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Our program year is now under way: our first event on 28 February explored Indonesia's new Criminal Code. (A summary has been posted to our news page.)   When we started Columns in 2020, it aimed to fill the gap arising from the suspension of our live events at Glover Cottages due to Covid restrictions. We have now been able to renew live events, but Columns has attracted a continuing readership and we are continuing to produce it in weeks when we don't hold a live event.   We look forward very much to seeing those of you who can make it to Glover Cottages - our events are publicised in advance on line - and hope that Columns continues to engage your interest in the months ahead.  With warmest wishes for a happy and healthy year,  Ian LincolnPresident Australian Institute of International Affairs NSW | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **From the Councillors** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | For our first edition of Columns for 2023, some of our Councillors and interns share a selection of articles, analytical pieces, videos and podcasts about what is happening in the world of international affairs. This week, they share an analysis of China expressed by former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, a UN report on the situation in Myanmar and an article about Ukraine.  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. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | [China Matters](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rlrkT8BXlg&ab_channel=ChinaMatters) China and its international relations remain the central geopolitical issue of our age. We need to understand the rise of China and what that means for the US-led system to which we have become accustomed. Kevin Rudd has a deep knowledge of the People’s Republic of China from his time as a diplomat, as foreign minister and as prime minister. He has also led the Asia Society think tank and completed a doctorate on China’s President Xi Jinping's worldview.  Rudd [**delivered**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rlrkT8BXlg&ab_channel=ChinaMatters) the Inaugural China Matters Oration in Brisbane on 15 February. He gave a thoughtful and concise introduction to developments in China over the three months since December 2022. The video recording of his talk is well worth watching. His talk concerned Chinese domestic politics and economics, but it was [**introduced**](https://chinamatters.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Introductory-remarks-by-Mr-Peter-Varghese.pdf) by Peter Varghese AO, the Chancellor of the University of Queensland and former Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, who said, “Australian policy must rest on its own view of China. We can and should draw on the analysis and insight of others, but we have distinctive interests which demand we come to our own conclusion. In arriving at these judgements we have to grapple with some fundamental questions. The US has described China as its pacing challenge, its strategic competitor and its ideological adversary. But how should Australia see China? China is clearly a strategic challenge. But that doesn’t make China our enemy or adversary.”  Image credit: [**Michael Lieu**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/mickeylieu/2440143842) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This video recording 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. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | [**Widespread Violence Continues in Myanmar**](https://www.lawfareblog.com/topic/arbiters-truth)  While two years have now passed since the military coup in Myanmar of February 2020, a report by the UN Human Rights Office last year [**has shed light**](https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/03/militarys-four-cuts-doctrine-drives-perpetual-human-rights-crisis-myanmar) on the continued violence. It reveals that the military have created a perpetual human rights crisis and committed widespread human rights abuses in nearly 80% of the country’s 330 towns. Turk describes the military’s ‘scorched earth’ policy, attempting to stamp out political opposition that has led to the detention of over 17,000 people and the death of almost 3,000. By 2022, violence had increased significantly in the north-west and south-east through indiscriminate airstrikes and shelling and mass burnings of villages. Tactics like these are remnants of earlier, well documented violence in Myanmar, such as the extremist violence against the Rohingya population in Rakhine in 2017. Compounding the intensifying violence is the blockages of main supply routes, preventing any humanitarian actors from reaching 17.6 million people in need. The report echoes calls by ASEAN and the UNSC for an immediate halt of violence and unhindered humanitarian access, but there has been little to no accountability for the perpetrators. It [**recommends**](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/myanmar-factsheet.pdf) that the situation be referred to the International criminal Court and that international actors must be more responsive in granting asylum and funding resettlement opportunities.  Image credit: [**iStock**](https://www.istockphoto.com/photo/myanmar-flag-gm1169907607-323577073) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This UN report was selected by Isabel Freudenstein. Isabel graduated from a Bachelor of Art and Bachelor of Advanced Studies at the University of Sydney with a First Class Honours in International Relations. Her thesis examined the changing nature of humanitarian intervention in a multipolar international system. Isabel is currently studying a Juris Doctor at the University of Sydney. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | [**Ukraine: Is Anything Negotiable?**](https://johnmenadue.com/myths-and-a-ukrainian-settlement/)   A spate of articles marked the anniversary on 24 February of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The brutality and illegitimacy of the war have made it difficult - even unimaginable - to propose a peace agreement that would give any ground to Russia. The Ukrainian government has said that its sovereignty over Crimea and the Donbas region is not negotiable. But military victory over Russia appears unrealistic. The alternative is for the slaughter and the crippling of Ukraine's infrastructure and productive capacity to continue. Sydney University emeritus professor Graeme Gill has given a thoughtful, balanced [**analysis**](https://johnmenadue.com/myths-and-a-ukrainian-settlement/) of the possibilities for a negotiated peace in Pearls and Irritations of 17 February 2023. (Professor Gill [**gave an address**](https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/news-item/russia-after-ukraine/) to the Institute last April on the bleak prospects for Russia in the wake of the war.)  Image credit: [**Max Kukurudziak**](https://unsplash.com/photos/qbc3Zmxw0G8) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | 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. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **From the Interns** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | In addition to our Councillors' recommendations, we invited our interns to share with you what they have found insightful or interesting in the world of international affairs over this week. This week Nadia Maunsell looks at the most recent projects being funded as part of the Partnership for Australia-Indonesia Research and Ella Whitehurst discusses the use of artificial intelligence in geopolitics.  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. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | [Domestic violence research funded by Australia-Indonesia partnership](https://www.ft.com/content/68e2c6d3-64da-4799-bbb0-0fb4dec8a0ed) The [**most recent project**](https://pair.australiaindonesiacentre.org/news/genuine-cross-country-collaboration-underpins-research-projects-at-the-australia-indonesia-centre/) to be funded by the Australia-Indonesia Centre will study domestic violence trends in Indonesia during the pandemic. Dr Irwan, an assistant professor from Hasanuddin University in Indonesia, will lead the interdisciplinary research team with the goal of making meaningful recommendations that can be implemented by policymakers in both countries.  [**The Partnership for Australia-Indonesia Research (PAIR)**](https://pair.australiaindonesiacentre.org/about/) is a development initiative that seeks to better understand the challenges and opportunities presented by Indonesia's rapid physical and economic development. PAIR is funded by the Australian government and implemented by the Australia-Indonesia Centre. The Centre's four major projects currently include: sustainable upgrading of the South Sulawesi seaweed industry; maximising effectivenessof the South Sulawesi rail line; a study on young people's skills, education and livelihood aspirations; and a [**study to**](https://pair.australiaindonesiacentre.org/featured/improving-the-health-and-wellbeing-of-rural-communities-in-south-sulawesi/)improve young people's health and well-being outcomes.  Image credit: [**MV Law**](https://www.mvlaw.com.au/family-domestic-violence-leave/) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This article was selected by Nadia Maunsell. Nadia is a recent graduate with a Bachelor of International Studies and a Bachelor of Media from the University of New South Wales. Currently, she works as a Research and Content Analyst for a financial education start-up. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | [**Innovation: a Geopolitical Code to Success**](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/eric-schmidt-innovation-power-technology-geopolitics)  Technological expertise, especially artificial intelligence (AI), is increasingly becoming influential in developing geopolitical strength. The article [**discusses**](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/eric-schmidt-innovation-power-technology-geopolitics) the potential for AI to revolutionise technological innovation, and the benefits that countries who lead in the sector will gain. Although AI is still an emerging technology, it is an area that is already demonstrating changes due to technological development in warfare and military intelligence. For example, Ukraine's advantages in technology over Russia have proven critical for their successes this past year.  Innovation will strengthen a country’s hard political and economic powers, as well as soft power. While the US is still leading against China in some aspects regarding technological innovation, government officials in Beijing are certainly pushing ahead with huge investments aimed at coming first in the race to AI supremacy. With regards to the US, the article outlines essential strategies for the development and usage of technology and AI that need to be implemented for the US to maintain its lead.  Image Credit: **[Pixabay](https://pixabay.com/vectors/america-china-war-usa-discussion-5129061/" \t "_blank)** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This article was selected by Ella Whitehurst. Ella is currently in her final year in a Juris Doctor at University of New South Wales, and has a Bachelor of Asian Studies and a Bachelor of Languages from the Australian National University. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **What else we're reading** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | * This International Women's Day, UN Women [**tackles**](https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/in-focus/2023/03/in-focus-international-womens-day) the persistent gender gap in digital access keeping women from unlocking technology's full potential with a campaign featuring the theme, DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality. * Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Development Intelligence Lab have co-released a report titled Pulse Check, which [**details the five biggest challenges**](https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/61aeea4630faad7963d2fc75/63fbee3f1ed0511db4dfcd6e_Pulse%20Check_Development_Policy.pdf) for Australia's new development strategy according to 100+ experts. * In the second series of his original book Musings, Singapore's former foreign minister George Yeo [**gives his perspective**](https://www.amazon.com.au/George-Yeo-Musings-Two/dp/9811259720) on India, China, ASEAN, Europe, the US and other parts of the world, and how Singapore's history is connected to each of them. * In The Guardian, Amy Hawkins [**discusses**](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/feb/22/china-and-japan-meet-tokyo-formal-security-talks-stabilise-tensions-military) the recent security talks between China and Japan aimed at reducing regional tensions, the first to have happened in four years. * With rising wages and current China trade relations, many manufacturers are looking elsewhere. The Economic podcast 'Money Talks' [**looks at**](https://www.economist.com/podcasts/2023/03/02/what-are-the-alternatives-to-made-in-china) potential alternatives for more sustainable supply chains within Asia. * The Lowy Institute outlines changing power distributions within Asia with the [**publication**](https://power.lowyinstitute.org/report/) of their 2023 Asia Power Index report. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **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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