

The background features three large, semi-transparent globes arranged horizontally. In the foreground, there are silhouettes of numerous business professionals in suits, some standing in groups and others in pairs, suggesting a global business environment. The entire scene is set against a light blue background with a subtle grid pattern.

# **BUSINESS ACUTITIES**

**December 2018**

## **INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS**

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## **INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS**

**Trade Tensions Between the US and China:** The ongoing trade war between the United States and China continued to escalate in December 2018. The two countries imposed tariffs on billions of dollars' worth of goods, affecting various industries and causing uncertainty in global markets.

**Brexit Negotiations:** December 2018 was a crucial month for Brexit negotiations between the United Kingdom and the European Union. The UK Parliament faced a vote on the withdrawal agreement, which ultimately was delayed until January 2019. The uncertainty surrounding Brexit had a significant impact on businesses and markets globally.

**General Motors Restructuring:** In December 2018, General Motors (GM) announced a major restructuring plan that involved cutting thousands of jobs, closing several plants, and discontinuing several car models. The move was seen as a response to changing consumer preferences and the need to focus on electric and autonomous vehicles.

**Renault-Nissan-Mitsubishi Alliance:** Carlos Ghosn, the chairman of the Renault-Nissan-Mitsubishi alliance, was arrested in Japan in November 2018 on charges of financial misconduct. In December, the alliance struggled to deal with the fallout from Ghosn's arrest, leading to uncertainty

about the future of the partnership and its leadership.



**OPEC Production Cuts:** In an effort to stabilize oil prices, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) agreed in December 2018 to cut oil production by 1.2 million barrels per day. The decision aimed to address concerns about oversupply and declining oil prices, but it also faced challenges from non-OPEC members and geopolitical factors.

Please note that these events occurred in December 2018 and my knowledge is based on information available up until September 2021.

## **DOMESTIC TRADE WAR**

**US-China Trade War:** The trade war between the United States and China had a significant impact on domestic trade throughout 2018, and December was no exception. Both countries imposed tariffs on a range of goods, affecting various industries such as agriculture, manufacturing, and

technology. The ongoing trade tensions had consequences for businesses and consumers in the United States.

**USMCA Trade Agreement:** In December 2018, the United States, Mexico, and Canada signed the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), which aimed to replace the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The agreement addressed several trade issues, including provisions on automobiles, labor, and intellectual property. The USMCA had implications for domestic trade relations and industries in all three countries.



**Retail Holiday Sales:** December is an important month for retail trade due to the holiday shopping season. In 2018, there were reports of strong retail sales during the holiday period, driven by consumer confidence and increased online shopping. Retailers offered discounts and promotions to attract customers, contributing to the overall domestic trade performance for the

year.

**Farm Bill:** In December 2018, the United States Congress passed the Farm Bill, which is a comprehensive legislation that addresses various aspects of agricultural policy and programs. The Farm Bill included provisions related to crop subsidies, nutrition assistance programs, conservation efforts, and trade promotion. The bill's passage had implications for domestic agricultural trade and related industries.

**Impact of Tariffs on Domestic Industries:** The imposition of tariffs by the United States on imported goods from various countries had repercussions for domestic industries. In December 2018, there were reports of how the tariffs were affecting sectors such as steel, aluminum, solar panels, and washing machines. Domestic companies faced challenges related to supply chains, pricing, and competition as a result of the tariffs.

These are just a few examples of domestic trade news from December 2018. It's important to note that trade news can vary widely depending on the country and industry in question.

## **SHARE MARKET**

**Global Stock Market Sell-Off:** December 2018 saw a sharp decline in global stock markets, with major indices experiencing significant losses. Concerns over the US-China trade war, rising interest rates, and global

economic slowdown contributed to investor unease. Major indices, including the S&P 500, Dow Jones Industrial Average, and FTSE 100, all recorded notable declines during the month.

**Federal Reserve's Interest Rate Hike:** The US Federal Reserve raised interest rates for the fourth time in 2018 in December. The decision, coupled with comments from the Fed indicating further rate hikes in the future, contributed to market uncertainty and heightened concerns about the impact on economic growth and corporate earnings.



**Tech Stocks Under Pressure:** Technology stocks, which had been

performing strongly in previous years, faced significant selling pressure in December 2018. Concerns over global growth, regulatory challenges, and fears of slowing demand for tech products led to a sell-off in tech shares. This had a notable impact on major tech-heavy indices such as the Nasdaq Composite.

**Brexit Uncertainty:** Uncertainty surrounding Brexit negotiations between the UK and the European Union also affected stock markets in December 2018. The lack of clarity and potential economic disruptions associated with Brexit negotiations weighed on investor sentiment, particularly in European markets.

**Oil Price Volatility:** December 2018 saw heightened volatility in oil prices. Concerns over oversupply, weakening global demand, and uncertainty surrounding OPEC's production cuts contributed to sharp declines in oil prices during the month. The drop in oil prices had a significant impact on energy stocks and broader market sentiment.

These events and factors contributed to a challenging month for global stock markets in December 2018, with heightened volatility and negative investor sentiment. However, it's important to note that market conditions can change rapidly, and the information provided reflects the situation as of that specific period.

## TECHNOLOGY

**Huawei CFO Arrest:** In early December 2018, Meng Wanzhou, the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei, was arrested in Canada at the request of the United States. Meng faced allegations of violating US sanctions on Iran. The arrest heightened tensions between US and China, affecting global technology markets and Huawei's reputation.

**Google CEO Testifies before Congress:** In December 2018, Google's CEO Sundar Pichai appeared before the United States Congress to testify on a range of issues, including data privacy, political bias, and the company's operations in China. The hearing was part of the ongoing scrutiny faced by major technology companies regarding their practices and influence.

**Facebook Data Privacy Controversy:** Facebook continued to face backlash in December 2018 over the Cambridge Analytica scandal, which involved the unauthorized access of user data. Additional revelations emerged regarding Facebook's handling of user information and privacy practices. The controversy raised concerns about data privacy and led to increased scrutiny of social media platforms.

**Qualcomm and Apple Patent Dispute:** Qualcomm and Apple were engaged in a legal battle over patent disputes throughout 2018, and in December, Qualcomm won an injunction in China

banning the sale of certain iPhone models. The ruling added another layer to the ongoing legal disputes between the two tech giants and had implications for their respective businesses.



**Microsoft Becomes Most Valuable Company:** In December 2018, Microsoft briefly surpassed Apple to become the world's most valuable publicly traded company by market capitalization. This shift reflected Microsoft's successful transition to cloud computing services and its strong performance in the technology sector.

These are just a few examples of technology news stories from December 2018. Technology is a rapidly evolving field, and there may have been other significant events and developments during that time that are not included here.

## EDUCATION

**Education Funding and Budgets:** In many countries, discussions and debates surrounding education funding and budgets were prominent in December 2018. Governments and educational institutions grappled with issues such as allocating resources, addressing budget constraints, and ensuring equitable access to quality education.

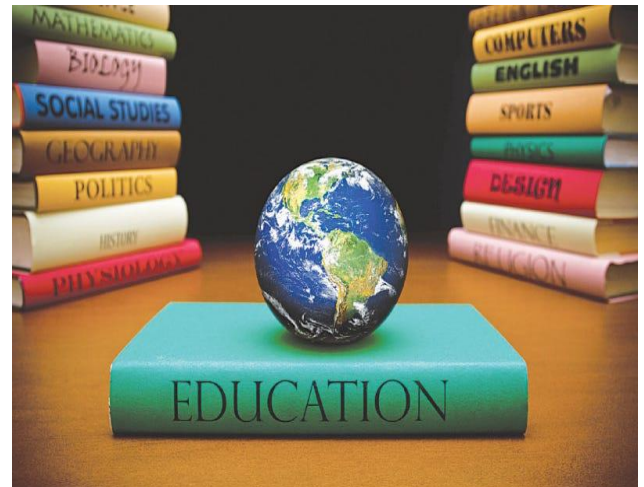
**Education Reform Efforts:** December 2018 saw ongoing education reform efforts in various countries. Governments and education policymakers focused on initiatives aimed at improving educational outcomes, such as revising curriculum standards, implementing new teaching methodologies, and promoting digital literacy in schools.

**Rising Student Debt:** The issue of student debt and its impact on students and graduates continued to be a significant concern in December 2018. Reports highlighted the increasing burden of student loans and the challenges they posed for individuals seeking higher education and long-term financial stability.

**Technology in Education:** The integration of technology in education remained a key topic in December 2018. Discussions revolved around the use of educational technology tools, online learning platforms, and digital resources to enhance teaching and

learning experiences, promote access to education, and develop 21st-century skills.

**Education Policy Changes:** December 2018 witnessed various education policy changes worldwide. Governments implemented reforms to improve educational systems, including changes to curriculum frameworks, teacher training programs, assessment methods, and school accountability measures.



These are just a few examples of educational news from December 2018. Educational news can vary significantly by region and country, and there may have been other important events and developments during that time.