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# Future Trends

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**Welcome to this week's Future Trends** - the must-read weekly briefing covering the changing face of global politics, economics, development, and conflict.

**Here's what you need to know this week:**

- European Parliament approves \$53 billion more for Ukraine
- White House: Iran 'actively facilitating' some attacks on US military bases
- ICC drops the charges against former militia leader from the Central African Republic
- US Navy warship near Yemen intercepted projectiles
- Oil drops over 2% as diplomatic moves in Gaza war ease supply concerns
- Musk considers removing X platform from Europe over EU law

## **SPECIAL EDITION: INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT**

**European Parliament approves \$53 billion more for Ukraine.** The EP is [giving an extra \\$53 billion in European Union money](#) over the next four years to help rebuild a Ukraine shattered by Russia's invasion. Negotiations can now start with EU member states on the final details of the [Ukraine Facility](#).

**Ukraine's parliament backs ban on Russia-linked church.** The Ukrainian parliament gave initial approval to a law that would [ban the minority Ukrainian Orthodox Church](#) after Kyiv accused it of collaborating with Russia following last year's invasion.

**White House: Iran 'actively facilitating' some attacks on US military bases.** Iran is in some cases ["actively facilitating" rocket and drone attacks](#) by proxy groups on US military bases in Iraq and Syria. President Biden said to brace for more attacks, and has ordered an 'appropriate' response.

## POLITICS

**Italy reinstates border controls with Slovenia, citing attack risk.** [Italy reinstated border controls with Slovenia](#) as part of its strategy to improve home security against threats of terrorist attacks in Europe. This suspends the Schengen which governs free movement within the EU.

**ICC drops the charges against former militia leader in CAR.** The [prosecutor withdrew the charges](#) saying that there were no prospects of a conviction. Maxime Mokom allegedly played a key role in a plan to violently target the country's Muslim civilian population in 2013 and 2014.

**Austrian ex-chancellor Kurz on trial for perjury.** Austria's conservative former chancellor [Sebastian Kurz went on trial for perjury](#) in a separate case from the corruption investigation that forced him from office, but which could still influence his ruling party's electoral fate.

**US and UK back Canada in dispute with India over diplomats.** The US and Britain on Friday urged New Delhi not to insist Canada reduce its diplomatic presence in India and expressed concern after [Ottawa pulled out 41 diplomats amid a dispute](#) over the murder of a Sikh separatist.

**Rightwing populists perform strongly in Swiss parliamentary elections.** Voters turn away from green politics amid fears over immigration and rising energy costs. Switzerland's rightwing populists [achieved one of their strongest performances](#) in parliamentary elections on Sunday.

## CONFLICT

**Thousands of refugees in danger as Sudan fighting spreads from Khartoum.** Fighting between the Sudanese army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) has [spread south of Khartoum](#) towards Gezira state, endangering the lives of thousands who have fled there from the capital.

**US Navy warship near Yemen intercepted projectiles.** A US Navy warship on Thursday [intercepted three cruise missiles and several drones](#) launched by the Iran-aligned Houthi movement from Yemen potentially toward Israel, the Pentagon said.

**Biden casts Russia, Hamas as parallel threats to democracy.** President Joe Biden directly appealed to the American people to support funding for Israel and Ukraine's war efforts, warning that Hamas and Russian President Vladimir Putin pose [parallel threats to US democracy](#).

**China's nuclear arsenal contains over 500 warheads.** China has [more than 500 operational nuclear warheads](#) in its arsenal and is on track to have over 1,000 warheads by 2030, the Pentagon said in its annual report on Beijing's military.

**Russian lawmakers vote to scrap ratification of nuclear test ban treaty.** The State Duma (lower house) passed the second and third readings of [a bill that revokes Russia's ratification](#) of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Both were passed unanimously by 415 votes to zero.

## ECONOMICS

**Egypt issues Chinese yuan-denominated panda bonds.** Egypt issued the bonds for the first time amid a scramble to pay foreign debts. Three-year bonds worth 3.5 billion yuan (\$479 million) [were issued with a 3.5% interest rate](#). The move also marks yet another shift towards de-dollarization.

**Oil drops over 2% as diplomatic moves ease supply concerns.** [Oil prices fell over 2%](#) as diplomatic efforts in the Middle East intensified in an attempt to contain the conflict between Israel and Hamas, easing investor concerns about potential supply disruptions.

**Qatar supplies gas to Europe, vying with US to replace Russian supply.** As Qatar competes with the US to help replace Russian supplies to Europe, it has [made two long-term deals this past week](#) with European countries. The agreements are for 27 years.

**African Development Bank provides agricultural supplies to Guinea.** [AFDB provided agricultural supplies to Guinea](#) as part of the \$1.5 billion African Emergency Food Production Facility launched by the bank to tackle potential a food crisis in Africa triggered by the war in Ukraine.

**Ferrari to accept crypto as payment for its cars in the US.** It will also [extend the scheme to Europe](#) following requests from its wealthy customers. The vast majority of blue-chip companies have so far steered clear of crypto as their volatility renders them impractical for commerce.

## DEVELOPMENT

**Italy signs off deal to take in 4,000 migrant workers from Tunisia.** In a bid to reduce the pressure that Tunisia is facing due to migration, Italy has [signed a deal to take in 4,000 migrant qualified workers](#). This will create job opportunities for young people, and aims to stop migrant smugglers.

**Zimbabwe struggles to contain spread of cholera outbreak.** A cholera outbreak has [killed more than 100 people](#) and infected 5,000 since February. Authorities are discouraging visits to open-air markets, unlicensed vendors, or outdoor church camps where sanitation is scarce.

**US issues worldwide travel alerts.** The US has warned its citizens travelling abroad to [exercise caution](#) in light of the Israel-Gaza conflict. In order to protect citizens from potential violence and terrorist attacks, they have listed a number of additional countries on the 'Do Not Travel' list.

**Musk considers removing X platform from Europe over EU law.** [In August the EU adopted the Digital Services Act \(DSA\)](#), setting rules for preventing the spread of harmful content, banning or limiting certain user-targeting practices, and sharing some internal data with regulators.

**The Amazon River fell to its lowest level in over a century.** The Amazon river is at the heart of the Brazilian rainforest as [the record drought upends the lives](#) of hundreds of thousands of people and damages the jungle ecosystem.

## SOCIAL

**NASA captures images of Jupiter's 'Io' moon.** It is one of Jupiter's 90 moons and [has the most volcanic activity of any in the solar system](#). Hundreds of volcanoes cover its mottled surface, with erupting lava fountains that reach kilometres high. 'Io' has lakes of molten silicate lava on its surface.

**One in three children have lead poisoning.** According to a study conducted by the Center for Global Development (CGD), one in three children worldwide have lead poisoning which they [described as a 'global health pandemic'](#) that has been neglected even though it leads to severe health implications.

**Julian Assange to be made honorary citizen of Rome.** WikiLeaks founder [Julian Assange will become an honorary citizen of Rome](#) by early next year following a vote this week by its local assembly.

**Discovery in Türkiye suggest Neolithic Age 'more advanced' than expected.** Archaeologists unearthed a large sculpture of a man seated on a stone bench at Karahan Tepe, dating back to around 8,500 BC, making it potentially [one of the oldest known three-dimensional human figures](#).

**Stroke deaths may rise by 50% by 2050, researchers predict.** Worldwide stroke deaths could increase by 50% by 2050, [killing as many as 9.7 million people per year](#), according to a study. Unequally distributed health-care resources, a lack of prevention programs and lifestyle factors are to blame.

## PEACEBUILDING

**A national nonpartisan panel of the [UCLA Law School's Safeguarding Democracy Project](#) has issued 24 recommendations for protecting the 2024 US elections.** The project brought together scholars, election administrators, legislators, lawyers, voting rights advocates, and concerned

citizens to develop practical solutions spanning law, media, politics and tech, [according to PBS](#).

**[ALLMEP](#), a coalition of over 170 organizations building people-to-people cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians, is [providing information about how to support activists working on the ground now](#).** ALLMEP has established a resource page for its members with information about trauma-informed care, emergency response, and countering misinformation online. In addition, ALLMEP urges supporters to participate in a joint campaign for emergency funding, connect donors with humanitarian organizations, check in individually with peacebuilders who are suffering, create space for honest conversations and amplify the voices of ALLMEP members.

**[The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians has recovered land in North Carolina](#) where Cherokee people teach visitors about their knowledge, culture and food,** according to the New York Times. The tribe has regained ownership of a 57,000-acre area, the Qualla Boundary, in sections. Some avoided the US government relocation of Cherokee people over the Trail of Tears. The tribe bought back parcels of its ancestral land in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and in 1996, the Cherokee bought back [Kituwah](#), which was once a town and cultural center.

**Farms in the US and Europe are piloting the [use of solar-powered GPS collars to manage livestock](#) in an environmentally sustainable way.** The Norwegian company [Nofence](#) has sold the collars to 43 farms in the US while 60,000 collars are in use in Europe. The collars allow farmers to easily create new pastures and move animals from place to place by using a smartphone app to create virtual fences instead of building physical or electric fences. This kind of rotational grazing spreads manure over a wider area and avoids concentrations and runoff of nutrients that can pollute waterways.