

September 1, 2020



Future Trends

Brought to you by



Institute for
Economics
& Peace



Alliance for
Peacebuilding

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

CONFLICT

The conflict in the Aegean Sea continues to worsen. The Turkish Vice President reacted to an [expansion of the Greek sovereign zone](#) in the Ionian Sea by openly threatening Greece with war.

Sudan on the brink of ending 17 years of conflict. State media has reported that the nation's main rebel alliance has [come to an agreement](#) with the government. The deal covers key issues such as land ownership, security, and power-sharing.

Riots in Sweden after far-right activists burn copy of Quran. Unrest erupted in Malmö city after a copy of the [Muslim holy book was burned](#) during a far-right rally in a mainly immigrant district.

DEVELOPMENT

AI beats US military pilots in a fight. The exercise simulated a fight between an F16 human-piloted fighter jet and an [AI-piloted fighter jet](#). The test extended for five rounds, all of which were won by the AI piloted fighter jet.

Zimbabwe outlaws expulsion of pregnant students from schools. This landmark ruling was made to [enhance gender equality](#) as well as access to education. 12.5% of the country's 57,500 students fell pregnant in 2018 accelerating the decisive action.

World Bank suspends 'Doing Business Report' following 'irregularities'. The apex bank has indicated that there were changes made to the data, which [may compromise the validity and integrity of the key publication](#). An audit is currently underway, and corrective measures have been promised.

ECONOMICS

Fundraising during a challenging economy. With economic downturn, additional [challenges for fundraising are arising](#). Numerous non-profits have already cancelled rallies, walks and other in-person events, and have reduced staff this year.

Mass unemployment threatens Britain. It is estimated that [unemployment in Britain will rise to approximately 12%](#) once the government withdraws wage support at the end of October. The current rate of unemployment is just 3.9%.

US Federal Reserve changes policy on inflation. It announced a significant change in how it manages interest rates by saying [it plans to keep rates near zero](#) even after inflation has exceeded its 2% target level. The policy change underscores the Fed's belief that an exceedingly low jobless rate is critically important for the economy and for individual Americans.

Argentina braced for verdict on \$65bn debt restructure. The restructuring, consequence of the country's ninth sovereign debt default, will shave [\\$38bn off the value of the country's debt](#) over the next decade, but only covers a fifth of the country's current \$323bn burden.

POLITICS

China Belt and Road plans for Australia face veto under new law. The Australian government is seeking new powers to veto or scrap agreements that state governments reach with foreign powers, in a move [aimed at weakening China's ability to gain influence](#) in the nation through its Belt and Road initiative.

Hezbollah open to discussing new political order in Lebanon. Hezbollah said it was open to discussing a new political order in Lebanon if all factions agree to it, as [foreign donors press for deep reforms](#) to tackle the country's multiple crises.

Putin says Russia has set up police force to aid Belarus leader if needed. The Kremlin has set up a police force to [support Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko](#) at his request, although it would not be deployed unless unrest there spun out of control.

Pressure mounts to disband Brazil's successful anti-corruption squad. Political pressure is growing in Brazil to disband a high-profile team of anti-corruption prosecutors that has put dozens of former executives and politicians behind bars, [despite its strong popular support](#) and hundreds of cases still pending.

Iran allows entry to IAEA inspections at two sites, ending standoff. Iran said it was [ending a months-long standoff with the UN nuclear watchdog](#) by granting it access to two sites suspected of hosting secret nuclear activities.

SOCIAL

Japan wants flying cars in its skies in three years. As a country known for its fast, efficient transportation, Japan is [hoping to conquer the next frontier of human mobility](#): winning the race to build a manned flying car with a commercial car in 2023.

The rising prevalence of dementia is a global emergency. “Dementia” is an umbrella term for a range of conditions with a variety of causes, of which [the most common is Alzheimer’s disease](#), accounting for 60-80% of cases. At present, about 50 million people around the world have the condition, a number expected to rise to 82 million by 2030 and 150 million by 2050.

Trump’s legacy will remain regardless of the election. Trump’s 2016 election ushered in a [new era of white nationalist movement mobilisation](#), according to a [report](#) by the Southern Poverty Law Center. The [number of federal appointments](#) Trump has made, including almost a quarter of active federal judges will provide a legacy.

PEACEBUILDING

[Thousands participated in the March on Washington](#) on August 28 to protest against police brutality and call for civil, economic, and voting rights. Participants in the 2020 march commemorated the 57th anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington while echoing the themes of the earlier march and expressing frustration that more has not been done to address structural racism in the US.

[\(How to\) Build up for Peace, Shift Power for Peace](#) and others are developing new, free **digital applications** to help peacebuilders adapt their work to digital spaces. Buildup will launch a new course on Digital Capacity Building this week. Their course on Digital Peacebuilding 101 is now available on WhatsApp as well as other platforms.

The [Bridging Divides Initiative \(BDI\) at Princeton University](#) has published a mapping of **organizations working to bridge divides in the US**. This map is designed to be overlaid with the *US Crisis Monitor* map of political violence and demonstrations published on the [Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project \(ACLED\)](#) website. The BDI-ACLED project aims to support local community resilience in the US by providing an evidence base from which to identify risks and hotspots as well as available resources to empower local communities in times of crisis.