



# Midday Assessment – 2026-01-02

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## Categories in this Brief

- national security threats
- Counter-Terrorism
- regional conflicts

## national security threats

- **Insight [G, Confidence: Moderate ]:** The erosion of the post-WWII international order is contributing to a rise in global flashpoints, with adversaries exploiting perceived Western exhaustion. This is evident in the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine, the Middle East, and tensions in the Taiwan Strait.  
**Credibility:** The sources highlight multiple global crises, corroborated by ongoing international reporting, though some narratives may be influenced by geopolitical biases.  
**Coherence:** The insight aligns with a broader pattern of increasing geopolitical instability and challenges to Western influence, consistent with recent global events.  
**Confidence:** Moderate confidence due to the complexity of international dynamics and the potential for rapid changes in geopolitical alignments.
- **Insight [S, Confidence: High ]:** The situation in Yemen, particularly the STC's actions, poses a direct threat to Saudi Arabian security, exacerbated by regional power plays involving the UAE.  
**Credibility:** Reports from multiple sources confirm the STC's military advances and the geopolitical tensions between Saudi Arabia and the UAE.  
**Coherence:** This insight fits within the established pattern of proxy conflicts in the region, reflecting ongoing power struggles in the Gulf.  
**Confidence:** High confidence due to consistent reporting and the strategic importance of the regions involved.
- **Insight [R, Confidence: Moderate ]:** The tit-for-tat visa bans between the US and several African nations signal a deterioration in diplomatic relations, potentially impacting broader US-Africa engagements.  
**Credibility:** The visa bans are officially documented, though the broader implications are subject to political interpretation.  
**Coherence:** This development is consistent with a trend of increasing diplomatic friction between the US and certain African states.  
**Confidence:** Moderate confidence due to the evolving nature of international diplomatic policies and potential for rapid policy shifts.

## Sentiment Overview

Escalatory rhetoric and strategic maneuvering characterize this category, with multiple regions experiencing heightened tensions.

## Policy Relevance

Policymakers should monitor the evolving dynamics in Yemen and the broader Middle East, as well as the implications of US-Africa diplomatic tensions. The potential for escalation in these areas could impact global security and economic stability. Additionally, the weakening of the post-WWII order may require strategic reassessment of alliances and defense postures.

## Counter-Terrorism

- **Insight [S, Confidence: High ]:** Russia's expanding influence in Africa through military and disinformation campaigns poses a significant challenge to Western counter-terrorism efforts and democratic stability in the region.  
**Credibility:** The insight is supported by multiple reports of Russian activities and the withdrawal of Western forces, though some details may be exaggerated by involved parties.  
**Coherence:** This aligns with the broader trend of Russia seeking to fill power vacuums left by Western withdrawals, consistent with its global strategy.  
**Confidence:** High confidence due to corroborated reports and the strategic implications of Russian actions in Africa.
- **Insight [R, Confidence: Moderate ]:** The UN's condemnation of Israel's restrictions on UNRWA highlights ongoing tensions in Gaza, with potential implications for regional stability and humanitarian operations.  
**Credibility:** Statements from the UN and Israeli government provide a reliable basis, though the political context may influence interpretations.  
**Coherence:** This fits within the ongoing pattern of Israeli-Palestinian tensions and the international community's response to humanitarian issues.  
**Confidence:** Moderate confidence due to the complex and evolving nature of Israeli-Palestinian relations.

## Sentiment Overview

Fragmented and tense, with significant geopolitical maneuvering and humanitarian concerns.

## Policy Relevance

Stakeholders should focus on the implications of Russian influence in Africa for global counter-terrorism strategies and the potential for increased instability. The situation in Gaza requires attention to humanitarian impacts and regional diplomatic efforts. Monitoring these developments is crucial for anticipating shifts in global security dynamics.

## regional conflicts

- **Insight [G, Confidence: Moderate ]:** The ongoing peace negotiations between Ukraine and Russia are fragile, with both sides engaging in military posturing that could derail progress.  
**Credibility:** Reports from both Ukrainian and Russian sources provide a basis, though claims of military actions are difficult to independently verify.  
**Coherence:** This insight aligns with the historical pattern of fluctuating tensions and ceasefire violations in the region.  
**Confidence:** Moderate confidence due to the volatile nature of the conflict and the potential for

rapid changes in the negotiation landscape.




## Sentiment Overview

Anxious but stable, with ongoing negotiations overshadowed by military activities and strategic uncertainties.

## Policy Relevance

Policymakers should prioritize supporting diplomatic efforts to stabilize the Ukraine-Russia conflict, while preparing for potential escalations. The balance between negotiation and military readiness will be crucial in the coming months. Monitoring both official and unofficial channels for shifts in positions or unexpected developments is essential.

## Legend – Analytic Tags & Confidence Levels

-  **Geopolitical Risk:** Power shifts, diplomatic friction, alliance impact.
-  **Security/Intelligence Signal:** Operational/tactical insight for defense, police, intel.
-  **Strategic Disruption:** Systemic instability in digital, economic, or governance layers.

## Confidence Levels

- **High:** Strong corroboration and high reliability.
- **Moderate:** Some verification; potential ambiguity.
- **Low:** Limited sources, weak signals, early indications.