

**Trump-Meloni Rift**  
 So why did a seemingly friendly relationship between Trump and Meloni suddenly turn into a public dispute? The clash began after Trump made remarks about a G7 summit photo. | P7

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## Hormuz Blocked, US on Alert



A Lebanese woman weeps as she sits on the rubble at the site of an Israeli airstrike that targeted the southern Lebanese village of Qennarit on June 20, 2026.

The US military said Saturday it remained "present and vigilant" in the Strait of Hormuz, shortly after Iran announced it was closing the critical shipping lane.

"US forces remain present and vigilant to ensure all aspects of the agreement with Iran are adhered to, obeyed, and in full force and effect," US Central Com-

mand (CENTCOM) said in a statement. CENTCOM, which oversees US forces in the Middle East, said 55 commercial vessels had transited the strait on Saturday and that "safe passage through the international waterway remained intact today."

Iran had announced moments earlier that it was closing the strait in response to Israeli strikes on Lebanon, deeming them a violation of its fragile deal with the United States.

The renewed tension came as US and Iranian negotiators were expected in Switzerland to continue talks on implementing the agreement.

Vice President JD Vance, speaking on Fox News before Iran's announcement, said he expected to travel to Switzerland in "the next couple of days" to take part in negotiations.

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### Rubio to Visit Gulf States Next Week



U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio is planning a trip to the Middle East next week and is expected to visit Bahrain, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates according to Axios, citing sources.

During the visit, Rubio is expected to hold talks with regional officials, including a meeting with Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) foreign ministers in Bahrain, the report said.

The visit comes as Washington continues diplomatic engagement with Gulf partners on regional issues.

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### Shura Council Praises Arab Parliamentary Union's Role



H.E. Ali bin Saleh Al Saleh, Speaker of the Shura Council

Shura Council Speaker Ali bin Saleh Al Saleh praised the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union's efforts in strengthening joint Arab parliamentary work and enhancing its presence in regional and international forums.

The remarks came as the Union marked the 52nd anniversary of its establishment. Al Saleh sent congratulatory messages to Shaikh Dr. Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Ibrahim Al Al-Shaikh, Speaker of the Saudi Shura Council and President of the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union, praising his efforts in promoting cooperation and coordination among Arab parliaments.

Al Saleh highlighted the Union's role in addressing Arab issues and supporting parliamentary cooperation, stressing the importance of continued coordination to strengthen unified positions on matters of common interest.

## MP Seeks Social Media Ban for Under-15s

Plan follows similar restrictions introduced in UAE and several European countries

TDT | Manama  
Mohammed Darwish

A proposal to bar children under 15 from social media has been put before Parliament as Bahrain weighs curbs on young users' access to online platforms.

MP Hamad Al Doy has called for under-15s to be blocked from using social media, saying children are being drawn too early into sites and apps that leave them open to harm.

The plan would force social media firms to check the age of users before letting them open or use accounts. It would also require tools for parents to follow and manage their children's use of such platforms.

Mr Al Doy said the spread of social media among children had raised their risk of seeing age-inapt content, being bullied online, facing digital abuse and becoming hooked on smart devices.

Early and unchecked use, he warned, could harm men-



Hamad Al Doy, MP

tal health, weaken school work and strain family ties.

The move follows steps taken in the UAE and a num-

ber of European states to curb children's access to social media and bring in stronger age checks.

Mr Al Doy said Bahrain needed to strengthen the legal shield around children in the digital space while keeping room for online tools used in learning.

The proposal seeks to place online safety within the aims of the child laws, while striking a balance between child welfare and the use of digital platforms in education.

### Countries are tightening rules to improve child online safety

**UAE:** Bans under-15s from social media accounts; strict controls for ages 15-16.

**UK:** Plans ban for under-16s by 2027 on major platforms.

**Denmark:** Minimum age 15, with parental consent possible from 13.

**Greece:** Under-15 ban planned for 2027.

**Portugal:** No access under 13; parental consent required for ages 13-16.

## Bahrain stresses women's role in peace and security at UN

Supreme Council for Women highlighted as key driver of national progress

The Kingdom of Bahrain emphasised the critical role of strong national institutions in turning international commitments on women, peace and security into practical, long-term policies and programmes that promote women's participation, empowerment, and leadership.

This position was outlined in a statement delivered by Ambassador Jamal Fares Al Ruwaih, Bahrain's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, during the United Nations Security Council open debate on "Women's Participation in International Peace and



Security Processes." The session was chaired by Colombian Foreign Minister Rosa Yolanda Villavicencio Mapy and featured participation from UN Women Executive Director Sima Bahous.

Ambassador Al Ruwaih noted that the debate comes at a pivotal moment, as ongoing conflicts around the world and their humanitarian impacts highlight the urgent need for greater and more meaningful involvement

of women in peacebuilding and political transition efforts.

He reaffirmed that Bahrain, under the leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and the guidance of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, strongly prioritizes enabling national institutions to translate global commitments on women, peace and security into effective and sustainable action.

The Ambassador also commended the role of the Supreme Council for Women, chaired by Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa,

**"There is a growing need to ensure women's effective participation in peace processes amid ongoing global conflicts and political transitions."**

since its establishment in 2001. He described it as Bahrain's key national mechanism for advancing women's development, promoting equal opportunities and gender balance, and integrating women's needs into national development planning and decision-making processes.

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