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

## CONFLICT

**Denmark accused of helping United States spy on European allies.** Several European nations want Denmark to explain why its foreign secret service [allegedly helped](#) the United States spy on European leaders, including Germany, Sweden and Norway.

**At least 55 killed in eastern Congo massacres by Islamists.** At least 55 people have been killed in villages in eastern Congo, in potentially the [worst night of violence](#) the area has seen in at least four years. The attacks are attributed to the Allied Democratic Forces, an Islamist armed group.

**International reports highlight scale of problems in Belarus.** Over the years, [a plethora of international reports](#) have shown how freedom has been curtailed in Belarus.

**Protests spread across once-quiet Oman as economy flounders.** Protests over mass layoffs and Oman's poor economy [spread to cities](#) across the sultanate. Government debt, once 6% of Oman's gross domestic product in 2014, has risen to 79%.

**SE Asia states want to drop proposed UN call for Myanmar arms embargo.** Nine Southeast Asian nations - Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam - [have proposed watering down](#) a UN General Assembly draft resolution on Myanmar, including removing a call for an arms embargo on the country.

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## DEVELOPMENT

**China allows families to have three children in major policy shift.** China has announced that it will allow couples to have [up to three children](#), after census data showed a steep decline in birth rates. China's birth rate is less than 10 per 1,000 people, and has dropped roughly 40% since the two-child policy was introduced.

**World's first electric vehicle charging highway trial to start In Italy.** The highway will [recharge electric vehicles as they drive](#) using copper coils on the side of the road to transfer energy straight to the batteries of electric vehicles via magnetic induction.

**The largest peacekeeping operations in 2021.** The largest mission AMISOM is the [responsibility of the African Union](#) and has been ongoing since February 2007.

**Germany to atone for Namibian colonial past with a billion euros of projects.** Germany has [agreed to fund projects](#) in Namibia worth more than a billion euros over 30 years to atone for its role in genocide and property seizures in its-then colony more than a century ago.

**Giant river otters thought to be extinct reappear in Argentina.** A giant river otter [appeared next to the canoe](#) of the director of conservation at Rewilding Argentina. The otter known as the “Wolf of the River”, considered extinct, had not been seen in Argentina since the 1980s.

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## SOCIAL

**Bulldozers threaten conservation of ancient Mexican metropolis.** Just beyond the towering pyramids of what was [once the largest city of the Americas](#), an illegal building project threatens to cause irreparable harm to the remains of temples and two dozen other ancient structures.

**Pakistan: Government plans to 'Islamize' mainstream curriculum.** Prime Minister Imran Khan's administration is preparing to implement [a uniform education system](#) in the country with a strong focus on an Islamized syllabus and teaching the Quran.

**Record plague of mice in Australia overruns farms, shops and bedrooms.** The mice have devoured crops, bitten people in their beds, dropped out of air-conditioning units and have gnawed through appliances. It is estimated the plague [could cost farmers](#) over one billion dollars' worth of harvests.

ADD PHOTO

**Spanish postal service was criticised following the launch of “Equality Stamps”.** As part of a campaign to fight racism, they have created 4 stamps with [different colors of skin](#), in which the white stamp is the most expensive and the darkest it gets, the cheapest.

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## ECONOMICS

**Netherlands court orders oil giant Shell to cut emissions.** By 2030, Shell must [cut its CO2 emissions by 45%](#) compared to 2019 levels, the civil court ruled. It is the first time a company has been legally obliged to align its policies with the Paris climate accords.

**Unemployment in Brazil hit record 14.7% in first quarter.** The total number of job-seekers was a record 14.8 million while workers [without sufficient work](#) increased by 1.2 million to 33.2 million.

**Supply chains still have not recovered from the pandemic.** The rate for a standard 40-foot container shipped from Shanghai to Rotterdam is [up 485% from a year ago](#). The composite which looks at eight of the world's primary shipping rates is 293% higher than a year ago.

**Uber recognises a trade union for the first time.** The UK GMB union will be representing drivers [in talks with Uber](#) about providing pensions, benefits and worker rights. This could mark a trend for Uber and other gig employers to improve working conditions and employee rights.

**G-7 Trade chiefs want stronger rules on state owned company subsidies.** Trade ministers from the [world's seven largest advanced economies](#) want to bolster regulations on industrial subsidies and curb actions by state-owned companies that distort trade.

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## POLITICS

**Mali President and Prime Minister freed by military after resigning.** The release coincided with a visit by an Economic Community of West African States delegation to [press the military to back down](#). The UN, the African Union and other international bodies had also urged their release.

**US tells Russia it will not re-join Open Skies arms control pact.** The United States told Russia it will not re-join the [Open Skies arms control pact](#), which allows unarmed surveillance flights over member countries.

**Somalia's PM commits to free, fair polls after impasse over elections resolved.** Somali Prime Minister said he was [committed to free and fair polls](#) after he signed an agreement with leaders from the country's regions to hold elections after delays triggered a crisis. This avoids possible conflicts between rival clans.

**Zambia ex-minister jailed in graft case that led to aid freeze.** Britain, Finland, Ireland and Sweden [withheld nearly \\$34 million in aid](#) to Zambia's social welfare and education sectors in 2018 because of concern over financial mismanagement.

**Prosecutors seek jail for Istanbul mayor for insulting election board.** Turkish prosecutors are [seeking a prison sentence for the mayor of Istanbul](#), seen as a possible challenger to long-time President Erdogan, for insulting election authorities.

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## PEACEBUILDING

**Turkey and Greece have [returned to talks](#) about their dispute over sovereignty in the eastern Mediterranean Sea.** In July – August 2020, the dispute devolved into the longest-lasting military face-off since the 1970s. The discussions could help the parties de-escalate tensions, according to the [International Crisis Group](#).

**ICAN's Better Peace Initiative (BPI) is launching a new guide on *10 Steps to Ensure a Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Constitution-Drafting Process*.** The [guide](#) is intended to inform governments, international organizations, women peacebuilders and other civil society advocating for and engaged in constitutional reform processes.

**The Carter Center and Rice University's Baker Institute are organizing a [series of virtual panel discussions on Bipartisan Solutions to Election Reform](#).** The discussions use the framework of the recommendations of the bipartisan Commission on Federal Election Reform co-chaired by former President Jimmy Carter and former Secretary of State James A. Baker in

2005. That commission came up with 87 recommendations on issues such as voter registration, voter ID and voting by mail. All 21 members signed the report.

**[Resetting the Table](#)'s long-time facilitator Moshe Samuels has released a new TV series** on Israeli Public Broadcasting exploring the multiple identities and perspectives of American Jews and viewing American Jewish life through an Israeli lens.