



The Diplomatic Envoy

PAKISTAN RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL AID AFTER DEVASTATING FLOODS

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Since mid-June Pakistan has been devastated by floods with an estimated 1,400 dead, and over 30 million people displaced, according to The New York Times. The nation's Minister of Finance, Miftah Ismail, estimates that there have been around \$10 billion in damages caused by the flooding, however, others believe that there could be up to twice that amount and that the damages will only continue to rise, reports Al Jazeera. About one-third of Pakistan has been affected by the floods, with the district of Dadu in Sindh province being among one of the most severely flooded, reports the Associated Press.

Among the billions of dollars in damages caused by the unprecedented flooding is the destruction of about 2 million acres of farmland and 735,000



Image of a Mosque in Islamabad, Pakistan. Courtesy of Sayed Bilal Javaid (Unsplash)

livestock, according to BBC News. This has raised concerns about a food shortage striking the nation. The Associated Press reports the rising cost of vegetables and other foods in the nation, as Pakistan's agriculture belt in eastern Punjab and southern Sindh provinces has flooded. So far, United Nations agencies as well as other countries have sent aid to Pakistan, including the United States. According to the Associated Press, altogether about 60 plane loads of

aid have been sent to the nation. The U.S. has sent six planes to Pakistan, loaded with food, three of which were sent to the hardest-hit Sindh province. Additionally, the U.S. has organized a humanitarian air bridge to Pakistan that will consist of 20 flights to the nation. The U.S. also plans to distribute cash to those in need. The severity of the floods in Pakistan has raised alarm bells for the international community, as many experts believe that the floods were exacerbated by climate change.

USA Today reports that Pakistan's former Minister for Climate Change, Malik Amin Aslam, believes that extreme heatwaves in April and May were the precursor to the flooding, as temperatures rose as high as 123 degrees Fahrenheit. This increased the severity of the floods since they were, in large part, caused by monsoon rains. Monsoons are shifts in the direction of winds caused by changes in temperatures on the land and water as the sea-

sons progress. Because the temperatures were so high in April and May, it caused the monsoon rains to come in quicker and have more intense winds and rain. USA Today further stated that Pakistan's national rainfall in August was over 240 percent higher than average. However, the intense heat Pakistan experienced also led to increased glacier melt from Pakistan's 7,200 glaciers, reports NPR. The combination of both intense monsoon rains and heightened glacier melt were the key factors behind the unprecedented caliber of the flooding. United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres visited Pakistan on September 9 and 10 to observe the widespread damage to the nation, stating that he has "seen many humanitarian disasters in the world, but [he] has never seen climate carnage on this scale," reports Al Jazeera. They also state

that Guterres has claimed that "wealthier countries are morally responsible for helping developing countries like Pakistan to recover from disasters like [the floods]." G20 nations cause roughly 80 percent of the Earth's greenhouse gas emissions, but it is poorer nations like Pakistan, which emits less than 1 percent of global emissions, that are facing the deadly consequences. The unprecedented nature of these floods further demonstrates that the impacts of climate change are no longer a future threat, but a present reality. Pakistan is still reeling from the effects of the flood and, despite receiving support from many states and organizations around the world, it will take a long time for the nation to recover from the damage these floods have wrought.

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YOUNG AMERICANS WORKING FROM HOME ARE MOVING TO MEXICO CITY DUE TO HIGH COSTS

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As prices continue to soar in major U.S. cities, seemingly breaking a new record every year, young Americans are increasingly looking for options to cut costs and make the most out of their income. CNN Business reports that many Americans have unexpectedly looked toward Mexico City as a work-from-home haven because of its significantly cheaper cost of living. Nicknamed "digital nomads," American expats have flocked to iconic neighborhoods in Mexico City (CDMX) such as Roma and Condesa, which offer amenities and luxuries that would otherwise be unattainable for them in the United States. The U.S. State Department has calculated

that 1.6 million Americans are currently residing in Mexico City, with an additional unknown number currently staying on tourist visas, many of them from Los Angeles and New York City. The Mexico Daily Post explains Mexico City has become America's prime choice because of its massive cultural offering, its gastronomy, and its hyper-connectedness in a globalized world. As the work-from-home boom continues, young Americans are faced with the unprecedented opportunity of receiving American salaries while being able to live abroad. Consequently, an estimated 80 percent of the foreign demand for housing in Mexico City originates from the United States. In a study conducted by Trovit, a Spanish search

engine for real estate, analyzing the foreign demand for housing in several cities, Mexican cities are the only ones where a single country, the United States, contributes the majority of the demand, illustrating the large scale of American migration to Mexico City. While the influx of Americans to Mexico has boosted the country's economy, not everyone is content with the increased American presence. As has been the case in many American cities, the arrival of people with significantly higher incomes to relatively cheap neighborhoods quickly raises the costs of living, effectively pricing out the locals. The Los Angeles Times informs that the locals in Mexico City have begun to face a sharp price increase in everything

from housing to groceries since the start of the American migration to their neighborhoods. The Mexico Daily Post reports that rents in Mexico City have increased by 20 percent on average; largely due to the digital nomads' high purchasing power in Mexico. The extreme increase in prices has angered the locals who have gone as far as calling the American residents "a plague" according to ABC News. The Los Angeles Times also reports that several posters were put up during the month of July reading messages such as "New to the city? Working remotely? You're a f--king plague and the locals f--king hate you. Leave" showcasing the increasing anger among the Mexico City locals. Despite the local's objections, American mi-

gration to Mexico City and other places outside the U.S is not expected to slow down any time soon. The rising inflation in the United States as well as the perennial racial divides affecting the country have become push factors prompting young Americans to consider the possibility of moving abroad at higher levels than ever before according to a recent article published by Mic Magazine. The idea of living abroad has become more desirable as Americans begin to lose faith in the country's upward mobility and institutions, something exacerbated by the effects of the pandemic. Social media has also played a big role in increasing the popularity of Mexico City as a work-from-home destination. Several videos, promoting

the perks of relocating to Mexico City have garnered millions of views and interactions; appealing to the estimated more than 3 million Americans currently classified as "digital nomads," according to The Mexico Daily Post. The interactions with the videos have not all been positive, however, with a large amount of the discussion recognizing the harm done to local communities by digital nomads and advocating against the practice.

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JOIN THE TEAM!

GREEK VESSEL ATTACKS TURKISH CARGO SHIP IN THE AEGEAN SEA

James Murray
Staff Writer

On September 10, Greek forces attacked The Anatolian, a Turkish cargo ship, just 11 miles off the coast of Bozcaada, further straining relations between the two countries. According to the National Interest, the Greek ship assessed the Turkish cargo as “moving suspiciously,” which served as justification for their attack. No crew members were injured during the surprise assault, yet evidence presented in a viral video recorded by one of the crew members shows bullet holes in the ship’s cabin windows along with the crew’s terrified reactions. Turkish vessels were dispatched to the area, but before they could arrive to defend the cargo, the Greek ship had fled the scene. During a military demonstration following the attack, Turkish president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, made open threats toward Greece about

territorial disputes. Erdogan, along with many Turkish officials, has recently accused Greece of occupying previously demilitarized islands, according to Bloomberg. They accused Greece of militarizing the islands in close proximity to Turkish coasts, threatening their national security. On September 12, Greek officials wrote letters to the UN pleading with them to condemn the statements of the Turkish president, claiming that continued behavior involving such threats creates the potential for more violent situations. According to Reuters, Greece’s Foreign Minister, Nikos Dendias, acknowledged that the behavior of Turkey, a NATO member, risked a situation similar to the one currently unfolding with the war in Ukraine. Despite aggressive rhetoric from Erdogan, the Greek government has been diplomatic in response to the threats made toward their country. According to

Politico, Greece’s Prime Minister, Kyriakos Mitsotakis, found the Turkish president’s comments unacceptable and problematic, additionally fueling the tensions between the two countries. Mitsotakis concluded his thoughts on the threats by stating he is “always open to meeting Erdogan,” says Politico. Because of the recent Greek attack, UN officials are concerned about the potential for another open conflict in Europe in light of the already destabilizing conflict in Ukraine. Greco-Turkish relations have soured over the past few decades because of maritime border disputes, but tensions have been especially high in recent years due to accusations of airspace violations from both sides. According to The Washington Post, Turkish officials say that Greek forces have been targeting their fleets and jets during NATO exercises over the Mediterranean, while the Greeks say that they are ensuring tight security and defense for high concentration tourist spots close to Turkey’s coast. Much of the aggression between the two countries points toward ongoing disputes over claims in the Eastern Mediterranean, as well as much of the Aegean Sea, while Greece rejects accusations that there is ongoing militarization of the islands that border the Turkish coast. According to Al Jazeera, Hasan Gogus, former Turkish ambassador to Greece and Austria says that Turkey and Greece have several disputes regarding the Aegean Sea that go beyond the continental shelf dispute including demilitarization of the islands, width of territorial waters, and airspace length. Despite their proximity to Turkey, disputes over islands such as Kos and the base of the Aegean Sea are critical for Greece due to the large population of Greeks that live there, as well as the strategic military and geopolitical locations of the islands. Turkey claimed the waters and land within the Aegean Sea near the country’s western shoreline prior to World War One. However, on July 24, 1923, the Treaty of Lausanne was signed by Turkey, Britain, France,



Shipping containers on a cargo ship. Courtesy of Rinson Chory (Unsplash)

Greece, and many others. According to The Lausanne Project, the treaty outlined the modern-day borders of Turkey, and the straits between the Aegean and Black Sea were declared open to all trade. The treaty additionally set the rules of Greece’s claim to Kos, as well as the other islands that border western Turkey, including provisions that the islands must remain demilitarized. If the islands were to become militarized again at any point, the terms of the treaty would be broken.

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TIGRAYAN REBELS OPEN TO PEACE TALKS WITH ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT

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On September 11, Ethiopia’s Tigray rebels announced that they are willing to participate in peace talks headed by the African Union (AU), reports Al Jazeera. This announcement comes after fighting resumed between the Ethiopian Federal Government and the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) in August. BBC News reports that on the morning of August 24, shots were fired on the southern borders of Tigray, which caused fighting to start up again and ended the humanitarian truce that had been in place for months. The origin of the shots is unknown, though each side blames the other for firing the shots. As fighting has once again commenced, the TPLF forces have been settling and fighting near the Sudan border in the west, and a security expert informs CBS News “that there’s grow-

ing concern fighting on this new front could potentially draw Sudan into what is already a complicated regional conflict.” The authorities in northern Tigray have said that “We are ready to abide by an immediate and mutually agreed cessation of hostilities in order to create a conducive atmosphere,” reports Al Jazeera. The TPLF’s decision is a significant step toward peace, especially because they had previously opposed talks with the AU because it is spearheaded by Olusegun Obasanjo. Obasanjo is the former president of Nigeria and the TPLF suspected his bias and interests are in favor of and aligned with Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. Peace talks were supposed to happen months earlier in July, but they fell through. BBC News confirms that no international envoys said exactly why the talks broke down, but prior to the breakdown, the TPLF

publicly announced their outrage at Obasanjo offering to invite Eritrea to the discussion. Eritrea is an ally of the Ethiopian government and has been accused of aiding Ethiopia in this conflict. They also fought multiple wars with the TPLF when they were the ruling party of Ethiopia for 20 years, according to the Center for Strategic International Studies. Tigray is a state located in northern Ethiopia and shares a border with Eritrea in the north and Sudan in the west. The TPLF had been the dominant faction in Ethiopian politics and ruled the country for nearly 20 years. According to the Global Conflict Tracker, the TPLF’s regime included the oppressive marginalization of other ethnic groups and the emergence of a more centralized government. The military conflict started in 2020, when the Tigray state council held regional elections and refused to abide by

the rules of the federal government. Prime Minister Abiy, who came to power in 2018 in an election that ousted the TPLF-led coalition, opposed and condemned the Tigray regional elections, accused the TPLF of attacking federal military resources, and established a six-month state of emergency where troops were deployed to Mekelle, the capital of Tigray. Since then, civil war has wreaked havoc on the nation to the point where the U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken condemned the Ethiopian troops’ actions as ethnic cleansing of the Tigrayans. Human Rights Watch investigators found that even after Blinken’s condemnation human rights violations were still occurring. HRW also reports that “since January 2022, Amhara security forces have held hundreds, possibly thousands, of Tigrayans in overcrowded facilities, where detainees have

been killed, tortured, and denied adequate food and medical care.” Not only are Tigrayans being forced into battle, either by military conscription by the TPLF or civilian endurance, but there is also a major hunger crisis plaguing the region. The Guardian reports that 80 percent of the Tigrayan population is now food insecure. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the head of the World Health Organization (WHO) also confirms the crisis the Tigrayan people face when he said “there was nowhere on earth” where the health of millions of people is more at risk, according to The Guardian. The truce that was brokered before the outbreak of fighting in August was made to combat this widespread famine. It allowed the World Food Programme (WFP) to continue limited operations in Tigray. The WFP claimed it was aiding “tens of thousands

of people,” which falls below the approximate 4.8 million people in need. According to The University of Ghent, nearly 400 to 1,200 people could be dying per day due to starvation. As the fighting prolongs the dire humanitarian crisis, a third-party mediator like the AU may be the only hope for peace.

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QUEEN ELIZABETH’S 70-YEAR REIGN COMES TO AN END

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Queen Elizabeth II, the United Kingdom’s longest reigning monarch, passed away on September 8 and was succeeded by her son, King Charles III, who is now head of state in Britain and its 14 Commonwealth realms. Her reign was historic because she wasn’t in line for the throne when she was born, NBC writes. She would likely have never worn the crown if it hadn’t been for her uncle, King Edward VIII, who abdicated the throne after proposing to an American divorcee. Because he had no children of his own, Elizabeth’s father, King George VI ascended the throne in 1936, NBC continues. George passed away in 1952, and Elizabeth became queen at just 25 years old. Over the course of her 70-year reign, she came to be known and beloved for what Politico calls her own brand of “marshmallow diplomacy,” and her enduring stoicism. She has been revered as the “grandmother of the nation,” writes NBC; Politi-

co continues that her apolitical nature added to her relatability, especially in the United States, where she was popular amongst both Republicans and Democrats. She met with 13 of the last 14 presidents, and former president Barack Obama even called her one of his favorite people, according to Politico. Irish attitudes towards the Queen, however, are an excellent testament to the complexity of her legacy. As The Washington Post writes, reactions to the Queen’s passing were mixed. While politicians praised her “efforts to repair strained ties between Ireland and Britain,” most Irish people are indifferent, and in some cases, downright hostile towards the monarchy. Ireland gained its independence in 1922, but Northern Ireland remained part of the United Kingdom. The Washington Post reports that this led to tensions between Irish nationalists and unionists, who were loyal to the Crown, leading to decades of violence.



The crown jewels of Great Britain. Courtesy of Firebrace (Wikimedia Commons)

This is just one example of what The Washington Post calls the “collective trauma” of those who suffered due to British colonialism. Throughout Elizabeth’s reign, 17 nations left the Commonwealth Realm including Barbados just last year, writes the Council on Foreign Relations. Reuters continues that Jamaica will likely follow suit, and Antigua and Barbuda plans to hold a referendum on becoming a republic within the next 3 years.

Such republican movements are not unique to the Caribbean. Zimbabwe is a particularly interesting case study, as it is a demonstration of just how quickly attitudes towards the monarchy can change. Al Jazeera writes that when Elizabeth visited the nation in 1991, she was extraordinarily popular. By 2000, however, as internal tensions grew, the relationship between the two nations quickly soured. It is important to note,

however, that even as then President Robert Mugabe grew to be more critical of Britain, he never spoke against the Queen specifically. According to Al Jazeera, this is at least partially because she was seen as more of a symbolic figure. This idea may help to explain why there is speculation that other republican movements will strengthen now that Charles is King. Charles is significantly less popular than his mother, which may lead to an increased desire to separate from the Commonwealth. As the Council on Foreign Relation explains, Belize has said previously that it may consider leaving, and anti-monarch sentiments are slowly growing in Canada. The same holds true in Australia, as well as New Zealand, whose Prime Ministers have both expressed desires to leave the Commonwealth. While these sentiments were already present during Elizabeth’s reign, there is a significant chance that they will strengthen under Charles. British monarchs

have very little political power in these nations, but if they were to separate, the losses would still be significant. The global presence of the monarchy is a source of soft power for Britain. If public opinion of the monarchy continues to suffer, that power would diminish significantly, according to Council on Foreign Relations. It’s still unclear exactly how Queen Elizabeth II will be remembered. On the one hand, many consider her a hero, whose stoicism brought a sense of stability to a nation, and a world, that was constantly changing. On the other hand, many see her as a relic of an imperialist system, a symbol of the atrocities her country committed in its colonial era. Regardless of how exactly she is remembered, there is no question that Elizabeth’s reign was historic from the time it began to the time it ended.

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US ALLIES DOUBT IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL REVIVAL IS IMMINENT

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With the latest effort to revive the Iranian nuclear deal, U.S. allies have stated that they have “serious doubts” that Iran and the U.S. will strike a deal, reports Reuters. President Biden promised to restore the nuclear agreement during his 2020 presidential campaign, yet negotiations appear to be delayed ahead of the 2022 mid-term elections. Withdrawal from the deal in 2018, former President Donald Trump claimed that “this was a horrible one-sided deal that should have never, ever been made.” The nuclear deal, between Iran, the five permanent UN Security Council members and Germany, aimed to curb Tehran’s ability to produce nuclear weapons and material supply in exchange for the removal of strict economic sanctions imposed by the U.S., E.U., and UN on Iran. Since the abandon-



Meeting of the UN Security Council. Courtesy of United Nations Photo (Flickr)

concerns over Iran’s reliability in the agreement as uranium particles were found at three undeclared sites by the IAEA. As Iran has yet to clarify why traces of nuclear matter were found, the nation is demanding the IAEA to terminate its investigations into its nuclear activity. The European countries said in a joint statement that they doubt Iran’s commitment to a legitimate deal reports Reuters. For more than a month, Washington and Tehran have been ex-

changing comments regarding the revival of the deal. A State Department representative stated that the U.S. is ready to “quickly conclude a deal,” along with EU Foreign Policy Chief Josep Borell who stated on Twitter that “what can be negotiated has been negotiated, and it’s now in a final text.” Amidst indirect conversations and negotiations, the U.S. is offering to lift all sanctions imposed in exchange for the restoration of nuclear program constraints and commitments

under the 2015 pact. Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian discussed with Al Jazeera that the deal may be reached only if “all forms of sanctions stipulated in the nuclear agreement were lifted.” If an agreement were to be made, Iran’s economy would benefit from the expansion of oil exports and other materials, along with having access to foreign exchange reserves and the global financial system for trade. Supporters of the deal have urged Iran and the U.S. to come to an agreement because, without one, Tehran’s developments will become difficult to reverse. French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna explained how the world needs “to avoid a nuclear catastrophe,” and advises Iran to accept the deal alluding to the aggressive Ukraine-Russia and China-Taiwan conflicts, reports the Associated Press. Efforts to revive the nuclear pact have contin-

ued to reach a stalemate as the United Nations General Assembly’s 77th Session on September 20 commenced. President Ebrahim Raisi of Iran made his first appearance addressing the United Nations, reiterating that his government is serious about the deal while raising concerns over trust in the U.S commitment to the deal and seeking stronger assurance that the deal will not be abandoned. President Biden has said that although he can guarantee current U.S. compliance, he cannot promise future administration assurances, reports The Guardian. The deal has yet to come to a conclusion after months of debate between Iran and the United States and as satisfactory exchanges continue to fall short, the likelihood of a restored JCPOA looks bleak.

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POLITICAL VIOLENCE ON THE RISE AHEAD OF PIVOTAL BRAZILIAN ELECTIONS

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Tensions between supporters of the two Brazilian Presidential candidates became deadly on September 9, when a supporter of President Jair Bolsonaro murdered a backer of his challenger, former President Lula ahead of the October 2 election, reports The Guardian. The violence broke out in a remote Amazon town after arguments over support for the two candidates broke out. Rafael Silva de Oliveira, 24, killed Benedicto Cardoso dos Santos, 42, by stabbing him with a knife. Silva de Oliveira was taken to the police station, where he confessed and was charged. This murder has sent shock waves through Brazil. Bolsonaro's political opponents believe this murder and the number of other violent incidents which have taken place ahead of next month's vote to be a result of the rhetoric commonly used

by the far-right populist. On October 2, the Brazilian people will go to the polls for a crucial general election in South America's largest economy and most populous country to determine the next President, Vice President, and National Congress, says TIME. In what many observers are calling a test of Brazilian democracy, the presidential election will determine whether the right-wing incumbent President Jair Bolsonaro will be reelected or whether left-wing former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (Lula) will return to power continuing the recent trend of leftists taking power in Latin American countries such as Colombia, Argentina, and Mexico, among others. Recent polls show Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro narrowing his deficit to Lula, who still holds an eleven-point lead at 45 percent against Bolsonaro's polling at 34 percent, Reuters reports. In Brazil, if no presidential candidate receives a majority

of the votes, a run-off election will be held between the two frontrunners, almost certainly this year, Bolsonaro and Lula. Polling shows that in the event of a run-off election, Lula would be elected, polling at 53 percent while Bolsonaro polls at 39 percent in a run-off. Doubts about the validity of the upcoming election are mounting, largely thanks to President Bolsonaro's repeated attempts to discredit the country's electronic voting system, reports CNBC. There are fears that he may refuse to accept defeat, much like his political ally, former U.S. President Donald Trump. In July, President Bolsonaro invited dozens of diplomats to the presidential palace to present claims regarding the vulnerabilities of the country's electronic voting system, the Associated Press explains. Despite numerous attempts to verify and validate the election process, Brazil's electoral authority issued

yet another statement to debunk several falsehoods about the country's elections, including many that Bolsonaro mentions. President Bolsonaro has a long history of propagating concerns about the nation's electronic voting system, which has been used for over a quarter century, Al Jazeera investigates. The results from more than 150 million eligible voters appear a few hours after the last polls close, with no significant fraud ever detected. In 1993, then-lawmaker Bolsonaro complained that the paper voting system was rigged and had often spoken in favor of digitalization. However, once electronic voting was implemented, Bolsonaro became one of its fiercest critics. Bolsonaro introduced a constitutional amendment to mandate printed records of votes that would allow manual recounts in 2015. Although the measure passed Congress, the Supreme Court blocked it based on such a mea-

sure being too costly and in violation of the right to a secret ballot. While Bolsonaro won the presidency in a 2018 runoff, he repeatedly claimed fraud denied him an outright victory in the first round. President Bolsonaro has faced many scandals since coming to power in early 2019. Over the last four years, Bolsonaro repeatedly questioned the role of the Supreme Court and suggested without evidence that the electoral system is rigged, according to TIME. Bolsonaro faced widespread criticism for his environmental track record and response to the pandemic. He likened COVID-19 to the flu and approved devastating environmental policies concerning deforestation in the Amazon. Bolsonaro has also faced numerous calls for impeachment. A return to power for former President Lula, who governed Brazil from 2003 to 2010, would mark an extraordinary political comeback, says

The Washington Post. Lula, a former union leader, was an immensely popular president for two terms when his social programs helped lift millions out of poverty. Lula is not without controversy, however, as he was jailed in 2017 after a sweeping investigation that imprisoned dozens of the country's political and business elites. Lula was eventually released in November 2019, after his conviction was overturned, giving him a road back to the presidency. As tensions rise, many onlookers will watch with great intrigue to see if Brazil continues its democratic backslide.

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FIGHTING ALONG AZERBAIJAN-ARMENIA BORDER LEAVES OVER 100 DEAD

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On September 12, more than 100 people were killed when fighting erupted along the Armenia-Azerbaijan border surrounding the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region, reports The Washington Post. In a series of attacks by "heavy artillery, drones, and large-caliber weapons," Azerbaijan attacked Armenian troops along the border in response to what they claimed were military provocations from Armenia, according to the United Nations. The UN reports that eight civilians have been wounded since the start of the attacks. Armenia claims that Azerbaijan initiated the fighting unprovoked. Azerbaijan has claimed the opposite saying their attacks were in retaliation to Armenian aggression. The UN has reviewed numerous scenarios that could arise because of the conflict, one of which is the destabilization of the

Nagorno-Karabakh region. There has not been direct UN involvement but UN missions in both states are cooperating and are ready to communicate about humanitarian issues. According to NPR, Nancy Pelosi has publicly stated that Azerbaijan is to blame for the attacks, a statement which Azerbaijan deemed escalatory. NPR also reports that U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken asked the Azerbaijani president to cease "hostilities" against Armenia. Due to their status as former USSR states, Armenia and Azerbaijan are still closely associated with Russia, which has played a mediator role between Baku and Yerevan in the past. While Russia has close ties to both countries, it cannot militarily involve itself in the conflict due to its current war on Ukraine. Armenia is appealing for military aid while Russia is appealing to both states for calm, says NPR. Turkey may also get involved in the conflict

because of its close ties to Azerbaijan, reports Al Jazeera. With both Turkey and Russia attempting to play mediator roles, both countries may be dragged into further geopolitical entanglements that threaten to worsen conditions on the ground, especially for civilians caught in the crosshairs. Nagorno-Karabakh is a territory that is internationally recognized as a part of Azerbaijan but populated primarily by ethnic Armenians. This territory has been the site of two wars between Azerbaijan and Armenia since 1994, according to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. The dispute has resulted in the displacement of many families and civilians, specifically in the city of Shusha, within the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region. According to Time, the most serious fighting occurred during the collapse of the Soviet Union when Armenian forces displaced 600,000 Azeris between 1988 and



Nagorno-Karabakh region in Azerbaijan. Courtesy of Adam Jones (Flickr)

1994. An Azerbaijani invasion in 2020 recapturing Shusha followed. To stabilize its control over the Nagorno-Karabakh region, Azerbaijan is looking to establish Shusha as the "cultural capital" of the region regardless of the majority population of ethnic Armenians, says Time. Armenia and Azerbaijan have previously engaged in conflicts during 2016 and 2020, known as the Karabakh Wars, the latter killing 6,500 people in under 2 months, says Al Jazeera. During this sec-

ond war, Russia brokered a ceasefire deal which sent 2,000 peacekeepers to the Nagorno-Karabakh region. Due to Turkey's alliance with Azerbaijan, it subsequently closed its borders with Armenia. Since the 2020 war, the two sides have attempted to come to a settled resolution and even established a hotline for direct communication between the defense ministers of both Armenia and Azerbaijan, according to Carnegie. Also reported by Carnegie

is that in the buildup to the 2022 fighting, Azerbaijan had been stockpiling military equipment along the border, a tactic similar to those the Russians used against Ukraine. While both sides try to resolve the conflict, a dangerous geopolitical game in the Caucasus between foreign powers threatens to make matters worse, especially as an impending energy crisis makes the natural resources of the region even more valuable.

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COLOMBIA AND VENEZUELA REOPEN BORDERS FOR CARGO AS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS ARE RESTORED

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On September 2, the presidents of both Colombia and Venezuela announced that the closure of their countries' borders for cargo traffic will end on September 26, and flights between their capitals will also resume, reports the Associated Press. On August 29, the presidents of Colombia and Venezuela officially re-established diplomatic ties, three years after ties had been severed. The change came after Gustavo Petro, the country's first leftist president, was sworn in on August 7, 2022. A month into Petro's presidency, he began communicating with Venezuela's president, Nicolas Maduro, to re-establish diplomatic relations. For almost a decade, diplomatic relations between Colombia and Venezuela were stable until 2019, when former right-wing president of Colombia, Ivan Duque, refused

to recognize the reelection of the current president of Venezuela, Nicolas Maduro. Duque instead recognized the opposition leader, Juan Guaido, who had declared himself president of Venezuela after disputing the legitimacy of the elections, reports DW. Since 2019, both Colombia and Venezuela had ceased diplomatic relations, closed their borders to trade, and prohibited flights to each other's capital cities. On August 28, the new Colombian ambassador, Armando Benedetti, arrived in Caracas, Venezuela as part of the normalization process between the two nations, says Al Jazeera. Benedetti expressed that relations between the two nations should have never fallen apart. On August 11, both presidents announced their plans to restore diplomatic relations, which were broken in 2019 when members of the Venezuelan opposition intended to cross the Colombian border into Venezuela with

packages provided by USAID. The re-establishment of ties between the two countries fulfilled one of Petro's primary campaign promises and highlights the changes many hoped for under Petro's presidency after decades of conservative rule in Colombia. Gustavo Petro's electoral victory in Colombia follows South America's trend toward electing left-leaning governments, according to the Carnegie Center. The resumption of diplomatic ties is just the beginning of restored cooperation between the two nations. Further improvements in relations and cooperation agreements are expected between Bogota and Caracas as they reopen their embassies. The first step that the two nations agreed to take is the full reopening of their borders to reinvigor trade and alleviate economic struggle within the two nations, according to the Associated Press. After the reopening of their borders, it is ex-

pected that Colombia can resume aid efforts in Venezuela, and in return, Venezuela can provide Colombia with cheap oil. In 2019, Venezuela refused aid coming through the Colombian border when Ivan Duque's right-wing government

recognized Juan Guaido as president of Venezuela. Reopening trade between the two countries serves as a diplomatic victory for Petro as the move is expected to help both sides, the Carnegie Center says. Caracas and Bogota both

appointed ambassadors to each other's countries and announced their desire to restart military cooperation, according to France 24. On August 26, Maduro announced on Twitter the reopening of both nations' borders and the resumption of flights. The Venezuelan ambassador to Colombia, Felix Plasencia, who was appointed by President Nicolas Maduro, was welcomed in Bogota by the Colombian authorities and is waiting for the credential documents to accredit him as Venezuela's top diplomat in Colombia, Mision Verdad reports. The re-establishment of diplomatic relations highlights the common history and culture between the two nations, which share an active border thrumming with human interaction and commercial trade.



President of Colombia, Gustavo Petro. Courtesy of Departamento Nacional de Planeación (Wikimedia Commons)

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CONSERVATIVES WIN SWEDISH ELECTIONS FOR FIRST TIME IN EIGHT YEARS

Ashley Skladany
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On September 11, Sweden's right-wing party won the general election after a tight race against the center-left. As of September 15, conservatives have won 176 of 349 seats in parliament, reports The New York Times. Though the Swedish Social Democratic Party obtained the largest percentage of votes, they only were able to grab 173 seats in parliament, marking an end to Sweden's historic left-leaning control of the government. The right-wing Sweden Democrats had a remarkable showing of 21 percent this election, becoming the second largest party in Sweden. The results reflect citizens' increasing desires to move away from leftist policy making. Only four years ago, right-wing parties refused to cooperate with Sweden Democrats,

who were criticized for being anti-immigration and neo-Nazi ties, according to BBC News. This recent election is the first time such parties have said they are ready to govern with support from the far-right, DW reports. For many, the Sweden Democrats' rise to power is a concerning development. Previous Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson points out that an employee from the party had once sent out an invitation inviting people to celebrate the Nazi invasion of Poland, Time writes. The party claims to have expelled white nationalist extremists, reports the Associated Press, but continues to support a strict law and order platform. A more restrictive policy on immigration, specifically, has been a major political push factor by the Sweden Democrats, despite being in opposition to the country's prior pro-immi-

gration stance. Many believe their rhetoric toward asylum-seekers is worrying, DW explains, as the policies are bound to only further ostracize and instigate racism toward a marginalized population. Another key issue for voters is gang violence. Many citizens have felt a loss of security as a result of the country's uptick in shootings, which have left 48 people dead this year from firearms. Time clarifies that the country has jumped up the list of the most crime-infested European countries, with citizens particularly worried about gang-infested neighborhoods. Reuters reports that 41 percent of Swedish voters identify crime as their biggest concern for election issues. Sweden's Social Democrats have tried to tackle the issue by prioritizing fixing the welfare state in an attempt to stop people from joining gangs. However, opposition



Swedish parliament. Courtesy of Jonathan (Flickr)

parties have argued that it is not enough, blaming Andersson for focusing "too much" on immigration and "too little" on integration, Time reports. Energy prices also remained high on voter's agendas. As a result of the war in Ukraine, Andersson explains, people have seen an increase in their electricity bills. Sweden has also seen an uptick in the cost of living, with essential food items rising in price by nearly 25 percent. The Social Democrats are committed to hydro, solar, and wind power—a policy the

Sweden Democrats have heavily criticized, insulting the country's move to close nuclear power plants. The party argues that the soaring prices from importing electricity abroad would be counteracted by the power plants. Former Prime Minister Andersson conceded the election and announced that she would resign on September 15. The new expected Prime Minister is Ulf Kristersson, head of the center-right Moderate Party. Despite the Sweden Democrats' political gains, the existing bloc of right-wing parties

agreed to support a coalition government led by the center-right Moderate Party as opposed to one led by the Sweden Democrats, reports The New York Times. The Sweden Democrats are still expected to play an important role in the formation of the new conservative government. While the left reels from its loss, Kristersson will have to balance a government of moderate and center-right members and a far-right faction with a powerfully energized base.

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THE UNITED STATES

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The ongoing energy crisis that started in Europe has rapidly reverberated across the globe, and the United States is not immune from its influences. However, while Energy Wire reports on Americans' deep-rooted concerns over gas prices and the domestic political impact it may have, U.S. oil production means the country is more involved in the crisis than some assume.

The U.S. produces the most oil and gas in the world, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) reports, making the country a key partner as Europe struggles through the crisis. After cutting off Russian oil due to the war in Ukraine, the European Union started looking for ways to diversify their imports of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and crude oil. To achieve

this end, U.S. President Joe Biden and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen formed the U.S.-EU Energy Security Task Force.

The task force has already started working. Bloomberg emphasizes that U.S. crude oil exports are the highest they have ever been, hitting 5 million barrels a day in August. For perspective, five years ago the U.S. only exported 1 million barrels a day. While exports are only expected to increase by 2023, U.S. refining capacity remains at the same level. The Wall Street Journal indicates this has led to a 34 percent increase in crude oil prices, 32 percent increase in gas prices, and a 117 percent increase in natural gas prices since December 2021.

America is attempting to solve Europe's energy crisis; the cost of which runs deeper than increasing prices. NBC reports that over 525,000 families

in California were warned by their utility companies of rolling blackouts if energy is not better conserved. While most Americans have yet to feel the worst effects of it, the United States is running



U.S. President Joe Biden with Ursula von der Leyen, Emmanuel Macron, and Justin Trudeau. Courtesy of Taylor Atkinson (Flickr)

out of energy. The heat in California generated the most concern in August, but, just as in Europe, the need for more energy in the coming winter is the source of future concerns.

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development encourages countries to shift to

renewable energy and take measures to mitigate the crisis. The U.S. has already started this shift, with Energy Wire explaining that U.S. experts believe the increase in oil production will not

have an impact on renewable energy progress. Yet, Bloomberg indicates it may not be that simple. In addition to increasing its own production, the U.S. has encouraged the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to increase overall oil production.

Actions by the U.S. and OPEC have disrupted the African oil market, which originally provided a larger portion of European and Asian gas. Bloomberg continues that European refiners view oil coming from OPEC as more stable than the oil imported from West Africa, which has recently suffered from political disruptions. Once this crisis ends, the security Europe gets from OPEC gas is unlikely to wane—indicating a long-term danger to the African oil market.

Despite all of the actions being taken by the U.S., Axios concludes that the U.S. alone cannot fix the European energy crisis. The U.S. is producing the maximum amount of LNG it can, but the European Union is not currently equipped to accept it. The next three months are going to be difficult between an increased energy demand and the lack of available energy infrastructure. CSIS em-

phasized that the plans for the EU to keep up energy supplies are ambitious, and it is unclear how well the United States is equipped to help with the country's own dwindling supplies.

While the U.S. is presenting itself as able to aid the EU, the energy crisis is tightening in America too. As the U.S. and Europe try to handle this crisis in the short term, governments must remain cognizant of the long-term effects.

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AFRICA

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Managing Editor

The Russian invasion of Ukraine sent economic shockwaves across the world, affecting the production of economic staples such as wheat and nickel and putting significant strain on the global supply chain, reports CNBC. The energy market is one of the most significantly affected industries, and the strain impacts far more than the West. Africa is beginning to feel the brunt of this crisis.

According to the International Energy Association (IEA), Russia is one of the world's top three crude oil producers and the second largest producer of natural gas, accounting for 14 percent of the global oil supply and nearly 40 percent of EU natural gas in 2021. Disruptions to this supply, combined with rising inflation across the world and exacerbated by previous pandemic-related shocks, have led to global shortages of energy that Foreign Policy describes as "wreaking havoc around the world."

This situation only hinders efforts to increase equitable energy access throughout Africa, which has historically been one of the region's most significant barriers to development. According to The Economist, more than half of the 600 million individuals living in sub-Saharan Africa had limited to no access to electricity in 2019. The continent, which makes up nearly a fifth of the global population, accounted for just four percent of the world's energy use. Brookings reports that the number of Africans with access to electricity declined in 2020 for the first time in six years. Increases in global poverty and the rising energy crisis have only made energy services in sub-Saharan Africa, already some of the most expensive in the world, even more unaffordable.

South Africa has started experiencing elongated blackouts, according to The Washington Post. Though the country has utilized rolling blackouts as a means of energy preservation since 2008, blackouts have become longer and



Street in Nigeria amid rolling blackouts. Courtesy of Andrew (Flickr)

more frequent than ever before. Gas prices have risen 36 percent across the country in 2022, causing the impact to be disproportionately felt by the working poor, many of whom cannot afford backup power supplies.

As the impact is being felt across the EU, however, Bloomberg reports that more and more European countries are importing natural gas from resource-rich sectors of sub-Saharan Africa. Though Nigeria alone contains three percent of the world's proven gas reserves, almost none

of the product goes back to the country's residents — and similar phenomena exist across much of the region. This is largely due to a lack of investments that have facilities running below capacity and vulnerable to pipeline theft and vandalism.

Though this mismanagement can partially be blamed on individual governments, Bloomberg adds that many African leaders have called on European leaders to continue investing resources in natural gas and oil facilities, especially considering the current state of global en-

ergy supplies. This comes after Reuters reports that some European officials have called for the end of World Bank energy investments into fossil fuel industries on the helm of climate change.

Foreign Policy reports that several African leaders have called out European hypocrisy in the EU's attempts to balance climate change reduction with navigating the energy crisis. African countries are only responsible for three percent of global carbon emissions, yet they face some of the harshest effects of climate change

and regularly live under energy shortages. Many of the countries most responsible for carbon emissions, on the other hand, do not take on the brunt of work to limit their effects. As Bloomberg reports, many European countries are now relying on energy from the very reserves that they seek to phase out.

A report released by the IEA reasons, however, that the crisis creates the perfect opportunity to shift energy investments in Africa to clean alternatives. Africa is home to 60 percent of the most effective solar energy locations worldwide, but it houses only one percent of solar resources. Expansion of these tools could lead to more cost-effective and clean energy that could be used across the continent, helping to mitigate the crisis while moving the world in a new energy direction.

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EUROPE

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Germany, along with the greater European Union, has promised to boost its lending to major energy firms as rising energy prices threaten to extend their crushing grip on the industry. According to Reuters, the European Commission has targeted specific paths to reduce electricity consumption along with placing a revenue cap on non-gas fueled plants.

Soaring energy prices have affected multiple sectors across the European continent and have introduced grave new economic risks to businesses. The New York Times reports that Arc International, a glass factory and major employer operating in northern France, has partially furloughed a third of its employees after Russian gas was cut off from Europe.

The head of Arc International emphasized that the energy crisis has been debilitating for several industries, making production difficult. The New York Times reports that, although the cutbacks are regarded as temporary, there remains a risk that these losses of labor will potentially result in a dire economic recession.

The Economist states that this crisis affects both consumers and businesses, as the risks of an economic recession and unstable energy markets loom. Already, 14 percent of families in Britain are late on their energy bills, and Arce- lorMittal, a European steel producer, is at risk of closing several plants.

Despite its severity, this crisis was predictable based on increasing tensions between Russia and the European Union. As PBS reports, the primary cause of this developing

energy crisis is that Russia has cut off the cheap supply of natural gas that European factories, electric plants or grids, and homes have relied on to supply energy and heat houses.

Analysts from Rystad Energy in Europe tell PBS that the continent could face a serious electricity shortage as soon as late September. PBS explains the Europe's power grid will be challenged this winter, which could lead to rolling outages and blackouts across the continent. Carlos Torres-Diaz, the head of Rystad Energy, states that the coming winter may be the most challenging Europe has seen in decades, according to PBS. The energy crunch means that current supplies may not be enough to sustain Europe's historical level of electricity use.

To deal with the energy crisis, European ministers are discussing several op-



Heating with a home thermostat will be extremely expensive in Europe this winter. Courtesy of Erik Mclean (Unsplash)

tions, as POLITICO reports, including proposals for natural gas price caps, mandatory cuts to electricity use during peak hours, and a myriad of measures to support beleaguered homeowners and businesses. However, the potential losses in labor and energy anxieties are not the only potential looming economic crisis.

According to Reuters, if the lack of energy security on the continent for the coming winter is exacerbated by a liquidity crunch in the energy mar-

ket, prices will increase beyond the current peaks. This fear is validated by European governments delaying offers of financial support to the power providers that are the only thing preventing a full-blown energy crisis. A senior trading source told Reuters, "We have a dysfunctional futures market, which then creates problems for the physical market and leads to higher prices and higher inflation." To counteract this, PBS reports that Europe has tried to line up all its

alternative gas supplies in liquefied natural gas by ship from the United States or other European sources, such as Norway and Azerbaijan, which are more expensive.

In the end, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen suggested that, in response to the crisis, electricity markets should be adjusted to avoid dramatic swings in gas prices, says POLITICO. However, it is unclear whether these measures will be sufficient to ward off the worst of the crisis. One thing is certain: without better long-term solutions, the worst of the energy crisis is still yet to come

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ASIA

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Layout Editor

The effects of the current global energy crisis are touching the whole world, but they are the most apparent in the Asia-Pacific region. Lines for fuel stations hit two miles long in Sri Lanka this summer and the government approved private schools to close for at least two months. Pakistan has reduced its work week from six days to five, yet hour long power outages plague the country daily. Malls and restaurants in their largest city, Karachi, have been asked to close early as the country's energy supply is almost 5,000 megawatts below demand, says CNN.

In Tokyo, liquefied natural gas (LNG) costs 10 times more than the typical summer rate. Spot prices for LNG supplied to Japan, South Korea, and China this summer reached \$40 per one million British thermal units (BTU), and even hit \$50 per one million BTUs at the end of July. Spot prices are usually around

\$5 per one million BTUs in the summer and get higher during the winter months, according to Nikkei Asia. Pakistan's imports of LNG from January to July were down 18 percent from last year, and the country had to back out of bidding for 10 cargoes of natural gas that would have arrived between July and September due to lack of funding. LNG imports have dipped in India and Bangladesh, alongside other countries. As a result of the energy crisis, the output of Pakistan's textile industry crashed by more than half in July, losing them at least \$1 billion in revenue. With winter approaching, richer Asian countries, such as China, Japan, and South Korea, are buying LNG in bulk. Since April, the expected growth for Asian economies has dropped from 5.4 percent to 4.6 percent.

COVID-19, climate issues, and supply and demand problems have driven gas and oil prices up since 2020, Foreign Policy says. Now, with sanctions placed on Russia due to its

ongoing war on Ukraine, a large part of the world's oil supply is cut off and supply and demand has gotten even worse. According to CNN, Russia is the world's third largest oil producer and second largest crude oil exporter. Countries know that they can no longer rely on crude oil as heavily and are scrambling to find alternative energy sources.

Many Asian countries are now turning to nuclear energy. Bloomberg reports that Japan and South Korea are removing anti-nuclear policies, while China and India are looking to build more reactors. This marks a dramatic shift for the nuclear industry, as projects around the world that were abandoned after the Fukushima disaster in 2011 are being revisited, Reuters explains. Nuclear technology has progressed greatly since then. Small modular reactors are much faster and cheaper to build than the nuclear plants originally planned in 2011. China currently has 24 gigawatts of nuclear power and another



Steam coming out of a nuclear power plant. Courtesy of Nicholas Hippert (Unsplash)

34 gigawatts planned, Bloomberg states. Despite the recent warming to nuclear energy, not every country is jumping on board. Building a larger dependence on nuclear energy is years or even decades away. So, while it can help avoid future crises, it is not a solution to the crisis right now. Seventy percent of India's energy already comes from coal, but the country is now increasing coal consumption in response to the energy crisis. Coal India, its largest coal company, is importing coal for the first time since 2015, according to CNN. Coal is a much cheaper option than LNG or renewables, which is why India may

not be the only country to turn to it, regardless of its climate effects. If India's decision to rely more heavily on coal is a temporary, the effects could be easily mitigated. However, if it starts a trend, it could cause huge problems for the environment. Scientists say a drastic reduction in coal mining is necessary to limit the effects of global warming. If the global average temperature surpasses a 1.5 to 2 degrees Fahrenheit increase, even temporarily, damage to the planet could be irreversible, CNN says. Foreign Policy asserts there is no end to the energy crisis while Russia is at war. Increased rolling

blackouts and electric instability is going to hit low-income countries, who will suffer even more this upcoming winter. The energy crisis will also increasingly affect agriculture and food. Countries will continue to pay exorbitant prices for energy and be forced to explore alternative energy sources until this is resolved.

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LIZ TRUSS: THE UK'S NEXT DISASTER

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International News Editor

To the energy, climate change, migrant, and debt crises currently facing UK citizens, they can add their newest prime minister, Liz Truss to the list of disasters they must face. On September 5, the governing Conservative party chose Liz Truss to be their new party leader and, by extension, the prime minister, according to NPR. While she may be a welcome change from her scandal-ridden predecessor, Boris Johnson, Truss still champions the same policies that have hurt the UK and its relations with other countries over the past decade of conservative rule.

All Truss needed to become prime minister was around 81,000 votes out of the nearly 142,000 Conservative Party members eligible to vote in the leadership elections, according to NPR. She beat her opponent Rishi Sunak by one of the lowest mar-

gins for a party leader and comes into office with essentially no democratic mandate. A YouGov poll found that only a pitiful 12 percent of Britons believe that Truss will do a great job. The silver lining for Truss, however, is that she has a laughably low standard to meet. All she needs to do is perform slightly better than her predecessor and the media will praise her as a courageous and decisive leader, despite her record showing nothing of the sort.

Truss began her career as a Liberal Democrat who opposed Thatcher's policies and was a supporter of remaining in the EU, though she now portrays herself as a champion of Brexit, according to BBC News. An opportunist in every sense of the word, she has spent her career climbing the ladder and following the political winds, a strategy that has admittedly helped her so far. The fact remains that while Truss's strong Thatcherite ten-

dencies may be enough to win over the core Tory base, voters in many key districts in the industrial North, who were devastated by her policies and voted Conservative only after Johnson demonstrated more support for Churchill's policies than Thatcher's, may not find her appealing, according to The Associated Press.

Many hoped Truss would be an improvement from Johnson, but her first week alone shows that her policies and ideology are woefully ineffectual in the face of a pivotal moment for the UK. According to The Guardian, immediately after her campaign, during which she performed her dollar-store Margaret Thatcher routine, she announced a £150 billion plan to tackle the energy crisis that would involve significant government assistance, or "handouts" as she pejoratively described them on the campaign trail. While significant government

assistance is needed, her plans are half baked at best, falling dramatically short of what many small businesses require in order to survive the surge in energy prices that will only worsen as winter arrives, according to BBC News. Her plan involves no new taxes, a core campaign promise, and relies heavily on borrowing. This has led major institutions like Deutsche Bank to warn of an impending debt crisis in the UK, reports Reuters. The Labor party leader, Keir Starmer, exposed how fragile her proposal is because of her refusal to implement a windfall tax. Without a windfall tax, which would raise taxes on the energy sector that has profited heavily off the energy crisis, Truss is essentially consigning the country to borrowing more than it can handle, according to The Guardian.

On foreign policy, Truss is one of the most hawkish Conservative leaders in decades, according

to VOA News. She has pledged to increase defense spending from two to three percent of GDP, or around £180 billion, and has taken many hard-line stances against Russia and China. She has pledged to continue sending arms to Ukraine to keep the war going and, similar to Johnson, opposes making peace with Russia, even at the expense of Ukrainian lives, according to Responsible Statecraft. Truss also wants to scrap the Northern Ireland protocol negotiated by her predecessor as a part of the Brexit deal that prevents a hard border in Northern Ireland, which could reignite violence along the border with the Republic of Ireland, reports Reuters. When it comes to refugees, Sky News explains that Truss supports the absurd policy of sending migrants and asylum seekers to Rwanda to deter people from crossing the English Channel. This cruel and expensive policy

was shut down by the European Court of Human Rights earlier this year because it was deemed too inhumane, according to Foreign Policy. With all of the backward policies of Boris Johnson and none of the charm, Truss will likely be just one more disaster in a long list plaguing the UK. The country may be looking for its fifth prime minister since 2016 when she and her embarrassment of a party inevitably fail.

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OHCHR REPORT ON UYGHURS: TOO LITTLE, FAR TOO LATE

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On August 31, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) issued a report assessing human rights violations in China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. China had been forcibly moving much of its Uyghur population to concentration camps, which it calls "re-education camps," to combat "terrorism" in the ethnic Muslim minority community. According to the UN, the commission's report stated that the deprivation of fundamental human rights, arbitrary detention, and credible reports of torture, ill-treatment, forced medical treatment, and sexual violence may amount to crimes against humanity. While the report may seem like a positive step to holding China accountable for its atrocities, it comes five years too late.

Information regarding the camps in Xinjiang has been public knowledge since 2017. In 2017, on the Chinese internet, Xinjiang officials announced the forcible transportation of Uyghurs, Kazakhs, and other ethnic minorities to "re-education camps." In 2018, satellite footage of the camps was seen on some Chinese websites and became public knowledge internationally. Users could view the images through the Wayback Machine or the internet, before they were deleted, reports the Atlantic. In 2018, Reuters additionally published satellite footage of 80 different camps, 39 of which were clearly visible and expanding rapidly. Reuters explained that the camps were nearly identical in structure, evidence that serious planning went into the rapid creation of these camps. Civilians in the region also reported that one could be sent to a camp for practicing

their religion. The whole world, including the UN, has known since 2018 that there was substantial evidence that Uyghurs were being arbitrarily detained and forcibly moved, both of which meet the legal criteria to be considered crimes against humanity. The real question, then, is why the UN waited so long to investigate and report on these camps. The report was published on the last day of Michelle Bachelet's four-year term as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, according to UN News. Bachelet, a former president of Chile, could have acted at any time in the past four years, but only decided to investigate the issue this year with a visit to China in May, after the United States officially called the atrocities in Xinjiang 'genocide,' The Washington Post reports. The United Nations is structured in such a way that it is almost complete-

ly beholden to the will of states, especially superpowers. China, a superpower with a convenient permanent membership to the UN Security Council, has undue influence on the UN's actions. China's power means the human rights council's votes can be easily swayed by China's interests and alliances with less powerful states, CNN reports. The UN also cannot investigate unless they are given consent from China to do so. The UN's structure does not allow it to protect human rights; everything – including who is considered human – is determined by the states themselves. Thus, fearful of backlash from one of the world's most powerful countries and its allies, the UN remained silent for five years. Even now, though the report was published, it will reportedly not be addressed at the Human Rights Council's session this Septem-

ber, according to CNN. The UN's lack of action in this human rights catastrophe is not a new story. Though it has a Human Rights Council, the UN has a bad track record in genocide prevention. Its responses to the Rwandan Genocide, the Bosnian Genocide, and the atrocities in Darfur were all massive failures. Human Rights Watch recounts the UN's most egregious failure in Rwanda, wherein civilians were left behind by peacekeepers, while high government officials or diplomats of other countries were taken to safety. Human Rights Watch also recounts Srebrenica, declared a safe zone by the UN during the conflict in Bosnia, and described how the safe zone fell due to peacekeepers' refusal to help and then destroying evidence of severe human rights abuses after the fall. BBC News spoke with UN Official Aicha el Basri in 2014, who explained

that UN Peacekeepers responding to Darfur watched as civilians died in front of them and did not intervene. Basri also claimed that Ban Ki-Moon failed to mention in official reports that the government had bombed villages 106 times. The UN, because of its careless attitude towards atrocities, cannot be trusted to stop the genocide in Xinjiang. It is beholden to a genocidal state, and its actions are uncertain and weak. The countless who were brutally murdered can never be brought back, and the damage done to communities destroyed by the Chinese government can never be undone.

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LIZ TRUSS: DARING AND DETERMINED

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Liz Truss, the UK's new Prime Minister, faces many economic problems and political divides. The conservative PM will have to confront Boris Johnson's legacy, high inflation, a fraying National Health Service (NHS), and an energy crisis threatening households and businesses. More than 60 million Britons depend on Liz Truss's ability to guide the country through these challenges. She has an enormous task ahead, especially with her party's image in peril, and only two years to turn the tide.

Britain's current economic predicament is exacerbated by the fact that inflation comes from two sources – tripling energy prices undermining the standard of living and wage increases requiring companies to raise their prices on products and services. Inflation is currently at 9.9 percent, and some economists predict it may reach 15 percent in the next 12 months, the

highest since 1980, reports Channel 4 News. Additionally, she will be tied up by a wave of public service strikes. The NHS faces labor shortages, leaving almost 1,000 patients waiting over 12 hours in accident-and-emergency departments, reports The Economist.

Another challenge Truss must face is the Russian energy crisis. According to BBC News, Truss will cap household energy bills at £2,500 per year, which the government claims will "spark economic growth and curb inflation by as much as 5%." Under a new "energy supply task force," the UK will negotiate new contracts and reduce its dependency on Russian natural gas by allowing fracking where locally supported and building more nuclear power plants, reports The Washington Post. Additional fracking is not allowed under Britain's legally binding commitment to achieve net-zero carbon emissions, which Truss supports, but the current energy situation requires

the government to pivot to other energy sources to get Britons through the winter months.

Truss's practical approach to solving a crisis must follow free-market principles and monetary policy. The PM is against the Bank of England's decision to raise interest rates by half a point. She claims the Bank has been producing fairytale forecasts and will review its independent mandate to ensure it is on par with other central banks and can effectively control inflation, reports CNBC. The Bank's leadership, like others, believed inflation would be transitory. However, the PM is expected to employ a massive bailout for homes and businesses by gradually cutting taxes from 25 percent to 19 percent. Although the PM cannot save the UK under these circumstances, her pragmatism could keep the island afloat until the storm passes.

Although members of Truss's cabinet, including Chancellor of the Exchequer Kwasi Kwarteng, believe that radically shrink-

ing the government will boost economic growth, they also understand that leaving the current situation to correct itself would put the economy in freefall. According to The Independent, the Chancellor's upcoming mini-budget will cut taxes by £30 billion, easing the cost of living. Under Truss's and Kwarteng's leadership, the UK is expected to incorporate new low-regulation investment zones, remove levies on fuel bills, and backtrack business regulations to increase investment.

Liz Truss's experience leading a political party is limited, and her list of promises will be difficult

to keep, but underestimating her is a mistake that cost Rishi Sunak and his supporters the race for party leadership. During the campaign, Truss came out on top as the more convincing candidate, defending unpopular economic policies because of their potential for increasing productivity in the long term. Truss has been compared to former PM Margaret Thatcher, known for her pro-business policies and undying desire to unify the country—a spirit that the UK needs now. In her previous position as Foreign Secretary, she secured the release of two British nationals detained in Iran,

something her two predecessors failed to accomplish. Despite the precarious energy situation, Truss also maintains that the UK will not accept Russia's attempt to dismantle democracy in Ukraine.

Truss's commitment to Britons is unflinching and undeniable. The news of Queen Elizabeth II's passing put a temporary stop to the UK's underlying economic and political issues. Only two days after meeting the Queen, Downing Street entered a mourning period putting all government activity on hold. However, the next few weeks will be critical in releasing policy before the party conference in October. If Truss focuses on slashing taxes and increasing aid, she will sink England's economic credibility, but if she mobilizes all her ministers, the Bank, and unlocks capital, she will be remembered as a radical leader who delivered for her citizens.



UK Prime Minister, Liz Truss. Courtesy of Just Click's With a Camera (Flickr)

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THE QUEEN'S DEATH DOES NOT ERASE LEGACIES OF COLONIALISM

Esther Edohwokeni
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The United Kingdom and the rest of the world watched in shock as Operation London Bridge was enacted as Queen Elizabeth II's 70-year reign came to an end on September 8, 2022. Code-named "London Bridge is Down," the operation included the announcement of her death, the period dedicated to the Commonwealth's mourning, and funeral details. The Queen passed away peacefully in her home at Balmoral Castle in Scotland at the age of 96, making her Britain's longest reigning monarch, says The Washington Post.

According to The New York Post, tributes poured in from leaders around the world including former British colonies. President Muhammadu Buhari of Nigeria, a country that gained independence from Britain in 1960, expressed his sadness and acknowledged the Queen's role in

the development of modern Nigeria and dedication to making the world a better place. Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro announced a three-day national mourning period and noted that she was an inspirational figure not just for Britons, but for the whole world. South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol tweeted that the Queen left behind a legacy of good deeds that stemmed from her "belief in the cause of human freedom."

However, these tributes in the Queen's "good name" erase the legacy of British Colonialism. Her passing forces the world to consider what she stood for as a monarch of the Commonwealth realms. World leaders publicly acknowledging only the positives runs contrary to how others, especially people in African nations, view the Queen's legacy and is an insult to former British colonies who fought for their right to rule themselves. Although Queen Eliz-

abeth's death received a substantial number of reactions online, not all of them were positive, reports CNN. In places like Lagos, Nigeria, some young Africans are remembering the colonialist legacy the Queen left behind, which they came to understand through stories shared by their elders. Wanjiru Chelsea, named after her grandmother, tweeted how her grandmother used to recount how they were beaten and their husbands were taken from them, leaving them to look after their kids alone.

In places like Kenya, which was under British colonial rule until 1895 and received independence in 1964, the atrocities that occurred under British rule are at the forefront of people's memories. The Mau Mau Uprising in 1952, the year Queen Elizabeth's reign began, is one such memory. According to The Washington Post, the uprising began with Kenyans demanding inde-

pendence but ended with more than 150,000 Kenyans being held without trial in detention camps, where they were subjected to countless atrocities, such as castration and sexual assault. Here too, the legacy of British colonialism is shared by elders. Like Wanjiru Chelsea, another young girl heard her grandmother's stories and shared her grandmother's movement pass, a colonial document from the Mau Mau uprising meant to restrict Kenyans from free travel in British-ruled territories.

Some argue that the Queen took steps in the right direction in some countries by granting independence and approving reparations, but ignoring their fights for independence and the inadequacy of reparations ignores their suffering. According to CNN, in 2011, for example, a group of elderly Kenyans who were tortured under British colonial rule asked for compensation at London's

High Court, but were refused. Denying all responsibility, Britain's Foreign and Commonwealth Office asked the judge to dismiss the case because other nations formerly under Britain's Colonial rule would also ask for compensation. It was not until 2013 when Britain admitted fault, giving 5,000 Kenyans a compensation of 300,000 shillings – the equivalent of about \$3,500 per victim. Mau Mau veterans claim this amount was not enough for the suffering they endured when the rebellion was suppressed.

Arguments that the Queen was merely a figurehead are ignorant. As a symbol of the British monarchy, she cannot be separated from its colonization of Africa and other former British colonies. Although she played a role in decolonization, the colonial wounds also inflicted during her reign are still fresh. The people of these nations, who have been forced to adapt

to the dominant paradigm, live with significant trauma having lived in a world where their culture was deemed inferior.

Sipho Hlongwane, a writer based in Johannesburg, South Africa, explained in an article for The Washington Post that although colonialism might be history in the West, it is still the present for millions. South Africa's history is littered with examples of British influence, including Apartheid practices borrowed from the British, racial disparities in poverty thanks to colonial-era discrimination, and British mining companies still having access to South African mines and raw materials. The Queen's death is historic not only because of her long 70-year reign, but because of the inextricable ties her reign had with colonialism and imperialism.

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A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION WITH DR. CORNEL WEST

Sophia Alicea
Staff Writer

On September 15, Hackensack Meridian Health Theater in Red-bank, New Jersey, hosted American debater, philosopher, and author Dr. Cornel West in their Community Conversations series.

The forum examined the American philosopher's outlook on justice, race, and the dangers of populism in a growing society. The evening commenced with a gospel performance, the first indication that the theological basis of West's leading theory of "Racial Conditionedness" would build from gospel into a commentary on race and populism.

Dr. Cornel West is an accomplished author, most known for his New York Times best-selling works Democracy Matters and Race Matters. He is also an avid lover of jazz, literature, political theory, and philosophy. West's affinity for knowledge becomes evident when examining his

history. He is the former Professor of Public Philosophy at his alma mater, Harvard University, where he graduated Magna Cum Laude. Furthermore, he worked as a professor at Princeton University, where he received his master's degree and his

philosophical concepts rooted in theology. The theological and philosophical claims made by West when introducing his opinions on race, justice, and institutions were that the materialistic implications of race as a historical concept are flawed. Race

the focus of the conversation; the observed concept of grace by Black people is not a result of skin color, but of spiritual and moral greatness.

West's perception of justice is derived from the idea of what it means to be human and embrace human goodness. He repeatedly asked the audience to think, when reflecting on racism, what kind of human should one be? He stated that, of his morals

regarding the U.S. justice system, he would rather be in court than a coward. How one goes about overcoming skepticism to reconnect with the truth is what it means to regain justice in a divided society.

West's main argument regarding the relationship between graciousness and race is the historical graciousness of African American people in the United States. West reminded the audience of the graphic and brutal sufferings African American people endured, leaving the air of the hall still. Capitalizing on the silence of the audience, West honed in on the beauty of African American people putting themselves into the realms of academia, fine arts, and government to fight for a world that accepts all.

Dr. Cornel West's work is reflected in his talk, entertaining the audience with his charisma and genuine concerns regarding the hyperpolarization of races in the United States. One of the greatest takeaways of Dr. Cor-

nel West's speech was when he addressed a 13-year-old boy in the audience from New Jersey. The young boy asked Dr. West, "how can I be kind to people who hate my color?" Without hesitation, Dr. West reminded the boy that justice is what love looks like applied in public and, if one has love in their hearts, then justice will follow through.

Overall, Dr. West's application of his theory of "racial conditionedness" remains pertinent in the realms of community involvement, theology, and philosophy, imprinting onto those who will listen that prejudice exists where hate is allowed. If a divided country is to come together again, it must be done in the name of intersectionality and removed from bias, regardless of skin color, gender, nationality, or sexual orientation. West's stance was firmly rooted in Baptist philosophy. His message had tangible impact on the audience.

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Dr. Cornel West speaking at an event at Arizona State University. Courtesy of Gage Skidmore (Flickr)

doctorate in philosophy. West opened his speech with the claim that justice is what love looks like applied in public. This set the tone for his trademarked

is an abstract concept: the 'flesh' has nothing to do with graciousness. This is where the historical and cultural conception of black people became

man goodness. He repeatedly asked the audience to think, when reflecting on racism, what kind of human should one be? He stated that, of his morals

FROM FRAGILITY TO RESILIENCE VIRTUAL DIALOGUE

Anderson Sydney Dyer
and Daniella Skeoch
Staff Writers

In partnership with Food for the Hungry, Foreign Policy and Dr. Mayesha Alam hosted a discussion titled "From Fragility to Resilience." The virtual symposium focused on promoting resilience measures aimed at helping economically unstable communities reduce the risks posed by crises.

COVID-19 and the Russian invasion of Ukraine proved to create immense stress on already struggling countries. Alam speaks about how the pandemic created huge problems in global economies, causing the food and energy crises to intensify. Climate change and poverty are two of the many struggles that have been exacerbated by the pandemic and the war

in Ukraine. The world's economically weakest countries are disproportionately affected by these circumstances. In this conversation, Alam speaks with Mark Viso, the president of Food for the Hungry, who has worked in international relief and development for 30 years. Having this conversation allows for the rethinking of international cooperation in the most in need places of the world.

Beginning the conversation, Viso speaks about how Food for the Hungry is beginning to see the emergence of four main characteristics of resilience: paradigm shifts, systems not symptoms, focusing on broken relationships, and adaptation. The paradigm shift is the change in resilience from intervening and fixing to being a lens that is used to better understand how

we, as a world, react to crises and development. "Systems not symptoms" refers to moving from simply fixing issues in society like poverty, to fixing the systemic and structural causes underlying these societal issues to make a community more independently resilient. Broken relationships come in the form of patterns of exclusion and marginalization that are some of the main contributors to the risks in fragility and resilience. The more access and equal distribution of power that is reached, the better and stronger social structures become. The ability to adapt and persevere allow these communities to stay strong when difficult times and situations arise.

Viso continued to discuss the interconnections between the world, emphasizing how it is

beneficial for everyone to be involved and want these states and communities to be resilient. He says though this would be ideal, it is unfortunately not the case, thus the responsibility falls onto the countries that are struggling. Although this can be difficult, when the country itself is resilient and autonomous, it provides a strong sense of accomplishment, pride, dignity, and purpose. Help from other countries facilitates this process, as with the case of Mozambique with the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Ambassador Peter Vrooman discusses the program PEPFAR and its influence on healthcare systems. This program has aided the resilience of the healthcare system in Mozambique and other countries by enabling them to have a

public health response to crises. It is important to note that public health crises are not limited to a pandemic; crises can include disease outbreaks after natural disasters and other large scale public health phenomena. Another factor that deeply impacted Mozambique's ability to build resilience, cites Vrooman, was colonization, as they did not have independence until the 1970s.

The Global Fragility Act allows for a certain level of flexibility. In the case of Mozambique, the Act is assisting the mission of the United Nations of the demobilization of the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) fighters in the region. It is important to focus on community involvement and engagement to ensure the continued support and coop-

eration with programs.

Climate change and the environment can often and unfortunately be pushed to the side when focusing on resilience and economic strengthening of a country. In these instances, be mindful of promoting economic growth and building in resilience features into the economy while minimizing overall climate impact.

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UKRAINE DEALS RUSSIA MAJOR BLOW WITH SIGNIFICANT COUNTER-OFFENSIVE

Eman Fatima
Staff Writer

Beginning September 10, Ukrainian forces launched a significant counter-offensive against Russia, recapturing many cities and marking a major shift in the conflict, reports Reuters. During the past five months of the war, Russia captured 20 percent of Ukrainian territory. However, Ukraine regained those northeastern territories in a surprise offensive that caught the Russians off guard. Although Ukraine's latest victory gives significant hope to Ukrainians, it is difficult to evaluate whether this will be a turning point in the war.

Understanding the geographical aspect of this war is essential to understanding the conflict. On September 13, Ukraine was able to regain much of the Kharkiv region, according to The Guardian. In response, Igor Konashenkov, a Russian Defense Ministry spokesman, spoke about

moving Russian troops away from the Balakliya and Izyum territories to eastern Donetsk, reports the Associated Press. A Ukrainian Foreign Ministry spokesman, Oleg Nikolenko, stated that the Ukrainians reconquered not only Kharkiv and Izyum, but also a town called Kupiansk. According to DW, Ukraine taking back the Izyum region is a substantial loss for Russia, as the region is a gateway to the industrial area. Capturing the Kupiansk region has dealt a significant blow to the Russians as this region held strategic importance because of railroads; now, they will have a more challenging time transporting their supplies.

Ukraine's fight on the battlefield has not ended yet; military troops are preparing themselves for Russia's inevitable response, according to Al Jazeera. The likely target for a Russian attack seems to be Kherson, since it is one of the first cities that Rus-

sia captured and the area is vital to Russia and Ukraine due to its strategic harbor. If Ukraine recaptures this city, Ukrainian forces will be able to move from the Dnieper River and finally cut off the Russian-occupied canal supplying Crimea. If Russia loses Kherson, they will lose the protection of the freshwater canal feeding Crimea since the harbor protects it.

One of the biggest concerns throughout this conflict has been the potential for nuclear disaster – either from weapons or due to fighting around Ukrainian nuclear power plants. The Zaporizhzhia plant is the largest nuclear power station in Europe and has experienced multiple instances of shelling in its vicinity, reports NPR. According to Al Jazeera, the shelling has damaged the power lines connecting it to the electrical grid for which Russia and Ukraine have both blamed each other. Energoatom, the Ukrainian agency in charge



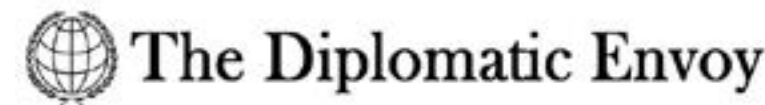
Ukrainian soldiers claim recapture of city. Courtesy of Just Click's With A Camera (Flickr)

of running the plant, warned about a radiation disaster and suggested shutting down the plant for safety purposes. The International Atomic Energy Agency has also called for a safe zone in the plant region to avoid any dangerous escalations and sent two experts to monitor the situation there. ABC News reports, "After yesterday's restoration of the power line – which connects the ZNPP to the switchyard of a nearby thermal power station – the operator of the ZNPP this morning

shut down its last operating reactor, which over the past week had been providing the plant with the required power after it was disconnected from the grid," the IAEA said in an emailed statement. While the regaining of territories is good news to Ukrainians, there is still a lot for them to do to keep their momentum. Russia will see this counteroffensive as an embarrassment and respond harshly, with Putin even threatening to use nuclear weapons, reports CNBC. Winter will

be especially difficult for the Ukrainians as the war sparks an energy crisis impacting the whole of Europe and raises pressure on Ukraine's allies to support a negotiated settlement to end the conflict.

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