia and Ukraine held a second round of direct talks in Istanbul, [where Russia presented a memorandum outlining two ceasefire options](#). The first requires Ukraine to withdraw from Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson. The second includes restrictions on Ukrainian troop movements, a halt to foreign military aid, demobilization, and a ban on foreign troops in Ukraine. Both sides would release detained civilians and grant mutual amnesty for "political prisoners." Ukraine would also have to lift the state of emergency and hold elections within 100 days. The proposal further demands Ukrainian neutrality, a ban on foreign military activity, non-nuclear status, and limits on the Ukrainian Armed Forces. Russia also seeks the lifting of international sanctions, recognition of its annexation of Crimea and four other regions, and mutual renunciation of war reparations. Additional points include protections for Russian speakers, lifting restrictions on the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, banning Nazi glorification, and gradually restoring diplomatic and economic ties, including gas transit. The primary outcome of this round was an agreement on a 1000 prisoner exchange prioritizing vulnerable groups, including the gravely injured and young individuals, which took place in three series: on June 16, [June 19-20](#), and [June 26](#).

These demands, articulated in a memorandum presented during the same period, have been deemed unacceptable by Kyiv, viewing them as tantamount to capitulation. Subsequent developments have seen continued prisoner exchanges and repatriation of the deceased, reflecting limited areas of consensus. However, high-ranking officials from both sides, including [Dmitri Medvedev, Deputy Chairman of the Security Council of Russia](#), and [Andrei Kelin, the Russian Ambassador in the UK](#), have expressed skepticism regarding the prospects for a peaceful resolution, claiming that Russia

has to claim a “rapid victory [in Ukraine] and the complete destruction of the Ukrainian government”, as well as the acceptance of Moscow’s peace conditions and total capitulation.

RUSSIA - internal and external dynamics

Following the June 1 covert [long-range drone operation](#) targeting Russian military airfields and the collapse of the two bridges, on June 4, President Vladimir Putin [addressed](#) only the bridge incidents, [accusing Kyiv of terrorism](#) and hinting at a possible halt in peace talks. Meanwhile, senior Russian lawmakers proposed [designating Ukraine's leadership as](#) a terrorist organization. The attacks triggered [intense backlash](#) from Russian military bloggers, [some demanding nuclear retaliation](#). In response to the operation, Russia [relocated strategic bombers](#) — including Tu-160s, Tu-95MSs, and Tu-22M3s — from affected bases to more remote airfields in Kamchatka and Chukotka.

In terms of military production developments, President Vladimir Putin [announced the serial production of the Oreshnik medium-range missile system](#) as part of a broader strategy to strengthen nuclear capabilities, including the deployment of Yars systems (range: 12,000 km), integration of Tu-160M bombers, and naval modernization with precision-guided missiles. Concurrently, Russia is [reinforcing its military infrastructure near NATO's northern flank](#), with Planet Labs satellite imagery (cited by SVT) showing increased activity at five sites near Sweden. Belarus is reactivating the former nuclear storage site at Asipovičŭ, while nuclear-related facilities have been constructed in Kaliningrad, and naval ballistic missile capabilities are expanding on Novaia Zemlea and the Kola Peninsula. The internal military restructuring includes [reinstating the Moscow and Leningrad military districts](#) by 2025, forming a new category of unmanned system troops, and upgrading marine infantry brigades into divisions to boost operational capabilities. At sea, Russian forces are now [using Lancet drones to intercept Ukrainian maritime drones](#). In one case, a Lancet in Crimea destroyed a Magura V7 carrying two U.S.-made AIM-9M Sidewinder missiles. Simultaneously, Roscosmos is preparing to launch 102 satellites and a spacecraft for a future drone-control system; the Express-RV network will [support continuous connections](#), including in the Arctic.

On the political front, President Vladimir Putin has approved Russia’s first-ever [Development Strategy for the Navy](#) through 2050, offering a detailed assessment of the international politico-military environment, possible scenarios for the outbreak of armed conflicts, and the naval capabilities of the world’s leading maritime powers. The strategy will be supported by a [long-term shipbuilding program](#) extending to 2050. In addition, Moscow launched the [second phase of the federal program Time of Heroes](#), aimed at training Ukraine war veterans for roles in public administration and state-owned enterprises. Of the 85 participants, 31 are Heroes of Russia and 71 have received the Order of Courage. Initiated by Putin in March 2024, the program positions veterans as Russia’s “new elite,” yet as of May 1, 2025, only [57% of demobilized soldiers](#) had found employment, according to Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova.

Furthermore, at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (June 18–21), President Vladimir Putin outlined the Kremlin’s position on the war in Ukraine, asserting that [Russians and Ukrainians are “one people”](#) and declaring that [“all of Ukraine is ours.”](#) He cited an “ancient rule” claiming any territory occupied by Russian soldiers becomes Russian, while stating that Moscow’s goal is not Ukraine’s surrender but recognition of the “new realities on the ground” since the March 2022 talks. Putin also announced plans to create a 10–12 km [“security zone” in Ukraine’s Sumy region](#) and did not rule out the capture of the city itself. In a press conference with foreign media, he expressed [willingness to negotiate](#) with President Zelensky but questioned his legitimacy, citing Ukraine’s constitution, which limits presidential terms to five years with no wartime extension provision.

Public sentiment, patriotic education, and defense policy in Russia continue to evolve amid the ongoing conflict. The Kremlin continues to intensify patriotic education initiatives. On May 31, the [“Movement of the First” festival opened in Moscow](#) with President Putin’s participation, featuring weapon-assembly activities, lectures by veterans of the war in Ukraine, and discussions on patriotic values. From 2026, [Russia will launch Pilots of the Future](#), a national UAV piloting competition for children aged 7 and up. Approved by Putin, the program aims to promote drone skills — both civil

and military — through official sports titles and rankings, further embedding ideological and technical training into youth education.

Economically, Russia's economy is showing mounting signs of strain amid persistent inflation, slowing growth, and labor shortages. According to Rosstat, [inflation between June 17–23 rose by 0.04%](#), bringing monthly inflation to 0.12% and year-to-date inflation to 3.68% — slightly lower than 3.88% for the same period in 2024. The annual inflation rate dropped to 9.41% on June 23, down from 9.60% a week earlier. The Central Bank, noting faster-than-expected disinflation, cut the [benchmark interest rate](#) by one point to 20% in early June. Inflation expectations also [declined to 13%](#) in June, from 13.4% in May. At the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (June 18–21), top officials acknowledged the limits of the current wartime growth model. Former Economy Minister [Maxim Oreshkin said](#) the model focused on maximizing human and productive capacity has been exhausted. Central Bank Governor Elvira [Nabiullina echoed this](#), citing depleted resources: labor, production capacity, banking capital, and the National Welfare Fund. Economic Development Minister Maxim Reshetnikov [warned that the economy is “on the verge of recession.”](#)

This slowdown is reflected in the [Business Climate Index, which dropped from 4.8 in May to 2.9 in June](#) — the lowest since December 2022. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov [said the current 20% interest rate remains too high](#) for economic activity. Despite a slight uptick in industrial production ([1.8% year-on-year](#) in May), cumulative growth for the first five months was just 1.3%, well below the ministry's 2.6% forecast for 2025 and [far short of the 5.2% seen](#) in the same period last year.

To [address labor shortages](#), Russian industry brought in 47,000 skilled foreign workers in 2024 — up 16% from the original quota — mainly from China, Turkey, India, and Serbia. Labor Minister Anton Kotyakov [emphasized that](#) long-term solutions require investment in automation and robotics. Meanwhile, the metallurgical sector faces a crisis due to plummeting exports. Industry Minister Anton Alikhanov [announced plans to reduce the tax burden](#) on steelmakers by 2026. Severstal's CEO warned of [possible factory shutdowns](#) to stabilize finances, as Russian steel exports have [dropped by](#) one-third since the war began, from 32 million tons in 2021 to 20 million in 2024, according to Ruska Stal.

On June 4, former U.S. President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin held another telephone conversation. Trump stated the [talks focused on](#) resolving the conflict in Ukraine and addressing Iran's nuclear program. During the call, [Putin warned that Moscow would respond to Ukrainian drone strikes](#) on Russian airfields. Around the same time, Sergey Chemezov, head of the state-owned defense giant Rostec, [claimed that the U.S. had expressed interest in cooperation](#) and initiated a process that might lead to lifting sanctions on the company, which supplies about 80% of weapons used by Russia in Ukraine.

Meanwhile, Russia's gas hub project in Turkey, once seen as a cornerstone of its post-Nord Stream energy strategy, has been quietly shelved. Citing stalled negotiations with Ankara, Bloomberg reported that [Gazprom abandoned plans for a Black Sea pipeline hub](#) capable of delivering 55 billion cubic meters of gas annually to Turkey and then to Europe. The initiative, proposed by Putin in 2022, aimed to help Moscow re-enter the European energy market, which it largely lost following its full-scale invasion of Ukraine. In contrast, Russia is expanding its energy footprint in Africa. Putin [ratified a cooperation deal with the Republic of Congo](#) for the construction of an oil pipeline linking Pointe-Noire to Brazzaville. A Russian company will hold a 90% stake in the joint venture, with a 25-year concession planned upon completion.

Tensions in the Middle East further tested Moscow's diplomacy. Following U.S. airstrikes on Iranian nuclear facilities on June 22, the Russian Foreign Ministry [condemned the attack as “irresponsible”](#) and a violation of international law. On June 23, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas [Araghchi visited Moscow](#) to meet with Putin and delivered a letter from Ayatollah Khamenei. According to Reuters, Tehran expressed disappointment over Russia's cautious response to the U.S. and Israeli actions, [expecting stronger backing](#) from a strategic partner. Putin reassured Iran of support but avoided specifics. At the St. Petersburg Economic Forum, when pressed by journalists, he clarified that the

Russian-Iranian partnership [does not include defense cooperation](#), and that Iran had [made no formal request](#) for military assistance.

Bilateral diplomacy between Russia and the U.S. remains stagnant. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Washington had [postponed a scheduled June 16 meeting](#) in Moscow without explanation. In parallel, U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham announced in a June 29 interview that President Donald Trump is prepared to support a Senate vote on a bill introducing new sanctions against Russia. Graham, one of the bill's co-authors, explained that the proposal [includes tariffs of up to 500%](#) on products imported into the United States from countries that continue to purchase oil, gas, or uranium from Russia, while failing to support Ukraine. The senator emphasized that the measure is particularly aimed at China and India, which are accused of indirectly financing Russia's war effort through significant purchases of Russian energy resources.

On the other hand, economic ties are being discreetly explored. Kirill Dmitriev, head of the Russian Direct Investment Fund, [announced that](#) talks with American firms are underway for strategic projects. According to him, the collaborations—set to be announced in the coming months—will focus on strategic sectors such as rare mineral extraction, including in the Arctic region, and the development of related infrastructure.

Meanwhile, Russia–North Korea military-industrial cooperation is expanding rapidly. On June 17, Russian Security Council Secretary Sergei Shoigu [made his second visit to Pyongyang](#) this month. Following discussions, the two sides [agreed that](#) North Korea will send 1,000 engineers and 5,000 military builders to Russia to assist with reconstruction in the Kursk region. In addition, NHK reported that [Pyongyang may send](#) up to 25,000 personnel for training in drone manufacturing and operation at Russia's Alabuga UAV factory in Tatarstan, known for producing Geran-2 drones. Further, Ukrainian intelligence chief Kyrylo Budanov [alleged that Russia is helping North Korea](#) develop long-range drones, including production of "Geran" and "Garpia" models on North Korean soil. Bild [reported that](#) construction has begun on North Korea's largest arms factory, near Huichon, which is reportedly being built for export to Russia, not domestic use.

Evolutions in the Republic of MOLDOVA

In June, the Republic of Moldova experienced increased tensions related to an unofficial [kickboxing championship held in Chişinău](#), which triggered political controversy and national security concerns. Although the event lacked official recognition, it was organized with the support of Mayor Ion Ceban, whose pro-European stance has been questioned due to his past affiliations with the Communist and Socialist parties. The PAS faction in the Chişinău Municipal Council criticized the City Hall for allegedly cooperating with a sports organization linked to pro-Kremlin and separatist networks. As a result, [government authorities banned entry to over 100 foreign nationals](#), mainly Russians and Belarusians, suspected of connections to military groups. Tensions intensified when several individuals from Romania, believed to have connections to Russia, [were also refused entry](#).

On the other hand, energy infrastructure remains a strategic priority for Moldova's national resilience. Progress continues on the construction of the [Vulcăneşti–Chişinău](#) high-voltage power line, a key project for Moldova's energy independence. A total of 224 pylons (44% of the required number) have been installed, and 80% of the foundations are complete. Minister of Energy Dorin Junghietu confirmed these figures during an on-site inspection.

Recent public demonstrations have underscored the increasing political polarization in Moldova ahead of the parliamentary elections scheduled for September 28. [On June 23](#), the Socialist Party (PSRM) organized a rally titled "For Sovereignty" near Parliament, criticizing the pro-European government and advocating for permanent neutrality, constitutional sovereignty, and the preservation of national identity. Concurrently, the ruling Party of Action and Solidarity (PAS) held a parallel event, the ["March of Sovereignty"](#), reaffirming the nation's European integration as a reflection of the sovereign will of the Moldovan people.

Bilateral relations between Romania and the Republic of Moldova were further reinforced through a high-level diplomatic visit. Romanian President Nicușor Dan paid his [first official visit to Chișinău](#) on June 10, 2025, fulfilling a campaign promise to provide ongoing support to the Republic of Moldova.

For the first time in its history, the Republic of Moldova will host a high-level bilateral summit with the European Union. This landmark event, held under the auspices of President Maia Sandu, is scheduled to [take place on July 4, 2025](#), at the State Residence, further underscoring Moldova's commitment to advancing European integration. However, this significant diplomatic event occurs amid escalating covert efforts to undermine Moldova's European path. Between [May 22 and 25](#), over 100 youths from sensitive regions were covertly transported to Antalya, Turkey, under the guise of a cultural exchange. This operation was coordinated by Roman Zagliadov, financed by the Russian NGO "Evrezia," and involved recruitment efforts supported by clergy previously engaged in pro-Russian initiatives in Russia.

At the economic level, preliminary data from the National Bureau of Statistics indicates that [Moldova's GDP contracted by 1.2% in the first quarter of 2025](#) compared to the same period in 2024. Amid a worsening economic crisis in Transnistria, unrecognized leader Vadim Krasnoselski convened an emergency meeting, citing a [43% drop in industrial output](#), a [31.5% fall in foreign trade](#), and the suspension of electricity exports between January and May 2025. With financial reserves nearly exhausted and social payments at risk, he raised the prospect of requesting substantial aid from Russia.

The Balkans

On June 4, the European Parliament delayed the vote on North Macedonia's EU accession report due to disputes over [language and identity](#), driven by Bulgarian MEPs' objections. Despite this, on June 24, the [Foreign Affairs Committee approved the report](#), rejecting an amendment on the "Macedonian language and identity." Bulgarian MEPs plan to reintroduce the amendment in July, seeking language that safeguards Bulgarian minority rights and interests.

On June 11, Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić made his [first visit to Odesa](#), Ukraine, amid regional tensions. At the Ukraine-Southeastern Europe Summit, he declined to sign a joint declaration supporting increased aid to Ukraine and rejecting assistance to Russia, upholding Serbia's neutral position. Serbia condemns the Kremlin at the UN and backs Ukraine's territorial integrity, but refuses to sign an ["anti-Russian" declaration](#).

The recent escalation between Israel and Iran has intensified geopolitical tensions with direct repercussions in the Balkans. Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić expressed concern over growing economic instability, particularly the rise in oil prices, and announced the immediate [suspension of all ammunition exports](#) in light of international scrutiny regarding arms deliveries to Ukraine and Israel. The Serbian Ministry of Defense stated that any future exports will require prior approval from the National Security Council and other relevant authorities. Additionally, to mitigate potential economic disruptions caused by sanctions, the [Serbian government](#) has formally requested a [180-day extension](#) of Naftna Industrija Srbije's (NIS) operating license from the U.S. Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC).

Romania continues to reinforce its strategic role in regional security and NATO cooperation through key military exercises and defense acquisitions. The country hosted the [25th Sea Breeze multinational maritime exercise](#) in Brăila from June 9 to 20, enhancing NATO interoperability with regional allies, including Bulgaria, Moldova, and Turkey, under the leadership of the U.S. Sixth Fleet. Additionally, Romania formalized the transfer of [18 more F-16 fighter jets](#) from the Netherlands during the NATO Hague Summit. These jets are part of a transitional program toward integrating advanced F-35 aircraft and will also be used to continue training Ukrainian pilots.

On June 24, Romania's Parliament approved a new [pro-European coalition government](#) led by [Prime Minister Ilie Bolojan](#), securing 65% support. The coalition comprises the Social Democratic Party (PSD), National Liberal Party (PNL), Save Romania Union (USR), and Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (UDMR). Newly elected President Nicușor Dan emphasized the government's focus on rebuilding public trust through fiscal stability, anti-corruption measures, and reducing income inequality. Prime Minister Bolojan highlighted priorities such as reducing the budget deficit and reforming state institutions.

In the meantime...



The first-ever [high-level bilateral summit](#) between the Republic of Moldova and the European Union will take place in Chișinău on July 4, 2025, hosted by President Maia Sandu. The meeting will focus on Moldova's EU accession path, with discussions covering economic cooperation, infrastructure, energy, digitalization, and the €1.9 billion Growth Plan.



The [17th BRICS Summit is scheduled for July 6–7](#) in Rio de Janeiro, under Brazilian leadership, focusing on promoting Global South interests, economic cooperation, sustainable development, and advancing trade using national currencies. Russian President Putin will participate remotely due to an ICC arrest warrant, with Foreign Minister Lavrov attending in person, as member states prepare a balanced communique on the Iran–Israel conflict.



The [Ukraine Recovery Conference](#) (URC 2025) will be held in Rome on July 10–11, focusing on Ukraine's reconstruction, EU integration, and reform progress. Co-hosted by Italy and Ukraine, it will bring together international partners and businesses to promote long-term recovery and investment.

