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Peacebuilding

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

IN THIS WEEK'S EDITION

Here's what you need to know: Russia doubles interest rates after rouble slumps, thousands flee air strikes, shelling as fighting erupts in Myanmar, Airbus promises hydrogen aircraft by 2035, Toyota suspends domestic factory operations after cyberattack, the election for the future of the internet, the US Copyright Office says an AI cannot copyright art it creates.

SPECIAL EDITION: UKRAINE

Russia doubles interest rate after rouble slumps. The Bank of Russia more than doubled its interest rate to 20% after the [rouble sank 30%](#) after new Western sanctions. The currency then eased back to be about 20% down.

Swiss ditch historic neutrality to enforce Russia sanctions. The Swiss government broke with a long-entrenched tradition of neutrality and agreed to [enforce EU sanctions](#) against Russian companies and individuals including the President and Foreign Minister.

EU commits to hosting Ukrainian refugees. The UN estimates that [400,000 Ukrainian refugees](#)—mostly older men, women and children—have left already. Millions more are expected to follow.

CONFLICT

Thousands flee air strikes, shelling as fighting erupts in Myanmar.

Myanmar's military deployed ground troops and launched air and artillery strikes [against rebel forces](#) in the country's east, prompting thousands of people to flee.

Haiti Police open fire on demonstrators. Haitian police opened fire on demonstrators demanding higher wages and killed a reporter. The protesters were workers from the garment sector who received a 37% increase that took their [wages to just under \\$7.50 a day](#) — half what union leaders had demanded.

CIA says Havana Syndrome not result of sustained campaign by hostile power. The CIA has ruled out that the mysterious symptoms known as [Havana Syndrome](#) are the result of a sustained global campaign by a hostile power aimed at hundreds of US diplomats and spies.

71% of South Koreans in favour of developing own nuclear weapons. This is despite President Moon Jae's diplomatic approach to North Korea's growing [nuclear and missile capacities](#).

Al-Shabab in Somalia spent US\$24 million on weapons in 2021. A Hiraal Institute report shows that [al-Shabab spent US\\$24 million on weapons](#). The report also alleges that the group has an annual revenue collection of about US\$180 million.

DEVELOPMENT

Airbus promises hydrogen aircraft by 2035. Airbus is working with the French-American engine manufacturer CFM International to develop a [hydrogen-powered aircraft engine](#).

There are common traits among mammal and bird species facing extinction. For mammals the speed of reproduction and being small seems to be the key factors. This favours foxes and mice but not hippopotamus. For birds it is different, almost the opposite. Birds that grow fast and have many offspring were the most [endangered](#).

Fish communicate extensively through sound. Researchers have learned that [sounds are a major mode of communication](#) among fish, rather than being limited to a few species. The most chatter was recorded around food and sex.

Innovative agriculture technique aims to support crop production in Kenya. [Agrivoltaics](#) is the simultaneous use of land for both solar power generation and agriculture.

Humpback whales no longer listed as endangered after major recovery. Humpback whales will be removed from [Australia's threatened-species list](#), after an independent scientific panel deemed the mammals had made a major recovery.

ECONOMICS

Toyota suspends domestic factory operations after cyberattack. The company suspended [domestic factory operations](#), losing around 13,000 cars of output, after a supplier was hit by a cyberattack.

Gold demand has surged in India. It is the [world's second-largest market](#) for the yellow metal, behind China.

BP will sell its 20% stake in Rosneft while Shell and Equinor will end their Russian joint ventures. Energy companies are beginning to pare back from [Russian investments](#) after government pressure following the country's invasion of Ukraine.

Total advanced economy debt now exceeds 250% of GDP. Debt includes households, business and government. In the emerging markets, [debt has risen more quickly](#) and now stands at about 150% of GDP.

Soybeans soar to nine-year high with South America supply in doubt. Chicago Futures climbed by 2% setting the highest price since 2012. This adds to [inflation expectations](#) for food and livestock feed affected by supply chain shortages and rising energy bills.

POLITICS

The election for the future of the internet. UN member states will cast their votes for the next secretary-general of the [International Telecommunication Union](#). Russia and China would like to make it easier for nation states to control, track and censor the internet.

Tunisia will bar foreign funding for civil society. Tunisia's President Kais Saied said he will [outlaw foreign funding](#) for civil society organisations as he tries to remake the country's politics after establishing one-man rule.

Europe proposes rules for fair access to connected device data. [The Data Act](#) will unlock the economic and societal potential of data for the benefit of businesses, researchers, public administrations and society at large.

Germany to boost military spending in latest historic shift. Germany will channel \$113 billion this year into a fund to [modernise the military](#). By 2024, the government will spend at least 2% of gross domestic product each year on defence in line with a NATO target that Berlin has consistently failed to meet.

Turkish opposition parties vow return to parliamentary democracy.

Six opposition parties in Turkey have pledged to bring back parliamentary democracy and scrap the [executive presidential system](#) introduced by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

SOCIAL

The US Copyright Office says an AI cannot copyright art it creates. The US Copyright Office has rejected a request to let an [AI copyright](#) a work of art. The board found that an AI-created image didn't include a human element. **First ever recording of dying brain may shed light on our final moments.** The [rhythmic brain wave patterns](#) were recorded during the man's time of death. They were observed to be similar to those occurring during dreaming, memory recall and meditation.

China to delay retirement ages due to increased life-expectancy. The [retirement age](#) for employees in the public sector and at state-owned enterprises is set at 60 for men, 55 for female office workers and 50.

Uganda to impose steep penalties for those who refuse COVID-19 vaccines. [The new bill](#) proposes a fine of 4 million Ugandan shillings (US\$1,139) for those who refuse to get vaccinated, or a jail term of six months. This equates to one year's salary for many.

PEACEBUILDING

[Interaction](#) has redesigned and reissued its NGO Aid Map to show the work of InterAction member organizations around the globe. The new map is designed to amplify the impact of the work of InterAction Members more effectively and support InterAction's advocacy by including data and mapping capabilities.

Historically Black cities and communities around the US are seeking to preserve and develop their towns. [In Africatown, Alabama](#), descendants of the survivors of

Clotilda, the last slave ship to the US, are revitalizing the community and building a museum, business center and welcome center, financed by the city, county, state, and private corporations. In Oakland, California, community members are opening a museum and community gathering place to recognize the women of the Black Panther Party who in the 1960's organized local projects, including children's breakfast programs, medical and dental services, elder assistance and voter registration drives.

The governments of South Africa, the United Kingdom, the United States, France, Germany, and the European Union have signed the Political [Declaration on the Just Energy Transition in South Africa](#). The document outlines a partnership to support the decarbonization of South Africa's heavily coal-dependent energy system, underwritten by financing of \$8.5 billion over the next three to five years. [DAI](#) has released an [analysis](#) of how policymakers and development practitioners can address some of the challenges involved.

The [Mekong Dam Monitor](#) is an open-source online platform near-real time monitoring of dams and environmental impacts in the Mekong Basin. The Monitor uses remote sensing, satellite imagery and GIS analysis to provide data freely available for public use. The project is a collaboration of the [Stimson Center](#) and [Eyes on Earth, Inc](#) funded by the [Mekong-US Partnership](#), the [Chino Cienega Foundation](#) and individual donors.