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This week, our Councillors examine the decline of democracy, Australia's one-China policy, and Frances Adamson's final speech as head of DFAT.  Disclaimer: The views expressed below by Councillors and interns are their own. The Australian Institute of International Affairs New South Wales does not take policy positions. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A picture containing grass, outdoor, sky, old  Description automatically generated | | [**Democracy in Decline**](https://www.crowdcast.io/e/yq32lc6p/1)  In a 7 July [**webinar**](https://www.crowdcast.io/e/yq32lc6p/1) hosted by Oxford University Press John Keane, Professor of Politics at the University of Sydney, and Indian journalist Debasish Roy Chowdhury discussed their recently-published analysis of Indian political trends under Prime Minister Modi’s increasingly harsh rule, To Kill A Democracy: India's Passage to Despotism. (Professor Keane [**foreshadowed**](https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/news-item/the-new-global-disorder-and-the-rise-of-despotism/) his 2020 book The New Despotism at the Institute in May 2019.) Mr Chowdhury emphasised the role of declining social mobility in reducing political participation. He considered that the increasing cost of political campaigns is leading to candidate selection favouring the rich. Professor Keane suggested that democracies world-wide are suffering the “Indian disease” : weakened social foundations due to shrinking welfare, concentrated power and wealth in major cities, political attacks on independent judiciaries, creating and disenfranchising out-groups (such as religious minorities). Growing problems include neutered oppositions and meaningless polarisation - the raucous “duelling banjos” exchanges increasingly evident in Australian politics. In a related analysis, corrosive trends in US democracy are [**discussed**](https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/between-a-rock-and-a-hard-place-why-the-us-not-china-should-be-australias-biggest-security-concern/) by outgoing AIIA NSW intern Sanjay Balakumar in a June Australian Outlook article.  Image credit: **[Nimrod Bar](https://www.flickr.com/photos/nimrodbar/31437132/in/photolist-3M8aw-5yz4QH-4GhrwH-8TwB5g-prFt3T-a84czT-Am7ewQ-2grNg1x-qdqfxm-81iWz-2ZkGHN-cXQxn-2XFPv-efQE1H-99sArH-efQEtF-9a6qu5-jNySe-b9oo16-TpsSGq-b9oJpH-eGLvb6-2ifGHkx-cXG9B-G3GcN-Q2ELFo-2m2VmLD-8mUCb-6i63Gv-6fEUpU-2m2TLVD-4zub4q-qfj7ox-sCj34-2hS2ESh-2hRY9Bz-2hXrNzi-2hXqLCo-2hcZzPV-2hXqLR4-2hXrNB7-2hS2EKd-2351bbx-7DaKbo-efQFkF-aj4VCU-9SGTkn-c7M98-qf6Ubb-2hS2ENz" \t "_blank)** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This article was 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. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A city skyline at night  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | | [**Australia and the One-China policy**](https://www.defenceconnect.com.au/key-enablers/8377-op-ed-australia-and-the-one-china-policy?utm_source=DefenceConnect&utm_campaign=12_07_21&utm_medium=email&utm_content=1&utm_emailID=20cf2edc015982f5a687fcef5f8e56a1a7d8a3a92d50585817a9f05c04bc97cb)  China’s implacable refusal to communicate diplomatically or publicly with Australia has continued for many months and is notable for this being unique to Australia. Other democratically governed countries with a common interest in an international rules-based order have not been similarly treated.  So how should Australia behave going forward? In a [**recent article**](https://www.defenceconnect.com.au/key-enablers/8377-op-ed-australia-and-the-one-china-policy?utm_source=DefenceConnect&utm_campaign=12_07_21&utm_medium=email&utm_content=1&utm_emailID=20cf2edc015982f5a687fcef5f8e56a1a7d8a3a92d50585817a9f05c04bc97cb) I have suggested that Australia should persevere with bilateral trading in spite of punitive tariffs and other impositions, because our economy must be sustained before we stand on ceremony to further criticise China or offer explicit support for Taiwan.  In compliance with the One-China policy agreed half a century ago, Australia has prospered from bilateral trade with China with the level of trade greater today than ever, mainly due to massive exports of iron ore and to a lesser degree wool. This does not suggest subservience on Australia’s part – only the clear-eyed commitment to continue with mutually-beneficial trade while suppressing the profound differences in our underlying philosophical principles or aggravating the Taiwan issue.  Image credit: [**Li Yang**](https://unsplash.com/photos/5h_dMuX_7RE) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This article was written by Christopher Skinner. Christopher served 30 years in the Australian Navy as a weapons and electrical engineer officer in six surface warships, including service in the South-East Asian Treaty Organisation, the Vietnam War and North-West Indian Ocean surveillance. He is a member of several organisations and institutes engaged in geopolitics, technology and submarine matters, including the Australian Institute of International Affairs. The views expressed above are entirely those of the author and are not endorsed by any of the organisations of which he is a member. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A person holding a stuffed animal  Description automatically generated with low confidence | | [Frances Adamson departs as DFAT Secretary](https://www.dfat.gov.au/news/speech/national-press-club-address) DFAT Secretary Frances Adamson has wound up five years in charge of the implementation of foreign policy and left Canberra for her home state of South Australia where she will become Governor. On 23 June she gave a [**speech at the National Press Club**](https://www.dfat.gov.au/news/speech/national-press-club-address)where she summarised her four main agendas as:   * “How the world, and more specifically our near region, recovers from COVID-19,” * “How we and others respond to China’s growing power and ambitions," * “How we deal with climate change, including via the dramatic energy transition underway," * “How international rules, standards, and institutions evolve and on what basis.”   A number of people have commented that her claim of significant achievements on all agendas, was not borne out by facts. Some of these criticisms, by Bruce Haigh and myself, can be read in the [**Pearls and Irritations blog**](https://johnmenadue.com/a-sinking-dfat-has-given-policy-making-over-to-aspi/).  Image Credit: [**Australian Embassy Jakarta**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/kedubesaustralia/) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This speech was selected by Jocelyn Chey AM. Jocelyn is an Adjunct Professor at the Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, Visiting Professor at the University of Sydney and an Adjunct Professor at the Australia-China Institute for Arts and Culture at Western Sydney University. She was previously a senior officer in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Jocelyn is a Fellow of Australian Institute of International Affairs | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **From the Interns** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | In addition to our Councillors, we invite 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, our new interns Cameron Smith and Luke Goldman discuss the South China Sea and America's selective promotion of democracy.   Disclaimer: The views expressed below by our interns are their own. The Australian Institute of International Affairs New South Wales does not take policy positions. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A picture containing water, sky, outdoor, boat  Description automatically generated | | [Whatever happened to the South China Sea ruling?](https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/whatever-happened-south-china-sea-ruling) This July has witnessed the five year mark since an international tribunal dismissed Beijing's 'nine-dash line' claims in the South China Sea. In this article for The Interpreter, Pratik Jakhar [**argues**](https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/whatever-happened-south-china-sea-ruling) that despite this 'landmark ruling', the Philippines has squandered the opportunity it presented to more forcefully push back against China's claims in the South China Sea, and reduced it to just a moral victory. This he argues has largely played into the hands of Beijing, and reduced the appeal for other countries to challenge China on legal grounds. Jackhar argues that the Philippines must raise the costs for China's non-compliance to the ruling, and not squander the leverage this ruling gives Manila in shaping the narrative in the South China Sea. This might be particularly valuable at a time when Chinese grey-zone operations in the region appear to be increasing.  Image credit: **[Asael Peña](https://unsplash.com/@asaelamaury" \t "_blank)** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This article was selected by Cameron Smith. Cameron is a recent Bachelor of Arts (Honours) graduate majoring in History and International Relations at the University of Wollongong. Currently, he is working as an Electorate Officer at the Parliament of Australia and is the Co-Founder and Chief Operations Officer of the Australia-Pacific Youth Dialogue. He has a particular interest in US foreign policy, international security, and grey-zone operations in the Indo-Pacific. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A person holding a microphone  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | | [Does America Really Support Democracy—or Just Other Rich Democracies?](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-07-09/does-america-really-support-democracy-or-just-other-rich) In Foreign Affairs, Jake Werner [**contends**](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-07-09/does-america-really-support-democracy-or-just-other-rich) the United States’ advocacy of democracy against autocracy has been conflating democratic nations with wealthy nations. He argues that peripheralising democratic developing nations, which count for twice as many people as democratic advanced nations, has obstructed the US’ ability to gain the strategic support of the full democratic world and renders weaker democracies vulnerable to autocratic influence. To address this, the author recommends that the Biden administration look to establish “a new structure of global growth” through resolving intellectual property disputes between advanced and developing nations, embracing economic development as a human right and improving global labour standards.  Image credit: [**Gage Skidmore**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/gageskidmore/) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This article was selected by Luke Goldman. Luke is a student at the University of Sydney, where he is studying Politics and International Relations. He currently works at a consulting firm and his particular interests include trade and international security. | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **What else we're reading** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | * A New York Times [**investigation**](https://www.nytimes.com/video/us/politics/100000007606996/capitol-riot-trump-supporters.html)compiles footage, radio communications and social media posts to provide an in-depth look at the January 6 Capitol riot and its aftermath. * The Guardian's Today in Focus podcast [**discusses**](https://www.theguardian.com/news/audio/2021/jul/01/how-a-pro-democracy-newspaper-in-hong-kong-died)the forced closure of the Apple Daily newspaper and its implications for media freedom in Hong Kong. * Foreign Correspondent travels to the Dead Sea to [**uncover**](https://www.abc.net.au/foreign/the-sinking-sea/13382278)why it is disappearing and the impact this has on Israeli-Palestinian relations. * The ABC's Matt Henry and Matthew Carney [**explain**](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-07-08/trump-facebook-twitter-china-us-superpower-tech-war/100273812) why we might need to two phones in the future. * Vox [**unpacks**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0fhaEIlGux4)Taiwan's success in managing COVID-19 and how they have been handling their most recent outbreak. * Radio National [**details**](https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/sundayextra/syria---turkey/13438788) the closure of the last remaining humanitarian border crossing between Syria and Turkey. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **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 publish 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. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | | | |
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