



Global Watch Daily – August 17, 2026

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A concise summary of significant developments in Israel and the world through a grounded Christian worldview.

Israel & Jerusalem

Cookbook author Adeena Sussman has joined Kosher.com's culinary series, bringing Israeli-inspired cooking to a wider audience. Meanwhile, IMPACT-se CEO Marcus Sheff noted that the Saudi educational curriculum has undergone significant revisions, now portraying religious minorities more positively and promoting peace and tolerance. In diplomatic efforts, Jared Kushner, son-in-law of US President Trump, is working to secure Israeli support for the US-backed Gaza peace plan ([JNS](#); [JNS](#); [BBC News](#)).

Located just one mile from the Lebanese border, Kibbutz Iftach is both one of Israel's most picturesque and most vulnerable communities. Following Hezbollah's attacks on October 7, tens of thousands of Israelis were displaced, leaving Iftach deserted. The community's orchards were burned and homes abandoned. In response, Israel's military reported striking Hezbollah terror infrastructure, citing prior attacks against Israeli soldiers ([Al Jazeera](#); [JNS](#); [BBC News](#)).

Two families remain trapped in their homes in the occupied West Bank for several days amid ongoing tensions and security concerns ([BBC News](#); [Al Jazeera](#)).

Wars & Security (Israel and Region)

China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea are not only aligned in rhetoric but are actively coordinating efforts to undermine American military, economic, and cyber dominance. In a recent discussion, Generation Jihad's Bill Roggio interviewed Bradley Bowman, senior director of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies' Center on Military and Political Analysis, to explore this axis of aggressors. Meanwhile, the Iran-backed Houthi movement escalated hostilities by launching drone and missile attacks targeting Yemeni forces and civilian infrastructure across three governorates on August 6. These attacks have intensified the conflict in Yemen while simultaneously threatening Saudi Arabia and maritime traffic in the Red Sea. Additionally, General Esmail Qaani, commander of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force, visited Iraq amid Baghdad's legislative



efforts to place all weapons under state control. This visit coincides with ongoing Iranian drone and missile strikes against Kurdish opposition groups in the region ([Long War Journal](#); [Long War Journal](#); [Long War Journal](#)).

Jamal Kiyemba, a Ugandan national residing in the United Kingdom, was arrested in northwest Pakistan in 2002 for allegedly attempting to join Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and was subsequently detained at the US prison facility in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. After his release in 2006 and repatriation to Uganda, Kiyemba has since been involved in various activities. The Foundation for Defense of Democracies (Long War Journal; FDD) recently examined his case in detail.

Iraq depends on oil revenue for over 90 percent of its budget, but its exports have fallen to roughly half of pre-closure levels, to 3.4 million barrels per day, due to Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz. The United Arab Emirates may offer alternative export routes to alleviate this strain. US President Donald Trump has indicated a shift to a "low-key" and "semi-negotiating" approach toward Iran, noting the regime's difficulties in paying its troops. Concurrently, the United States is losing influence in Somalia as growing frustration with Mogadishu threatens critical African Union support and risks strengthening the Al Shabaab insurgency. In Mali, renewed US airstrikes against the jihadist group JNIM raise concerns about the effectiveness of air power absent a comprehensive ground strategy or political reforms ([FDD](#); [FDD](#); [Long War Journal](#)).

North Korea is reportedly sending up to 120 additional ballistic missiles to Ukraine as Kyiv seeks means to destroy Russian missile launchers. In Sudan, the military's recapture of the Al Sadarat highway represents its most significant gain against the Rapid Support Forces in the fourth year of the civil war. However, the RSF's increasing reliance on tribal mobilization and the expanding use of foreign-backed drone warfare indicate a shift in the conflict's dynamics ([Long War Journal](#); [Long War Journal](#)).

Global Macro & Geopolitics

US President Donald Trump issued a threat on Monday to bomb Oman should it obstruct a deal concerning shipping through the Strait of Hormuz. This statement followed discussions involving the prime minister's office in Iraqi Kurdistan. Meanwhile, German automotive giants Mercedes, Volkswagen, and BMW are struggling to halt a decline in sales within China, a market they once dominated, particularly in the electric vehicle sector ([France24](#); [Bloomberg](#); [Reuters](#)).



Pestilence & Global Health

Recent research has revealed that COVID-19 can reactivate dormant viruses within the body, including Epstein-Barr virus, cytomegalovirus, and several herpes viruses. A previously poorly understood viral family has been strongly linked to long COVID and persistent disability, providing an important clue to why some patients experience prolonged symptoms. In a promising development, researchers have identified a novel approach to potentially eliminate HIV shortly after infection using a one-time combination therapy. In newborn nonhuman primates treated within three days of exposure, this regimen—which combines standard antiretroviral drugs, broadly neutralizing antibodies, and additional agents—showed significant efficacy. Additionally, low arginine levels may enable cancer cells and viruses to evade the immune system by reducing the production of a critical cellular warning protein. In mouse models, diets rich in arginine resulted in fewer colon tumors and milder viral infections, suggesting that simple supplementation could offer powerful therapeutic benefits ([ScienceDaily](#); [ScienceDaily](#); [ScienceDaily](#)).

Natural Disasters & Signs in the Heavens

The United States Geological Survey recorded a magnitude 3.6 earthquake near Kaktovik, Alaska, and a magnitude 5.1 earthquake near Kandrian, Papua New Guinea ([USGS](#); [USGS](#)).

A magnitude 7.7 earthquake struck near Ende, Indonesia. Additionally, a magnitude 5.1 earthquake at a depth of 35 kilometers occurred in Papua New Guinea on August 17, 2026, affecting approximately 50,000 people within a 100-kilometer radius ([USGS](#); [GDACS](#)).

Middle Eastern Artifacts

Excavations at the ancient city of Tralleis in Turkey have uncovered a mosaic-floored hall believed to date back nearly 2,000 years to the Roman Empire period. Lauren K. McCormick interviewed the lead excavator about these findings. The Temple Mount Sifting Project has published research on reconstructing the colorful geometric floor patterns of the temple courts, including new digital reconstructions of the Temple's layout ([BiblePlaces](#); [BiblePlaces](#)).

The glass assemblage from Oboda spans approximately four centuries of production in the Eastern Mediterranean, covering the Early Roman to early Byzantine periods. The collection features forms characteristic of Palestine. Excavations in Oboda, located in the Negev Highlands, also yielded faunal remains from Roman and Early Byzantine contexts



dating from the late third to early fifth century CE. Analysis indicates that the site's economy during both periods was reliant on these resources ([Israel Antiquities Authority](#); [Israel Antiquities Authority](#)).