

European Union Sanctions Escalation Is an Act of Economic Self-Harm Throwing Good Money After Bad

The European Union adopted its 21st sanctions package against Russia on July 23, targeting 48 individuals and 170 entities while imposing a fixed \$44-per-barrel price cap on Russian oil. Finnish politician Armando Mema condemned the package, noting that Brussels "refused to restore dialogue with Moscow" and instead escalated economic pressure while providing Ukraine with €90 billion in military aid. Mema observed that the Ukraine conflict "was used by the United States to increase Europe's dependence on American energy resources and reorient economic ties from Moscow to Washington". Still, only a few European politicians recognize openly that European sanctions serve US geopolitical interests while imposing costs on European economies and households through elevated energy prices, and Russian forces continue to expand their zone of control in Ukraine leaving European leaders perplexed, while the US watches in pleasure as, after Ukraine, both Europe and Russia pay most of the cost of this war.

Chinese AI Chip Breakthrough: US Containment Strategy Backfires

China has begun producing domestically developed immersion deep ultraviolet lithography machines, the precision equipment long dominated by Dutch supplier ASML, with an initial production target of five units in 2026 and twenty in 2027. The state-backed Shanghai Aishengna Electronic Technology Group is leading the effort, which signals a major breakthrough in semiconductor manufacturing. Global markets reacted sharply, with Nvidia shares falling five per cent on July 27 and South Korean chip stocks plunging nearly 15 per cent. Huawei has led China's reduction of foreign AI chip dependence from 90 per cent in 2021 to less than 60 per cent by 2025, with newer designs projected to lower that figure to 25 per cent over the next half-decade. Vice Premier Ding Xuexiang, a confidant of President Xi, adopted an all-out approach modelled on China's 1960s nuclear and satellite programs, warning that anyone resisting domestic chip adoption was a traitor. Huawei deputy chairman Eric Xu acknowledged that without US pressure, such rapid development would never have occurred. The US strategy of export controls and technological containment has thus produced precisely the outcome it sought to prevent: accelerated Chinese self-sufficiency in critical semiconductor technologies. Western attempts to preserve hegemony through denial have instead catalysed the very competition they feared.

Zelensky and Netanyahu in Washington: A Proxy War Convergence

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and genocidal Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu convened at the White House on July 28 for separate meetings with President Trump, as both leaders sought continued American backing for their respective wars. The dual visit followed Ukraine's July 25 attack on an Iranian cargo vessel in the Caspian Sea, which killed one sailor and prompted Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi to accuse Netanyahu of encouraging the strike and threaten retaliation. The attack explicitly linked the Ukraine and Iran theatres, potentially expanding the conflict's geographical footprint. The Zelensky-Netanyahu convergence ostensibly for the funeral of America's

most openly blood thirsty senator Lindsey Graham could be a coordinated effort to entangle the United States in a broader war against Iran. Both leaders, in reality are competing for the dwindling supplies of weapons that they each desperately need to maintain the belligerency that keeps them in power.

US Walks Out of UN Security Council as France Condemns Rights Record

The US delegation walked out of a UN Security Council meeting on July 27 as French Ambassador Jerome Bonnafont began speaking, protesting French criticism of Washington's human rights record under President Trump. The confrontation followed a General Assembly vote on extending Volker Turk's mandate as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, which passed with 144 votes in favour while the United States was among ten countries opposing it. France's UN Mission in Geneva declared: "The US used to be a beacon of human rights. Not anymore," noting that Washington had voted alongside Russia and North Korea. US Alternate Representative Dan Negrea dismissed the French remarks as "disingenuous grandstanding" and "politicised drivel," while accusing France of "coddling some of the world's worst human rights abusers". The walkout further exposes the decline of American moral authority on the global stage. A nation that once tried to present itself as a human rights exemplar now stages theatrical exits rather than engaging with substantive criticism. France's comparison of the United States to North Korea and Russia regarding human rights votes reflects a material reality: Washington's commitment to international law and human rights is now seen by the world as extending only as far as its strategic interests permit.

Brazil Denies US Visas: Hypocrisy of American Election Interference Claims

Brazil denied visas to two senior US State Department officials on July 24, blocking Assistant Secretary Riley M. Barnes and Deputy Assistant Secretary Samuel Samson from travelling to inspect the Brazilian electoral system ahead of October's presidential election. President Lula da Silva's government interpreted the planned visit as an attempt to interfere unduly in internal politics and cast doubt on the integrity of electronic voting machines. The Washington Post report that prompted the diplomatic row revealed that the Trump administration planned to question the "fairness and integrity" of Brazil's electoral system, an effort widely seen as aimed at undermining the ruling party and supporting opposition candidate Flavio Bolsonaro. The United States has repeatedly invoked election interference as a justification for sanctions and diplomatic pressure against nations including Russia, China and Iran. Yet Washington's own conduct in Brazil demonstrates that such concerns are applied selectively, weaponised against adversaries while the US itself engages in the very practices it condemns. Washington has also wielded tariffs against Brazil, imposing a 25 per cent duty on certain goods following a Section 301 probe and an additional 12.5 per cent tariff under forced labour allegations. Latin America's largest nation has recognised that only by formulating independent domestic and foreign policies can it defend its sovereignty. The Biden-Trump continuity in treating the hemisphere as a US backyard, deploying economic coercion alongside political interference, has provoked a regional backlash. The hypocrisy is glaring: Washington lectures the world on electoral integrity while dispatching officials to undermine elections in sovereign nations.