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

Welcome to this week's Future Trends—the must-read weekly briefing covering the changing face of global politics, economics, development, social factors, and conflict.

Here's what you need to know this week:

- Harris to become Ireland's youngest PM
- ISIS targets Russia, and Moscow in particular
- US announces climate rules to phase out gas cars by 2032
- Japan approves plan to sell fighter jets to other nations
- Race to protect the surface of the moon

POLITICS

Harris to become Ireland's youngest PM. [Simon Harris](#), 37, was successful after the leadership race in his Fine Gael party ended without any other candidates. The leadership became vacant after Leo Varadkar announced his surprise resignation.

Senegal's president-elect Faye vows to govern with humility, transparency. Opposition candidate Bassirou Diomaye Faye, a political newcomer popular among disaffected youth, is set to be [the next president](#) after his main rival called him to concede defeat.

Vietnam's President Thuong resigns amid anticorruption campaign. Thuong [resigned](#) after little more than a year in office due to “violations” and “shortcomings”, the governing Communist Party said. Thuong is the second president to resign in two years amid an anticorruption crackdown.

As election nears, Venezuelan government arresting opponents. The government has cited alleged criminal plots as the reason for [the arrests of more than 30 people](#) since January, including a prominent human rights attorney and staffers of the leading opposition presidential candidate.

Protests against arrest of a top rival of Indian Prime Minister Modi. Arvind Kejriwal, New Delhi's top elected official and one of the country's most consequential politicians, [was arrested](#) by the Enforcement Directorate. The agency accused Kejriwal's party of accepting \$12 million in bribes.

CONFLICT

Why did ISIS target Russia? The lethal attack by ISIS on a Moscow concert hall – the terror group's largest ever attack in Russia – appears to have come from left field. However, this was no surprise. We explain why [ISIS targeted Russia](#), and Moscow in particular.

Taiwan admits US troops are now stationed on Chinese border. American troops are to be [permanently stationed in Taiwan](#), according to Taipei, a move that will likely escalate tensions with China.

Burkina Faso's security forces accused of killing more civilians. Civilian deaths at the hands of security forces [increased by 70%](#) from 2022 to 2023 to 735 people killed from 430.

Mexico rescues 42 people after mass kidnappings by criminal groups. Mexican authorities said [they rescued 42 hostages](#), including 18 children, from criminal groups after a wave of kidnappings in Sinaloa state, where more than 600 special force troops were sent to beef up security.

UN Security Council passes first demand for ceasefire in Gaza. The United Nations Security Council has [demanded an immediate ceasefire](#) between Israel and Palestinian militants Hamas and the immediate, unconditional release of all hostages after the US abstained from the vote.

ECONOMICS

US announces climate rules to phase out gas cars by 2032. The Biden administration issued one of its most [ambitious climate rules](#), a push that could cause electric cars to make up the majority of US auto sales by 2032. Automakers could build

a mix of vehicles to comply with the rule, including battery-powered, hybrids and more efficient conventional engines.

China plans new rules on market access. Beijing eased some rules on foreign investment, after investment inflows shrank nearly 20% in the January-February period. China's cyberspace regulator [relaxed some security rules](#) on data exports that had worried foreign firms in China.

US Justice Department to sue Apple for antitrust violations. The Justice Department is accusing Apple of [violating antitrust laws](#) by blocking rivals from accessing hardware and software features of its iPhone. The suit escalates the Biden administration's antitrust fights against US technology giants.

IMF reaches staff level agreement with Pakistan to disburse \$1.1 billion. If the International Monetary Fund board approves the deal, it will disburse [\\$1.1 billion](#) for South Asian country's broken economy as it struggles with a balance payment crisis.

First global shipping emissions tax a step closer. Talks held at the International Maritime Organization centred on climate regulation of the shipping industry, which accounts for [around 3% of global carbon emissions](#). Thirty-four countries expressed backing a universal greenhouse gas price.

DEVELOPMENT

Japan approves plan to sell fighter jets to other nations. Japan's Cabinet approved a plan to sell future [next-generation fighter jets](#) that it's developing with Britain and Italy to other countries, in the latest move away from its postwar pacifist principles, and to build up the Japanese arms industry.

NZ accuses China of hacking parliament. New Zealand's government has raised concerns with China about a state-sponsored cyber hack on its parliament in 2021, which was uncovered by the [country's intelligence services](#). This comes as Britain and the US accuse China of cyber espionage.

Births crisis: nearly every country to shrink by 2100. The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation warns that the populations in 198 of 204 countries [will shrink by 2100](#). Most births will take place in lower-income countries and Sub-Saharan Africa is expected to account for one in every two children born.

Sodium powered batteries can replace lithium batteries. In Australia's Yarra Valley, new battery technology is helping power the country's residential buildings and commercial ventures using [sodium powered batteries](#). Sodium can be found in salt, making it a cheap source.

Johannesburg water supply 'close to collapse'. Millions of people in Johannesburg have been left without consistent [access to clean water](#) over the past two weeks. Residents have been forced to line up for hours to get water from municipal tankers.

SOCIAL

Race to protect the surface of the moon. A new report calls for the protection of sites of extraordinary scientific importance, or SESIs. As traffic to the moon increases, there are [two major international efforts](#) under way to establish rules for lunar activities, but neither stresses the protection of SESIs.

Musk's X Corp loses lawsuit against hate speech watchdog. A US court rejected Elon Musk's lawsuit against a nonprofit group that faulted him for allowing a [rise in hate speech on X](#). The judge said Musk sued because he didn't like its criticism, thought it would hurt X's image and scare advertisers.

Polly wants an iPad. Parrots love [playing tablet games](#), and it's helping researchers understand them. During a recent study parrots learned to use a tablet-based basic app game using their beaks and tongues.

World's first gene-edited pig kidney transplant breathes new life into man. The pig donor's genes were edited using CRISPR-Cas9, replacing the pig genes with ones [more compatible with humans](#). This follows another world first in China, where pig liver was gene-edited into a human recipient.

A Kenyan start-up turns plastic waste into solar-powered freezers. The freezers can hold up to [70 kilograms and cost \\$700](#) and can be installed on the back of a motor bike to enable the movement of fresh fish.

PEACEBUILDING

[The Jordan Compact transformed the Syrian refugee crisis into a development opportunity by integrating refugees into the economy](#), and it remains a model for

institutional resilience. The Government of Jordan has provided Syrian refugees access to healthcare, education, and essential services and removed restrictions on their entry into the formal labor market. The international community financially supported Jordan and gave Jordan's exporters preferential access to European Union markets. As a result, the number of work permits for refugees has increased significantly, from around 3,000 issued annually prior to 2016. As of mid-2023, more than 350,000 work permits have been issued since the signing of the Compact.

[Partners Global](#) has announced the winners of the [Pop Culture Challenge in Serbia](#). The challenge aims to improve the legal environment for, public understanding of and capabilities of civil society contributions to Serbian society. The winners, who will receive funding, are: *Sex, Drugs, Violence and Fear*, a web series on challenges Serbian youth face; *Crack and the City Shorts*, an animated short addressing gender equality and mental health; and *Paste the Idea*, paste-up poster art to combat hateful graffiti. A jury of media professionals and civil society representatives chose the winners from 80 proposals. PartnersGlobal and [DT Institute](#) in cooperation with [CentarE8](#) held the contest.

The [Institute for Integrated Transitions](#) is developing a **[“fast-track” model of negotiation](#)** to match the more urgent local change needed in the majority of today's conflict situations. This model will focus on outcomes over process and on pragmatism over perfectionism. Drawing on research that IFIT has begun carrying out, the fast-track negotiation model will expand the toolbox of conflict resolution and overcome the overreliance on slow, process-oriented approaches.

The [Palladium Group](#) has named **[the winners of its 2023 Challenge for Technology for Humanitarian Action](#)**, recognizing innovations that increase the impact of humanitarian crisis response. Special attention was given to proposals that empower local communities and offer long-term solutions. The winners are: *Uncharted Waters*, based in Australia, uses digital twins or virtual models to identify the impact of climate volatility on water and food security; *Practical Action*, a Nepalese organization, will document indigenous practices and integrate them into Heat AI, an automated dashboard that will also collect, analyse, visualize and disseminate findings on heatwaves. The AI system will monitor environmental conditions, forecast risks, and recommend ways to prepare humanitarian actions.