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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | The Australian Institute of International Affairs New South Wales welcomes you to Week 15 of: | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **From the Councillors** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Each week, some of our Councillors will share with you a selection of articles, analytical pieces, videos and podcasts about what is happening in the world of international affairs. This week our Councillors introduce you to an address on the increasing prominence of misinformation, responses to the recently released Australian defence update and the role of Canberra in building a 'strategic equilibrium' in the Indo-Pacific region.  Disclaimer: The views expressed below by Councillors are their own. The Australian Institute of International Affairs New South Wales does not take policy positions. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | | [**Evidence and Education in a Post Truth, Post-Covid World**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rgwChXjj-o&feature=youtu.be)  Our Patron, Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC QC, Governor of New South Wales, recommends the [**address**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rgwChXjj-o&feature=youtu.be) by Professor Brian Schmidt AC, Vice Chancellor of the Australian National University, to the annual dinner of the Royal Society of New South Wales on 27 June. In introducing Professor Schmidt, Her Excellency, who is also the Patron of the Royal Society, expresses concern at the devaluing of truth and expertise in favour of tweeted opinions and misinformation. Professor Schmidt outlines the world-wide advances since World War II in prosperity, education and health (including China’s dramatic economic success) but deplores the “increasing din” of shareable information via the internet. Today, people absorb information which confirms their prior beliefs, by-passing expert curation. Democracy is being challenged by polarizing, often intentionally-deceptive material. The COVID-19 crisis might provide an opportunity to reclaim the ascendancy of expertise, knowledge and truth. Image credit: **[Pixst](https://www.pikist.com/free-photo-sekca" \t "_blank)** | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | | **Increased defence expenditure**  Mainstream reporting of Prime Minister Morrison’s strategic policy announcement on 1 July focused on concerns about China. Articles in Pearls and Irritations have drawn attention to other aspects. [**Geoff Miller**](https://johnmenadue.com/geoff-miller-australias-defence-all-the-way-with-the-usa-again/?mc_cid=5584128c6b&mc_eid=3b44e64159) notes the emphasis on the US alliance, including support for US-led coalitions outside our immediate region. [**Hugh White**](https://johnmenadue.com/why-australias-strategic-situation-is-far-worse-than-we-think-afr-6-7-20/?mc_cid=bddf3b2ebf&mc_eid=3b44e64159) considers the review too complacent about future threats, and [**Mark Beeson**](https://johnmenadue.com/mark-beeson-indefensible-policies/?mc_cid=5584128c6b&mc_eid=3b44e64159) questions whether enhanced military hardware can increase our capacity to face them. [**Colin Mackerris**](https://johnmenadue.com/china-is-not-a-threat-to-australia/?mc_cid=5584128c6b&mc_eid=3b44e64159) does not accept the underlying premise that China is a threat to Australia. In a two part series, Joseph Camilleri suggests that our [**sprawling security establishment**](https://johnmenadue.com/joseph-camilleri-its-time-to-strip-national-security-of-its-sacred-cow-status-part-1/?mc_cid=5584128c6b&mc_eid=3b44e64159) is too hawkish and fails to take account of the [**power shift**](https://johnmenadue.com/joseph-camilleri-its-time-to-strip-national-security-of-its-sacred-cow-status-part-2/) away from the US. Image credit: [**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/dfataustralianaid/10674558544/in/photolist-hggUmQ-s1RrcY-51szs5-a3uBN5-hg25ba-5RA4De-CXizm4-HY9ffm-51onL4-hgjnaV-Coso4b-EGYaJR-iYvFSv-pFA4yP-r4hAfy-8ZKj1W-in3Yo9-a3rK1K-3UN759-dF5FYo-8ZGdPZ-EocUPg-pyjFuM-51szE1-Cy3s3x-mFgwNx-9zuMSB-a4Tdq7-CXiAGF-8tk7gS-2gvNkbG-crcEFf-pR6Srz-fvMAET-8Vf2Rv-2cT75u6-2h82gKV-2hcPLRc-EGYaV2-bpSiiG-bCMf32-BAwEcb-9wA2Pj-Cci9YB-9priYW-5XpKAH-51ooAr-hCERAh-ihLvsx-9priJb) | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | These articles were selected by Ian Lincoln, President of AIIA NSW since 2017. Ian was in the Department of Foreign Affairs for 33 years including postings in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Pacific. He was later an appellate member of the Refugee Review Tribunal and has worked in a number of community organisations. | | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | | [**Building a Strategic Equilibrium in the Indo-Pacific**](http://chinamatters.org.au/policy-brief/policy-brief-june-2020/)  In his latest contribution to the national debate, former DFAT Secretary Peter Varghese [**argues**](http://chinamatters.org.au/policy-brief/policy-brief-june-2020/) that Australia needs to help craft a new “strategic equilibrium” in the Indo-Pacific, which involves both constraining and engaging China. This means not only engaging China bilaterally and multilaterally, but also supporting arrangements to constrain the destabilising aspects of its behaviour. Mr Varghese argues that by working with countries such as the US, Japan, India, Indonesia and South Korea, Australia can help build a strategic equilibrium in the Indo-Pacific with the capacity to collectively constrain China when it behaves coercively. Mr Varghese also participated in a China Matters [**webinar**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3fBqtDlixM&feature=youtu.be) on 3 July which discussed these issues further.  Image credit: [**US State Department**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/statephotos/48798458131) | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **From the Interns** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | In addition to our Councillors, we will be inviting 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, Wendy Hu focuses on events in the Middle East with peace negotiations in Afghanistan and the impact of Israel's proposed annexation of the West Bank.  Disclaimer: The views expressed below by interns are their own. The Australian Institute of International Affairs New South Wales does not take policy positions. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | | [**Peace Talks in Afghanistan**](http://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/afghanistans-progress-towards-reconciliation-some-good-and-bad-news/)  The future of peace negotiations to achieve reconciliation in Afghanistan is [**uncertain**](http://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/afghanistans-progress-towards-reconciliation-some-good-and-bad-news/). The good news is that the US and Taliban reached a “peace agreement” on 29 February. Moreover, President Ashraf Ghani and his rival Abdullah Abdullah reached an agreement on 17 May whereby Ghani would be president and Abdullah the new head of the High Council for National Reconciliation (HCNR). The difficulties will lie in whether the Taliban accepts the guiding principles laid out by Abdullah. The recent death of Taliban leader Mullah Haibutullah Akhunzada has also catalysed a leadership battle unlikely to be resolved anytime soon. Image credit: [**The U.S. Army**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/soldiersmediacenter/1050391183/in/photolist-2APwGP-4wxVUG-2APwET-9oHRz-8jusEN-8jusEA-63ZvH1-dBNSUV-2APwFv-7ijFAA-2ATJbh-2QqUne-2APwGH-7iggrT-7fodmu-5HPrLA-2APwHv-4DKHVG-983zY1-38RXoi-bpnCZ-7ikaLw-4DFs2k-4DKHZC-KKKC5-bpvjU9-tehoj-4tg2JA-4FTqMe-39RZNY-XNKCm-4EbeoS-Hxuzg-7Riofn-4FXAn3-52LLJ-52LLK-45hiyR-7ikcJG-ceEWf5-7igq2T-63VgoX-bhUTnP-bdutJa-7igaQ8-e2Serv-H1t97-4S7dJF-7ifWtF-hHfHU) | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | | [**The aftermath of annexation**](https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/07/06/annexation-israel-palestinians-west-bank-settlements/)  The short-term effects of Israel’s announcement to annex parts of the occupied West Bank are unlikely to be dramatic. While a Palestinian uprising, the cutting of ties by Arab nations with Israel and imposition of sanctions may occur, it is the [**long-term effects**](https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/07/06/annexation-israel-palestinians-west-bank-settlements/) which are more devastating. For Israel, their formal incorporation of the area violates international law. It denies Palestinians their basic rights and may irrevocably isolate Israel from the international community. For the Palestinians, it extinguishes any lingering hope of a two-state solution. Younger Palestinians are fed up with the current Palestinian leadership, and find the two-state solution “unappealing”. As the next generation of Palestinians take power, they will likely push for a single, democratic state with equal political rights for all. Image credit: [**G Travels**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/g_travels/35210452492/in/photolist-VDqLP7-Geut23-6TkTGH-91vR6G-4KyLxS-GeyGr1-27U996u-2aDZWoD-2azzLC9-9R2nfL-Ux8C8W-T6rJXg-TQJbbL-S1oDkG-6y6ZUW-4Tq6Wf-4TkUkX-V4KssY-V4JAc7-V8fp9B-7fVzL-4fnvsn-7p7vpQ-2gHswCh-8W1ZPF-2hPnAjb-2ghfrP3-2gJD3ZU-2ifcbvX-2ghfXSF-2h5QqGa-2h1Xozi-2gJD3zq-rr2mrA-sGtbtf-3i6unA-iyNxU-7G7nGZ-5SvPqx-2gJD3FT-4apENc-7GRY32-2gG6WTQ-2gA4mAc-2gkNaDL-2gkNjKP-VbWTRY-ee6VgA-2gHswFt-97EtMh) | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | These articles were selected by Wendy Hu. Wendy Hu is a penultimate year student at the University of Sydney studying a Bachelor of Commerce and a Bachelor of Laws. She has previously interned at the United States House of Representatives and is particularly interested in the international financial system, and US politics and foreign policy. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **What else we're reading** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | * The New York Times [**looks at**](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/07/03/us/george-floyd-protests-crowd-size.html) the number of Black Lives Matter demonstrations across the United States, arguing that it constitutes one of the largest protest movements in US history. * Writing for the Lowy Institute, Catherine Wilson [**examines**](https://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/demanding-future-navigating-pacific-youth-bulge) the 'youth bulge' in the Pacific Islands and how policymakers can respond to its resulting challenges. * Independent journalist Marcus Rubenstein [**analyses**](https://johnmenadue.com/independent-think-tank-aspi-behind-push-for-more-defence-spending-rakes-in-advisory-fees/)the substantial government and defence industry funding of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI). * Ilana Webster-Kogen [**writes**](https://theconversation.com/hachalu-hundessa-charismatic-musician-who-wasnt-afraid-to-champion-ethiopias-oromo-142062) in The Conversation on how the murder of musician Hachalu Hundessa sparked deadly ongoing protests in Ethiopia. * A short video from Al Jazeera [**explores**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bIduN0MeK74) whether the post-COVID economic rebound provides an opportunity to build a greener, cleaner society. * Graeme Dobell pens a [**two**](https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/oz-strategists-owen-harries-part-1/) [**part**](https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/oz-strategists-owen-harries-part-2/) tribute to Owen Harries, the former foreign policy adviser and founding editor of The National Interest magazine who passed away in late June. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Letters to the Editor** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Get involved!**  We're committed to keeping conversations about international affairs going, so get involved in our Letters to the Editor section!  Each week, we’ll be publishing letters from our subscribers about what they think of the issues we’re discussing.  You can take part in the conversation by emailing us with your comments on each week’s articles. There are just a few simple guidelines: letters should be no more than 100 words in length, and should only be about the previous week’s articles. Please include your name and affiliation, and a mobile number (which won't be published). If you are a university student, please include your university and current degree.  Send all letters to the editors at [**aiianswletters@gmail.com**](mailto:aiianswletters@gmail.com) by Wednesday at 5pm Sydney time for the chance to be published in the following week's newsletter. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | |