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

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## CONFLICT

**French troops kill leader of Islamic State group in Sahel.** The head of Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, who was wanted for deadly attacks on US soldiers and foreign aid workers, [has been killed](#) in an operation by French troops.

**Attacks on Myanmar telecom towers show evolving tactics in conflict.** Around 700,000 people in Myanmar lost internet access after [attacks on telecommunication equipment](#). The National Unity Government (NUG) is believed to be responsible.

**French minister in Mali to pressure junta over Russian mercenaries.** France's Armed Forces Minister [visited Mali](#) to pressure the military junta to end talks to bring Russian mercenaries into the country. He also called for the country to return to constitutional order.

**The hotel manager who sheltered people during a genocide and inspired the film Hotel Rwanda convicted of terror charges.** The ruling comes more than a year after Paul Rusesabagina disappeared during a visit to Dubai and appeared days later in Rwanda [in handcuffs](#).

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## DEVELOPMENT

**UN urges 'repurposing' of global agricultural subsidies.** The UN [calls for](#) a radical rethink of agricultural subsidies, saying more than 80% of the government funds either distort prices, harm the environment, or feed inequality.

**UNHCR chief says 'space for discussion' with Taliban over human rights.** UNHCR chief, Filippo Grandi, [said he found](#) that the Taliban have space for discussion and engagement on human rights issues, including women and minorities rights.

**Bioscience company plans to bring woolly mammoths back from extinction.** The bioscience firm has raised \$15 million from investors to [develop techniques](#), including CRISPR gene editing, for de-extinction.

**World's largest plant capturing carbon from air starts operations in Iceland.** The plant [sucks carbon dioxide](#) directly from the air. The isolated carbon is then mixed with water and pumped deep underground, where it slowly turns into rock.

**US launches mass expulsion of Haitian migrants from Texas.** The US is [flying Haitians](#) camped in a Texas border town back to their homeland and blocking others from crossing the border from Mexico in a massive show of force.

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## SOCIAL

**One million Nigerian children to miss school due to mass kidnappings.** Schools have become [targets for mass abductions](#) for ransom in northern Nigeria by armed groups. Many of the kidnappings are conducted by criminal gangs.

**International court backs probe into Philippines' war on drugs.** [Judges' assessment](#) of material presented by prosecutors, was that “the so-called ‘war on drugs’ campaign cannot be seen as a legitimate law enforcement operation”, but rather amounted to a systematic attack on civilians.

**How metal-infused jaws give some ants an exceptionally sharp bite.** The [metal-fortified body parts](#) have “the kinds of properties that you want in a knife or needle,” The team estimates that the zinc-infused teeth allow it to puncture and cut using only about 60 percent of the energy and muscle mass it would otherwise.

**Marlboro giant seals takeover of UK inhaler firm.** Marlboro cigarette maker Philip Morris International [has sealed its £1bn bid](#) for the UK inhaler firm Vectura. Vectura makes inhaled medicines and devices to treat respiratory illnesses such as asthma.

**Mass dolphin killing forces Faroe Islands to re-examine hunting rules.** 1,428 white-sided dolphins [were killed last weekend](#), exceeding the total of those killed from 2007-2020.

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## ECONOMICS

**Debt load threatens Latin America jobs recovery.** [World Bank says](#) Latin America’s heavily-indebted corporations are likely to delay rehiring workers during the recovery from last year’s slump, according to the World Bank. About 26 million people in Latin America lost their jobs last year.

**China applies to join Pacific trade pact to boost economic clout.** Japan said it would have to determine [if China meets the extremely high standards](#) of the group. Before the US withdrawal from the pact, the Trans-Pacific Partnership was seen as an important economic counterweight to China's regional influence.

**'Quad' countries to agree on secure microchip supply chains.** Leaders of the United States, Japan, India and Australia [will agree to take steps](#) to build secure semiconductor supply chains when they meet in Washington next week.

**Benin becomes world's fastest place to start a business.** Benin created an [online business registration](#) platform making it the world's fastest place to start a business. Economists say that the online business registration is cost effective, minimizes delays and corruption.

**The World Bank accuses the IMF of artificially boosting China's rankings.** [They accuse](#) the managing director of the IMF of personally pushing for a higher China's rank in the lender's annual Doing Business report.

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## POLITICS

**Poland will face EU fines for failing to suspend its Judicial Discipline System.** The European Commission will ask the European Court of Justice to [levy financial penalties against Poland](#) after its government failed to respond to a ruling asking it to end its controversial judicial disciplinary regime.

**Chinese ambassador to UK barred from British parliament.** The new Chinese ambassador to the UK [has been barred from parliament](#) after the imposition of sanctions on British MPs by Beijing.

**Argentinian government rocked as hard-left ministers resign.** Argentina's interior minister, Eduardo de Pedro, has [offered his resignation along with several other hard-left officials](#). This signals a major rift within the government after a bruising election loss in midterm primaries.

**Iran joins China Russia bloc.** Iran has [gained membership](#) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, founded two decades ago in St. Petersburg and currently has eight members.

**France sees crisis over submarine cancellation.** France is in a crisis with the United States and Australia after [Canberra's cancellation of a multi-billion dollar submarine](#). This has led Paris to recall envoys in Washington and Canberra.

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## PEACEBUILDING

The [Environmental Law Institute \(ELI\)](#) has released a new report that can help cities address food waste and climate change. The report, [A Toolkit for Incorporating Food Waste in Municipal Climate Action Plans](#), includes model provisions for incorporating food waste measures into city climate actions plans. ELI has also worked with the [Natural Resources Defense Council](#) to create a [Model Compost Procurement Policy](#) to help municipalities encourage the use of compost products. In 2019, 35% of food in the US was wasted, contributing to 4% of all US greenhouse gas emissions.

The [Alliance for Middle East Peace \(ALLMEP\)](#) and [B8 of Hope](#) are publicizing a [series of videos](#) by young Middle East activists explaining what "drives their activism" and "what sort of future they are working to build, together." The videos were produced by [Pendulum](#).

Since his election in 2001, Belgium Mayor Bart Somers has led an effort to turn his city away from intolerance and make it "green, clean and safe." Schools and housing have been integrated voluntarily. Every foreign newcomer is matched with a Mechelen native, and the pairs meet weekly for six months so the newcomer can learn the local language and customs. So far, the strategy seems to be largely successful, [according to The Atlantic](#). Support for the far-right

party, Vlaams Belang, has dropped from a third in 2000 to 15 percent in 2019. Belgium had Europe's highest number of foreign fighters per capita in Syria, but not a single person left from Mechelen.