



Global Watch Daily – January 2, 2026

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Israel & Jerusalem

Tensions remain high as former President Trump and Iranian officials exchanged sharp threats amid ongoing protests in Iran, with Trump warning that the U.S. will intervene if Iranian forces kill protesters ([Times of Israel](#)) ([BBC](#)). Israel's Culture Minister sparked controversy by stating that Gaza belongs to Israel and Palestinians are merely guests there, a statement that underscores the complex and contested claims to the land ([Times of Israel](#)).

In a revealing report, Israel had requested Qatar to increase financial aid to Gaza just a month before the devastating events of October 7, highlighting the intricate and often paradoxical relationships in the region ([Times of Israel](#)). Meanwhile, Spanish Jewish communities expressed fears that a map identifying local Jewish and Zionist businesses could incite violence, reflecting ongoing concerns about antisemitism in Europe ([Times of Israel](#)).

In Ireland, hateful graffiti labeling Jews as “RAT JEW” was painted on a road, with police treating the incident as a hate crime, a stark reminder of the persistence of antisemitism in Western societies ([Times of Israel](#)). On a more technological front, Tel Aviv is set to build Israel's first vertiport, paving the way for future air taxis and signaling a step forward in urban transportation innovation ([JNS](#)).

Qatar's promotion of jihad through connections with the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas continues to fuel regional instability ([JNS](#)). Israel condemned the harassment of a slain hostage's family in Miami, emphasizing the need for dignity and respect even amid conflict ([JNS](#)). Military actions continue as Israel struck Hezbollah sites in southern Lebanon, maintaining pressure on hostile groups near its borders ([JNS](#)).

Israel launched a new five-year initiative to integrate minority groups into the tech industry, reflecting efforts to foster inclusivity and economic development ([JNS](#)). The IDF issued an evacuation order for Tehran ahead of anticipated strikes, signaling heightened military readiness ([Jerusalem Post](#)). Additionally, the Defense Ministry planned a military exercise on Highway 35, underscoring ongoing security preparations ([Jerusalem Post](#)).



Internationally, a Ukrainian drone attack forced the closure of Moscow's airport, escalating tensions between Russia and Ukraine ([Jerusalem Post](#)). The United States condemned the shooting of Colombian presidential candidate Miguel Uribe, reflecting concerns over political violence in Latin America ([Jerusalem Post](#)). In Europe, an Israeli man was arrested in Albania for attempting to leave with undeclared €194,000, highlighting issues of financial regulation and security ([Jerusalem Post](#)).

The United Arab Emirates announced its withdrawal from Yemen following Saudi strikes on separatist-held ports, marking a shift in regional military engagement ([BBC](#)). Meanwhile, Israel's recognition of Somaliland as an independent state has sparked controversy, reflecting the complexities of international diplomacy and recognition ([BBC](#)).

Wars & Security (Israel and Region)

Regional military activity remains intense as Jordan conducted airstrikes in Syria targeting drug smugglers, demonstrating ongoing efforts to combat illicit trafficking and maintain border security ([Long War Journal](#)) ([FDD](#)). The United Arab Emirates announced plans to withdraw forces from Yemen after Saudi demands and strikes, signaling a recalibration of alliances and military presence in the region ([Long War Journal](#)).

Israel continued its operations against Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, with strikes reported between December 22 and 28, 2025, maintaining pressure on this militant group ([Long War Journal](#)). Military rotations are underway in Gaza as a new phase of a ceasefire deal approaches, indicating ongoing strategic adjustments by the Israel Defense Forces ([Long War Journal](#)).

Beyond the Middle East, the United States conducted strikes against Islamic State targets in Nigeria, reflecting the global reach of counterterrorism efforts ([Long War Journal](#)). Syria's coastal region has seen a resurgence of sectarian violence, complicating the fragile stability in the war-torn country ([FDD](#)).

Saudi Arabia appears to be pivoting away from its previous moderation stance, a development that could have significant implications for regional politics and alliances ([FDD](#)). Meanwhile, protests in Iran have reached their fourth day, driven by economic collapse and currency devaluation, with calls for Washington to pay attention to the popular unrest ([FDD](#)) ([FDD](#)).

Global Macro & Geopolitics



A tragic fire at a Swiss ski resort bar has claimed 40 lives, marking one of the worst recent disasters in Switzerland and prompting investigations into the cause of the blaze ([France24](#)) ([France24](#)) ([France24](#)) ([France24](#)).

In other global news, dozens are missing after a boat carrying 200 migrants sank off the coast of Gambia, highlighting the ongoing humanitarian crises related to migration ([BBC](#)). Former U.S. President Trump has publicly stated he takes a higher daily dose of aspirin than doctors recommend, a personal health disclosure amidst his ongoing political activity ([BBC](#)).

Indian families continue to grieve deaths caused by contaminated tap water, underscoring persistent public health challenges in parts of the developing world ([BBC](#)). In Ukraine, President Volodymyr Zelensky appointed military intelligence chief Kyrylo Budanov as the new chief of staff, a move that may affect the country's military strategy amid ongoing conflict ([France24](#)).

In Southeast Asia, political and social developments are closely watched, including the implementation of Indonesia's new criminal code amid civil society criticisms and the mounting debt burden in Central Asia, both of which carry significant policy implications for regional stability and governance ([The Diplomat](#)) ([The Diplomat](#)).

Pestilence & Global Health

Recent scientific studies have shed light on why mRNA COVID vaccines can trigger heart inflammation, helping to inform safer vaccine development and public health policies ([ScienceDaily](#)). Researchers have also identified viral suspects that may contribute to long COVID symptoms, advancing understanding of this complex condition ([ScienceDaily](#)).

In dental health, a new method to prevent gum disease has been discovered that preserves beneficial bacteria, offering a more balanced approach to oral care ([ScienceDaily](#)). Additionally, artificial intelligence has found a surprising weak spot in monkeypox virus, which could lead to improved vaccines ([ScienceDaily](#)).

Mental health trends show that children's anxiety and depression rates dropped rapidly following COVID-19 school reopenings, highlighting the importance of in-person education for youth well-being ([ScienceDaily](#)).

Natural Disasters & Signs in the Heavens



Several minor earthquakes were recorded in the United States, including a magnitude 1.7 quake near Toyah, Texas, and a 2.2 magnitude event near Whites City, New Mexico, reminding us of the earth's continual activity ([USGS TX 1.7](#)) ([USGS NM 2.2](#)). Additional tremors were noted in California and Alaska, though all were minor and caused no reported damage ([USGS CA 1.2](#)) ([USGS CA 1.4](#)) ([USGS AK 1.6](#)).

Astronomical events continue to be observed with interest, including the 2026 American Astronomical Society (AAS) Town Hall and Hyperwall schedules, which highlight ongoing research and discoveries in space science ([NASA AAS Town Hall](#)) ([NASA AAS Hyperwall](#)). NASA's Curiosity rover sent a holiday postcard from Mars, a symbolic reminder of humanity's expanding reach beyond Earth ([NASA](#)).

Further, NASA's Chandra X-ray Observatory rang in the new year by observing the Champagne Cluster, a massive galaxy cluster, underscoring the wonders of God's creation in the cosmos ([NASA Chandra](#)).

Middle Eastern Artifacts

The City of David archaeological site continues to reveal new antiquities, offering valuable insights into the ancient history of Jerusalem and the biblical heritage of Israel ([City of David](#)). These discoveries enrich our understanding of the biblical narrative and the enduring significance of the Holy Land.

Reflection

As we observe the unfolding events across Israel, the Middle East, and the wider world, we are reminded of the fragile nature of peace and the persistent challenges of conflict, injustice, and suffering. The ongoing tensions in the Holy Land and the broader region call for prayerful discernment and steadfast commitment to justice and reconciliation. In a world marked by political strife, natural disasters, and health crises, the Christian believer is called to be a witness of hope, peace, and love grounded in the truth of God's Word.

May we seek wisdom to understand the complexities of our times, courage to stand for righteousness, and compassion to care for those who suffer. Let us also remember the ancient promises concerning Jerusalem and the ultimate peace that comes through Christ, our Prince of Peace.

- Pray for peace and protection over Jerusalem and all of Israel amid ongoing conflicts.



- Lift up the persecuted and vulnerable communities facing hatred and violence worldwide.
- Ask God for healing and wisdom for global health challenges and for comfort to those affected by natural disasters.