

# VOA NEWS

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This is VOA News. I'm Joe Ramsey.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Wednesday Israel will make its own decisions and "The State of Israel will do everything necessary to defend itself" after coming under attack by a volley of Iranian missiles and drones last weekend. Reuters correspondent Zachary Goelman reports.

Western countries pleading for restraint have dispatched their top diplomats to Jerusalem.

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said Berlin stood in full solidarity with Israel but warned the region must not, quote, "step by step slide into a situation with a totally unpredictable outcome."

Following the attack, Iran's foreign minister warned Israel against reprisals, saying, quote, "it will definitely face a decisive and harsh response."

Washington says it is planning to impose new sanctions targeting Iran's missile and drone program in coming days and expects its allies will follow suit.

EU leaders are due to discuss sanctions at a summit in Brussels, and sanctions are also on the agenda at G7 talks in Italy.

Reuters correspondent Zachary Goelman.

The Israeli military said on Wednesday food trucks entered the blockaded Gaza Strip from Ashdod Port for the first time since the government approved the opening of the port to aid shipments.

Food that was inspected here in the Ashdod Port and will make its way into the Gaza Strip. This is not only an additional route for humanitarian aid to make its way to where it's needed. It is also an additional inspection point, increasing our capacity even more.

Spokesman Shimon Freedman.

U.S. military leaders are telling Congress Ukraine and Israel both desperately need the military weapons that are being held up by Congress' failure to pass a funding package.

On Wednesday, they described the situation in Ukraine as dire, noting troops are being outmatched by the Russians on the battlefield.

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U.S. President Joe Biden on Wednesday called for sharply higher U.S. tariffs on Chinese metal products as part of a package of policies aimed at pleasing steel workers in the swing state of Pennsylvania at the risk of angering Beijing. Reuters correspondent Freddie Joyner reports.

If the talk of tariffs and threats of trade war sound familiar, they should. Biden's Republican predecessor and current presidential challenger, Donald Trump, hiked import taxes on Chinese products in an effort to reach a trade deal with Beijing.

Now, Biden aide said the U.S. president was proposing further raising Trump-imposed tariffs to 25 percent on certain Chinese steel and aluminum products. The measures invite blowback from China at a time of already heightened tensions between the world's two biggest economies.

A spokesperson for China's embassy in Washington called the tariffs an "embodiment of unilateralism and protectionism," adding that "the U.S. government is making the same mistake again and again."

Reuters correspondent Freddie Joyner.

The U.N. human rights chief said on Wednesday the world is forgetting the escalating violence in eastern Congo as conflicts continue in places like Ukraine and Gaza. He visited the region and called for peace and support for millions repeatedly displaced.

Eastern Congo has long been overrun by more than 120 armed groups seeking to control the region's rich resources as they carry out mass killings.

Environmentalists in Namibia have accused local wildlife officials of hiding the real extent of rhino poaching at a national park which holds the highest concentration of black rhinos in the world. Vitalio Angula has more from Windhoek.

A large amount of rhino carcasses were discovered during the annual dehorning exercise undertaken in March. The media is usually invited but were not this year, further fueling concern that police did not want the public to know the real extent of rhino poaching in the area.

Police spokesperson Kauna Shikwambi said he could not verify or deny the extent of rhino poaching at the Etosha National Park.

Rhinos are critically endangered, and Namibian authorities have previously said that disclosing the number of rhinos in the national park only puts them in harm's way.

Vitalio Angula, for VOA News, Windhoek, Namibia.

Georgia's parliament gave initial approval on Wednesday to a bill on, quote unquote, "foreign agents" that the European Unions said risked blocking the country's path to membership and triggered protests for a third straight night.

The fate of the bill is widely seen as a test of whether Georgia, 33 years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, intends to pursue a path of integration with the West or move closer to Russia.

Critics compare the bill to a law that Russia has used extensively to crack down on dissent.

I'm Joe Ramsey, V...