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This week, our Councillors explore the relationship between the UK and China, the first year of the AUKUS agreement and the tension between Armenia and Azerbaijan.  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. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | [**UK China Relations**](https://insidestory.org.au/china-syndromes/)  In a week when the media has focussed almost exclusively on the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II, some may have remarked on the British move to forbid a Chinese delegation visiting Westminster Hall to pay their respects to her late majesty.  Kerry Brown, Director of the Lau Institute at Kings College London, [**has written**](https://insidestory.org.au/china-syndromes/) a perceptive review of the development of Britain-China relations published in Inside Story.  Kerry, who was formerly the Director of the China Centre at the University of Sydney, draws some interesting parallels with Australia in his attack on Britain's China policy, which he describes as "barren, contradictory and self-defeating".  He highly recommends James Curran's recent book, Australia's China Odyssey (reviewed in an earlier edition of Columns), and says, "Only by facing the past, as James Curran does in this book, can Australia move beyond panicky responses to Beijing’s shrill and unpleasant tone."  Image credit: [**Foreign and Commonwealth Office**](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:UK-China_Energy_Cooperation_(6126957831).jpg) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This article 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. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | [**365 Days of AUKUS: Progress, Challenges and Prospects**](https://www.ussc.edu.au/analysis/365-days-of-aukus-progress-challenges-and-prospects)   [**According to**](https://www.ussc.edu.au/analysis/365-days-of-aukus-progress-challenges-and-prospects) Peter Lee and Alice Nason at the United States Studies Centre, few announcements have inspired as much interest – or misunderstanding – as AUKUS, an ambitious long-term project for Australia to secure itself in a deteriorating security environment. One year on from its announcement, the three AUKUS partners have made meaningful progress around key AUKUS initiatives, giving new gravitas to this monumental security arrangement and laying the foundations for the significant AUKUS work ahead. The partnership is now moving from the consultation and scoping phase to the implementation phase. It will be a marathon, not a sprint. And if it fails, the impact on Australia’s capability and credibility will be vast.  Image credit: [**U.S. Navy**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/usnavy/6543759177/in/photolist-aYftC6-gXP9ag-oGAWfw-gitUNn-cnMShw-ofNhBT-ecaEHs-cnMSem-cnMSbf-bbGz7Z-ecntPW-9eRM2e-obkMrf-9oNtW6-eWzfeV-cGmdT5-9owKyM-wPcJEE-ofjcnH-9eUQry-eWDHwX-f3BerU-oALokC-ohxBtz-o44o3s-mqAKF9-ouPmA2-c72ogm-nxc3mD-dbTQTk-dV2VzL-cGkAiN-2nka4PV-9ieb8d-cGwJsb-dxruMP-bJM4iM-puKQ7b-aqYeeE-nN3gxn-cCsUyu-ovJFfa-cTruHA-cnMS6Y-cnMS2s-osG5Q6-dtyxxb-9xGrBz-cGp2nE-cJNHdu) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | [**Armenian and Azerbaijan Fighting Risks Broader Conflict**](https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/09/amid-ukraine-war-armenia-and-azerbaijan-fighting-risks-broader-conflict)   Historical tensions that led to the [**death of 100 soldiers**](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-62888891) in the flare up between Armenia and Azerbaijan may indicate a larger risk of further conflict, [**according to Mary Glantz**](https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/09/amid-ukraine-war-armenia-and-azerbaijan-fighting-risks-broader-conflict) at the United States Institute of Peace. This conflict has simmered for decades in the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region but the violence of last week is the largest clash since the 2020 war. While the concern is that this will escalate to a similar position as the 2020 conflict that killed over 1,000, Glantz analyses several factors that may prevent another intensification of violence. She discusses the effect of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, suggesting that Azerbaijan may have initiated these attacks to test Russian military strength. The speed at which the Russian President Putin and Turkish President Erdogan have already attempted to agree to a ceasefire suggests, however,  that the heat may be kept in check. Ultimately, Glantz argues, the temporary solutions and ceasefires do not effectively resolve a tension rooted in historical and ethnic tension, requiring future diplomacy rather than military solutions.   Image credit: [**president.az**](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Azerbaijani_combattants_of_the_2020_Nagorno-Karabakh_conflict.jpg) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This article was selected by Isabel Freudenstein, a former intern and studying a Juris Doctor at the University of Sydney. Isabel graduated from the University of Sydney with a first-class honours in International Relations and a Bachelor of Arts/Advanced Studies in Politics and International Relations. Her thesis examined the changing nature of humanitarian intervention in a multipolar international system. Her main areas of interest include norms of international behaviour, international organisations, gender and migration. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **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 Ralph Housego and Oliver Owen explore federalism in the US and the development of Tik-Tok as a tool for digital searching.   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. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | [The Fractured Superpower: Federalism Is Remaking US Democracy and Foreign Policy](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/fractured-superpower-federalism-remaking-us-democracy-foreign-policy) While the federal government has always had jurisdiction over the United States’ foreign affairs, US states are increasingly acting with greater agency on both federal matters at home and international matters abroad. In [**Foreign Affairs**](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/fractured-superpower-federalism-remaking-us-democracy-foreign-policy), Jenna Bednar and Mariano-Florentino Cuéllar write that the perception of the US government as the country’s preeminent source of policy direction is becoming increasingly flawed as states begin to fill the policy vacuums left by partisan gridlock in Washington. Noting such examples as the California-Quebec cap-and-trade agreement, which created the largest carbon market in North America, and broader successful industry, research and environmental partnerships between states and foreign jurisdictions, the article argues there are many benefits of a greater foreign policy role for states. On domestic matters, states are often more politically stable than their federal counterparts, which creates opportunities for greater policy innovation that could drive international partnerships in key areas as well as act as a bulwark against potential acts of bolder federal partisanship (consider how many states resisted attempts to subvert the 2020 election). However, the authors recognise the inherent risks of an increasing political gap between Washington and the states, writing “If functional federalism is a strategic asset, dysfunctional federalism could be a recipe for weakening US power.”    Image credit: [**Mike Rastiollo**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/hellamike81/26549004234/in/photolist-Gs3A1j-VMMRHL-4GJtbP-ybmoro-4FoL4H-heGHc-9TntiZ-Jd5oT-4dmmP-88hfov-w6YSTb-LyYcYv-9JPSBX-x78JHk-5UTyDR-4B9GjP-65GEj4-5xVs6h-Cyjrrn-7psNrP-61TUKC-aomYqp-9PtCBA-UgEmMa-nG2Pt4-ah8qLg-JpZbVC-KHdGn9-5L7uWH-eLLFX-6TTD46-PzZukG-aGMHKD-buSS6S-buSRbW-6aDLkh-k3dPde-9mDGTk-22jVUr2-EreJGP-24PUV7S-QfsxZ-jG1GCc-9mFDN7-21UJJfG-HXY2Lx-doSWaW-c3ZLsY-dsCgsL-Vg6Kyf) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This article was selected by Ralph Housego. Ralph is a fourth-year student at the University of Sydney studying a Bachelor of Arts/Advanced Studies (Politics and International Relations, Political Economy). Ralph currently works as a media analyst at GRACosway, a strategic communications and public affairs consulting firm, and as a research assistant at the digital government advocacy platform, Advoc8. Ralph’s areas of interest centre on Australia’s trading relationships with its Indo-Pacific neighbours as well as broader geostrategic and economic issues in the region. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | [**For Gen Z, TikTok is the New Search Engine**](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/16/technology/gen-z-tiktok-search-engine.html)  In this New York Times article, **[Kalley Huang considers](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/16/technology/gen-z-tiktok-search-engine.html" \t "_blank)** the rise of new social media platforms, particularly TikTok, as information and search engine networks that are coming to disrupt and replace the dominance of Google. She suggests that TikTok’s rise as a discovery tool is part of a broader transition in digital searching, and whilst Google remains the world’s most used search engine, more and more people, particularly younger generations, are turning to social media channels instead. The transition is based on a range of factors, including the ease of searching capabilities and subsequent speed of results, the relevance of the information to the particular user given social media’s powerful algorithms, and the speed at which information can be ‘verified’ by other user comments. Huang suggests that this mode of searching is rooted in how young people discover information, not only to look for products, businesses and recommendations, but also to ask questions about how to do things and find explanations for what things mean. TikTok is steering into this transition too: the app is testing a keyword identification feature linking comments to search results, as well as a local content feed, so users can find businesses and events near them. As always, questions have been posed around the use of social media as information discovery, with concerns mostly based around misinformation circulation and echo chamber algorithms, as well as potential data privacy issues. Nonetheless, TikTok remains the most downloaded app for people between 18 and 24 and its use as younger generations’ search engine does not appear to br stopping.    Image Credit: [**Solen Feyissa**](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:TikTok_app.jpg) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This article was selected by Oliver Owens. Oliver is a recent graduate from the Australian National University where he studied a Bachelor of Politics, Philosophy and Economics, and a Bachelor of Visual Arts with a major in ceramics. He has previously worked at the Australian Trade and Investment Commission, and continues to pursue his arts practice by exhibiting work in galleries across Canberra and Sydney. Oliver’s research interests in international affairs are primarily associated with issues in security and climate policy, particularly across the Indo-Pacific region. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **What else we're reading** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | * Will Russia abide by the G7 price cap on its oil, or will it provoke a war of attrition? This is the question [**explored**](https://nationalinterest.org/feature/battle-over-russian-oil-just-beginning-204760) by Blaise Malley, Associate Editor at The National Interest. * In the New York Times, Keith Bradsher [**investigates**](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/20/business/europe-china-investment.html) the falling rates of European investment in China's economy. * Ramon Antonio Vargas [**reports**](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/sep/20/trump-lawyers-charges-documents-fbi-mar-a-lago) for The Guardian that Donald Trump's legal team admit to the possibility of the ex-president being charged over his keeping of documents at Mar-a-Lago. * Reporting for Reuters, Tom Perry [**writes**](https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/tehran-governor-accuses-protesters-attacks-least-22-arrested-2022-09-20/) of the recent protests in Iran over the death of a young woman in custody, which have spilled over into concerns about social rights, security and economic sanctions. * ABC technology reporter Ariel Bogle [**discusses**](https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2022-09-21/internet-online-safety-act-industry-codes/101456902) the implications of the Australian Government's recently introduced internet content moderation laws as part of the Online Safety Act. * Writing for Bloomberg, Irene Perez and Thomas Gaultieri [**examine**](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-08-08/barcelona-football-club-revamps-finances-to-buy-players-in-the-transfer-market) the billion dollar financial meltdown of football giants FC Barcelona. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **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 edition'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 edition'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 fortnight's newsletter. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | | | |
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