

# GLOBAL.

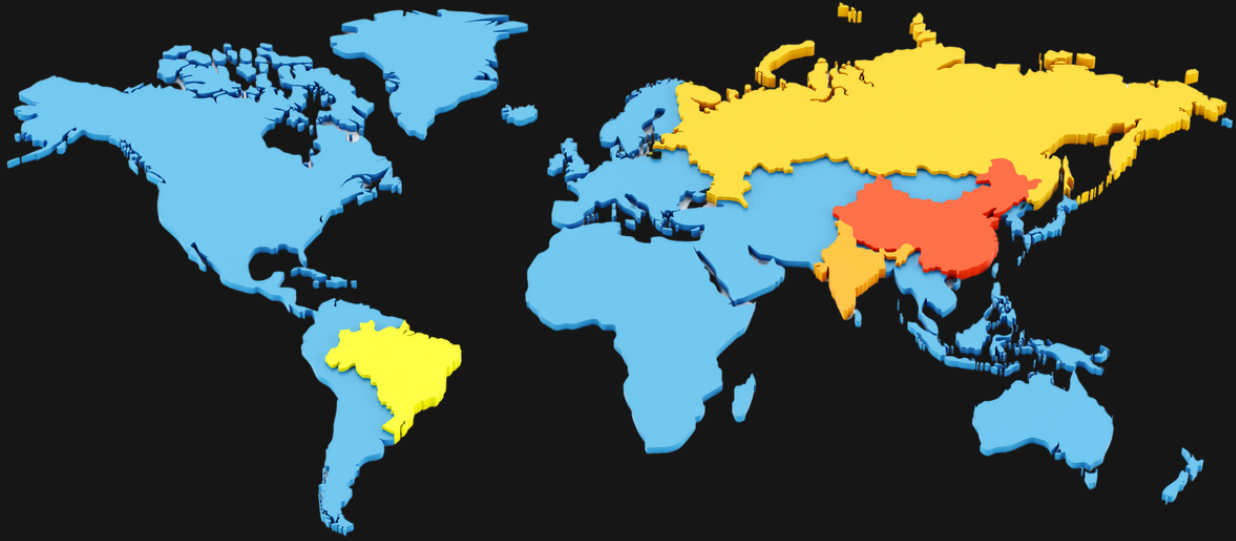
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NEWSLETTER

OUR WORLD IS COMPLICATED. YOUR NEWS SHOUDL'NT BE.

*An Ever Shifting World*





## Nº4.

*This week on GLOBAL. we are discussing the shifting geopolitical environment on the GLOBE. Whether its the struggling ICRC, an identity crisis in Hong Kong, a new mega-city in Nigeria, or the resurgence of Empires, it has become clear that our GLOBE is shifting evermore away from the traditional western bloc to a new BRICS led grouping around the world.*

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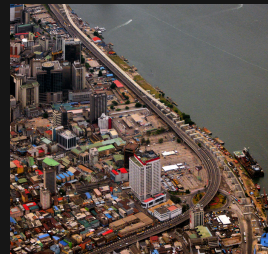
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# AFRICA'S MOST TUMULTUOUS REGION

BY: AUSTIN WALLACE

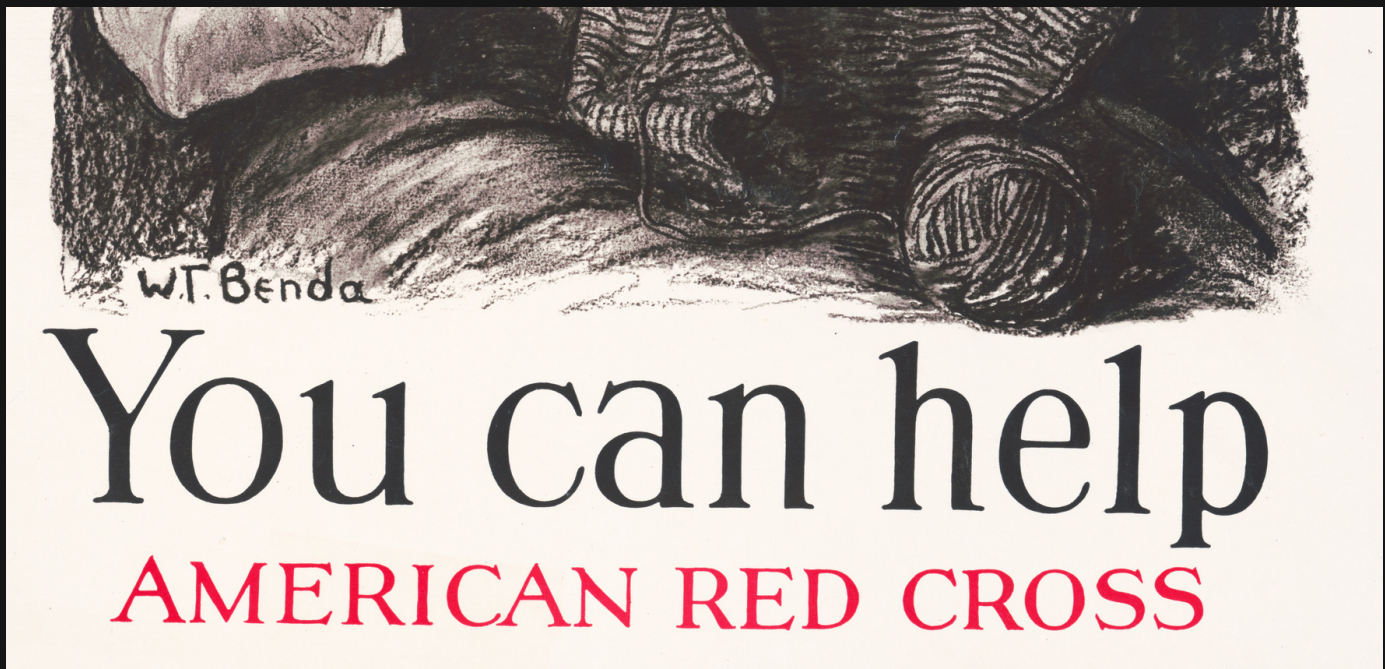


2023-2024 has been a challenging time for humanitarian agencies. Faced with enormous criticism, declining bank accounts, and lackluster support from countries globally, international agencies like the ICRC have seen enormous downturns in investments, support, and even respect. Where this leads and how it might get out of this current rut is vital to understanding how other groups like the UN might do the same.

It is important to remember that the work of the ICRC is different from that of other major international agencies within the same scope. The Geneva-based organization of the ICRC states their global purpose is "...helping people affected by conflict and armed violence and promoting the laws that protect victims of war. An independent and neutral organization, its mandate stems essentially from the Geneva Conventions 1949." (ICRC, 2024). This mandate, while similar to the UN and Medicines Du Monde, is radically differentiated by the fact that the ICRC is a neutral party that does not arrest (typically) political dissidents, use the military to enforce the rule of law or utilize partnerships with private companies to push issues globally. Instead, the organization relies on donations and country support for its ideals. Therefore, the ICRC promotes humanitarian actions, typically medical-based, to help keep human development growing or stabilize it. All other enforcement actions usually turn over to the UN and various national bodies. For this reason, the ICRC has maintained a relative balance of neutrality and upholds immunity in most countries globally (ICRC, 2024).

*However, the War in Ukraine, the conflict in Haiti, the War in Gaza, and various conflicts around the world have shifted the global view on organizations like the ICRC and the UN. For the first time in decades, the international community started withholding support for humanitarian and intergovernmental organizations (Le Monde, 2023; ICRC, 2024). It showed a massive geopolitical shift to authoritarianism and isolationism. Now, countries worldwide partner with nations like China or Russia for their developmental and security needs. As NATO, the UN, the Commonwealth, and the ICRC grow evermore irrelevant, bodies within Geneva have begun to work on plans to fix the organization's future.*





The current situation for the ICRC is dire. "Swiss government as the natural extension of its policy of neutrality, which has been under fire since the start of the war in Ukraine. The crisis at the ICRC thus comes at a very bad time for Swiss diplomacy, which has, for decades, supplied the ranks of its senior management. In reality, the ICRC, which is the depositary of the Geneva Conventions, has a huge financial hole. It needs 430 million Swiss francs (€441 million) to balance its budget for 2023. This deficit has more than doubled over the past 10 years, from 1.18 billion francs in 2012 to 2.84 billion in 2022. As a very immediate consequence, the ICRC has announced that it will have to make massive cuts in its workforce: 1,800 out of its 22,700 employees worldwide will be let go." (Le Monde, 2023). This presents a massive problem. The ICRC is in massive debt, cannot secure funding, is losing international credibility, and has now become a victim of the global trend that is killing the UN. In response to these issues, the ICRC developed a new master plan for 2024 -2027, "A compass for action for the next four years." (ICRC, 2024). This new action plan identified significant challenges such as a rise in isolationism and violence, a rise in new technologies that can be used for violent means such as AI, climate change accelerating land human disasters, and mass funding shortages (ICRC, 2024). They plan to uphold the protectionism of the innocent and remain a neutral party, promote humanitarian law, enhance their response and the time it takes to respond, affirm their neutral identity overall, and create a new and credible humanitarian role globally (ICRC, 2024).

These moves come about: "Worried that the current situation of spiraling costs and growing humanitarian needs might continue, the aid group sector is trying to reinvent itself. The political situation in the United States, the world's biggest donor, is a particular cause for concern – as is the potential for a recession due to a stalemate in the war in Ukraine." (France 24, 2023). These global political issues threaten the global landscape of international humanitarianism, and these five changes are the hope the world needs for these vital organizations to continue. It is important to note that the UN also has a similar plan. Essentially, they are sticking to their traditional viewpoints but sprucing it up for the 21st century. It is a much-needed overhaul, some would argue. However, as the West and other nations glide ever closer toward isolationism and radical conservatism, it is unclear whether the traditional liberal order of organizations can survive the half-century.

**GLOBAL.**

**IT'S COMING...**

**THE GLOBAL. STORE**

**4.25.2024**

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# THE REBIRTH OF EMPIRE

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*BY: AUSTIN WALLACE*

Since the dawn of civilization, nations of immense size and stature have risen to conquer others and exploit the resources of the defeated. These grand empires make marks on history so significant that even thousands of years after their rule, they remain relevant parts of the socio-cultural framework of our world. From Ancient Rome to Ancient Egypt, the Parthians, Mongols, British, Spanish, Americans, Soviets, Mayans, the Songhai, and Ancient China, empires have built and destroyed our world. They have brought advancements to human society and destroyed social constructs, pushing people back centuries. In recent memory, the grand empires of Europe were by far the most extensive and successful in size and wealth. The UK, Spain, and France essentially crafted the modern world through violent conquests, social restructuring, technological advancements, and economic control. Their relevance as empires remains essential today. Their reigns ended within the 20th century as the world progressed to a new stage of independence, liberal freedoms, and human rights protections alongside the UN. Despite this, imperial states like Russia and China have recently regained notoriety for their aggressive economic and military attacks globally.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, the USA remained the sole superpower globally. It retained a sort of power dedicated historically only to other empires. During this brief period of American hegemony, other states, like the newly restored Russia and resurgent China, began to look towards the future and take hold of it. China, in particular, has indeed become the only competitor to the USA in today's society. Other significant players like France, Russia, India, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Brazil, and the UK retain lesser roles, although significant as the great powers. This new global system has emerged as new alliances are being forged in the ashes of proxy wars and minor armed conflicts globally. With the War in Ukraine, Gaza Conflict, Haiti's conflict, Sudan's War, the Mali War, China's Neo-colonialism in Africa, and the foundation of the BRICS, the world appears to now be shifting away from Western domination (the cradle, 2024)

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*A New Age*



For decades, the USA, EU, Japan, CANZUK, and the UK controlled the entire global economic and geopolitical sphere of influence. However, the rise of BRICS has meant that this order is slowly crumbling. Whether it is the conspiracies of the "New World Order," Russia saying, "...Dmitry Peskov told reporters on Monday that while he agrees on the need for a "new world order," he does not believe the US should be at the helm. Any new system should be "free from the concentration of all mechanisms of world governance in the hands of one state," he said." (Aljazeera, 2023), or the growth of the BRICS its become clear a new rival to the age-old NATO and Western global alliance has grown. China has used this new change to be the dominant player on the world stage. "Humanity is once again at a crossroads," said the 5,400-word Chinese proposal, which calls for greater multilateralism in international affairs with a reformed United Nations and an expanded Security Council at its core." (VOA, 2023). This dynamic at the UN has also been supplemented by American attempts to shift it to their side. Despite the best efforts of the West, forces within and outside are shifting it with or without them. This paints a daunting future for liberalism, democracy, and human rights. With the UN, ICRC, NATO, and various other Western blocs declining and China and Russia rising again, it has become clear that our world in the following decades may be unrecognizable.



# SUSTAINABILITY PLEDGE



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# IS HONG KONG LIBERATED OR OCCUPIED?

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*BY: AUSTIN WALLACE*



Hong Kong is one of the most interesting cases in history. This enclave is smaller than most urban cities on Earth, and it is neither a part of China nor independent. Its design and background are marred by bloody British colonial war and reinvented by British liberalism in the late 20th century, only to be shockingly and quickly reformed into China's symbol of its semi-capitalist and communist political and economic rule. This complex history means that the identity surrounding Hong Kong's current political situation is unclear and divided.

"Hong Kong is on its back heels. Its economy has been floundering. Its stock exchange has been mired in a wrenching bear market. There has been a major exodus of talent. It is caught in the crossfire of the U.S.-China conflict. And its political strings are under the ever tighter control of its masters in Beijing. A perfect storm shows no sign of abating. For those of us personally attached to Hong Kong, the recent confluence of adverse developments has been especially painful to watch." (TheWireChina, 2024). Hong Kong is currently experiencing a massive recession, which a lot of China is experiencing. It is failing to be the most significant economic zone of the country. Under British rule, Hong Kong was one of the most essential parts of the British Empire and its ability to control China's economy. Today, it looks like a modernized relic of that antiquated British belief that an enclave with a port could be the center of China.





These economic issues have brought up a significant problem, the 1997 Hong Kong handover. The handover was one scene that marked the end of the empire and embodied the end of the global decolonization era. However, Hong Kong's residents have been experiencing a shocking nostalgia for the British and the pro-democracy rule of the past. "Patten's appearance capped a string of events that had drawn activists, former lawmakers, and exiles to London for a week of lobbying, commemoration, and nostalgia for the protest movement. It was a remarkable scene, the aging head of a former imperial power emphatically cheered by former subjects who had fled their ostensibly decolonized homeland. Most of the Hong Kongers at the London event, a show of hands revealed, had arrived in the United Kingdom after the British government had broken with long-standing immigration policy to welcome them in. Many seeking refuge in the seat of the former empire have done so because it allows them to live and outwardly express an identity that Beijing is intent on stamping out as it imposes its own form of colonial rule and imperialist tendencies." (The Atlantic, 2022). This move has shocked many globally; it is not often that people have nostalgia quite so devout for their former colonial ruler. In this scenario, the pro-democracy violations, mass arrests, and the re-engineering of the election system have pushed many to revel in the time of democratic peace and freedoms in the later part of British Colonial rule (TheAtlantic, 2022).

The future of Hong Kong is uncertain but seems precarious. As many like Jimmy Lai and others remain arrested or murdered, Beijing has proven its ability to crack down on democratic views and wait out the 2047 mandate date when it is allowed to control Hong Kong fully. Whether or not Hong Kong will last till 2047 and remain an enclave is unknown, but without a doubt, Hong Kong will be altered for the future (BBC, 2022, WSJ, 2024). Those alterations look evermore controlling and authoritarian by Beijing, showing a potentially dark and unknown future for the people of Hong Kong.



# LAGOS - AFRICA'S MEGA-CITY

*BY: AUSTIN WALLACE*

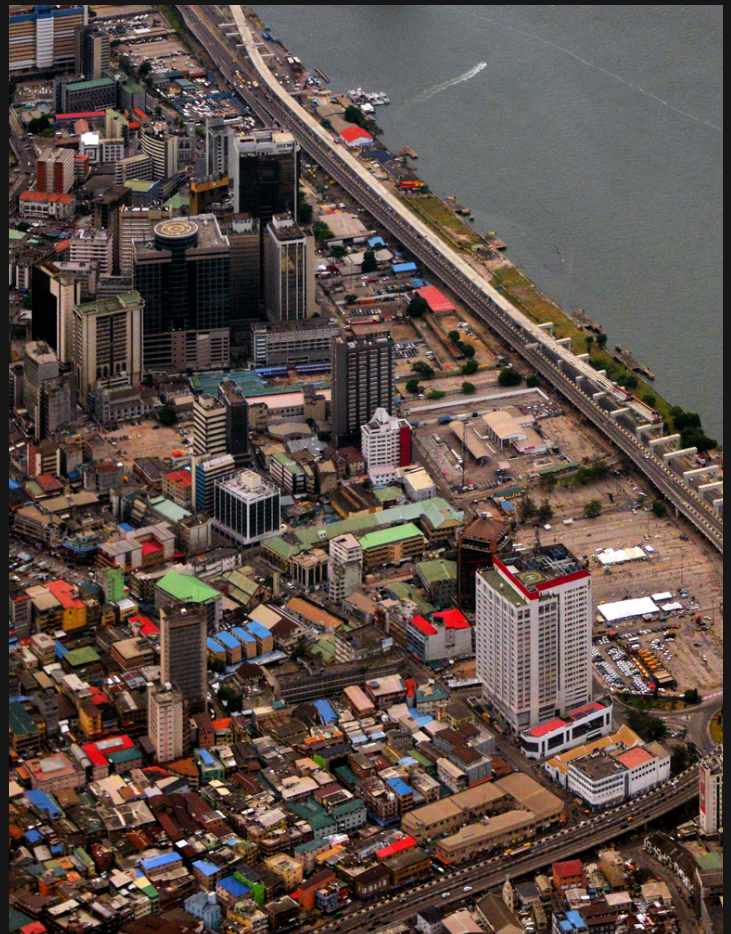
Alongside Africa's Western coastline, is one of the largest megacities on Earth. It stretches across Nigeria's coast and has over 24 million residents. It is a testament to Nigeria's rapid economic and medical growth over the past 40 years. Even more than this, it is a monument to the power of Africa's developmental future. "...Lagos is Nigeria's economic powerhouse, making it a destination for people seeking new opportunities. But that rapid growth creates pressure on the streets, and the environment." (BBC, 2021). Lagos is the center of a new African development that has seen cities across the continent pop up to megacity status in the last 20 years. From Cairo to Lagos to Cape Town, these economic zones have shown Africa's grand capability to grow far and beyond their colonial restrictions, but they have also shown a worrying push on the environment and the people within.



"While the overall climate in Lagos is expected to see less rainfall overall with climate change, the intensity of rain is expected to increase, bringing with it greater risk of flooding. Meanwhile, the low-lying city is also particularly vulnerable to water from another source: rising seas. If global warming exceeds 2C, the city is predicted to see 90cm of sea level rise by 2100, according to research led by marine physicist Svetlana Jevrejeva, of the UK's National Oceanography Centre." (BBC, 2021). With Lagos experiencing the woes of climate change firsthand, it is essential to remember that the government's perspective on this issue is very divided. Part of what has made Lagos so rich is its urban expansion, cheap and unregulated industrial standards, and growing labor force. Climate change is seen as a potential threat to the economic power of Lagos, and many in Africa feel this is another example of uneven distribution of the burden of climate change. "Why does the West get to pollute, but we do not?" (BBC, 2021). It is a complex problem for one of the largest cities on Earth, but it is only a part of a larger story.

Lagos is also seen as the epicenter of West African music and cultural exchange. Its expanse has meant the world has taken notice and invested billions in its multitude of studios for film and music. It is an example of Africa's crown jewel of pop cultural movements. "Lagos is Nigeria's capital of culture, finance and entertainment. It is the laboratory of two of Nigeria's major cultural exports: music (including Afrobeat) and cinema (Nollywood). Afrobeat songs chart high on the Billboard Hot 100; Nollywood is the world's second-largest movie industry by output. Even as a boy growing up in northern Nigeria, hundreds of miles away, the city was my reality. Like most Nigerians, it informed my identity – culturally, linguistically, philosophically." (NYT, 2024). Lagos has seen tremendous growth in its cultural influence globally, but with Western influence, mainly British, often covering this up, Nigerians are beginning to rethink their relationship with the world. With Chinese investment growing, Russian influence sparking, and British power waning, Nigeria has also become a political powerhouse in its own right.

Long after British rule, Nigeria became one of the epicenters of African politics. However, it reignited a close relationship with the UK, one of its largest trade partners and military allies. As a part of the British Commonwealth, it enjoyed the many benefits of the Anglo-sphere but also began to experience the desire for true freedom from England. The rise of China in Africa provided a unique opportunity to align with other powers. "Unfortunately, Nigeria is also beset with corruption, human rights violations, a violent insurgency waged by Boko Haram in the northeast, and an armed rebellion in the oil-rich Niger Delta. Under these conditions, Nigeria has sought neutrality on Ukraine and aims to deepen relations with China and the United States to the greatest extent possible to serve its interests." (Carnegie, 2023). These interests are at the epicenter of Lagos's desire to become the world's supercity, but it remains unclear where these interests lie. Will it win its war in the north against terrorism, redevelop climate change, protect human rights, remain neutral globally, or retain the ancient English economic cooperation is unclear. However, Lagos's future remains steadily optimistic as it grows into Africa's most potent epicenter.





PODCAST.



## CRISPR and Crime

By: Nicholas Sims

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2.0



FEEL **GOOD** FRIDAY

*This Week is CRISPR and Crime.*

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HOW WAR WAS REFINED AFTER  
WW2, SUPERSONIC FLIGHT  
FOR THE FUTURE, WHY  
GENOCIDE IS HARD TO PROVE?

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