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Russia Hosted Talks with Iran, Syria and Turkey

On 25 April, Russia's Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu [hosted](#) four-way talks aimed at normalizing ties between Ankara and Damascus. The ties have been severed since 2011 due to the civil war in Syria. The Russian Defence Ministry stated that "practical steps were discussed in the field of strengthening security in the Syrian Arab Republic and normalizing Syrian-Turkish relations". Successful Kremlin mediation could give Russia diplomatic clout amidst Russia's growing international isolation.

Russia Conducted Snap Naval Drills in the Pacific

Russia [conducted](#) snap naval drills in the Pacific on 20 April, stressing that its forces were ready to repel "aggression" during an armed conflict at sea. During the exercises, Russian forces practised searching and destroying submarines, repelling large-scale rocket and aviation attacks, and launching rockets, torpedoes and artillery fire against seaborne and ground targets. It involved 25,000 Russian military personnel, 167 warships and support vessels, including 12 submarines.

Turkey Unveiled Russia-Built Nuclear Power Plant

Russian President Vladimir Putin [hailed](#) the loading of fuel into the first of the four planned reactors at Turkey's Russia-built Akkuyu nuclear power plant on 27 April. On completion, the plant's four reactors will operate at a total capacity of 4,800 megawatts. In a separate phone conversation, Russian and Turkish Presidents discussed the Black Sea Grain Initiative and the situation in Ukraine.

Russia to Seize Assets of Unfriendly Foreign States

On 26 April, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a [decree](#) authorizing temporary control over foreign companies' Russia-based assets. The decree lists the Russian divisions of German energy company Uniper and Finland's Fortum. The Kremlin said that the decree will be applied on a case-to-case basis and is not tantamount to expropriation. So far, the West has blocked over US\$ 350 billion of Russian state and personal assets and has signalled that these frozen Russian assets should go toward Ukraine's post-war reconstruction.

Russia Faces Record Workforce Shortage

Russian companies across a wide range of sectors are facing record staff [shortages](#) this year as the country grapples with population decline, an exodus and the need to replenish military equipment. Manufacturing, water supply, mining and transportation industries have been hardest hit by the workforce shortage. Meanwhile, car sales, wholesale trade and service sectors are the least affected ones. Employee availability has hit the lowest value since record-keeping began in 1998.

Central Asian-Russian Foreign Ministers Meeting Held

On 14 April, the Foreign Ministers of Central Asia and Russia [met](#) in Tashkent for the sixth round of talks. The meeting focused on cooperation in political, economic, energy, transport, humanitarian, and migration sectors. Regional and international issues were also discussed, including the situation in Afghanistan.

CIS Ministerial Council Meeting Held

A [meeting](#) of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was held on 14 April in Samarkand. Members discussed global and regional issues, organisation related matters, and potential of culture and sports.

Armenia Hosted First Trilateral Meeting with India and Iran

Yerevan [hosted](#) the first trilateral meeting of officials from Armenia, India and Iran on 20 April. It involved deputies and assistants from the foreign ministries of the three countries. The main focus of the meeting was on economic issues and regional communication channels, alongside outlining prospects for deepening cultural and people-to-people contacts.

SCO Defence Ministers' Meeting Held

As rotating Chairman of the SCO, India [hosted](#) the SCO Defence Ministers Meeting on 28 April in New Delhi, with in-person attendance of all member states except Pakistan which attended virtually. India's Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh called for concerted efforts to work collectively to eliminate terrorism in all its forms. He also highlighted India's vision of its Chairmanship - "SECURE,"- which reflects India's commitment towards the multi-dimensional welfare of the region. The SCO members signed a protocol, expressing their collective will to make the region more secure, peaceful, and prosperous.

Ukraine's Deputy Foreign Minister Visited India

On 10 April, Ukraine's first Deputy [Foreign Minister](#) Emine Dzhaparova arrived in

India for a four-day visit, the first by a Ukrainian minister since February last year. She met with officials from the Ministry of External Affairs and discussed developments in Ukraine, food and energy security. She also visited prominent think-tanks in New Delhi.

Israel Sold Anti-Tank Missiles to Greece

Israel signed a US\$ 400 million deal to sell Spike [anti-tank missiles](#) to Greece. The Spike missiles are expected to strengthen Greece's defence preparedness. Israel announced the deal days after newly-inducted NATO member, Finland bought its David's Sling missile defence system.

German Foreign Minister Visited China

Germany's Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock visited China on 13 April. The visit was seen as an attempt at damage control. However, upon her return, she stressed on the need to avoid repeating past mistakes like the policy of "[change through trade](#)" as China is increasingly behaving like a "systemic rival". This comes against the backdrop of Germany's strategy on China focused on "minimizing risks" rather than [decoupling](#).

EU to Deploy Mission to Moldova

The EU would send a [civilian mission](#) to Moldova to help combat growing threats from abroad. EU's High Representative [Joseph Borrell](#), said that the mission, under the Common Security and Defence Policy, would provide "support to Moldova to protect its security, territorial integrity and sovereignty" against Russia. The mission would focus on "crisis management and hybrid threats, including cybersecurity, and countering foreign information manipulation and interference."