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Institute for
Economics
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Alliance for
Peacebuilding

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

CONFLICT

Israeli jets launch air raids on southern Lebanon. Following Hezbollah rocket attacks against Israel, Israel retaliated by conducting [its first airstrike on Lebanon in seven years](#). Lebanon's Prime Minister stated that the attack violated the resolutions of the UN Security Council.

Two Myanmar men arrested in US for plotting to kill Myanmar's UN envoy. Two Myanmar citizens have been arrested in New York state for [plotting with an arms dealer in Thailand](#) - who sells weapons to the Burmese military - to kill or injure Myanmar's ambassador to the UN.

Mozambican, Rwandan forces retake territory from IS linked insurgents. Mozambican and Rwandan security forces have [recaptured the port town of Mocimboa da Praia](#), an insurgent stronghold, adding to a growing list of retaken towns and villages. The area contains \$60 billion of gas development.

Thousands of Thai anti-government protesters clash with police in Bangkok. More than a thousand Thai [anti-government protesters clashed with police](#), as they demonstrated against the government's failure to handle COVID-19 outbreaks and their impact on the economy.

Islamist militants recruit child soldiers in Burkina Faso. The Western Sahel has become the [epicentre of attacks by Islamist militant groups](#), resulting in an increase in the recruitment of child soldiers.

DEVELOPMENT

IPPC warns 1.5 C warming could be reached by 2030. The Earth could be just 10 years from heating up by [more than 1.5 degrees Celsius](#). This is a threshold beyond which even more serious and frequent fires, droughts, floods and cyclones are expected.

Disposable facemasks could take 450 years to break down. Globally, [129 billion disposable facemasks are thrown into landfill every month](#), according to a study by the University of Southern Denmark researchers.

Nanoscope tool could help doctors detect cancer in a routine urine test. Researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology [have created a nanoparticle diagnostic tool](#) that can detect cancer cells in urine.

Number of threatened species is rising. The number of threatened mammals [increased by 21%](#) between 2007 and 2020.

MSF forced to exit Cameroon. The organisation's announcement comes after almost [eight months of suspension by the country's government](#). It also received notification from the Ethiopian government on July 30 that it was suspending their operations in the country for three months.

SOCIAL

Prehistoric cave paintings in Spain show Neanderthals were artists. Neanderthals may have been [closer to our species of prehistoric modern human](#) than previously believed after cave paintings found in Spain proved they had a fondness for art.

Mexico sues US gun makers, seeking \$10 billion in damages. Mexico has sued several gun makers in a US federal court, [accusing them of reckless business practices](#) that supplied what it called a "torrent" of illegal arms to violent Mexican drug cartels.

Uganda's President, Yoweri Museveni, has encouraged Africans to use Swahili to unite. He made the remarks [on African Integration Day](#) saying that Swahili is a 'neutral language'.

Alibaba suspends several staff over sexual assault allegations. The Chinese e-commerce giant has suspended several staff following [an employee's allegations that she was sexually assaulted by her boss and a client](#). This followed a social media storm on China's microblogging website Weibo highlighting a broader trend.

Nigeria's health sector under pressure due to cholera surge. The country's public health sector is under further pressure [due to the surge in cholera cases](#). Out of the 36 states, 22 have reported cholera-related cases that have killed approximately 653 since March.

ECONOMICS

India's female labour participation rate falls to 16.1% as pandemic hits jobs. The female labour participation rate in India [had fallen to 20.3% in 2019 from more than 26% in 2005](#), according to World Bank estimates.

China-US container shipping rates set new record above \$20,000. Container shipping rates from China to the United States have [risen above \\$20,000 per 40-foot box](#), as rising retailer orders ahead of the peak U.S. shopping season add strain to global supply chains.

Foreign investment in Latin America plummets. Foreign investment in Latin America [dropped 35% in 2020 compared to the previous year](#). Argentina suffered a fall of 39.7%, Central America was worst hit with an 89%, while South America saw a 40% fall and the Caribbean lost 25.5%.

Private equity firms revise China strategy as regulatory crackdown widens. Hong Kong and Chinese private equity firms [are rethinking their strategies in China](#) as a widening regulatory crackdown on some of the country's hottest sectors. Investors are scouting for opportunities in other industries that they hope will be less vulnerable to sudden policy changes.

POLITICS

Hard-line cleric Raisi sworn in as Iran president. The cleric has formally started his four-year term. [His victory was endorsed by the supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei](#), after most prominent rivals were barred from standing. With Raisi's presidency, all branches of power in Iran will be controlled by anti-Western hardliners loyal to Khamenei.

Cuba now allows small and medium-sized private businesses. Under the new rules, [enterprises with up to 100 employees will be allowed](#). President Miguel Díaz-Canel said Cuba was taking firm steps to update its economic model.

Bulgaria's anti-elite ITN party proposes minority government. Bulgaria's largest political grouping, the anti-elite ITN, [proposed a minority government to lead the Balkan country](#), although doubts remain whether it would forge enough support in the parliament for its approval.

Indonesia commits to South China Sea defence with the US. Indonesia has started [discussions with the US on trade in the South China Sea](#). This is a strategic attempt to counter China's regional power and to defend their right to navigate the sea.

Sudan to join International Criminal Court (ICC). The Sudanese cabinet has [unanimously decided to join ICC after years of refusal](#). This is a step towards former President Omar al-Bashir facing trial for crimes against humanity, and genocide.

PEACEBUILDING

[Mediate.com's Online Mediation Training Task Force](#) has invited comments on its [Final Report and Recommendations](#) on how to support the field of mediation fully embracing online mediation and online mediation training. The report suggests the field should develop resources, expand access, and update clinical practice and ethical standards for online mediation practice, training, mentorship, and apprenticeship.

[The Alliance for Middle East Peace](#) started a new podcast series, [Groundwork: Mixed Cities Edition](#). The podcast focuses on towns and cities that are home to both Jewish and Palestinian Arab communities. As they explore in these episodes, each city is different, with "painful histories, legacies of dispossession and injustice, and current realities of inequality," but are home to Jewish and Arab activists working to "make reality more just and equitable."

[The Carter Center](#) released [Sudan's Youth and the Transition: Priorities, Perception, and Attitudes](#), a report on the experiences, expectations, and hopes of Sudanese youth regarding the country's transition from Omar al-Bashir's regime to democracy.

The Alliance for Peacebuilding has [proposed](#) the establishment of a US initiative to "support civic engagement and rebuild democracy," modelled on President Ronald Reagan's National Endowment for Democracy, which supports democracy globally. The

organization would work with a broad spectrum of civil society organizations across the U.S. to “reform and increase opportunities for civic education, break down information silos, and increase literacy and awareness of misinformation.”