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# Future Trends

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**Introducing another week of Future Trends** — *tracking current global news stories that provide insight into the future.*

**Here's what you need to know:** Ukraine defence minister not in favour of early peace talks with Moscow, Slovakia's government loses parliamentary no-confidence vote, India test-fires Agni-V missile amid border tensions with China, global coal consumption to reach all-time high this year, US researchers announce historic nuclear fusion breakthrough, Twitter users vote for Elon Musk's resignation.

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## SPECIAL EDITION: UKRAINE

**UK trains Ukrainian judges to carry out war crimes trials for Russian soldiers.** As a part of a £2.5 million investment, Ukrainian judges are being trained in a secret location to ensure [perpetrators of war crimes](#) can be prosecuted during the conflict. Already 43,000 reported crimes are registered.

**Ukraine defence minister not in favour of early peace talks with Moscow.** The minister said that Ukraine would not agree to talks [until Russia withdrew from all of the country](#), including the Crimean Peninsula and eastern regions of Ukraine, which Moscow has occupied since 2014.

**GPS signals are being disrupted in Russian cities.** New data analysis reveals that multiple major Russian cities appear to have faced widespread [GPS disruption by Russia](#). The signal interference follows Ukraine launching long-range drone attacks deep into Russian territory.

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## POLITICS

**Slovakia's government loses parliamentary no-confidence vote.** The fall of the coalition government is the latest stage of the ongoing [political crisis](#), and could pave the way for snap elections in the country.

**Tunisians boycott parliamentary elections.** Only 8.8% of Tunisian voters cast ballots in the [parliamentary elections](#), after most political parties boycotted the vote as a charade aimed at shoring up President Kais Saied's power.

**Chile political parties agree to draft new constitution.** Fourteen political parties, including representatives from the left and right, have agreed to begin work on a new constitution to replace a national charter that dates back to the [military dictatorship](#) of Augusto Pinochet.

**Peru declares state of emergency.** Peru's government has declared a [30-day state of emergency](#) after angry protests rocked the country following the removal of leftist former president Pedro Castillo by the conservative-dominated Congress.

**Japan to amend laws to allow offensive cyber operations against foreign hackers.** The government will make legislative changes so it can begin [monitoring potential attackers](#) and hack their systems as soon as signs of potential risk are established.

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## CONFLICT

**India test-fires Agni-V missile amid border tensions with China.** The [nuclear-capable ballistic missile](#), with a range of 5,400 kilometres, launched from eastern India. Fresh tensions arose between India and China following recent clashes between their armies along a disputed border in Arunachal Pradesh state.

**Unprecedented \$320bn military build-up unveiled by Japan.** Japan has said it would begin a \$320 billion [military build-up](#) that would arm it with missiles capable of striking China, and ready it for a sustained conflict, as regional tensions increase.

**US Senate passes record \$858bn defence act, sending bill to Biden.** The [annual defence spending budget](#), approved by a vote of 83 to 11, includes a 4.6% pay increase for troops, weapons, ships, aircraft, as well as support for Taiwan and Ukraine.

**Honduras partially suspends constitutional rights to tackle gangs.** Authorities in Honduras will [partially suspend constitutional rights](#) as part of an effort to combat a rise in gang violence and extortion. Human rights groups are concerned about potential violations of rights.

**Kosovo tribunal convicts ex-rebel leader for war crimes.** In its first-ever war crimes verdict, the Kosovo Specialist Chambers has sentenced a former Kosovo Liberation Army commander to [26 years in prison](#) for murder and torture.

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## DEVELOPMENT

**US researchers announce historic nuclear fusion breakthrough.** A California-based laboratory succeeded in replicating the [process that powers the sun](#) and, in doing so, generated more energy than it took to produce.

**COP15: Historic deal struck to halt biodiversity loss by 2030.** [Nearly 200 countries, but not the US](#), signed an agreement to protect 30% of the planet for nature by 2030, reform \$500 billion of environmentally damaging subsidies, and restore 30% of the planet's degraded terrestrial, inland water, coastal and marine ecosystems.

**EU adopts carbon border tax to fight polluting imports.** The [Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism](#) will apply to imports across several sectors, including steel and aluminium, forcing them to respect EU environmental standards. It will come into effect in 2026 or 2027.

**China officially launches WTO dispute against US chip export curbs.** China has officially launched a [trade dispute](#) at the World Trade Organization against the US, challenging the US chip export curbs.

**Private sector take stakes in Taiwanese defence.** Private organisations are preparing Taiwanese citizens for [war against China](#). Demand from civilians for classes on war preparation has been rising and fighting academies are expanding to all major cities.

**Merck, Moderna detail potential skin cancer vaccine progress.** Significant progress has been made in the development of a [preventive shot for melanomas](#). Combining the vaccine and Merck's Keytruda immunotherapy leads to a statistically significant improvement in patient survival.

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## ECONOMICS

**Global coal consumption to reach all-time high this year.** A report by the International Energy Agency foresees [consumption to remain at similar levels](#) in the next few years if stronger efforts towards a low-carbon economy are not made.

**China calls for arduous efforts to revive economy.** China will work on [stabilising growth](#), employment and prices while speeding up construction of infrastructure projects and expanding effective investment.

**Tunisia receives €150mn to curb food insecurity.** The European Investment Bank has agreed to lend Tunisia 150 million euros to avert looming [food insecurity issues](#).

**Sudan signs \$6bn deal with UAE Group to build port.** Sudan signed an agreement to begin the construction of the [Abu Amama port and economic zone](#) on the Red Sea to boost economic growth.

**Brazil's central bank to launch its digital currency in 2024.** They aim to launch the [digital currency](#) after a closed pilot program next year with financial institutions, bank president Roberto Campos Neto said, adding that the project had received international attention.

**US watchdog gets full access to audit Chinese firms for first time.** The US Public Company Accounting Oversight Board has achieved full access to inspect and investigate [accounting firms in China](#), removing the risk that around 200 Chinese companies could be kicked off US stock exchanges.

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## SOCIAL

**Twitter users vote for Elon Musk's resignation.** 17.5 million people voted, with [more than 57% voting for Elon Musk to resign](#) as the platform's Chief Executive, after he ran a poll about his future. Musk said he would abide by the result, but no timeline was given.

**New Zealand to ban smoking for the next generation.** The [law aims to phase out tobacco smoking](#) for the next generation by imposing a ban. Tobacco can't ever be sold to anybody born on or after January 1, 2009 and the minimum age for buying cigarettes will keep increasing.

**New 'invisibility cloak' hides wearers from security cameras.** The [InvisDefense](#), developed by a team of students at Wuhan University, is a low-cost coat that can be used day or night to evade detection from security camera systems monitored by artificial intelligence.

**Biden in full support of African Union gaining a permanent seat in the G20.** President Biden announced his [full support of the African Union joining the G20](#) as a permanent member to strengthen collaboration.

**Quebec ends mandatory oath to King Charles for elected officials.** Quebec [passed a law](#) ending a requirement for elected officials to take an oath to Britain's King Charles, agreeing to make such a show of fealty optional.

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## PEACEBUILDING

**[Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte has formally apologized](#) on behalf of his government for the Netherlands' role in slavery and the slave trade.** The government is not offering compensation to individuals but instead is establishing a 220 million-euro education fund. Activists welcomed the apology but expressed concern about the lack of consultation with descendants of former slaves and the absence of concrete plans for repair and reparations.

**Roughly 200 countries agreed at a conference in Canada to a set of measures to try to [protect and restore vulnerable wildlife habitats](#).** Under the legally non-binding agreement, by 2030, world nations have pledged to protect 30 percent of the land and water considered vital for biodiversity. They agreed to offer some \$200 billion per year to help fund these initiatives. And wealthier nations pledged to pay \$30 billion annually to developing nations.

**[Build Up](#) has made available online a [Social Media Analysis Toolkit](#) for peacebuilders.** The toolkit is a practical how-to guide for mediators and peacebuilders who want to conduct their own social media analysis. It offers an overview of possible approaches, technology tools, and analysis methods.

**As part of [Counterpart's Open Government Project](#), a consortium in Manta, Ecuador has developed a [model to address violence against women](#).** The model facilitates coordination of legal, psychological, and health services to deal with cases of domestic violence. The consortium includes representatives from 40 entities, including civil society organizations, local government, and the judiciary.