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

Here's what you need to know this week:

- Hostages complicate plan for vengeance against Hamas
- Russia develops a missile designed to carry nuclear weapons with unlimited range
- Venezuela issues arrest warrant against opposition leader Juan Guaidó
- More than 100 dead in attack on Syrian military academy
- WTO slashes growth forecast for global goods trade by more than 50%
- Pakistan issues ultimatum to illegal aliens to leave the country by November 1st
- Nobel Prize for Physics awarded to laureates Agostini, L'Huillier, and Krausz
**SPECIAL EDITION: UKRAINE**

Russia develops a missile designed to carry nuclear weapons with unlimited range. Called the *Burevestnik*, it is powered by a small nuclear reactor which can give it unlimited range and is designed to fly at a lower altitude than other missiles, making it more difficult to detect.

**UK warns of Russia laying 'sea mines' to deter Black Sea cargo ships.** The UK’s Foreign Office said that intelligence assessments indicated that Russia was considering the use of sea mines to deter civilian ships traveling through a ‘humanitarian corridor’ established by Ukraine to facilitate grain exports from the Black Sea ports.

**Ukraine expects a record number of drone attacks this winter.** Ukraine’s air force expects a record number of Russian drone attacks on its soil this winter as Kyiv prepares for a second winter of mass bombardment of its energy facilities.
POLITICS

Venezuela issues arrest warrant against opposition leader Juan Guaidó. The government of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro has issued an arrest warrant against opposition leader Juan Guaidó and has requested an Interpol red alert, accusing the politician of using state oil money for his own benefit.

Indian police raid journalists over claims NewsClick received funds from China. NewsClick, founded in 2009, is known as an Indian news outlet that is critical of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. A number of other news organisations have been investigated for financial impropriety under Mr. Modi’s Hindu nationalist government.

France’s Sarkozy investigated for suspected witness tampering in Libya funds case. Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy was placed under formal investigation for suspected witness tampering and fraud, as part of a probe into whether he received illegal Libyan funding for his successful 2007 election campaign.

Kosovo-Serbia tensions threaten the Balkan path to EU integration. Advancement of discussions between the Western Balkan
countries and the EU Enlargement Commission to join the EU are being hampered by tensions in the Balkans and the lack of readiness of their national institutions.

Pro-China candidate Mohamed Muizzu presidency, upending relationships with India. This win could lead to closer ties with China, which has led India, alongside the US, to be concerned about the growing assertiveness of China in the Indian Ocean.

CONFLICT

More than 100 dead in attack on Syrian military academy. An attack on a military academy in Syria, with weaponised drones bombing the site minutes after Syria’s defence minister left a graduation ceremony there, has left over 100 dead.

Hostages complicate plan for vengeance against Hamas. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s options for hitting Hamas over its deadly incursion into Israel could be reined in by concern for the many Israelis seized in the raid, as a nation scarred by past hostage crises faces perhaps its worst one yet.
Turkey has caught 2,554 fugitives since Ankara bomb attack. Turkish authorities have captured 2,554 fugitives as part of a nationwide counter-terrorism operation launched after Kurdish militants detonated a bomb near government buildings in Ankara a week ago.

UN Security Council approves international force to aid Haiti amid gang violence. A multinational force led by Kenya will be sent to assist in Haiti as the Caribbean nation contends with widespread gang violence. Having requested international assistance over a year ago, Haiti has welcomed the decision.

Sudan conflict creates world’s fastest-growing displacement crisis. A UN aid official in Sudan, states that the past six months have forced more than 5.4 million people in Sudan from their homes and half of the country’s population now requires humanitarian assistance and protection. Conflict, displacement and disease outbreaks now threaten the entire country.

ECONOMICS

Bangladesh gets first uranium shipment from Russia for nuclear power plant. Russia is financing 90% of $12.65 billion project to build the country’s first nuclear power plant in Rooppur. The country is building the first of two
nuclear power plants in collaboration with Russian state-owned atomic company Rosatom.

**Tesla's China-made EV sales volume falls 10.9% year-on-year in September.** US automaker Tesla sold 74,073 China-made electric vehicles in September, a **10.9% decrease from a year earlier**. Chinese rivals Dynasty and Ocean series of EVs and petrol-electric hybrid models, saw passenger vehicle deliveries grow 42.8% to 286,903 year on year.

**The World Bank fears 'lost decade' for sub-Saharan Africa.** The World Bank published its growth forecasts for sub-Saharan Africa, showing that its GDP per capita has not grown since 2015. The reasons cited include political instability, fragility, conflict, and violence, continual issues that **raise concerns for the future of the region**.

**China-EU relationship is at a crossroads.** This is some of the sharpest wording to come from European officials and follows data that showed the EU logging a trade deficit of almost 400 billion euros with China in 2022. This comes as a reaction to the more aggressive US decoupling and the EU’s awareness of being China is a critical trading partner.

**WTO slashes growth forecast for global goods trade by more than 50%.** The WTO halved its forecast for global trade growth this year in response to rising interest rates that have dented consumer spending power worldwide. The expected slowdown of trade could depress the living standards of people around the world, particularly in poor countries.
DEVELOPMENT

Pakistan issues ultimatum to illegal aliens to leave the country by November 1st. Government estimates suggest there are about 1.7 million undocumented Afghan refugees are in the country, which would be facing a threat of deportation.

EU considering proposal to make phone apps less addictive. One of the most addictive design features in apps is called the 'infinite scroll' and the 'pull-to-refresh' page reload, which can trigger a quick rush of dopamine in the hopes of finding something remarkable every time you reload the page. These are a couple of the features that would be modified with EU regulation.

Dengue will 'take off' in southern Europe, US, Africa this decade. Dengue fever will become a major threat in the southern US, southern Europe and new parts of Africa this decade, according to WHO’s chief scientist, as warmer temperatures create the conditions for the mosquitoes carrying the infection to spread.

US issues first ever fine for space junk to Dish Network. The Federal Communications Commission fined Dish Network $150,000 for failing to move an old satellite far enough away from others in use. Space junk is made up of
bits of tech that are in orbit around the Earth but are no longer in use, and risk collisions.

Footprints found in US National Park being the oldest sign of humans in the Americas. New research has indicated fossil human footprints in New Mexico are likely the oldest direct evidence of human presence in the Americas. They are likely to be 23,000 years old and up-ends what many archaeologists thought they knew about civilisation in the region.

Nobel Awards 2023

Nobel Prize for Physics awarded to laureates Agostini, L'Huillier and Krausz. Their work demonstrated a way to create extremely short pulses of light that can be used to capture and study rapid processes inside atoms. The development is likely to lead to even more accurate electron microscopes, much faster electronics and new tests able to diagnose diseases at a much earlier stage.

Nobel Prize in Chemistry awarded for discovery of quantum dots. Moungi Bawendi, Louis Brus and Alexei Ekimov shared the prize. Quantum dots are
tiny particles. Their size alone affects how they absorb and release visible light, allowing for very bright colours and leading to their use in many electronics.

**Norwegian author Jon Fosse awarded the 2023 Nobel Prize in Literature.** Norwegian author and dramatist Jon Fosse has been awarded the 2023 Nobel Prize in Literature for his innovative plays and prose which give voice to the unsayable.

**Iranian human rights activist Narges Mohammadi awarded 2023 Nobel Peace Prize.** Narges Mohammadi has been imprisoned in Iran since 2015. The charges against her include spreading propaganda against the state. She is the deputy head of the Defenders of Human Rights Center, a non-governmental organisation led by Shirin Ebadi, the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize laureate.

**Claudia Goldin wins Nobel economics prize for work on gender pay gap.** The Harvard professor Claudia Goldin has won the Nobel economics prize in recognition of her groundbreaking work examining wage inequality between men and women.

**PEACEBUILDING**

**Uruguay’s electricity grid gets 98% of its power from domestically created, renewable energy, mostly wind.** Private companies set up and maintain the wind turbines, while the public utility buys the energy produced at a set rate for 20 years and distributes that energy to its customers. The transition started in 2009 with auctions in which wind companies bid on how cheaply they would sell renewable energy to the country. Today, there are more than 700 wind turbines installed across Uruguay’s countryside and, adjusted for inflation, consumer prices have gone down, according to NPR.

**Accountable Tech has published Democracy by Design: A Content-Agnostic Election Integrity Framework for Online Platforms.** The framework includes specific recommendations for ensuring election integrity by bolstering resilience, countering election manipulation and creating paper trails that highlight key transparency measures. The Center for American Progress, Center for Democracy & Technology, Center for Humane Technology, Common Cause, epic.org, Institute for Strategic
Dialogue, Issue One, Public Knowledge, and Ranking Digital Rights have also endorsed the framework.

Peace Direct has published a new practical guide to decolonizing partnerships in the humanitarian, development and peacebuilding sectors. Based on consultations with 200 participants from 70 countries, Transforming Partnerships in International Cooperation emphasizes the need to shift power and resources to local practitioners and to “rebuild partnerships with trust, humility, respect and mutuality.”

Search for Common Ground and Tangible AI have developed BridgeBot, a chatbot that helps social media users bridge differences and build trust and understanding online. Easy to use through the WhatsApp platform, BridgeBot helps social media users think differently about how to deal with differences, by equipping them with skills and perspectives on empathy, identity, perception and non-violent communication. The Bot offers users dozens of pathways with quizzes, games and role-plays.