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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: Ukraine's bid to recruit fighters from Africa sparks uproar, Iran launches missiles at northern Iraqi city, Amazon rainforest reaching tipping point, the world economy facing stagflation, Israel and Turkey hail new era in relations, Twitter unveils version of site that can bypass Russia block.

SPECIAL EDITION: UKRAINE

Ukraine's bid to recruit fighters from Africa sparks uproar. Nigeria, Senegal and Algeria have criticized Ukraine's efforts to enlist [international fighters](#) as it resists the Russian invasion. Analysts say those who have responded to the call need to reconsider.

How sanctions have hurt ordinary Russians. Prices on many goods increased between [20% and 40%](#) in the first week of the invasion, including food. Milk doubled, while iPhones increased 40%. The price of appliances rose by 30%, and McDonald's have closed all 850 restaurants.

France, UK, Germany say Iran deal could collapse on Russian demands. The three countries warned Russia that its demands to have its [trade guaranteed with Iran](#) risked the collapse of an almost-completed nuclear deal.

CONFLICT

Iran launches missiles at northern Iraqi city. Iran's Revolutionary Guards force says it targeted an [Israeli "strategic centre"](#) with ballistic missiles fired from Iran that struck the Iraqi Kurdish city of Irbil.

Pakistan demands joint probe into 'accidental' India missile fire. Pakistan has rejected New Delhi's decision to hold an internal inquiry into the incident and called on the international community to play a role in [the investigation](#).

Australia plans \$28 billion military boost as threats grow. Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced a A\$38 billion (\$27.8 billion) expansion of the country's military as [security concerns](#) in the Asia-Pacific region rise. The government is planning to lift the number of uniformed personnel in the Australian military to about 80,000, a rise of 18,500, by 2040.

Nearly 70 killed in South Sudan cattle raids. [Intercommunal clashes](#), mostly involving cattle, have killed nearly 70 people across various parts of South Sudan. This comes amid rising food prices.

Salvadoran court orders arrest of ex-president. A court in El Salvador ordered the provisional arrest of the former President for alleged involvement in covering up the [murder of six Jesuit priests](#) and two of their staff during the country's civil war in the 1980s.

France to continue aerial support to Mali after troop withdrawal. France will continue to provide aerial [military support](#) to Malian troops battling an Islamist insurgency in the Sahel even after its counter-terrorism mission has withdrawn, but only where Russian fighters are not present.

DEVELOPMENT

Amazon rainforest reaching tipping point. The trees are losing health and could be approaching a tipping point due to [mass deforestation](#). The findings are based on three decades of satellite data.

Africa is vulnerable to the impacts of the Ukraine war. The IMF says that the [knock on effects of the Ukraine war](#) will affect Africa in four ways; Increased food prices, higher fuel prices, lower tourism revenues and difficulty to access international capital markets.

Moderna to establish first mRNA vaccine facility in Kenya. Kenya's government and Moderna have signed an MoU to establish the [first mRNA vaccine manufacturing plant in Africa](#), which aims to produce 500 million doses of vaccines annually.

Rejuvenation research continues advancing. A group of scientists successfully conducted a procedure in middle-aged mice to [refresh their cells](#). The results could help people with cancer, Alzheimers, or other health problems related to ageing.

AI aims to help detect Parkinsons. Scientists are developing an [AI electronic nose](#) that could identify a specific odour linked to the disease.

First person to get genetically-modified pig heart dies 2 months after operation. The procedure will require further research to determine its future use. Currently, 17 people die each day waiting for a transplant, and there are [more than 100,000 people on the waiting list](#) in the US.

ECONOMICS

The world economy facing stagflation. A historic surge in commodity prices after [Russia's invasion of Ukraine](#), coming on top of already-high pandemic inflation, has gotten investors and economists searching for parallels with the energy shocks of four decades ago and the prolonged slowdowns that followed.

Italy stops sale of military drones firm to Chinese investors. This is the latest in a series of moves by Prime Minister Mario Draghi to [curb Beijing's forays](#) into the euro zone's third-largest economy.

Mexican drug cartels turn to bitcoin, internet, e-commerce. The cartels are increasingly turning to the internet, bitcoin and e-commerce to [launder money and sell drugs](#), according to a report released by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

Egypt restricts exports of basic food products. The list includes wheat, flour, lentils, among others. The decision was taken to protect the [domestic demand and food reserves](#). Other countries have also introduced similar bans.

POLITICS

Israel and Turkey hail new era in relations, but divisions remain. Israel and Turkey announce a new era in relations following more than a decade of diplomatic rupture, as Israeli President Isaac Herzog made [a landmark visit](#) to the Turkish capital, Ankara.

Turkmen president's son likely to succeed father in election. The Turkmen President son, Serdar, has [won a snap presidential election](#) and will succeed his father as the ruler of a gas-rich Central Asian nation of six million.

South Korea: Opposition candidate Yoon Suk-yeol elected president. The main voters' priorities were addressing the [economic challenges and inflation](#),

particularly in the housing market. The new elected president aims to shift foreign policy towards North Korea and China.

Modi's BJP wins big in India's largest state election. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's party won India's most populous state with a big majority. This offers [clues to the national mood](#) before a 2024 general election.

Far-right gains first share of power in Spain since Franco. A [far-right party](#) will hold a share of power in Spain for the first time since the dictatorship of Francisco Franco, with the Vox party securing a place in a coalition running the regional government in Castile and Leon.

SOCIAL

Twitter unveils version of site that can bypass Russia block. Twitter has launched a [privacy-protected version](#) of its site to bypass surveillance and censorship after Russia restricted access to its service in the country.

Rwanda to impose tax on watching Netflix. This comes a few months after Zimbabwe and Nigeria laid out plans for the [collection of taxes](#) from digital companies such as Netflix, Google, YouTube, and Amazon and e-commerce.

EU criticizes Mexican president's comments on media bias. The EU Parliament passed a resolution urging President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador to tone down his [criticisms of the media](#) over the increased assassinations of journalists.

WHO estimates that obesity rates would double by 2030. Obesity has been rapidly increasing in [low and middle-income countries](#). The disease is affecting more women than men.

Saudi Arabia executes 81 men in one day for terrorism, other offences. Offences ranged from [joining militant groups to holding "deviant beliefs"](#). The number dwarfed the 67 executions reported there in all of 2021 and the 27 in 2020.

PEACEBUILDING

The [Carter Center](#) has [expanded its Inform Women, Transform Lives campaign](#) to 12 additional cities around the world. The project aims to ensure that women can acquire beneficial information from their local governments and thrive in their communities. The added cities are Birmingham, United Kingdom; Bogota, Colombia; Casablanca, Morocco; Dhaka North, Bangladesh; Freetown, Sierra Leone; Maputo, Mozambique; Montevideo, Uruguay; Nairobi, Kenya; Paris, France; Santo Domingo,

Dominican Republic; Tunis, Tunisia; and Washington, D.C., USA. [The project started](#) in 13 cities in March 2021.

[InterAction](#) is **[launching its revamped Results-Based Protection Website](#)**. The [site](#) offers nearly 200 resources that promote results-based approaches to protection, including tools, reports, evaluations, webinars, podcasts, and more.

Bosnian teachers have created a teaching manual, [Holocaust and Peace: Lessons from the Past for the Future](#). [Post-Conflict Research Center](#) and [forumZFD](#) in Sarajevo collaborated on the project. A free digital copy is available in English or Bosanski (Bosnian) from [The Educators' Institute for Human Rights](#).

[Northspan's Welcoming Community program](#) is preparing to launch learning cohorts centered around inclusion topics in three rural communities in northeast Minnesota: Cloquet, Cook County, and Rock Ridge School Districts. The program aims to provide the community with continued opportunities for learning and connection related to topics relevant to diversity, equity, and inclusion. In their monthly emails, they highlight a specific equity topic and provide resources related to the monthly theme. The theme for the month of March is Digital Equity.