



An explosion thought to have been caused while a tanker was refilling a gas tank, destroyed nearly 80 per cent of the five-star Saratoga hotel in Havana, Cuba. As CRJ went to press, the death toll was reported to be 42, with another 54 injured. Most of the victims were construction workers and staff, as the 19th Century hotel was undergoing renovation works and no guests were on the premises
Reuters | Alexandre Meneghini | Alamy

Urgent action needed on energy

A REPORT ON the state of the global energy transition highlights the action required by private and public sectors to ensure a resilient transition as the world faces the most severe energy crisis since the 1970s. According to the World Economic Forum’s *Fostering Effective Energy Transition 2022*, this is reinforced by high fuel prices, commodities shortages, insufficient headway on achieving climate goals and slow progress on energy justice and access.

Building on ten years of the *Energy Transition Index*, an annual country benchmarking report, this special edition report details key recommendations for governments, companies, consumers and other stakeholders on how to progress the energy transition.

Prioritising a resilient energy transition and diversification of the energy mix are crucial. To accelerate the transition to cleaner energy supply and demand, the report notes that more countries need to make binding climate commitments, create long-term visions for domestic and regional energy systems, attract private sector investors for decarbonisation projects and help consumers and the workforce adjust. There is also a need to protect consumers and ensure affordable access to energy.

Structural barriers to balancing energy affordability, security and availability with sustainability include: Compounded shocks from a post-pandemic surge in energy demand; fuel supply bottlenecks; inflationary pressures; and reconfigured energy supply chains as a result of the war in Ukraine.

Countries must pursue diversification in the domestic energy mix in the long term, and in considering their fuels and energy suppliers in the shorter term, the report concludes.

■ [More details: weforum.org](https://www.weforum.org)

‘Global epicentre of terrorism’

THE GLOBAL TERRORISM Index (GTI) 2022 says that despite global terrorist attacks having increased in number to 5,226 in 2021, deaths declined slightly by 1.2 per cent.

Two thirds of countries recorded no attacks or deaths from terrorism – the best result since 2007 – while 86 countries recorded an improvement on their *GTI* score.

However, the report warns that the Ukraine conflict is likely to drive a rise in traditional and cyber terrorism, reversing previous improvements in the region.

Terrorism in the West declined substantially, with attacks falling by 68 per cent, but Sub-Saharan Africa is home to the world’s fastest growing and most deadly terrorist groups, accounting for 48 per cent of terrorism-related deaths, according to the report.

Four of the ten countries with the largest increases in deaths from terrorism were also in sub-Saharan Africa: Niger, Mali, the DRC and Burkina Faso. Meanwhile, Myanmar had the largest rise in terrorism, with deaths increasing 20 times to 521 in 2021.

“The Sahel has become the new epicentre of terrorism,” the report notes. It continues, saying that: “Terrorism in the region is compounded by high population growth, lack of adequate water and food, climate change and weak governments. Adding to the complexity, many criminal organisations are representing themselves as Islamic insurgencies.”

The annual *Global Terrorism Index*, which is now in its ninth year, is developed by leading international think tank the Institute of Economics and Peace (IEP) and provides the most comprehensive resource on global terrorism trends.

■ [The full GTI 2022 report and interactive map are available at: visionofhumanity.org](https://www.visionofhumanity.org)

Food systems ‘shaken to the core’ by Ukraine war

AS THE WAR in Ukraine pushes food, fuel and fertiliser prices towards record levels, putting food security in many of the world’s poorest countries at risk, the UN’s International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has launched a crisis response initiative to ensure that small-scale farmers in high-risk countries can produce food over the next few months to feed their families and communities, while reducing the threat to future harvests.

“The disruption to global markets is shaking food systems to the core,” said Gilbert F Houngbo, President of IFAD. “This is particularly alarming for countries already grappling with the impacts of climate change and Covid-19, where more people are likely to be pushed further into poverty and hunger.”

The repercussions of the war are being felt most acutely in parts of Africa, the Near East, and Central Asia, but other countries and regions are becoming more affected.

In Somalia, one of the top priority countries for IFAD’s initiative, electricity and transportation costs have spiked since the conflict in Ukraine began. Small-scale farmers relying on irrigation powered by small diesel engines have been affected, compounding the worrying outlook of famine amid a severe drought.

Meanwhile, the ICRC has also reported that the Sahel is experiencing the worst drought in over a decade, pushing more than 10.5 million people into malnutrition. “For Burkina Faso, the situation is particularly worrying as the country reels from the consequences of conflict that are severely aggravating the ongoing food crisis,” it says. Violence has internally displaced more than 1.8 million people, almost ten per cent of the country’s population in a country where 80 per cent rely on agriculture for their livelihoods.

The ICRC and its partners have scaled up their response across ten countries in Africa.



Larba Mathieu Yougbare, an IDP in Burkina Faso, says he and his family were chased out of their village by armed groups. “A person of goodwill,” is allowing him to exploit this piece of land, he told the ICRC, but the lack of rain is leading to a bad harvest
Still from footage taken by ICRC | ICRC.org

Climate: Hopes and hazards for the future

REACHING NET ZERO emissions will only be the beginning of the climate struggle, according to *Pandora’s Toolbox: The hopes and hazards of climate intervention*. The author, Wake Smith, explains that temperatures will remain elevated for centuries after net zero; climate damage will continue to accrue and sea levels will continue to rise.

A lecturer at Yale University, Smith teaches an undergraduate course on climate intervention. He is also a Senior Fellow at Harvard, writing articles on costs, aeronautics and governance of solar geoengineering.

Smith says that reaching net zero cannot be achieved rapidly by emissions reductions alone; we will also need massive carbon removal and storage. The world might also have to reduce incoming solar radiation to lower high temperatures. But unproven and potentially risky climate interventions raise questions of governance and ethics.

Pandora’s Toolbox also offers an introduction to some technologies that could help.

■ *Published by Cambridge University Press, ISBN: 9781316518434, Pandora’s Toolbox will feature in the next edition of the CRJ, in an interview with Wake Smith*

in brief

India: The world’s third largest carbon emitter boosted coal production amid increasing blackouts in the midst of an extreme heatwave. Such accelerated coal production could harm Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s COP26 commitment to meet 50 per cent of energy demand through renewable energy by 2030, in a move that will see its coal needs double by 2040.

Afghanistan: Heavy and unseasonal rainfall caused flash flooding in which at least 13 people died and that affected a further 3,400. More than 1,200 houses were destroyed or damaged.

Nigeria: After a three-storey building collapse that killed at least ten people, the Lagos State Government has announced plans to start the demolition of buildings that have been identified as defective.

Philippines: A bridge gave way during a traffic jam, sending vehicles plunging into the river below and killing at least four people. The bridge, which is in the town of Loay in Bohol Province, had previously been damaged by an earthquake, but was in temporary use while a new bridge was under construction.

Taiwan: The Taiwanese Transportation Board said that unprofessional work site practices and unclear contract stipulations were among the failures surrounding a train crash that killed 49 people and injured 213 in April, 2021. The fatality rate among those with standing tickets was seven times higher than that of passengers with seated tickets, prompting the investigators to advise the board to consider reducing the number of standing tickets it sells on trains.

PEOPLE

CRJ announces staff changes and welcomes two new Members to its Advisory Panel



CLAIRE SANDERS, who has been a stalwart of the Crisis Response Journal, will be leaving us to have a baby. We are sorry to see her go, but are absolutely delighted for her and owe her a debt of gratitude for her calm head, brilliant (and much needed) administration skills, good humour, intelligence and efficiency. We will miss her and wish her all the best for the future.



SUE CHAMBERLAIN will be joining the team. Sue has worked in both the public and the private sector, latterly senior management in higher education professional services, where she managed the teams responsible for the university library's student/academic community-facing services in the built and digital environment. She was also responsible for managing teams to meet the Covid-19 challenge with policy development. Past roles include editorial work, managing conferences and liaising with professional and government agencies, the UK MOD, the European Commission, NATO and the UN. Sue has a long-standing interest and involvement in the crisis response sector, and has previously worked with CRJ Editor-in-Chief Emily Hough in publishing and conferences within the fire and rescue sector. She says: "I am excited to be working with Emily again, having followed the CRJ over the years. Always important, thoughtful, wide-ranging and ahead of the curve – it seems to me that we have never needed this publication more than now."



Professor LUCY EASTHOPE, LLB MSc PhD FHEA FRAI FEPS, is a leading authority on recovering from disaster. For over two decades she has challenged others to think differently about what comes next after tragic events. She is a passionate and thought-provoking voice in the field of emergency planning. During the Covid-19 pandemic, her work became more mainstream. She has advised government departments, corporations, emergency and health services and charities throughout her career. Her new book, *When The Dust Settles*, is a Sunday Times bestseller. She is a Professor in Practice of Risk and Hazard at Durham University, where she co-founded the After Disaster Network. Lucy is also a Fellow in Mass Fatalities and Pandemics at the Centre for Death and Society, University of Bath, and is a Research Associate at the Joint Centre for Disaster Research, Massey University, New Zealand.



MATTHEW PORCELLI, MSc, CPP, F ISRM is a private Security Manager with 15 years of experience in the criminal justice and private security sector. He is a Certified Protection Professional (CPP), holds a Master's degree in Administration of Justice and Security and is a 2019 graduate of the FBI Citizens' Academy. Porcelli volunteers with ASIS International as a Community Vice President and is a global advocate for young security professionals. Porcelli is a Fellow of the Institute of Strategic Risk Management, chairing its New York Chapter.

■ Welcome to Sue, Lucy and Matthew!



Guardian Response 22 is an annual homeland emergency response exercise designed to sharpen skills, boost capability and improve the mission readiness of units assigned to the US DoD's CBRN Response Enterprise. Here, US Army Sergeant Timothy Cannon prepares to move a simulated casualty as part of a decontamination line exercise during Guardian Response 22 at Muscatatuck Urban Training Centre in May, 2022
US Army photo | Sgt Matthew Roberts

Climate change 2022: Mitigation

BETWEEN 2010-2019, AVERAGE annual global greenhouse gas emissions were at the highest levels in human history, although the rate of growth has slowed. However, without immediate and substantial emissions reductions across all sectors, limiting global warming to 1.5°C is beyond reach. But there is increasing evidence of climate action, notes the latest *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)* report.

"We are at a crossroads. The decisions we make now can secure a liveable future. We have the tools and know-how required to limit warming," said IPCC Chair Hoesung Lee.

The report says that many sectors must at least halve emissions by 2030; this will involve major transitions in the energy sector and reducing emissions in industry.

Cities and other urban areas offer significant opportunities for reducing emissions, including in established, rapidly growing and new cities.

These can be achieved through lower energy consumption (such as by creating compact, walkable cities), electrification of transport in combination with low-emission energy sources, and enhanced carbon uptake and storage by making use of natural solutions.

Agriculture, forestry and other land use can also provide large-scale emissions reductions and remove and store carbon dioxide at scale. However, such land measures cannot compensate for delayed emissions reductions in other sectors, according to the report.

In the assessed scenarios, limiting warming to around 1.5°C requires global greenhouse gas emissions to peak before 2025 at the latest, and be reduced by 43 per cent by 2030; methane would need to be reduced simultaneously by about a third. Even if this is achieved, the report says it almost inevitable that this temperature threshold will be exceeded temporarily, but could return to below it by the end of the century.

"It's now or never, if we want to limit global warming to 1.5°C (2.7°F)," said a spokesperson. "Without immediate and deep emissions reductions across all sectors, it will be impossible."

■ The Summary for Policymakers of the IPCC Working Group III report, *Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of climate change, is the third instalment of the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report (AR6), which will be completed this year. More info from: ipcc.ch*

Health risks of wildfires to communities

LIVING NEAR REGIONS prone to wildfires may boost the risk of developing lung cancer and brain tumours, says a study from McGill University in Canada, which tracked more than two million Canadians over a 20-year period.

The research shows that people living within 50 km of wildfires over the past ten years had a ten per cent higher incidence of brain tumours and 4.9 per cent greater incidence of lung cancer, compared with people living further away.

Wildfires typically occur in similar regions each year, so people living in

nearby communities might be exposed to carcinogenic wildfire pollutants on a chronic basis. In addition to their effects on air quality, wildfires also pollute aquatic, soil and indoor environments. While some pollutants return to normal concentrations shortly after the fire has stopped burning, other chemicals, including heavy metals and hydrocarbons, might persist in the environment for long periods of time.

■ Long-term exposure to wildfires and cancer incidence in Canada: a population-based observational cohort study, *The Lancet Planetary Health: doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196(22)00067-5*

Curbing the long-term risks of Covid-19 on a global level

THE WORKING PAPER, *A global strategy to manage the long-term risks of Covid-19*, is calling for a more comprehensive and integrated pandemic response from the international community.

Published by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), in partnership with the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), the Global Fund and Wellcome Trust, the paper says that ending the pandemic everywhere remains an urgent economic, health

and moral priority for the world.

The paper estimates that it will cost an additional \$10 billion a year to ensure adequate global pandemic preparedness.

Jeremy Farrar, Director, Wellcome Trust, noted that: "The response must be built on international co-operation. Only by working together can leaders achieve long-lasting and sustainable recovery from Covid-19 and prepare for the epidemic and pandemic threats of tomorrow."

■ www.imf.org

Market fire in Somalia

A FIRE SO large that it took 16 hours to bring under control, destroyed up to 2,000 shops and stalls in the town of Hargeisa, Northern Somalia.

According to the Somaliland Fire Protection, the blaze was the worst experienced in decades, and the Ethiopia Somali region fire department assisted with support in operations.

"The town has never witnessed such a massive calamity," Hargeisa's mayor, Abdikarim Ahmed Mooge, told reporters. "This place was the economic centre of Hargeisa and even though the firefighters did their best to contain the fire, the market is destroyed." *The Guardian* says the mayor added that the blaze could have been brought under control before causing such extensive damage but that the firefighters' efforts were hampered by access problems.

Most houses in the nearby area were constructed from light materials, such as iron sheets and tarpaulins, set amid tall concrete buildings, according to an IFRC report. Sixty-two people were rescued and 28 were severely injured but, as the fire broke out on a weekend, no deaths were reported. However, the blaze caused immense property and financial loss, affecting more than 12,000 people.



Rescuers working at the site of a missile strike in the southern Ukrainian city of Odesa in May, 2022. The State Emergency Service of Ukraine said that a shopping centre and three warehouses were hit by shelling. See p52 for the CRJ's feature on Ukraine
State Emergency Service of Ukraine | Shutterstock