

# Think Tank Report

1/2018 Insights into the agendas of international think tanks

Leading Topics

Observed

Faces



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

## The AI arms race has long been under way

### AI powers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

Technology moves faster than diplomacy – the *Institut français des relations internationales* is sure of it. The development of artificial intelligence (AI) is considered to be a driver of this new era. But there is as yet no form of governance that would monitor the development and use of AI. Russian President Putin recently asserted that global leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be decided in the area of AI. The American security agencies are also convinced that AI will change armed conflict as much as nuclear weapons did in the last century. And China is catching up: While U.S. corporations hesitate to invest in military applications for fear of damage to their image, Chinese agencies aim to lead the

global AI market by 2030 and have a comprehensive plan for doing so. Close cooperation among the government, the Communist Party, and national technology companies such as *Baidu* is to merge the commercial and military AI development efforts. *The Institut français des relations internationales*, Paris, France, analyses where it all might lead.

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## MOBILITY

# Bringing safety to the streets

## Autonomous vehicles could save many lives

Must autonomous vehicles be entirely error-free before people are ready to relinquish the steering wheel? This is an important question for both policy-making and user acceptance. Previously, conventional wisdom said that autonomous driving systems must be entirely free of error before they are approved for public use. Current insights from the *RAND Corporation*, however, indicate something different: The quicker autonomous systems are launched, the quicker the technology can be refined from its already advanced level – saving hundreds of thousands of lives in a few years. In 2016, more than 37,000 people died on U.S. streets and highways because of human error. This is where autonomous vehicles can help, the report's authors show. *RAND Corporation*, Santa Monica, USA



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[@RANDCorporation](https://twitter.com/RANDCorporation)

## ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

# Relocated because of climate change

Relocation because of climate change is an increasingly important issue. In some countries, governments are planning the relocation of entire communities that are being affected by climate change. However, there are as yet no valid guidelines for such a process, which is likely to become more frequent in the future. Most debates on climate change and migration have so far focused solely on people's individual mobility. The last few years have seen an increase in state-directed relocations of entire population groups. *The Danish Institute for International Studies*, Copenhagen, Denmark, shows ways of handling this trend in the context of local developments and the implications that can be derived from planned resettlements in Vietnam and Zambia.

### Relevant aspects for planned relocations



Source: UNHCR, Brookings, Georgetown University, 2017

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## THE WORLD OF EMPLOYMENT

# Living longer = working longer?

Canada is the last of the G7 nations without plans to increase the retirement age: By 2039, the UK will raise its retirement age to 68, and similar steps have already been initiated in the United States, Germany, Italy, and France. This makes 13 of the OECD nations that have raised the retirement age to 67 or higher – Iceland went as high as 70. Five countries have linked the retirement age to life expectancy, so that longer life spans automatically mean longer working lives. The *Fraser Institute*, Vancouver, Canada, analyses methods of assessing this development and the behaviour of individual countries.

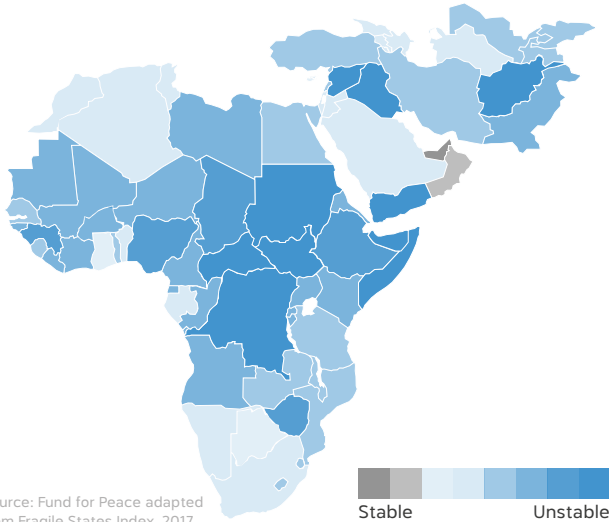
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[@FraserInstitute](https://twitter.com/FraserInstitute)

## INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

# When states threaten to disintegrate

## Fragile nations need better international support



Fragile nations are at the centre of the current global development crisis – Washington’s *Brookings* is convinced. By 2030, an estimated 80 per cent of the world’s extremely poor will live in fragile nations. While international players are already focusing on the cycle of fragility, conflict, and violence, so far no concrete policy objectives have been developed for dealing with nations that are about to collapse. In an initial study, Brookings analyses the internal power structure within fragile nations and uses the results to develop five ideas for how international players can interrupt the cycle of instability. *Brookings*, Washington D.C., USA

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## CYBER SECURITY

## Rethinking Public-Private-Partnerships

### When governments ask hackers for advice

There is no question that the issue of cyber security is becoming increasingly important. That is why rules and laws in this area must be analysed, cooperation established, and time and resource economy taken into account. To this end, governments are working not only with security experts, but also with “white-hat hackers” and private cyber security companies. A well-planned alliance is to allow government players and hacker networks to cooperate in ensuring mutual security and transparency. Algorithms that are verified by means of blockchain are to coordinate the cooperation among all players in cyberspace while preventing state secrets from falling into the wrong hands. The *Australian Institute of International Affairs*, Canberra, Australia, analyses how it all might work.

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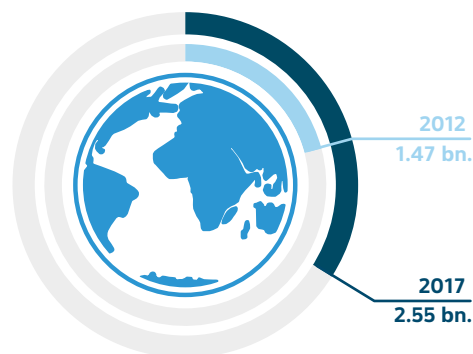
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## MEDIA

## Guidelines for social media

### Should social media platforms be treated like media companies?

#### Users of social media (worldwide)



Source: WMCES, 2017

For large parts of our society, social media have become the primary source of information. This entails much that is positive, including quicker information flows and the capability of political mobilization. But the fake news discussion and the so-called echo chambers reveal the other side of the coin. *The Wilfried Martens Centre* therefore proposes that social media platforms be treated like media companies and regulated by modified press laws. A standardized “notice and correct” procedure is also to be developed to stop the spread of lies and allow the public and private players affected to protect their rights. The paper outlines how such a procedure might function without limiting freedom of expression. *Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies (WMCES)*, Brussels, Belgium

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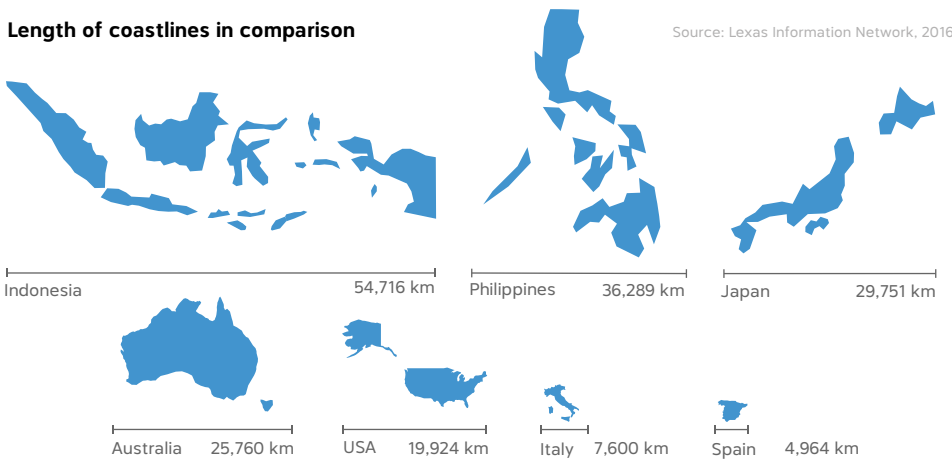
CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

# On the waterfront

## Effects of climate change on inter-state cooperation in Southeast Asia

In the face of the complex geographical situation in Southeast Asia, with its myriad archipelagos, long coastlines, complicated border situations, and the aspirations of several of its states to become global powers, climate change will have an especially great effect on inter-state relations in the region, as the *Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI)* in Oslo believes. Changed climatic conditions make humanitarian crises in the region increasingly likely. Such crises usually mean that goods that are critical to survival must be moved across international borders, something that the current border situation would scarcely allow. Given these circumstances, how will climate policy scenarios and crises be dealt with in the future? Oslo's *NUPI* provides initial insights. *Norwegian Institute of International Affairs*, Oslo, Norway

### Length of coastlines in comparison



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DIGITALISATION AND THE WORLD OF EMPLOYMENT

# Migration 4.0

## How politics must deal with digital labour migration

Globalization, technological development, and digitalization have far-reaching effects on education, employment, and migratory movements around the world. The digital revolution means that today, a growing number of people work remotely, on a flexible part-time basis, or for multiple employers. National borders are playing less and less of a role, especially regarding highly qualified professions and innovative sectors. At the same time, many traditional jobs and organizations are increasingly globalized. People are becoming "digital migrants", pursuing their careers at the international level. Sydney's *Lowy Institute* analyses this trend in work migration with a special view to policy-making in countries with high incomes, such as Australia and other specialized industrial countries. *Lowy Institute*, Sydney, Australia

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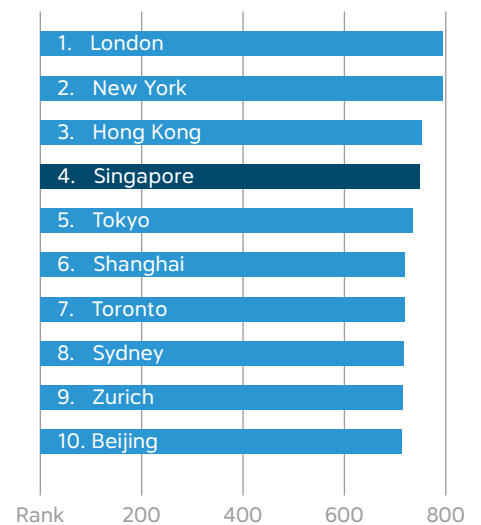
ECONOMY AND FINANCE

# The green shoot of the financial revolution

## How Singapore intends to establish itself as a sustainable financial centre in Asia

In the past 40 years, Singapore has developed into one of the leading global financial centres, combining regional and international markets. This came about only as a result of long-term, far-sighted action. Using the same logic, Singapore is now trying to attract so-called Fintech innovations and establish itself among the leading economies and financial centres as a location for the green finance of the future. Today, worries about environment and sustainability are a globally unifying challenge. In this area, national strategies, laws, and regulations are developed which, in turn, affect the markets. The financial sector is not exempt, and must be one of the first to react to these changes. What Singapore's strategy looks like, and what it might mean for Europe's financial centres, is the subject of an analysis by the *Singapore Institute of International Affairs*, Singapore.

### Top ten of financial centres worldwide



Source: Global Financial Centres Index, 2017

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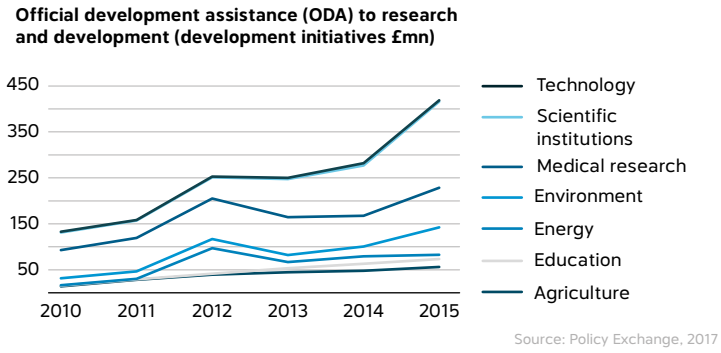
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INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

# Development research as a priority

## How increased research spending on development aid could help solve the pressing issues of our time

Britain should double its budget for international development assistance in research and development (R&D) to address pressing global challenges and support the government's industrial strategy, says *Policy Exchange* in London. In 2015, R&D aid in the British development budget amounted to around £419 million. The increase in this expenditure is intended to both benefit the world's poorest and support the work of the UK's leading scientists. Drug resistance, demand for clean energy, and global food demand, all of which are growing, are just some of the future challenges that British science should address. The highest social returns of any forms of intervention are to be expected here. *Policy Exchange* has already developed an initial implementation plan. *Policy Exchange*, London, UK



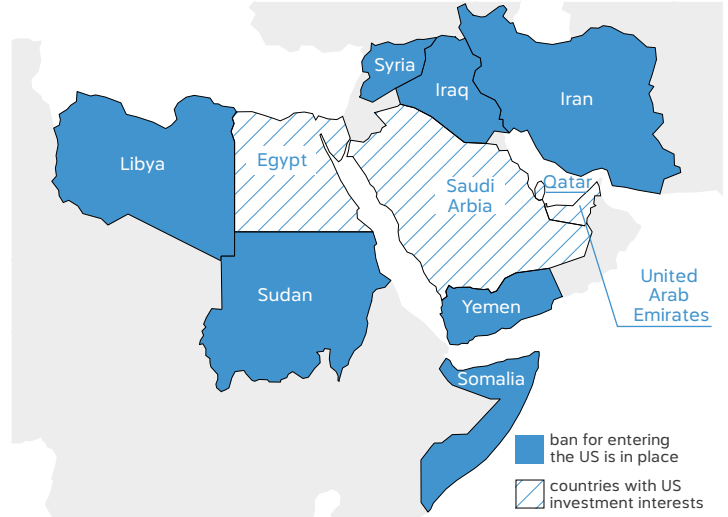
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MIDDLE EAST POLICY

# In search of strategists and strategies

## The new U.S. Middle East policy



Source: Deutsche Welle, 2017

The first year of the Trump administration was marked, among other things, by a lack of a coherent Middle East policy. Although, during the election campaign, the U.S. president spoke in favour of reducing United States intervention, the U.S. seem to have no choice but to re-assume the role of “the world’s policeman”. So far, however, little that is constructive is discernible. That is why the Institute for *National Security Studies (INSS)* in Tel Aviv used the anniversary of the U.S. election as an occasion to develop guidelines for a Middle East strategy that is intended to allow dealing with extremist elements in the region while strengthening America’s allies. The *Grand Strategy of the Institute for National Security Studies*, Tel Aviv, Israel, shows how this can be achieved.

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RULE OF LAW

# Securing justice in the midst of chaos

## How the rule of law can be guaranteed even in times of social upheaval

Under the buzzword *transitional justice*, the rule of law is being sought for societies that are characterized by conflict or decades of authoritarian rule. Transitional justice is intended to ensure the transition from violent and authoritarian to liberal and democratic rule. In reality, such a transition rarely occurs; instead, one form of

authoritarianism is often followed by a new authoritarian system. An example from the recent past is Egypt. The *Brookings Doha Center* uses this example to investigate how transitional justice can work in non-liberal contexts, how a path toward a liberal democracy might emerge, and how other countries could react con-

structively to this approach. *Brookings Doha Center*, Doha, Qatar

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[@BrookingsDoha](https://twitter.com/BrookingsDoha)



OBSERVED



## A NEW WORLD OF EMPLOYMENT

**The global workforce**

How digital projects in developing countries can create jobs

Many non-governmental organisations have set themselves the goal of reducing global poverty. *Samasource*, a young, community-based company, intends to make a contribution to this goal by outsourcing digital work projects to the unemployed in developing countries and the U.S. Under the buzzword impact sourcing, *Samasource* applies an internet-based model called “Microwork” to break down large digital business projects into smaller tasks which can then be digitally processed by a diverse workforce. This workforce is initially trained in basic computer skills, receiving a local salary for their work. In this way, almost 10,000 people have already taken the first step towards becoming digital knowledge workers. In an international ranking last year, *Samasource* was chosen as one of the 50 most innovative companies in the world for this commitment and can now number *Walmart*, *Google*, and *eBay* among its customers. *Samasource*, Uganda/Kenya/India/U.S.



[samasource.org](http://samasource.org)

## SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

**Keeping warm**

How Kenya turns dust and waste into sustainable briquettes

Developing countries in particular see high levels of use of fossil fuels such as kerosene, gas, or coal for heating in the domestic environment. *Kencoco*, a Kenyan start-up, produces and sells briquettes made of recycled agricultural coconut and biomass waste. These briquettes are a cost-effective alternative to more environmentally harmful fuels. Each month, the company now produces about 20 tons of briquettes, which are cheaper than most existing fossil fuels – and have comparable burning times, calorific value, and heat content. The aim is to stop deforestation in Kenya and promote a sustainable cycle of energy and raw materials. *Kencoco*, Mombasa, Kenya



[vc4afri.ca/71io6](http://vc4afri.ca/71io6)

## CYBER SECURITY

**Security through sheer mass**

A new security architecture to prevent cyber attacks in real time

As computing machines become increasingly faster and data volumes grow exponentially, security applications must become increasingly powerful as well. In the first quarter of 2017 alone, the number of Trojan and bot-guided attacks on public institutions and private computers was thirteen times as high as it had been the previous year, according to the quarterly “Malware Report”. Big data and machine learning therefore play a decisive role in cyber security. Founded in 2011, *CrowdStrike* has now developed an algorithm that can analyse more than 70 billion events from millions of various sources in 176 countries every day, identifying and thwarting both known and unknown threats. Artificial intelligence allows each file to be traced back and thus previously undetectable attacks to be identified and blocked in real time.

*CrowdStrike*, Irvine, USA



[crowdstrike.com](http://crowdstrike.com)



FACES



FINTECH

## Loans for farmers

In Africa, only one per cent of bank loans are granted to entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector, although around 65 per cent of the population work in agriculture. In order for the farmers to be economically successful, they need access to credit for seed, fertilizers, and other means of production. Rita Kimani, who grew up on a small farm in Kenya herself, is working on instruments that will solve this problem. Today, she is co-founder of *FarmDrive*, an alternative model for valuating credit risks: Credit-relevant information is collected for banks via SMS, enabling small farmers to establish a link with their banks and qualify for credit. In the last two years, *FarmDrive* has helped some 3,000 landowners to obtain loans in this way.

 [farmdrive.co.ke](http://farmdrive.co.ke)



AGRICULTURE

## Agricultural networking

Micro-farmers supply food to about one third of the world's population. Most of them operate independently and without any advice. Alloysius Attah from Ghana wants to change that. With *Farmerline*, his start-up, and a force that now numbers 25 employees, Attah offers the tailor-made, individualized services required by farmers today. These services include up-to-date weather data, new agricultural practices, updates on market prices, and literacy training. The information is provided in short form via SMS and in data form via smart phones and apps. In the next two years, *Farmerline* is expected to grow to one million customers.

 [farmerline.co](http://farmerline.co)



ARCTIC GOVERNANCE

## Lots of news in the north

At the age of only 27, Victoria Herrmann was elected director of the *Arctic Institute (AI)*. Through multidisciplinary research, the AI aims to promote a safe, equitable, sustainable Arctic policy; discuss the most important security problems of the circumpolar region through direct cooperation among scientists, political actors, and northern communities; and develop solutions for decision-makers. Victoria Herrmann can scarcely hope for support from the White House: Her article entitled "I am an Arctic researcher. Donald Trump is deleting my citations" distanced her from the U.S. president's policy. Her new AI study shows that the issue of international governance is still gaining in importance for the Arctic.

 [thearcticinstitute.org](http://thearcticinstitute.org)