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Hamas rejects Trump's Gaza vision, calls for end to 'Israeli occupation'

February 27, 2025 israelnationalnews.com reported: "Hamas on Wednesday strongly condemned a video shared by US President Donald Trump which promotes his vision for transforming Gaza into a seafront resort, *Xinhua* reported. The terrorist organization accused Trump of disregarding Palestinian rights and cultural identity.

Bassem Naim, a senior member of Hamas' political bureau, stated that Trump's proposals 'ignore the real causes of Gaza's suffering, primarily the ongoing Israeli occupation.'

'Unfortunately, Trump is reintroducing ideas that do not take into account the culture and interests of the Palestinian people,' Naim said in a statement quoted by *Xinhua*.

He further stressed that the reconstruction of Gaza would be futile without addressing what he referred to as the 'open prison' imposed by Israel.

'Our goal is not to improve prison conditions, but to end the occupation and be free of it,' Naim continued, underlining that genuine progress in the region could only be achieved through the establishment of an independent Palestinian state..."

Iran significantly increased stocks of highly enriched uranium: IAEA

February 27, 2025 spacewar.com reported: "Iran has significantly increased its stockpile of highly enriched uranium in recent months, according to a confidential report by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) seen by AFP on Wednesday.

Tensions between Iran and the UN nuclear watchdog have repeatedly flared since a 2015 deal curbing Tehran's nuclear programme in exchange for sanctions relief fell apart.

The IAEA said in its quarterly report that it is of 'serious concern' that Iran has an estimated 274.8 kilograms (605 pounds) of uranium enriched to up to 60 percent as of 8 February, up by 92.5 kilograms since the previous report in November.

That level of enrichment is a short step from the 90 percent needed to make a nuclear weapon. Tehran in December warned it would ramp up production of uranium enriched to 60 percent in response to the adoption of an IAEA board resolution that censured Tehran for its lack of cooperation with the agency.

Iran had also announced that it would launch 'new and advanced' centrifuges. Tehran insists on its right to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and has denied it is seeking a weapons capability..."

China holds 'shooting' drills off Taiwan's coast, vows 'reunification' push

February 26, 2025 voanews.com reported: "China's military held 'shooting training' on Wednesday off Taiwan's southwest coast in a move Taipei described as provocative and dangerous, while a senior Chinese leader vowed unswerving efforts to bring the island under Beijing's control.

Democratically governed Taiwan, which China views as its own territory, has repeatedly complained of Chinese military activities, including several rounds of full-scale war games over the past three years.

From shortly before 9 a.m. local time, Taiwan's defense ministry said in a statement, it had detected 32 Chinese military aircraft carrying out a 'joint combat readiness drill' with Chinese warships in the Taiwan Strait area.

'During this period, it even blatantly violated international practice by setting up a drills area in waters about 40 nautical miles (74 km) off the coast ... without prior warning, claiming that it would carry out 'shooting training, it added..."



Germany's Merz vows 'independence' from Trump's

February 23, 2025 politico.eu reported: "Friedrich Merz did not even wait for the final results in Germany's election before delivering what could well be a defining verdict on U.S. President Donald Trump, consigning Europe's 80-year

alliance with the United States to the past.

The Trump administration does not care about Europe and is aligning with Russia, said Merz, who is on course to become Germany's new leader. The continent, he warned, must urgently strengthen its defenses and potentially even find a replacement for NATO — within months.

Merz's comments mark a historic watershed: They reveal how deeply Trump has shaken the political foundations of Europe, which has depended on American security guarantees since 1945.

If he follows through on his rhetoric after assembling a new government in the coming weeks, Merz will steer Europe in a radical new direction at a critical time for the security of Ukraine and the wider region.

"My absolute priority will be to strengthen Europe as quickly as possible so that, step by step, we can really achieve independence from the USA," Germany's chancellor-in-waiting said. "I never thought I would have to say something like this on a television program. But after Donald Trump's statements last week at the latest, it is clear that the Americans, at least this part of the Americans, this administration, are largely indifferent to the fate of Europe."

Merz, a staunch Atlanticist who has spent much of his professional career as a lawyer working with and for American firms, didn't stop there. Later this year, a NATO summit will be held — but he suggested Europe may need to devise a new defense structure to replace it.

"I am very curious to see how we are heading toward the NATO summit at the end of June," he said. "Whether we will still be talking about NATO in its current form or whether we will have to establish an independent European defense capability much more quickly."

Such extraordinary statements from the likely next leader of Europe's biggest economy are stronger than any head of government has made in response to the U.S. president's 10-day onslaught against Europe and Ukraine.

On Friday, Merz suggested it was time to explore nuclear cooperation between France, the U.K. and Germany (and others) to replace the American nuclear umbrella that has guaranteed European safety from Russian attack. His speculation was anything but idle..."

Jihadists Behead 70 Christians in DR Congo Church

February 21, 2025 [breitbart.com](https://www.breitbart.com) reported: "Open Doors UK, a human rights group focused on persecution against Christians, reported on Tuesday that a militant group affiliated with the Islamic State (ISIS) took 70 Christian villages hostage, marched them into their church, and then murdered them by cutting their heads off.

Open Doors quoted sources in the field who said the massacre took place on February 13, when a group of terrorists allegedly from the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) surrounded the village of Maybe and forced residents from their homes. The ADF allegedly rounded up a total of 70 Christian villages and forced them into a Protestant church in the nearby town of Kasanga. This church, like many in the area, had been abandoned by its congregants because the security situation was so dire.

The militants proceeded to murder all 70 of their hostages inside the church, with beheading reportedly their preferred method of execution. According to Open Doors' sources, families of the deceased were too frightened to bury the dead until a week later and many of the surviving Christians have fled the area..."

U.S. Air Force test-launches nuclear-capable, hypersonic Minuteman 3 ICBM

February 20, 2025 [spacewar.com](https://www.spacewar.com) reported: "The U.S. Air Force demonstrated the nation's nuclear readiness by launching an unarmed Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California..."

The test launch occurred shortly after Russia test-launched its Yars ICBM missile, and the Minuteman III completed a 4,200-mile course in about 22 minutes at a speed of 15,000 mph and splashed down at a test range near the Kwajalein Atoll in the Pacific Ocean, the *Daily Mail* reported..."



Friedrich Merz
German chancellor-in-waiting