

Hostage dilemma Netanyahu faces choice between prisoner swaps and attempted rescue — PAGE 3

# Israel prepares for ground invasion

1,300 Gaza targets hit as Biden backs ‘right’ of response to Hamas attack

Army says civilians’ bodies – some infants – found at kibbutz near border

UN estimates 200,000 Palestinians displaced as water emergency looms



JOHN REED — JERUSALEM

Israel pounded the Gaza Strip yesterday and prepared for a ground invasion of the enclave, three days after an attack by Hamas triggered the bloodiest war on the country’s territory for decades. The Israeli military said it had hit more than 1,300 targets in Gaza to date in response to Saturday’s deadly incursion by the militant group, while more than 4,500 rockets had been fired back from the enclave. As sirens warning of further rocket attacks sounded across Israel, with many missiles aimed towards the city of Ashkelon, the country’s military said it had found the bodies of “dozens” of civilians, including infants and children, at a kibbutz near the Gaza border. The

Israel Defense Forces described the Kfar Aza site as “a massacre: children, women and elderly . . . were butchered”. The kibbutz was one of the last sites where Israeli troops subdued armed Palestinian militants in fighting that continued into Monday morning. The IDF said that the casualties numbered in the “dozens [and] we are still counting”. The IDF said the area near the Gaza border was “more or less secure”, adding that it had retrieved the bodies of 1,500 Palestinians who had stormed Israeli territory. President Joe Biden said Israel had both the “right” and the “duty” to respond to the attacks by Hamas, as he confirmed that Americans were being held hostage by the terrorist group. Describing the attacks by Hamas as

“sheer evil” that brought back grim memories of “genocide and anti-semitism”, Biden vowed that the US would “stand with Israel”. Biden called on Congress to help bolster aid to Israel as needed and said it was more broadly time for “the United States to come together”. For the third successive day Israel also shelled sites in Lebanon, its neighbour to the north, in response to a volley of rockets launched across the border. Israel has called up a further 60,000 reservists in addition to the record 300,000 mobilised this week. It deployed 35 military battalions and four divisions as it builds up “an infrastructure for future operations” in apparent preparation for a widely anticipated land attack on Gaza.

Israeli soldiers carry a body from the ruined homes of Kfar Aza, a kibbutz near the Gaza border — Ilia Yefimovich/dpa As Israel prepared for a prolonged Gaza war, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s Likud party said the ruling coalition had authorised him to negotiate the formation of an emergency unity government. Talks were “advancing with great strides”, it said. More than 2mn people live in the Hamas-controlled enclave and tens of thousands have already fled their homes seeking shelter from Israeli strikes from the air and sea. According to the UN, the bombardment has displaced at least 200,000 people. Yousef al-Aqqad, director of the European Gaza Hospital in Khan Younis

in the south of the enclave, said the area had been shelled every day since Saturday, with 87 killed, including women and children. “Houses and apartment blocks have been bombed,” he said. “We write ‘unknown’ on the bodies. We hear the bombing every second.” The UN warned it expected “a severe shortage of already scarce drinkable water” to affect more than 600,000 people in the territory, which Israeli authorities have cut off from water and electricity as part of a “complete siege”. The IDF said more than 900 Israelis had been killed since Saturday’s incursion. Palestinian authorities said 830 of their citizens had been killed. Additional reporting by James Shotter in Jerusalem, Max Seddon in Moscow and James Politi in Washington

## Main points

- Benjamin Netanyahu’s Likud says coalition partners have allowed talks with opposition parties on a unity government
- Vladimir Putin blames US policy for the conflict and says the UN should work on creating a Palestinian state
- UN raises alarm over a looming shortage of drinkable water in Gaza for 610,000 people as Israel cuts supplies
- EU says aid to Palestinian territories will continue while it completes a review, a reversal of its previous position
- Israeli military says it has shelled southern Lebanon in response to a volley of rockets launched across the border
- Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei says those who link his regime to Hamas’s attack are ‘mistaken’

## Inside

- News & Analysis** Conflict threatens to spill into Egypt; Biden forced into foreign policy shift; Kidnapping dilemma for Netanyahu; and Regional threat round-up **Pages 2-3**
- Markets** Oil traders nervous but not terrified **Page 13**
- Opinion** Kim Ghattas **Page 23**



## Lift rates to bring inflation into line with G7, says IMF

Higher inflation than in other G7 nations will require further increases in interest rates by the Bank of England, a top IMF official has warned. Chief economist Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas told the FT that headline consumer price inflation will average 7.7 per cent this year before dropping to 3.7 per cent next. The IMF has also warned on the threats from rising bond yields. **Reports** ► PAGES 4 & 7 **Big Read** ► PAGE 21 **Martin Wolf** ► PAGE 23

# Starmer pledges to ‘bulldoze’ planning regulations in new housebuilding era

JIM PICKARD AND GEORGE PARKER — LIVERPOOL

Sir Keir Starmer has promised to “bulldoze” the planning system and work with the private sector to unleash a “big build” across the UK as part of radical action to accelerate housebuilding. Starmer used his party conference speech yesterday to promise that Labour would build new towns and also “speed ahead” on the transition to a low-carbon economy if returned to power. Speaking for an hour, the Labour leader criticised what he called the political and economic chaos of recent years under multiple shortlived Conservative administrations, insisting his party would offer a return to stability. He claimed there was little to show for 13 years of Tory rule in contrast to the achievements of the New Labour gov-

ernment from 1997 to 2010. “Thirteen years of ‘things can only get better’ versus 13 years of ‘things have only got worse,’” he said. Starmer pledged to oversee a “decade of national renewal” if Labour won the general election, expected next year. Along with offering stability in “an age of insecurity”, he said Labour would offer hope: “What is broken can be repaired, what is ruined can be rebuilt.” Starmer’s housing proposals include planning reforms, a generation of “new towns”, creation of a “planning passport” to fast-track brownfield schemes and allowing first-time buyers “first dibs” on new-build developments. Labour has set a target to build 1.5mn homes during a five-year parliament, equivalent to 300,000 a year. Starmer pledged that a Labour government would bring about stronger

economic growth, safer streets and cheaper homegrown power through a state-owned company called GB Energy, which would work with the private sector on new projects. The Labour leader took aim at the “chaos and crisis” of five Conservative prime ministers leading the country in just seven years, noting the UK was now gripped by a cost of living crisis. He urged Tories looking “in horror at the descent of your party into the murky waters of populism and conspiracy” to join Labour, which shared values on crime, fiscal discipline and commitment to the four-nation union. As his party is regularly averaging a 16-point poll lead, Starmer’s speech was a bid to reassure voters they could safely vote for change with Labour. **Labour conference** page 5 **Janan Ganesh** page 23

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## World Markets

STOCK MARKETS				CURRENCIES				GOVERNMENT BONDS					
	Oct 10	Prev	%chg	Pair	Oct 10	Prev	Pair	Oct 10	Prev	Yield (%)	Oct 10	Prev	Chg
S&P 500	4383.09	4335.66	1.09	\$/€	1.060	1.055	€/€	0.944	0.948	US 2 yr	4.93	5.08	-0.14
Nasdaq Composite	13652.18	13484.24	1.25	\$/£	1.226	1.221	£/€	0.816	0.819	US 10 yr	4.62	4.80	-0.18
Dow Jones Ind	33869.57	33604.65	0.79	£/€	0.865	0.864	€/£	1.157	1.158	US 30 yr	4.82	4.97	-0.15
FTSEurofirst 300	1795.34	1761.15	1.94	¥/\$	148.835	148.535	¥/€	157.728	156.638	UK 2 yr	4.54	4.58	-0.03
Euro Stoxx 50	4205.27	4112.57	2.25	¥/£	182.450	181.390	£ index	80.779	80.727	UK 10 yr	4.58	4.64	-0.05
FTSE 100	7628.21	7492.21	1.82	Sfr/£	0.960	0.957	Sfr/€	1.110	1.108	UK 30 yr	4.89	4.94	-0.06
FTSE All-Share	4124.72	4049.14	1.87	CRYPTO				JPN 2 yr		0.05	0.06	-0.01	
CAC 40	7162.43	7021.40	2.01		Oct 10	Prev	%chg	JPN 10 yr		0.77	0.80	-0.03	
Xetra Dax	15423.52	15128.11	1.95	Bitcoin (\$)	27470.00	27580.40	-0.40	JPN 30 yr		1.72	1.74	-0.01	
Nikkei	31746.53	30994.67	2.43	Ethereum	1569.18	1579.86	-0.68	GER 2 yr		3.06	3.03	0.03	
Hang Seng	17864.73	17517.40	0.84	COMMODITIES				GER 10 yr		2.77	2.77	0.00	
MSCI World \$	2858.71	2845.23	0.47		Oct 10	Prev	%chg	GER 30 yr		3.00	3.01	-0.01	
MSCI EM \$	935.42	937.34	-0.20	Oil WTI \$	85.70	86.38	-0.79						
MSCI ACWI \$	656.67	654.04	0.40	Oil Brent \$	87.55	88.15	-0.68						
FT Wilshire 2500	5599.89	5563.85	0.65	Gold \$	1845.50	1819.60	1.42						
FT Wilshire 5000	43609.50	43332.10	0.64										

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ISRAEL-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Exit call

# Gaza upheaval threatens to spill across border into Egypt

Mixed signals from Israel revive worries it wants to shift obligations to Cairo

HEBA SALEH — CAIRO

An Israeli military spokesman yesterday offered some advice to Palestinians seeking to flee his country’s bombardment of the Gaza Strip: “get out” through the “open” border with Egypt. The problem is that the Rafah crossing in the south of the Palestinian enclave was only open to travellers with prior clearance. An Israeli air strike had also caused damage nearby. The office of military spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Richard Hecht later issued a clarification while the Israel Defense Forces said there had been “no official call by Israel for residents of the Gaza Strip to exit into Egypt”.

But his comments underscored Cairo’s long-running concern that Israel wants to push its troubles dealing with Hamas-controlled Gaza on to Egypt. “Israel, as the occupying force, has

‘Egypt will eventually play [a mediation] role in some form, but this conflict is unprecedented’

responsibilities towards Gaza under international law. It cannot give these up” and shift the problem on to Egypt, said Ahmed Kamel al-Beheiry, an analyst at the Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies. Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu was “seeking to broaden the crisis and put pressure not just on the Gazans but on neighbouring countries too”, he added. Netanyahu has advised Gazans to “leave”, even though Egypt is the only logical place they can go to, given that they cannot flee into Israel. Egypt has worked with Israel to keep the more than 2mn Gazans inside their coastal enclave. Cairo controls Rafah, the main crossing for any Palestinian seeking to enter the outside world. Egypt and Israel co-ordinate extensively over border security and there is trust between their security agencies. Cairo is also acutely aware of the sympathy that many of Egypt’s 100mn population have towards Palestinians’ desire for statehood. On Sunday, a day



after the mass Hamas incursion in which at least 900 Israelis were killed, an Egyptian policeman killed two Israeli tourists in the city of Alexandria. The first Arab state to normalise relations with Israel in 1980, Egypt has since played an important mediation role in wars between Israel and Hamas by working to secure ceasefires. Cairo is expected to play a similar role this time too. Michael Wahid Hanna, an analyst at the International Crisis Group, said it was unclear when the negotiations would start. “The Israelis haven’t moved into Gaza yet, and the ground offensive has not started,” Hanna said, referring to a possible Israeli invasion of Gaza. “Egypt will eventually play this [mediation] role in some form or fashion, but this conflict is unprecedented and we shouldn’t assume it will follow pre-existing scripts.”

The complicating factor this time is that more than 100 Israeli hostages are in the hands of Hamas and its allies. The militant group has threatened to execute a hostage every time Israel bombs a residential area without advance warning. “We don’t have a reference point for that” from previous wars, said Hanna. “Pressure from within Israel on Netanyahu to negotiate might impact when the mediation starts.”

The role as a conflict mediator has helped shore up Egypt’s global standing, according to analysts. Surrounded by conflict and failed states in Libya and Sudan, Egypt’s record in securing truces has also helped mute western criticism over its human rights record. Egypt is making preparations to receive the wounded and send humanitarian aid into Gaza when it becomes possible. At the same time, Israeli television reported that Israel had warned Egypt it would bomb any aid trucks sent to relieve the pressure on Gaza, which yesterday endured another day of Israeli bombing. Tens of thousands of Palestinians have already fled their homes in Gaza, where electricity is intermittent and access to food restricted. Health officials in the Mediterranean territory said 765 Palestinians had been killed in the past four days. The confused statement from Hecht was far from the first time an Israeli had suggested Palestinians go to Egypt. Rightwing politicians and commentators within Israel had periodically argued that Gazans could be resettled in the Sinai peninsula. Egypt has responded through state-controlled media. The Al Qahera News channel said on social media on Monday that senior Egyptian sources had told it that “Egyptian sovereignty” was not to be breached and that the “occupying authorities are responsible for creating humanitarian corridors to save the people of Gaza”. Also this week, a senior Egyptian TV presenter, Lamis al-Hadidy, said taking in Gazans would “empty the Palestinian cause of meaning” and “only serve the interests of the occupation”.



Devastation: a Palestinian woman sits amid the rubble of a destroyed area of al-Ramal neighbourhood in Gaza City yesterday — Mohammed Saber/EPA/Shutterstock

White House. Priorities

## Biden forced into foreign policy shift

US president refocuses on Middle East after accusations of being caught off-guard

JAMES POLITI AND FELICIA SCHWARTZ WASHINGTON

Joe Biden’s hopes of presiding over a relative lull in conflict across the Middle East were shattered by the surprise attack on Israel by Hamas, upending the US president’s foreign policy priorities and exposing him to a torrent of domestic political criticism. The outbreak of war has forced Biden and his national security team to shift to rushing munitions and other assistance to meet Israel’s immediate needs while ramping up diplomacy to try to prevent the conflict from spreading further. At the same time, the administration is attempting to protect stranded US citizens and weighing how to respond to the possibility Americans have been captured by Hamas. On Monday, Biden said that 11 Americans were among the dead. The attack jolted the White House following a week dominated by Biden’s efforts to reassure allies that the US would stick by Ukraine even though Congress had dropped funding for Kyiv from legislation to keep the government running. “They were trying to focus on China, they were trying to focus on Russia, and hoping to keep the Middle East on the back burner. But as the Middle East has

a way of doing, it thrust itself upon them,” said Daniel Byman, a professor at Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service. The White House has already faced vitriolic attacks from Republicans in Congress and on the 2024 presidential campaign trail in connection with the strike on Israel. Critics accuse Biden of being caught off-guard by an attack against its top ally in the Middle East and emboldening Israel’s foes, including Hamas and its backer, Iran. “Joe Biden betrayed Israel,” Donald Trump, the former president and front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination, said in prepared remarks for a rally in New Hampshire on Monday night. “America is incredibly distracted and incredibly divided and when America is distracted the world is less safe,” Nikki Haley, a Republican presidential candidate and former US ambassador to the UN, told NBC on Sunday. The conflict could become even more difficult for Biden if Israel presses ahead with a lengthy invasion and siege of the Gaza Strip, which could lead to many more civilian casualties on the Palestinian side, making it harder for the White House to defend Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s government. Israeli-Palestinian relations have long divided the Democratic party, with generational splits among politicians and supporters about how to best address the Palestinians’ plight. Representative Rashida Tlaib, who is

of Palestinian descent, did not join many others in her party in condemning Hamas’s attack. “I grieve the Palestinian and Israeli lives lost yesterday, today and everyday,” she said. “As long as our country provides billions in unconditional funding to support the apartheid government, this heartbreaking cycle of violence will continue.” Biden administration officials have vowed to remain steadfast in their support for Israel despite tensions between the US president and Netanyahu over

‘America is incredibly distracted and incredibly divided’

Nikki Haley, Republican candidate

the years. “Biden has considered himself strongly pro-Israeli for almost 50 years. That’s bigger than the relationship with Benjamin Netanyahu,” said Jon Alterman, director of the Middle East programme at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. “We expect the Israeli response to this horrific set of attacks to continue for quite some time,” deputy national security adviser Jon Finer told ABC. “We expect more US steps to show support and solidarity for Israel.” Many Republicans tried to argue that Biden had helped fund the attack after the US transferred \$6bn to Iran as part of a prisoner swap deal last month. But that criticism was quickly debunked as

misinformation because the money remains untouched in an escrow account in Qatar and can be used only for humanitarian aid. Although Iran has traditionally backed Hamas, US officials have not found any evidence of direct involvement by Tehran in Saturday’s attacks. Bruce Riedel, a senior fellow in the centre for Middle East policy at the Brookings Institution in Washington, has however warned that Biden’s main diplomatic initiative of the past few months in the region — securing a normalisation of relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia — would have to be put on hold. “Saudi Arabia is not going to normalise with Israel, in the midst of a war in Gaza. It’s just not going to do it. So what was always a long shot, now I think becomes a dead end,” he said. But Alterman said that whenever the time came for a settlement between Israel and Hamas, Biden should be ready to broker a deal, which could brighten the picture for Washington. “The Biden administration came in, and neither the Israelis or Palestinians felt a necessity or urgency to engage in Palestinian-Israeli diplomacy. That is suddenly changing,” he said. “Henry Kissinger made a lot of his reputation negotiating the end to the Egypt-Israel war,” he said, referring to the former US secretary of state and national security adviser under Richard Nixon. “I don’t recall anybody criticising Henry Kissinger for missing the signs in 1973.”

Humanitarian support

## Brussels blames commissioner for U-turn on Palestinian aid

ANDY BOUNDS AND HENRY FOY BRUSSELS  
LEILA ABOUD — PARIS

Brussels blamed one of its commissioners for its U-turn over freezing EU aid to the Palestinian territories, saying that payments would continue while it completed a review into whether they were inadvertently funding terrorist groups.

Eric Mamer, European Commission chief spokesman, said yesterday that neighbourhood commissioner Olivér Várhelyi had not consulted other senior officials in the bloc’s executive before posting on social media that “all payments [are] immediately suspended”. Mamer said the Hungarian’s statement was “not preceded by consultations with any member of the college” of commissioners. That followed an initial statement from Mamer on Monday afternoon that he could “confirm the substance” of Várhelyi’s statements. The mixed messages underscored the divisions inside the EU over how to handle the reverberations from Hamas’s attack on Israel and Israel’s response against Gaza. That decision was made by a meeting

of commissioners’ chiefs of staff on Monday afternoon, Mamer said yesterday. Mamer said the “evolving situation on the ground” after Hamas’s attack on Israel meant the commission must exercise “particular prudence” on vetting funding, which is spent by partners such as the UN. The EU gave the Palestinian Authority €296mn in 2022 and was providing €82mn this year, Mamer said. There were no payments expected imminently, he added. Yesterday, French president Emmanuel Macron said he was “not in favour of suspending aid that directly benefits the Palestinian people”, adding that Paris had “established procedures” to ensure its bilateral aid did not flow to Hamas. France allocated €95mn in aid last year. He said, however, that he supported a review of how EU funds are being spent. “We must fight terrorism and Hamas, but this must not be confused with basic humanitarian needs and the support of civilians, especially given the underlying risk that the people will end up supporting the terrorist actions and extremists in the region,” Macron said. Speaking alongside Macron at a news conference in Hamburg, German chancellor Olaf Scholz agreed that it was important to keep humanitarian aid being “delivered far away from the scene of the events, to support people, to make sure they have water and access to food”. “At the same time, we have to make sure that we do not end up supporting a structure that has something to do with terrorism,” Scholz said. Additional reporting by Sam Jones in London

Olivér Várhelyi: reportedly did not consult about his announcement



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ISRAEL-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

# Kidnappings present Netanyahu with dilemma amid warning of executions

Prisoner swaps carry risks and previous exchanges have been lopsided in favour of Palestinians

NERI ZILBER — TEL AVIV  
JOHN REED — JERUSALEM

Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit was held for five years by Hamas in Gaza before he was extracted in a 2011 prisoner swap. The price: more than 1,000 jailed Palestinians.

Now Israel faces a hostage dilemma of a different magnitude. During Hamas’s surprise assault on Israel on Saturday, the militant group that runs the Gaza Strip abducted people including civilian women, small children and elderly people, taking what the Israeli military said were “dozens” of captives back to Gaza.

The fate of the hostages presents Benjamin Netanyahu’s government with one of the most acute challenges of the worst war on its territory since Israel was founded in 1948.

Videos of the abductions horrified the Israeli public, while families of some of those kidnapped have appeared in tearful television broadcasts saying they were receiving little or no information from authorities. Israelis are acutely aware of potential risks to the abductees from the country’s fierce bombardment of Gaza and an expected ground assault.

“Even in our worst nightmare we couldn’t imagine this was possible,” said Adva Adar, whose 85-year-old grandmother, Yafa Adar, was filmed in a golf cart in Gaza as crowds cheered. “We’re heartbroken and have no words to imagine what it’s like to be kidnapped at [more than] 80 years old.”

The kidnappings appear to have been a key element of Hamas’s strategy in its surprise assault. The militants on Monday threatened to broadcast the execution of one Israeli civilian captive each time Israel targeted civilians in their homes in Gaza without warning.

Hamas said on Monday that four hostages had been killed in Israeli bombings, but the claim could not be confirmed. Qatar has held talks with Israel and Hamas aimed at a deal in which the militant group would release women and children it is holding, a person briefed on the talks said on Monday. The person said that in return, the Jewish state could release Palestinian women and children held in its prisons, though the talks do not look to have borne fruit.

Yet prisoner swaps carry risks, and such exchanges by Israel have been lopsided ones in which the Jewish state has released large numbers of Palestinians in exchange for a handful of Israelis.

While the prisoner swap for Shalit was popular at the time, it has since drawn sharp condemnation from rightwing politicians and ultranationalist groups. Israeli security officials say many of the Palestinians released in 2011 went on to return to militant activity: one of them, Yahya Sinwar, is currently Hamas’s political leader in Gaza.

“It was a terrible, tragic choice to have to make,” said Uzi Arad, who was Netanyahu’s national security adviser during the talks in 2009 to 2011 over Shalit’s release. “We knew that with the release of the poor man Shalit — in a cellar in Gaza for years — what we were to give in exchange were terrorists who were not only guilty of terrorist crimes but would likely return to that line of activity.”

Israel’s military and civilian leaders



Hostage fears: a pro-Israel vigil near Downing Street, London, where one placard pictured Shiri Bibas and her children captured by Hamas. Below, Yafa Adar, 85, with her captors

Neil Hall/EPA/Shutterstock, Hatem Ali/AP

have not disclosed what they know about the location of the latest hostages or any plan to try to keep them safe, much less extract them at a time when Israel is bombarding Gaza from air and sea ahead of a potential ground assault.

Major Nir Dinar, speaking for Israel’s defence forces, said on Tuesday: “When you face this kind of situation, there are two options. First, you put enough pressure on the terrorist organisations to [return] kidnapped people. Second, you bring them back by force.

“Now in most days, I would recommend the first option. But after seeing what I saw, in the Israeli civilian communities in southern Israel, the way that bodies were treated, I don’t think

we have someone to speak to.” Hamas said yesterday it would not negotiate for a prisoner swap while under fire.

Dinar said that the captives numbered at least 50, but that there might be more as it was hard to ascertain whether some individuals had been killed or kidnapped; other reports have suggested they may number as many as 150.

Some captives hold passports from countries other than Israel. US president Joe Biden said on Monday it was “likely” US nationals were among those being held, while France and Thailand are among the countries that said they believed their nationals were captured.

After Saturday’s attacks, Netanyahu said he would hold Hamas “responsible for their wellbeing”, adding: “Israel will settle accounts with anyone who harms one hair on their heads.”

The Israeli leader said he had appointed Gal Hirsch, a confidant and former military commander during the 2006 Lebanon war, as his “co-ordinator for the captive and missing”. Netanyahu said he was “formulating a full assessment of the situation” and “acting with full force” to help the hostages’ families.

The families, however, say they have been largely left in the dark. “We’ve received no information — zero — from the Israeli authorities,” said Yossi Schneider, a relative of another family from Nir Oz, all six of whom were taken hostage: Margit and Yossi Silverman, in their 60s, their daughter and son-in-law

‘Israel will settle accounts with anyone who harms one hair on their heads’

Benjamin Netanyahu

Shiri and Yarden Bibas, both in their 30s, and their four-year-old son Ariel and nine-month-old baby Kfir.

Israel for decades prided itself on not negotiating with militant groups over the release of hostages, long preferring to use force — whether inside Israel or in Uganda during the hijacking of an Air France plane to Entebbe in 1976. Netanyahu’s older brother, military officer Yonatan Netanyahu, was killed during an otherwise successful Israeli raid to rescue those hostages.

Israel’s policy shifted from the 1980s, as the country began engaging in prisoner swaps. In 1985 it exchanged more than 1,100 imprisoned militants for three soldiers held by a leftist Palestinian faction in Lebanon. In 2004 it released more than 400 prisoners in exchange for a captured Israeli colonel seized by militant group Hizbollah.

Relatives and friends of missing people are scouring social media for news. Schneider, the relative of the missing family of six, said he had learned of their abduction via a social media video of Shiri in Gaza, surrounded by militants, clutching her two boys to her chest.

Adva Adar, whose grandmother is missing, said: “I just hope that they will find a place in their hearts to keep them safe and bring them back home . . . I don’t know if there’s anyone listening.” Additional reporting by John Paul Rathbone in London and Raya Jalabi in Beirut

See Opinion



Security. Regional threats

## Vulnerability to attacks on multiple fronts laid bare by surprise assault

Militant groups and non-state actors pose long-term danger to Jewish state’s stability

JOHN PAUL RATHBONE — LONDON  
NERI ZILBER — TEL AVIV

The Hamas assault on southern Israel caught the country’s security apparatus unawares and exposed its vulnerability to militant attacks, despite boasting the Middle East’s most sophisticated military. Israel faces multiple threats from militant groups and non-state actors in the region.

Hamas

The Islamist movement, which has run Gaza since 2007, was founded in 1987 during the first Palestinian intifada, or uprising. It began life as an affiliate of the Muslim Brotherhood and has fought four wars with Israel, launching home-made rockets over the border while using tunnels beneath Gaza to smuggle arms and harbour its fighters.

Before Saturday’s attack, the most recent round of serious fighting was an 11-day conflict in 2021, when Hamas surprised Israel with the scope and scale of its rocket attacks, firing more than

3,700 rockets across Israel’s towns. Hamas enjoys support from Iran and Hizbollah, the Lebanese group, but its relationship with the Shia Islamic republic is not straightforward.

As Sunnis, Hamas rejects Iran’s religious Shia leadership. Its relations with Iran also became strained when it displayed sympathy for the opposition that rose against President Bashar al-Assad during the Syrian civil war. Tehran and Hizbollah backed the Assad regime.

Yet several senior Hamas leaders reside in Lebanon and the group’s military development is also in large part due to Iranian and Hizbollah patronage. That includes rockets, the technology needed to build them, and training required to fire them en masse, Israeli officials said.

In Saturday’s attack, Hamas claimed to have fired 5,000 rockets in a single day, more than it fired during the whole 2021 conflict. This “would very probably have required external help from Iranian and Hizbollah advisers, to build that big an arsenal”, said Emile Hokayem, senior fellow for Middle East security at the International Institute for Strategic Studies think-tank.

The Israel Defense Forces said Hamas had sent 1,000 fighters across the border, surprising the Jewish state with its ability to plan and execute

such a multidimensional assault.

Hamas, which is considered a terrorist organisation by Israel, the US and the EU, is a rival to Fatah, the Palestinian faction that controls the West Bank.

Hizbollah

The Lebanese Shia movement was founded in 1982, the year of Israel’s invasion of Lebanon, as a “resistance” movement. Led by cleric Hassan Nasrallah since 1992, it has evolved into the world’s most heavily armed non-state actor and a political force in Lebanon.

Its military wing consists mostly of light infantry and it was able to withstand a month-long war with Israel in 2006. It controls southern Lebanon, which borders Israel, and its fighters have gained extra battle experience after being sent to Syria to support the Assad regime during that country’s civil war.

A Palestinian Islamic Jihad militant in Gaza

Nasrallah said in 2021 he had some 100,000 fighters, but analysts estimate the size at 20,000-50,000, including reservists. The group has an arsenal of attack drones, small arms, artillery, tanks and an increasingly accurate portfolio of missiles that includes tens of thousands of Soviet-made Katyusha rockets and Zelzal missiles produced in Iran.

Nasrallah has boasted that these can reach anywhere in Israel, including its nuclear reactor in the south. Israeli officials say Hizbollah has become a fully-fledged “terror army” with capabilities in excess of most state militaries.

The fear in Israel is that Hizbollah could follow Saturday’s Hamas assault to open a second front on the northern border. Hizbollah militants fired mortars towards Israel on Sunday and met a response, but the exchange appeared designed not to trigger an escalation. Several Gulf states

consider Hizbollah a terrorist organisation due to its “incitement” in Syria, Yemen and Iraq. In Lebanon, however, the group’s network of social services help it maintain support from both Shia and non-Shia Lebanese.

Palestinian Islamic Jihad

The second-largest and most prominent of the militant “rejectionist” factions that, like Hamas, has its stronghold in Gaza. It also has a presence in Lebanon.

The Iran-backed Islamist movement has claimed it was part of the cross-border assault, with video it released showing gunmen inside Israeli communities. The group has claimed it is holding some 30 Israelis captive inside Gaza.

Founded in Gaza in the 1981, PIJ drew its ideology from the Islamic Revolution in Iran and is fully funded and allied with Tehran, according to Israeli intelligence and independent analysts. The group’s secretary-general, Ziad Nakaleh, is based in Damascus and meets regularly in Tehran and Beirut with Iranian and Lebanese Hizbollah leaders.

PIJ’s operatives were responsible for suicide bombings inside Israel throughout the 1990s targeting buses and cafés, which derailed the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process. More recently, it has established itself as the junior partner

Politics

## Coalition gives green light to Likud talks on unity government

JOHN REED AND JAMES SHOTTER  
JERUSALEM

Benjamin Netanyahu’s Likud party said members of his governing coalition had authorised him to negotiate a unity government with the opposition in the wake of the worst attack within Israel in the country’s history.

Likud, which rules in conjunction with four ultrareligious and far-right parties, said in a brief statement yesterday that “all heads of the coalition, without exception” had backed the move.

Saturday’s mass incursion into Israel by Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, which killed at least 900 Israelis and sparked war with the militant groups, has taken some of the heat out of Israel’s bitterly polarised political discourse.

Netanyahu has this year faced the biggest wave of protests in the country’s history over his controversial programme of judicial reforms, which opponents regard as a mortal threat to Israeli democracy.

But since the weekend attack from the Gaza Strip, Netanyahu has been holding talks with Benny Gantz, a former general who heads the centre-right National Unity party, over establishing a unity government.

Gantz said on Sunday that his party would be open to forming a war cabinet.

“Our current reality demands we realise that we face a strategic event of critical importance to the state of Israel,” Gantz said. “This is not an operation, this is a war.”

Israel has had a number of national unity governments in its history. Netanyahu and Gantz sat together in a rotation government in 2020-21, but it collapsed in acrimonious circumstances.

Yair Lapid, the opposition leader who heads Israel’s centrist Yesh Atid party, said after the Hamas attack that he was ready to join an “emergency government”.

But he also said it would be impossible to manage a war with the current “extreme and dysfunctional cabinet” in place. This was interpreted as a demand that Netanyahu must eject the far-right parties of his key coalition members Bezael Smotrich and Itamar Ben-Gvir in order for Lapid to join.

One analyst said the creation of a unity government would mean that opposition politicians “won’t be in a position to criticise” during what Israelis anticipate will be a long war against Palestinian militants in Gaza.

“This is important to focus on one mission, which is winning,” said Aviv Bushinsky, a political analyst and former chief of staff to Netanyahu. “It’s a tough task, and we are going to lose many soldiers.”

Bushinsky added that Israel faced an “unprecedented” challenge in the form of the scores of hostages, including civilians, taken during the incursion and now being held inside Gaza, and that international support being voiced for Israel might wane during a protracted war.

“No doubt Israel enjoys huge support from the world,” he said. “But no doubt we will face rainy days.”



NATIONAL

World Economic Outlook

# IMF predicts further rate rise needed

Fund expects inflation to remain higher than in other G7 countries

SAM FLEMING — MARRAKECH

The Bank of England may need to further increase interest rates as it grapples with higher inflation than in other G7 countries, the IMF predicted, as it set out an outlook that will provide a painful backdrop to the election expected next year.

Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas, IMF chief economist, said yesterday rates might need to rise another quarter-point above the current 5.25 per cent, as he

warned of “quite persistent” inflation.

Headline consumer price inflation will average 7.7 per cent this year before dropping sharply to 3.7 per cent next year, according to the fund’s latest World Economic Outlook.

This would exceed inflation readings in other G7 countries, including Germany, which is predicted to have the second-highest rate in the group next year at 3.5 per cent.

The forecasts, if borne out, will make for a tough backdrop for the government as it seeks to demonstrate the country is putting the cost of living crisis behind it before the general election expected next year.

Jeremy Hunt, chancellor, said: “The

IMF have upgraded growth for this year and downgraded it for next, but longer term they say our growth will be higher than France, Germany or Italy.”

“To get there, we need to deal with inflation and do more to unlock growth, which I will be focusing on in the upcoming Autumn Statement.”

Elsewhere, inflation in the US would fall from 4.1 per cent this year to 2.8 per cent next year, the IMF forecast.

The high rate of UK inflation comes despite an expected sharp slowdown in growth both this year and next. Gross domestic product is predicted to rise by just 0.5 per cent this year and 0.6 per cent next, below the pace of more than 4 per cent recorded last year.

Output this year will remain in positive territory, however, unlike Germany where GDP is forecast to fall by 0.5 per cent before recovering by 0.9 per cent next year.

The UK, Gourinchas said, was facing a “low growth performance”. The stubbornly high rate of inflation “is going to require monetary policy to remain tight for a little while longer, into next year”.

But he played down IMF forecasts that showed the BoE would need to lift rates to 6 per cent, saying the fund had pared back that estimate to 5.5 per cent, following more recent analysis. Rishi Sunak, prime minister, has vowed to halve inflation by the end of the year to 5.4 per cent as one of five big pledges.

At the Conservative party conference last week, Sunak attempted to present himself as a change candidate who would enliven the country, as he pointed to revised GDP figures that showed the UK was no longer the weakest performer in the G7 following the Covid-19 pandemic.

The IMF said that it had not yet been able to incorporate the revised GDP figures from the Office for National Statistics into its assessment of the economy.

The BoE left rates unchanged at 5.25 per cent in September, a day after inflation came in below forecast for August at 6.7 per cent.

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Martin Wolf page 23

Food prices

## Grocery inflation falls for seventh month in row

VALENTINA ROMEI

The cost of some staple goods in supermarkets has started to drop as grocery price inflation fell for the seventh consecutive month to the lowest rate in more than a year, according to industry data.

In the four weeks to October 1, grocery prices rose by an annual rate of 11 per cent, down from 12.2 per cent the previous month and the lowest since July 2022, research company Kantar said yesterday.

Tom Steel, strategic insight director at Kantar, said: “For the first time since last year, the prices of some staple foods are now dropping and that’s helping to bring down the wider inflation rate.”

Last autumn, dairy registered the sharpest rise in prices of all categories. But the average cost of a 250g pack of butter is now 16 pence less than 12 months ago, according to Kantar.

The data is further confirmation that food inflation, one of the important drivers of rising prices in the UK, is beginning to fall, suggesting that cost of living pressures are beginning to ease.

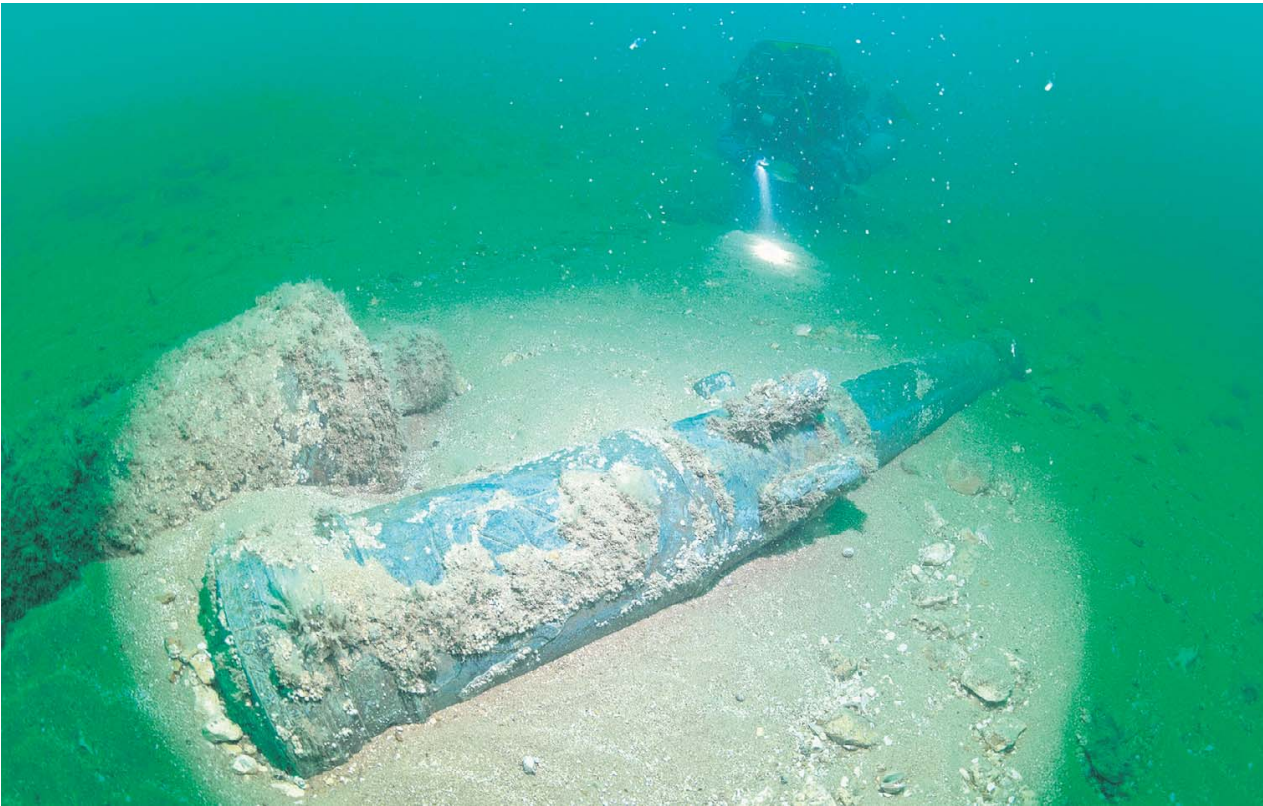
Figures from the British Retail Consortium trade body this week showed that in September retail inflation fell to its lowest level for a year, with food prices declining month on month for the first time in two years.

Official data on food and non-alcoholic beverage inflation, due from the Office for National Statistics next week, is expected to underscore the decline.

Sue Davies, head of food policy at consumer association Which?, said: “Inflation easing is positive, but the reality is that supermarket prices are still rising very quickly when many shoppers are already struggling to make ends meet.”

Kantar reported that consumers continued to look for cheaper food options at the supermarket. Spending on promotions made up 26.5 per cent of sales in the past 12 weeks, the highest level since June 2022.

Cheaper supermarkets Lidl and Aldi reported annual sales growth of about 15 per cent, double the rate of the entire grocery sector, and increased their market share compared with last year.



## Shipwrecks Underwater treasures to be protected by markings



Two guns lie on the seabed near the Klein Hollandia off the Sussex coast. Above, a diver holds a sign showing that the site is marked  
Cathy de Lara/MSDS Marine

England’s most valuable shipwrecks are to be protected from criminal divers by new “forensic marking” technology that enables bronze cannons and other precious items to be traced and identified when offered for public sale.

Of the 37,000 wrecks lying off the coast of England, 57 of the most important sites are to be “marked” underwater using the technique, which has taken seven years to refine to ensure it can withstand the rigours of the marine environment.

Mark Harrison, head of heritage crime strategy at Historic England, the public body that looks after sites of historic interest, said the technology would act as a “clear deterrent” to those looking to plunder protected sites.

Specialist divers have started work on the Klein Hollandia, a 17th-century Dutch warship that was sunk off the Sussex coast in 1672, applying the invisible markings to its cannons.

Wrecks dating from before 1700 are very rare and little documentation exists on the design and construction of Dutch ships of the period.

Boarded by English sailors in an attack on a Dutch convoy before going down, the wreck was identified in 2019 and remains in a “remarkable” condition.

The heritage body has joined forces with its Dutch counterpart, the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands, to develop the forensic marking system and research the site.

Hefin Meara, maritime archaeologist at Historic England, said: “This is a game-changer for us. It gives us peace of mind to know that these at-risk objects have a marker on them and it is going to be a big deterrent to anybody thinking that they can take this stuff and get away with it.”

Underwater heritage crime has long been a problem in Britain. In 2014, two men were convicted of plundering objects such as cannons and propellers from wrecks off the Kent coast.

Another man was fined and given a custodial sentence in 2015 for attempting to sell three bronze cannons that turned out to have been from Charles II’s flagship, which sunk off Southend in 1665. Another was found guilty in 2016 of unlawfully

raising tin ingots from a 19th-century wreck off the Cornish coast.

Meara said the initiative would also help put off the souvenir hunters who, after visiting modern but nonetheless protected wrecks, might take engine parts or fittings from the bridge as a keepsake.

The idea of forensic marking for marine heritage was prompted by the technique being applied to the lead roofs of churches in England, where high prices for metals have led to a spate of thefts.

Meara added that bronze cannons from shipwrecks typically went to two markets: private collectors or metal dealers.

A network of volunteer divers and boat owners helps to safeguard wreck sites, but Historic England said many were too far off the coast to be continually monitored.

“If someone breaks the law and removes any property, the new markings will give police the ability to link the offender to the crime scene and implement criminal proceedings,” said Harrison.

James Pickford

Shadow banking

## BoE seeks tighter liquidity rules for money market funds

LAURA NOONAN — LONDON

Bank of England officials are pushing to double the amount of easily sellable assets that money market funds have to hold, the latest move by financial watchdogs globally to reduce shadow banking risks.

The BoE’s financial stability experts recommended the tighter liquidity requirements for sterling-denominated money market funds as they cited risks including geopolitical tensions and “stretched” valuations in some markets.

“The overall risk environment remains challenging,” the BoE’s quarterly financial stability statement said yesterday. It also cited rising household indebtedness and the tripling in the prevalence of 35-year plus mortgages in the UK since 2021.

Shadow banks, which span a broad sweep of the financial sector, from hedge funds to insurers to non-bank lenders, have been at the centre of a spate of recent crises, including the dash for cash in March 2020 when markets seized up as the pandemic hit, and the gilts crisis late last year.

Yesterday’s statement was the latest in a series of measures aimed at reducing risk in various areas of the shadow banking sector.

Higher liquidity standards have been imposed on liability-driven investment vehicles used by pension funds. The leveraged vehicles exacerbated the gilts crisis through a mass sell-off of bonds in the aftermath of former prime minister Liz Truss’s “mini” Budget.

Under the recommendations, money market funds would have to hold up 50 to 60 per cent of their funds in assets that can be liquidated within seven days. The current requirement is 30 per cent, though the industry average is about 45 to 50 per cent. Sterling-denominated money market funds have £250bn of assets, though much of this is held in the EU.

The BoE stressed the importance of international co-ordination around measures to reduce risk in the funds industry.

The Financial Conduct Authority, which supervises money market funds, and the Treasury will consult on the UK’s requirements this year.

The US has announced a weekly

liquidity requirement of 50 per cent.

The BoE’s financial stability experts also announced an overhaul of next year’s banking stress test to better capture the risks from a prolonged era of high interest rates after more than a decade of loose monetary policy.

The bank stress tests are an annual exercise introduced in the aftermath of the financial crisis to ensure lenders are well prepared for potential crises.

The central bank said it would run an in-house exercise next year testing against a range of shocks. Results will be published for the system as a whole.



Bank of England says the ‘risk environment remains challenging’

Homes shortage

## Housebuilders endorse Starmer’s new towns pledge

ANNA GROSS AND MICHAEL O'DWYER  
LIVERPOOL  
AKILA QUINIO — LONDON

Several of the UK’s biggest housebuilders welcomed Sir Keir Starmer’s pledge to develop new towns and make it easier to build homes on brownfield sites should Labour win power.

The opposition leader set out the plan as part of his vision for a decade of “national renewal” in his speech to the party conference in Liverpool.

He promised to target areas with good transport links and significant housing shortages, in an echo of the party’s rebuilding programme after the second world war.

“Sometimes the old Labour ideas are right for new times. So where there are good jobs, where there is good infrastructure, where there is good land for affordable homes, then we will get shovels in the ground,” Starmer said. “Getting Britain building again is critical for economic growth, our most important mission.”

Starmer also set out plans to allow housebuilders to build in parts of the greenbelt, such as “dreary wasteland” which he said should be renamed the “grey belt”. Labour officials gave few further details beyond pledging to develop a “handful” of new towns with green spaces and attractive high streets. They promised “nature spots or important green spaces” would be protected.

The announcement was welcomed by Berkeley Group, Barratt Developments, Persimmon Homes, Taylor Wimpey, Vistry Group and Legal & General.

“The proposals combine short-term actions and medium-term strategy which will knit together a system that is currently dysfunctional,” said Mark Skilbeck, planning director at Taylor Wimpey. “We believe that these reforms should lead to speedier decisions across the country and ultimately much-needed homes.”

Sir Nigel Wilson, chief executive of L&G, said that meeting the UK’s housing needs required “national and local collaboration coupled with modernisation of planning and construction, improvements to funding and a change in culture”. Labour’s approach took “a holistic view of these barriers to deliver ambitious outcomes”, he added.

Labour has previously set out plans to build 1.5m homes over five years, equivalent to 300,000 homes a year, though it said it would not be able to meet that annual level immediately.

It has promised to reinstate compulsory housebuilding targets, pointing out that new home completions were set to fall to 160,000 a year by election time.

Under Starmer’s plan, local leaders would bid for sites in their areas to be selected, and the government would set up corporations to take on planning in those regions and make compulsory purchases of land where necessary.

Housing developers would be awarded “planning passports” that would make it easier for them to build on brownfield sites. First-time buyers would be given “first dibs” on newly built homes, according to officials.

Marc Vlessing, chief executive of Pocket Living, a developer, said Starmer’s “pro-builder speech” had contrasted with that of Labour’s deputy leader Angela Rayner, which he said “did rather demonise the builders”.

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LIVERPOOL CONFERENCE

# Labour bullish over return to power despite policy dearth

Starmer shrugs off protest to deliver speech  
light on promises but heavy on rhetoric

GEORGE PARKER AND LUCY FISHER  
LIVERPOOL

A stage-invading protester inadvertently handed Sir Keir Starmer the perfect start to his Labour conference speech.

“Protest not power,” Starmer said as security staff rushed to remove the man from the stage. “That’s why we changed our party.”

The Labour leader nonchalantly brushed glitter from his hair and removed his now-sparkling jacket, gifting him a metaphor-heavy opportunity to roll up his sleeves and promise a “decade of national renewal”.

His speech was light on flashy policy promises — aside from a pledge of radical planning reforms — but heavy on rhetoric about tackling an “age of insecurity” and delivering hope to what he claimed was a damaged country.

Starmer’s speech was the highlight of a Labour conference where the party that in 2019 suffered a crushing election defeat was in a bullish mood about the coming general election, likely next year. But the conference has been overshadowed by the Israel-Gaza conflict, depriving Starmer and his shadow cabinet media coverage at a crucial point in the political cycle.

With a typical poll lead of 16 points over the Conservatives, Starmer’s team has appeared relaxed, but one Labour official said it was “a massive problem” for the party.

“Conference is the one time a year we have a microphone and we’ve lost that this year,” the official said. “A key part of our strategy is ensuring fed-up Tory voters stay home on election day; they will only do that if they realise Labour is not a risk. This was our chance to communicate that.”

There was relief, however, in the Starmer camp that the conflict had not spawned inflammatory outbursts from hard-left party members who could

have derailed the conference. By Tuesday no major incident had erupted, and delegates cheered Starmer when he backed Israel and its right to self-defence. Even the most staunch pro-Palestinian Labour MPs condemned Hamas’s attack on Israeli civilians.

This was billed as the conference when Labour would answer the question, “If not the Tories, why us?” But if anyone was waiting for Starmer to deliver a broad new set of policies, they were to be disappointed.

The buzz around the conference came not from the new policies on offer but from the proximity of power. Long queues formed to hear Starmer and Rachel Reeves, shadow chancellor, speak this week.

The managerial tone that Labour under Starmer has adopted was reinforced by an influx of tailor-made suits on the balmy banks of the Mersey river, as many of Britain’s business elite gathered to schmooze with the people they think will form the next government.

Starmer’s spokesperson insisted Labour’s promises to promote new towns, reform the planning system and cut NHS waiting lists framed an argument about “national renewal versus permanent decline”.

But in an era of high taxes and towering government debt, Labour has been forced to promote supply side reforms rather than reverting to traditional promises of higher spending.

Starmer and his team have also been anxious to avoid policies that could expose them to Tory attack, particularly when fanned by a hostile press. “Dull for the many, not the few,” joked one Labour official.

The confidence apparent at the Labour conference has been fuelled by the party’s belief that Rishi Sunak, prime minister, failed to land any serious blows during his own Conservative party conference in Manchester last



week, an event described by Starmer as “a circus”.

Gary Smith, general secretary of the GMB union, said: “You can feel there’s a sense of momentum. Change is coming. This is a credible government-in-waiting, with a radical world view about rebuilding the economy.”

Labour strategists said they were surprised by Sunak’s decision to make a U-turn on the HS2 high-speed rail line the central feature of the Tory conference, particularly when the Conservatives were trying to portray Starmer as “a flip-flopper”.

A Deltapoll survey for the Mail on Sunday suggested voters were not convinced by the attack line. It found 53 per cent of people thought Sunak would flip-flop on decisions against 42 per cent for Starmer.

Polls also suggested Sunak had not received a “conference bounce”. Indeed in recent days he and his ministers have

**Stage invader: a protester sprinkles glitter over Keir Starmer at the start of the Labour leader’s speech in Liverpool yesterday**

Charlie Bibby/FT

said projects earmarked to receive £36bn of funding intended for the abandoned northern leg of HS2 were “illustrative” rather than firm promises.

Greg Hands, Conservative chair, yesterday said Starmer failed to say how he would address illegal migration, adding that his plans to borrow to invest in green energy projects would fuel inflation.

“Sir Keir just offers more of the same short-term political decision-making of

‘You can feel there’s a sense of momentum. Change is coming’

Gary Smith, GMB union

the last 30 years that has failed Britain, all glitter, no substance,” Hands said.

Starmer warned his party that the electoral battle had only just started. He said of his Conservative opponents: “Wherever you think the line is, they’ve already got plans to cross it.”

“They will be up for the fight to save their own skin. And this isn’t over; in fact, it has barely begun.”

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**Janan Ganesh** page 23

Employment. Pledges

## Unions toe line in effort to boost chances of election win and secure reforms

Manifesto that includes a long list of pro-employee policies garners majority support

JIM PICKARD AND MICHAEL O'DWYER  
LIVERPOOL

Open criticism from the leader of one of Britain’s biggest trade unions during Labour’s annual conference this week gave the impression that party leader Sir Keir Starmer’s rightward march is causing ructions among workers’ representatives.

Sharon Graham, general secretary of Unite the Union, said the UK’s largest opposition party needed to be “bolder” and embrace policies such as the nationalisation of the energy industry. “They must come out with a bigger offer than they’re coming out with at the moment,” she said.

There has also been irritation among some union leaders about the extent to which senior members of the shadow cabinet are cosying up to business leaders and insisting on fiscal discipline.

But most are quietly supportive of Starmer because they want to ensure Labour’s 16-point opinion poll lead over the ruling Conservative party is translated into victory at the general election expected next year.

Their backing is founded on Labour’s manifesto including a long list of pro-worker policies dubbed the “new deal for workers” that meets many of their demands. As such Starmer can rely on the support of three of the four biggest unions: Unison, the GMB and Usdaw.

Their support was crucial two years ago when the Labour leader took a big political gamble by changing the rules around future party leadership contests to make it harder for a “hard left” MP, such as Starmer’s predecessor Jeremy Corbyn, to stand.

“I don’t think he [Starmer] has been too timid. I think Keir’s got a laser focus

on trying to win the next election,” said Christina McAnea, general secretary of Unison, a public sector union with more than 1mn members.

“As a trade union leader I’m never going to be super-happy, we always want more, but my ‘pissed-off-ometer’ is quite low at the moment,” said one person at the conference.

Deputy Labour leader Angela Rayner, a former Unison official, drew up the package at the heart of the “new deal”.

A Labour government would reform statutory sick pay by removing both the “lower earnings limit”, which cuts out those on low wages, and the waiting period, which means workers can only access it from day four of sickness.

Other union-pleasing measures include extending statutory maternity

‘I’m never going to be super-happy . . . but my ‘pissed-off-ometer’ is quite low at the moment’

and paternity leave, banning “fire and rehire” moves by companies, scrapping “exploitative” zero-hours contracts and introducing a “right to disconnect” outside working hours.

The party is examining a rollout of collective bargaining across sectors rather than individual companies to secure minimum pay and conditions, starting with a pilot scheme in the care industry. It has also committed the party to extending the time for bringing an employment claim against an employer from three to six months.

An argument over that package overshadowed the party’s national policy forum in July when some unions were riled by the party’s partial dilution of promises to boost the protection of those in the gig economy and to create a single status of “worker” for all but the genuinely self-employed.

But most of the new deal has survived

that process, to the satisfaction of more moderate unions.

In last week’s Rutherglen by-election in Scotland, Labour campaigners highlighted the new deal as the party’s main retail offer to voters, according to Paul Nowak, general secretary of the Trades Union Congress, the movement’s umbrella body.

“Those policies really resonated on doorsteps,” he told the Financial Times. “The SNP tried to attack Labour from the left but Labour campaigners had this set of radical measures that would reset the balance of power in all workplaces.”

Union leaders were also delighted by Starmer’s promise to reverse Tory legislation that makes it harder to take industrial action. A Labour government would cancel the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act from earlier this year, which allows ministers to enforce minimum levels of service in crucial areas of the public sector.

Starmer has also promised to “tear up” the 2016 Trade Union Act, under which unions are required to secure a 50 per cent turnout in a vote of a company’s workers for a strike vote to be valid.

Some union leaders, including Mick Lynch from the RMT, have called for Starmer to repeal anti-union laws from the 1980s. But others believe the proposals strike the right balance between radicalism and realism.

Some business groups are uneasy about the reforms, even though their public criticism has been muted.

Matthew Percival, director of people and skills at the CBI, said the private sector supported the idea of “fairness” in workplaces but said labour market flexibility was a key pillar of the UK’s competitiveness.

How long unions’ support for Labour lasts if the party wins the election remains to be seen. They will “toe the line” to get the party into Downing Street but then “the gloves are going to come off”, a former party adviser said.

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INTERNATIONAL

Energy supplies

# Finland checks possible pipeline sabotage

Helsinki says gas link and data cable probably damaged on purpose

RICHARD MILNE  
NORDIC AND BALTIC CORRESPONDENT

Finland is investigating whether sabotage caused a leak in a Baltic Sea gas pipeline and a break in a data cable between the Nordic country and Estonia.

Sauli Niinistö, Finland’s president, said the damage to the gas pipeline and data cable was caused by “external activity” but that the precise cause “is not yet known”.

Finland’s foreign minister, Elina Valtonen, later yesterday said the two

undersea links “have probably been damaged on purpose”.

Niinistö spoke to Jens Stoltenberg, Nato’s secretary-general, about the damaged pipeline yesterday. Finland, which shares a 1,300km border with Russia, became the latest member of the western military alliance in April, in response to Moscow’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Estonia has been a Nato member since 2004.

The potential sabotage echoes last year’s explosions in the Baltic Sea that destroyed the twin Nord Stream pipeline that connected Germany to Russia.

In recent days, Finland and Estonia have reported a possible leak to the 77km-long pipeline across the Gulf of Helsinki between the two countries, which opened in 2020.

Officials said a ship passed over the pipeline, causing the damage, but as it was stormy weather at the time it cannot yet be confirmed if it was a case of deliberate sabotage or an accidental act, such as damage by an anchor.

“The investigation will continue in co-operation between Finland and Estonia. We are also in constant contact with our allies and partners . . . Finland’s level of preparedness is good. These events have no impact on our security of supply,” Niinistö said.

Stoltenberg said Nato was “sharing information and stands ready to support allies concerned”.

Henri Vanhanen, a researcher at the Finnish Institute of International Affairs, said the Finnish authorities’ willingness to suspect sabotage indi-

cated there was a “strong reason to assume hostile intent”. “This is a test to the alliance: how will it react if indeed evidence of, for example, Russian interference is detected?”

Margus Tsahkna, Estonia’s foreign minister, said he had talked to his Finnish counterpart about “the concerning situation”. Petteri Orpo, Finland’s prime minister, said it seemed as though the cut in the data cable occurred in Estonian waters, while the gas pipeline leak was in Finland’s.

Despite investigations by Denmark, Sweden and Germany, nobody has been publicly blamed for the Nord Stream explosions in September 2022. Media leaks have suggested German prosecutors are focusing on a possible pro-Ukraine group, while in Scandinavia

attention has centred on Russian military ships observed in the area.

Stoltenberg has made it clear that an attack on energy infrastructure in one of the alliance’s member states could be regarded as an attack on Nato. Speaking on a Norwegian oil rig in March, he told the Financial Times that “we cannot protect every metre of this infrastructure at every time”, as there were 8,000km of pipelines and cables in Norway alone.

Both Finland and Estonia can receive gas from alternative sources — Finland via a liquefied natural gas terminal, and Estonia from a gas storage plant in Latvia and a LNG terminal in Lithuania. Most of the gas in the pipeline at the time of the leak was being transported from Finland to Latvia via Estonia.

Trade concern

# Brussels axes shipping industry’s competition law immunity

OLIVER TELLING — LONDON

The EU has scrapped the shipping industry’s exemption from competition laws, in a blow to shipowners whose profits have long been bolstered by their ability to share vessels.

The European Commission said yesterday that the exemption, which for years had enabled shipping lines to place containers on each other’s ships, no longer appeared “fit for its purpose” and would not be renewed when it expired next April.

While the decision does not in itself end co-operation between shipping groups, it has the potential to upset the business of global trade, which has become increasingly dominated by a handful of container shipping companies that control most of the market through so-called alliances.

The move is also the latest sign of a clampdown on the shipping industry, which due to its international nature has historically proven difficult to regulate. It comes at a critical time for container carriers, whose earnings have plunged following bumper profits during the Covid-19 pandemic when an online shopping boom combined with logjams at ports caused demand to out-strip supply.

“It really is a big deal,” said Mike Garratt, director at MDS Transmodal, a shipping consultancy whose research informed the commission’s decision. He said there were nine companies that almost seemed to be beyond the law, controlling most of the value of world trade. “[This] has dramatic implications for the deep sea shipping sector.”

The world’s nine largest container shipping lines have formed three separate alliances over the past decade, allowing them to control supply and put a floor under the cost of shipping during years of low earnings.

But when freight rates rose to record highs during the pandemic, profits soared, infuriating customers who faced severe delays importing and exporting goods through congested ports. During the three years to 2022, container shipping groups made as much money as they had during the previous six decades combined, according to consultancy Drewry.

The commission, which received submissions from 33 shipping customers, said the capacity shortages recently faced by these businesses had “reignited the debate” over the industry’s so-called Consortia Block Exemption Regulation. Once subject to EU antitrust rules, alliances of shipping companies could be considered as cartels, with the European Commission having the power to break them up and impose fines.

“[Shipping] has undergone significant structural changes, such as carriers’ consolidation, global alliances and vertical integration, resulting in new market conditions,” said Didier Reynders, the EU competition commissioner. “A dedicated block exemption for shipping lines is no longer adapted to those new market conditions.”

Co-operation between shipowners has been exempted from EU competition rules since 1986. The CBER, adopted in 2009, has guaranteed the legitimacy of consortiums involving companies whose combined market share does not exceed 30 per cent.

AfD surge. Politics

# Far right pledges to smash German ‘firewall’

Main parties’ refusal to work with fringe movement will be tested by regional poll outcome

GUY CHAZAN — BERLIN

The Alternative for Germany long seemed to be little more than a regional rump party, the voice of disgruntled voters in the former communist east — but Sunday night’s political earthquake changed all that.

In two critical elections in the affluent, highly industrialised western half of Germany the far-right AfD’s share of the vote increased massively, confirming its status as a nationwide force that its leaders say is on the way to power.

“The AfD is no longer an eastern phenomenon, it is an all-German, mainstream party,” said Alice Weidel, co-chair. “Voters have clearly swung from left to right.”

The elections in Hesse, in central Germany, and Bavaria in the south were won by mainstream conservative parties. However, the AfD also performed strongly, garnering 14.6 per cent in Bavaria and 18.4 per cent in Hesse, its best result in a western state.

Centrist politicians expressed dismay. Parts of the AfD have been designated extremist by German domestic intelligence and one of its leaders is to stand trial for using banned Nazi slogans. A former AfD MP was arrested last year over her role in an alleged plot by radicals to overthrow the national government. Yet none of that seems to be deterring voters, who are abandoning traditional parties in droves to put their crosses next to the AfD.

The results of Sunday’s elections might have been a triumph for the AfD but they were disastrous for the three parties in Germany’s governing coalition — Olaf Scholz’s Social Democrats, the Greens and the liberal FDP, all of whose votes shrank.

Voters seemed to be punishing them for everything from high inflation, recession and surging energy costs to a jump in irregular immigration that is straining towns and villages nationwide.

“Migration is a complex issue and people are choosing the simple answers offered by rightwing populists,” said Saskia Esken, co-leader of the Social Democrats. “But these only have the appearance of answers.”



**Vote boost:** Alice Weidel, AfD co-chair, right, and other party members prepare to meet the Berlin media on Monday after strong results in Hesse and Bavaria  
*Sean Gallup/Getty Images*

Immigration clearly played a role: 80 per cent of voters in Hesse and Bavaria said in exit polls they wanted a “fundamentally different asylum and refugee policy, so fewer people come to us”.

Yet the issue is only one explanation for the AfD’s rise.

Manfred Güllner of pollsters Forsa said frustration with Scholz’s government predated the surge in refugee numbers and had more to do with climate policies, in particular a law to phase out gas-fired boilers and replace them with heat pumps.

“A majority of German citizens was

and still is against the decision to switch off the country’s nuclear power stations, against a rise in guaranteed basic income, against the ban on gas heating systems and against the ban on combustion engines in cars,” he said. These are all policies the AfD opposes.

The party also benefited from the constant squabbling between SPD, Greens and FDP that has held up much cabinet business.

“The AfD’s success had a lot to do with the chaos and conflict in the federal government,” said Boris Rhein, leader of the winning party in Hesse, the centre-

‘The AfD’s success had a lot to do with the chaos and conflict in the federal government’

right Christian Democratic Union.

Greens and liberals in Hesse and Bavaria admitted that dissatisfaction with Scholz’s coalition had cast a long shadow. “None of the parties in the government got a boost [from Berlin],” said Tarek al-Wazir, leader of the Greens in Hesse. “We had a real uphill fight.”

But underlying Sunday’s results was an important shift in the AfD’s electorate that could have big implications for opposition politics for years to come. AfD supporters were long seen as classic protest voters who wanted to convey their discontent to powers-that-be in Berlin. That is changing.

Exit polls on Sunday showed that 38 per cent of voters who chose the AfD did so out of conviction, not protest. In Bavaria the proportion was higher, 47 per cent. Voters from all other parties had defected to the AfD, Weidel said, proving “we have established ourselves in all sections of the electorate”.

Robert Lambrou, the party’s top candidate in Hesse, cited data showing that 15 per cent of first-time voters put their crosses by the AfD. “You see from the numbers that something is changing in west Germany,” he said.

AfD policies proposed in Hesse — limiting “mass immigration”, reducing property transfer tax, a kind of stamp duty, and reintroducing nuclear power — “reflect the will of the majority”, Lambrou said.

Despite the AfD’s newfound success, it remains a fringe movement. All of the other parties have erected a “firewall” around it, insisting they will never co-operate or form coalitions with it, either on federal or regional level.

Weidel said Sunday’s results underscored the absurdity of the firewall, a policy she said meant “millions of voters are being excluded” from the political process. “This contempt and disdain for the AfD, this exclusion of the party from government is, in the long run, untenable,” she said. “The firewall is deeply undemocratic.”

Weidel’s allies predict the firewall will not survive for long, especially in eastern states where the AfD polls at above 30 per cent and other parties may struggle to form workable coalitions without it.

“In the next one to two years we’re going to see a coalition [with the AfD] on the regional level, whether in Hesse or some other state,” said Lambrou. “We are ready for more.”

Disease prevention

# Scientists alter chickens’ DNA to reduce spread of bird flu

DONATO PAOLO MANCINI — LONDON

Researchers have altered parts of chickens’ DNA to significantly impede the transmission of bird flu without damaging their health, an intervention that could prove a simple and cost-effective way of protecting animals and humans from the disease.

In a peer-reviewed study published in Nature yesterday, researchers from Edinburgh university, Imperial College London and the Pirbright Institute used gene-editing techniques to alter the section of chicken DNA responsible for producing ANP32A, a protein that the flu virus takes over to replicate itself.

In the study, chickens whose ANP32A molecule had been gene-edited were exposed to a normal dose of the H9N2-ULD strain of avian flu and nine out of 10 remained uninfected, with no transmission to other chickens.

The spread of bird flu is a concern for health authorities, animal welfare groups and food producers. More than

100mn animals were culled last winter, and the spread to humans in a few cases stoked fears of a new pandemic.

James Wood, University of Cambridge head of veterinary medicine, who was not involved in the study, called the research a “breakthrough” that “provides important proof of principle of the utility of gene editing in introducing genetic resistance to disease caused by influenza in farmed animals”.

The researchers exposed the birds to an “artificially high dose” of avian flu to further test their resilience. In that case, half the birds became infected. But the intervention still provided some protection, with the viral load in the gene-edited group “much lower” than is typically seen in birds with avian flu.

The gene-editing process also curbed transmission to just one of the four non-gene-edited chickens in the same incubator. Among the gene-edited chickens, no transmission was recorded. The birds showed “no signs” that the change in their DNA affected their wellbeing.

Infrastructure financing

# Ireland uses tax windfall to launch sovereign wealth funds

JUDE WEBBER — DUBLIN

Ireland is set to invest more than half of its corporation tax windfall in two new sovereign wealth funds, providing revenue for infrastructure projects and future economic challenges.

Michael McGrath, finance minister, said yesterday the wealth funds would together receive €6.3bn a year from the estimated annual €10bn to €12bn of corporate tax paid by global technology and pharmaceuticals companies that the government believes could prove temporary.

“We have a window of opportunity we must grasp,” McGrath said, calling the funds “a step-change in how we plan for the future”. Corporate tax receipts have more than tripled since 2015 and are forecast to hit €23.6bn this year and €24.5bn in 2024.

But the government says it must be cautious because the revenues, generated by companies that have their European headquarters or large operations

in Ireland to take advantage of the country’s low tax rate, are volatile and may suddenly dry up.

The planned funds cement a remarkable turnaround for Ireland’s economy, which needed a €67.5bn bailout from the IMF and EU in 2010 after an economic and banking crash.

Ireland’s corporate tax rate, which at 12.5 per cent is one of the lowest in the world, has been an important driver of the country’s recent economic strength. Under a global deal, the rate will be raised to 15 per cent from January.

As a result of the corporate tax bonanza, the government is expecting budget surpluses of €46bn between 2023 and 2026. It will pay 0.8 per cent of gross domestic product — about €4.3bn — into the new Future Ireland Fund every year from 2024 to 2035. Next year, it will also pay in an extra €4.1bn from an existing rainy day fund, which is being wound up.

It expects the fund to be worth €100bn by 2035.

National security

# Polish military commanders resign days before election

RAPHAEL MINDER AND BARBARA ERLING  
ŁÓDŹ, POLAND

Two of Poland’s top military commanders have resigned days before a fiercely contested election in which national security is a key feature in the rightwing government’s campaign.

Rajmund Andrzejczak, chief of the general staff of the armed forces, and operational commander Tomasz Piotrowski tendered their resignation to President Andrzej Duda, the military said yesterday.

The two army chiefs gave no reason for their resignation. But ahead of parliamentary elections on Sunday, the opposition seized on the opportunity to cast a longstanding row between the top brass and defence minister Mariusz Błaszczak as proof that the ruling Law and Justice (PiS) party could not be trusted with national security matters.

“This is happening at a time when there is a war on our eastern border and a conflict is growing in the Middle East

that may turn into a global conflict,” said opposition leader Donald Tusk, who claimed that more commanders had resigned.

PiS is claiming Tusk cannot be trusted with national security. They allege he is a stooge for Germany and Russia. “The safe future of Poles” is one of the main PiS campaign slogans.

Former defence minister Tomasz Siemoniak described the double resignation as “an earthquake”. A candidate for the opposition, he told TVN television that it summed up eight years of “PiS rule over the Polish army”.

The feud between Błaszczak and the military came to the fore in the spring, when the minister blamed army commanders for failing to report that a stray Russian-made missile had landed in Poland, a Nato member. The unexploded rocket was discovered by a civilian in a Polish forest in April, four months after crossing into Polish territory, presumably after missing its target in neighbouring Ukraine.



INTERNATIONAL

Transatlantic push

EU plans probe into Chinese steelmakers

Brussels joins Washington in effort to shield industry with anti-subsidy action

ANDY BOUNDS — BRUSSELS

The EU is planning to announce anti-subsidy investigations against Chinese steelmakers at a summit with the US this month as they further develop a common front against Beijing.

Brussels had agreed to join Washington's efforts to shield industries from cheap competition, two officials with knowledge of the move told the Financial Times. Washington had asked Brussels to move against Chinese steel pro-

ducers in return for avoiding the reimposition of tariffs on EU steel imposed by former president Donald Trump in 2018, the officials said.

The EU had taken retaliatory action with levies on US products such as bourbon and Harley-Davidson motorcycles but both sides suspended measures in 2021 as they collaborated on a sustainable steel initiative designed to limit Chinese imports.

The EU officials said they understood the need for President Joe Biden to protect steelworkers' jobs in swing states such as Pennsylvania and Ohio to prevent Trump winning an election rematch next year.

The EU move would be the second

case against China in as many months, after it announced a probe into Chinese-made electric vehicles. Brussels is also considering an inquiry into the wind turbine sector. These investigations, which are expected to last up to a year, could lead to the imposition of tariffs.

At their October 20 meeting, the two sides are expected to announce a Global Arrangement on Sustainable Steel and Aluminium, or GSA, curbing exports of Chinese metal that have been flooding the world market, officials said. It will be open to other countries, such as the UK and Japan if they agree, to also implement tariffs on China.

The EU and US will also sign a political agreement to keep their own dispute on

ice while they continue talks on a second part of the GSA, the decarbonisation of steel and aluminium making.

Over the past two years of talks, the EU has refused to copy the US decision to use national security grounds to slap tariffs of 25 per cent on steel and 10 per cent on aluminium after the World Trade Organization ruled the move breached international law.

But Brussels has agreed to levy WTO-compatible duties if its investigation proves that China's subsidies are unfair. The US and the EU paused their dispute two years ago pending a resolution.

Figures from the OECD show global steelmaking capacity reached record levels in 2022. Excess capacity is at

record highs too, with just 75 per cent utilised. China has accounted for a quarter of the capacity increase.

Brussels has already imposed anti-dumping duties on about 10 categories of Chinese steel imports. It also put quotas in place for many steel products after the US action.

The EU steel industry said they were ineffective. The European Commission declined to comment.

Separately, Brussels is introducing a carbon border adjustment mechanism, which will tax imports, including steel, according to how much carbon they emit.

The CBAM will not start charging importers until 2026.

Monetary policy

IMF urges central banks to remain firm in their inflation fight

SAM FLEMING AND COLBY SMITH MARRAKECH

The Federal Reserve needs to hold its nerve in its fight against the worst bout of US inflation for a generation, a senior IMF official said, as he urged the central bank to keep monetary policy tight even as global economic momentum slows.

Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas, the fund's chief economist, told the Financial Times that, despite recent falls, inflation remained too high for comfort in the US. Any policy easing would be a "huge risk" given the hard-fought battle to bring inflation down.

"What is really important is that monetary policy remains in tightening territory," he said ahead of annual meetings of the IMF and World Bank being held this week in Morocco. "The cost of easing too early is probably higher than the cost of tightening a little more, especially when you have an economy that keeps surprising to the upside."

He added that keeping US borrowing costs elevated for longer than expected, or even raising rates again from their current target range of 5.25 per cent to 5.5 per cent, would not be "unreasonable".

While a spate of rate rises by multiple central banks is taming price pressures — and weighing on global growth — inflation is still expected to hang above target in 93 per cent of economies with an inflation goal, including the US, the IMF said in its latest World Economic Outlook, released yesterday.

Inflation is set to remain high despite expectations of weaker global growth of 2.9 per cent next year, down from 3.5 per cent in 2022 and 3 per cent this year, according to the IMF's latest forecasts. The fund lifted its projection for global inflation next year to 5.8 per cent, an increase of 0.6 percentage points from its previous forecast.

Most central banks, including the Fed, European Central Bank and Bank of England, target inflation of 2 per cent. Personal consumption expenditures inflation in the US is now 3.5 per cent, against consumer price index inflation of 4.3 per cent in the euro area and 6.7 per cent in the UK. Returning inflation to target is expected to take until 2025 in "most cases", the IMF warned, adding that near-term inflation expectations were "markedly" above target.

The legacy of central bank tightening is playing out in credit markets, the IMF found, with "clear signs that tighter credit conditions are increasingly affecting real activity".

In advanced economies, credit and investment demand shrank in the first half of the year. House prices have been growing more slowly or going into reverse, while bankruptcy rates are up 20 per cent in the US over the past year. The global economy, the fund found, was "limping along, not sprinting".

Nevertheless, tougher conditions do not amount to a "credit crunch", the IMF said.

Surprisingly robust hiring data in the US helped renew a global sell-off on bond markets on Friday, as investors bet official interest rates would stay higher for longer than originally anticipated. Among G7 economies, Japan is set for the firmest growth after the US this year, at 2 per cent.

Additional reporting by Mary McDougall  
See FT Big Read and Martin Wolf

Asia. Growth brake

China homes gloom takes shine off Golden Week

Positive statistics for tourism and holiday-period revenue clouded by housing activity

JOE LEAHY AND NIAN LIU — BEIJING  
CHAN HO-HIM AND WILLIAM LANGLEY HONG KONG

China's Golden Week holiday provided some relief for the world's second-largest economy as it struggles to recover from the coronavirus pandemic but policymakers will have to take action to spur stronger growth, economists say.

Domestic tourism numbers and revenue during the eight-day holiday, which started on October 1 and combined the mid-autumn festival and National Day, were slightly higher than 2019 levels before the pandemic, official figures showed.

But activity in the stricken property market, which analysts say lies at the heart of China's economic woes, remained lacklustre, with fewer people than expected inspired by the holiday cheer to buy a new home.

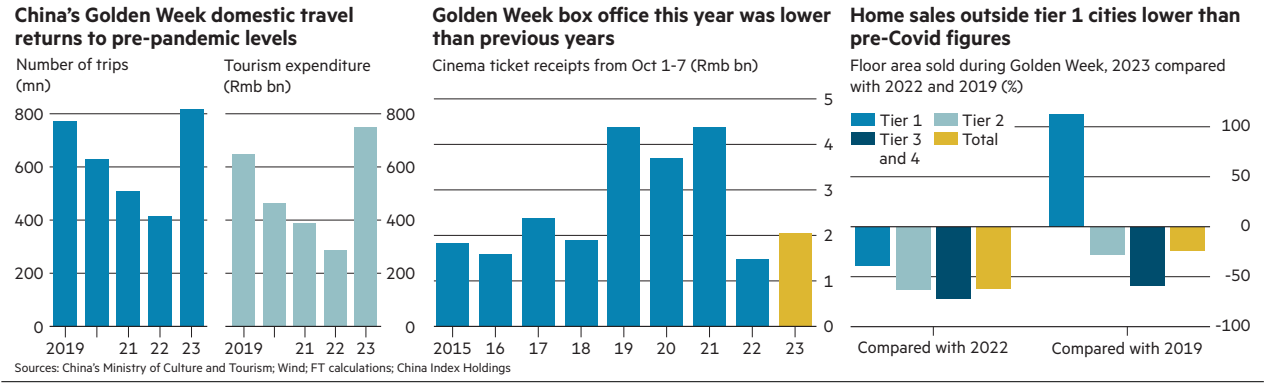
With China's third-quarter gross domestic product data expected next week, analysts will be looking for signs that Beijing will continue to support the recovery with sustained stimulus measures.

"The economy is resilient," said Heron Lim, greater China economist at Moody's Analytics. "But in terms of strong growth, that is still missing."

China's economy was expected to rebound decisively this year after Covid lockdowns in 2022 but a weak property market has undermined consumer confidence, while lagging foreign demand for the country's exports has hit trade and manufacturing. Policymakers have responded with cuts to mortgage requirements and interest rates but have implemented only piecemeal stimulus measures in a bid to avoid adding to growing public debt.

State media lauded the Golden Week holiday as a success, noting "bustling scenes" across the country as "the latest sign of . . . China's steady economic recovery, in stark contrast to the dire predictions made by western media and politicians".

But initial estimates for domestic tourism fell short of forecasts. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism said the number of domestic travellers during the break was 4.1 per cent above 2019 levels, and domestic tourism revenue was 1.5 per cent higher. Prior to the holiday, the government had projected visitor numbers would rise 7.8 per cent and



**Holiday snaps: tourists visit a section of the Great Wall of China during the Golden Week break this month**

Kevin Frayer/Getty Images

revenue 3.7 per cent, Goldman Sachs said. Tourism revenue per head was 2 per cent below 2019 levels, an improvement from the minus 16 per cent recorded during the Dragon Boat public holiday in June. Box office revenue was also well below pre-pandemic levels.

In the real estate sector, average daily sales volumes by area fell 17 per cent compared with 2022, according to data from China Index Holdings, which tracks 35 cities.

"The property sector showed signs of weakening again, despite the raft of easing measures rolled out in September," Nomura economists wrote in a research note, adding that the loosening of buyer restrictions in China's top-tier cities might come at the expense of demand in smaller cities.

In Hong Kong, the daily average of visitors from across the border reached 70

per cent of comparable figures from 2017 and 2018, before Covid and anti-government protests rocked the territory. But mainland visitors spent less per capita on high-value luxury goods and services, analysts said.

Tourists "now prefer social media check-ins over shopping" during holiday trips, said Oliver Tong, head of retail in Hong Kong for real estate services firm JLL. "Retailers are losing their confidence in the business prospects of the Chinese new year in 2024."

"Spending power has diminished and it reflects on restaurants and bars," said Girish Jhunjhunwala, founder of Hong Kong-based hotel group Ovolo.

Ray Chui, chair of Kam Kee Holdings, which runs more than 40 restaurants across the city, said holiday revenue was about 75 per cent of 2018 levels.

"It is more about getting the experi-

'The property sector showed signs of weakening again, despite the raft of easing measures rolled out in September'

ence than spending now," Chui said. In the past, tourists spent an average of up to HK\$300 (\$38) per person, he said. "Now it is around HK\$80."

In Macau, the gambling hub that relies heavily on mainland tourists, visitor numbers reached 932,000, with average daily arrivals hitting about 84 per cent of the equivalent figure for 2019, the city's tourism authority said.

Average daily gross gaming revenue during the holiday was estimated at 830mn patacas (\$103mn), up nearly 30 per cent from the Labour Day holiday this year, JPMorgan analyst DS Kim said.

Analysts warned that signs of stabilisation remained fragile, given the weakness in the property services sectors, while elevated interest rates in China's trading partners would hit demand for its exports.

See Lex

Dollar-swap pledge

Argentine peso tumbles ahead of election

CIARA NUGENT — BUENOS AIRES

Argentina's currency has tumbled as voters and markets brace themselves for a possible victory by Javier Milei, a radical rightwing economist who wants to swap the peso for the dollar, in elections on October 22.

Argentina's official exchange rate has been fixed at 365 pesos to the dollar since August. But on Monday its black market exchange houses were charging 945 pesos a greenback, a 7.4 per cent increase from Friday.

The gap between the official and unofficial rates has widened to 165 per cent, the largest on record.

The peso has lost 71 per cent of its value against the dollar on parallel exchange markets over the past 12 months amid Argentina's worst economic crisis in two decades. Annual inflation hit 124 per cent in August.

Analysts said a strong poll performance by Milei, who has made scrapping the peso to stamp out inflation a central part of his campaign, had increased the

pressure on the exchange rate. Milei's libertarian Libertad Avanza is leading in the polls, followed by the ruling centre-left Peronist coalition and centre-right opposition Juntos por el Cambio.

Milei on Monday advised Argentines against keeping their savings in investment instruments denominated in pesos. "Never in pesos, never in pesos," he said. "The peso is a currency emitted by Argentine politicians, so it can't be worth excrement, because those pieces



A supporter of Javier Milei holds fake dollar bills depicting his face

of trash don't even work as fertilisers."

About 13.6tn pesos are held in term deposits, according to Amilcar Collante, an economist at La Plata national university. "Those pesos are currently contained by the system, but if people hear Milei say 'after the election we are going to dollarise, so get rid of them', that generates more demand for dollars," he said. "What might work well for him electorally is very harmful for market expectations."

The government has ploughed billions of dollars of foreign currency reserves into legal parallel exchange markets this year to prop up the peso, with about \$1bn spent in September.

But with the central bank now out of firepower — its reserves excluding liabilities are about \$5bn in the red — the government has been forced to ease interventions, according to Fernando Marull, founder of Buenos Aires-based economic consultancy FMyA.

"The pressure was so great that what they were doing was no longer working, so they have stopped," Marull said.

Global economy

Regulators told to watch rising bond yields

COLBY SMITH AND SAM FLEMING MARRAKECH

The IMF has urged regulators to sharpen their scrutiny of threats from rising bond yields, as a continuing surge in global borrowing costs triggers "heightened risk" in financial markets.

"When you see large moves that are very fast, it has more potential to trigger instability, because market participants have to reposition and there are these accelerators in the system that could kick in," Tobias Adrian, director of the fund's monetary and capital markets department, told the Financial Times. "Hopefully, calm will prevail at some point, but there is certainly heightened risk [now]."

The remarks come amid weeks of volatility in the price of US government bonds. Yields on 30-year US debt hit a 16-year high of more than 5 per cent last week after strong data on the jobs market raised the prospect of the Federal Reserve's benchmark interest rates remaining high for an extended period.

Adrian was particularly worried about banks' exposure, especially those hit hard by the implosion of Silicon Valley Bank this year. While the recent sell-off had not yet translated to significantly wider credit spreads, that "could, of course, be triggered at some point".

"There are going to be more and more stresses on the banks," he said.

'When you see large moves that are very fast, it has more potential to trigger instability'

In March, regional banks in the US faced a crisis that later spread to larger institutions — even ensnaring one of Europe's biggest lenders, Credit Suisse.

"Forceful supervisory action can really make a difference," Adrian said.

His remarks to the FT echo warnings outlined in the IMF's latest Global Financial Stability report, published yesterday at the outset of the multilat-

eral lender's annual meetings with the World Bank, which are taking place in Marrakech this year.

In the report, the IMF warned of "adverse feedback loops" sparked by an abrupt tightening of financial conditions that could "again test the resilience of the global financial system".

It also stress tested nearly 900 lenders globally. Most lenders could handle the so-called "baseline" scenario of modest global growth and easing inflation — though 55, including a group of US regional banks, would be exposed to "significant" capital losses.

But a painful global recession and resurgent inflation that leads central banks to raise rates further would put 215 institutions, which together account for 42 per cent of global banking assets, at risk. Several systemically important institutions in China, Europe and the US would be affected, the IMF said.

Despite these vulnerabilities, Adrian urged central banks to "stay the course to get inflation back to target in a durable manner".



# Companies & Markets

## Meta oversight board probes manipulated video of Biden

- Facebook guidelines under scrutiny
- Fears over fake clips’ impact on polls

CRISTINA CRIDDLE

Meta is facing a review into its policies on manipulated content and AI-created “deepfakes” after the company’s moderators refused to remove a Facebook video that wrongfully described Joe Biden as a paedophile.

The company’s oversight board, an independent body set up in 2020 and consisting of journalists, academics and politicians, said yesterday it was opening a case to examine whether the social media group’s guidelines on altered videos and images could “withstand current and future challenges”.

The investigation, the first of its kind into Meta’s “manipulated media” poli-

The case surfaced when a user reported the post to the platform, which declined to remove it

cies, has been prompted by an edited version of a video during the 2022 mid-term elections in the US. In the original clip, Biden places an “I Voted” sticker on his adult granddaughter’s chest and kisses her on the cheek.

In a Facebook post from May this year, a seven-second altered version of the clip loops the footage so it repeats the moment when Biden’s hand makes contact with her chest. The accompanying caption calls Biden “a sick paedophile” and those who voted for him “mentally unwell”. The clip is still on the Facebook site.

Although the Biden video was edited without the use of artificial intelligence, the board argues that its review and rulings will also set a precedent for AI-generated and human-edited content.

“It touches on the much broader issue of how manipulated media might impact elections in every corner of the

world,” said Thomas Hughes, director of the oversight board administration.

“Free speech is vitally important; it’s the cornerstone of democratic governance. But there are complex questions concerning what Meta’s human rights responsibilities should be regarding video content that has been altered to create a misleading impression of a public figure.”

The board’s investigation comes as AI-altered content, often described as deepfakes, is becoming increasingly sophisticated and widely used. There are concerns that fake but realistic content of politicians could influence voting in elections. The US goes to the polls in just over a year.

The Biden case surfaced when a user reported the video to Meta, which did not remove the post and upheld its decision to leave it online following a Facebook appeals process. The unidentified user appealed against the decision to the oversight board. Meta confirmed its decision to leave the content on the platform was correct.

The Biden case adds to the board’s growing number of investigations into content moderation around elections and other civic events.

The board this year overturned a decision from Meta to leave up a Facebook video that featured a Brazilian general, whom the board did not name, following elections potentially inciting street violence.

Previous assessments have focused on the decision to block Donald Trump from Facebook, as well as a video in which Cambodian leader Hun Sen threatens his political opponents with violence.

Once the board has completed its review, it can issue non-binding policy recommendations to Meta, which must respond within two months.

*Additional reporting by Hannah Murphy in San Francisco*

## Luxury restraint LVMH’s sales growth slows in third quarter on weaker US and Europe



Eastern promise: LVMH’s sales in Asia held up better than in US and European markets — SeongJoon Cho/Bloomberg

ADRIENNE KLASA — PARIS

Sales growth at luxury conglomerate LVMH slowed in the third quarter, as demand for luxury handbags moderated and spirits fell after several years of stellar growth.

The French group controlled by Bernard Arnault said sales grew 9 per cent in the third quarter to €19.9bn, down from a 17 per cent rise in the preceding quarter, reflecting softer luxury sales worldwide, notably in the US and Europe.

Sales in Asia excluding Japan grew at 11 per cent in the quarter, down from 34 per cent in the previous three months, while the US continued the trend of low-single-digit growth from earlier in the year as aspirational consumers pulled back on spending. In Europe, most countries were now growing in the mid-single-digit range, according to LVMH chief financial officer Jean-Jacques Guiony.

Guiony said there had been “no marked change in the business we do with the Chinese clientele” in the most recent quarter, but he noted that people were travelling abroad more and could be shopping there.

However, in Europe, “we’ve seen slight drops in the third quarter compared to mid-single-digit growth in the first half of the year . . . time will tell, depending on the depths and lengths of the cycle, whether it was a [change] in consumption or merely a blip after three extraordinary years”.

Sales at LVMH’s fashion and leather goods division — its biggest — grew 9 per cent in the third quarter, a slower pace than the 21 per cent growth in the second quarter. Selective distribution, which includes travel retail and Sephora, had the fastest growth at 26 per cent this quarter.

However, wines and spirits sales fell 10 per cent, which LVMH said was linked to a post-Covid normalisation

of demand and the tougher economic environment in the US, particularly for cognac sales.

The headline figure comes in below Visible Alpha’s consensus estimate of 11.5 per cent sales growth in the quarter for LVMH.

LVMH is the luxury industry’s biggest group by far and regarded as a bellwether given its size and influence. Luxury companies had already reported a slowing pace of growth in the US, the industry’s largest market, last quarter. Tighter economic conditions in China, the motor for the luxury industry’s record sales from early 2020 onwards, have also set the stage for the sector to experience more moderate growth.

“We expect a broad-based growth normalisation in the third quarter, with demand from European locals normalising, and less support from tourism flows,” wrote analysts at HSBC.

## Default threat at Country Garden after payment miss

THOMAS HALE — SHANGHAI  
CHENG LENG AND CHAN HO-HIM  
HONG KONG

Country Garden, China’s largest private developer, has warned of a potential default on its international debts in a blow to the country’s embattled property sector.

The company, which has about \$200bn in liabilities and close to \$10bn in dollar-denominated debt, told the Hong Kong stock exchange that it had missed a due payment of HK\$470mn (\$60mn) on some of its debts and expected that it “will not be able to meet all of its offshore payment obligations” when they are due.

“Such non-payment may lead to relevant creditors . . . demanding acceleration of payment of the relevant indebtedness owed to them or pursuing enforcement action,” the company said yesterday.

The statement underscores a sudden deterioration in the financial health of Country Garden, which had so far withstood a sector-wide property cash crunch following the 2021 default of its peer, Evergrande.

The potential default also adds to concerns over China’s property sector, which typically drives more than a quarter of the country’s economic activity but has for two years been plagued by construction delays and falling demand.

Country Garden said its sales for the first nine months were down 44 per cent on the same period in 2022 and fell in September for the sixth consecutive month.

“As there has not been any material, industry-wide improvement in property sales, the group faces significant uncertainty regarding asset disposals, and its liquidity position is expected to remain very tight in the short to medium term,” the group said.

Country Garden missed international bond payments in August, triggering a 30-day grace period, within which it narrowly avoided default.

It said yesterday it expected not to make payments “within relevant grace periods”, one of which expires next week.

Country Garden told the FT it hoped to “comprehensively solve the company’s current overseas debt risks”.

In September, it disclosed \$7bn of losses in the first half.

Lex page 24

## Attracting BlackRock’s Fink is not enough for Japan’s resurgence

INSIDE BUSINESS

ASIA

Kana Inagaki

After hosting a gathering of the world’s biggest investors in Tokyo last week, BlackRock founder Larry Fink compared the current global interest in Japan to the time when the world was fascinated by the country’s economic “miracle” that lasted through the 1980s.

The words were music to the ears of prime minister Fumio Kishida, who had spent the past few weeks trying to convince executives of Blackstone, KKR and sovereign wealth funds such as Norges Bank to allocate more money to Japan.

With stock prices trading near a 33-year high, the economy out of deflation, the global uncertainty in China and corporate governance reforms of the past decade finally bearing fruit, it’s not surprising that fund managers who had shown no interest in Japan are suddenly flocking to Tokyo.

Some longtime Japan investors, such as Drew Edwards, who runs GMO’s Usonian equity funds, are convinced the changes are real and are encouraged by Kishida’s plans to reform the country’s asset management industry and labour market. “When you meet with CEOs who are under the age of 60, they’re not nostalgic of the 1980s and they have clear memories of the 1990s” when the economy slowed down, said Edwards.

“This is the generation that is coming into power and they are much more inclined to change.”

Still, some company executives are also wary of the sudden interest in Japan and anxious that new investors could easily be disappointed by the pace of change in Japan and leave quickly before meaningful changes in portfolio allocations are made.

Turning to overseas investors is a sensible and well-tested strategy with a quick outcome, but the lesson from the “Abenomics” era was that it’s not enough. Japanese investors and companies need to have faith in their own markets if Tokyo is serious about unlocking \$14tn of household savings and making investment in Japan a long-term bet.

Looking at the market for initial public offerings, the signs at home are not encouraging. Fostering start-ups is already a central part of Kishida’s economic programme but the quality of IPOs in Japan is a serious problem that has deterred many Japanese households from investing in the stock market.

### Turning to overseas investors is a sensible strategy but the lesson from the ‘Abenomics’ era was that it’s not enough

While there is a significant quantity of corporate venture capital going on within Japan’s larger companies, there is a severe shortage of the kind of risk capital that would, in the US or European context, support a company through late stages of venture capital funding. According to CB Insights, venture funding in Japan totalled \$4.3bn last year compared with nearly \$200bn in the US.

As a result, many start-ups in Japan list their shares well before their global counterparts, leaving retail investors to shoulder the risks. Others choose to do their IPOs elsewhere, as was the case

with the five Japanese start-ups that listed on Nasdaq this year. There are also conglomerates — such as e-commerce group Rakuten — listing parts of their businesses in attempts to raise money.

When ispace, a lossmaking start-up that tried to land a spacecraft on the Moon this year, listed in April, sole bookrunner SMBC Nikko took the extra step of asking investors to sign a document confirming that they were aware of the risks of investing in the company.

That was after Morgan Stanley decided against taking part in the IPO after assessing the risks. Its pullout, which was followed by Nomura and another US bank, was seen as significant because it is known for employing one of the industry’s foremost experts on the finance side of space. All four banks and ispace declined to comment.

Ultimately, shares of ispace soared after they were priced 78 per cent below the valuation achieved at its final private funding round. But it would be a healthier market if there were more institutional investors in Japan willing to provide the risk capital to start-ups.

Kishida’s efforts also include a plan to raise the quality of asset managers in Japan and to remove barriers for foreign players to enter the industry. Critics have long argued that asset management firms in Japan need to raise the performance of their funds and provide more attractive products with higher returns. What is puzzling is that the 14-member panel tasked with reforming the asset managers does not have a single member from inside the industry.

Much of the prime minister’s energy with his “Buy Japan” campaign has been spent looking outside, but it’s Japan that needs to believe in that narrative.

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COMPANIES & MARKETS

Financial services

Pay rises squeeze Deloitte’s US profits

Increases meant to retain staff are hitting margins as advisory work slows down

STEPHEN FOLEY — NEW YORK

Deloitte employees took home a bigger share of the accounting and consulting firm’s US revenues in the past year, reflecting pay rises that were meant to retain staff but also squeezed profit margins.

Pay and benefits for staff accounted for 55.4 per cent of revenue in the financial year ended June 3, the highest in the eight years the firm has been publishing the number, according to its latest

transparency report. As recently as 2019, less than half the revenues of Deloitte US went to staff remuneration.

The figures lay bare a shift at the Big Four accounting firms since the coronavirus pandemic, which unleashed a wave of demand for their consulting services from corporate America but also prompted staff to reconsider whether the long hours were worth it.

The result was a battle to hire staff and retain critical personnel using higher salaries and bonuses, which has weighed on the bottom line as demand for some consulting services has returned to normal or even shrunk.

Now, pressure on margins has led the Big Four to seek cost reductions.

Deloitte has resumed the tough annual performance reviews that it and other firms used before the pandemic to push out unwanted staff. It has also announced lay-offs, including a round in April that affected at least 1,200 people, concentrated in the financial advisory business that has been affected by a fall in merger and acquisition activity.

“We are in a dynamic time for the consulting industry,” Deloitte said, adding it had been “investing heavily in our workforce, both during and after the pandemic’s talent marketplace shifts”.

Deloitte’s push to retain essential staff was more successful in the US than in its European or Asia-Pacific businesses, according to Monadnock Research,

which monitors the consulting profession. In its 2022 financial year, employee turnover was 20 per cent in the US, versus 25 per cent or more elsewhere, Monadnock said.

“While retention strategies were effective in many cases, those salary increases continue to have a negative impact on service margins in markets where demand tempered in the second half of 2022 and in 2023,” said Mark O’Connor, Monadnock chief executive.

Deloitte’s US staff swelled from 65,000 to 80,000 between mid-2021 and mid-2022.

According to Management Consulted, which coaches graduates on getting a job at consulting firms, Deloitte pushed

up starting salaries significantly. An MBA student who joined Deloitte Consulting in 2020 could expect to earn \$173,000 in the first year, it found, while a 2022 hire could expect \$204,000.

Revenues at Deloitte US rose 17 per cent to an all-time high of \$32.7bn in the year to June 2023, the firm’s transparency report shows. The consulting business accounted for a record 54.4 per cent of those revenues, but a smaller percentage of earnings than in any of the past eight years, at just 22.8 per cent.

In the same period two years earlier, boosted by demand for digital transformation services after the pandemic, consulting contributed 52.5 per cent of revenues but 31.2 per cent of earnings.

Technology. Geopolitics

Saudi-China AI ties raise fears on access to chips

Concerns expressed at one of Gulf’s top universities over risk of upsetting Washington

SIMEON KERR AND SAMER AL-ATRUSH  
DUBAI  
QIANER LIU — HONG KONG  
MADHUMITA MURGIA — LONDON

Saudi Arabia’s collaboration with China on artificial intelligence has stirred fears at the leading Saudi academic institution that the ties could jeopardise the university’s access to US-made chips needed to power the new technology.

Professor Jinchao Xu, a US-Chinese mathematician at King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, has launched AceGPT, an Arabic-focused large language model, in collaboration with the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen and the Shenzhen Research Institute of Big Data.

The move is part of Riyadh’s efforts to lead regional development of AI technology, building large supercomputers and rolling out LLMs, the technology that underpins generative AI systems such as chatbots. Along with the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia is seeking to compete with AI companies and create bespoke models for Arabic speakers.

Western officials have long expressed concerns about growing tech transfer between their traditional allies in the Gulf and China.

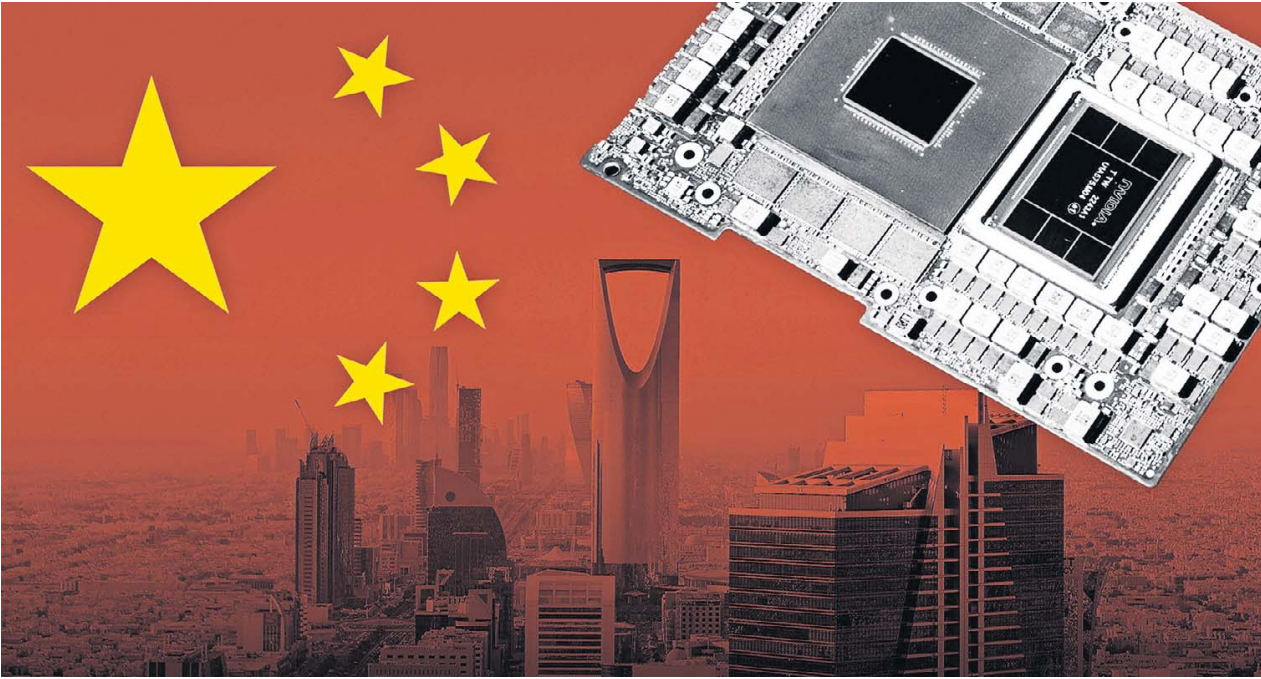
The US has expanded export licence requirements for graphics processing units made by Nvidia and AMD, preventing Chinese entities from accessing



the chips that are vital in building generative AI models. But the Biden administration has stopped short of blocking exports to the Middle East.

People at Kaust seeking to obtain the chips nonetheless believe that limiting Chinese co-operation is vital to secure delivery. “Many people involved have raised their concerns to leadership about the Chinese relationships jeopardising the supercomputer,” said one of the people aware of the matter. “They don’t want to upset the US government.”

AI has become one of the regional battlegrounds of Sino-US competition in the Gulf, where Riyadh and Abu Dhabi



Riyadh is seeking to lead regional development of AI tech. Below, Tony Chan, president of King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, is building on outreach to China — FT montage/ Bloomberg/Dreamstime

are determined to build on flourishing trade relations to include tech transfer while also sustaining ties with Washington, their main security partner.

Abu Dhabi has launched a version of its Falcon model, claimed to be more than twice as powerful as Meta’s Llama 2, previously seen as the most sophisticated “open source” model. G42, a company controlled by the UAE’s national security adviser Sheikh Tahnoon bin Zayed al-Nahyan, which has co-operated with China on vaccines, has also released an Arabic-language LLM.

US officials are stepping up efforts to draw the Gulf states away from China,



including backing a rail and shipping corridor linking India and Europe through the Middle East.

The latest Gulf move into AI comes as Kaust president Tony Chan builds on his outreach to China, including signing deals with Shenzhen universities to share research capabilities and talent exchange. He co-wrote an essay last month in Foreign Policy headlined “America can’t stop China’s rise”.

Kaust has said that the Saudi-China exchange is “thriving”, as evidenced by the numbers of Chinese at the university, including 20 per cent of students, 34 per cent of post-doctoral researchers and 9 per cent of faculty members.

A member of Kaust staff said Chinese universities offered cheaper interns and students who could handle rote work, including testing the GPUs. Kaust said its students do not test GPUs. That job is handled by vendors and Kaust staff, it added. The university also said: “stipend payments to Kaust interns and students are not based on nationality.”

The AI initiative at Kaust, led by German computer scientist Jürgen Schmidhuber, is developing a supercomputer, Shaheen III, which aims to deliver 20 times more computing power than that of its existing system.

In response to questions about the

Shaheen III at Kaust aims to deliver 20 times more computing power than that of the existing system

LLM, Kaust described AceGPT as “an individual research project by one of our professors”. The chatbot is trained in Arabic, Chinese and English.

Kaust said it had “relations with many countries” and its “investments in GPUs are based on the needs of its own academic community to deliver projects of significance to the kingdom it serves.

“Where research collaborations are concerned, our supercomputers and other computing infrastructure cannot be accessed without strict, internationally compliant controls.”

The university said it had contracted Hewlett Packard Enterprise to deliver the Shaheen III system, for which the US company chose Nvidia chips.

Kaust was not buying the chips directly from Nvidia, the university said. Kaust has yet to receive the order.

HPE said it was monitoring export controls and remained “committed to serving our customers around the world in line with US government guidelines”.

Kaust said it complied with US export rules and had a monitoring framework to meet the safeguarding regulations to be able to operate Shaheen III.

It said: “Physical and system software access to Shaheen III is limited to the Kaust Core Labs system administrator and Hewlett Packard Enterprise teams.”

Financials

Ireland boosts banking levy to €200mn in latest tax blow for EU sector

OWEN WALKER  
EUROPEAN BANKING CORRESPONDENT

Ireland has become the latest European country to hit banks with higher taxes, as governments target the bigger profits lenders have generated from rising interest rates.

As part of the Irish Budget announced yesterday, Dublin said the banking levy would increase from around €87mn to €200mn in 2024 — a larger than expected increase — and be paid by the banks that had received financial assistance from the state: Allied Irish Banks, Bank of Ireland and Permanent TSB.

“It is important that the banking sector continues to make a contribution to the Irish economy following the support they received during the financial crisis,” finance minister Michael McGrath told the Irish parliament.

Ireland follows a wave of European countries increasing taxes and levies on banks. The Netherlands and Italy have recently joined Spain, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Lithuania, which have all made such moves over the past year.

Rising interest rates have boosted bank profits as they benefit from the difference between the interest they pay

‘It is important that [banks contribute] to the Irish economy following the support they received’

out to depositors and the interest they make on loans.

But, as profits have hit the highest levels since the global financial crisis, politicians have sought to target lenders with higher taxes to help pay for measures to support voters facing an increase in living costs.

Yet the tax rises have often met resistance. In Spain, the banking sector began legal challenges, while Italy was forced to water down its own windfall tax last month following fierce criticism of the measures, including from the European Central Bank.

Reports in the Irish press over the weekend had indicated the levy could rise to €175mn, though bank shares were little affected by the announcement yesterday.

AIB stock was up more than 5 per cent, Bank of Ireland’s up 3.5 per cent and PTSB up 4.6 per cent by late afternoon yesterday.

“Today’s announcement is within investor expectations and removes one of the key remaining uncertainties on the Irish banks, so could act as a catalyst for the shares to now re-rate,” said Citi analyst Borja Ramirez Segura.

The government did not provide details about how the levy would be broken out but Goodbody analyst John Cronin estimated AIB’s annual contribution would rise from €37mn to €92mn, Bank of Ireland’s would go from €25mn to €81mn and PTSB’s would increase from €22mn to €27mn.

“It has presumably purposefully been struck at a level that is a bit higher than was anticipated in the public domain in a bid to be seen to be trying to inflict some pain on the sector given current high returns — and, perhaps, to stave off any further media/political pressures from a deposit pricing perspective,” Cronin added.

Oil & gas

Survivors of 2021 Mozambique terror attack accuse Total of involuntary manslaughter

JOSEPH COTTERILL — JOHANNESBURG  
TOM WILSON — LONDON  
SARAH WHITE — PARIS

TotalEnergies has been accused of involuntary manslaughter by survivors of a 2021 terrorist attack in Mozambique that killed dozens of people and forced Total to halt Africa’s biggest natural gas development.

A criminal complaint filed with French prosecutors this week alleges that Total “failed to take necessary measures to ensure the safety of subcontractors” in the gas-rich Cabo Delgado province when they came under attack from Islamist insurgents.

The public prosecutor’s office in the Parisian suburb of Nanterre, where Total is based, can either reject the complaint or open a preliminary inquiry ahead of any decision to proceed with a prosecution. Such cases can take years to advance in the French justice system.

Total declined to comment on the claim, which it said it had not seen, but

said its evacuation plans had included subcontractors as well as its own staff and civilians.

The March 2021 attack in Palma, a town close to where Total was developing a \$20bn liquefied natural gas project, has undermined Total’s ambitions to develop LNG in Mozambique. The company suspended work on the project following the incident and has only recently signalled that it could soon restart the investment.

Analysts believe the death toll in the attack might have been much higher than the dozens officially reported. A survey team commissioned by journalist Alex Perry concluded that about 1,200 civilians may have died in the assault, based on witness accounts.

An estimated 4,700 people have been killed in fighting in Cabo Delgado in the past six years, according to the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, with tens of thousands displaced as Islamist insurgents sought to overthrow Mozambique’s government.

The seven individuals behind the complaint, including three former subcontractors who survived a bloody hotel siege in Palma and four relatives of victims, also accuse Total of “failure to assist a person in danger”.

The complainants allege that the group failed to warn subcontractors of the attack, lacked a proper security plan for evacuating the LNG project, and refused to give fuel to a South African private security contractor that tried a helicopter rescue after the assault took

Rwandan soldiers were invited to help restore order in Cabo Delgado after the attack in 2021 — Simon Wolffert/JAFP via Getty Images

place. Dyck Advisory Group, which worked for the Mozambican state, airlifted contractors and officials from the besieged hotel during the attack, but many had to risk escaping by convoy.

The complaint cites a February report to the Dutch parliament alleging flaws in Total’s security planning and emergency procedures around the LNG project, for which the Dutch export credit agency provided financing.

There has been no full Mozambican investigation into what happened.



Before the Palma attack, a human rights consultant said in a 2020 report commissioned by Total that its LNG project had “ultimately . . . the lead role in co-ordination and oversight” of assessing security and human rights risks.

Total said it was “inexact” to suggest it had not had a plan for subcontractors. It said all project staff, including contractors and subcontractors, had been instructed to remain inside the perimeter of the LNG project and that 2,500 people had been successfully evacuated from this area, mainly by boat.

It said it had not been informed that its subcontractors were at the besieged hotel, which was outside the perimeter.

Total said that Dyck had been hired by the Mozambique government to support “offensive” military operations rather than provide security, and that advocacy groups had accused Dyck in 2020 of carrying out attacks that had affected civilians.

As a result, Total decided not to sup-

port or contribute to any of Dyck’s operations, it said. Dyck, which has said it has investigated the claims, denies any wrongdoing.

The assault on Palma was a turning point in the insurgency by Mozambique’s al-Shabaab group as it marked the first killings of foreign contractors since attacks began in 2017.

It also led President Filipe Nyusi’s government to invite troops from Rwanda and a regional force to restore security.

These forces have pushed back the insurgents from the LNG development zone and key towns.

Patrick Pouyanné, Total’s chief executive, told investors last month that the LNG project might be able to restart by the end of the year because of an improvement in the security environment.

Eni and ExxonMobil have been developing an even larger, \$30bn onshore development in Mozambique but are yet to make a final investment decision.



COMPANIES & MARKETS

# UBS deal to rescue Credit Suisse spurs \$9bn of legal claims across the world

Bank, regulator and Swiss government face further deluge of lawsuits from investors and staff

OWEN WALKER — LONDON  
KAYE WIGGINS — HONG KONG  
MERCEDES RUEHL — SINGAPORE

Switzerland’s government managed to head off a spiralling European banking crisis when it orchestrated UBS’s \$3.3bn takeover of Credit Suisse six months ago — but the long-term pain has only just begun, with \$9bn of legal claims already filed and more cases in the works.

Debt investors lost out when \$17bn of Credit Suisse debt was written down to zero during its hastily negotiated rescue, while shareholders received roughly a tenth of what their equity would have been worth three years ago.

Potential claimants have three targets: Finma, the Swiss regulator that ordered the writing down of Credit Suisse’s \$17bn of additional tier 1 bonds; the Swiss government, which engineered the rescue deal and introduced an emergency law to make it possible; and UBS itself.

### Finma

The Swiss regulator has been the main target so far.

The disputes mainly relate to AT1s, a form of bank debt that can be converted to equity or wiped out when lenders hit trouble. Holders of Credit Suisse’s AT1s claim the trigger that would have allowed the bonds to be written down — a so-called viability event — did not happen and so Finma acted rashly in wiping them out.

By forcing losses on AT1 investors while allowing equity investors to receive some value for their shares, Finma upended the traditional capital hierarchy: a move from which the European Central Bank and Bank of England were quick to distance themselves.

But Finma, which is looking for a replacement chief executive after Urban Angehrn quit because of stress last month, has consistently argued the AT1s were designed to protect taxpayers from bearing alone the cost of failed banks. It has insisted that, without the AT1s being written down, UBS would have been unwilling to buy Credit Suisse. With no alternative buyer in the frame, nationalisation would have been the only other choice.

International law firm Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan has already filed complaints in the Swiss court in St Gallen on behalf of 1,000 investors with more than \$6bn of AT1 holdings. A similar case brought by London-headquartered firm Pallas has close to 800 claimants who collectively own \$2.5bn of Credit Suisse AT1s.

Firms including Withers and Drew & Napier in Singapore have also initiated claims, since AT1s were particularly popular among wealthy Asian investors because of their higher interest rates compared with other bonds and perceived safety compared with shares. The two Singaporean firms represent in total about 300 claimants and \$250mn of AT1s. Further cases in international and domestic courts are in the works.

Finma is also the target of another group that lost hundreds of millions of dollars on the takeover: current and former staff at Credit Suisse who received a type of bonus similar to AT1s.

The contingent capital awards date



**Standing firm:** UBS argues it paid a fair price for Credit Suisse. Below, opponents of the deal protesting outside the Credit Suisse annual meeting in April  
Jose Cendon/Stefan Wermuth/Bloomberg

back to 2014 when staff at managing director and director level were offered them as part of their remuneration.

However, \$400mn of CCAs were wiped out when Finma cancelled the AT1s. Law firms in Switzerland working for current and former staff have filed claims in St Gallen against the regulator.

### Switzerland

Several law firms have begun putting together arbitration claims against the nation of Switzerland through the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes in Washington DC.

These are based on investment treaties Switzerland has with more than 120 countries designed to protect investors from the risk of governments expropriating assets through nationalisation.

“Traditionally, investment treaties were the shields western investors took into less developed markets, guarding against unfair treatment by host governments,” said Kher Sheng Lee, Asia-Pacific co-head of the Alternative Investment Management Association, which this month organised an event for AT1 holders in the region. “Now, we’re seeing a fascinating role reversal, where investors from these ‘emerging’ markets are using them to challenge Swit-

zerland, which was supposed to be a bastion of financial stability.”

Drew & Napier is pursuing one case, while Allen & Overy is soliciting claimants for a separate case funded by litigation finance group Omni Bridgeway.

Another firm, Quinn Emanuel, is exploring an alternative approach: suing Switzerland through the US courts. Sovereign nations are usually immune to being sued in the US. But the firm believes they can convince a judge that investors should be able to sue Switzerland in this case.

Investors in another case brought by Quinn Emanuel involving YPF, the Argentine oil major, recently won an award of \$16bn through the New York courts after a judge ruled that the South American country had unlawfully renationalised the company.

That was one of the largest judgments against a foreign sovereign by US courts, and could serve as a useful precedent for Credit Suisse shareholders who argue that, by passing a law to engineer the cut-price sale to UBS, the Swiss government in effect expropriated their assets.

### UBS

The third target that investors are pursuing is the biggest beneficiary of the takeover: UBS.

UK firm Pallas is close to initiating proceedings against the bank in Switzerland for Credit Suisse’s role in writing down the AT1 bonds, even though it was directed to do so by the government and Finma so the takeover could go ahead.

“The reasonable reaction for Credit Suisse — now UBS — would have been to challenge a direction to write down the AT1s,” said Fiona Huntriss, a partner at Pallas. “It’s not good enough to say ‘I was told to do this by my regulator.’”

And at least two claims have been brought by groups of Credit Suisse

“They [UBS] have to decide whether it is better to have a painful ending or endless pain’

equity investors to Zurich’s commercial court, arguing that shareholders should be compensated by UBS for the bargain-basement deal it negotiated.

Under Swiss law, shareholders in a company that is taken over who feel short-changed can appeal to a judge to be paid “adequate” compensation. Lawyers are arguing that UBS should pay any compensation that is decided.

The Swiss lender unveiled a \$29bn quarterly profit last month — a record for a bank — which was almost entirely down to an accounting gain it made on the Credit Suisse deal.

“If you look at the special profits, it’s an indicator that the price UBS paid for Credit Suisse was way too low,” said Arik Röschke, general secretary of the Swiss Investor Protection Association (SASV), which filed a claim in Zurich’s commercial court on behalf of 1,500 Credit Suisse shareholders in August.

Another lawsuit organised by Lausanne start-up LegalPass has attracted 3,000 claimants. Both the SASV and LegalPass declined to reveal the size of their claims.

UBS has argued the \$29bn accounting gain should not be viewed as a traditional profit as it will mostly be used to back Credit Suisse assets and bolster the combined bank’s capital strength.

Still, the \$3.3bn UBS paid for Credit Suisse was less than half the bank’s market value on the final trading day before the deal and a fraction of its book value.

The prospect of legal challenges dragging on for years threatens to be a distraction for executives trying to make a success of the most significant bank merger since the global financial crisis.

“They have to decide whether it is better to have a painful ending or endless pain,” said the SASV’s Röschke.

Finma, UBS and the Swiss government declined to comment.

### Financials

## Warburg Pincus beats target to close \$17bn private equity fund

ANTOINE GARA — NEW YORK  
WILL LOUCH — LONDON

The US private equity group Warburg Pincus has raised \$17.3bn for the largest fund in its 57-year history, joining a handful of peers that have beat their targets as others struggle to raise cash.

The firm began soliciting investments for the new fund about two years ago with a \$16bn target. The fund will focus on Warburg’s core business of corporate buyouts and equity stakes in companies, aiming to make between 75 and 90 investments averaging \$175mn each.

Unlike some rivals, privately held Warburg has not dramatically increased the sizes of its funds and has largely avoided, in recent years, moving into new business lines such as credit in order to rapidly expand assets under management. That strategy has meant that firms that were close to Warburg’s size 15 years ago, such as Blackstone Group, have grown more than 10 times as large by assets.

Warburg also remained focused on private equity investments, spreading them among dozens of smaller deals in various sectors and locations.

Warburg chief executive Chip Kaye said the group’s measured approach had appealed to investors, citing its plans to “remain disciplined about investment

### Warburg chief executive Chip Kaye said the group’s measured approach had appealed to investors

pricing”. Timothy Geithner, its chair, has said there currently is a “premium on diversification”.

Alongside Warburg, a group of older private equity managers such as Clayton, Dubilier & Rice, CVC Capital Partners, TA Associates and GTCR have all recently closed large funds above their targets. Several larger firms, including the listed Apollo Global Management, Carlyle Group and Blackstone, have warned they expect to miss initial fundraising targets for their flagship buyout funds.

Kaye has warned that geopolitical friction had complicated the investment outlook and trends of deglobalisation would lead to entrenched inflation. He also said Warburg had missed out on some deals in 2020 and 2021 as buoyant equity markets drove up their price.

In recent years, Warburg has focused on returning cash to investors. This year, it has struck deals to sell \$9.3bn in investments versus making \$6.7bn in new commitments, people familiar with the matter said. Warburg declined to comment on its asset sales.

Despite its successful conclusion, Warburg’s latest fundraising effort encountered challenges. After the fund’s launch in 2021, interest rates quickly rose, stock markets plunged and some investors pulled back from allocating more cash to private equity.

The difficult environment meant Warburg had to ask investors for one fundraising extension, according to a person familiar with the matter, a sign the process took longer than expected.

### Mining

## Rinehart lifts stake in lithium target Lontown

HARRY DEMPSEY

Gina Rinehart has lifted her stake in Lontown Resources, as Australia’s richest person seeks to muscle in on a proposed takeover of the lithium mine developer by Albemarle, the world’s largest producer of the battery metal.

Rinehart’s Hancock Prospecting raised its shareholding to 18.36 per cent in Lontown, up from 16.69 per cent, as the iron ore and agriculture magnate seeks to gain exposure to the commodity used in electric car batteries, according to a stock market filing yesterday.

The Australian billionaire has thrown Albemarle’s \$4.3bn takeover proposal for Lontown into jeopardy at a time when lithium prices have slumped almost 70 per cent this year because of rapidly growing supplies and a pullback in Chinese demand.

Albemarle would need at least 75 per cent of voting shareholders’ support for the deal to pass, making it likely that Rinehart could block the US company’s takeover proposal since many investors do not typically vote.

Rinehart rose to prominence by reviving iron ore business Hancock Prospecting, founded by her father Lang Han-

cock in 1955, and transforming it into Australia’s largest private company.

While it is clear Rinehart — nicknamed the “iron lady” for her steely personality and the commodity that formed the bedrock of her fortune — is working to diversify into lithium, she has remained silent on her exact intentions.

Industry analysts have speculated that she might want to elicit a higher price from Albemarle — which said its fourth offer in September was its “best and final” — partner with the global lithium leader in a joint venture, team up with somebody else or even go it alone in acquiring Lontown.

Under Australian takeover law, if



**Billionaire Gina Rinehart has thrown Albemarle’s takeover into jeopardy**

Rinehart’s stake exceeds 19.9 per cent, she will be obliged to make a rival bid for Lontown, which is developing a large underground lithium deposit in Western Australia.

But Hancock has a long history of joint ventures on virtually all of the assets that it owns, making some form of partnership the most likely outcome and Albemarle a desirable partner for its expertise in chemical processing.

Hancock said last week that it “remains open to nominating directors to Lontown’s board in the future and particularly if its strategic stake continues to increase towards 19.9 per cent”, suggesting that it is unlikely to opt to make a full takeover bid for now.

In Hancock’s first public statement about Lontown in September, it said the company could contribute to the lithium company’s future direction “alongside other Lontown shareholders, including in relation to potential investment opportunities for downstream value add in Western Australia”.

The other main shareholders in Lontown are chair Tim Goyder and Albemarle, while the remainder of the publicly disclosed shareholders are passive funds that would not be involved in operating a mine.

### Oil & gas

## Czech minister questions Křetínský media role

ALICE HANCOCK — BRUSSELS

The Czech energy minister has warned that attacks on him by a newspaper owned by the billionaire Daniel Křetínský should raise questions about how the businessman uses his media assets in other countries.

Jozef Sikela said he found it “strange” that Blesk newspaper had run a series of stories criticising the Czech government’s acquisition of Net4Gas, a gas pipeline operator that Křetínský’s EPH Group had also bid on.

“If [Křetínský and his business partner Patrik Tkáč] will act in the same way also in the countries where they have a business and they own some media . . . It will be an interesting question for me,” he said.

Křetínský, who built his fortune in the energy business, made record profits last year as a result of Europe’s gas crisis and has been expanding his empire into media and retail.

The Czech tycoon sold his stake in France’s Le Monde last month but still owns several radio stations and magazines, including Elle. He has recently expressed interest in buying the UK’s Daily Telegraph, the Financial Times has revealed. EPH Group said: “We

strictly and unequivocally reject the accusations made by minister Sikela. We fully respect the independent editorial policy; we do not determine topics but will not suppress them either.”

Martina Říhová, chief executive of Czech News Center, publisher of Blesk, added: “The media’s interest in the suspicious purchase of gas pipelines

### “The media’s interest . . . is not determined by the ownership structure but by a natural curiosity”

is certainly not determined by the ownership structure but by a natural curiosity about this massive state deal.”

Opposition politicians and other media, including the website newstream.cz and weekly Echo24, have also criticised the deal.

Net4Gas was bought by the Czech government through state-owned company ČEPS for about €205mn plus debt in September. The company declared pre-tax profits of about €314mn in 2022 on €5.3bn revenue, and debt of €13.6bn.

After the deal was completed, Blesk ran several stories criticising Sikela for

overspending on the indebted energy business, putting taxpayers on the hook for billions of Czech koruna due to the structure of the transaction.

Other bidders, including Křetínský, offered less for the energy business, according to one person close to the deal. Sikela defended the deal as being crucial for the country’s energy security. The country has historically had one of the most liberalised energy markets in the EU, which the government feared could be weaponised following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

Sikela said private ownership of the pipeline network made it vulnerable.

“I want to act in the best interest of Czech people. The best interest of the country must not be the same as the best interest of billionaires,” he said.





COMPANIES & MARKETS

Insurance costs burden hurricane-prone US states



**Patrick Temple-West**

Farmers Insurance, one of the biggest property and casualty providers in the US, found itself under attack this year for “wokeness”. In July, Farmers pulled out of Florida amid exploding costs, prompting the state’s chief financial officer to accuse the insurer of “virtue-signalling” on environmental, social and governance issues.

“Farmers Insurance is well on its way to becoming the Bud Light of insurance,” Florida’s CFO Jimmy Patronis said, referring to the culture wars controversy that embroiled Anheuser-Busch InBev earlier this year.

Snarkiness aside, the CFO’s outburst underscores the reality in the Sunshine State: it is teetering on a financial crisis. Insurance companies are fleeing Florida

as costs to insure property have increased dramatically. Although governor Ron DeSantis and Florida lawmakers in 2022 tried to stem the loss of insurance coverage, the threat of hurricanes has insurance companies rushing for the exits. Six residential property and casualty insurers became insolvent in 2022, according to the state.

As a result, Florida’s state-run insurance programme, which is supposed to be an insurer of last resort, has instead become the largest insurer in the state. If the programme does not have enough funds to cover insurance claims because of hurricanes, Florida taxpayers will need to cover the balance.

For example, if Hurricane Idalia — which hit a relatively unpopulated area in August — had hit the Tampa Bay area, the state insurer would probably not have had enough funds to cover the claims, according to a report from the non-profit First Street Foundation.

“The intensification of Hurricane Idalia prior to landfall was fuelled by climate-related increases in water temperatures in the gulf [of Mexico],” First

Street said. “As the climate continues to change, the intensification of hurricane events over the gulf will become the norm and one landfall into a populated area could spell disaster for the Citizens Insurance programme,” which is Florida’s state-run insurance company.

While the problem is acute in Florida, insurers’ costs have increased steadily around the world. Swiss Re estimates that annual inflation-adjusted insured losses from natural catastrophes have exceeded \$100bn five times since 1970, and three of those have been in the past six years, Moody’s said in a report.

Patronis’s soundbite got attention, but the seeds of his anxiety — felt by Florida’s 22mn residents — were on display at a humdrum insurance meeting with regulators at the state’s capitol in June. Citizens officials presented a troubling picture of the state’s insurance situation and asked for an average premium increase of 13 per cent.

Citizens estimated that two Category 5 hurricanes in one year could result in \$23.9bn in costs. Maximum losses from a one-in-100-year storm continued to

“drastically increase”, the organisation said. “I don’t say this lightly; no one wants to pay more for insurance,” said Tim Cerio, Citizens president.

The problem is not isolated to Florida. In October 2022, Louisiana approved a 63 per cent rate increase on its residential property insurance policies. Louisiana, which in 2020 was hit by the high-

est number of storms in any hurricane season on record, has also lost private insurance companies in recent years.

The US also provides a federal flood insurance programme. This won’t cover vacation homes but it does help about 1.7mn Floridians. Today, the National Flood Insurance Program is about \$20bn in debt. Its losses have been amplified by floods “influenced by climate change and sea-level rise”, but also

by more people living in flood-prone neighbourhoods, said Firas Saleh, a director at Moody’s RMS.

But some Floridians have another idea: cut some insurance altogether. At Florida’s insurance hearing, Mel Montagne, an insurance seller in the Florida Keys, said the federal government required both flood and wind insurance. But historically, the damage from hurricanes came from wind, not flooding, he said. “We vehemently oppose the flood insurance requirement,” he said.

Florida and other states in June sued the Biden administration, arguing that the government’s insurance coverage requirements had made protection unaffordable. The case is ongoing.

Bickering over insurance cost calculations is a distraction. What the Farmers fight and the courtroom showdown highlight is that global warming is an inflation problem — one that is falling on ordinary taxpayers.

*A version of this article first appeared in the Moral Money newsletter, available on FT.com*

Financials

Private equity firms sell assets to themselves

Gloomy IPO landscape and high costs seal off traditional exit routes

MICHAEL O'DWYER

UK private equity managers now see selling companies to themselves as their best option to offload investments, according to research, as a moribund listings market and the higher cost of financing deals make traditional exit routes more difficult.

Disposals to so-called continuation funds are the most popular option for private equity executives seeking an exit from their investments, according to a poll of 200 senior UK-based industry professionals carried out by Numis.

Disposals to continuation funds are the most popular option, according to a poll of industry professionals

The results, due to be published this week, underline the trend of private equity funds turning to newer funds raised by the same firm as they seek to sell assets to return cash to investors.

Private auctions, the preferred route in last year’s poll, are now the least popular of four exit options, as a more difficult debt financing environment combines with political uncertainty ahead of UK and US elections.

The gloomy economic outlook and the gap between buyers’ and sellers’ valuations were also cited. In Europe, the number of sales from one private equity group to another fell earlier this year to the lowest level since the pandemic.

The vast majority of those polled, drawn from professionals focused on mid-market deals worth £500mn-£1bn, did not expect a fully functioning initial public offerings mar-

ket before the final quarter of 2024. Despite this, IPOs were ranked as the third most popular option for prospective disposals, while a “dual track” process, where companies prepare a stock market listing and a private sale in parallel to keep options open, was second.

The growing use of continuation funds has drawn scrutiny, with the investment chief of asset manager Amundi last year likening parts of the private equity sector to a Ponzi scheme.

The technique involves a private equity fund selling an asset it has owned for several years from one of its funds where investors have been promised a return in cash to a newer fund where backers are not due to get their money back for a few years.

The popularity of the strategy has grown as pulling off deals has become harder. Dealmaking fell to a 10-year low in the first nine months of 2023. Supporters of the method say flipping assets from one fund to another can allow private equity firms to continue benefiting from assets with strong cash flow.

While the new fund may have different backers, or may invest alongside third parties, the method raises questions of how a private equity firm should objectively value an asset while doing the best for the investors in both funds.

The UK’s Financial Conduct Authority said this month it was planning a review of the valuations of private assets, warning that higher interest rates were likely to result in lower valuations and could present risks to the financial system.

The survey found that, for UK assets, private equity sponsors had shifted their focus from public companies to private companies. The poll found 71 per cent of executives were focused mainly on targeting UK private companies, up from 11 per cent a year ago. The proportion focusing on UK public assets fell from 73 per cent to 14 per cent.

*Additional reporting by Ivan Levington*



Wrapped up Lunchmaker Greencore lifts outlook

Greencore, the the top UK sandwich maker, raised its annual profit forecast as the popularity of food-to-go endures despite inflation and increasingly cost-conscious consumers.

The upgrade sent the Dublin-based company’s stock soaring after the unscheduled trading update; the shares ended the day 22.2 per cent higher.

Greencore expects operating profit for the year to September 29 to be in the range of £74mn to £76mn, ahead of the market consensus of £70.1mn.

The supplier of sandwiches, salads and sushi to supermarkets and cafés expected revenues in the year to have risen 10 per cent. The revised forecast follows 4 per cent year-on-year pro forma revenue growth in the fourth quarter, driven by 3 per cent growth in the food-to-go division and 6 per cent in other convenience categories.

Chief executive Dalton Phillips said it had been “a strong second-half performance in what was a difficult seasonal comparative period and against the backdrop of inflation and a challenging consumer environment”.

The performance follows a difficult period for Greencore during the pandemic when it sank to a loss as demand for prepared lunch items plummeted during lockdowns. In 2020, Greencore was forced to suspend its dividend, adopt cost-cutting measures and hold an £87mn equity placing to help offset some of the impact of the pandemic.

Greencore announced a fourth share buyback programme as part of the £50mn return of capital to shareholders announced last year.

*Euan Healy*

Banks. Challenger outlook

Colombian magnate behind Metro deal backs branches model

Gilinski cites need for renewal and improved efficiency while bringing costs under control

MICHAEL STOTT — BUENOS AIRES

The Colombian behind Metro Bank’s weekend financing deal has said he sees opportunities to use the challenger as a base for acquisitions — once costs are brought under control — following a similar playbook to the one he has used during four decades of dealmaking in Latin America.

Jaime Gilinski Bacal will take a 53 per cent stake in the bank after agreeing to contribute £102mn of new equity as part of a refinancing that drew a line under weeks of private negotiations to shore up Metro’s capital position.

“Once Metro becomes profitable and the business model continues to grow, we should be looking at building more

value through adding more assets,” Gilinski, 65, said.

Metro has reported underlying profits for the past three quarters. But it has not reported an annual profit since 2018, the year before an accounting debacle revealed a capital hole and sent the shares plunging.

“With some of the experience that I have had in Latin America, of buying banks with some problems and turning them around, building them to [make] further acquisitions, I feel that Metro could be a very good base to build and to grow,” Gilinski said.

“We have to for sure become more efficient . . . but if we continue having a very loyal customer base, close to 3mn customers today, with good service and the right technological platform, we should be able to be profitable starting in 2024.”

Metro has 2.8mn customers in the UK and £21.7bn of assets.

Gilinski, whose personal wealth is

estimated by Forbes at \$4.9bn, said he would draw on decades of experience of buying assets at bargain prices and turning them around in his approach to the acquisition, his 14th in the financial sector. Starting in 1991, he established a reputation for acquiring banks from big participants such as HSBC, Banca Intesa and BBVA, stripping out costs, improving technology and boosting returns.

“It’s what I have done all my life,” Gilinski said of the Metro deal. “I have been 46 years buying banks and improving their efficiencies and cost structures.”

Gilinski, whose investments stretch from banking to property and the food industry, first took a stake in Metro in November 2019 when he picked up 9 per cent after the accounting scandal

and the bank’s £375mn cash call. Despite his focus on cost-cutting, Gilinski gave his backing to Metro’s branch model — a rarity for a challenger bank in a market where digital competitors eschew bricks and mortar.

“The branch network has been a high cost but it has also been a very good asset in terms of building the customer base and the loyalty and service,” he said. “It has to be renewed and made more efficient but the business model of branches is a model that works. You just have to make sure that the costs are under control.”

Gilinski lent his support to Metro chief executive Dan Frumkin and his plan. Frumkin took over as chief executive at the start of 2020 following the departure of both the bank’s chair and chief executive in less than a year. A restructuring specialist, he scaled back its expansion programme and planned a shift away from the competitive market for residential mortgage loans.



**Jaime Gilinski Bacal is taking a 53% stake in the bank after agreeing to contribute £102mn of new equity as part of a refinancing**  
*Edison Ivan Arroyo Moral/Bloomberg*

Media

YouGov keen to make the most of busy elections year

DANIEL THOMAS

YouGov is seeking to capitalise on elections in countries including the US and UK next year, according to Steve Hatch, the newly appointed chief executive of the London-listed data analytics and polling group.

Shares in YouGov rose 22.9 per cent yesterday, taking its value to more than £950mn, after it reported a 77 per cent rise in pre-tax profit to almost £45mn for the year to July. Revenue rose 17 per cent year on year to £258.3mn, in line with consensus estimates.

Hatch said the group would target the US for the next stage of growth in the business, adding that the company at present had less than 1 per cent of the potential market in the country.

YouGov works with consumer and tech brands as well as providing detailed political coverage in the US and UK of voting intentions.

“We have a moment in time over the next few months with the US presidential election: that’s obviously great for our revenue potential but it’s also great for our brand in the marketplace,” Hatch said. “There are over 2bn people voting over the next 12 months, many of which will turn to our platform to understand the world.”

In the UK, YouGov’s polling of voting intentions shows that the clear lead held by Labour did not change after the Conservative party conference last week, with a gap of 45 per cent intending to vote for the opposition party versus 24 per cent for the Tories.

Stephan Shakespeare, co-founder and a leading shareholder in YouGov, earlier this year said the company was considering listing in the US to help support its growth in the country. Hatch yesterday said YouGov was always reviewing its options but declined to comment further.

Hatch said the company’s planned €315mn acquisition of GfK’s consumer panel business would also help the US strategy, with the deal expected to be completed this year after scrutiny by EU competition authorities.

YouGov — as with companies in advertising and marketing — has experienced a fall in demand from technology clients over the past year. However, Hatch said these clients were returning, with “an increase in the number of assignments we’re receiving”. YouGov said it remained confident in meeting current market expectations for its 2024 financial year.

Hatch, who was an executive at Facebook owner Meta until joining YouGov this summer, said: “When you’ve got the most sophisticated data organisations in the world appointing and expanding with YouGov, I think it’s a good sign of confidence about the offering that we have.”

He will use his first year in the role to work on the quality of its consumer panels, which provide its core data sets, such as targeting under-represented groups and expanding into different product categories.

YouGov carries out “panels” of consumer behaviour for brands, and Hatch said that GfK would add extra data on buying choices to go alongside its existing insight into intentions and attitudes.

YouGov is also building a niche in providing data on viewing data for streamers such as Netflix and Disney+, which will become increasingly important as these groups roll out advertising options.

**See Lex**



COMPANIES & MARKETS

Commodities. Supply threats

# Israel conflict is ‘manageable crisis’ for global oil traders



Crude still below last month’s peak as sector participants see little risk of 1970s-style shock

TOM WILSON — LONDON  
MYLES MCCORMICK — HOUSTON

In October 1973, a coalition of Arab states attacked Israel. The region’s biggest oil producers responded with an embargo against the US that quadrupled crude prices and reshaped energy markets forever.

Fifty years later, Israel is at war again following an unprecedented attack by Hamas, but the impact on the oil market has been muted. Prices for Brent crude, the global benchmark, jumped 4 per cent on Monday, its first full day of trading after the conflict broke out, before falling back slightly to \$87.56 yesterday. They remain far below the \$97 a barrel reached in late September.

“I look at it and say: the market’s nervous, but it’s not terrified,” said Dan Pickering, head of Houston-based consultancy Pickering Energy Partners. “Right now it’s being viewed as a manageable crisis, not a 1970s-type crisis.”

Israel does not produce significant volumes of oil so there is no immediate threat of supply disruptions.

The jump in prices on Monday reflected a market reappraising risks in the region rather than concerns about supply, said Henning Gloystein, director for energy, climate and resources at consultants Eurasia Group.

“The Middle East, over the past year or so, has been de-escalating in geopolitical terms . . . and that was reflected in the oil price,” he said, pointing to diplomatic and commercial deals between

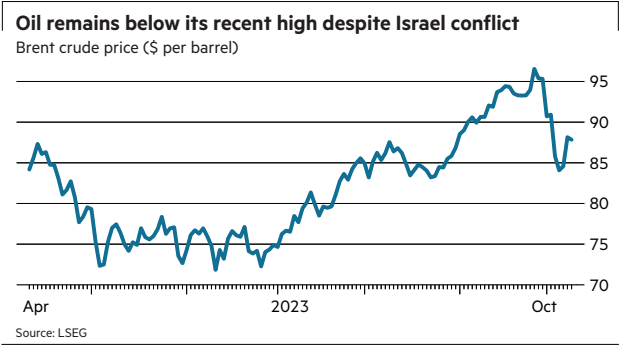
countries such as Israel and the United Arab Emirates. “Now these events over the weekend really jerked the Middle East back into traders’ minds.”

The Yom Kippur war in 1973 also had minimal impact on oil infrastructure. However, Saudi Arabia and its allies used US military support for Israel as a pretext to weaken Washington’s influence over the oil market by cutting production and choking exports.

This time, Arab countries are not attacking Israel together and traders are not expecting producers to weaponise oil exports in support of Hamas.

Prospects for oil demand also look starkly different. In the 1970s, crude consumption was surging and producers had limited additional capacity. Today, although demand is at a record high of 103mn barrels a day, growth has slowed, partly due to efforts to transition away from fossil fuels.

After climbing towards \$100 a barrel at the end of September, Brent crude fell more than 10 per cent last week, in a sign that traders felt the economic outlook failed to justify such high prices.



The rally of recent months, rather than being demand-driven, was underpinned by production cuts by Saudi Arabia, Russia and other members of the Opec+ alliance. Those cuts mean that spare capacity has swelled to the highest level in years, providing a buffer against disruption.

Saudi Arabia alone could increase global production by almost 3 per cent – about 3mn barrels of day – in the event that supply is cut elsewhere.

But exactly how Riyadh would respond if the conflict in Israel affected oil supply is uncertain. Before Hamas’s attacks, the US and Saudi Arabia had been edging closer to a broad diplomatic deal encompassing civilian nuclear assistance and new security guarantees for Riyadh in return for the normalisation of relations with Israel and increased oil flows.

This kind of “sweeping diplomatic reset” is now in a “precarious place” following the weekend’s deadly events, said Helima Croft, head of commodities research at RBC Capital Markets and a former CIA analyst.

Security fears: Israel’s gas production has been affected by the conflict with Hamas, after the energy ministry shut operations at the Chevron-operated Tamar platform in the Mediterranean

Marc Israel Seliem/AP

Oil supply from the Middle East could be hit if evidence of direct Iranian involvement in the attacks is identified or if Tehran becomes actively involved.

In such a scenario, Washington might seek to tighten sanctions on Iranian crude. Iran exported 1.5mn b/d of crude to China in August, the most in a decade, according to ship tracking data provided by Kpler. But given that most of these cargoes would have travelled on Iranian or dark-fleet vessels and been facilitated by Iranian and Chinese banks, the ability of the US to control such shipments is dwindling.

“The only way for the Americans to really do that is to stop ships and that’s going to be tricky,” said Eurasia Group’s Gloystein. “That would probably involve a US escalation of the conflict in the Middle East and we think they are going to try and avoid that.”

One area already affected is Israel’s natural gas production after the Ministry of Energy on Monday shut the Chevron-operated Tamar platform in the Mediterranean Sea over security concerns. Production at the Leviathan and Karish fields further north continues.

While most of Israel’s gas is consumed domestically, about a third is exported by pipeline to Jordan and Egypt. Any disruption to those supplies could have a knock-on effect on global gas markets by increasing the demand for cargoes of liquefied natural gas to Jordan and reducing the gas available for export as LNG from Egypt, said Tom Marzec-Manser, head of gas analytics at ICIS.

European benchmark gas prices have risen sharply, trading 25 per cent above Friday’s closing price yesterday. “While there’s not an immediate impact on supply to Europe, there’s definitely a connection,” he said.

‘I look at it and say: the market’s nervous, but it’s not terrified’

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Equities

## Korean watchdogs vow crackdown on leveraged buying and margin call risk

SONG JUNG-A — SEOUL

South Korea’s financial regulators have vowed to curb short-term speculation by retail investors, as their bets on tech stocks fuel fears of a market bubble.

Retail investors have made big bets on themes including electric vehicle battery materials, quantum computers and superconductors, making the tech-heavy Kosdaq one of the world’s best performers this year.

“Their investment patterns are highly risky, so we are cracking down on leveraged buying and margin call risks,” said Lee Bok-hyun, governor of the Financial Supervisory Service. “They seem to be recently lured by high volatility, which leaves bigger room for strong gains.”

He said small investors lacked incentives to invest for the long term.

“Retail investors are not convinced of the market’s long-term gains. We’ll expand measures to protect minority shareholders and thoroughly implement them to restore market credibility and induce their longer-term investments.”

With this in mind, Lee said that regulators were stepping up monitoring

of the market and would strengthen punishment of those involved in unfair trading.

The FSS has committed more staff to help with a crackdown on illegal sales activities by brokerages and asset managers and the distribution of false information by investment boutiques and advisory firms. Authorities plan to impose hefty fines and speed up investigations.

“It is important to ferret out unfair trading by institutions, large sharehold-



Bets on tech stocks at South Korea’s exchange have worried regulators

ers and insiders in order to regain investor confidence,” Lee said.

His comments reflect regulators’ concerns over Korean retail investors’ leveraged speculative buying of “theme stocks”, with margin loans near historic highs.

Heavy retail buying of anything related to electric vehicle batteries has helped the Kosdaq gain about 20 per cent in the year to date, more than double the 8 per cent rise in the Kospi Composite.

“Many retail investors pursue a ‘high-risk, high-return’ strategy, spurred by sensational news and tips from YouTubers, Telegram [users] and other social media,” said Lee Seung-hoon, head of research at IBK Investment & Securities. “Their investment spans are getting shorter and shorter, swayed by news flows with no fundamental basis.”

Analysts at Goldman Sachs have also expressed concern over the risk of margin calls on ordinary investors.

Despite the wild swings, analysts expect retail flows into the Kosdaq to continue, given the high level of deposits in brokerage accounts since the pandemic.

Asset management

## Investors flee hedge fund Pelham after hefty losses drag down overall returns

COSTAS MOURSELAS, HARRIET AGNEW AND LAURENCE FLETCHER

Pelham Capital, once one of the biggest names in London’s equity hedge fund sector, has lost more than three-quarters of its assets in the past three years amid poor performance, investor withdrawals and team departures.

Assets at equities specialist Pelham, which was founded by former Lansdowne Partners fund manager Ross Turner and is backed by Goldman Sachs’s publicly listed Petershill fund, have dropped from \$4.5bn in October 2020 to around \$1bn today, according to people familiar with the situation.

The flagship fund was down 11.8 per cent in 2021 and dropped 29 per cent last year, investors said. This year it has recovered by around 5 per cent, leaving it far off its so-called high-water mark, the level at which it can start charging performance fees. “Assets leave when performance is bad,” said one investor. “Clients lose patience.”

Pelham’s declining fortunes reflect how “long/short” equity hedge funds, a strategy betting on rises or falls in individual stocks, have fallen out of favour

with investors. Many of these funds struggled to earn returns comparable with blue-chip equity indices during the long bull market that followed the 2008-09 financial crisis.

Last year’s downturn in stock markets as global interest rates rose sharply brought only a minor reprieve, with long/short equity funds falling 13.5 per cent, 6 percentage points less than the decline

‘Assets leave when performance is bad. Clients lose patience’

Pelham Capital investor

suffered by the S&P 500 index. This year, an index tracking such funds is up 5.6 per cent, while the main US equity benchmark has gained 12.5 per cent.

Some of Pelham’s peers, including Adelphi Capital and Sloane Robinson, have closed in the past few years, while others such as Lansdowne and Egerton Capital are running smaller hedge fund businesses than before.

Turner, a prominent European stock picker and the largest single investor in

Crypto

## Binance’s UK marketing push halted by regulator

SCOTT CHIPOLINA

UK regulators have blocked Binance’s attempts to market itself to British consumers under the latest clampdown on the crypto industry.

The world’s biggest cryptocurrency exchange, which has frequently clashed with the Financial Conduct Authority, had tried to navigate new industry standards which came into force on Sunday by teaming up with a locally regulated firm.

But yesterday the FCA said Rebuildingsociety.com, Binance’s Leeds-based partner, had been added to its list of regulated companies forbidden from promoting crypto services in the UK.

The move is a fresh setback to Binance’s ambitions to expand in the UK market. The exchange, which says it has no headquarters and has fallen foul of regulators around the world, was in 2021 ordered by the FCA to halt all regulated activity in the UK after failing to respond to basic queries.

The agency has only recently been given powers to oversee some aspects of the sprawling crypto industry, including compliance with anti-money-laundering rules and advertising standards.

Under the new rules, promoting crypto assets to UK customers without approval can result in an unlimited fine, and potentially up to two years impris-

‘The FCA has set down a firm marker for crypto firms about preventing crystallising risks’

onment. They apply to all companies, whether based in the UK or abroad.

In the three days since the rules came into effect, the FCA has issued more than 150 warnings to companies that are not registered with or authorised by the regulator, including exchanges such as Huobi and KuCoin. Another cryptocurrency exchange, Bybit, last month announced plans to wind down in the UK because it could not comply with the incoming rules.

“The FCA has set down a firm marker for crypto firms about preventing crystallising risks and intervening early enough to prevent harm,” said Lisa Lee Lewis, a lawyer specialising in digital assets at Addleshaw Goddard.

Binance said last week its partnership with Rebuildingsociety.com meant it would comply with the FCA rules, allowing it to offer UK users services such as crypto trading, credit cards, non-fungible tokens and loans.

The FCA said in an update yesterday that Rebuildingsociety.com had until the end of today to withdraw all of its crypto promotions. It is “disappointing we have had a restriction imposed on us, and we are working to remove it”, Rebuildingsociety.com said, adding that it intended to appeal against the decision. Binance said it had “invested an enormous amount of time and resources” to ensure it complied with the new FCA rules, but declined to confirm whether it would seek a new partnership or cease promotions in the UK.



Markets Insight



The Fed sees a more robust economy and higher interest rates than its last SEP in June

The SEP is a powerful tool. Economists Taeyoung Doh and Andrew Foerster at the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City argue that the SEP and other types of forward guidance shorten the time it takes for the Fed to affect financial market conditions and the economy. But the SEP can also be an unpredictable tool. What the Fed thinks it is saying (in words or numbers) and what market participants hear are not always the same; it can take time to line the two up. Thus, small changes in the SEP sometimes have outsized effects on interest rates as markets catch up. It

Another debate is whether we have entered a higher interest rate world. The Fed did not raise its estimate of the long-run federal funds rate, but it stretched out the current levels and allowed the inflation-adjusted rate to move up further. So it's at least a thumb on the scale that the Fed is in no hurry to lower its interest rate.

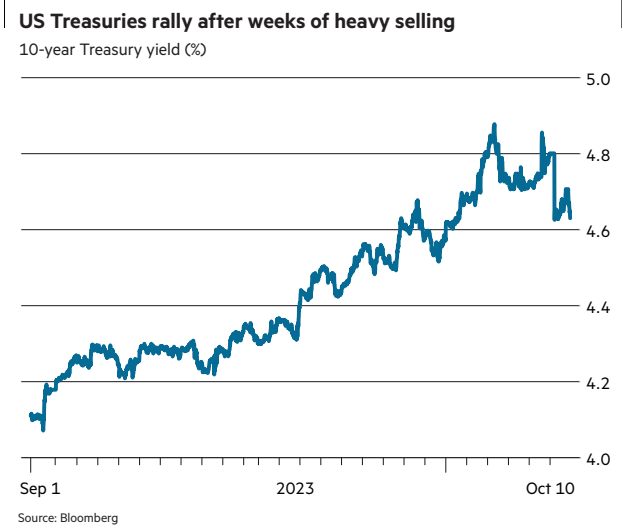
*Claudia Sahm is a former Federal Reserve economist, founder of Sahm Consulting and a writer of the Stay-at-Home Macro blog*

## The day in the markets

## What you need to know

- US Treasuries surge as investors seek haven assets
- Flight to safety as conflict unfolds in Middle East
- Rally boosts equities as Stoxx 600 Europe rises 1.5 per cent







It also followed moves on European debt markets on Monday, when German Bund yields, a benchmark for the eurozone, fell 0.11 percentage points to 2.77 per cent. Yields on the Bund were steady yesterday. US government debt also rose after comments by Fed officials on Monday, who signalled that the US



Markets have scaled back bets on a Fed interest rate rise to 14 per cent when it sets policy on November 1, down from a 30 per cent probability after Friday's payroll data. Investors are on guard for further volatility in Treasury markets when US markets open. Sanchez Balcazar

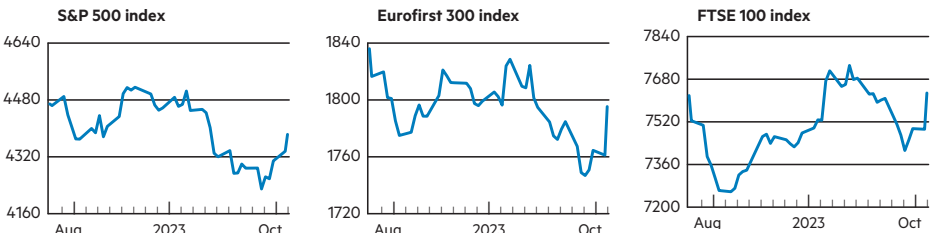
Investors will be listening carefully to several Fed policymakers scheduled to speak today for signs of future policy.  
**Mary McDougall and George Steer**

## Markets update

						
	US	Eurozone	Japan	UK	China	Brazil
Stocks	S&P 500	Eurofirst 300	Nikkei 225	FTSE100	Shanghai Comp	Bovespa
Level	4383.09	1795.34	31746.53	7628.21	3075.24	116600.79
% change on day	1.09	1.94	2.43	1.82	-0.70	1.25
Currency	\$ index (DXY)	\$ per €	Yen per \$	\$ per £	Rmb per \$	Real per \$
Level	106.047	1.060	148.835	1.226	7.293	5.077
% change on day	-0.034	0.474	0.202	0.410	0.007	-1.821
Govt. bonds	10-year Treasury	10-year Bund	10-year JGB	10-year Gilt	10-year bond	10-year bond
Yield	4.620	2.772	0.769	4.583	2.709	11.341
Basis point change on day	-18.200	0.100	-2.850	-5.200	1.500	-33.600
World index, Commods	FTSE All-World	Oil - Brent	Oil - WTI	Gold	Silver	Metals (LMEX)
Level	439.36	87.55	85.70	1845.50	21.65	3624.00
% change on day	1.45	-0.68	-0.79	1.42	2.53	0.69

Yesterday's close apart from: Currencies = 16:00 GMT; S&P, Bovespa, All World, Oil = 17:00 GMT; Gold, Silver = London pm fix. Bond data supplied by Tullett Prebon

## Main equity markets



## Biggest movers

%	US	Eurozone	UK
Ups	Truist Fin 6.69	Casino Guichard 11.73	Ocado 6.69
	Enphase Energy 6.56	Alstom 4.86	Anglo American 5.63
	First Solar 6.44	Oci 4.72	Flutter Entertainment 5.17
	Solaredge 5.39	Telecom Italia 4.72	Antofagasta 4.48
	Generac Holdings 4.92	Grifols 4.39	Entain 4.41
Downs	Northrop Grumman -1.68	A.p. Moller - Maersk B -1.97	Spirax-sarco Eng -2.01
	L3harris -1.47	Carrefour -1.39	Beazley 0.00
	Campbell Soup -1.46	Fresenius -0.68	Dechra Pharmaceuticals 0.05
	Qorvo -1.15	Henkel -0.46	Haleon 0.12
	Juniper -1.13	Talanx -0.33	Halma 0.18
	Prices taken at 12:00 GMT		
Based on the constituents of the FTSE Eurofirst 300 Eurozone			

All data provided by Morningstar unless otherwise noted.

## Wall Street

Truist agreed to sell a 20 per cent stake in this division to the private equity firm for \$1.95bn back in February. Mubadala Investment was also involved in the deal.

*Rav Douglas*

## Europe

The largest contract, which spans five years, involved the supply of components for a satellite-based in-flight entertainment and communications system for multiple airlines. *Rav Douglas*

## London

**Treatt**, the fragrances and flavouring manufacturer, rose sharply after Daemmon Reeve, chief executive, said he was "seeing some early signs of a reversal" of customer destocking that had recently hit its trade. *Rav Douglas*

A dark grey background with white and red text. At the top, the word "Barriers" is in white, with a large red "NO" superimposed over it. Below "Barriers" is "to your" and "progress" in white. Further down, "Say yes to a new kind of prime brokerage" is written, with "yes" in red. A paragraph of white text follows: "For too long, institutional barriers have stifled the ambitions of emerging hedge fund managers. With the authority of a FTSE 250 company, our prime brokerage tears down the barriers to your success, giving you the tools you need to grow your fund." At the bottom left is a QR code and a red button with "IG.COM/PRIME" in white. At the bottom right is the "IG Prime" logo in red and white.



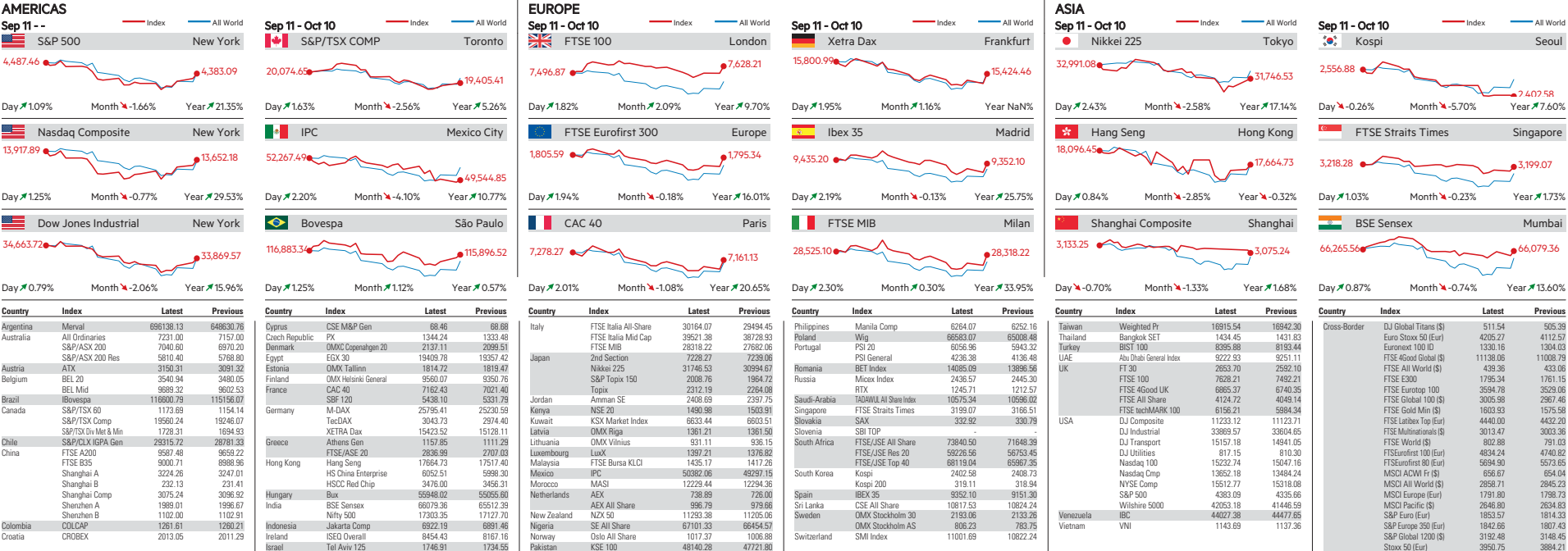
## MARKET DATA

## WORLD MARKETS AT A GLANCE

## Change during previous day's trading (%)



## Stock Market movements over last 30 days, with the FTSE All-World in the same currency as a comparison









## FINANCIAL TIMES SHARE SERVICE

## Main Market

	52 Week						Vol
	Price	+/-Chg	High	Low	Yld	P/E	
<b>Aerospace &amp; Defence</b>							
Avon Protection	655.00	33.00	1250	582.00	4.47	-11.05	38.0
<b>BAE Sys</b>	1041	16.00	1065	702.20	2.32	19.03	5569.9
Chemring	278.00	5.50	332.50	253.95	1.51	19.31	541.5
<b>Automobiles &amp; Parts</b>							
FordMtr \$=	12.28	0.21	15.42	10.90	4.71	12.36	12284.6
<b>Banks</b>							
ANZ AS=	25.57	0.14	26.08	22.39	5.89	10.75	6886.0
BocSant	311.00	9.00	343.50	209.55	2.06	7.42	241.0
BkIGroup\$	3535	60.00	3762	1899.5	6.51	3.36	31.8
Bankline Grp £	9.40	0.30	11.03	6.93	-	10.61	100.0
BkNwS C\$=	59.99	0.58	74.41	57.57	6.81	9.54	730.9
<b>Barclays</b>	156.78	4.76	198.86	128.12	4.62	4.54	45426.2
Carling US=	51.65	0.56	65.24	50.03	6.48	10.73	823.3
<b>HSBC=</b>	657.80	12.80	725.60	434.70	4.95	6.97	10271.4
<b>LydsBkC=</b>	43.37	1.26	54.33	38.51	5.53	5.49	93562.1
<b>NWG=</b>	228.50	7.10	310.00	210.90	6.03	5.11	10449.1
PermITSB £=	2.35	-0.04	2.81	1.18	-	-27.36	65.9
ReliCo C\$=	115.37	0.47	140.18	114.98	5.40	11.33	929.0
<b>Standard</b>	758.80	20.60	920.40	515.80	1.87	9.92	6905.5
7.375%PF	99.10	-1.25	105.75	94.50	7.44	-	10.0
8.25%PF	109.85	1.85	114.50	101.36	7.51	-	485.6
TntDom C\$=	80.70	9.00	94.05	76.32	4.60	10.61	1048.0
Westpac AS=	21.48	0.06	24.50	20.03	6.03	11.89	6785.3
<b>Chemicals</b>							
Elementis	119.50	2.80	130.00	87.70	-	40.16	417.2
Johnson Matthey	1579	42.00	2270	22.00	4.34	19.91	281.9
Victrex	141.80	3.20	1953.15	1320	4.21	16.85	10.1
<b>Construction &amp; Materials</b>							
BoschH	168.00	-0.10	255.00	188.00	2.91	10.11	19.3
Galfrd	226.20	2.50	249.00	144.11	2.08	50.22	52.9
MorgSt	1968	40.00	2150	1330	3.56	9.63	16.5
Tyman	270.50	1.50	324.00	162.40	2.96	10.69	154.1
<b>Electronic &amp; Electrical Equip</b>							
Daiglight	167.00	-	340.00	156.55	-	547.54	0.1
Discoverie PLC	642.00	12.00	956.00	610.00	1.58	52.62	54.6
IT Select	1920	3.50	2520.95	1670	0.92	27.87	10271.4
Morgan Ad	242.50	7.50	326.50	226.00	2.76	10.23	685.4
Oxford	2080	120.00	2884.8	1700	0.81	28.55	81.4
Quadrant	3428	48.00	4296	3238	1.93	19.56	40.7
Spectris	3310	95.00	3893.95	2654	2.10	10.89	289.6
Ti Elect	168.00	-3.60	212.00	123.40	3.82	23.96	168.3
XP Power	971.00	84.00	2750	662.40	9.47	5.19	235.7
<b>Financial General</b>							
3i	2054	54.50	2107	1044.5	1.87	7.11	1257.7

## AIM

	52 Week						Vol
	Price	+/-Chg	High	Low	Yld	P/E	
<b>Aerospace &amp; Defence</b>							
Cohort	494.50	4.50	560.00	384.00	2.55	17.75	7.5
Wesley Computer PLC	39.50	-	65.00	13.65	-	-13.17	30.6
<b>Banks</b>							
Cardocean Inv	26.50	-	45.40	24.03	-	3.05	136.6
<b>Basic Resource (Ex Mining)</b>							
CropperJ	740.00	-20.00	1050	560.00	-	22.56	5.8
<b>Chemicals</b>							
Directa Plus PLC	42.50	-1.50	108.00	41.78	-	-9.90	3.0
Versarien PLC	1.04	-0.01	23.00	0.90	-	-0.30	893.0
<b>Construction &amp; Materials</b>							
AccsysTch	67.00	-	108.00	54.40	-	-39.37	175.6
<b>Electronic &amp; Electrical Equip</b>							
Checkit	28.50	-	35.00	13.74	-	-3.48	1.0

## Investment Companies

	Conventional (Ex Private Equity)		52 Week				Dist or Pmt
	Price	+/-Chg	High	Low	Yld	NAV	
abdrnkum	399.50	6.00	485.34	389.50	1.93	455.1	-122
3i Infra	306.00	0.50	346.00	276.34	3.20	338.4	-9.0
AbnAsiaInf	197.50	1.00	237.00	165.50	5.16	226.8	-12.9
Abf Smi	1198	24.00	1428	1098	2.83	1398.0	-13.8
Abf SpI Inc	69.40	4.00	80.00	63.30	4.46	72.0	-5.0
abrdn Asia Focus	226.00	1.00	271.00	224.24	1.16	305.5	-15.5
abrdnukmGwth	77.00	-7.00	99.00	75.20	7.14	111.3	-30.8
Abdrn Eqt Inc	371.00	7.00	367.76	290.00	6.06	309.1	0.9
Asia Dragon	352.00	1.00	457.00	338.27	1.85	417.7	-15.7
Alliance	104.2	22.00	1070.37	894.00	1.61	1108.1	-5.9
AllianzTech	586.00	5.00	277.00	201.50	-	306.5	-13.5
Art Alpha	283.00	-1.00	355.00	264.16	1.87	349.9	-18.9
Avon	125.00	2.00	163.97	121.60	-	143.7	-13.0
Aura Inv	207.00	4.00	240.00	178.00	0.27	235.3	-12.0
AVJ AvpGpp	112.00	1.00	129.00	103.00	1.21	115.9	-3.4
Axonim	85.50	-1.00	93.29	65.00	7.02	-	-
BG Euro	83.00	1.40	102.20	73.50	0.42	96.3	-14.0
BG Japan	687.00	14.00	829.00	662.00	0.87	763.3	-11.3
BG Shin	125.00	2.00	163.97	121.60	-	143.7	-13.0
Bulle GrndUK	154.00	3.40	180.80	139.40	1.57	179.8	-14.3
Bankers	96.40	1.20	107.00	90.86	2.25	111.6	-13.6
BB Healthcare Trust	171.00	2.00	175.80	131.80	4.08	146.4	-7.7
BiotechGth	72.20	13.00	102.00	74.50	-	819.9	-6.0
BiotechH	115.00	4.40	149.50	108.00	3.48	127.5	-9.8
BlackRfnt	139.50	2.00	148.00	123.00	3.70	152.4	-8.9
BlackGrInv	505.00	14.00	566.00	396.00	1.22	542.4	-6.9
BlackR&G	179.50	-	202.00	164.00	4.01	206.8	-12.0
BlackRSmr	1224	20.00	1456	1168	2.72	1406.4	-13.0
BlackRScdcm	180.00	0.50	215.00	176.00	4.44	197.3	-8.8
BlackRThrd	557.00	14.00	670.00	487.19	1.83	588.8	-5.4
BlackRInv	569.00	16.00	774.00	539.97	3.70	588.8	-3.0
Brunner	1050	10.00	1115	888.00	1.92	1223.9	-14.8
California Inv	3940	65.00	4065	3050	1.88	5024.7	-35.8
Carden CS	34.88	0.41	37.40	29.11	2.46	54.7	-36.2
City Lon	395.00	6.50	432.00	366.50	4.85	394.6	0.1
COSNafis	167.50	1.50	217.00	160.75	3.34	201.4	-16.8
CTMgdl	109.00	1.00	129.29	106.00	5.83	106.6	2.3
CTMgdl	220.00	-	245.98	214.35	-	224.3	-1.9
CT Cyph	302.00	7.00	341.00	269.58	3.84	296.2	2.3

	52 Week						Vol
	Price	+/-Chg	High	Low	Yld	P/E	
<b>abrdn</b>							
BiopptGpp Plc	169.75	5.65	238.00	131.03	9.08	3.48	10976.4
CytLonInv	189.80	5.00	263.40	164.80	-	11.86	537.7
CyberSols	349.00	-6.00	475.00	322.00	9.46	8.19	39.9
CyberSols	880.00	27.00	1139	780.00	6.82	6.58	129.9
CyberSolsIntl \$=	40.85	-1.55	56.10	19.00	-	0.06	57.9
<b>Hargr Lans</b>	770.00	28.40	1023.5	726.60	5.00	13.73	1895.0
Indvdrn SKr	290.40	6.70	305.70	216.30	2.34	-10.05	599.1
ICG	1389	59.50	1516	947.20	4.03	7.97	484.7
Investec	476.00	23.90	558.20	375.40	2.73	11.96	570.6
Jupiter	86.95	2.45	158.30	82.20	19.22	3.31	417.6
Liontrust	587.00	14.50	1300	541.50	8.01	7.34	842.6
Record	8258	104.00	8893.86	7052	1.30	68.47	1162.7
<b>LSE Grp=</b>	1650	32.00	2245	1553.28	4.48	12.76	88.1
Rathfrim	75.00	1.75	152.02	91.60	3.80	16.27	14.2
S & U	2225	-20.00	2570	1940	4.03	10.55	0.1
<b>Schroder</b>	402.00	13.00	507.00	348.00	28.86	1.85	3607.9
Shires Income	222.00	4.00	275.00	213.00	6.04	3.10	51.5
<b>SLMip=</b>	821.40	25.80	1301.5	783.00	2.50	18.90	340.9
TP ICAP	185.20	3.40	202.80	140.60	3.63	28.00	3521.7
Vanquis	121.60	9.20	249.40	102.60	-	2.28	240.3
<b>Food &amp; Beverages</b>							
AngloEast	732.00	8.00	886.20	650.50	2.67	7.86	1.9
<b>AschFrid=</b>	1989	38.50	2167	1223.5	2.20	20.87	1242.7
BarrAG	490.00	3.00	565.60	426.50	-	17.40	299.6
Beca	833.50	14.00	950.00	760.00	2.90	19.80	340.9
CarnsGroup	131.75	1.75	152.02	91.60	3.80	16.27	14.2
<b>Coca-Cola HBC</b>	2149	47.00	2582	1911	2.50	17.18	376.4
Cranwick	3528	16.00	3666	2548	1.98	18.64	84.1
<b>Diageo</b>	3094.5	44.00	3881.5	2996.75	2.51	18.82	3743.4
Gmcore	84.00	15.25	94.05	60.15	-	16.60	859.1
Hilltopfd	688.00	3.00	789.00	495.42	2.35	12.95	65.7
Kerry £=	76.55	0.05	100.00	74.45	1.13	18.33	8.4
PremFds	116.80	-	139.00	91.04	0.86	12.12	299.5
Tate&Lylf	673.50	4.50	837.50	648.00	4.57	14.42	671.0
<b>Unilever</b>	3953.5	44.00	4868.64	3797.5	3.76	14.13	3222.7
<b>Health Care Equip &amp; Services</b>							
GRShtn kr	121.25	5.15	197.85	115.30	-	35.69	879.5
<b>Sims &amp; Nephew</b>	980.80	16.80	1316.75	952.60	2.78	22.25	1535.5
<b>House, Leisure &amp; Pers Goods</b>							
<b>Bartlett</b>	422.10	11.25	515.00	313.00	6.80	6.75	2534.8
Bellway	2256	88.00	2570	1590.5	5.21	8.78	140.8
<b>Barrat</b>	454.60	45.94	616	314	0.22	10.76	65.5
Barnes	183.20	20.00	205	125	1.22	10.16	60.8
<b>Carin Homes</b>	230	4.10	1020	72.50	2.27	10.6	608.6
Carroll	1010	256.00	1180	575	2.52	27.84	45.5
Gleeson	387.00	2.00	475.00	331	3.88	0.5	243.3



MANAGED FUNDS SERVICE

SUMMARY																						FT.COM/FUNDS				
Winners - EAA Fund UK Equity Income						Losers - EAA Fund UK Equity Income						Morningstar Star Ratings					Global Broad Category Group - Property									
Fund Name	1Yr Return GBP	3Yr Return GBP	5Yr Return GBP	3Yr Sharpe Ratio	3Yr Std Dev	Fund Name	1Yr Return GBP	3Yr Return GBP	5Yr Return GBP	3Yr Sharpe Ratio	3Yr Std Dev	Fund Name	Base Currency	Morningstar Rating 3 Yr	Morningstar Rating 5 Yr	Morningstar Rating 10 Yr	Morningstar Category	Base Currency	Total Ret 1Yr GBP	Total Ret 3Yr GBP	Total Ret 5Yr GBP					
UBS UK Equity Income Fund	14.40	19.52	2.77	1.06	18.67	HS Montrose Funds HS Montrose UK Income Fund	5.41	-1.35	-	0.10	19.06	Robeco Emerging Markets Fixed Income UCITS Fund	US Dollar	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	Property - Direct Switzerland	Swiss Franc	-1.63	3.17	-					
AI UK Listed Equity Income Fund	16.82	18.74	4.08	0.98	19.70	Montanaro UK Income Fund	6.85	-0.75	0.68	0.15	18.47	Proxic Asia Emerging Opportunities Fund A Acc	US Dollar	★★★★	★★★★	★	Property - Direct Europe	Euro	-1.19	-0.78	-0.56					
TIM Redwheel UK Equity Income Fund	17.67	16.97	5.09	0.90	19.48	FSL Marlborough Multi Cap Income Fund	1.21	0.16	-2.16	0.11	15.73	RAM Systematic European Eq	Euro	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	Property - Direct UK	Pound Sterling	-10.19	-1.26	-1.91					
Schroder Income Fund	13.77	16.77	2.45	0.93	19.27	Tiger Funds (Holdings) Tiger Income Fund (Holdings)	4.32	0.65	0.71	0.02	12.12	Index Pacific ex Japan P-Acc	Pound Sterling	★★★★	★★★★	-	Property - Direct Global	US Dollar	5.81	-5.01	-2.62					
Quilter Investors UK Equity Income Fund	13.76	16.71	5.98	1.03	16.89	PLC Income Opportunities Fund W-Acc GBP Fund	-2.65	0.81	-	0.09	13.12	UK Opportunities Fund W-Acc GBP	Pound Sterling	★★	★★	★★★	Property - Direct Other	US Dollar	-0.94	-7.44	-3.70					

Advertising Feature

Slater Investments

Oct 2020 - Oct 2023

Slater Growth A Acc

1,500

1,400

1,300

1,200

1,100

1,000

900

Oct 20

Jan 21

Apr 21

Jul 21

Oct 21

Jan 22

Apr 22

Jul 22

Oct 22

Jan 23

Apr 23

Jul 23

Oct 23

Day ▲ -1.00%

Month ▲ -1.78%

Year ▲ -9.98%

Firm Name

Slater Investments Ltd

Fund Name

Slater Growth A Acc

Morningstar Category

UK Small-Cap Equity

Max Annual Charge

-

3Yr Rating

★★★

Morningstar Sustainability Rating

-

Bid Price

5/75.68

KID Ongoing Charge

1.57

Offer Price

5/75.68

Day End One Year Return

-3.25

+/-

6.79

Total Ret 3Yr

0.53

Performance

1,500

1,400

1,300

1,200

1,100

1,000

900

Oct 20

Jan 21

Apr 21

Jul 21

Oct 21

Jan 22

Apr 22

Jul 22

Oct 22

Jan 23

Apr 23

Jul 23

Oct 23

— Fund

— Category

Weightings - As of 31/03/2023

Sector

Weighting

Cat Avg.

Basic Materials

4.25%

5.17%

Communication Services

17.43%

5.32%

Consumer Cyclical

8.62%

14.45%

Consumer Defensive

3.97%

3.95%

Energy

-

3.31%

Financial Services

21.36%

11.02%

Healthcare

6.72%

5.49%

Industrials

20.91%

23.42%

Real Estate

1.25%

3.19%

Technology

15.49%

14.72%

Utilities

-

0.75%

Cash & Equivalents

-

9.06%

Corporate

-

0.02%

Derivative

-

0.00%

Government

-

0.10%

Municipal

-

0.02%

Securitized

-

0.00%

Top 10 Holdings - As of 31/03/2023

Holding

Sector

Weighting

Serco Group PLC

Industrials

8.68%

Prudential PLC

Financial Services

6.71%

Kape Technologies PLC

Technology

5.80%

Future PLC

Communication Services

4.73%

Next Fifteen Communications Group PLC

Communication Services

4.65%

Tesco PLC

Consumer Defensive

3.97%

JTC PLC Ordinary Shares

Financial Services

3.42%

CVS Group PLC

Consumer Cyclical

3.27%

Alliance Pharms PLC

Healthcare

2.96%

Marlowe PLC

Industrials

2.64%

Risk Measures - As of 30/09/2023

1Yr

1Yr Cat Ave

3Yr

3Yr Cat Ave

5Yr

5Yr Cat Ave

Alpha

-13.96

-3.57

-9.56

-5.67

-0.22

-1.26

Beta

0.83

0.82

0.74

0.83

0.76

0.85

Information Ratio

-2.91

-0.95

-1.70

-0.81

-0.07

-0.24

R Squared

81.83%

71.02%

83.55%

73.93%

81.25%

75.81%

Sharpe Ratio

-0.56

0.15

0.01

0.23

0.18

0.18

Std Dev

11.71

14.34

14.99

17.93

17.40

20.44

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Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr	Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr	Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr	Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr	Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
LGT Wealth Management (CI) Limited (JER)							CG Asset Management Limited (IRL)							EdenTree Investment Management Ltd (UK)							Hermes Property Unit Trust (UK)													
Sir Walter Raleigh House, 48 - 50 Esplanade, St Helier, Jersey, JE2 3QB							25 Moorgrate, London, EC2R 6AY							PO Box 3733, Swindon, SN4 4BG, 0800 358 3010							Property & Other UK Unit Trusts													
FCA Recognised							FCA Recognised							Authorised Inv Funds							Property													
Volare Offshore Strategy Fund Limited							CG Portfolio Fund Plc							Authorised Inv Funds																				
Bridge Fund	£2.1208	-	0.0059	2.41	3.65	1.42	Absolute Return Cls M Inc	£131.66	132.25	0.44	1.69	-1.68	1.85	Amity Balanced For Charities A Inc	93.49	-	-1.58	5.65	10.95	5.00	Janus Henderson Asia Pacific Capital Growth Fund A Acc	1093.00	-	-1.00	0.06	-3.62	-6.68	Janus Henderson Asian Dividend Income Unit Trust Inc	73.55	-	0.20	5.78	-3.25	0.02
Global Equity Fund	£3.3336	-	0.0073	1.52	7.05	4.18	Capital Gearing Portfolio GBP P	£3601.56	3600.06	112.58	1.71	-2.61	1.93	Amity Global Equity Inc for Charities A Inc	153.00	-	-0.80	3.10	7.86	7.26	Janus Henderson Cautious Managed Fund A Acc	277.20	-	2.50	3.25	8.66	2.85	Janus Henderson Cautious Managed Fund A Acc	134.30	-	1.20	3.31	8.70	3.12
Global Fixed Interest Fund	£0.7047	-	0.0025	6.84	5.56	-4.84	Capital Gearing Portfolio GBP V	£175.09	176.06	0.55	1.71	-2.61	1.93	EdenTree European Equity Cls A Inc	327.00	-	4.50	2.05	23.34	10.24	Janus Henderson China Opportunities Fund A Acc	1052.00	-	0.00	0.30	-11.82	-16.25	Janus Henderson Emerging Markets Growth Fund A Acc	189.50	-	-0.40	0.76	-4.34	-4.53
Income Fund	£0.6081	-	0.0035	3.38	4.42	2.79	Dollar Fund Cls D Inc	£156.58	157.05	-1.24	1.28	-9.85	-2.46	EdenTree European Equity Cls B Inc	330.50	-	4.60	2.69	24.02	10.86	Janus Henderson European Growth Fund A Acc	294.00	-	3.50	0.76	14.58	5.27	Janus Henderson European Growth Fund A Acc	294.00	-	3.50	0.76	14.58	5.27
Sterling Fixed Interest Fund	£0.6483	-	0.0031	4.97	9.25	-7.05	Dollar Hedged GBP Inc	£87.74	88.00	-0.47	1.27	-2.85	-5.02	EdenTree Global Equity Cls A Inc	331.00	-	0.80	0.70	8.90	4.23	Janus Henderson European Select Opportunities Fund A Acc	238.00	-	25.00	0.87	19.46	6.66	Janus Henderson Fixed Interest Monthly Income Fund Inc	16.18	-	0.13	4.83	4.05	-6.47
UK Equity Fund	£1.8375	-	0.0242	3.43	5.86	4.19	Real Return Cls A Inc	£188.05	188.82	-1.22	1.78	-8.85	-2.63	EdenTree Global Equity Cls B Inc	333.70	-	0.80	1.26	9.48	4.79	Janus Henderson Global Equity Income Fund A Acc	64.08	-	0.36	3.44	6.93	7.15	Janus Henderson Global Equity Income Fund A Acc	478.80	-	-0.20	0.10	5.46	3.64

Algebris Investments Regulated (IRL)						
Algebris Core Italy R EUR	€ 138.63	-	-0.85	0.00	8.61	8.64
Algebris Core Italy R EUR	€ 130.76	-	-0.82	0.00	7.78	8.90
Algebris Financial Credit I EUR	€ 174.36	-	-0.31	0.00	8.76	-0.98
Algebris Financial Credit R EUR	€ 149.13	-	-0.27	0.00	8.00	-1.58
Algebris Financial Credit R EUR	€ 85.67	-	-1.63	6.20	8.00	-1.55
Algebris Financial Equity B EUR	€ 117.51	-	-1.56	0.00	23.92	26.65
Algebris Financial Equity R EUR	€ 148.03	-	-1.32	0.00	22.68	25.44
Algebris Financial Income I EUR	€ 184.96	-	-0.86	0.00	13.91	11.49
Algebris Financial Income R EUR	€ 167.03	-	-0.79	0.00	12.98	10.50
Algebris Financial Income R EUR	€ 97.24	-	-1.67	4.97	12.89	10.49
Algebris Global Credit Opportunities I EUR	€ 129.79	-	0.03	0.00	10.03	1.56
Algebris Global Credit Opportunities R EUR	€ 126.25	-	0.03	0.00	9.53	1.19
Algebris IG Financial Credit I EUR	€ 106.57	-	-1.07	3.54	9.97	1.31
Algebris IG Financial Credit I EUR	€ 97.36	-	0.15	0.00	8.23	-2.96
Algebris IG Financial Credit R EUR	€ 95.46	-	0.15	0.00	7.69	-3.44
Algebris Sust. World B	€ 104.31	-	0.16	-	-	-
Algebris Sust. World R	€ 103.01	-	0.15	-	-	-

Ashmore Group						
61 Aldwych, London WC2B 4AE. Dealing team: +352 27 62 22 233						
Authorised Inv Funds						
Emerging Markets Equity Fund	£116.64	-	-0.14	0.00	9.25	-2.61
Emerging Markets Equity ESG Fund	£134.21	-	-0.17	0.00	11.66	-4.11
Emerging Markets Active Equity Fund	£116.83	-	1.28	0.00	3.86	-4.84
Emerging Markets Frontier Equity Fund	£180.07	-	-1.53	0.98	3.28	7.05
Emerging Markets Blended Debt Fund	£48.81	-	-0.04	5.36	5.37	-10.15
Emerging Markets Blended Debt ESG Fund	£87.21	-	-0.99	0.00	5.48	-6.27
Emerging Markets Debt Fund	£53.59	-	-0.07	5.92	7.76	-10.84
Emerging Markets Corporate Debt Fund	£56.00	-	-0.07	7.05	3.55	-7.89
Emerging Markets Local Currency Bond Fund	£59.57	-	0.10	5.03	10.79	-2.77

Atlantis Sicav Regulated (LUX)						
American Dynamic	\$8651.16	-	-0.57	0.00	10.89	5.09
American One	\$7303.55	-	-54.20	0.00	18.27	8.11
Bond Global	€1532.89	-	-12.61	0.00	-2.05	0.62
Eurocroissance	€1269.06	-	-3.85	0.00	4.89	2.12
Far East	\$943.48	-	9.38	0.00	7.47	-5.01

Blue Whale Investment Funds ICAV (IRE)						
www.bluewhale.co.uk, info@bluewhale.co.uk						
FCA Recognised - Ireland UCITS						
Blue Whale Growth USD T	€ 10.06	-	0.07	-	27.88	-1.35

Dodge & Cox Worldwide Funds (IRL)						
48-49 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5JG						
www.dodgeandcox.worldwide.com 020 3713 7664						
FCA Recognised						
Dodge & Cox Worldwide Funds plc - Global Bond Fund						
EUR Accumulating Class	€ 16.10	-	0.12	0.00	-0.86	2.94
EUR Accumulating Class (H)	€ 10.37	-	0.06	0.00	4.85	-2.59
EUR Distributing Class	€ 11.25	-	0.08	2.41	-3.17	1.15
EUR Distributing Class (H)	€ 7.18	-	0.04	2.50	2.30	-4.39
GBP Distributing Class	€ 11.95	-	0.07	2.15	4.78	0.50
GBP Distributing Class (H)	€ 7.79	-	0.05	2.47	3.91	-3.40
USD Accumulating Class	€ 12.28	-	0.07	0.00	7.62	-0.83
Dodge & Cox Worldwide Funds plc-Global Stock Fund						
USD Accumulating Share Class	€ 31.07	-	0.13	0.00	20.57	13.84
GBP Accumulating Share Class	€ 41.74	-	0.17	0.00	9.07	16.25
GBP Distributing Share class	€ 27.77	-	0.11	-	7.85	15.52
EUR Accumulating Share Class	€ 44.15	-	0.27	0.00	11.07	18.19
GBP Distributing Class (H)	€ 14.16	-	0.06	0.25	17.93	11.86
Dodge & Cox Worldwide Funds plc-U.S. Stock Fund						
USD Accumulating Share Class	€ 39.07	-	0.28	0.00	13.64	13.26
GBP Accumulating Share Class	€ 49.64	-	0.35	0.00	2.84	15.66
GBP Distributing Share Class	€ 29.54	-	0.21	0.00	1.97	15.11
EUR Accumulating Share Class	€ 47.93	-	0.43	0.00	4.70	17.57
GBP Distributing Class (H)	€ 15.30	-	0.11	0.16	11.63	11.48

Dragon Capital						
www.dragoncapital.com						
Fund information: info@dragoncapital.com						
Other International Funds						
Vietnam Equity (UCITS) Fund A USD	€ 28.39	-	0.07	0.00	9.28	9.85

FIL Investment Services (UK) Limited (1200)/F (UK)						
Beech Gate, Millfield Lane, Lower Kingswood, Tadworth, KT20 6RP						
Callfree: Private Clients 0800 414161						
Brokers Dealings: 0800 414 181						
OEIC Funds						
Allocator World Fund W-Acc-GBP	€ 2.72	-	0.02	1.15	5.76	7.21
American Fund W-Acc-GBP	€ 58.90	-	0.25	0.00	10.86	4.19
American Special Sits W-Acc-GBP	€ 22.94	-	0.21	0.64	0.22	14.81
Asia Fund W-Acc-GBP	€ 14.64	-	-0.01	0.83	-2.20	-5.47
Asia Pacific Ops W-Acc	€ 2.75	-	-0.01	1.37	2.53	3.22
Asian Dividend Fund W-Acc-GBP	€ 2.23	-	0.00	3.10	-1.27	-0.88
Cash Fund W-Acc-GBP	€ 1.06	-	0.00	1.77	4.08	1.52
China Consumer Fund W-Acc-GBP	€ 2.41	-	0.00	0.32	-8.94	-14.74
Emerging Mkts NAV	€ 7.21	-	-0.16	2.03	-2.76	-7.95
Enhanced Income Fund W-Hnc-GBP	€ 0.83	-	0.01	6.8		



MANAGED FUNDS SERVICE

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yield	1Yr	3Yr
Davis Crescent Global Medium Equity Fund USD A (Dist)	\$ 13.29	-	0.04	0.70	7.11	0.94
Davis Crescent Global Property Equity Fund USD A (Dist)	\$ 7.22	-	0.03	1.65	6.70	-0.69
Davis Crescent Global Short Term Income Fund USD A (Dist)	\$ 0.93	-	0.00	2.72	3.31	0.03
Davis Crescent Variable Fund GBP A (Dist)	£ 9.41	-	0.01	0.68	2.02	1.57

<b>Marwyn Asset Management Limited</b> <b>Regulated</b>	(CYM)
Marwyn Value Investors	£ 329.72 - -6.14 0.00 - -7.17

<b>McInroy &amp; Wood Portfolios Limited</b> Easter Alderston, Haddington, EH41 3SF 01620 825867 <b>Authorised Inv Funds</b>	(UK)
Balanced Fund Personal Class Units	5601.00 - 2.90 1.40 -1.47 2.79
Income Fund Personal Class Units	2793.40 - 5.30 2.40 1.43 4.66
Emerging Markets Fund Personal Class Units	2087.80 - -17.10 1.48 -9.31 0.11
Smaller Companies Fund Personal Class Units	5777.00 - 49.40 1.30 3.56 -1.97



<b>Milltrust International Managed Investments ICAV (IRL)</b> enquiries@milltrust.com, +44(0)20 8123 8316 www.milltrust.com <b>Regulated</b>	
British Innovation Fund	£ 121.92 - 2.89 0.00 - -
MAI - Buy & Lease (Australia)AS 103.45	- 0.59 0.00 -16.53 1.41
MAI - Buy & Lease (New Zealand)NZB 91.20	- -6.06 0.00 -7.20 -2.67
Milltrust Global Emerging Markets Fund - Class A	£ 88.46 - 0.79 0.00 1.12 -4.89

<b>Milltrust International Managed Investments SPC</b> enquiries@milltrust.com, +44(0)20 8123 8316, www.milltrust.com <b>Regulated</b>	
Milltrust Alaska Brazil Fund SP A \$	89.99 - 0.44 0.00 7.29 12.85
Milltrust Laurium Africa Fund SP A \$	87.72 - 0.07 0.00 -2.35 2.56
Milltrust Marcellus India Fund SP	\$ 135.62 - 1.93 0.00 3.39 9.91
Milltrust Singapur ASEAN Fund SP Founders	\$ 123.16 - -0.20 0.00 0.02 -1.94
Milltrust SPARK Korea Equity Fund SP A \$	112.53 - 0.83 0.00 23.08 -6.98
Milltrust Xingtai China Fund SP A \$	89.73 - 0.08 0.00 4.80 -13.92
The Climate Impact Asia Fund SP A \$	70.51 - -0.10 0.00 -2.65 -
The Climate Impact Asia Fund (Class B)	\$ 69.85 - -0.10 0.00 -3.14 -

<b>Ministry of Justice Common Investment Funds</b> <b>Property &amp; Other UK Unit Trusts</b>	(UK)
The Equity Idx Tracker Fd Inc	1886.00 - 18.00 2.50 7.70 7.05
Distribution Units	

<b>Mirabaud Asset Management</b> www.mirabaud.com, marketing@mirabaud-am.com Please find more details on our website: www.mirabaud-am.com <b>Regulated</b>	(LUX)
Mir. - Glb Strat. Bd I USD	\$ 114.03 - -0.21 0.00 2.88 -1.26
Mir. - DiscEur D Cap GBP	£ 149.40 - -1.62 0.00 -1.83 -1.50
Mir. - UKEq HA Cap I GBP	£ 127.66 - -1.17 0.00 2.72 0.30



<b>Oasis Crescent Global Investment Funds (UK) ICVC (UK)</b> <b>Regulated</b>	
Class Crescent Global Equity Fund USD A (Dist)	\$ 34.19 - 0.16 0.52 12.39 2.20
Class Crescent Global Income Fund USD A (Dist)	\$ 9.80 - 0.01 3.63 3.14 -0.99
Class Crescent Global Low Equity Fund USD D (Dist)	\$ 11.91 - 0.03 1.21 6.33 0.21

<b>Purisma Investment Fds (UK) (1200)F</b> 65 Gresham Street, London, EC2V 7NQ Order Desk and Enquiries: 0345 922 0044 <b>Authorised Inv Funds</b> <b>Authorised Corporate Director - Link Fund Solutions</b>	(UK)
Global Total Fd PCG A	418.72 - 0.17 0.17 17.32 7.60
Global Total Fd PCG B	412.63 - 0.16 0.00 17.03 7.33
Global Total Fd PCG INT	404.16 - 0.15 0.00 16.74 7.06

<b>Purisma Investment Fds (CI) Ltd</b> <b>Regulated</b>	(JER)
PCG B *	316.59 - 6.32 0.00 23.18 5.20
PCG C *	307.45 - 6.14 0.00 22.92 4.98



<b>Ram Active Investments SA</b> www.ram-ai.com <b>Other International Funds</b>	
RAM Systematic Emerg Markets Eq	\$ 219.01 219.01 -0.34 - 15.29 4.56
RAM Systematic European Eq	€ 505.67 505.67 -2.09 - 7.96 4.01
RAM Systematic Funds Global Sustainable Income Eq	€ 148.18 148.18 0.52 0.00 11.38 6.89
RAM Systematic Long/Short European Eq	€ 153.74 153.74 0.20 - -1.78 2.78

<b>Royal London</b> 80 Fenchurch Street, London EC3M 4BY <b>Authorised Inv Funds</b>	(UK)
Royal London Sustainable Diversified A Inc	£ 2.34 - 0.01 1.25 10.48 -0.03
Royal London Sustainable World A Inc	351.90 - 0.50 0.16 10.47 1.54
Royal London Corporate Bond Mth Income	72.34 - 0.24 4.83 9.29 -4.49
Royal London European Growth Trust	206.90 - 2.50 1.71 16.01 6.66
Royal London Sustainable Leaders A Inc	774.20 - 7.90 1.41 12.52 6.92
Royal London UK Growth Trust	615.10 - 8.30 2.27 12.03 6.24
Royal London UK Income With Growth Trust	197.70 - 2.30 4.97 9.11 7.71
Royal London US Growth Trust	414.90 - 0.30 0.00 14.96 13.02
Additional Funds Available	
Please see www.royallondon.com for details	

<b>Ruffer LLP (1000)F</b> 65 Gresham Street, London, EC2V 7NQ Order Desk and Enquiries: 0345 601 9610 <b>Authorised Inv Funds</b> <b>Authorised Corporate Director - Link Fund Solutions</b>	(UK)
LF Ruffer Diversified Rtm C Acc	97.89 - 0.31 1.78 -3.94 -
LF Ruffer Diversified Rtm C Inc	95.43 - 0.31 1.81 -3.83 -
LF Ruffer Equity & General C Acc	564.50 - -6.31 1.37 6.12 8.51
LF Ruffer Equity & General C Inc	503.15 - -5.62 1.38 6.12 8.51
LF Ruffer Gold C Acc	224.42 - -6.30 0.46 6.80 -12.30
LF Ruffer Gold C Inc	135.25 - -3.80 0.45 6.79 -12.30
LF Ruffer Total Return C Acc	526.43 - -3.99 2.48 -4.67 2.93
LF Ruffer Total Return C Inc	320.63 - -2.43 2.52 -4.65 2.94

<b>Rubrics Global UCITS Funds Pfc</b> www.rubricsam.com <b>Regulated</b>	(IRL)
Rubric Emerging Markets Fixed Income UCITS Fund	£ 136.66 - 0.54 0.00 4.97 -0.18
Rubrics Global Credit UCITS Fund	£ 16.80 - 0.08 0.00 2.90 -1.24
Rubrics Global Fixed Income UCITS Fund	£ 167.35 - 1.01 0.00 0.41 -2.77

<b>Scottish Friendly Asset Managers Ltd</b> Scottish Friendly House, 16 Blythswood Sq, Glasgow G2 4HJ 0141 275 5000 <b>Authorised Inv Funds</b>	(UK)
Managed Growth	356.10 - 3.60 0.00 8.80 6.64
UK Growth	403.00 - 5.40 0.00 7.50 6.49



<b>Slater Investments Ltd</b> www.slaterinvestments.com, Tel: 0207 220 9460 <b>FCA Recognised</b>	(UK)
Slater Growth A Acc	575.68 575.68 6.79 0.00 -6.85 -1.13
Slater Income A Inc	133.35 133.35 1.01 5.22 3.17 10.85
Slater Recovery A Acc	299.40 299.40 3.22 0.00 -7.32 2.66
Slater Artorius	256.48 256.48 -5.31 0.57 -7.90 2.58



<b>Stonehage Fleming Investment Management Ltd</b> www.stonehagefleming.com/gbi enquiries@stonehagefleming.com <b>Regulated</b>	(IRL)
SF Global Best Ideas Eq B USD ACC	\$ 239.36 - 0.16 0.00 15.40 2.31
SF Global Best Ideas Eq D GBP INC	£ 297.36 - -0.36 0.00 5.79 4.39



<b>Superfund Asset Management GmbH</b> www.superfund.com, +43(0)1 247 00 <b>Other International Funds</b> <b>Authorised Inv Funds</b>	
Superfund Green Gold	\$ 801.74 - -2.35 0.00 -36.35 -17.72
Superfund Green Silver	\$ 673.49 - -2.71 0.00 -35.98 -20.40
Superfund Green US\$	\$ 639.21 - -8.85 0.00 -38.68 -14.32

<b>Thesis Unit Trust Management Limited</b> Exchange Building, St Johns Street, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1UP <b>Authorised Funds</b>	(UK)
TM New Court Fund A 2011 Inc	£ 18.83 - 0.03 0.00 8.97 3.39
TM New Court Fund - A 2014 Acc	£ 19.00 - 0.03 0.00 9.01 3.39
TM New Court Equity Growth Fund - Inc	£ 20.64 - 0.04 0.00 11.45 4.11



<b>Toscafund Asset Management LLP</b> www.toscafund.com <b>Authorised Funds</b>	(UK)
Aptus Global Financials B Acc	£ 5.21 - -0.06 3.81 17.85 16.39
Aptus Global Financials B Inc	£ 3.24 - -0.03 3.94 17.83 17.82

<b>Toscafund Asset Management LLP</b> www.toscafund.com	
Tosca A USD	\$ 442.87 - -0.06 0.00 - 11.22
Tosca Mid Cap GBP	£ 127.07 - -6.15 0.00 - -4.12
Tosca Opportunity B USD	\$ 252.81 - -15.03 0.00 -29.95 -19.96
Pegasus Fund Ltd A-1 GBP	£ 28.54 - 0.00 0.00 -29.25 -4.72



<b>Troy Asset Mgt (1200)</b> 65 Gresham Street, London, EC2V 7NQ Order Desk and Enquiries: 0345 608 0950 <b>Authorised Inv Funds</b> <b>Authorised Corporate Director - Link Fund Solutions</b>	(UK)
Trojan Ethical O Acc	127.30 - 0.18 0.07 2.28 2.26
Trojan Ethical Global Inc O Acc	103.90 - 0.35 2.59 4.97 -
Trojan Ethical Global Inc O Inc	99.00 - 0.33 2.63 4.98 -
Trojan Ethical O Inc	127.21 - 0.19 0.08 2.50 2.33
Trojan Ethical Income O Acc	138.43 - 1.18 2.67 9.49 1.21
Trojan Ethical Income O Inc	112.93 - 0.97 2.72 9.50 1.22
Trojan Fund O Acc	380.18 - 0.84 0.26 0.30 2.44
Trojan Fund O Inc	306.94 - 0.67 0.26 0.30 2.44
Trojan Global Equity O Acc	518.50 - 0.08 0.00 13.30 6.83
Trojan Global Equity O Inc	427.80 - 0.06 0.00 13.30 6.83
Trojan Global Income O Acc	154.85 - 0.58 3.05 1.54 4.90
Trojan Global Income O Inc	126.49 - 0.48 3.11 1.53 4.89
Trojan Income O Acc	339.02 - 2.84 2.96 7.06 1.21
Trojan Income O Inc	162.93 - 1.36 3.04 7.06 1.21

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**Guide to pricing of Authorised Investment Funds:** (compiled with the assistance of the IMA, The Investment Association, Camomile Court 23 Camomile Street, London EC3A 7LL. Tel: +44 (0)20 7831 0898.)

**OEIC:** Open-Ended Investment Company. Similar to a unit trust but using a company rather than a trust structure.

Different share classes are issued to reflect a different currency, charging structure or type of holder.

**Selling price:** Also called bid price. The price at which units in a unit trust are sold by investors.

**Buying price:** Also called offer price. The price at which units in a unit trust are bought by investors. Includes manager's initial charge.

**Single price:** Based on a mid-market valuation of the underlying investments. The buying and selling price for shares of an OEIC and units of a single priced unit trust are the same.

**Treatment of manager's periodic capital charge:** The letter C denotes that the trust deducts all or part of the manager's/operator's periodic charge from capital, contact the manager/operator for full details of the effect of this course of action.

**Exit Charges:** The letter E denotes that an exit charge may be made when you sell units, contact the manager/operator for full details.

Time: Some funds give information about the timing of price quotes. The time shown alongside the fund manager's/operator's name is the valuation point for their unit trusts/OEICs, unless another time is indicated by the symbol alongside the individual unit trust/OEIC name.

**The symbols are as follows:** ⚡ 0001 to 1100 hours; ♦ 1101 to 1400 hours; ▲ 1401 to 1700 hours; ♣ 1701 to midnight. Daily dealing prices are set on the basis of the valuation point, a short period of time may elapse before prices become available. Historic pricing: The letter H denotes that the managers/operators will normally deal on the price set at the most recent valuation. The prices shown are the latest available before publication and may not be the current dealing levels because of an intervening portfolio revaluation or a switch to a forward pricing basis. The managers/operators must deal at a forward price on request, and may move to forward pricing at any time. Forward pricing: The letter F denotes that managers/operators deal at the price to be set at the next valuation.

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ARTS

# Exhilaration in the everyday

Ruth Asawa was best known as a sculptor, but her drawings – on show in New York – reveal marvels, writes Ariella Budick

A sheet of paper teems with hands – or rather, the same two hands, flexing, stretching, curled into a claw, clenched in a fist. The ravishing ink drawing, a partial self-portrait that Ruth Asawa made in the 1940s, entices with its repetitive variety. She has rendered the plump stubbiness of the fingers, the slight swell of the palms and the close-clipped half-moons of the nails with expressive precision. Charming, an interloper has wandered into the bottom left corner: a pair of feet with pudgy toes and fleshy arches.

Asawa, who died in 2013, was still a student when she assembled that collection of free-floating limbs, a perennial staple of academic draughtsmanship. Dürer lingered on long, elegant fingers. Leonardo produced gloriously shaded hands, each a graceful synecdoche for physical suppleness. To Asawa, the drawings were exercises not just in how to draw but in how to see. She absorbed that lesson from her teacher Josef Albers and now, a decade after her death, she imparts it to us.

*Ruth Asawa Through Line*, the Whitney’s simultaneously soothing and exhilarating survey of her work in New York, reveals the marvels she perceived in what most of us mistake for the ordinary. A dead fish, a watermelon, the approaching headlights of a car in the dark – all appear in her work as figments of acute beauty.

Asawa is best known for her sculptures, airy tracteries of woven wire suspended from the ceiling, like clouds dangling in the sky. These received early attention, followed by decades of oblivion and a deathbed rediscovery, a trajectory familiar to so many talented women. Her drawings, even more time-entombed than the sculptures, have

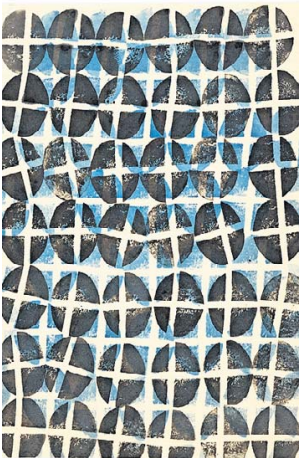
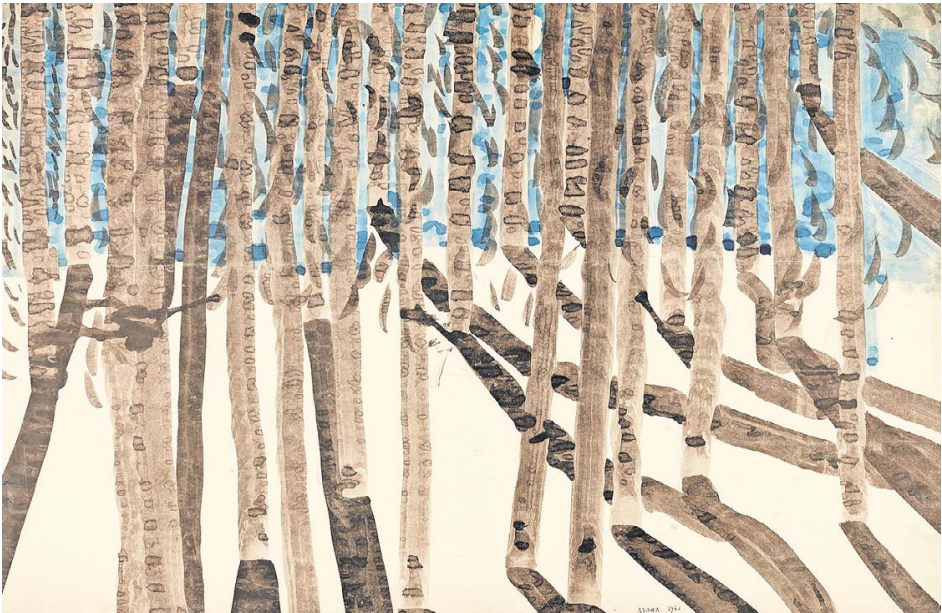
finally sprung on to the New York stage, and it turns out that Asawa’s real passion was line and that the sculptures really were, as she always claimed, “drawings in space”.

One of seven children, Asawa was born in 1926 and grew up on a small farm in the Southern California town of Norwalk (now a Los Angeles suburb). Her parents were Japanese immigrants who grew strawberries, carrots, green beans and tomatoes to sell at local markets. The sights of an outdoor childhood, such as the glimpse of a diaphanous dragonfly’s wing etched in sunlight, imprinted themselves on her memory and reappeared, years later, in her luminously organic sculptures and

She took a cross-section of a giant redwood tree and drew by hand each of its 356 concentric rings

drawings. The Japanese school she attended on Saturdays taught calligraphy, which ignited a life-long passion for the expressive power of line.

After Pearl Harbor, she and most of her family were interned in a horse stable at the Santa Anita Park track, an experience that was both miserable and formative. “The smell of horse dung never left the place the entire time we were there,” she recalled. The saving grace was the presence of fellow internees who had worked as Disney animators and provided her first intensive artistic training. Later, the family, along with 8,000 other Japanese Americans, were packed off to a prison camp in Arkansas, which is where Ruth graduated from high school.



Clockwise, from above: Ruth Asawa, ‘Untitled’ potato print (c1951-52); ‘Untitled’ eucalyptus grove (1961); ‘Untitled’ potato print (c1951-52); ‘Untitled’ studies of hands and feet (c1946-49)

Ruth Asawa Lanier, Inc./ARS



It’s hard to imagine the sense of liberation she must have felt when in 1946 she arrived at Black Mountain College in North Carolina, a small institution then undergoing astonishing ferment. She studied with Merce Cunningham, Buckminster Fuller and Albers, who incited her to fix her attention on the humblest objects: Wonder Bread packaging, Jell-O moulds, fallen leaves. She stayed three years, then followed a Black Mountain architecture student, Albert Lanier, to San Francisco, where they married.

With Albers’ instruction burrowed deep in her soul, Asawa stayed home, raised six children and drew incessantly. Parents of just one or two young kids know how hard it can be to carve out even a few minutes of quiet and concentration, yet she somehow managed to thrive as an artist even in the constant company of Xavier, Aiko, Hudson, Adam, Addie and Paul. An adolescence spent in the camps had fortified her resilience and discipline, and accustomed her to finding zones of freedom in a restricted existence.

“I couldn’t go to a drawing class, so I drew my children or the flowers in the garden. I kept my hands in it,” she recalled.

At the Whitney, two stunning drawings in a spiral notebook depict her daughter Addie asleep. In one, scores of brisk black lines leap from the child’s head, scramble on to a pillow, and then creep up the wall behind her. Each

stroke embodies the kinetic force that will be released the moment she wakes. On the facing page, the girl frowns in her sleep. Her mouth, scrunched into an energetic pout, blasts striated wrinkles into her rounded face.

Arts and crafts projects in the Asawa home yielded celestial results. She carved botanical motifs into sliced potatoes and used them to make sublime prints in indigo and orange. Her daughter Aiko gathered leaves, which she inked and pressed, fixing the unique morphology of each one, as distinct as a portrait sitter’s features. She posed, rather than merely placed, those leaves



to emphasise a characteristic angle, the symmetry of branched veins, the rough or spongy texture.

When her son Adam caught a large fish, Mom did what moms do: she doused it in black ink, draped it in Japanese paper and pressed, producing a spectacular monoprint. The impression looks practically sentient because it represents not just a visual, but a tactile experience of the fish. You can make out where Asawa applied pressure to the open jaw, scales and fins, and where the paper wrinkled at the edges.

Studying natural forms led her to mimic their deeper structures. The spiral, found at the heart of so many growing things, stoked a life-long fascination. In one of her most transcendently exacting works, she took a cross-section of a giant redwood tree and drew by hand each of its 356 concentric rings. She called the process a “torture exercise”, but the result is a poetic compression of time, the tree’s slow-motion evolution recapitulated in the artist’s patient labour.

The following year, 1961, she applied a similar technique to “Headlights”, in which treelike rings and diagonal beams radiate from a pair of brilliant centres, intersecting and overlapping in a mesmerisingly abstract pattern.

But it’s Asawa’s flowers – picked from her garden, gifted to her in bouquets – that best incarnate her mixture of serenity and dynamism. “Cosmos” (c1976-89) blooms across two pages of a sketchbook, sprouting from a dense tangle of spiky stems into masses of lavish petals. Asawa raises the discipline of seeing to a new level of knowing as she follows the contour of the plant in an apparently continuous, ever-lengthening line that has no beginning and no end, only the exuberance and mess of being alive.

To January 15, whitney.org



Ruth Asawa, ‘Untitled’ self-portrait (c1960s)

Ruth Asawa Lanier, Inc./ARS

## Familiar story with a subversive twist

nonetheless seems to blossom as she and her beau jet off to Paris.

That excursion is the subject of one of several playful musical and choreographic interludes that highlight the nimble virtues of Maree Kearns’s glitter-curtain-backed design, which is at once stripped down and cheerfully camp.

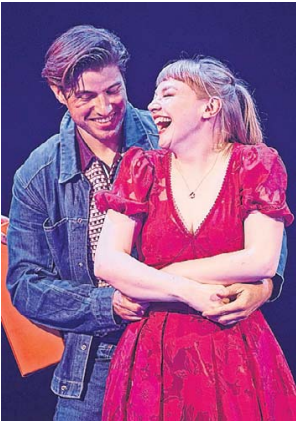
After the interval, Harris introduces an initially perplexing meta-theatrical twist whose logic becomes clearer as Cynthia worms into her sister’s relationship. The hoary premise of dreamboat-is-not-what-he-seems thereby acquires a winningly zany dimension centred on the activities of what we initially assume to be two therapists (played with skilful range by Stephen Brennan and Kate

Stanley Brennan). That development yields a mordant vision of what it would be a mistake to call modern love. Despite all its jaunty frolics, *Somewhere* is a romantic comedy that turns out to be bereft of genuine happiness.

Cynthia, played with cunning and haughty venom by Galligan, emerges as the dominant presence. Her seething interactions with her shiftless husband Eric (Paul Reid) yield a sharply observed portrait of a marriage sustained by contemptuous familiarity. As Cynthia and Casey’s parents, Enda Oates and Lise-Ann McLaughlin similarly convey the desultory rhythms of infidelity and conjugal inertia.

As Casey, Keating offers an amiably ingenuous counterpoint that takes on psychological depth. Alongside, Cuffe performs his deliberately two-dimensional role with a light touch. And Reid captures the feigned nonchalance of a man wrestling with middle-aged professional failure.

The play suffers, however, from an excess of self-absorption among the characters, who have nothing of note to say about anything except themselves. The best comedy provides food for the intellect, but this one serves up a bit too much conversational candyfloss. At around two hours and 45 minutes (with an interval), *Somewhere* also feels rather baggy. Though its subversive take on romantic comedy has the merit of originality, Harris’s play would have benefited from more of the genre’s traditional structural discipline.



Cameron Cuffe and Eimear Keating in ‘Somewhere Out There You’

To November 4, abbeytheatre.ie

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President Biden’s plan to revitalise the World Bank and the IMF is partly aimed at countering China’s growing sway among developing nations. But securing approval in the US could be complicated.

By Colby Smith, James Politi, Aime Williams and James Kynge

In the middle of the G20 summit in New Delhi last month, President Joe Biden peeled away for a small gathering with a few other world leaders. In attendance were Narendra Modi, the Indian prime minister and host, South African president Cyril Ramaphosa and Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the leader of Brazil – three of the five countries in the Brics grouping of large developing countries. They held hands and smiled for the cameras, along with Ajay Banga, the new president of the World Bank.

The event occurred shortly after Biden had presented what US officials describe as a big new push to deliver billions of dollars in additional financing to emerging and developing economies. Absent from the G20 were China’s Xi Jinping and Russia’s Vladimir Putin.

The plan involves boosting the financial might of the World Bank and the IMF, the two Washington-based institutions that have been at the centre of the economic order America and its allies spearheaded after the second world war to foster international co-operation and increase their global leverage.

Biden’s bet – and that of his top officials including Janet Yellen, the Treasury secretary – is that he can revitalise them in a way that expands America’s economic offering to developing nations around the world, while countering China’s mounting international influence.

The plan is a litmus test for the future of the US-led order – whether institutions such as the World Bank and IMF can be renewed even as the US plays a less dominant role in the global economy, or whether they will become more marginal amid growing geopolitical competition between the US and China.

“I cannot think of a time when the US Treasury secretary and president have focused this kind of sustained attention on the multilateral development banks [MDBs] and the IMF,” says Karen Mathiasen, who previously served as acting executive director for the US at the World Bank and in the Treasury’s international affairs department.

Such efforts, she says, feel “more acute and existential, because you have an increasingly polarised global environment, making the importance of multilaterals delivering even more essential so they can show that they’re relevant”.

Biden has already clinched agreement with member countries or is expecting agreement on reforms to the World Bank and other multilateral development banks that would expand its balance sheet by \$200bn and make them more nimble and aggressive in helping struggling nations. But he has also called on Congress to approve new funds for the World Bank to bolster its financial power by a further \$25bn. If other countries join in, the total war chest could grow by another \$100bn.

With the IMF, Biden has proposed directing \$21bn in US funds towards beefing up the lender’s ability to deliver financial aid to low-income nations and backed a plan to increase its capital over the longer term. The plans will be at the heart of discussions at the annual meetings of the IMF and World Bank in Marrakech this week.

“As we look at countries that have gone through a very hard time and think, ‘What can we in the United States do to drive global growth and stability?’, the [IMF and World Bank] are incredibly important tools,” a senior Treasury official says. “We want to make sure they are operating as well as possible.”

Yet delivering on the plan will not be straightforward. The administration needs to get congressional approval in the midst of a polarised and dysfunctional US political climate.

It also will require broad international backing, testing America’s international economic clout at a time when advanced economies are feeling budgetary pressures that will limit their financial contributions, and developing countries may resist plans to give western-led institutions more resources without a boost in their representation.

The new US effort to inject fresh capital into the World Bank and IMF does not include a push to address the underrepresentation of China and other emerging economies, a notable omission given that Beijing has only the third-largest share of voting power in each institution despite being the world’s second-largest economy.

Critics also question the ability of the IMF and World Bank to deliver help to developing economies on a scale to match China’s Belt and Road Initiative, a grand scheme to win influence in the “global south” launched by Xi in 2013.

China has lent close to \$1tn to developing countries mostly to build infrastructure under the BRI. As many of these countries slipped into financial distress, China’s financial institutions have stepped in with bailout packages that totalled \$240bn between 2000 and



# A test for US influence

‘The China-US relationship is in a period of tension we haven’t seen for 40 or 50 years, and the IMF and World Bank are caught in the middle’

the end of 2021, a recent study found. That amounts to more than 20 per cent of total IMF lending over the past decade.

“We’re in a situation where the China-US relationship is in a period of tension we haven’t seen for 40 or 50 years, and [the IMF and World Bank] are caught in the middle,” says Kenneth Rogoff, who used to work at the fund and is now at Harvard University.

“They’re at this crossroads where they need to make a decision about whether to keep China in and fully engaged or begin a process of disengagement,” he adds. “I don’t really see how we’re going to solve the world’s problems without China.”

### Reviving multilateralism

The new plan is the latest in a series of efforts backed by Washington to boost the international financial institutions. An agreement on raising IMF quotas was reached in 2010 and later enacted in 2016. And five years ago, the US and other governments across the globe extended a major show of support to the World Bank, both injecting new capital and ushering in a new era that gave China and emerging economies more internal sway.

But that initiative, which took place during the administration of Donald Trump, who was openly hostile to the idea of multilateralism, was widely judged to have fallen short as developing economies grappled with a multitude of challenges.

At the time, the official responsible for overseeing US engagement with international financial institutions – David Malpass, who eventually went on to lead the World Bank – was not only sceptical of the need to aggressively

combat climate change, but had a record of being highly wary of the organisations themselves.

Following Malpass’s resignation this year, Biden-appointed Banga, a former Wall Street executive, has sought to address the criticism that the World Bank has failed to adequately address the scale of the global climate crisis, alongside its traditional mission of alleviating poverty.

Since taking the helm in June, Banga has also tied to stretch the lender’s balance sheet, without sacrificing its top-tier triple A rating, and put in place new financial instruments to help indebted countries. Over the summer, Banga used a summit with French president Emmanuel Macron to unveil new “pause clauses” attached to debt repayments from countries hit by natural disasters and has launched a so-called hybrid capital scheme to experiment with new financial instruments. The organisation is also looking at ways to encourage private sector investment in emerging markets.

Banga has been clear that he needs not just a “better bank” but a “bigger bank” to fulfil these goals, but the sheer volume of resources that must be mobilised presents a daunting task. For the green transition alone, the International Energy Agency estimates that investments to mitigate global warming need to increase by \$2.2tn a year by 2030 in emerging and developing economies.

With a mandate of reform in place at the World Bank, US officials have turned to the IMF, demanding more in terms of overseeing troubled countries and guiding them out of crises.

“We cannot let the temptation to address every problem pull the IMF away from its core mission of macroeconomic and exchange-rate surveillance and guidance,” Jay Shambaugh, under-secretary for international affairs at the Treasury, said in a speech last month. The lender has in recent years expanded its remit – something IMF head Kristalina Georgieva defended in a recent interview with the FT.

“The role of the fund inevitably has to change because the world around us is changing,” she said. It has established the Resilience and Sustainability Trust, aimed at extending lending for climate-related matters and pandemic preparedness, as well as a programme to help countries address balance of payment needs tied to food scarcity.

That embrace has garnered significant support. “In light of the costs of

crises in the poorest countries, the fund simply cannot pretend to be a provider of global public goods unless it engages more with those countries and their issues,” says Maurice Obstfeld, a former IMF chief economist now at the Peterson Institute for International Economics. But there are also detractors. Anne Krueger, who previously served as the first deputy managing director at the IMF, expressed “dismay” at what she characterised as the fund’s drift from “essential” mandates of financial stability and holding crisis-prone countries accountable. Argentina and Pakistan, for instance, have had to repeatedly turn to the IMF for assistance, most recently to ensure they did not default on debt payments, including ones owed to the lender itself.

### The China question

Looming in the background of all discussions about the two institutions is China – and its growing presence in development finance.

China has long sought to boost its representation – and voting power – at the World Bank and several other multilateral development banks. It sees this goal as a crucial part of an overarching strategy to reform the world’s financial architecture by providing a greater say for developing countries, which Beijing has ambitions to lead, Chinese policy advisers and observers say.

But translating China’s aspirations into actual influence has been a hard road for Beijing, stretching back at least 15 years.

At the IBRD, the lending arm of the World Bank, China’s total voting power is 5.96 per cent, ranking third after the US with 15.62 per cent and Japan with 7.13 per cent. This is despite the fact that in nominal terms China contributed 18.06 per cent of global gross domestic product in 2022, compared with just 4.23 per cent for Japan and 25.41 per cent for the US.

It is not that China has been unwilling to stump up the capital necessary to increase its voting power at the World Bank. On the contrary, says Yunnan Chen, researcher at ODI, a London-based think-tank, it tried to boost its capital contributions, especially in the years following the 2008 financial crisis.

But the bank’s leading western shareholders were resistant because an increase in China’s voting power would most likely diminish that of other countries such as the US, Japan, Germany and the UK.

The US president wants to boost the financial might of the two Washington-based institutions as China courts the developing world

FT montage

“Shareholding is a zero-sum game, and major shareholders, particularly the US, have consistently pushed back on any substantial changes in shareholding structure,” adds Chen.

In spite of its recent experience, China remains hopeful that the institutions will eventually soften their resistance to Beijing playing a larger role, according to senior Chinese policy advisers, who declined further identification.

One reason for this optimism is that the World Bank and other MDBs have an intense need for capital to fund development in many countries where infrastructure is insufficient to serve exploding populations and the impact of climate change.

“China’s representation and voting rights at the World Bank and [other MDBs] have been kept suppressed by western powers for too long,” says one adviser to the Chinese government. “We should be willing to increase our capital support for these organisations if they recognise our contributions and our economic weight in a proper manner.”

Observers also point to the way in which the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, a multilateral lender led by China, maintains a highly co-operative stance towards the World Bank. The AIIB has co-financed 20 projects worth \$4.36bn between 2021 and the end of August this year, becoming the World Bank’s leading co-financing partner, says Sir Danny Alexander, the AIIB’s vice-president for policy and strategy.

On voting power within the IMF in the future, Georgieva said that “there is a need to constantly change to reflect how the world economy is changing”. Quota reviews happen at least every five years.

Speaking to the FT, Yellen hinted the US could eventually support broader changes for under-represented countries. Asked about China specifically,



she says: “It is also important for China to live up to the norms of the institution when it comes to things like co-operation on debt restructuring and things like foreign exchange transparency.”

In Sri Lanka, for example, China has received considerable criticism for hampering progress towards a deal, which has led to mass public protests and shortages of essential goods. At issue is China’s hesitancy so far in co-operating with an IMF-led bailout that also involves its geopolitical rivals Japan and India, analysts say.

The reasons for Beijing’s “go-it-alone” approach stem from the way its state-owned banks view their lending overseas. They seek to preserve maximum discretion in setting the terms of their lending and when loans turn sour, they prefer to “reprofile” their portfolio so as to avoid significant writedowns.

### All politics is local

China is not the only potential roadblock: the fate of Biden’s pitch also hinges on support from Congress.

The president included measures to buoy World Bank and IMF lending in a budget request to Congress this summer alongside funding for aid to Ukraine, but help for the international financial institutions – like the money for Kyiv – was left out of the deal to avert a government shutdown struck on September 30. A new budgetary deadline is coming in mid-November, but it is very unclear whether there is bipartisan support for new funds.

“It’s hard to persuade Congress of the merit of these institutions in any event, and they certainly don’t have constituencies that care deeply,” says Mathiasen, the former World Bank official. “And this isn’t any event. This is a highly dysfunctional period in US legislative history, so it makes for a perfect storm of the worst kind.”

Blaine Luetkemeyer, a Republican congressman from Missouri who chairs the financial services subcommittee with oversight over the IMF and the World Bank, says no concessional loans should be issued to China and that Beijing’s voting power should not be increased, while also calling on these institutions to narrow their scope to “poverty reduction and short-term balance of payments crises, respectively”.

“They have no business pushing radical climate and pandemic agendas that hurt energy producers and free markets,” Luetkemeyer says.

But if members of Congress want to offset Chinese influence in the world, Mark Sobel, a former US Treasury official, says the IMF and the World Bank are the “prime place” to allocate money.

“This is a darn good investment and we get a lot of leverage out of it,” he says. “It’s good for our economy and it’s good for our national security.”

‘It is important for China to live up to the norms of the institution when it comes to things like co-operation on debt restructuring’



# The FT View



## FINANCIAL TIMES

‘Without fear and without favour’

ft.com/opinion

# Starmer’s Labour is asking the right questions

*But the UK opposition has more work to do on fleshing out its answers*

When Jeremy Corbyn’s Labour party crashed in 2019 to its worst electoral defeat since the 1930s, restoring it to anything near electability was seen as the work of far more than one parliament. That Sir Keir Starmer was able to stand before his party conference with a double-digit opinion poll lead ahead of next year’s election is thanks, in part, to the Conservatives’ bizarre squandering of their own opportunity. It is, though, also a reflection of the journey Labour has made under his leadership. Labour still has work to do to lock in sufficient support from business, investors and the wider electorate. But Starmer has restored to Labour a plausibility that Corbyn had thrown away.

The Labour leader is criticised by some for an overly safety-first

approach. Indeed, headline policies announced by Conservative prime minister Rishi Sunak in recent weeks seemed designed to grab attention and present him, not Starmer, as the “radical” candidate: delaying some targets to achieve net zero; scrapping part of the costly HS2 rail project; progressively banning smoking.

Starmer could afford to remain vague about Labour’s programme while the governments of Boris Johnson and Liz Truss imploded. But his conference speech began to elaborate a plan that aims, at least, to grapple with some of the UK’s biggest challenges. He and shadow chancellor Rachel Reeves have rightly put rekindling growth and investment at the heart of their agenda, in part by seizing the potential of the green transition.

Labour has set out ambitious goals, including cutting record NHS waiting lists through increased overtime, paid for by scrapping “non-domiciled status” or tax breaks to some UK residents

whose permanent home is elsewhere. It vows to “get Britain building again” by easing planning controls and devolving powers to regional authorities – including new infrastructure and 1.5mn homes in five years to ease the shortage that has priced the young out of housing.

Such targets are always far easier to set than to deliver. A new Labour government would face the same Nimbyist barriers as the Tories. The worst fiscal inheritance for decades would hem in its spending. Estimates of the proceeds of ditching non-dom status, for example, may prove optimistic.

Unlike previous incoming Labour administrations, however, it would not have to push up taxes sharply itself since the Conservatives have already done so. Even modest enhancements to growth would begin to flow into higher revenues. But Starmer’s Labour is relying on its answer to the US Inflation Reduction Act to do much of the heavy lifting in raising growth. It needs to provide more detail on plans to bolster other parts of

The party’s leader and his shadow chancellor Rachel Reeves have rightly put rekindling growth and investment at the heart of their agenda

the economy. It is unclear, too, how feasible it is to borrow £28bn a year for green investment, proportionately bigger than the US plan – even by the middle of the next parliament – without breaching its self-imposed fiscal rules.

Business bosses will be attracted by the prospect of greater stability, green growth and better EU relations, lighter planning, and a partnership that uses government money to pump-prime private investment. They will worry about continued high corporate taxes, enhanced workers’ rights that could impede flexibility, and Labour’s sometimes knee-jerk regulatory instincts.

Yet Starmer inherited a Labour party more akin to a protest group, in thrall to a narrow hard-left base. His achievement has been to turn it once again into a national party – while it is the Conservatives who are now largely talking to themselves. Business and investors will not like all of the answers it is offering; some still need a lot of elaboration. But it is focusing on the right questions.

## Opinion Environment

# We are in a period of climate stuckness

Andy Carter



Pilita Clark

Last week, the term “energy transition” was mentioned more than 3,000 times in news reports, media releases and research papers. Numbers like this, from the Factiva news database, are enough to make you think the world is finally shifting decisively away from the fossil fuels that have dominated for decades towards a cleaner, greener energy system. But it isn’t.

Oil, gas and coal made up 81.8 per cent of the global energy mix last year – almost the same as the 82.3 per cent in 2021 – Energy Institute data shows. That’s barely below the 85 per cent share fossil fuels had in 2015 when the Paris climate agreement was struck, and the 86 per cent in 1995 when the first UN climate COP conference was held.

We hear a lot, rightly, about the huge

The green energy surge has so far amounted to an addition to fossil fuels, not a substitute for them

gains that solar power, wind farms and electric cars have made in that time. But as energy use has grown, the global green surge has so far amounted to an addition to fossil fuels, not an emphatic substitute for them.

This might soon change. The influential International Energy Agency thinks current government policies will lead oil, gas and coal demand to finally peak this decade. But it doesn’t think the projected drop will be steep enough to limit global warming to the Paris Agreement goal of 1.5C. That will require tougher measures.

All this underlines the strange period of climate stuckness we have entered.

The need for faster climate action has never been more widely accepted. As a result, we understand better that much of the global financial, economic and climate institutional architecture needed to cut emissions is either unfit for purpose or has yet to be built.

The World Trade Organization, OECD, World Bank, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and other bodies that should be leading the charge to accelerate the energy transition are struggling to do so.

This is not for want of trying. Experts within and outside these groups have pushed for reforms for years. Changes often need govern-

ment agreement that is hard to secure at the best of geopolitical times, which we don’t have today. Yet the need for improvement is only going to grow.

The WTO, for example, is logically the body to galvanise the global trade of green goods and stamp out trade-distorting fossil fuel subsidies that slow the energy transition. It isn’t, despite years of effort from some member countries. Global fossil fuel use subsidies rocketed to a record of more than \$1tn last year, the IEA says.

The World Bank has probably done more to help governments tackle these subsidies than any other international institution, says development economist Neil McCulloch, author of the recently published book *Ending Fossil Fuel Subsidies*. But the budgets it has had for such work have been dwarfed by the size of the problem. The same goes for similar programmes at the IEA, OECD, IMF and UN Environment Programme, he says.

The UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is also ripe for reform. Many of the climate scientists who contribute to the ever more enormous assessments of global warming it has been issuing since 1990 think it should focus on shorter, more consequential reports. Its relatively slender 2018 study on the effects of 1.5C of warming shows what is possible. Those findings revolutionised thinking about how quickly emissions must fall and made the concept of net zero mainstream.

More than 70 countries have now set a net zero target, along with nearly half of the largest 2,000 companies. But the absence of official global standards for such targets, let alone an international body monitoring whether they are met, makes it hard to judge their impact.

Likewise, efforts to shift the trillions of dollars in capital needed to speed the energy transition would be helped if there were, say, an intergovernmental panel on ESG investing standards, or greenwashing.

Calls for reform of the UN’s unwieldy COP conferences hardly need repeating. These annual affairs should focus more on implementing policies to meet agreed goals, and it would help if decisions were made by majority votes, not consensus.

We know that institutional reform is possible. This week’s IMF and World Bank meetings in Marrakech are expected to build on moves the bank set out in June, such as pausing debt repayments, to help low-income countries deal with a rising barrage of natural disasters.

But it’s not enough. These steps must be matched by measures to hasten the shift away from what is fuelling those disasters in the first place.

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## Letters

# Boards must do more than vet their chief executives

There is a reason why boards are shining a brighter light on how executives conduct their private lives (Opinion, Work & Careers, October 2), and it is almost entirely because of the epidemic of sexual misconduct allegations that have come to light since the #MeToo reckoning began.

Indiscretions and allegations of abuse by certain former chief executives at companies like CBS, Hewlett-Packard and Fox News and,

more recently, those involving hedge fund manager Crispin Odey have left boards struggling to overcome hits to their reputations, stock value (where applicable) and workplace morale.

Even when relationships are consensual – which is what every bad acting CEO claims at the discovery of a scandal – the disparity in power between a CEO and a lesser-ranking employee opens the door to potential abuse. More than a few women have

come forward from those relationships to say they were intimidated by the power imbalance and didn’t really think they could resist the cajoleries of the CEO in whose good books they wanted to stay.

This means boards need to be looking beyond just super-vetting the CEO, to what they can be doing to minimise risk and create a gender-ethical culture.

Declaring an outright ban on

non-disclosure agreements that often silence victims of wrongdoing and allow perpetrators to thrive, disclosing annually the number of gender-related complaints made at the company and bringing gender sensitivity training and related HR practices into the 21st century would send a powerful signal to employees, shareholders and CEOs.

**Kathleen Finlay**  
Founder, The ZeroNow Campaign,  
Toronto, ON, Canada

## Discrimination is afflicted by zero-sum thinking too

John Burn-Murdoch’s Data Points article makes an elegant case for the impact of a growing “zero-sum” mentality present in macroeconomics (Opinion, September 23). It appears the same mentality operates when it comes to discrimination, and is an explanation why this is such a persistent societal problem.

In any case of discrimination, there is an advantaged group and a disadvantaged group. Researchers in the US showed that advantaged groups will protect their relative advantage. They will do this even if it is to their detriment. They see any attempt to remove inequality as a zero-sum game. “If you rise, I fall.”

In experiments researchers looked at mortgage lending, salary, hiring and even start-up funding. They assessed race, gender, criminal record and disability discrimination. In each case participants were first given an example showing discrimination. So they were told “historically Hispanics with the same profile as white candidates are offered smaller mortgages”. They were then offered rules designed to reduce inequality. In some cases, the rule was set up as zero-sum: “Hispanics will be given more mortgages, and the money will come from white groups.” In other cases a zero-sum was excluded: “This will make no difference to mortgage available to you.”

In some cases, the rule was set up such that there would be more funds available to both groups. Even though equality would increase, they were told the policy would increase the availability of mortgages to all.

Yet most of the advantaged group saw any attempts to reduce inequality as “zero-sum”. Indeed, attempts to reduce inequality were seen by them as discriminatory. They were thought to threaten the advantaged group. This happens even when the rule excludes a zero-sum outcome. It even occurs when the rule would enhance the whole “pie”. The inequality reduction was a threat for many, even though the group would be better off. The results are the same across all kinds of discrimination.

It appears that this effect too dominates normal political affiliation, as shown in your article. The state of California created a positive discrimination “proposition”. It sought to hire and award contracts and university places favouring minorities.

Researchers used the proposition with a sample of white and Asian Californians. They asked for their voting intentions. They also measured individuals’ political leanings: liberal versus conservative. The best predictor of their vote was not their political affiliation. Instead, it was their perception that reducing inequality was “harming”. They saw the world as “zero-sum”. Thus a growing mentality of “zero-sum” will have social as well as



economic implications.  
**Professor John Bateson**  
Bayes Business School, City, University of London, London EC2, UK

## Plaudits for the FT’s Ethiopia reporting

Thank you for the excellent article by Andres Schipani about the situation in Ethiopia, which was comprehensive, well researched, evidence-based and clear. Just great journalism on a tragic and vastly under-reported war. I do hope it helps bridge the chasm in understanding about refugee flows from the region (The Big Read, October 5).

**Patrick Davie**  
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, UK

New Jersey deserves a better political system

As a resident of New Jersey’s Hudson County, I read your piece about Senator Robert Menendez’s indictment on bribery charges (“Senator’s case opens new chapter in infamous county”, Report, October 9) with great sadness.

The party bosses draw their strength from their ability to place their favoured candidate’s name upfront on the ballot for primary elections. Their candidate gets placed in “Column A” while the rest languish in the backwaters hoping the voters will make an effort to find them on the ballot paper. In a heavily blue county, winning the primary as a Democrat ensures a win in the general election. The road to reform has consumed many martyrs who challenged “the machine”. Money is the fuel that powers the system. The source of these funds is typically the incumbents who want to stay in the good books of the party bosses and eventually become bosses themselves. I hope that the crack that has just appeared results in some attention being directed to this issue at the national level. This beautiful part of New Jersey and its residents deserve better.

**Dini Ajmani**  
Hoboken, NJ, US

## Republicans in the House are cowed by Trump

Your leader “The brutal lesson of McCarthy’s ousting” (FT View, October 6) advises the Democrats to make “compromises” with “responsible” Republicans. Would you mind telling your readers who these Republicans are?

Bear in mind that out of 207 Republican members of the US House who took part in the vote to impeach Donald Trump in January 2021, one week before his term expired, 197 voted No. Of the 10 who voted with the Democrats to impeach Trump, eight are no longer in the House.

The simple fact is that the Republican party is cowed by Donald Trump and his Maga (Make America Great Again) supporters. There is no House Republican who can be elected Speaker and then make compromises with the Democrats. Despite your hopeful longings, unicorns still do not exist.

**Guy Wroble**  
Denver, CO, US

## Setting record straight on Singapore’s crackdown

In reference to the question you pose “Can Singapore keep its ‘safe haven’ reputation?” (The Big Read, September 12), Singapore is ranked third in the Global Financial Centres Index 2023, after New York and London. The global Financial Action Task Force has verified we have robust legal and institutional frameworks to tackle money laundering. Indeed, FATF, headquartered in Paris, has appointed a Singaporean, T Raja Kumar, as its president. Singapore’s reputation as a trusted leading global financial hub speaks for itself.

But laws alone do not prevent crime. Legal frameworks must be accompanied by strong detection and swift enforcement. The recent crackdown in Singapore, one of the largest undertaken globally, is testament to our robust anti-money laundering regime.

Contrary to one opposition leader’s claim, which you quote, Singapore did not launch the investigations at the behest of any foreign party. The Singapore Police Force started investigations many months ago.

They identified the suspects through extensive investigations, including analysis of suspicious transaction reports. They initiated investigations because they had reason to believe that offences had been committed in Singapore.

Singapore does not need others to tell us how, when, and against whom we should take action.

We act autonomously to protect Singapore’s reputation as a global financial hub, in accordance with our laws.

**TK Lim**  
Singapore High Commissioner  
London SW1, UK

## Recalling a Hollywood star’s wartime patent

Your review of books on Vienna and Austria by Sam Jones (“Oh, Vienna”, Life & Arts, September 9) opened with the remarkable story of Hedy Lamarr and her Hollywood career.

Given Lamarr’s singular contribution to sexual candour and her sequence of husbands, readers might be forgiven for treating the account of her activity as an inventor with a degree of scepticism.

But readers can check by calling up a much cited US patent attributed to Hedy Kiesler Markey (Hedy Lamarr) and pianist George Antheil which proposed a secure radio link to control torpedoes. The patent was granted in August 1942, but seized from Lamarr because she was an enemy alien.

The design is surrounded by colourful stories as to how Lamarr accosted Antheil to enlist his help. Its key feature is the idea of frequency hopping to secure communications. It is all the more original because it uses digital techniques to change frequency. Digital switching was familiar from Jacquard looms and, in this case, “player pianos”. But it was not current thinking in the analogue world of electronics at the time.

Since then spread-spectrum communications have become widely used in military applications as signals are hard to detect, difficult to intercept and resistant to jamming. This was precisely Lamarr’s idea.

**Jonathan Aylen**  
Salford, UK

## Heroic acts of German linguistic resistance

Amy Kazmin’s entertaining report on the Italians’ use of English to “convey modernity, coolness, technological progress, and status” (Opinion, October 5) reminded me of the situation here in Germany, where (for instance) email attachments get *downgeloadet*. Here too, formulations acceptable in the country’s host language produce comic results, such as the quasi-English slogan for a brand of comfortable German shoes: “Shoes for Actives”.

The alarm of Italians who “want to ban English in any public communications” has historical parallels, such as the French “Loi Toubon” of 1994, a futile attempt to curb the use of anglicisms in documents and advertisements.

The most heroic act of resistance was surely that of Philipp von Zesen, the 17th-century poet who invented German equivalents for French words then in fashion. Some of his coinages were notably unwieldy, such as “*Gesichtserker*” (“facial promontory”) to replace “*Nase*” (from Latin *nasus*, French *nez*, English “nose”).

**Louis Marvick**  
Emeritus Professor of French (University of Nevada, Reno, NV, US)  
Lüneburg, Germany



Opinion

Why is Starmer so underrated?

POLITICS

Janan Ganesh



Since 1980, two people, Tony Blair and David Cameron, have attained the office of UK prime minister at a general election. All the other premiers in that time first got the job as a result of wrangling within their parties in parliament. So if, as polls suggest, voters send Sir Keir Starmer straight from opposition to Downing Street next year, he will be in a class of three over a period of 44 years.

Even this understates the achievement. Blair and Cameron took over parties that were already competitive.

Starmer’s was on a plausible course to extinction. When he became Labour leader in April 2020, the Conservatives had a 22-point poll lead. He himself was a joke figure well into 2021. (Tuning in now and then from Washington, I found the disdain for him almost as vicious as anything in US politics.)

Now? Labour is the probable next government. At worst, it will come very close. Outside Microsoft and Arsenal Football Club, I am at a loss to name an institutional turnaround in recent times so dramatic.

Yet so uncredited. From those who didn’t see Labour’s resurgence coming, there is always a quibble. One is that he got lucky. Come on. He lost the first 18 months of his leadership to a pandemic that made the opposition irrelevant. Also, he had built a double-digit poll lead *before* Liz Truss immolated the Tories’ reputation for economic management in last year’s “mini” Budget.

The other knock is that he lacks a clear vision for Britain. Prepare for a year of ChatGPT2-grade discourse on this theme (“Will the real Keir Starmer please stand up?”). The problem with this line is that it is said of all incoming premiers, including Blair in 1997, whatever the determination of the national folk memory to remember

In the smallness of his plans, the Labour leader reminds Britain how limited its options are

otherwise. “Come this way for a vague new world,” is one representative headline about Blair from that election campaign. The idea that Starmer is uniquely smoke-screening his way to power is ahistorical.

Why is he so under-sung, then? Well, he doesn’t have a “people”. The Labour right mistrust him for going along with the Jeremy Corbyn project until the end. The left hate him for his methodical destruction of them ever since. As a latecomer to politics (he entered parliament at 52, having never worked as a gopher), he strikes people in that insular world, who are often lifers, as alien.

Socially, even, he is hard to place. He is Oxbridge, but also not. He grew up in a working-class home, but in the affluent commuter belt. Where he comes from, the non-London south of England, can be hazy in the mind’s eye of the rest of the country. Northerners sometimes conflate it with London, with which it in fact has a tense relationship, as the Brexit vote bore out.

This personal indistinctness is useful. It allows Starmer to fathom a nation in which lots of people have ambiguous

and changing identities. But it also means that no tribe regards him as theirs. He has no equivalent of the self-made suburbanites who swore by Thatcher, or the post-cold war generation for whom Blair represented deliverance from a stale past. If his political wins don’t elicit due praise, it is because no group feels he is winning for them.

There is another reason he is sold short. In the smallness of his plans, Starmer reminds people how limited Britain’s options are. The nation’s public debt now exceeds its gross domestic product. On one projection, the tax burden is going to reach a postwar high in the next parliament. When a government tried to borrow more for immediate purposes – those tax cuts – the financial markets revolted. The population is ageing, with all that implies for healthcare and pension liabilities. As for reform, Truss, though she continues to buff and polish that brass neck of hers,

wasn’t wrong that Nimbys and public sector unions stand in the way.

At each turn, then, the next government, and perhaps the one after that, will be hemmed in. What is this grand vision for change that Starmer keeps being asked to set out? There isn’t one. There can’t be one. And that, more than anything, is what irks people. Disappointment with Starmer is, in the end, a sublimation of disappointment with Britain.

It is far from clear that he should be prime minister. Had Corbyn won, Starmer would be in his cabinet. That, for now, is too much to put out of one’s mind, let alone forgive. But his worthiness for the office is another column. That he is in contention at all is up there with Brexit, Donald Trump and the rise of Emmanuel Macron as the democratic feat of the past decade.

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The global economy holds up yet limps on

Martin Wolf Economics

Convergence between rich and poor countries is stalling and more challenges lie ahead



The last four years have brought three huge shocks: Covid; post-Covid supply disruption; and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and the subsequent surges in commodity prices. Is this series of vast shocks now over? The deadly assault on Israel and conflict in Gaza suggests that the answer may be “no”. Recent turmoil in bond markets is another mark of persistent lack of predictability.

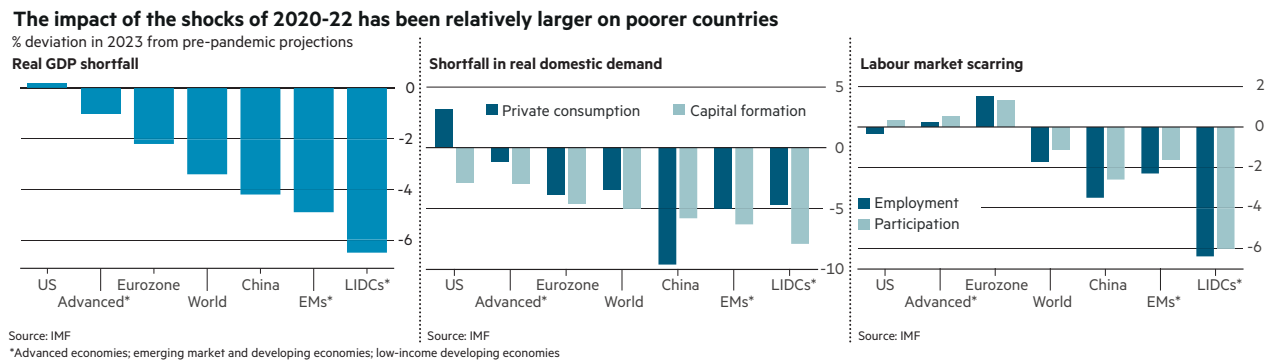
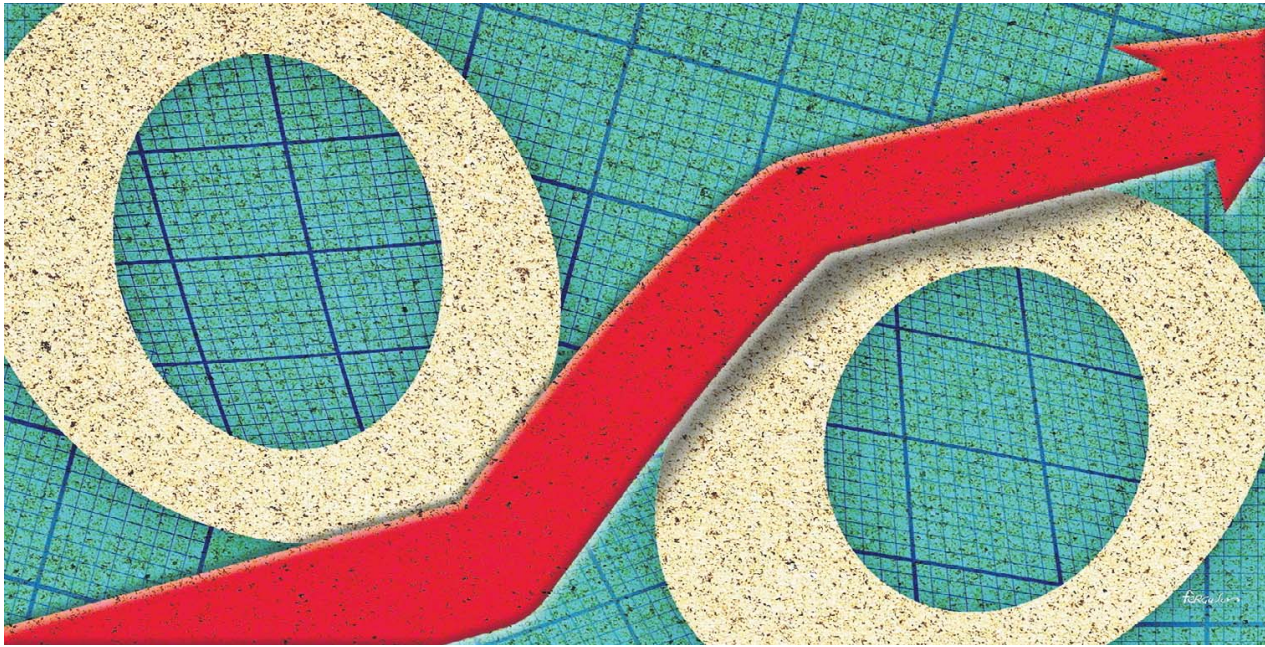
Thus, the carefully prepared analysis of the IMF’s latest World Economic Outlook may already be a bit out of date. Nevertheless, it is, as always, very helpful. What it tells us is both encouraging and disturbing. The world economy has proved resilient, but performance has deteriorated in the longer term, combined with a divergence in the performance of rich and poorer countries relative to expectations. (See charts.)

Start then with resilience. Here are three encouraging developments: the IMF has had no need to make any significant changes to its April forecasts; the financial turbulence of last spring – with the collapse of US regional banks and Credit Suisse – has abated; and, most important, there is growing evidence that inflation may be reduced to target without recessions. Thus, disinflation may prove more “immaculate” than I had expected. The WEO notes that labour markets remain strong in many high-income countries, without evidence of “wage-price spirals”. There is also evidence of “wage

compression”, with lower wages rising relative to higher ones. The WEO suggests this might be due to the amenity value of flexible and remote working for skilled workers: the latter are prepared to work at home for lower pay.

Nevertheless, significant short-term risks remain. One is that China’s property crisis becomes far worse. Another is the possibility of further volatility in commodity prices. Another is that consumption weakens as Covid-era savings become exhausted, especially in the US. Yet another is that inflation proves more resilient than expected: the fact that it seems possible to lower inflation without a recession is not a reason for abandoning the effort prematurely. Finally, fiscal policy will prove more tightly constrained in this new world. Not least it means that developing countries are struggling with expensive debt. Further financial shocks seem likely.

Moreover, and unfortunately, resilience does not imply a good performance. Thus, in 2023, global output will be some 3 per cent lower than was forecast before the pandemic. What is more, these losses are rather small in the high-income countries: in the US, there is even a slight gain. But in emerging and developing countries the impact has been more adverse. This reflects the far greater ability of high-income countries to cope with shocks, relative to the poorer ones, which lack the capacity to create vaccines or borrow money cheaply. As a result, the pandemic, war



in Ukraine and climate shocks have reversed decades-long trends in poverty reduction: according to the World Bank, up to 95mn more people were living in extreme poverty in 2022 than in 2019.

This poor and divergent recent economic performance needs to be put in a longer-term context. The WEO notes that there has been a 1.9 percentage point decline in medium-term global growth prospects from 2008 to 2023 in WEO forecasts. The decline is general.

At worst, the scarring of recent years will prove a harbinger of permanently damaged performance

But it is particularly significant for the developing countries. The expected number of years needed for emerging and developing countries to close half the gap in incomes per head with high-income economies has risen sharply, from 80 years for projections in the April 2008 WEO to about 130 years for projections in April 2023. The glad story of economic convergence is stalling.

There are more long-term difficulties ahead. One is climate: the world experienced its hottest September ever last month after surpassing the previous record by an “extraordinary” 0.5C. Moreover, if real interest rates are going to be permanently higher, as some believe, the conditions for long-term investment and growth will also be permanently worse, just when a huge surge in investment is needed to meet

climate challenges and wider development goals. The fracturing of the world economy, with rising protectionism and intense geostrategic competition, is likely to intensify all this. At worst, the scarring of recent years will prove not just irreversible, but a harbinger of permanently damaged performance.

In the last resort, all these are essentially political problems, which is another way of saying they are almost insoluble. We have the resources and technology to manage them. There is no good reason why so many people should live in such dire circumstances. There is no reason either why we should fail to tackle climate and other environmental challenges. But to do so we need to recognise our common interests, the need for collective action and the imminence of what were until recently

thought to be remote possibilities.

Collectively, we are bad at thinking and acting in sensible ways and, right now, we are getting worse, as the chaos in Washington DC, bad policy choices in China, Russia’s criminal war in Ukraine, the failure to reach any sort of peace between Israel and the Palestinians, and the inability to avoid some of the consequences of the recent shocks for poor countries all show.

At the annual meetings in Marrakech, policymakers need to agree a huge increase in resources for the IMF and the World Bank. Just about everyone knows that. Will that happen? One must very much doubt it. But it should. It is high time for humanity to grow up a little.

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All involved in the Israel-Hamas conflict should heed the warnings of 1982

Kim Ghattas

The siege of Gaza has started and Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu has promised “mighty vengeance”, vowing to “eliminate” Hamas after the horror its militants unleashed on Israel at the weekend. Hamas may be driven out from the Gaza Strip; Netanyahu claims his actions will “change the Middle East”.

There have been four wars between Israel and Hamas since the group violently took over the territory in 2007, each one ending with a return to the untenable status quo. But there are echoes of the summer of 1982, when then defence minister Ariel Sharon vowed to

purge the Palestinian Liberation Organisation from southern Lebanon. He too wanted to change the Middle East.

With a nod and a wink from US secretary of state Alexander Haig, Sharon sent his troops all the way to Beirut, laying siege to the city for two months. Even though the PLO did end up leaving Lebanon, Israel’s first large-scale ground war against a non-state entity was one of its worst strategic blunders. We are still living with the consequences of Sharon’s hubris and Haig’s wink, including the birth of an axis of resistance from Damascus to Tehran.

Israel wanted not only to evict the PLO but also to help install a friendly government in Beirut with which to make peace, while bringing Syria to its knees, and perhaps to the table, by pummelling its armed forces in Lebanon. And all of this without making a single concession to the Palestinians. If Netanyahu thinks this time he can bomb Gaza

and then return to normalisation talks with the Saudis without offering anything substantive to the Palestinians, he would be gravely misreading Riyadh.

The lesson of the past four decades is also that every attempt to wipe out Palestinian armed groups has only produced more extreme iterations

estinian armed groups has only produced more extreme iterations and worse conundrums. Two days after Israel’s invasion of Lebanon, a planeload of Iranian Revolutionary Guards arrived in Damascus and headed to Lebanon’s Bekaa Valley with Syrian president Hafez al-Assad’s blessing. Since Iran arrived in the Levant, it has never

left. Hizbollah – Tehran’s most successful export since the 1979 Iranian revolution – was formed, and with Iran, vowed to evict America from Lebanon and the Middle East. In 1983, the US suffered a devastating blow when suicide trucks blew up first its embassy in Beirut and then the Marine contingent of a US-French multinational Force. President Ronald Reagan pulled out the Marines, briefly keeping US warships off the coast of Lebanon.

Syria bided its time while the Soviets replenished its arsenal, becoming the ultimate arsonist of American plans in the region while posing as a firefighter. Damascus fulfils a different role today as Iran, Hizbollah and Russia maintain a heavy presence on its soil.

With US citizens now among both the dead and the hostages from Hamas’s lightning attack, and a US carrier strike group on its way, America is now involved beyond simply being Israel’s

ally – just as it was in Lebanon, minus the troops on the ground. Israel is seeking revenge, but the US should heed the wider warnings from 1982.

Back then, the Soviets were looking for ways to regain influence in the Middle East, where they had lost considerable ground after Egypt switched sides to become a US ally. The Soviet ambassador in Beirut, Alexander Soldatov, made clear that Moscow was opposed to any American success in the Middle East and worked to scupper the US-brokered deal between Lebanon and Israel. Soldatov also vowed to stop the US getting out of Lebanon safely while the Reagan administration was assisting the anti-Soviet Mujahideen in Afghanistan.

There is no evidence that the Soviets had a hand in the devastating attack against the Marines in October 1983 but agendas aligned from Moscow to Tehran and Damascus. Similarly, there is no evidence that Russia provided any kind of

support for the horror that unfolded in Israel on Saturday and Moscow maintains good ties with Tel Aviv – so far. But anti-American agendas still align, especially while Washington supports Ukraine and is pushing to normalise ties between Israel and Saudi Arabia. Iran has been supplying Moscow with drones. Hamas leaders have made several visits to Russia recently.

At its core, the current conflict is about the longest occupation in modern history, one that leaves the Palestinians dispossessed while Israel quests relentlessly for its security. But the bigger picture is one of regional shifts and global alliances reaching a critical juncture. The danger now is of more strategic blunders that will only perpetuate the violence for years to come.

The writer is author of ‘Black Wave’ and a distinguished fellow at Columbia University’s Institute of Global Politics



