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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | The Australian Institute of International Affairs New South Wales welcomes you to Week 16 of: | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **From the Councillors** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Each week, some of our Councillors share a selection of articles, analytical pieces, videos and podcasts about what is happening in the world of international affairs. In this edition of Columns our Councillors explore the Australian defence strategic update, Thailand and China's increasing presence in Latin America.  Disclaimer: The views expressed below by Councillors are their own. The Australian Institute of International Affairs New South Wales does not take policy positions. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | | [**Thailand - the land of smiles**](https://asiancenturyinstitute.com/development/1621-thailand-the-land-of-smiles)  Thailand, one of the largest economies in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), has many attractive attributes for tourists and investors alike. Its population is young and well-educated, it possesses a large manufacturing industry, and the city of Bangkok serves as a thriving metropolis and a gateway to Southeast Asia. However, these positives are often overshadowed by less salubrious activities and unfortunate events. In this [**article**](https://asiancenturyinstitute.com/development/1621-thailand-the-land-of-smiles) for the Asian Century Institute, some of the attractions of the country are outlined in more detail, including its success in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic despite its relatively porous borders with other nations. Image credit: [**Allan Ascaño**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/allan_the_colorblind/8764034137/in/photolist-emrY1R-ems3kX-emFEQw-6P9rmd-9bStN5-emrTYM-7ig9ry-4zynYp-7kEvNg-emFFN5-7wswtQ-65tvKg-CCMrp-7wjLBa-emrUzF-emrVix-9bSsku-WrgTG-emFEVs-9bSt6u-7wpDj5-emFC1U-9bStkU-9bStDY-ems1QK-9bPnK8-bo3MM9-6vzP6y-7wqkNU-7wsNqq-bn74uU-bo3Byq-emrZPt-7wokk3-9bPp2p-bo3Bos-emrYH2-bmjmg5-7wkMW2-emrZj8-7wroWY-7wjBv2-7wkRSr-7wphQo-emrWNR-7wqFcW-emFKwu-ems2Zv-7wpo6f-bAXDhv) | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This article was selected by Glen Robinson. Glen is an AIIA NSW Councillor and has spent the last 30 years providing advice and assistance to organisations wishing to establish or enhance a commercial presence in ASEAN. He has developed a wide range of colleagues in both government and the private sector in the region. | | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | | [**Australia's strategic update by the numbers**](https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/australias-strategic-update-by-the-numbers/)  The release of the Australian defence strategic update in early July heralded what many have seen as a major change of direction in security and defence policy. Graeme Dobell echoes this sentiment in a [**piece**](https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/australias-strategic-update-by-the-numbers/) for ASPI’s The Strategist, where he dives into the numbers and figures in the Update. The language of ‘rules’ and the ‘rules-based global order’ is replaced with ‘threats’ and ‘coercion’, especially the threat posed by ‘grey zone’ activities. Most prominently, the Update also marks a departure from the long-held assumption of a ten-year strategic warning time for a potential military attack against Australia. For Dobell, the Update marks a sombre – and foreboding – read. Image credit: [**Australian Department of Defence**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/aus_defence_force/5247988070/in/photolist-8ZKj1W-in3Yo9-a3rK1K-3UN759-dF5FYo-EocUPg-pyjFuM-Cy3s3x-pR6Srz-fvMAET-8Vf2Rv-2cT75u6-EGYaV2-9zuMSB-bpSiiG-a4Tdq7-bCMf32-CXiAGF-8tk7gS-8ZGdPZ-2gvNkbG-crcEFf-51szE1-2h82gKV-2hcPLRc-mFgwNx-BAwEcb-9wA2Pj-9kzVKb-Cci9YB-5XpKAH-51ooAr-9tP6fT-hCERAh-ihLvsx-pyTn6C-ehMbBL-ehFpQt-in2cUv-8bhoEK-72tPTw-a4TseG-7pCFd9-hCFunn-5vWFhP-2gvE3hT-7dkyLq-9priYW-gUxuw9-9nzRVV) | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This article was selected by Euan Moyle. Euan is a final-year Master of International Relations student at the University of Sydney. He is currently a risk analyst and editor for Foreign Brief, and a Young Leader with the US-based international affairs think tank Pacific Forum. He has formerly interned with the Lowy Institute. Euan has served on the Council since 2019. | | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | | [**China and Latin America**](https://www.youngausint.org.au/post/the-chinese-exchange-irresponsible-foreign-interest-in-an-ailing-latin-america)  For many decades, Latin America was viewed as a region that was firmly within the United States’ sphere of influence. During the Cold War, large amounts of US foreign aid flowed to Latin American countries to advance Washington’s political aims. Today, China is increasingly interested in Latin America. While many countries welcome having an additional source of aid and investment, there are also some concerning aspects of its behaviour, much like with China’s investment in other parts of the world. Writing for Young Australians in International Affairs' blog INSIGHTS, Ariel Castro-Martinez [**looks at**](https://www.youngausint.org.au/post/the-chinese-exchange-irresponsible-foreign-interest-in-an-ailing-latin-america) Chinese investment in Latin America, how it is structured and what the impacts of COVID-19 may be on a region that is facing one of its worst economic contractions in history. | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This article was selected by Alex McManis. Alex holds a Bachelor of Arts with First Class Honours in Government and International Relations from the University of Sydney. He is currently the Climate and Energy Security Fellow at Young Australians in International Affairs. Alex has served on the Council since 2019. | | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **From the Interns** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | In addition to our Councillors, we invite one of our interns to share with you what they have found insightful or interesting in the world of international affairs over the past week. This week, Nimaya Mallikahewa takes a look at the absence of Russia in Australian strategic policy and how limited access to the internet is exacerbating inequality in Pakistan.  Disclaimer: The views expressed below by interns are their own. The Australian Institute of International Affairs New South Wales does not take policy positions. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | | [**Pakistan's Great Digital Divide**](https://thediplomat.com/2020/07/pakistans-great-digital-divide/)  Working or studying from home has become the new norm which many have welcomed. However, not all communities have easy access to internet services and digital devices, and this divide is particularly stark in Pakistan. Shah Meer Baloch and Zafar Musyani, writing for The Diplomat, [**explore**](https://thediplomat.com/2020/07/pakistans-great-digital-divide/) the inequality facing the students and professionals of Pakistan where internet in unavailable, disrupted or shut down due to national security reasons. Students and teachers are faced with online classes in an environment that is deeply unprepared to move into an online space, with a lack of infrastructure, physical resources and access to internet exacerbating socioeconomic inequality. Baloch and Musyani highlight that the government has been slow to respond to pleas from affected regions and quick to justify internet shutdown in some areas as essential for national peace and security. Image credit: **[Hashoo Foundation USA](https://www.flickr.com/photos/hashoofoundation/16404791113/in/photolist-qZCQS6-zTvdx-2d8nWpm-2hS1EhW-6bB8S4-SZVvML-DuXEQ4-QwqwUF-ffGDP4-rDRNK3-2iYyQhn-2iuSdq9-2iuSdvQ-8FuBjL-2hS2EQy-2g6MpCy-2ie2thG-ffGza2-2hMcQik-qZCPkt-2gdwBm2-Qwqxcz-ffWT8C-2iuSdgG-2erhqyU-2is7Cz6-2ipDU2u-2f4rp55-2h1XoJm-FDNory-243cc4K-2dxEQmG-2h2fobd-2gzxCKA-di18eX-2gdwzTC-2g6MpM6-de82Eq-PeLik-c11b9s-qZr5R3-hyL76n-hyJD4m-hyKfos-cBiTZ-X1MmU6-2495JVt-VdCrHF-QwqxrH-2dhZKeu" \t "_blank)** | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | | [**Australia's Russia Problem (and how to solve it)**](https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/australia-s-russia-problem-and-how-solve-it)  Australia’s 2020 Defence Strategic Update has raised questions in the wake of its announcement, with some emphasising a lack of diplomatic efforts to complement the defence-heavy foreign policy. Elizabeth Buchanan, for the Lowy Institute's The Interpreter, [**highlights**](https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/australia-s-russia-problem-and-how-solve-it) a notable absence in the Indo-Pacific focused Update: Russia. Buchanan warns against the self-defeating attitude which dismisses Russia’s lack of power in the post-Cold War environment but simultaneously disapproves of Russia’s transgressions in a rules-based order. She argues that reframing ties with Moscow does not mean giving Russia a “free pass” but keeping an open mind to create foreign policy based on commonalities that take Russia into account as a potential Indo-Pacific player – a Sino-Russian bloc, Buchanan says, would be one that Australia could not match. Image credit: **[flowcomm](https://www.flickr.com/photos/flowcomm/14731097895/in/photolist-orJJbt-PiBjdH-et8ZQp-xWkF9X-T4p4H9-m9aSoo-qJnX2F-aBfCMM-ekQWVP-rvg6pd-fpvZJN-h4QSdi-crsBmh-fqQUAB-Fhu7n2-fzczxq-YhX9RV-fyXgwi-fjpWAL-7PJZ2K-29gfVPZ-fkRZTK-29gfYGH-peaU1z-28b1eTf-2jjAy6h-2jbxcpg-63Hewo-5zozFE-5d6HqB-53cUDg-q3bZfj-fAk3Dq-g5JGnb-bEgd9w-fpXP3m-e69xUe-g5kznU-8a44K3-6PtZW2-ftUBb7-23C9SXp-dBmtc5-5UATqA-dBmM5A-tmGBB-Ye4pNJ-CmrmN-2hPwtH3-zZVya/" \t "_blank)** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | These articles were selected by Nimaya Mallikahewa. Nimaya is in the final year of her double Bachelor's degrees in International Studies and Media (PR and Advertising) at UNSW, where she has focused her research on development aid, transitional justice, maritime security and foreign policy in the Indian Ocean region. She has interned at AIIA NSW since February 2020. | | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **What else we're reading** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | * AIIA NSW intern Wendy Hu [**examines**](http://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/resource/citizens-assemblies-a-french-approach-to-climate-change-policy/) the role of citizens' assemblies in addressing climate change policy in France. * Liberal MP and former Ambassador to Israel Dave Sharma [**writes**](https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/diplomatic-step-match-our-military-step) that Australia's defence strategic update should not overlook expanding Canberra's diplomatic network. * Michele Dunne from the Carnegie Endowment [**explores**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VRE3YqIujp4) how the recently completed Grand Renaissance Dam in Ethiopia has resulted in tensions with neighbouring Egypt. * In the latest edition of the Australia in the World podcast, Darren Lim and Allan Gyngell [**look at**](https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/australia-in-the-world-episode-51/) the recent Lowy Poll 2020, Australia-China relations and ongoing border skirmishes between China and India. * Author and former Supreme Court judge Michael Pembroke’s [**latest book**](https://www.hardiegrant.com/au/publishing/bookfinder/book/play-by-the-rules-by-michael-pembroke/9781743796528), Play by the Rules – the short history of America’s leadership, will be launched next month. * The Dialogue's Latin America Advisor [**speaks with**](https://www.thedialogue.org/analysis/can-pressure-from-foreign-investors-save-the-amazon/) foreign investors about whether the threat of divestment can force Brazil's government to halt the erosion of environmental and human rights protections. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Letters to the Editor** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Dear Columns editors,  Finally, the issue of an independent foreign policy is brought up in your articles. The term that we are an ally of the US has been accepted by all Australian governments, and with few exceptions - Brian Toohey, Hugh White - by commentators. Are we really a vassal or satrapy? Are we able to free ourselves from ANZUS? Do we want to proceed along with America in seeing China, and perhaps Russia, as enemies?  Keith Lethlean AIIA NSW Member | | |