

Headlines:

- **US Senate Defence Bill Temporarily Blocks Sale of F-35 to Turkey**
- **US-China Trade War**
- **Us Quits UN Human Rights Council**

Details:

US Senate Defence Bill Temporarily Blocks Sale of F-35 to Turkey

The US Senate passed its version of the National Defence Authorization Bill for 2019, which retained a clause to temporarily block the sale of F-35 combat jets to Turkey over concerns regarding the government's intent to install the Russian-built S4-00 air defence system. Ever since differences emerged between Erdogan and the US over the Kurds in North Syria, the US has been using alternative means to pressure Turkey into submission. Fully blocking the sale of F-35 combat jets to Turkey risks further exacerbating the fragile relations between the two nations, United States and Turkey. Despite Erdogan protecting US interests since he emerged victorious in Turkey back in 2002, the US has no permanent friends or allies.

US-China Trade War

US President Donald Trump threatened to impose tariffs on \$200 billion worth of Chinese goods, and to identify an additional \$200 billion worth of Chinese goods for tariffs if Beijing retaliates, The New York Times reported June 18. On June 15, the White House announced it would impose 25% tariffs on \$50 billion worth of Chinese imports, to which Beijing responded with reciprocal tariffs on an equivalent amount of U.S. goods. Trade tensions between the United States and China have continued to escalate, risking a full-blown trade war. It began with Trump arguing that the US gets a raw trade deal with most countries as it runs a trade deficit. Trump has targeted China with trade, something which has been central in the country's economic rise. The US is the largest destination for Chinese exports by far – in 2016, 23% of Chinese exports, worth roughly \$481 billion, ended up in the United States. Any trade war would have a significant impact on China and its economy due to its reliance on the US consume market.

US Quits UN Human Rights Council

The US is withdrawing from the United Nations Human Rights Council, the Trump administration announced on Tuesday, calling it a "cesspool of political bias" that targets the Zionist entity in particular while ignoring atrocities in other countries. The US ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley, said she had travelled to the council's headquarters in Geneva a year ago to call for reforms, to no avail. "Regrettably it is now clear that our call for reform was not heeded," Haley told reporters at the state department. "Human rights abusers continue to serve on, and be elected to, the council."

She added: "The world's most inhumane regimes continue to escape scrutiny and the council continues politicising and scapegoating of countries with positive human rights records in an attempt to distract from the abusers in their ranks." The UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, expressed regret about the US withdrawal. The organisation's top human rights official, Zeid Ra'ad al-Husseini said in a tweet: "Given the state of human rights in today's world, the US should be stepping up, not stepping back." The Trump administration had been signalling its intention to leave the council for some months, but the announcement came while the US itself is under intense criticism for its own human rights, because of the administration's policy of forcibly separating young children from their parents when apprehended on the Mexican border.