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

What you need to know: Erdogan says he won't let 'terrorism-supporting' countries enter NATO, Pakistan police fire teargas, round up supporters of ousted PM Khan, AI – you're already consuming its writing, Pacific nations walk away from trade and security deal with China, Slovenia's lawmakers approve ex-business executive as prime minister, robots filling gaps in Singapore's workforce after COVID-19 disruptions.

SPECIAL EDITION: UKRAINE

Erdogan says he won't let 'terrorism-supporting' countries enter NATO. He said talks with Finland and Sweden about their joining NATO were not at the "expected level" and Ankara cannot say yes to these "[terrorism-supporting](#)" countries.

World Bank's IFC still disbursing funds in Ukraine despite war. The World Bank has continued disbursing funds to some private firms in Ukraine despite the war, and is looking to finance efforts to re-orient the country toward "[greening](#)" its economy.

EU agrees on further Russian sanctions. The European Union agreed "on principle" to a [partial ban of Russian oil imports](#) as part of a new sanctions package against Moscow. Pipeline imports would be exempt from the sanctions, according to the European Commission.

CONFLICT

Pakistan police fire teargas, round up supporters of ousted PM Khan. The Pakistani police fired teargas, baton-charged and detained [supporters of ousted Prime Minister Imran Khan](#) to stop them from reaching the capital Islamabad to demand fresh elections.

DRC suspends flights from Rwanda over its alleged support for rebels. The [DRC has suspended RwandAir flights](#) in response to what it says is Rwanda's support for M23 rebels carrying out a military offensive in its eastern borderlands. The conflict has displaced 72,000 people.

Religious tensions between Muslims and Hindus escalate in India. A court in Varanasi has ordered the closure of a mosque due to the [discovery of a Hindu relic](#) which has sparked tensions across the country. The mosque is adjacent to a Hindu temple.

At least 40 Islamist insurgents killed in Niger. Niger's army has killed at least [40 Boko Haram insurgents](#) on an island in Lake Chad and recovered several weapons along with ammunition and explosives.

Philippine National Police heightens alert in Manila after recent Mindanao bombings. Security within Manila has been heightened after two recent bombing incidents in Mindanao, as [fears of terrorist attacks spread](#).

DEVELOPMENT

AI – you're already consuming its writing. From student essays to content marketing, [AI writing tools](#) are doing what only a few years ago seemed impossible. Dozens of apps are aimed at students. Examiners will not be able to tell the difference between an AI written essay and a human one.

Uber reaches 1 billion rides in Africa. The company entered the market in 2013. It has established a [presence in eight African countries](#): South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana, Egypt, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Ivory Coast.

Pfizer to sell all its patented drugs at non-profit price in low-income countries. The company will make all of its patented medicines, including COVID-19 treatments and best-selling breast cancer drugs, available [at a not-for-profit price to 45 of the world's poorest countries](#).

Globalisation's supporters grasp for new buzzwords at Davos. [Globalisation is on shaky ground](#) as trade disputes fuel economic nationalism, a pandemic exposes the fragility of global supply networks, and a conflict in Europe might transform the geopolitical landscape.

G7 for strict environmental rules on deep-sea mining. The G7 agreed that [stringent environmental controls should govern deep-sea mining](#), and that consent would be provided only if they did not seriously harm the marine environment.

ECONOMICS

Pacific nations walk away from trade and security deal with China. The [countries have agreed not to sign a region-wide trade and security deal with China](#) after a high-level meeting between Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and his counterparts from 10 Pacific nations in Fiji.

IMF: 'Trend of fragmentation is strong'. What is most concerning to the IMF is that we are entering a world of increased fragmentation with currency and trade blocs that will separate

what was until now an [integrated global economy](#). This is more worrying than a slowdown in China, or war in Ukraine.

Polish Parliament approves judicial reforms to unblock EU funds. More than €35bn in grants and cheap loans were put on hold due to a dispute over the rule of law, but [Warsaw now looks set to agree to EU terms regarding the independence of judges](#).

US bill would bar Google, Apple from hosting apps that accept China's digital yuan. Republican senators want to [bar US app stores from hosting apps](#) that allow payments to be made with China's digital currency, amid fears the payment system could allow Beijing to spy on Americans.

More countries place restrictions on food exports. Concerns related to “[food nationalism](#)” rise as food shortages increase, particularly in Asia. Some examples are Malaysia’s limitation on chicken exports, palm oil from Indonesia, and India’s reduced wheat exports.

POLITICS

Slovenia's lawmakers approve ex-business executive as prime minister. [Fifty-four MPs endorsed Golob](#), a former executive of a state-owned energy company that launched green energy projects, who became the leader of the environmentalist Freedom Movement party that was formed last year.

Moldova places former President Dodon under house arrest. A Moldovan court placed the former president and pro-Russian opposition leader under house arrest for 30 days to allow prosecutors [to investigate allegations of corruption and treason](#).

Hungary's Prime Minister Orban calls a state of emergency. For the third time [Hungary's government gains emergency powers](#) because of the Ukraine war, allowing for decisions by decree. This shows the gradual increase of Orban’s power over the last 12 years.

Zimbabwe's legal age of sexual consent raised to 18 years. In an effort to [prevent teenage pregnancies](#), Zimbabwe’s Constitutional Court has ruled that the legal age of consent for sex should be raised to 18 from 16.

Somalia swears in new President. [Hassan Sheikh Mohamud was voted into power](#) on May 15th by parliamentarians. The UN has invited the international community to take this as a ‘moment of opportunity’.

SOCIAL

Robots filling gaps in Singapore's workforce after COVID-19 disruptions. After [struggling to find staff during the pandemic](#), businesses in Singapore have increasingly turned to robots to help carry out a range of tasks, from surveying construction sites to scanning library bookshelves.

French court scraps rule allowing burkinis in Grenoble swimming pools. A [French administrative court has suspended Grenoble's decision](#) to allow body-covering "burkini" bathing suits for women in municipal pools.

Mass shootings and gun violence in the United States are increasing. [Gun incidents are up 33% since 2017](#) with nearly 21,000 people killed in 2021. For adolescents and children, it's the most common form of death – more than motor accidents.

Some scientists want serious research into UFOs. The US defence and intelligence communities are taking [unidentified flying objects](#) seriously. Some researchers think the scientific community should too.

Kangaroos have been spotted in east India. [Smuggling of exotic animals](#) and private breeding farms in Southeast Asia are on the rise as demand for exotic animals increases.

PEACEBUILDING

The [TRUST Network](#) is using [early warning data](#) to identify cities at risk of political and election violence, in order to work with local partners to develop intervention strategies to prevent violence. The Network is pro-actively [connecting community mediation centers](#) around the country with other community organizations and law enforcement to share information about potential local threats and avert violence. Judging by the data, they have identified 11 cities at risk: Chicago, IL; New York, NY; Columbus OH; Houston, TX; Los Angeles, CA; Las Vegas, NV; Phoenix, AZ; Seattle, WA; Pittsburgh, PA; Portland, OR and Washington, D.C.

The [Environmental Law Institute](#) has announced a new [Climate Equity for Local Governments initiative](#) that will offer municipalities programming and resources on integrating equity into climate action planning. The initiative launched on May 26 with a [webinar](#) introducing equity-centered local climate action planning.

[The Cross-Border Conflict Evidence, Policy and Trends \(XCEPT\) research program](#) examines conflict-affected borderlands, how conflicts connect across borders, and the drivers of violent and peaceful behavior., using field data collection, satellite data and open-source investigations. The program includes a cross-border local research network dedicated to building the capacity of local researchers as well as world-leading research institutions. The participating [research institutions](#) include [The Royal Institute of International Affairs](#), [King's College London](#), [The Asia Foundation](#), [Rift Valley Institute](#), [The Malcolm H. Kerr Carnegie Middle East Center](#), [Conciliation Resources](#), [Satellite Applications Catapult](#), and [Chemonics](#). The program is funded by UK Aid.

[Diebedo Francis Kere has been awarded](#) the [Pritzker architecture prize](#) for his work on buildings that address social needs, particularly in Africa. Kere uses simple, local materials, incorporates natural light and ventilation, and works closely with community members in his projects. In 2001, he designed and built a primary school in Gando, Burkina Faso and helped finance it through a foundation he created. His firm has also designed the Serpentine

Pavilion in London, the Benin National Parliament and a community playground in Kampala, Uganda.