The Diplomatic Envoy

MYANMAR SOLDIERS ADMIT TO ROHINGYA KILLINGS

Hannah Walley
Staff Writer

Two soldiers who deserted the Myanmar army appeared on video testifying to the deliberate killing of Rohingya Muslims. The video was filmed in July, but first reported by AP in early September. According to Wall Street Journal, the soldiers, Myo Win Tun and Zaw Naing Tun, defected from Myanmar’s army and were taken into custody by the original Army, a Rakhine rebel group who is fighting the Myanmar government’s troops. The international community believes war crimes have been committed in Myanmar and assumed it was being ordered by high-ranking officials, but did not have official confirmation until this video surfaced.

In the video, the soldiers detailed the rapes and killings perpetuated against the Rohingya. TIME reported that in one operation, Myo Win Tun said he participated in the killing of “eight women, seven children and 15 men and elderly.” The soldiers said their officers told them to “shoot all that you see and that you hear.” According to the Irish Times, Myanmar forces would sweep through villages, killing women and children and burying them in mass graves. As the troops entered the villages “old men were decapitated, and young girls were raped before being killed. Myo Win Tun admitted to raping one woman, while Zaw Naing Tun claimed he was never directly involved with rape. After filming the video, the soldiers crossed the border from Myanmar into Bangladesh in mid-August and are now believed to be in the custody of the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Wall Street Journal reported.

Relations between the two sides have remained tense, with a series ofNEGOTIATIONS and withdrawals. In August 2017, government troops have been systematically targeting and eliminating the Rohingya population in Myanmar. According to BBC, the Médicins Sans Frontières reported that 6,700 Rohingya, including at least 730 children, were killed in the first three months of violence. Since then, the violence has pushed over 600,000 Rohingya refugees into surrounding states like Bangladesh. The Myanmar government has repeatedly denied claims of genocide and ethnic cleansing, and even excluded the Rohingya from the 2014 Census because they view them as illegal immigrants. The army has claimed that they are fighting violent Rohingya militants and trying to avoid civilian casualties. Myanmar’s Independent Commission of Enquiry admitted that parts of the security forces may have participated in “war crimes, serious human rights violations, and violations of domestic law,” but denied any and all evidence of genocide reported by the BBC. The international community has been working to both protect the Rohingya and hold Myanmar and its army accountable. The United States called the actions of Myanmar “ethnic cleansing,” but refrained from labeling it as genocide. According to NPC, The Cambodia, on behalf of the 57 countries in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, filed a case before the International Court of Justice. The case accuses Myanmar of “trying to destroy the Rohingya as a group, in whole or in part, by the use of mass murder, rape, and other forms of sexual violence.”

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Brexit talks have hit a new crisis in the European Union (EU), with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson vowing to continue with a controversial bill that threatens to undermine Britain’s current exit agreement, and which many say breaks international law. According to CNBC, the proposed Internal Market Bill would give the British government the power to reject the EU in aid cases regarding trade between Northern Ireland and Ireland. The New York Times reports that given its current wording, this new piece of legislation would give Britain a right to reject European Court of Justice sentences elements of this treaty without EU negotiation, as is required by international law. This plan has been condemned by several international organizations, with The New York Times also reporting that the European Commission, suggested a desire to take legal action against the UK. The plan is also being rejected by parties on both sides of the Irish border, states Albanian, with Irish Foreign Minister Simon Coveney speaking out against the move on Tuesday. Senior members of Northern Ireland’s two largest Irish national political groups, Sinn Fein and SDLP, parties, also shared criticism. Chief EU negotiator Michel Barnier told Albania that under the original withdrawal deal, the EU single market rules will still apply in Northern Ireland. This will help to avoid the creation of a hard border between Ireland and Northern Ireland. The move was meant to avoid avoiding separatist tensions between the two nations, which were eased by the Good Friday Agreement of 1998.

The controversy around Johnson’s plan creates a big risk for Britain, according to Bloomberg. If the bill were to pass, it would greatly increase the potential for the country to end its Brexit transition period without a free trade agreement with the EU. The introduction of quotas and tariffs on goods from the nation’s largest trading partner would likely cause widespread economic shocks. France reports that the EU has warned Britain that any breach of the previously established withdrawal agreement would erode any trust left between the two sides. The British government has repeatedly decried the bill as a violation of international law and plans to impose sanctions and Brexit underlines the Good Friday accord, there will be absolutely no chance of a U.S.-UK trade agreement taking the role on July 1. The United States has also taken a firm stance against the bill. CNBC also reports that U.S. Ambassador Nancy Pelosi tweeted that “If the UK violates its international agreements and Brexit undermines the Good Friday accord, there will be absolutely no chance of a U.S.-UK trade agreement.” Officials worry that the British government’s open admittance to breaking the law could be detrimental to public perception of new legislatures, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Former Labour leader Ed Miliband, the party’s current shadow business secretary, shared his concerns with Sky News, saying “How can we, on the one hand, be saying you’ve got to obey the law but then the government comes along and says it’s okay for us to break the law because it’s in a specific and limited way.”

Some analysts view the bill as a way for Johnson to increase his leverage with the European Union as Britain’s exit date looms closer. The UK’s transition phase out of the EU will expire on December 31. Others, however, argue that the legislation confirms that members of his government are determined to cut more ties with the bloc. The New York Times.

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**International News**

**Australian, American Journalists Expelled Out of China**

**Jasmine DeLeon Staff Writer**

In early September, Bill Birtles, an Australian correspondent for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and China correspondent for ABC, was advised by Australian officials to leave China after the arrest and detention of another foreign journalist, reports The Guardian. Two days later, Beijing state security bureau told him to leave the country, and that he would be contacted the next afternoon to answer questions, reports BBC. Michael Smith, a foreign correspondent for The Australian Financial Review (AFR), was also visited by state security officers to be questioned on the Cheng Lei case. Cheng Lei, an Australian anchor for Chinese state media who was investigating for the Chinese government for national security offenses, was detained by the Chinese government last month. She will likely be detained for six months without a lawyer, reports The Washington Post.

After diplomatic negotiations, Smith and Birtles were cleared to leave the country on the condition that they do not be interviewed. Both journalists stated that they did not see how their questioning contributed to Cheng Lei’s investigation. Smith stated that he has never talked to Cheng Lei, and Birtles stated in an interview with BBC: “There was a real, rigorous effort to extract anything that could be really used in any case.”

Their departures marks the second time in nine months that Australian media has not had correspondents in China, reports Al Jazeera. One day after Smith and Birtles left China, Zhao Lijian, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson, accused Australia of raiding homes of four Chinese journalists back in June. According to AP, Zhao Lijian claimed that the Chinese journalist’s work devices and personal belongings were seized in the raids and have not been returned yet. The incident follows a pattern of strained relations between Australia and China, which is Australia’s third-largest trading partner. The Wall Street Journal (WSJ) published an op-ed titled “China is the Real Sick Man of Asia.”

The news comes in the wake of the headlining, China expelled three reporters and one picture editor from the newspaper, reports the Columbian. According to Reuters, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs recently informed the U.S. embassy in China that they “intended to further limit access for foreign journalists by denying press card renewals and refusing to issue pending visa applications for those expelled earlier this year.” In China, a foreign journalist’s press card functions as a visa that allows them to live in the country.

Morgan Ortagus, a spokesperson for the U.S. Department of State, tweeted that “these proposed actions will worsen the reporting environment in China, which is already suffering a dearth of open and independent media reporting.” On February 3, the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) published an op-ed titled “China is the Real Sick Man of Asia.”


The deteriorating relations between the U.S. and China was exacerbated when the Trump administration announced a reduction to regulate the work visas for Chinese journalists from open-ended, single-entry visas to 90-day work visas in May, says VOA.

The MFA informed foreign journalists with expired press cards that they could continue living in China under residence permits until early November, which is when the Trump administration may decide whether or not to renew the press cards of Chinese media workers currently in the United States, reports The New York Times.

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**Fire Breaks Out Again in the Aftermath of the Beirut Explosion**

**Juliet Nangini Staff Writer**

After the one-month anniversary of the August 4 Beirut explosions that took place in the port of Beirut’s capital, dark skies brooded over the city once again with two new fires that erupted within the past week. The former erupted on Tuesday, September 8 and the latter blazed through the port just two days after.

The fire has since been contained and no new injuries have been reported. The fire broke out in a warehouse that housed oil and tires in the port’s duty-free area. BBC Logistics, a global freight, rented a storage facility where the fire took place. The warehouse was undergoing re-construction work at the time of the fire, but their fire equipment was destroyed in last month’s blast. Another of the major implications of the recent fires is its disruption to the humanitarian efforts in the area. In a report from Al Jazeera, Fabrizio Carboni, regional coordinator of the Near and Middle East team of Catholic Relief Services (CRS), said to the Mar Mikhail district and rescue team, TOPOS, conducted the search in the Mar Mikhael district — which was once largely populated by Beirut’s trendy arts district. It commenced on Thursday with Flash, a five-year-old dog, known on social media for his protective red shoes. Many people stressed how grateful they were for the dog’s effort and think “it cared about the country’s problems more than their own government,” AP, says. Despite that, the team found no survivors.

The original blast, which was by 3,000 tons of improperly stored ammonium nitrate, had been felt for over 100 miles away to the island of Cyprus and had damaged 191 people and wounded around 6,000 people. Ammonium nitrate, though by itself does not explode, is a highly explosive material that can combine with other fuels by dispensing oxygen. However, storing it with organic materials can be risky, especially with the presence of heat. The first explosion ignited a fire, which triggered a second blast. An investigation by The New York Times interviewing numerous port and security officials revealed “a corrupt and dysfunctional system that failed to respond to the threat while enriching the country’s political leaders through bribery and smuggling.”

Money poured into the country, already under major economic and political duress, has fallen deeper into instability — all while dealing with the pandemic. Food and fuel shortages continue to be a prominent issue as a silo containing 85 percent of Lebanon’s grain was destroyed in the original explosion, in addition to the destruction of the harbor, which causes further implications as the country relies on 80 percent of its food consumption. A report from Business Insider indicates the blast left almost 300,000 people without water, in addition to the poverty line and one-third of the country jobs lost. The public blames corruption and lack of care from the country’s officials and politicians, reports Al Jazeera.

Several countries provided aid to Lebanon, already suffering a dearth of food and medicine, as well as the systematic destruction, by fire, of their villages.” The ICC has opened a case investigating the crimes against the Rohingya. Matthew Smith, CEO of the human rights NGO Fortify Rights said, “These men could be the first perpetrators from Myanmar tried at the ICC, and the first inside the custody of the court,” the Irish Times confirms. The evidence brought forward by the soldiers marks a major step forward in the case against Myanmar, and now places greater pressure on the UIC and supports its investigation in support of the Rohingya.

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**Myanmar Soldiers Admit to Rohingya Killings**

Continued from page 1...

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The government of the People’s Republic of China is receiving growing international criticism from the public, governmental bodies, and organizations for their mass incarceration and torture of ethnic minority groups in Xinjiang province. According to The Washington Post, a public tribunal in London plans to hold hearings next year investigating claims that the Chinese government is committing atrocities against its Uighur ethnic group.

The tribunal has been urged by many experts in the international community to investigate the mass forced movements and imprisonments of ethnic minorities over concerns of a possible genocide. Human rights groups take place somewhere around next year and will be led by Barrister Geofrey Nice, a notable human rights lawyer, who led the prosecution against the former Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic.

Barrister Nice was urged by the World Uighur Congress to inquire into claims that the Chinese government is committing atrocities against Uighur and Kazakh ethnic minorities. According to the Associated Press, the tribunal is in the stage of collecting evidence, including testimony from Uighur exiles and possibly from former camp security guards. Nice explained that the strongest pieces of evidence for genocide include the mass incarcerations and evidence of sterilization, the latter of which he believes breaches the Genocide Convention of 1948. An additional investigation by the Associated Press also found strong evidence of forced sterilization and eugenics being performed in the camps.

Despite the tribunal not being backed by the British Government, it is one of the first investigations into this issue on a strong legal basis, which may allow for further legal and governmental action against the People’s Republic of China for human rights violations that it may have committed. Aside from the London tribunal, the government of some nations are also starting to speak out against China. A report by Al Jazeera indicates that the European Union has suffered enorously under these sanctions, as its economy was already struggling prior to implementation of the Caesar Act.

According to Reuters, this has resulted in the Syrian lira losing 80 percent of its value. Most citizens are experiencing extreme poverty. With Turkey occupying northern Syria and U.S. troops stationed in eastern Syria, Assad has had to look to either Russia or Iran for aid. The Jerusalem Post reports. Yet, with Iran struggling to cope with its own grace owing round of U.S. sanctions and neighboring Lebanon requiring a bailout of $93 billion, Syria has no choice but to turn to Russia.

Since 2015, Russia has acted as Syria’s primary foreign ally, providing urgently needed military support which has seriously changed the outlook of Syria’s nine-year war with Islamists and U.S.-backed rebels. Yet, these gains have been greatly threatened by the effects of the U.S. Caesar Act. Syrian pro-government analyst Hussam Taleb has stated on Syrian state-sponsored television that the U.S. was “fighting us in our livelihood by passing the Caesar Act to deprive us of our wealth,” Aljazeera reports.

In a statement released by the U.S. Department of State, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo asserted that the sanctions aim to push President Assad into UN-led talks to end the war, which has left hundreds of thousands dead and millions displaced, forced into vastly overcrowded refugee camps. In his statement, Pompeo also referenced the accounts of the Syrian military defector and whistleblower known only as Caesar, who, for years, has gathered photographic evidence of approximately 55,000 pictures. The evidence reveals that the Syrian government is guilty of crimes against humanity and war crimes against the Syrian people, including mass torture, executions, enforced disappearances, and use of chemical weapons, CNN reports. Yet many analysts fear that the Caesar Act will cause more harm than good for the Syrian people. BBC News explains. The plummeting value of Syrian currency has driven prices of imported staple foods far beyond the means of most civilians. According to CBS News, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Yuri Borisov has denounced the sanctions, stating that “[the Caesar Act] is a blockade, a destructive policy by the United States and Western countries that we are making joint efforts to break through.”

In addition to bolstering economic ties, Syria and Russia have agreed to review energy, mining, and power projects, all key areas of the Syrian economy. They would like to resume oil output but are unable to do so due to Turkey’s occupation of the country’s oil fields. Borisov has stated that Moscow presented proposals in July to expand economic ties and expects an agreement as early as December, Reuters reports. “The government is determined to continue to work with Russian allies to implement signed agreements and to ensure the success of Russian investments in Syria,” Borisov said according to Reuters.

According to Al Jazeera, Russia is hoping to gain major influence in the surrounding region of the Middle East, as well as a stronger foothold at a naval base in Syria’s Tartus port. This seems to be part of a larger trend of Russia seeking to expand its overseas interests, as Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has expressed a desire to mediate tensions between Cyprus and Northen Cyprus, which some speculate is a move to gain influence in the Mediterranean, according to The Jerusalem Post.
INTERNATIONAL NEWS

BELARUSIAN OPPOSITION MEMBER FACED DEATH THREATS FROM AUTHORITIES

Timothy Georgetti  
Staff Writer

A member of Belarus’ female opposition coalition, Maria Kolesnikova, ripped up her passport to prevent forced deporta-
tion to her native Ukraine before being abducted by masked men on Sep-
tember 8, according to Forbes. Kolesnikova is the third member of her opposition coalition to re-
main in Belarus after the release of the election results favoring incumbent President Lukashenko.

CNN reports that Koles-

nokova’s colleagues Svet-
lana Tikhanovskaya, lead-
er of the opposition, and Victoria Tsepkalo, the third member of the coali-
tion, fled to Ukraine and Lithuania out of fear of imprisonment by the Lu-

kashenko administration. Kolesnikova is now being held in a pre-trial detention center in the Belarusian capital, Minsk, according to statements made by her lawyer. Ac-
cording to The Guardian, Kolesnikova reports that authorities threatened her with 25 years of impris-

onment if she did not leave the country. Bel-

arusian authorities also threatened Kolesnikova’s life during the abduction.

Kolesnikova has since filed a criminal complaint against the Belarusian secret police, known as the KGB, and the officers involved in the incident. The BBC re-
ports that her detention is most likely related to a criminal case involv-
ings her involvement with the opposition’s Co-
or-duction Council, which was created to ensure 

the group’s legal status. Kolesnikova is ready to help ease rising tensions and support the opposition, according to Sergey Lavrov, Russia’s foreign minister. 

“Today, we are ready to discuss the crisis. In this zone, there are no-Indian war of 1962, several agreements were signed, including one in 1996 in which both countries agreed to have a conflict in the zone. China claims the area as part of its territory, which India claims as part of its own. However, the two nations have not been able to reach a resolution over the dispute.

In 2016, the Galwan River Valley’s Gogra area was occupied by Chinese troops, leading to a tense standoff. The two countries agreed to pull back their forces and end the standoff.

Russia Ready to Mediate Turkey-Greece Conflict in East Mediterranean

Zachary Schullian  
Staff Writer

Russia’s Foreign Minis-
ter Sergey Lavrov said on Sep-
tember 8 that Moscow is ready to help ease rising tensions over Turkey’s search for energy reserves in the eastern Mediterra-

enean, and rejected any actions that could lead to further escalation, The Associated Press reports. The Associated Press and The New York Times both reported on September 10 that Turkey is ready to help ease rising tensions over Turkey’s search for energy reserves in the eastern Mediterranean.

According to Al Jazeera, Turkey has increased its presence in the Mediterranean after regular maintenance, but a senior Turkish official said it could stay longer to give diplomacy a chance. On September 11, Turkey criticized support for Greece and Cyprus by southern European Union nations in the dis-

pute over gas exploration in the eastern Mediterranean, known as the “blind,” implying the nations to reverse their stance as to not diminish the chances of solutions, Bloomberg reports.

The core conflict lies in a legal basis regarding the definition of an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in the region. Greece and Turkey have drastically different notions of what con-

stitute an EEZ. In the third United Nations convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), a country’s exclusive eco-
nomic zone is defined as 200 nautical miles from a country’s baseline. Within this zone, the coastal na-
tion has sole rights over all the natural resources. Turkey, unlike Greece, does not adhere to the UNCLOS definition of an EEZ, and instead says that any island, including Cyprus, should be entitled to a 12 naut-

ical mile reduced EEZ. According to Al Jazeera, Lavrov, a diplomat’s diplomatic offer came as Greece said it will bolster its military with new weapons, troops, and the development of its defense industry, amid concerns of open conflict between the two coun-

tries’ military (the LAC).

The Chinese have not confirmed nor denied any成立了 extraordinary cooperation. The Beijing government has not commented on the incident. The Chinese military has not confirmed nor denied any成立了 extraordinary cooperation. The Beijing government has not commented on the incident. The Chinese military has not confirmed nor denied any

escalations at the LAC. Who fired first in Sep-

tember remains unclear, with each side accusing the other of escalating tension. In breaching the agreement of 1996, the firing side would be in violation of international law. Regardless of the moratorium ended, both sides have accused each other of vio-

lating provisions of other agreements. The Wall Street Journal reports that India claims Chi-


cineses occupied strategic positions that “violate agreements about how the informal border should be marked.” Conversely, China accuses India of crossing into territory China claims for itself. China, on the other hand, asserts that India is “building infrastructure, such as roads and air-

ports, that alter the strategic balance in the area.”

The precarious understand-

ing between China and India has been threat-
ed by actions on both sides, leading to distrust between leaders. In the past, there were certain policies and protocols that both sides respect-

ed. The Economist re-

ports that the two sides were forbidden, patrols that bumped into one another should not follow one another and heavy weap-

ons. Continue on page 11...
Kosovo & Serbia Normalize Economic Relations with Israel

Chimdi Chukwukere
Staff Writer

On September 4, 2020, Serbia and Kosovo agreed to normalize economic ties as part of U.S. brokered talks that include Belgrade moving its Israeli embassy to Jerusalem and an official visit of President Donald J. Trump to Kosovo. This comes only a few weeks after the Trump administration reached a peace deal normalizing relations between the U.S. and Israel. The President noted that additional progress was being made on reaching peace in the Middle East.

Full of excitement over the announcement, Ne- tanyahyu praised the U.S. President for his efforts in helping Israel. Times of Israel cites Netanyahu, saying “Kosovo will be the first majority-Muslim country to open an embassy in Jerusalem and I would like to thank my friend, President Trump, for his contribution to this achievement.” Netanyahu continued to express hope that additional European countries would move their embassies to Jerusalem.

However, reports from Brussels (AP) indicate the announcement was poorly received by the European Union, with the EU issuing a statement in response to the announcement on September 7, 2020 warning that Serbia and Kosovo could undermine the EU membership hopes by moving their Israeli embassies to Jerusalem.

The potential move by Serbia and Kosovo goes against the stance held by the EU. The bloc’s official policy states that the holy city’s status should be worked out between Israel and Palestine as part of peace negotiations. The European Union backed negotiations between Serbia and Kosovo started in March 2011 but stalled in 2018 having produced no results. It only resumed in July after U.S. negotiating effort began.

Vucic (Serbia) and Hiti (Kosovo) reiterated their commitment to the European track. Despite backlash from the EU, Israeli officials have lauded the normalization of relations as a historic feat. Foreign Minister Gabi Ashkenazi thanked Trump and his administration for their peace-making efforts, saying “The U.S. administration continues to lead significant diplomatic breakthroughs, both in our relations with Serbia and Kosovo, as well as the promotion of normalization and the historic peace agreement between Israel and the United Arab Emirates. Israel has no more important ally than the United States.” Palestinians suggest these peace deals were aimed at bolstering Trump’s re-election prospects in two months, alleging that Palestine “has become a victim of the electoral ambitions of President Trump, whose team would take any action, no matter how destructive for peace...to achieve his re-election” in November.

Serbian President Aleksander Vucic told re- porters there were still many differences between Serbia and its former province, which declared independence in 2008, but said Friday’s agreement marked a huge step forward.

The Serbian and Kosovo leaders appeared to sign separate documents, not one. Trump, meanwhile, signed letters acknowledging that the two coun- tries would work together.

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Afghan Vice President Dodges Assassination Attempt Amidst Taliban Talks

Ava Holtzer
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At least ten people have been killed after a bomb attack in Kabul on September 9. The at- tacker targeted Afghanistan’s first Vice President Amrullah Saleh. An addi- tional 31 people have been wounded, including several of the vice presi- dient’s bodyguards, says Associated Press. Saleh sustained minor injuries and burns in the attack.

Saleh, who is also Af- ghanistan’s former intel- ligence chief, appeared on television after the attack with bandages on his hands, and revered viewers that he was in good condition. He con- firmed that his younger son, who was in the car with him, was also fine.

“I have slight burns on my face and hand from the wave of the blast.” He further said that he lacked the exact details at the moment but apologized “to those who suffered casualties and those who lost their property in the attack” reports Los Ange- les Times. In an interview with Aljazeera, Interior ministry spokesman Ar- ian said, “the blast also ignited a huge fire in the area, a section of Kabul where shops sell gas cycl o by for use in heating homes and cooking. He feared the casualty fig- ures could rise further.”

A witness drove by as the attack happened and gave a description of the incident as it took place.

“I lost one of my broth- ers, and the other one is hurt,” he said in an in- terview with Reuters. He criticized the government, saying that neither the arm- ed forces nor the po- lice had arrived yet, BBC reported. The attack was condemned by the Euro- pean Union and Pakistan. The EU delegation in Afghanistan said on Twitter, “This is an attack on the Republic, & desperate act by spoilers of peace efforts, who must be collectively confronted.”

Saleh’s spokesperson, Ravan Marad said, “To- day, once again the ene- my of Afghanistan tried to harm Saleh, but they failed in their evil aim, and Saleh escaped the attack unharmed.” Saleh, who has been a staunch critic of the Taliban, has fallen victim to multiple ter- rorists attacks including one last year that killed 20 people, says Reuters.

As reported by Al- jazeera, the Taliban has denied responsibility of the attack. “Today’s ex- plosion in Kabul has nothing to do with the Mujahedeen of Islami- c Emirate” the Taliban spokesperson, Zabihullah Mujahid, said accord- ing to Associated Press. The insurgent group pledged not to launch targeted attacks in urban areas as part of a deal with the United States. The bomb comes just days before peace talks between the Afghan gov- ernment and the Taliban were scheduled to take place. “In recent days, Washington, officials in Kabul and the Taliban have all indicated that they could get under way imminently,” reports The Los Angeles Times.

The peace talks, called intra-Afghan negotia- tions, are hoped to end over 20 years of war in Afghanistan, according to The New York Times.

The Intra-Afghan ne- gotiations belong to a peace deal between the United States and the Taliban, signed back in February. The peace deal will allow U.S. troops to move out of Afghani- stan and is hailed as the best chance at peace af- ter decades of conflict in the Middle Eastern country. At best, the U.S. and Afghan officials are weary of the repercussions that such violence will likely cause. These attacks are feared to weaken the vital trust needed for success- ful peace talks and should be pushed back by the international community.

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Suicide bomber at a conference on democracy in Germany. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

Suicide bomber speaks at a conference on democracy in Germany. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.
Focus On Domestic

United Arab Emirates

Mark Gorman
Staff Writer

The debate between security versus privacy is not new, but it is one that is entirely ignored in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The UAE government, an absolute monarch with no established civil liberties, is free to spy on those in the country as much as it pleases. According to the Washington Post, “the UAE has one of the highest per capita concentrations of security cameras in the world,” which the government uses to track threats to its national security, most often in the form of dissent. The Post cites one example from 2010 where a Hamas commander was assassinated at a hotel in Dubai. Police were able to quickly identify the killers as a group of around three dozen suspected Israeli Mossad operatives. Authorities later revealed a video showing the suspected agents trailing the commander while dressed as tennis players, which allowed the government to track them from the time they arrived in Dubai.

The extent of the UAE’s surveillance program is both amazing and terrifying, but they did not assemble it alone. Reporters launched an investigation into a program called Project Raven, a joint operation between the Emirati government and a UAE-based cybersecurity firm called DarkMatter. What made this project special was that the team consisted of more than a dozen former U.S. intelligence operatives. These American ex-spies were hired for their expertise and knowledge into helping the UAE engage in surveillance of foreign governments, militaries, and activists critical of the monarchy.

In February of 2018, DarkMatter decided to address international media for the first time. According to The Middle East Eye, this was done as an attempt to absolve itself of any connection to potential human rights violations and argue it was independent of the Emirati government despite the UAE making up 80 percent of its customer base. The Eye also reports that surveillance and security have been increasingly important to the UAE, as well as other nations in the region. Likely in response to the Arab Spring, the UAE and many Gulf states passed cybercrime laws in 2012 which prohibit online criticism of the respective governments. The ability of the Emirati government to track and enforce these crimes is a result of the millions of dollars they have sunk into programs such as Project Raven.

While Reuters only tracks Project Raven back to 2014, Al Jazeera expounds on Project Raven’s history, which they report as beginning as a post-9/11 proposal by former U.S. government counterterrorism czar Richard Clarke to prevent another catastrophe. Five years after he left his position with the government, he was hired as a consultant to the UAE. In 2008, he was tasked to help create the Development Research, Exploration, and Analysis Department (DREAD), the predecessor to Project Raven. This project quickly went beyond merely spying on extremists as Clarke had originally pitched and was expanded to the extent that Saudi women’s rights activists, diplomats at the United Nations, and journalists working for FIFA’s (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) were all targets of the UAE’s surveillance program.

The UAE surveillance program goes so far that a popular chat app called ToTok has been revealed as a government surveillance tool. It reports on the UAE uses the app as a tool to track users’ conversations, location, and what data is stored on their phones, such as images. The Guardian points out that ToTok has been popular in the United Arab Emirates, an independent, nonprofit organization that promotes press freedom and defends the rights of journalists, released a list in 2019 of the 10 Most Censored Countries, with North Korea at number two, second only to Eritrea. They cite numerous examples of censorship, surveillance, and restrictions, including a case in 2017 where a North Korean court sentenced two South Korean journalists and their publishers to death for “insulting the dignity of the country.”

To this day, North Korean citizens are subject to some of the worst violations of privacy and censorship in the world. Kim Jong Un and his repressive dictatorship are behind the strictest domestic government surveillance programs in the world. With countless violations of basic human rights, invasion of basic privacy, and censorship of all information in and out of the country, North Korea and its society remains virtually a secret.

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Staff Writer

North Korea is one of, if not the most, surveillance-heavy countries on the planet. The Asian country is infamous for its strict government, tyrannical dictators, and repressive policies. Many have suffered at the hands of harsh rulers who continue to impose strict censorship and surveillance. It is virtually impossible to fully understand North Korea’s surveillance methods since it is entirely ignored in the United States, or even life in their counterparts on the southern half of the Korean peninsula. The North Korean government has kept its actions and country a secret for decades now, and it is arguably the best example of total domestic government surveillance.

In a report released by Human Rights Watch in January 2020, North Korea was stated to remain to be among the most repressive countries in the world, according to Civicus. Civicus highligh t s the worst of North Korea’s Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un’s leadership: “threats of execution, arbitrary punishment of dissenters, and forced labor to maintain fearful obedience,” while travel and communication outside of North Korea are also decreased. The government bans all media, civil society, and trade unions while failing to fulfill basic human rights by utilizing censorship in the world. Kim Jong Un and his government have systematically subjected North Koreans to forced abortions, and more. Brad Adams, the Asia director of Human Rights Watch, said that North Korea’s nuclear success is directly caused by overfunding at the expense of food people. Reporters without Borders (RSF) ranks North Korea last in media freedom, according to their World Press Freedom Index. North Koreans get their news, entertainment, etc. directly from state media, allowing for rampant propaganda and censorship of information. RSF also found that citizens can be imprisoned for consumption news and information from international media outlets.

In 2017, the United States Embassy and Consulate in the Republic of Korea issued a report on Serious Human Rights Abuses and Censorship in North Korea, where they identified the human rights violations carried out by the Government of North Korea. The report cites extrajudicial killings, forced labor, torture, detention, rape, forced abortions, and other sexual violence. The report also investigates the North Korean government’s monitoring of North Koreans abroad and policies that force defected citizens to seek asylum. It goes on to highlight individuals within the North Korean government who are responsible for the human rights violations that run rampant in the country. Amnesty International UK states that all phone and internet activity is monitored by “Bureau 27” in North Korea’s State Security Department. The Bureau utilizes advanced equipment enabling the government to detect mobile phone frequencies and monitor all activity. They surveyed right restrictions on the types of appliances and technology allowed in citizens’ homes.

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), an independent, non-profit organization that promotes freedom and defends the rights of journalists, released a list in 2019 of the 10 Most Censored Countries, with North Korea at number two, second only to Eritrea. They cite numerous examples of censorship, surveillance, and restrictions, including a case in 2017 where a North Korean court sentenced two South Korean journalists and their publishers to death for “insulting the dignity of the country.”

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The System of Operative Search Measures, or SORM, was once used by the Soviet Union to monitor phone calls. Now it is being used in Russia to track geolocation and IP addresses. The program was resurrected by the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) in 1995 to surveil online activity and has grown in scope as the internet became an ever greater expectation of day-to-day life.

Russia’s internet surveillance is based on blocking information, but rather on data collection. SORM gives the FSB a backdoor to the internet and access to user’s personal information, such as phone numbers or email addresses.

The so-called “Russian Model” of internet surveillance is much more appealing to most authoritarian regimes than anything as extensive as China’s “Great Firewall.”

The New York Times notes, “A lot more countries commonly referred to as ‘more free’ than Russia than China.” Resources, both financial and administrative, are scarce in many of these countries, and devoting such a large portion to internet surveillance is simply not possible.

A backdoor that allows the government to collect information on individuals rather than blocking outside information is more feasible and allows it to target individuals without sacrificing as many resources. SORM technology can be purchased for as little as $20,000, and Russian companies have sold it to many states in what Russians commonly refer to as the “near abroad,” such as Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, as well as Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East.

As noted in a report published by the Brookings Institute, on November 1st, 2019, Russia’s “sovereign internet” law came into effect. This law would effectively allow the government to cut off the country’s internet, commonly referred to as Runet, from the rest of the internet. Similarly, Russia’s video surveillance increased leading up to the 2018 World Cup. The Moscow Times reports, “During the World Cup, facial recognition systems using neural network image processing to identify, track and blacklist individuals suspects were connected to security cameras as and around stadiums in the eleven host regions.”

Human Rights Watch notes that since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Russia has use its network of cameras, facial recognition technology, and geolocation to ensure that its citizens abide by the mandatory 14-day quarantines imposed for people reintroducing the country from abroad or those who may have been exposed to COVID-19. According to Meduza, medical information and geolocation data are protected by Russian Constitution, but such protections are allowed to be restricted during times of emergency.

The August 20th poisoning of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny shows how far-reaching and pervasive FSB surveillance can be for entities of the Kremlin. For years leading up to Navalny’s poisoning with the Soviet-era chemical weapon Novichok, he and his associates had been followed by FSB officers and subject to intimidation.

The Integrated Joint Operations Center, which had arrived at a hospital in the Russian city of Omsk, Navalny’s family quickly recognized FSB agents were present. Navalny was taken from Omsk to a hospital in Germany, after Russia faced international pressure to allow his transfer, and he has since begun to recover.

IVAN ZHADNOV, the director of Navalny’s Anti-Corruption Foundation, told The Financial Times, “We know they constantly listen to our phone conversations, we know they put up hidden cameras, we know they take the footage from security cameras wherever we go. They interrogated my relatives, everyone I had meetings with — it’s more or less total control.”

Compromising material collected on Navalny and his family, such as video footage and phone calls, were used in a TV documentary commissioned in 2017 to discredit Navalny as well as the Anti-Corruption Foundation. Dmitry Medvedev, a former scriptwriter-for Rent-TV, the station which aired the documentary, claims that the materials were provided to the station by the FSB.

The surveillance and poisoning of Alexei Navalny show how far the Kremlin is willing to go to silence whistleblowers and opposition. The situation is even peculiar to the 2018 poisoning of the Russian ex-double agent Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia in the UK, as they were all poisoned by Novichok.

The Russian model of surveillance is ideal for regimes that wish to target and threaten individuals as opposed to suppressing information. It is comparatively inexpensive and uses administrative resources efficiently. Russia has the capability to track individuals using both facial recognition technology and geolocation and has backdoors to the internet via SORM technology that allows them to access user’s personal information. Information which has been sold to target and track persons of interest and activists against the Putin government.

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China
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Since the outset of the 21st century, the internet has changed dramatically and evolved to benefit individuals in society. However, it has brought together more people than it has also been exploited to use those connections against us. Never before have states had the power to surveil and monitor individuals on such a scale, and in the digital era, China is the king of surveillance.

While the rest of the world enjoys the relative fee and uncensored Web, China and its citizens face a different reality. Since the beginning of Maoist-era China, information has been tightly controlled to protect the government’s interests and maintain social stability. The emergence of new technologies in the past couple of decades has only made this job easier and more efficient. Since 2001, the country’s Ministry of Public Security has maintained one of the largest internet censorship systems, colloquially known as the “Great Firewall.” While it was initially created in scope to protect China’s cyberspace from foreign content, news and media, and also to ensure that propaganda and misinformation continue to circulate China’s Internet Web.

According to Politico, this has given rise to a radical nationalist generation of youth. Older Chinese, a citizen, who remember the earlier unrestricted Web, are continually at odds with the government and Chinese youth. Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) used to bypass China’s firewall are constantly shut down, and attempts to educate the people are often exported, shamed, and punished by young government informants. There is a sinister ingenuity to the Great Firewall, not only is it a system maintained on the Web, but one that is protected by the very citizens it hopes to dominate and control.

The threat of Chinese surveillance has taken on everyday trappings for example, WeChat, once considered China’s Face-Book copycat, has en- tered itself as the “digital social media app for Chinese people around the globe for almost a decade.”

Over one billion users worldwide, WeChat has been a cesssary for both Chinese citizens and mass government surveillance. For example, people WeChat is the established app for contacting family overseas, sharing photos and memories, and making payments for everyday es-sentials. At the same time, the app siphons personal data from users, allowing the government to target, profit from, and manipulate people in the country and necessitating these services, as reported by The New York Times.

South China Morning Post claims that in the future, the government and local companies will develop a “social credit system,” which is broadly defined as a “set of databases and initiatives that monitor and assess the behavior of individuals, companies, and government entities.”

Incentives for “good” social behavior include monetary rewards and exemptions while punishing “bad” social behavior with financial sanctions, travel restrictions, and punishment. This combination of unprecedented government surveillance and social engineering has given the Chinese government an unprecedented amount of control over its population. In conjunction with the government’s cultural and anti-terrorism policies, China’s mass surveil-lance programs have been especially devastating to the Uighurs, a Turkic minority in the country. For years, China has made considerable efforts to reeducate and reengineer Uighur culture, hoping to homogenize and consolidate them with the Han cultural majority. As the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists reports, these efforts have only become easier thanks to government technology.

Uighurs are now targeted both online and in real life through user activity on the internet and government investigations. For example, a digital Quran and messaging app, min- ing it for personal data on Uighur users. Anoth-er surveillance tool called the Integrated Joint Operations Platform (IJOP) also analyzes data, flagging “suspicious” or “threatening” individuals and giving authorities cause to arrest. According to CNEX, Chinese government surveillance has evolved even to the point of “cyber espionage.”

China’s surveillance has become a major issue not only domestically, but internationally. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation recently reported mass online data leaks by Zhenhua Data, a private company closely associated with China’s government intelligence. It reportedly collected information on over 2.4 million people. Along with recent talks about TenCent and TikTok bans worldwide, China poses a legitimate threat to international privacy and secu-rity. In a reality where surveil-lance is weaponized against the world and its peoples, it is up to the international community to stand up against systems of encroachment and oppression.

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**Will the SDGs Survive through the 2020s?**

**Sebastian Kopec**  
*Staff Writer*

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to wreak havoc upon the global economy, attention is being brought towards the state of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and their achievability by the deadline of 2030. Unfortunately, it appears that these goals will not be achieved by 2030 and instead most likely fail into another national government’s periphery as the decade continues, with the health crisis only affirming the prior failure of governments to act to address the SDGs. According to the Sustainable Development Goals Report 2020, “The 2020 Sustainable Development Goals Report” states that “the Sustainable Development Goals were launched in 2015 to end poverty and set the world on a path of peace, prosperity and sustainable development for all on a healthy planet. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) demand nothing short of a transformation of the financial, economic, and political systems that govern our societies today to guarantee the human rights of all. It is essential to clearly highlight the failures of the SDGs, which include no poverty, good health and well-being, quality education, and climate action were specifically mentioned by the UN Department of Social and Economic Affairs to be in danger of failing to meet their stated objectives by 2030.”

Before the global pandemic, SDG 1, No Poverty, was not on track to meet its target of eliminating extreme global poverty by 2030. As reported by The Lancet, “…with projections suggesting that 6 percent of the global population would still be living in extreme poverty by 2030. Now, an estimated 71 million additional people are living in extreme poverty due to COVID-19.” COVID-19 has only increased the likelihood that governments will fail to meet SDG 1 and SDG 10: Reducing Inequalities. Even SDG 3, Good Health and Well-Being, which prior to the pandemic was making steady progress, has hit a major setback. “During the crisis, 70 countries have halted childhood vaccination in order to efficiently target the failures of the SDGs, which include no poverty, health, and quality education. As a result, the 2020 Sustainable Development Goals Report by the United Nations states that the failure of SDG 3 to promote health and well-being presents an opportunity to greatly restructure the global economy towards renewable energy source and the creation of ‘green jobs.’”

If states take initiative to meet the economic, health, and environmental challenges of COVID-19, then new legislation has introduced not only where there would be significant progress towards the SDGs, but it would have to do so while facing the challenges of the future as well. As the UN Report advises, if there were any time to implement the policies of the Paris Climate Agreement it would be now. While the pandemic has shown that states are willing to cooperate on a large scale to tackle global economic crises, there appears to be little proof that such an undertaking will be done to address a global food crisis. According to The Guardian, the “massive ramping-up of mission” to tackle pollution to protect coral reefs, the international community did not fully address any of the 20 Aichi biodiversity targets agreed in Japan in 2010 to slow the loss of the natural world.

It is the second consecutive decade that governments have failed to meet the Sustainable Development Goals. Instead, states have failed to prioritize the impending threat of the climate crisis, and the international community did not fully address any of the 20 Aichi biodiversity targets agreed in Japan in 2010 to slow the loss of the natural world. As such, states can either continue to use them as rough guidelines or they can begin to take more active steps for a sustainable future. It is fundamentally in our national interests to do so, and the states that prepare their citizens early will be the ones that benefit the most while the others will have to do so later. The views expressed in The Diplomatic Envoy are those of the writers and are not intended to represent the views of the School of Diplomacy, Seton Hall University, or the CJM Fund.

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Any student of history has heard of the tariff, an obscure remnant of the isolationist past. Or so we thought. The Trump Administration’s decision to raise levies on goods — from China, Canada, and the EU just to name a few — has brought this archaic tactic back to life. Why tariffs? The administration has decided that tariffs are the best option to force other nations to the table. Negotiations are past trade deals that “have taken advantage of the U.S.,” according to the Tax Foundation.

However, this is not the answer. Only by embracing free trade can we better our free trade image. Tariffs have led to devastating results throughout history. Alexander Hamilton’s tariffs attempted to protect fledgling American businesses from British competition, resulting in higher domestic prices, insufficient business models, and finally the War of 1812. Another example is the 1930 Smoot-Hawley Tariff; duties on all goods were raised to a whopping 60 percent. According to PRI, it just so happens that the highest tariff in history was implemented on the eve of the Great Depression. They simply cause economic pain. Tariffs are a short-term solution to a long-term problem, and instead of solving it, they only compound it. Tariffs are inefficient as they crowd out low-income groups, who suffer most from the resulting price hikes.

The United States’ Next Mistake

Anita Balouky
Staff/Writer

172 nations are now engaged in discussions to participate in COVAX, a global initiative aimed at working with vaccine manufacturers to provide countries with equitable access to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines. By the end of 2021, the World Health Organization reports COVAX is co-led by the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and the World Health Organization (WHO), who is working with vaccine manufacturer across the world. COVAX’s goal is to acquire and deliver two billion doses of approved vaccines by the end of 2021. So far, it has nine COVID-19 vaccine candidates in its portfolio that employ a variety of different technologies and scientific approaches. An additional nine candidates are also being evaluated. Interested countries would confirm their intentions to join and make a binding commitment by September 18, and will subsequently make payments in early October using an allocation framework developed by the WHO. With the creation of the COVAX Advance Market Commitment, 92 low and middle-income countries will have support from 80 higher-income countries. Proponents believe that a huge positive of this design is that it would theoretically lead to lower costs for vaccines, which would in turn end this pandemic quicker.

The United States has refused to join this global effort. “The United States will continue to engage our international partners to ensure we defeat this virus, but we will not be constrained by multilateral organizations influenced by the corrupt World Health Organization and China,” says Judd Deere, a spokesman for the White House. This “go it alone” strategy is not only an ineffective way to defeat the virus; it is like deciding not to take out an insurance policy. This has the potential to put thousands of lives at risk.

According to The Washington Post, given the complexity of supply chains, vaccine development will essentially be a global effort, regardless of whether countries want to cooperate. It’s important to note also that the U.S. has withdrawn from the WHO despite being a major supporter of COVAX. This adds to the confusion and contradiction seen in the U.S. response to the pandemic. The whole idea behind COVAX is to discourage countries from hoarding and instead vaccinate high-risk people in every country. In a recent Harris Poll, 66 percent of Americans agreed that if the United States develops a vaccine, all domestic orders should be filled before any of the vaccines are made available abroad. The Washington Post reports, having a nationalistic point of view will result in an inefficient and unaffordable vaccine rollout. It is better to allow other nations to manufacture vaccines and to purchase vaccines from different countries.

The United States implemented a 25 percent tariff on the import of European wine in October 2019. Fast forward to August 2020 and wine distributors who have been flooded by the pandemic lockdowns already cannot afford to pay the levies. An additional piece by the Wall Street Journal explores the wine distributor’s plight. “Take Eric Faber, the chief executive of Cutting Edge Selections, a Cincinnati, Ohio-based wine distributor. Ohio laws require a markup of at least 25% between wholesalers and retailers and an additional 33% between retailer and customer. That means he can’t absorb the cost of the tariff.” As stated, the company cannot handle the price of the tariff. This fact is reflected in the business model by a price increase to the consumer.

Is this the system we want to live under? A system in which the masses pay for the enrichment of a few hand-selected companies? The government should not have this power. In the non-tariff world, the market determined the price of goods in which companies would prosper. The companies who failed to keep up with the needs of the market or were simply outmatched were washed up in the tide and sunk. Tariffs are anathema to free trade and act as a tool of crony capitalism. Tariffs discourage trade and allow these inefficient companies to keep their doors open relegating market forces moot. If we continue down this path we will see another prolonged economic downturn like the 1930s. We as a nation must stand up the Trump Administration as well as any other who would attempt to change us to the economically bloc that is the tariff.

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COVID-19 vaccine takes priority for many countries, if not all.

The views expressed in The Diplomatic Envoy are those of the writers and are not intended to represent the views of the School of Diplomacy, Seton Hall University, or the CMI Fund. For more information on sources, go to TheDiplomaticEnvoy.com.

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The legitimacy of voter fraud

Patrick Condon  
Staff Writer

With the recent Black Lives Matters protests in the US, Anti-Terror Law protests in the Philippines, and National Security protests in Hong Kong, worldwide media has become inundated with reports of social unrest. In one unlikely area, social changes are being sparked by six ground-breaking appointments. On August 6, 2020, the leader of the Pontifical of the Holy See, Pope Francis, appointed six women to the Vatican Council for the Economy for the first time throughout the Church’s 2,000-year existence.

Comprised of eight religious and seven laypeople, the six-year-old council was established to “supervise the economic management of the structure of the Holy See and Vatican City State.” The Council for the Economy acts only as a security measure for papal spending and is run by the Vatican bank.

While most to the appointment of six women to the largely-male 5,000-person workforce of the Holy See may seem groundbreaking, the positions themselves do not hold much influence in the overall decision-making of the church’s social positions. However, there is a growing inclusion of women. The previous percentage of the workforce being women in 2010 at the end of was only 697 women of the 4,053 person workforce, making it 8.3 percent male and 17 percent female. In comparison, last year’s 4,038 person workforce included 1,016 women, making it only 78 percent male. This five percent rise in the female workforce of the Holy See is considered groundbreaking, headlining major news sites like CBS who hailed it as a “historic first.”

This historic first is fortunately too little, too late, and we are still better than a five percent increase over ten years.

The six women appointed to the Council for the Economy are Professor Dr. Charlotte Kreutzer-Kirchhoff (Germany), Dr. Marija Kolar (Germany), Maria Concepcion Oscar Garcia (Spain), Eva Castillo Sanz (Spain), Ruth Mary Kelly (UK), and Leslie Jane Ferrar (UK), and Albertino Minali (Ita

The first country to be declared “COVID free” after many were infected. After reports of a few cases of COVID-19 appeared in Auckland, Prime Minister Jacinda Adern took action and put many parts of the country in lockdown and decided to postpone elections from September 19 to October 17, according to BBC. This pandemic does not only prevent elections from occurring and reduce voter turnout, it has also resulted in some large faults in underprepared countries. Poland tried partial voting by mail but had difficulties with the amount of time allotted to voters and missing ballot papers.

Some countries are going the extra mile to prevent any cases of the COVID-19. For example, New Zealand has virtually no cases of COVID-19 and it was the first country to be declared “COVID free” after many were infected. After reports of a few cases of COVID-19 appeared in Auckland, Prime Minister Jacinda Adern took action and put many parts of the country in lockdown and decided to postpone elections from September 19 to October 17, according to BBC. This pandemic does not only prevent elections from occurring and reduce voter turnout, it has also resulted in some large faults in underprepared countries. Poland tried partial voting by mail but had difficulties with the amount of time allotted to voters and missing ballot papers.

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failed to attract diverse talent to its Foreign Service, Felipe continues to partake in international affairs related internships during his time as a graduate student.

However, when asked if he always knew this would be his career choice, Felipe stated that he did not. It was through both internships and experiences that Felipe began to understand what he wanted to pursue. "I essentially started asking myself, both at the Envoy and Doctors Without Borders, 'where can I add the most value?" I think that, on the whole, the more experience I had — the more I engaged with the subject matter — the more it just started falling into place," Felipe said of his early experience with non-academic writing while at the Envoy. It is clear that even weeks after the global COVID-19 pandemic broke out, Felipe stated that his work shifted to communicating about "what our doctors were doing abroad" to "what they were doing in the US." "With COVID, our work revolved around the work that MSF was doing with migrant labor homes in Detroit," Felipe recalled. His work at MSF made him realize that "states play a tremendous role in the world." This realization, Felipe said, is what made him want to work for the American Foreign Service. However, the importance of nation-states in the world was not the only factor that motivated Felipe to pursue a career in the Foreign Service. In 2019, he became a United States Citizen after having originally immigrated to the U.S. from Ecuador in 2003. He says that his experience as an immigrant sparked his interest in diplomacy. "The fact of the matter is that the United States is unique in that you can come here — immigrate — become a citizen, and then represent your country," Felipe said. "The fact that America allows that is beautiful, and it's something that I want to be in service to." That experience, he added, was the Department of State'sRangel Fellowship. "What's really amazing about the Rangel Fellowship is part of this network of traditionally underrepresented international relations professionals. To me, that is what is so unique and beautiful about America," Felipe concluded.

As a graduate student, Felipe divides his time between his studies and being a research assistant for Harvard University's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, where he is working on the Cyber Threat Intelligence Project. When asked what advice he would give to undecided or Freshmen students, Felipe emphasized the importance of media literacy. "For undecided or students, you should remember that you enjoy the process," Felipe stated. However, when asked if he would do anything differently, Felipe said no, primarily known to Germany, which currently holds the EU presidency, has continued its diplomatic efforts, according to a Turkish official who spoke on condition of anonymity, and Turkey wanted to give those efforts a chance to lead them on this path and, eventually, to the prestigious Rangel International AffFairs Graduate Fellowship. Felipe's internship at Business Insider as an Editorial Fellow took place during some of the most contentious moments in recent history, such as Justice Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation hearing, and the 2018 midterm elections. When asked about specific insights that he gained from his time at Business Insider that would be useful to entering internships and graduates, Felipe emphasized the importance of media literacy and suggested that international relations majors take a journalism class. "If you go into international relations," Felipe said, "understanding how information is presented to you, and understanding its relative importance, is crucial because you are going to be operating day to day, minute to minute, on breaking news." After Business Insider, Felipe joined the press team at Médecins Sans Frontieres. On September 2, 2020, only a few months before the global COVID-19 pandemic broke out, Felipe stated that his work shifted to communicating something he always knew this would be a part of his career, but it should come to you. "It is clear that even before the warning shots in September, both sides had been preparing for long-term occupation of LAC. The brutal, Malaysian winter usually subdue military activity, and border disputes are minimized. However, "sky-high tensions are likely to make this year different," as reported by experts and security officials in The Wall Street Journal. The Indian army has been fortifying its outposts and camps with provisions for winter, such as increased medical supplies, arctic tents, and prefabricated huts. Indian military officials reported to The Wall Street Journal that aviation fuel, kerosene, and diesel have been relocated as well. China claims that actions such as these are likely to cause an increase in tension and have resulted in the mobilization of Chinese troops along the LAC. However, The Wall Street Journal reports that "China has been building roads, encampments, helipads and other defensive positions across the disputed Line of Actual Control." Satellite images confirm construction in regions neighboring the LAC. Amid the rising military tensions between India and China, India appears to be retaliating through diplomatic and economic means. Following the June border dispute, India banned 59 Chinese apps, including TikTok and WeChat, which it has done before. The Wall Street Journal reports that India cancelled a "major railway contract won by a Chinese firm," and is pushing for the use of non-Chinese equipment in various projects. As of September 2, India had banned an additional 118 Chinese apps, according to The Economist. The role of the media in the conflict has also been a factor amid the escalation. The lack of reporting from the front lines has created an atmosphere where facts cannot be made clear. This has led to national media outlets echoing government statements and calling for action, leading to a spurt of nationalism in both countries. With national support, neither China nor India appears willing to back down in Ladakh. Contact Alessandra at alexandra.antonacci@student.shu.edu

Felipe Bueno. Courtesy of Hartiana Ghoserhos. 

RUSSIA READY TO MEDIATE TURKEY-GREECE CONFLICT IN EAST MEDITERRANEAN

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Diplomacy News

Interview with Alumnus Felipe Bueno

Alessandra Antonacci
Staff Writer

Seton Hall University’s alumnus Felipe Bueno, primarily known to members of the SHU community as the former Editor-in-Chief of The Diplomacy Envoy, is currently pursuing a Master’s in Public Policy at Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government this fall. After a prestigious lineup of internships and jobs, including as a research intern at the Modern War Institute at West Point, an editorial fellow at Business Insider, and a press associate for Doctors Without Borders/ Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), he has set his eyes on a career in American diplomacy. As a distinguished Rangel Fellow in the 2020 Ran- giel International Affairs Graduate Fellowship, a prestigious U.S. Department of State program created to attract diverse talent to its Foreign Service, Felipe continues to partake in international affairs related internships during his time as a graduate student.

However, when asked if he always knew this would be his career choice, Felipe stated that he did not. It was through both internships and experiences that Felipe began to understand what he wanted to pursue. “I essentially started asking myself, both at the Envoy and Doctors Without Borders, ‘where can I add the most value?’ I think that, on the whole, the more experience I had — the more I engaged with the subject matter — the more it just started falling into place,” Felipe said of his early experience with non-academic writing while at the Envoy. It is clear that even weeks after the global COVID-19 pandemic broke out, Felipe stated that his work shifted to communicating about “what our doctors were doing abroad” to “what they were doing in the US.” “With COVID, our work revolved around the work that MSF was doing with migrant labor homes in Detroit,” Felipe recalled. His work at MSF made him realize that “states play a tremendous role in the world.” This realization, Felipe said, is what made him want to work for the American Foreign Service. However, the importance of nation-states in the world was not the only factor that motivated Felipe to pursue a career in the Foreign Service. In 2019, he became a United States Citizen after having originally immigrated to the U.S. from Ecuador in 2003. He says that his experience as an immigrant sparked his interest in diplomacy. “The fact of the matter is that the United States is unique in that you can come here — immigrate — become a citizen, and then represent your country,” Felipe said. “The fact that America allows that is beautiful, and it’s something that I want to be in service to.” That experience, he added, was the Department of State’s Rangel Fellowship. “What’s really amazing about the Rangel Fellowship is part of this network of traditionally underrepresented international relations professionals. To me, that is what is so unique and beautiful about America,” Felipe concluded.

As a graduate student, Felipe divides his time...
As the American presidential election nears and COVID-19 continues to plague the nations of the world, diplomatic tensions are reaching a tipping point between the United States and China. In order to better understand the latest developments in U.S.-China relations, The Diplomatic Envoy recently spoke with Dr. Zhong Wang, Professor at the School of Diplomacy and Director of the Center for Peace and Conflict Studies, to discuss the rise in hostilities between the two countries.

As an advocate of peace and dialogue between the U.S. and China, Dr. Wang understands the challenges of the relationship. Not only do the American and Chinese governments disagree on various issues including trade, maritime security, and diplomatic engagement, but it seems that little is being done to resolve these concerns. Dr. Wang discusses many of the issues that led to the current state of U.S.-China relations, including a lack of trust, unqualified diplomats holding key policy positions, and a rise in nationalism and populism. In dialogue between both countries, it facilitates the American and Chinese high-ranking policy officials as well as leading scholars from both sides. The goal of these talks, Wang explains, is to build a mutual understanding of the intentions of each side and to avoid major miscalculation and miscalculation.

Despite the tensions in the relationship, Dr. Wang explains that there is still hope so long as the two countries can keep hostilities below the level of conflict. He continues by saying that the next few months will determine the status of U.S.-China relations for the foreseeable future. He explains that China wants to avoid major miscalculations and miscalculation, and that the United States should also make efforts to prevent a conflict. The goal of these talks is to understand each other's intentions and make sure that there is no miscalculation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a lasting impact on U.S.-China relations. Dr. Wang explains that China has taken several measures to mitigate the pandemic, including lockdowns, mask mandates, and social distancing. He attributes China's success in controlling the pandemic to its strong leadership and efficient governance. Dr. Wang also notes that the Chinese government has made significant efforts to improve relations with the United States, including strengthening economic ties and cultural exchanges. He believes that these efforts are necessary to build trust and cooperation between the two countries.

Despite the challenges and a lack of communications, Dr. Wang remains optimistic about the future of the U.S.-China relationship. He emphasizes the importance of dialogue and cooperation to mitigate tensions and prevent conflicts. Dr. Wang encouragesboth sides to engage in constructive dialogue and work towards a peaceful resolution of their differences. He concludes by saying that a strong U.S.-China relationship is crucial for the prosperity and stability of the global community.