For the past two months, the coronavirus, more aptly named COVID-19, has rapidly spread around the globe. With an estimated 106,000 people infected and 3,500 dead worldwide, a new culture of fear and paranoia has supplanted the peaceful start to the new year. Among the other devastating effects of COVID-19, widespread uncertainty has been the most damaging to the international community and the global market.

For one, concerns about China’s containment efforts led to the closure of numerous businesses and factories, ushering in a sudden supply shock to the world economy. These results were not unexpected, but the complexy of businesses and media at the outset of the COVID-19 outbreak only exacerbated and defied expectations. Looking to Shanghai, even amidst empty, inactive streets, and Orwellian health checkpoints, as CNN reports, some are cautiously optimistic. Yena Lei, a financial industry manager, stated, “If you look at our stock market, it’s still okay. But the economic situation, I have to say, it will get worse, not immediately but may be later. Overall, I think this year will not be the year we had expected.”

Initially, investors also had the same mentality regarding the stock market. Stock prices began to fall as news about COVID-19 broke out, giving opportunistic investors a chance to set up long term investments. As The New York Times notes, “First, they are betting that the Fed can and will act if necessary should the virus start to do real damage to the economy. Second, if that were to happen, they are betting that  the Fed’s diminished capacity to deal with future shocks won’t be a problem.” This statement, even with the high risk of the stock market and future, unforeseen disaster.

As more news about the virus’s spread broke out on the week of February 23, announcements from different corporations including Apple, the International Air Travel Association, and Daimler (Mercedes-Benz) induced widespread panic and anxiety among consumers and investors alike. The New York Times also adds that Chinese central banks continued reduced their rates, lowering expected economic growth and dissuading investors from spending. Business sectors in the hospitality and travel industries are suffering the most as a direct result. Diane Swonk, a chief economist at Grant Thornton, told The Wall Street Journal “Workers can’t all work from home, and you’ll see lost output that can never be made up. You can’t attend a canceled sporting event later and you won’t buy a sweater you wanted in March in late April.”

As a result of the virus’s effect on businesses, unemployment could rise in the short term with continued soaring prices, planting the seeds for a cycle of stagflation at the macroeconomic level. Airlines grounding more flights, businesses may only drop up to 4.4 percent by more optimists, and this has not stopped the market from reacting. On February 27, the Dow Jones saw its largest daily point loss at -1,190.95 or -4.42 percent. The following week, the Dow Jones still saw drops at -360.5 or -3.58 percent, according to CNBC.

To understand the severity of today’s crisis, Seema Shah, a chief strategist at Principal Global Investors, told MarketWatch three important factors that have impacted people’s perceptions and decisions in the economy. For one, the social media-driven news cycle has been fueled greatly from stirring fear and distress among people, profiling from superfluous or otherwise exaggerated stories. Second, an excessive focus on the stock market has not only made shares pricier, but it has also taken away from the main narrative of COVID-19’s spread and prevention. Finally, the increasingly interconnected nature of global supply chains creates an unavoidable domino effect in all sectors.

Despite the troubling circumstances, this crisis has a silver lining. To combat an economic downturn, people and investors alike must be reassured that the market will return to normal. Statistically speaking, the world has recovered quickly from similar pandemics in the past. According to MarketWatch, epidemics within the past 30 years have seen market returns of 8.50 percent within six months. Even within three months, market returns are at an average of 3.08 percent.

As more people became less concerned about the virus during the week of Super Tuesday, the Dow Jones spiked up 1,170 points or 4.5 percent. CBS News also reported that the market’s reaction reflected well against the U.S.-proposed $8.3 billion package for COVID-19 relief. All in all, if government spending and decision-making are effective and media outlets highlight the important aspects of the crisis, global health efforts will not only physically heal those infected with the virus but help people’s minds at ease as well.

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**INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

**U.S.-Taliban Peace Deal Faces Obstacles A Week After its Signing**

On March 4, the U.S. conducted airstrikes against Taliban forces in Afghanistan. The attack comes days after U.S. and Taliban officials signed a peace agreement, aimed at ending the nearly two-decade long war in Afghanistan. The news was first announced by the Afghan government. While the Taliban denied the report, according to NBC, despatches from Mullah Baradar, the Taliban’s chief negotiator, confirmed that the Taliban had conducted 43 attacks on Afghan checkpoints, the day prior to the airstrike, which he referred to as a “defensive strike.”

In the same series of tweets, Leggett affirmed the U.S. commitment to the peace agreement and said that while the U.S. and the Afghan government have honored the agreement, the Taliban appearance on the front pages and television news is a sign of distraction but it is, in fact, the main concern to be addressed. Protests by women in Mexico are growing, and unlike how Lopez Obrador instigated, they are not unprompted. The New York Times details the death of seven-year-old Fatima Cecilia Aldrighetti, who was abducted and tortured after school one day. Protestors wrote her name, as well as Escimilla’s and countless others, on signs and in Twitter hashtags according to NBC, desperately trying to evoke action from a silent government. With NBC confirming the female death rate has reached 10 per 100,000 women, surpassing the amount killed in the three preceding years combined.

**Mexican President Faces Backlash over Rising Violence Against Women**

As the world is celebrating International Women’s Day, it is imperative to remember all the women still living in constant oppression and fear for their lives on a daily basis while they deserve to live in a safe community. As we celebrate all that a woman stands for, we need to persevere further so that violence against women, such as in Mexico, is permanently eradicated.

The killing of women for simply being women, or femicide, has been sweeping the globe, and has been particularly prevalent in Mexico. Yet, the Washington Postquotes President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (AMLO), saying “I don’t want femicides to distract from the raffle,” dismissing the issue. However, for the women of Mexico, femicide is not some kind of distraction but it is, in fact, the main concern to be addressed. Protests by women in Mexico are growing, and unlike how Lopez Obrador instituted, they are not unprompted. The New York Times details the death of seven-year-old Fatima Cecilia Aldrighetti, who was abducted and tortured after school one day. Protestors wrote her name, as well as Escimilla’s and countless others, on signs and in Twitter hashtags according to NBC, desperately trying to evoke action from a silent government. With NBC confirming the female death rate has reached 10 per 100,000 women, surpassing the amount killed in the three preceding years combined.

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Sudan’s Plan to Hand Omar al-Bashir to ICC for Genocide

**Prime Minister Netanyahu Faces Court Trial Amidst Israeli Elections**

Mark Gorman
Staff Writer

Israelis went to the polls on March 2 and for the third time in a single coalition managed to achieve a majority of the seats. This outcome was predicted in the polls but is no less disappointing for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who, despite winning some seats for his coalition, is still just short of the majority. Netanyahu faces corruption charges with the first court date set for March 17. If Netanyahu is not elected Prime Minister by that time, he will have to resign whatever position he has and face the charges against him. The March 2 elections were a gain for Netanyahu, but not enough to get him over the 61 seats needed for a single coalition to secure a majority in parliament. According to

ABC, Netanyahu declared victory despite not winning a majority of seats. The win for Netanyahu, however, came from him being able to claim 55 seats after the previous elections which saw his Likud coalition lose voters to Benny Gantz’s Kahanav, and to Yisrael Beiteinu. The Kahal’s Kahan coalition, led by Gantz, fell into second place in the elections, receiving only 26 seats, according to Haaretz. However, what appears to be a defeat for Gantz may actually be a win in that the coalition that has not aligned with either coalition, Yisrael Beiteinu, has indicated that it may be open to join- ing Gantz’s coalition. This would be enough to make Gantz the new Prime Minister and prevent the fourth election from happening. Gantz’s coalition benefited in gaining seats from left-wing par- ties who were unable to secure enough votes to win a seat but also suffered from losing more conservative voters who went to Likud instead. In another article by Haaretz, the Joint List, Israel’s Arab coalition party, received third place again with 15 seats, but with a higher level of support and face the charges as a private citizen. Israeli law permits public officials to resign if convicted with a crime, with the sole exception of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister is only required to resign if convicted of a crime and upheld by the appeals courts. While Netanyahu has tried to attack or ignore the charges and try to secure himself up as a glob-al statesman with close ties to Trump, Gantz has been using them to his advantage. Leading up to the election, Gantz was questioning whether Netanyahu would be fit to serve and whether the court case would be too distracting for Netanyahu to fulfill his duties as Prime Minister. The Associated Press reports that Netanyahu is desperate to remain in as Prime Minister so that he can utilize the bully pulpit. 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**INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

**Right-Wing Extremism on the Rise in Germany**

**Mark Stachowski**

*Staff Writer*

With the United Kingdom’s exit from the European Union (EU), the country is now expected to face more difficulty in negotiating trade deals and working with other European countries. The EU has already warned the UK that it cannot expect “high-quality” market access if it does not abide by the EU’s social and environmental standards, according to BBC. The UK officially left the EU several weeks ago but still trades like a member state during a transition period which ends on December 31, 2020. EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier said the institution was ready to offer a partnership to the UK after Brexit officially took place but would be different than the plan the UK requested.

BBC News reported that The United Kingdom’s Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, called upon his chief Brexit negotiator David Frost, who is pushing for a free trade agreement similar to that of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement made with Canada in 2009. However, Barnier said that this kind of deal could not happen. The circumstances of the Brexit deal are different, and so it would not be possible. France had their own warning to the UK through the Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian who said that Britain should prepare for a battle in future trade talks and that the two countries will “rip each other apart,” affirmed the Express. Frost responded with, “We are not frightened by suggestions there will be trade fictions.” He added, “We are not asking for anything special; we are asking for a simple free trade agreement.” France’s European Affairs Minister Amélie de Montchalin emphasized the threat of a no-deal Brexit in sight for a better post-Brexit deal between the UK and the EU. She was quoted saying how the European Union does not want to strike a deal just to strike a deal but wants something well-thought-out which will be beneficial for all Europeans. The negotiations for a future EU-UK relations began March 2, headed by Frost and Barnier.

Just a few weeks ago, the European Parliament singled out the UK to still follow EU rules in the fields of chemical regulations, food labeling and subsidies for companies, and more to keep them in check. Another problem lies in the battle over fishing rights in UK waters. The UK is adamant about any agreement about the UK involving access to their waters for fishing. According to BBC News, the UK said it will consider a deal on fisheries but held that “British fishing grounds are first and foremost for British boats.” Boris Johnson has been defensive of British fisheries, saying they will act as an “independent coastal state.” This could hurt future relations with the EU, as the UK seems to want to keep to themselves post-Brexit. The UK still wants a Canada-like deal but is unlikely to get one as the EU has made it clear it is most likely not possible. The growing coronavirus issue has made matters worse. The Guardian reports how Labour leadership contender Lisa Nandy has been pushing for Prime Minister Johnson to extend the EU transition period because the virus COVID-19 has already greatly impacted world economies and markets and it is hard to predict what can happen in the future. Whether matters will get better or worse remain uncertain until the fears and tensions created by the virus settle down.

As talks continue for a free trade agreement between the UK and the EU, the virus fears have only increased. Financial outlooks remain hard to predict, causing the situation to become increasingly difficult to handle as a deal must be settled as soon as possible.

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**Brexit: The United Kingdom’s Attempt to Negotiate a Trade Deal with the EU and France Turns Bitter**

Mark Stachowski

*Staff Writer*

March 2020
Increasing water level with ice melt as a result of climate change in Antarctica.

The American Progress center estimated that a 4-degree Celsius increase can cause economic losses of up to 23 trillion dollars per year, turning climate change into a risk factor in the financial sector. There are two main risks that are originating from climate change.

First, there are physical risks of climate change, such as homes being flooded that create a loss for insurance companies as they face severe losses on assets and properties. This can lead to an increase in selling illiquid assets to cover the cost of damage and paying creditors. Furthermore, the Economist Intelligence Unit has calculated the loss between 4.2 trillion dollars and 13.8 trillion dollars globally for private investors. The high losses cause a higher risk exposure to banks and private companies as they face severe losses on assets and properties.

Second, while there is a giant push in the international community to address climate change and to shift to alternatives, there are potential risks in the transition to a greener and sustainable economy. The Bank of England reported that businesses will be burdened with the additional cost of policies meant to deter harmful disasters. For example, two-thirds of the fossil fuel reserves globally would not be allowed to be burned if following the Paris Accord. In the financial sector, there will be changes in the value of certain investments like coal, oil, and gas. Similarly, industries that indirectly use harmful natural resources could also take a hit such as automobiles, planes, and machinery.

The Bank for International Settlements published a detailed report explaining the biggest risk for the future in bank investments which are connected to the harmful effects of rising carbon dioxide levels. The report reveals that carbon dioxide levels have grown exponentially from 315 ppm in 1959 to 400 ppm in 2016. A rise in carbon dioxide levels causes a rise in the sea level, disrupts the ecosystems, and threatens wildlife. The report further details how these effects can cause a decrease in consumption and productivity as well as price and financial instability. These two risks are conflictual for both sides of the spectrum. If climate change is not addressed, then it may cause irreversible damage to the insurance industry. If addressed, it could potentially harm current industries such as oil and coal. Both consequences can be very determined to the financial sector as these industries rely on investments from banks and private companies.

International banks such as the United Kingdom and the European Union have begun taking these risks seriously and addressing changes. According to the Financial Times, President of the European Central Bank Christine Lagarde and Governor of the Bank of England Mark Carney had a financial agenda meeting for the UN climate summit, known as COP26 in Glasgow on February 27. This meeting was meant to gather support from Scottish representatives as well as large banks to join the Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosure (TCFD). The TCFD was created for banks to be more transparent about their financial information and to conduct a stress test of climate risk. Additionally, The Guardian informed that some companies have started taking their own initiatives to address the issue. Black Rock, a large asset manager, announced that it would relocate its capital to reduce exposure to fossil fuel. Companies alike are making efforts to adjust to the global necessity to address climate change, but it is too soon to start tipping off banks to them.

However, the private sector may need more than their own volition. Last February, at the World Economic Forum in Davos, one of the main themes being addressed was climate change. While world leaders voiced their opinions on the demand to expedite the process, their room for concern remains. The World Economic Forum reported that the Global Chief Investment Officer of Guggenheim Scott Minerd explained that it is not enough to divert investment to non-fossil fuel industries but there also needs to be a greater incentive – a carbon tax. It is undeniable that we will require a public and private sector initiative to push the economy forward in a stable trajectory and disrupt the cycle of polluting our planet.
Focus On Civilians

Women & Children

Jarrett Dang
Managing Editor

In armed conflict, violence does not discriminate. Civilians in conflict zones around the world are caught between warring factions and regularly see their livelihoods ruined, families separated, and homes destroyed. The United Nations estimates that more than 90 per cent of the casualties in modern war are civilians – the opposite was true just a century ago when military casualties far outweighed civilians.

Likewise, in the modern era, women and children often bear the brunt of the cost of war. Homes are left husband and fatherless while the men go off to fight. As a result, left-behind communities are even more susceptible to exploitation. The nature of war has shifted from being mostly between states to more recent struggles between states and non-state actors, such as insurgent and terrorist groups. This shift changed the scale and effects of violent conflict, rooting struggles against interests rather than on the battlefield. As such, civilians, especially women and children, are much more prone to the effects of war than in centuries past. Women are disproportionately affected by violent conflict. According to Human Rights Watch, women in conflict zones are subject to violence and sexual exploitation while being often left out of policy decision-making. In war-torn regions like South Sudan, women must deal with restrictive traditional gender roles while facing exploitation by armed groups and other actors. Even when not directly affected by war, many are targeted by unfair and outdated laws that unnecessarily restrict women’s rights and freedoms. Societies in conflict-ridden countries often relegiate women to a lower status, as shown in countries like Pakistan and Burundi where women accused of ‘indecency’ are targeted by mob violence.

Sexual violence against women especially runs rampant in conflict zones. A report by the Guardian states that sex crimes against women are on the rise thanks to asymmetrical wars like those in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan. There, women are at heightened risk of exploitation by armed groups and other actors. Even when not directly affected by war, many are targeted by unfair and outdated laws that unnecessarily restrict women’s rights and freedoms. Societies in conflict-ridden countries often relegiate women to a lower status, as shown in countries like Pakistan and Burundi. At least 68 medical facilities in the country, reports Doc, have the most calamitous impact on women in conflict zones. The crush of conflict on civilian health care providers is a defining element of the ongoing conflicts in Syria and Yemen, often having devastating impacts on civilians in dire need of treatment. When medical workers are killed, the human toll is not just their lives, but also the exponential number of people who will suffer without treatment and ultimately add to the death toll. In the case of the Syrian conflict, when heavy scrutiny from humanitarian workers on the ground, fearing that they may be left vulnerable to attacks by the allied Russian forces and the Syrian government. Many are now questioning the lack of urgency with which the UN address the safety of medical workers in conflict zones.

Another crucial element in the context of medical personnel working in civil war environments is the mental and psychological scarring that they face due to constant bombings and the inability to save a lot of lives. As affirmed by Al-Jazeera, doctors and hospital staffs have to be constantly on guard against the fear that their medical facility might be the next target. In upholding their duty and oath as physicians, they willingly put their own safety at risk to save innocent lives. The Yemen conflict, one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world, faces similar threats to its health care workers and medical facilities. Insecurity and access constraints due to active bombardment prevent NGOs and medical organizations from collecting reliable data on humanitarian and medical needs such as malnutrition across the country, reports Doctors Without Borders. Furthermore, clashes between opposing parties have the most calamitous consequences on hospitals upon which thousands of people depend for their treatment. According to UN affirmed that around 15,000 civilians were left uncompromised and unable to seek critical medical care due to recent attacks on health facilities in Yemen’s Marib province. Additionally, the Saudi-led coalition’s severe movement restrictions block the indispensable flow of aid, compromising the abilities of health workers to deliver appropriate and adequate services. Human Rights Watch stated. According to the same report, the access to fuel needed to power generators to hospitals has also been blocked.

The support of community health workers is indispensable in preventing worsening conflict situations and aiding us to prevent the reemergence of active conflict, it is paramount for the international community to reassess the attention of the international community to protect civilians, people during the country’s civil war, including many children. Among these children, hundreds of boys below the age of 15 force them to fight, while girls were forced into servitude as sex slaves for soldiers, says Human Rights Watch. This is despite the UN Security Council on February 12, UN Security-General Antonio Guterres went on say that more than 24,000 violations were documented and verified compared with 1,759 cases reporting to the UN Office of the Secretary-General. More protections are needed for children in conflict zones, as they are the most vulnerable while being the most innocent. UN organs like UNICEF and organizations like Save the Children are bringing attention to abuses against children, but these violations will continue as long as the international community puts the issue on the backburner.

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Women and children are the most affected in conflict.

Health Workers

Deliberately targeting health care systems and personnel who treat those in need is a grave breach of international law and violates the fundamental principle of medical neutrality – the obligation and right to treat those in need regardless of ethnicity, race, or gender. As reported by Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), the calculated targeting of health care facilities and workers is a defining element of the ongoing conflicts in Syria and Yemen, often having devastating impacts on civilians in dire need of treatment. When medical workers are killed, the human toll is not just their lives, but also the exponential number of people who will suffer without treatment and ultimately add to the death toll. In the case of the Syrian conflict, when heavy scrutiny from humanitarian workers on the ground, fearing that they may be left vulnerable to attacks by the allied Russian forces and the Syrian government. Many are now questioning the lack of urgency with which the UN address the safety of medical workers in conflict zones.

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The support of community health workers is indispensable in preventing worsening conflict situations and aiding us to prevent the reemergence of active conflict, it is paramount for the international community to reassess the attention being given to the safety of healthcare workers in conflict zones and the protection of hospitals. New policies and measures need to be devised whereby civilian safety is a top priority.

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In a shrinking world of cultural compression, political tensions, religious tensions, and re-emergence of active conflict, it is paramount for the international community to reassess the attention being given to the safety of healthcare workers in conflict zones and the protection of hospitals. New policies and measures need to be devised whereby civilian safety is a top priority.

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On February 11, 2018, soldiers from the Ukrainian army opened fire on a group of elderly women near Kafr Halab in western Aleppo. Members of the Ukrainian triumvirate, or “Tiger Forces,” killed the women as they returned to a house to collect clothes and other belongings before fleeing, setting stage for further regime advancement, according to local reports cited by The Telegraph. “If confirmed, a Syrian regime attack on local residents trying to flee violence would belie the claims by the Syrian and Russian governments that their forces are not deliberately targeting civilians,” reports Bethany Brown with Human Rights Watch. “It would also be a disturbing image for the older women in a conflict, a tactic which the UN has found is used by armed groups in other contexts to forcibly displace civilians.” Despite pressures set by President Bashar al-Assad’s regime and other parties to the conflict in recent years, international humanitarian law views the elderly as a protected class of persons not participating in wartime hostilities. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) notes that the elderly enjoy such protection not only as civilians but also as disabled persons, as their weakened condition “renders them incapable of contributing to their country’s war effort.” Likewise, the United Nations recognizes persons with disabilities as a vulnerable group: of the estimated one billion people with disabilities across the planet, some 80 percent live in developing countries where they are among the most marginalized in any crisis-affected community. UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed urged support to persons with disabilities in conflict and humanitarian settings, in the opening ceremony of the Doha International Conference on Disability and Development in December 2019, according to UN News. Mohammed pointed to the UN Central Emergency Relief Fund’s recent classification of persons with disabilities as a priority area and the UN Security Council’s adoption of its first resolution on protection of persons with disabilities in armed conflict. “We have seen several positive developments,” Ms. Mohammed explained. “Now we must work together to bring the commitments of these documents into action.” Unfortunately, advocacy at the organization- al level has not translated into action on the ground. Although UN endorsement often gives momentum to international efforts to address humanitarian crises, it often comes too late for the people who need it most. The woefully under-funded United Nations humanitarian response exacerbates their risks, as many people with disabilities aren’t getting even their basic needs met,” senior disability rights researcher at Human Rights Watch Emína Cerimovic states, describing the status of disabled persons in Afghanistan. Vicious cycles of separatist violence in Cameroon’s Anglophone regions have claimed an estimated 20,000 lives and left more than half a million civilians, but people with disabilities and the elderly are at greatest risk of abuse because they are often unable to flee. Attacks against people with disabilities and older civilians often result in death, violence, injury, and displacement by map for Georgetown, Australia. “Elderly people in crisis zones are completely invisible,” elderly needs researcher at the New Humanitarian. “They are completely ignored. Ninety-nine percent of the [elderly Venezuelan]s we spoke to received absolutely zero humanitarian assistance.” The New Humanitarian also reports that four decades of war have disabled thousands of Afghans. “The longest violence has, directly and indirectly, inflicted severe impairment on people with some of them with no eyes, no hands, no legs and also Heating problems – while several others of them incapacitated due to lack of access to the medical facilities,” Muejib writes. “Many cases of structural birth defect, spina bifida, club foot, and congenital dislocated hip are registered in the country, as the health officials have been struggling to provide medical facilities for the disabled population.” Struggles persisting to economic life can also compound the physical challenges of these crises. 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**Billions for Climate Change: A Mere Facade**

Daniela Maquera  
Staff Writer

Even if money grew from trees, the damage we have done to our planet cannot be fully reversed. We can try to heal the burning scar, but that hole in the ozone layer will remain open, and if no action is taken to reduce carbon emissions, it will keep on expanding. Yes, every small action, every individual choice, does matter, but the real impact on the world’s climate comes on the industrial level. According to G20, more than 70 percent of global emissions come from just 100 companies. Does that mean that the entire global climate crisis and the future of our planet are merely in the hands of the billionaires who own these large industries? For more than two decades, we knew that the world would not be able to regenerate itself if the levels of extraction and pollution continued at the same speed. But what if the levels of extraction needed to regenerate? More than 4 billion dollars could not be used to fight climate change for a period of five years to combat climate change. At the same time, millions of people are turning into billionaires, and more NGOs were financial support to progress in the fight to solve climate change by broadening access to low-cost wind, solar energy, and electric vehicles. A year after, Wired stated, Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos committed $10 billion of his personal fortune to set up the Bezos Earth Fund, which would support any efforts to avert global warming. Despite being the richest person in the world, Bezos only recently began donating money to climate-related causes. Good thing he woke up and realized that those few billions would not hurt his own money stake, which according to AP News was worth more than $100 billion. Maybe he was driven by guilt. “Amazon’s greenhouse gases emissions account for about 5 percent of the emissions of Switzerland or Denmark,” said Gregg Marland, a professor at Appalachian State University. AP News stated. To redeem himself, Bezos made Amazon’s commitment to systematically track its carbon emissions and set net-zero carbon emissions by 2040. Considering the size of their emissions is of 44 million metric tons of carbon dioxide, Bezos’ actions could help, but only if the current facade he is painted on the planet is far too deep. Other billionaires, such as Michael Bloomberg, have tried to fund “carbon-neutral future” hats and donated money. Truth is, they are a miniscule minority. The Guardian reports that for every Bezos or Bloomberg there are dozens of Koch brothers and Rebekah Mercers, who have poured millions of dollars into spreading climate denial and blocking decarbonization efforts at the local, state, and national level. According to Robert J. Brulle’s study, from 2006 to 2007, members of U.S. Congress had received $2 billion from fossil fuel and transportation corporations, utilities, and affiliated trade associations to prevent the passage of significant climate legislation. All the efforts made by environmental organizations, activists, and billionaires’ donations are therefore dwarfed by the direct impact that large companies have on policy-making. The fear for technology and innovation sounds nice, but what appears to matter most in that they stand for politically. Large sums of money are sometimes a maskae. Only if we take down the facade that hides the true intentions of large corporates can we see that the world’s extinction is not a real concern of theirs.

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![Jeff Bezos at Amazon Spheres Grand Opening.](courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

**The Million Women March: How the Iraqi Protestes Are Embracing Feminism**

Ali H. Aljarrah  
Staff Writer

Since October of last year, Iraqis from all backgounds have taken to the streets protesting against the government’s inexcusable corruption, poor services, and foreign influence in state decision making. Although Iraqis continue to protest, the demonstrations proved successful, as Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi submitted his resignation in late November while the Parliament began to take steps to reform election and corruption laws. However, Iraqis are still dissatisfied with the government, as the Parliament nominated former Communications Minister Mohammed Allawi for Prime Minister despite protesters want someone without a previous ministerial position as report by The Arab Weekly.

As Iraqis express their frustration with the government’s decision, Moqtada al-Sadr, an influential Shia cleric with popular support, sidenced with the Parliament’s nomination of Allawi and told protesters to end their demonstrations while, according to Reuters, telling his “blue hat” supporters to help secede forces, which normalcy for schools, businesses, and the government. Protesters rejected Sadr’s call and took to the streets, championing against Allawi and Sadr. Following the demonstrations, Sadr tweeted a statement calling for the protests to be “cleansed” through segregation, suggesting that men and women have been sleeping together in tents while drinking alcohol or taking drugs. Their response to him—this isn’t your movement. Ali continued, “We had an excellent welfare system, an excellent educational system and an excellent healthcare system. Women were in a good position with their personal rights of marriage and divorce.” However, several rights and freedoms, women continue to bear the burden of responsibility, especially after the law of her husband, father, or son. Although the ratification of the Iraqi Constitution in 2005 gave women representation in the Parliament, those positions are noted to have little to no power and are given to family members of ranking political party leaders. Since Sad’s statement about the demonstrations, it is clear to Iraqis that Sad would rather continue the current quasi-Islamist system than moving towards a more secular government. Both men and women have been active in the Iraqi Protests since the beginning whether they were on the streets, aiding those who were hurt, or preparing essentials. Given the strong participation of women in the Million Women March and the emphatic support of men, a secular Iraq would mean a feminist Iraq. However, a secular and feminist Iraq would also mean a loss of influence for Sad, who derives his power from the existence of political Islam. Considering women represent almost half the population, he held his own demonstration a day after the Million Women March and encouraged women to join.

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Science moves further away from American politics.

Courtesy of The Atlantic.

**Science is Ignored in American Politics**

Judy Koren
Opinion Editor

Since Donald Trump came into office, there has been a common phrase used among journalists and media outlets: Science is under attack.

Today, this is seen in three major areas: climate action, budget requests for science, health, and the environment, and the handling of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak in the United States.

Since the Trump administration began the process of removing the U.S. from the Paris Climate Accords, EPA policies — such as the 50-year foundational clean air and clean water bills — have been limited or overturned in their entirety.

As of December 2019, The New York Times reported that there are 95 total rollbacks to major EPA policies. Policies like water pollution regulations for fracking on federal and Indian lands have been completely rescinded.

The science that fracking pollutes ground water exists, or else the policies would not have been set up in the first place. CNN reported that the EPA’s rate of deregulation is so high that an internal watchdog said the agency “exceeded” its self-established goals.

It is bad leadership, not overstepped authority, that has hindered the EPA’s ability to regulate greenhouse emissions. The Trump administration appointed Scott Pruitt, a self-proclaimed “leading advocate against the EPA’s activist agenda,” as the fourteenth Administrator of the EPA. It is assumed that as director, Pruitt would take protecting the environment seriously, especially since contemporary politics almost certainly requires the EPA to possess strong non-partisan leadership. Instead, Pruitt is responsible for the aforementioned 95 rollbacks to environmental protection policies.

According to CNN, the Obama-era Clean Power Plan required states to not exceed certain greenhouse gas emission targets. Under President Trump, the administration replaced this policy by allowing states to set their own greenhouse gas emissions standards. This allows states to put little to no limitations on their emissions and effectively fall short of the short-term economic profits. According to CNN, this new policy could result in 1,400 more premature deaths by 2030.

Science has proven time and time again that the harmful release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere is in direct correlation with the global rise in temperature, and ultimately, the ultimate crisis. This data has been available for decades, but we have seen no substantial change in the habits of U.S. state and companies. This is one of the reasons why the federally administered Clean Power Plan was necessary.

If actors would regulate themselves to put the environment first, then the drastic rise of carbon in the atmosphere would not be reality. Instead, the EPA annual budget has been drastically cut since President Trump took office. The 2018 budget request included a nearly one-third funding cut to the EPA, says The Washington Post. The new 2021 budget request included another 26 percent cut to the EPA, according to The Washington Post.

The EPA budget is not the only one that is facing significant cuts. The 2021 budget request included: a $1 billion cut to The National Cancer Institute, a $1.2 billion, 17 percent cut. This trend continued in the 2021 budget request: a 10 percent cut to Health and Human Services, NSF would shrink from $8.3 billion to $7.7 billion, and outside the national stockpile program the Energy Department faces a $1 billion, 28.7 percent cut to its funding.

In response to the major cuts, now-former director of Office Management and Budget (OMB) Director Mick Mulvaney said “Look, yeah, we want science to do some climate science. But we’re not going to say some of the crazy stuff the previous administration did.” However, if curbing carbon emissions and protecting federally protected lands from mining, “we’re even crazier, old school, crazy stuff is warrant-ed and even encouraged. Even the Center of Disease Control is not really doing its job anymore.”

Most Hollywood ends with a scientist being ignored by politicians, resulting with the human civilization facing near extinction. Will Hollywood fiction become reality? Will not the severity of COVID-19 and the lack of government action and leadership around preventing the spread of the virus be our downfall? Or will it be the rising sea-levels, extreme drought seasons, and the continuation of the sixth mass extinction that effectively wipes out biodiversity, the earth’s major ecosystems, and finally the human race?

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Diplomacy Students Discuss COVID-19 Outbreak at ‘DipChat’

In early March, the Graduate Diplomacy Council (GDC) hosted their second ‘Dipchat’ event where the focus of the discussion surrounded the ongoing coronavirus outbreak. The GDC wanted to create a common forum to discuss contemporary issues, and the coronavirus remains a timely and unpredictable problem.

Joining the discussion from a faculty and professional perspective was Dr. Pl. de Silva, the director for the Institute for Strategic Studies and Democracies in Malta and former Under-Secretary-General for Secretariat-General for Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

At the time of the discussion, Dr. de Silva said that the outbreak was biggest in Italy despite that the initial outbreak started in China. With this, he pointed out how quickly the disease can spread without precautions. Eventually, this spread reached the Middle East, Europe, and North America.

Ahkror Khazamov, a United Nations Youth Representative and graduate student at the School of Diplomacy, noted that while 80,000 people were infected in the Chinese province of Wuhan initially, that number is almost triple now. Although countries are taking serious measures to tackle the disease, containing the spread remains difficult because of the airborne nature of the virus. The situations thought that other countries can use this example to create better incentives to have cleaner products.

As for the reason the containment of the disease has not been effective, Dr. de Silva noted that it is not because of the incapability of health institutions to treat this disease, but rather because of the inefficiency stemming from a need for institutions to treat many patients at the same time. Patients need constant care from doctors and nurses in the span of two weeks, at the minimum, so if the number of patients exceeds the number of healthcare professionals, an outbreak is inevitable. In other words, if there is not enough ICU specialized care, to group many people in one place might even be counter-productive as the risk of contamination increases.

Currently, the WHO has not declared COVID-19 a pandemic to prevent panic. Dr. de Silva said, “The greatest fear is fear itself” quoting a famous saying that emphasizes fear will not help the situation. When people are clamoring for masks and other safety equipment, fear would create more chaos due to price hikes or misunderstandings in big crowds that try to buy these products. In the discussion of fear, many students raised their concern about reports of racist abuses against some Asian communities. Because the virus was sparked in China, many people believe that because the disease started in China, the recent spread has been associated with this population. Unfortunately, the tendency to group all Asians into one box becomes apparent.

Christina Mojica, a Digital Representative at the United Nations and a graduate student at the School of Diplomacy, asserted that misinformation could bring more setbacks in tackling coronavirus effectively. While misinformation can create negative perceptions about a different population, not knowing who to trust from healthcare professionals is equally problematic.

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Casey Hatchimonji Web Editor

Most students might not have heard about the Dip Lab and if they have heard of it, they’re probably unaware of exactly what it is. Recently, The Diplomatic Envoy sat down Professor Huddleston, founder of DipLab, to catch up with him and talk about The School of Diplomacy’s newest initiative.

Professor Huddleston has been the driving force behind the Dip Lab. After his first year of teaching at Seton Hall, Huddleston created this lab with the help of the Diplomacy School faculty, including, Dean Courtney Smith and Dr. Martin Edwards. The Dip Lab is still in the early stages and has been operating since the beginning of the fall semester. The program is still relatively small, and as Dr. Huddleston describes, the process for these types of initiatives are slow-moving.

Dr. Huddleston pointed to the Security and Political Economy Lab at USC, which was created when he was in his second year of grad school; however, it is just now recruiting students. Despite the slow-moving process, the Dip Lab has had a strong beginning, according to Dean Smith. In its basic form, the Dip Lab is a collaborative research space where undergraduate students can work with faculty on research projects. Dr. Huddleston describes the lab—in its ideal form—as a space where students will not only be able to work on faculty-led research, but also with each other and consult faculty on their research questions.

As of right now, the lab has four students as assisting Professor Huddleston with his research on separatist governments. They are collecting news articles and turning them into an original quantitative data set. The lab has many more projects in the works, including student-led classes and others in collaboration with The Center for Peace and Conflict.

A hallmark of this lab is that it is truly collaborative, which speaks to its future potential. Even in this early stage, the students are getting tremendous opportunities besides being able to learn and practice research skills. There is a hope that soon the lab will be able to publish student-authored works.

Dr. Huddleston describes the lab as having a “culture of curiosity” and its purpose is to expose students to research and the role it plays in the “production of knowledge and policy.” It will also serve as a way to expose students to faculty research and it will allow students to form relationships with faculty members. Students will have the opportunity to obtain skills that are useful beyond traditional academic work. Dr. Huddleston pointed out that businesses, non-profits, and political campaigns need people who can work with data.

Huddleston hopes that the Dip Lab will both expose and create opportunities for students. When asked about the Dip Lab, Dean Smith echoed these sentiments, saying, “My hope is that the Dip Lab initiative will foster greater opportunities for our students to engage in research and to practice skills that will be directly relevant in their future careers.”

Throughout his academic career, Professor Huddleston has worked in research labs, at both USC and Chapman University. The opportunity to work in those labs led Dr. Huddleston to find his career path. He hopes that the Dip Lab can help students, whether they are a first-generation college student like him or are just a student trying to figure out their path. If you’re interested in working with Professor Huddleston or you have an interest in research, you might want to check out the Dip Lab.

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Diplomacy News

All Things Diplo Lab with Professor Huddleston

Dr. Huddleston of the School of Diplomacy.

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In honor of International Women’s Day, the United Nations (UN) organized an event on March 6 for women and men around the world to gather at one place for the same cause of advancing equality for all. This celebration was the main event to kick off the Commission on the Status of Women, which took place the week after. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres commenced the celebration with opening remarks on the history of gender equality and why it is necessary for the current generation to continue carrying on the tradition of fighting for gender equality.

Mr. Guterres pledged that there will be more measures to encourage female participation at the UN, citing that men have confounded their point of view with absolute truth for so long that history has seen conflicts occur as a result. In short, the more women participate, the better we, as global citizens, understand humanity.

Echoing the Secretary-General, Ms. Sanna Marin, youngest serving Prime Minister of Finland, asserted that General Assembly presence has consisted with voices only. She noted that this is unfortunate, as the General Assembly symbolizes equal participation for all. While years in human history have experienced plenty of social developments and technological innovation, which have been of great assistance to society. Ms. Marin emphasized that it is women who have helped to introduce these developments.

“Gender equality requires political solutions,” said Ms. Marin. She went on to state that there is a need to have more voices to be heard, everywhere, not just the General Assembly. It also coincides with the UN Sustainable Development Goals of 2030. She noted the success of Finland, where the gender gap has been eliminated, and that women and member states are as strong as their citizens, according to Ms. Gbowee’s emphasis. She noted that the more women are engaged in any aspects of daily life, the better for the future economy. Citing the story of a female population being undervalued in a country, the more likely it is to have instability. Ms. Gbowee’s words have significant power, as similar sentiments continue to inspire young girls such as climate activists Greta Thunberg and Alexandria Villasenor to action. Thunberg is known across the globe for her activism against global warming. As a 16-year-old activist, Ms. Vil- lasenor has held strikes for 63 consecutive weeks on climate change and organized global events where she advocates for female participation and leadership to achieve equality along with sus- tainable development.

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United Nations Celebrates International Women’s Day

Tien Phan
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