

# The Global Weekly Report

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**W**elcome to The Global Weekly Report.

**Global Weekly** is your trusted source for understanding the complexities of today's world. Our comprehensive analysis helps you stay ahead of the curve, making informed decisions and developing strategies to navigate the ever-changing global environment.

Our team of dedicated analysts brings you comprehensive insights and analysis on key events and trends from around the world. This coverage provides an in-depth look at significant occurrences across various regions, highlighting critical developments and their potential implications. Whether it's political shifts, economic changes, or social movements, we delve deep into the factors driving these events and offer our expert perspectives.

Stay informed with our Flagship weekly report, featuring highlights and trend watch sections for North America, Latin America, Europe, Eurasia, the Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Indo-Pacific, East Asia, and Oceania. Each region is meticulously analysed to ensure that you receive the most relevant and up-to-date information. Our analysts consider historical contexts, current situations, and future projections to provide a well-rounded view of global affairs.

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## North America

### Highlights

In the USA, on 6 August, Kamala Harris announced Tim Walz, the Minnesota governor, as her vice-presidential candidate at a Philadelphia rally. Harris praised Walz's legislative record as Governor, describing her running-mate as 'a leader who will help unite our nation and move us forward'. Walz's attacks on opponents - Donald Trump and JD Vance - signal an aggressive campaign strategy. Recent polls suggest that the Harris-Walz ticket will likely pose a significant challenge to the Trump campaign. On 5 August, a US judge ruled that Google has an illegal monopoly and has violated antitrust law. This ruling is a significant step on behalf of federal authorities to reduce Google's hold on internet search engines, possibly leading to the future break-up of Google's parent company, Alphabet.



### Rewind

**United States of America:** On 8 August, a US District Judge dismissed six out of eight lawsuits brought by Mexico against US gun manufacturers, which alleged that these companies were fueling a weapons trafficking trade responsible for the flow of approximately 500,000 guns annually into Mexico. Judge Dennis Saylor ruled that Mexico failed to prove the direct connection between firearms sold in the US and the violence in Mexico, leaving Smith & Wesson Brands and Witmer Public Safety Group as the remaining defendants. Despite the ruling, Mexico's Foreign Ministry has announced plans to appeal the decision. Given this legal setback, it is unlikely that Mexico will succeed in its challenge against these manufacturers. The ongoing cross-border gun trade is expected to persist, contributing to a ***persistent gun violence risk in Mexico in the medium to long term.***

**United States of America:** On 9 August, Microsoft researchers reported that Iran government-backed hackers attempted to break into the account of a 'high ranking official' on the US presidential campaign in June. The Microsoft report highlights that, along with China and Russia, Iran has been ramping up attempts to disrupt this November's 2024 election. The breaches were unsuccessful in accessing other accounts. In the 2016 election, Russian hackers targeted the Hillary Clinton Campaign, the Democratic National Committee, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and the accounts of numerous American public servants. Although governments claim to have become far more 'cyber aware', it is likely that there will be ***increasing risk to the US's security and political apparatus*** in the run-up to the 5 November election.

**Canada:** On 9 August, Canada's two main rail companies, Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC) and Canadian National Railway, announced plans to lock out employees on 22 August if labour contract negotiations fail, potentially halting the country's transport of goods. The rail network is critical to Canada's economy, facilitating the export of key commodities like grain, potash, and coal across its vast geography. The companies and the Teamsters union recently resumed stalled talks with the help of a federal mediator, but Canadian National expressed doubts about the union's willingness to negotiate meaningfully and formally requested intervention from Labour Minister Steven MacKinnon. The ***risk of labour flexibility in Canada is likely to increase*** if a lockout or strike occurs, particularly during the fall peak shipping season.

## Latin America

### Highlights

In Venezuela, on 5 August, the government launched criminal investigations into opposition leaders Edmundo González Urrutia and María Corina Machado for allegedly inciting disobedience after refusing to concede the 28 July presidential election. This move is likely to heighten political instability, with US sanctions that were temporarily lifted expected to resume, further straining Venezuela's economy. In Mexico, on 8 August, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador refused a Ukrainian request to arrest Russian President Vladimir Putin during his visit for Claudia Sheinbaum's inauguration. This decision underscores the value placed on maintaining relations with Russia, though it is unlikely to significantly impact Mexico-US relations in the near term.

### Rewind

**Colombia:** On 5 August, the Colombian government announced the authorisation of peace talks with the Gaitanista Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AGC), the country's largest criminal organisation, known for illegal mining, cocaine trafficking, and targeted assassinations. The AGC, composed of former far-right paramilitary members, has expressed openness to a peace deal, creating a **realistic possibility that a successful agreement could be reached in the near to medium term**. For President Gustavo Petro, who currently holds a 26% approval rating and legislative challenges, a successful peace deal with the AGC could represent a significant political victory, but the outcome remains uncertain and beset by challenges. The potential for political stabilisation through these negotiations is notable, but the **risk of setbacks or continued violence remains**.

**Costa Rica:** On 6 August, Costa Rican police, in coordination with US and Panamanian law enforcement, arrested 21 individuals linked to human trafficking operations facilitating the movement of migrants, primarily from Ecuador, to the United States. These individuals are accused of providing logistical support for migrants travelling through Costa Rica as part of a broader land route from South America to the US. While these arrests mark a significant achievement for the involved law enforcement agencies, it is **unlikely that they will substantially deter illegal migration**, given the worsening security conditions in countries like Ecuador and the lack of comprehensive immigration reform in the US. The **risk of continued human trafficking and illegal migration through Central America remains high**, driven by persistent push factors in the region.

**Brazil-Nicaragua:** On 8 August, Nicaragua's government, led by Daniel Ortega, expelled the Brazilian ambassador, prompting Brazil, under President Lula da Silva, to reciprocate, highlighting worsening relations between the two formerly allied left-wing governments. Tensions began when Brazilian President Lula, at the request of Pope Francis, sought the release of Bishop Rolando José Álvarez Lagos, an Ortega critic. Subsequently, the Brazilian ambassador refused to attend Nicaragua's Sandinista revolution anniversary and Lula insisted on Venezuela releasing its election vote tallies, contrasting with Ortega's support for the Maduro government. In the near term, it is **unlikely that relations between Nicaragua and Brazil will improve or that regional tensions will ease**, as the Venezuelan election issue exacerbates divisions between left-wing autocracies, like Nicaragua and Venezuela, and left-wing democracies, such as Brazil and Colombia.



## Western Europe

### Highlights

In the United Kingdom, over the weekend of 3-4 August, far-right riots erupted in response to mass stabbing and the subsequent deaths of three young girls in Southport, fueled by online misinformation. Rioters targeted mosques, looted stores, and launched rockets at police, causing widespread chaos. Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer called an emergency COBRA meeting to establish mobile police units in response to the violence. In Norway on 8 August, Norway summoned an Israeli embassy representative over Israel's decision to revoke the diplomatic status of eight Norwegian envoys to the Palestinian Authority. Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz cited Norway's recognition of a Palestinian State as part of their justification, enhancing the risk of further tension by enabling a tit-for-tat response.



### Rewind

**Spain:** On 8 August, Catalan MP Carles Puigdemont returned to Spain to give a speech in Barcelona before vanishing into the crowd after Catalan police and Spanish courts threatened Puigdemont with immediate arrest and moved to increase security and limit access to the Catalanian Parliament and Barcelona. Puigdemont has been living in self-imposed exile in Belgium to avoid arrest since 2017 after attempting to establish Catalanian independence during his 2016-17 presidency, consequently sparking a Spanish constitutional crisis. Puigdemont believes that returning to Catalonia will promote defence against "Spanish repression", and the **risk of increasing regional tension is high as a result**. Continued action may come to threaten both the already-delicate regional relations between Catalonia and Spain and the stability of the current Spanish coalition government and its external supporter - Puigdemont's separatist Junts party.

**Austria:** On 7 August, Taylor Swift cancelled her three concerts in Vienna due to terror threats following the arrest of a 19-year-old reportedly affiliated with the Islamic State. The Interior Ministry noted the spread of misinformation regarding the incident, while highlighting the role of international cooperation in thwarting the attack. The successful prevention of the attack underscores the effectiveness of global intelligence-sharing networks. However, this incident could exacerbate ethnic tensions in Austria, where Islamophobic incidents reached a record high in 2023. The **risk of further societal divisions may increase in the short to medium term**, particularly as the security situation evolves.

**Sweden:** On 8 August, the Swedish Migration Agency forecasted that Sweden would experience net emigration in 2024 for the first time in over 50 years, coupled with the lowest number of asylum seekers since 1997. This shift is driven by a 15% year-on-year decrease in net migration and a 60% increase in emigration, primarily among individuals born outside Sweden, including from Iraq, Somalia, and Syria. The trend reflects the success of the right-wing Sweden Democrats, who have influenced immigration policy through a confidence-and-supply agreement with the governing coalition of the Moderate Party, Christian Democrats, and Liberals. The Sweden Democrats, who gained 3% in the 2022 election, bringing them to 20.5% of the vote, have focused heavily on reducing immigration and asylum intake, indicating their growing political influence, which creates a **realistic possibility in the near future of significant immigration policy change**.

## Eurasia

### Highlights

In Russia, on 6 August, Ukrainian forces launched a significant cross-border incursion into the Kursk region, pushing over 20 miles into Russian territory. This marks a major escalation in the conflict, with Ukrainian Armed Forces using tanks and armoured vehicles, raising tensions as Russia warns of potential consequences towards NATO. A state of emergency has been declared, with neighbouring Oblasts beginning evacuations. On 9 August, Ukraine also launched a large-scale drone attack against the city of Lipetsk, resulting in the evacuation of four villages. The attack, following EU support for Ukraine's right to defend itself, further escalates the conflict and underscores the growing intensity of the war.



### Rewind

**Bulgaria:** On 7 August, the Bulgarian parliament passed a law banning the 'propaganda, promotion, or indictment in any way' of views related to 'non-traditional sexual orientation' in schools, with 159 votes in favour out of 240. The nationalist Revival party initiated the motion, which has been condemned by human rights groups and NGOs as an attack on Bulgaria's LGBT+ community, drawing comparisons to similar legislation in Hungary and Russia. Bulgaria currently ranks as the third worst nation in the EU for LGBTQ+ rights protection, with critics fearing the law will exacerbate societal discrimination. Given the current scenario, it is **likely that political instability will increase in the short term** as LGBTQ+ rights groups protest in Sofia. Additionally, the **risk of regional tensions is likely to rise** as the European Court of Justice is likely to challenge the new law, potentially leading to further legal and political disputes between Bulgaria and the EU.

**Kazakhstan:** On 9 August, leaders from Central Asia convened in Astana, Kazakhstan, for the 6th Consultative Meeting of the Heads of State of Central Asia. Participants from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Azerbaijan focused on enhancing regional cooperation. Central to the discussions was the Central Asia 2040 Strategy, which aims to advance regional cooperation through infrastructure projects such as the Kambarata Hydropower Plant and the 'Green Power Plan,' promoting solar and wind energy across the Caspian Sea. Given the current scenario, the **risk of regional tensions is likely to significantly decrease in the long term** as Central Asian states continue to integrate their economies.

**Moldova:** On 7 August, Moldova's Central Election Commission (CEC) rejected the registration application of the pro-Russia Victory bloc, which sought to challenge the ruling pro-EU Party of Action and Solidarity in the 2024 presidential election and EU membership referendum. The Victory bloc, formed from the previously banned ŞOR Party, unites pro-Russian, eurosceptic, and nationalist factions that oppose Moldova's integration with Europe, instead advocating for closer ties with Moscow. Led by Israeli-Moldovan billionaire Ilan Shor, the bloc has gained popularity despite allegations that Shor is attempting to destabilise Moldova to install a pro-Russian regime. The CEC's decision to deny the bloc's registration is **likely to increase political instability in the short to long term**, as eurosceptic and pro-Russian sentiments persist, even as Moldova continues to align with the EU and NATO.

## Middle East and North Africa

### Highlights

In Lebanon, on 5 August, Hezbollah launched a drone strike on northern Israel, targeting an Israeli military base and wounding two soldiers. This attack, in retaliation for the recent killings of senior Hamas and Hezbollah leaders, has escalated regional tensions. While the strike was less intense than expected, it marks a continuation of near-daily exchanges of fire between Hezbollah and Israel since October 2023, backed by Iran. The situation is expected to strain regional stability further. In Iraq, on 5 August, two rockets struck the al Asad airbase, wounding five US personnel. This attack, possibly linked to the recent escalation between Iran and Israel, prompted the US to deploy additional military resources to the Middle East, aiming to protect its troops and Israel from further attacks. The strike is likely to exacerbate hostilities and increase regional tensions.

### Rewind

**Türkiye:** On 7 August, Türkiye filed a request to join South Africa's case accusing Israel of genocide in Gaza, submitting a statement of intervention to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague through Turkish legislators and its ambassador to the Netherlands. Türkiye, a vocal critic of Israel's actions in Gaza, joins Spain, Mexico, Colombia, Nicaragua, Libya, and Palestinian officials in seeking participation in the case, which was initially filed by South Africa last year, accusing Israel of violating the genocide convention. Israel has dismissed the charge, accusing South Africa of acting as 'an emissary of Hamas.' Türkiye's involvement is likely to deteriorate its relations with Israel further, **increasing regional tensions in the short to medium term.**

**Palestinian territories:** On 8 August, Israel escalated its airstrikes across the Gaza Strip, killing at least 25 people, with attacks concentrated in the Al-Bureij and Al-Nuseirat camps, which Israel views as 'strongholds of armed militants.' The strikes also resulted in casualties in Gaza City and Khan Younis, with the total number of Palestinian casualties since 7 October 2023 reaching 39,699, according to the Gaza Health Ministry. In response to Hamas-led attacks, which have caused 1,200 Israeli deaths and led to the kidnapping of around 250 civilians, Israel has intensified its military actions. The **ongoing violence is likely to escalate regional tensions and attacks further**, making it increasingly difficult for both sides to reach a ceasefire agreement in the near term.

**Egypt - Qatar:** On 8 August, Egypt, Qatar, and the US issued a joint statement urging Israel and Hamas to resume negotiations for a ceasefire and hostage deal, with talks proposed to take place in either Doha or Cairo on 15 August. The leaders of the three nations highlighted that a framework agreement is already in place, with only the implementation details left to finalise. Following the statement, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu agreed to participate in the negotiations, though Hamas has yet to respond. The recent appointment of Yahya Sinwar, a hardliner who masterminded the 7 October 2023 strikes on Israel, as Hamas's new political leader, adds uncertainty to the potential talks. If the negotiations proceed, Sinwar would be the primary negotiator for Hamas. The **joint statement poses a realistic possibility of somewhat easing regional tensions, although the outcome remains uncertain.**

## Sub-Saharan Africa

### Highlights

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, on 6 August, a violent altercation in Bosobolo Territory, North Ubangi, due to a longstanding land conflict between the Bodeme-pandé and Bokenge communities left 14 injured and 110 houses destroyed by fire. Despite efforts to establish a buffer zone, the potential for further violence remains high. In Ethiopia, recent macroeconomic reforms following an IMF financial package have led to significant price inflation, causing widespread anxiety among consumers in Addis Ababa. The government's crackdown on businesses accused of price hikes and hoarding has further heightened tensions. The risk of unrest over these economic reforms is expected to increase in the short to medium term.

### Rewind

**Niger:** On 6 August, Niger's military government joined Mali in severing diplomatic ties with Ukraine in response to Tuareg attacks on Russian Wagner forces and Malian troops, signalling a unified military front in the Sahel region. The move, viewed as a show of solidarity under the Alliance of the Sahel State charter, follows comments by Ukraine's spy agency head, hinting at support for the Tuareg rebels involved in the deadly assault. The attack, which resulted in the deaths of 47 Malian soldiers and 84 Russian mercenaries near the Algerian border, is the deadliest since Wagner's deployment in the region two years ago. As Russia and Ukraine vie for influence in Africa, this severance of ties underscores the alignment of military-led governments in the Sahel with Moscow. It is likely that Burkina Faso, another military-led country in the region, may follow suit, while **the attacks are unlikely to alter the strong ties between Moscow and Sahel's military regimes.**

**Kenya:** On 8 August, young protesters returned to the streets of Nairobi, marking the 'Nane Nane' march, in response to the swearing-in of President Ruto's new cabinet members. The protest, named after the date 'eight eight,' reflects dissatisfaction with the new cabinet, which includes several opposition figures but largely consists of members from the previous administration dissolved under public pressure. Demonstrators expressed frustration over the continued dominance of the same political elite, whom they accuse of corruption and stagnation. Despite the low turnout, the protest indicates underlying discontent with the government. While it is **unlikely that these demonstrations and the risk of protest will persist**, the political climate remains tense, and the government's future actions will be crucial in determining the stability of the situation in Kenya.

**Nigeria:** On 9 August, the Benue state government confirmed a bandit attack on Ayati village that resulted in 30 deaths, with the toll likely to rise. The assault, reportedly carried out by local bandits with support from herdsmen, is seen as retaliation for recent state security actions that expelled herdsmen from grazing lands and destroyed their settlements. This incident is part of the ongoing farmer-herder conflict that has plagued the region for years. The attack raises concerns about potential reprisal actions by farming communities against herder settlements. In the longer term, **the cycle of violence between these groups is likely to persist**, further destabilising the Middle Belt region.



## Indo-Pacific

### Highlights

In Bangladesh, on 5 August, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled to India after weeks of violent anti-government protests, resulting in over 300 deaths. An interim government has been formed, involving Nobel Peace Prize winner Mohammad Yunis as Chief Advisor, and stabilisation efforts are underway. While domestic instability may decrease in the short term, the likelihood of significant political change is high following Hasina's departure. In Thailand, on 7 August, the Constitutional Court dissolved the Move Forward Party (MFP) for proposing reforms to laws protecting the monarchy. This decision delays political liberalisation in the short term as the MFP reorganises and its members seek to join other parties.



### Rewind

**Indonesia:** On 6 August, Indonesian security forces recovered the body of New Zealand helicopter pilot Glen Malcolm Conning, who was killed in an alleged attack by the West Papua Liberation Army (WPLA), the armed wing of the Free Papua Movement (FPM). The FPM has historically targeted both local and foreign workers in remote regions as part of its efforts to pressure the Indonesian government for Papua's independence. Although this incident does not represent a significant escalation, it underscores the persistent political instability in the region and the ongoing risk to civilians amidst the conflict between government forces and separatist fighters. The levels of ***continued low-level violence and associated risks in Papua are likely to remain high.***

**Laos:** On 8 August, the Bank of Laos (BOL) and 15 commercial banks signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a centralised foreign exchange market aimed at stabilising the national currency, the Kip, and facilitating international currency transactions. This initiative follows a period of economic difficulties marked by high inflation and volatile exchange rates, which hindered the BOL's ability to implement effective growth policies. According to Soulisack Thamnouvong, Director General of the BOL's Monetary Policy Department, the new system is designed to stabilise the foreign exchange market and enhance government control over economic planning. It is ***highly likely that this development will contribute to economic stabilisation*** and set the stage for future growth.

**Philippines:** On 9 August, the Philippine Court of Appeals ruled that the Philippine Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) exceeded its authority when it ordered the shutdown of news website Rappler in 2018. Rappler, co-founded by Nobel Laureate Maria Ressa, had been accused of violating foreign equity restrictions but continued operating despite the order. Historically, Rappler faced significant criticism from former President Rodrigo Duterte for its coverage of his controversial anti-drug campaign. The court's ruling represents a significant victory for human rights and freedom of expression in the Philippines, underscoring the critical role of legal institutions in safeguarding these freedoms. However, the ***degree of risk for Human Rights issues within the Philippines is unlikely to see a significant decrease.***

## East Asia

### Highlights

In China, on 7 August, the People's Liberation Army conducted a joint sea and air patrol around the contested Scarborough Shoal, coinciding with joint drills by the Philippines, the US, Canada, and Australia in the region. This simultaneous military activity is likely to escalate tensions in the South China Sea, particularly as the Philippines strengthens its military ties with Western allies, potentially provoking retaliatory measures from China. In Japan, on 8 August, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida announced plans to push for a constitutional amendment that would formalise the existence of the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) and address military and disaster contingencies. This move, which shifts away from Japan's pacifist Article 9, is expected to intensify debates between antimilitarist and pro-military groups, particularly as Kishida seeks to garner conservative support ahead of the party's presidential election.

### Rewind

**Macau:** On 5 August, Macau's Statistic and Census Service reported a net increase of 814 incorporated companies in Q2 2024, with 50% in Business Services. Mainland China contributed 32.7% of the capital for these new companies, surpassing Hong Kong's 5% share, marking a shift in economic influence. The International Monetary Fund recently projected a 13.9% GDP growth for Macau in 2024, driven by a tourism recovery and rising private investment. This growth trend is likely to continue, with Mainland China's increasing economic influence potentially accelerating. This latter point, especially, is **highly likely to lead to rising concerns about the long-term impact on Macau's autonomy, investor confidence, and overall business environment.**

**Mongolia:** On 6 August, the Mongolian Stock Exchange reported a record market value of MNT₮12.3 trillion (approximately US\$361.8 million), marking a 3.05% increase following US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's visit. This surge, the second in a month, underscores the positive trajectory of Mongolia's economy under the socialist Mongolian People's Party, which is focused on attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from the US and Western Europe while maintaining strong ties with Russia and China. The establishment of a Roadmap for Expanded Economic Partnership between the US and Mongolia during Blinken's visit is likely to foster further investment, particularly in the digital economy and critical minerals sector. As such, Mongolia's economy is expected to continue its upward development in the long term, with increasing interest from American companies and a **reduced level of economic risk** alongside that.

**South Korea:** On 9 August, President Yoon Suk Yeol visited military headquarters in Gyeryong to inspect security measures and review preparations for upcoming joint military drills with the United States. This marks Yoon's third visit to the military headquarters since taking office, highlighting a strategic shift in South Korea's domestic politics towards prioritising military readiness and stronger international alliances. Yoon underscored the importance of a robust defensive posture in response to escalating North Korean threats, including recent provocations. He also asserted South Korea's commitment to self-reliance in security, signalling a firm stance in dealing with regional threats. Given this context, South Korea's **military expenditure is likely to rise in the medium term, potentially further stimulating regional tensions.**

## Oceania

### Highlights

In Australia, on 10 August, Foreign Minister Penny Wong condemned Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich's remarks suggesting the starvation of Gaza civilians could be justified. Wong's stance, echoed by the UK, Germany, and France, emphasises that such actions are war crimes and never justifiable. This condemnation is likely to heighten international tensions and increase diplomatic pressure on Israel amid ongoing calls for a Gaza ceasefire. Also in Australia, on the same day, former Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating criticised the AUKUS defence pact, warning that it risks ceding military control to the US and turning Australia into its '51st state.' Keating's opposition to AUKUS, which he views as compromising Australia's sovereignty and unnecessarily antagonising China, is expected to fuel domestic debate and increase opposition to the pact in the near term.

### Rewind

**New Zealand:** On 7 August, New Zealand's Parliament passed the Local Government (Māori Wards) Amendment Bill, requiring councils that established Māori wards without prior referenda to hold binding polls during the 2025 local elections. The bill, reversing a Labour government decision that removed referenda requirements, signals the coalition government's stance on ensuring democratic processes for Māori wards, which were designed to enhance Māori representation. Critics argue this move undermines Māori rights and may deepen societal divisions. The reintroduction of referenda is **likely to heighten social tensions** and spark further debate on Māori representation, **increasing the risk of political instability in the short to medium term.**

**Fiji:** On 11 August, the Chinese Foreign Ministry announced that Fiji's Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka will visit China from 14 to 21 August, marking an opportunity to strengthen the comprehensive strategic partnership between the two nations. This visit follows reports in March that Fiji would maintain a policing cooperation agreement with China, sparking concerns in Australia amidst ongoing geopolitical competition between China and the United States in the Asia-Pacific region. The Chinese ministry emphasised the visit as a chance to build a closer bilateral community. Rabuka's visit to China will take place shortly after the annual Pacific Islands Forum meeting in Fiji, where regional peace, security, and strategic goals for 2050 are key discussion points. This visit is **likely to deepen Fiji's ties with China**, potentially influencing regional dynamics and security alliances in the Pacific.

**Australia:** On 11 August, Australia's top intelligence official, Mike Burgess, confirmed that Iran is among 'at least three or four' countries involved in foreign interference within Australia's diaspora communities. As ASIO's Director General, Burgess noted that Iran has been actively attempting to intimidate and surveil Australian citizens, choosing to publicly name Iran due to prior ministerial disclosures. These revelations highlight rising concerns about espionage and foreign interference as critical security issues in Australia. This situation is **likely to heighten scrutiny of foreign influence, especially within diaspora communities.**

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