

**186**  
DECEMBER  
2017

## THE WORLD IN 2018: Ten issues that will shape the international agenda\*

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**F**or some years now we have felt a crisis was coming in the world order, but in 2018 the symptoms will emerge with greater frequency and intensity. Three contributing factors will be:

*Power vacuums.* The United States is withdrawing from certain spaces that other actors look eager to fill. The abandonment of its multi-lateral commitments and "America First" rhetoric are not read as signs of strength but expressions of weakness.

*The fourth industrial revolution.* Accelerated technological change is already resulting in a redistribution of power at global level and changing the foundations on which the economic and social orders of the most developed economies are based. Feelings of vertigo and vulnerability are growing in certain parts of the population and, with them, the temptation to withdraw.

*Digital vulnerability.* Technological changes require spaces to be governed that were either previously ungoverned or yet to be discovered. The US decision to end net neutrality poses new questions. Individuals, corporations and even states feel "cyber-vulnerable".

The calendar also invites us to reflect on the validity, durability and composition of the world order. One hundred years have passed since the First World War, which marked the beginning of the end of a Euro-centric world order. In 2018, it will be seventy years since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted, the World Health Organization (WHO) was created and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) came into force. All are pieces of what has come to be called the liberal order, which was built on a Western matrix and associated with US pow-

**US withdrawal, the redistribution of power at global level and accelerated technological change are three factors that will contribute to the crisis in the world order.**

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**The prospect of having to pay more interest on debt will raise the pressure on taxation.**

**The concerns of the global middle classes will not be homogeneous. Europeans and Americans will feel more vulnerable than the new Asian and African middle class.**

**Local political leaders are demanding to be more than mere managers and implementers of policies adopted by central governments.**

**Between a supposed fortress and the countries of origin a wide (and often lethal) moat will be dug to stop migrants and refugees reaching their destination.**

**In the multiple elections in the Americas in 2018, the middle classes will be those who end up tipping the balance.**

**It is not only the world order that is in question, so too are regional orders and even social contracts in many parts of the planet.**

er. It began to crack, politically, fifteen years ago with the war in Iraq, and economically with the fall of Lehman Brothers ten years ago.

## 1. Connectivity and the world order

Ensuring control over the means of transporting goods and information has become a strategic priority that is at least as important as territorial control, if not more so. In economic terms, the ownership and control of means of transport will soon be as vital as that of the means of production. In 2018, we will see how the ambitious Belt and Road Initiative led by China develops. This integrated land and sea transport network connects a vast Afro-Eurasian space more closely and, alongside the likely completion in 2018 of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (an Asia-Pacific trading space with a fully integrated China), illustrates Beijing's geo-economic vision.

Afro-Asian dynamics condition European and North American policies more than the reverse. We are witnessing an inversion of the geopolitical and geo-economic power inherited from Bretton Woods. China's ambition will provoke suspicion in the United States, which had got used to playing a hegemonic role in the international order and which still retains

## Afro-Asian dynamics condition European and North American policies more than the reverse.

primacy in the military sphere.

The Korean Peninsula will be in the news in 2018 not just for hosting the Winter Olympics, but will be one of the main epicentres of global tension throughout the year. Kim Jong-un will manoeuvre with his eye on preserving power, China will seek to maintain the status quo and the United States will attempt to reassert itself as the hegemonic power in military terms. The provocations will intensify and so, therefore, will the fears of a nuclear accident.

## 2. Taxes, middle classes and the welfare state

Ten years have already passed since the last great financial crisis broke out. The fall of Lehman Brothers reached Europe in the form of the sovereign debt crisis. The European Central Bank (ECB), in the hands of Mario Draghi, promised back then to do "whatever it takes" to preserve the euro. And barring last minute surprises, in 2018 the ECB will fulfil its promise to gradually restrict its programme of sovereign bond purchase (PSPP), which will fall from €60bn a month to €30bn. The prospect of having to pay more interest on the debt will raise the pressure on taxation. The sense of urgency will grow with the confirmation of underlying trends in the automation and digitalisation of the economy that may place yet more pressure on certain strangulated welfare states. To this may be added the indignation that would be provoked by the techniques individuals and large companies use to evade taxes.

During the first quarter of 2018 we will see whether Apple pays the taxes in dispute with the Irish tax authorities and how the European Commission continues the fight against financial engineering abuses by the large multinationals. And, as the year progresses, it is quite likely that the media will uncover new scandals like the Paradise Papers. Some leaders will be prepared to make a cause of this issue to attract the support of the middle classes. But if the financial framework and organised crime feel that their safe havens are insecure, rather than giving up they will explore alternative means like returning to the use of cash, safe haven assets like gold, primary materials and property, and will continue to inflate speculative bubbles like Bitcoin.

The concerns of the global middle classes will not be homogeneous. Europeans and Americans will feel more vulnerable than the new Asian and African middle classes, probably because they have more to lose. In 2018, the displacement of political and economic power in emerging economies towards the middle classes will continue. This will encourage consumption but will also intensify the climate challenge and the management of the frustration of all those who feel excluded from these growth dynamics.

## 3. An urban order

In recent decades, we have seen an apparently unstoppable process of population, wealth and power concentrating in urban and metropolitan areas. But the planet's great challenges also affect cities. Poverty, exclusion, violence and climate change are phenomena with a growing urban dimension. In this context, the number of local political leaders demanding to be more than mere managers and implementers of policies adopted by central governments is rising. They seek to influence the main global agendas around sustainable development, aware that the solution to the large global problems begins at local level. Their challenge will be to make the systems of global governance recognise cities as interlocutors in their own right, permitting them to participate in major political negotiations, such as those relating to climate change and the migration agenda.

2018 will also be the year of the effective localisation of the 2030 Agenda. We will see how local and metropolitan governments align their development strategies with the Sustainable Development Goals and implement the New Urban Agenda. Tensions between local authorities and central governments may also make the news in 2018. The mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, could intensify his opposition to Brexit. European cities will demand better responses to the refugee crisis and will do so through networks such as Refugee Cities. In the United States, local authorities will take measures to meet the commitments of the Paris Summit despite the United States leaving the agreement, and "sanctuary cities" such as New York, Chicago, Philadelphia and New Orleans that refuse to apply federal immigration laws in their areas will continue to proliferate. At a global level, the call for civic rights and the right of establishment may come into conflict with other paradigms centred on the nation and nationality.

To the tensions between cities and central governments it is necessary to add another fault line that may emerge at global level. Some territories feel abandoned due to the clout of global cities: these are rural areas, small and medium-sized cities far from the drivers of growth, and industrial areas with failed reconversion processes. Some of these areas will be fertile soil for populist and anti-establishment forces (if they are not already), while in others mobilisations and new forms of political action with transformative power may arise.

#### 4. From the fortress to the moat

Fortress Europe has been spoken of for many years. And with some variations, it also relates to the migration policies of the United States and Australia. But it is an inadequate image to reflect how migration flows will be governed in 2018. Between this supposed fortress and the countries of origin a wide (and often deadly) moat is being dug to stop migrants and refugees reaching their destination. The condemnation and lamentations for what happens in these moats will not be enough to change the direction of the migration policies, and though the flows will not fall they will be redirected and will face more obstacles. Walls and fences will be built and surveillance mechanisms set up in areas ever more distant and difficult for journalists and humanitarian organisations to cover.

Though humanitarian emergencies will accumulate throughout the year, in 2018 migration flows will continue to undermine international commitments to the internationally displaced. The Geneva framework will not be buried but it will be repeatedly ignored. Despite this, in September at the United Nations the *Global Compact on Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration* will be negotiated and approved, which will attempt to set certain standards and bring a degree of order to an issue that has been at the centre of the global agenda for years. Donald Trump has announced his withdrawal from the negotiations. But notwithstanding that, a multilateral agreement will be made, and everything holds up on paper, especially good intentions. There will be two orders of migration: the formal, based on some minimal commitments and drained of political will; and the everyday, which will be ever more fragmented and reactive.

#### 5. Terrorism: without a territory but with a project

Everybody is clamouring to proclaim the Islamic State's (IS) defeat, but the disappearance of their proto-state in Syria and Iraq will not mean their death as a movement. Much less the end to the terrorist attacks perpetrated in their name or in those of other organisations in the Al-Qaeda constellation which may think the time has come to fill the vacuum IS leaves. In 2017 all limits were exceeded, with some of the bloodiest attacks in recent history such as those in Moga-

dishu and at the Sinai mosque, which claimed 512 and 309 lives, respectively. For the most part, attacks in 2018 will continue to be characterised by their relatively low cost and by being carried out autonomously, sometimes a long way from conflict scenarios. One of the great concerns for the intelligence services and the police will be what to do with returning fighters and the surveillance of traditional recruitment methods will be stepped up.

In 2018 we will also see some governments and leaders in the Middle East attempt to flex their muscles in the wake of the Islamic State's territorial defeat and use it to raise their popularity among their people and their acceptance in the international community. President Sisi will step up a campaign to eradicate jihadist groups in the Sinai with an eye on Egypt's presidential elections (first half of the year). His campaign will be built around the rationale "it's me or chaos". In Iraq's elections on May 12th, Haider al-Abadi will stand as the man who took back Mosul and defeated the Islamic State organisation, as well as the man who halted the independence of Iraqi Kurdistan and who is willing to introduce institutional and social reforms. Bashar al-Assad, along with those who have supported him over the more than six years of war, will ramp up the rhetoric claiming that in reality they were fighting the terrorism that is now coming to an end.

### The ownership and control of means of transport looks like being as vital as that of the means of production

#### 6. (Dis)information as a political weapon

Producing fake news is cheap and quick; checking information is expensive and time-consuming. The manipulation of information to undermine or neutralise adversaries is nothing new. What is new is the realisation that democratic systems are the most vulnerable to it. Until now it seemed that those with most to fear from the proliferation of information channels were authoritarian regimes. But fear has changed sides, and when there are elections on the horizon, the fears multiply.

In 2018, the political risk in Europe will have an Italian aroma and the Kremlin will still be seen as a destabilising force. Three factors will converge: Italy, the third-largest economy in the eurozone, will go to the ballot boxes in the first half of the year, its migration crisis is easily exploitable from populist positions, and contacts between politicians sympathetic to Vladimir Putin and the Cinque Stelle and Lega Nord have been strengthened. Far from being an exclusively European issue, information poisoning will overwhelm other electoral settings, and in many cases the poisoners will be domestic actors. Episodes of this kind will be arise in the US mid-term elections (November 6th) as well as in the elections in Colombia (May 27th). The 2016 plebiscite on the peace agreement there already showed the impact the use of (dis)information can have.

## 7. European leadership and transition in the European order

It is not just the world order that is being rearranged, so is the European. 2018 will be a year of transition. First, because we will see whether Angela Merkel and Emmanuel Macron have their leaderships consolidated in their respective countries and whether, from this position, they can give a renewed boost to the Franco-German motor. President Macron needs to consolidate a package of reforms at national level to gain impetus as an emerging leader at global as well as European level. Chancellor Merkel must stabilise German politics after months of unexpected uncertainty. While Spanish and Catalan politics have been seen as an unforeseen risk by many European capitals over the past year, the Italian elections have for some time occupied a place on the agenda of potentially destabilising elements. All the more so given how, compared to other European societies, since Brexit the satisfaction with and desire to remain part of the EU has risen least in Italy.

In 2018 we will also find out whether the United Kingdom's exit will be orderly. With an eye on the signing of the exit agreement (predicted for October), the main features of the

## European cities will demand better responses to the refugee crisis and will do so through networks such as Refugee Cities

future relationship between the United Kingdom and the European Union will be discussed. At this point the temperature will be taken of a climate which, if it is constructive, would involve a win-win agreement between London and Brussels and the reform of the European integration project after Brexit. If this coincides with a period when leaderships favouring greater integration are strengthened, and the economic recovery of the countries on Europe's periphery continues, the foundations will be laid for the post-crisis Europe. 2018 will mark a decade since the global economic crisis broke out. Will this be remembered as the ten-year crisis or can we not call it over yet?

## 8. The Gulf: regional scale, global risk

As the fight against the Islamic State organisation goes to a second plane, the Saudis will present Iran as a global threat. If only because of their geographical position and the central role they play in energy production and trade, any escalation of tensions between the two countries becomes a disruptive factor with global dimensions. Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MbS) of Saudi Arabia will continue to change the balances in his country but also in the region as a whole. MbS is prepared to take risks, as we have seen with the war in Yemen, the boycott of Qatar, the calling to order of Hariri and the purges in the royal family. Nothing suggests MbS will stop in 2018. He is tireless and impulsive.

Iran will have no incentive to lower its profile as a rising power, and Saudi Arabia will neither give in nor be rebuked by the United States with sufficient force. Riyadh could tar-

get Hezbollah, which has been weakened by the effort of the Syrian war. But for that it would need the support of Israel, which would require a prior step: an agreement between a group of Arab countries, the Palestinian Authority and Israel, which would in passing reward the mediation work of Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner. Such an agreement seems almost impossible given President Trump's decision to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Alternatively, the gamble in Yemen may be stepped up and an attempt may be made to encourage the United States to join the effort, arguing that it is the least risky way to put Iran in its place. Another front remains on which the Emiratis have an essential role. Rather than military, this battle would take place in the United States Congress, where attempts may be made to get Washington to withdraw from the nuclear agreement with Iran and have sanctions reimposed. This would place companies from around the world, especially financial institutions, in a delicate situation, as by continuing their operations in Iran sanctions might be applied to them or they might find themselves shut out of the US market.

## 9. A militarised Sahel

For years the Sahel region has been a paradigm of instability, terrorism, organised crime and foreign intervention. The strip separating the countries of the Maghreb from Sub-Saharan Africa has been attracting the attention of international actors like France, supported by various European partners (Spain among them) and the United States. The European Union as a whole is paying increasing attention to what happens in this region and the migration challenge seems to have alerted it to the Sahel's proximity. In its competition for regional leadership and with the conflict in the Sahara as a backdrop, Morocco and Algeria have also redoubled efforts to increase their influence in this region and in the whole of West Africa.

During 2018 we will see how the military force of 5000 troops being set up by the G5 countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger) materialises and how the fear increases of this part of the world becoming the main producer of jihadist terrorism. This force, particularly encouraged by the European Union and the African Union, will be added to the 13,000 troops of the multinational force under the United Nations flag (MINUSMA), the 3000 troops of Operation Barkhane led by France, and an indeterminate number of American troops deployed in this region. The effort in the military field will not be accompanied by sufficient investment in economic development and institution building. For the Sahel, the main hope will remain a West African take-off and that the experiences of alternative democracy – such as those led in recent years by Gambia, Ghana and Nigeria – spread.

## 10. The Americas have a date with the ballot boxes

Eight out of ten citizens with the right to vote in the Americas will have elections in 2018. These elections will be preceded by bitter campaigns, including foul play. Rather than

a scramble for the centre the battle will fought over whose model prevails over their rival's. Paradoxically, the middle classes will be those who tip the balance. It is in their hands to determine whether the Americas will continue turning to the right or if the direction of the pendulum will change.

There are so many elections that we can only highlight a few. Mexico votes on July 1st and the United States mid-terms are on November 6th. The tensions between the two countries could infect both campaigns. Brazil goes to the polls in October and must choose between giving a second chance to the Workers' Party (PT) or, because of its relative weight, tipping the continent towards the right. Colombians will have already voted by then, on May 27th. Here, as important as the left-right axis, or more so, will be the division over the peace agreement. We will learn whether the FARC's reconversion as a political force is consolidated.

Cuba and Venezuela also both have elections, but of different natures. Cuba will select the members of its National Assembly, which should elect Raúl Castro's successor in a process that will combine revolutionary narrative and practice with a need to embrace post-Castroism. If they are not brought forward, Venezuela's elections will take place in October. Maduro learned the lesson of the last parliamentary elections and will not risk losing the presidential ones. The opposition must decide whether to give up the politico-legal battle for lost and focus on the street.

**Producing fake news is cheap and quick; checking information is expensive and time-consuming.**

In conclusion, we will end the year with no sense of an alternative world order to the current one. The **previous year** we spoke of an order that would not change but would change hands. We said that the actors who founded the liberal order would defend it less strongly and that those who initially saw it as an imposition would seek to make it theirs. This statement remains valid but must be complemented by the knowledge that the symptoms of crisis and exhaustion are proliferating, in large part accelerated by processes of the automation and digitalisation of the economy. It is not only the world order that is in question, so too are regional orders and even social contracts in many parts of the planet. Those who theorise and reflect on international relations and those who in think tanks aspire to combine analysis with proposals must join forces to identify the points of friction and fracture and articulate solutions that reduce the costs of transition and increase the resilience of our societies. We will not see a change of order in 2018 but we cannot delay the debate on the possible obsolescence of the current one.

## 60 dates to mark in the calendar

<i>January 5th to August 21st</i>	<b>50th anniversary of the Prague Spring.</b> For several months Czechoslovakia managed to open up its regime, something previously unheard of in the Communist bloc. But the hopes were crushed by Soviet tanks.
<i>January 12th and 13th</i>	<b>Presidential elections in the Czech Republic.</b> The current president, Miloš Zeman, is seeking to revalidate his mandate. Europe will be watching these elections closely in a context of growing tension between European institutions and certain member states, such as Poland and Hungary.
<i>January 23rd to 26th</i>	<b>The World Economic Forum in Davos.</b> One of the most important international political and economic dates on the calendar, where the causes of and solutions to the fractures in 21st century global society will be analysed.
<i>January 28th and February 4th</i>	<b>Presidential elections in Cyprus.</b> The island's division remains unresolved and hope is fading of reaching an agreement that not only brings the conflict to an end but also allows a better relationship between Turkey and the EU.
<i>January 30th</i>	<b>Rwanda assumes the presidency of the African Union.</b> Controversial Paul Kagame will take up the AU's leadership with at least four items on the agenda. humanitarian crises; conflict resolution; managing migration flows; and jihadist terrorism.
<i>February 3rd</i>	<b>Fed presidency.</b> Janet Yellen will leave the presidency of the Federal Reserve, to be replaced by Jerome Powell. What monetary policy will her successor apply and how might it affect interest rates at global scale?
<i>February 7th to 13th</i>	<b>World Urban Forum.</b> To be held in Malaysia where for the first time the implementation of the New Urban Agenda adopted by the United Nations in 2016 will be addressed.
<i>February 9th–25th</i>	<b>Winter Olympic Games.</b> South Korea will put its best foot forward with one eye on its neighbour to the north. Unlikely to be the only time the Korean Peninsula attracts international attention.
<i>February 22nd</i>	<b>25th anniversary of the creation of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.</b> The anniversary coincides with the ICTY's dissolution at the end of 2017. A good time to analyse whether the wounds have healed and whether the countries involved are prospective EU members.
<i>March 18th</i>	<b>Russian presidential elections.</b> Vladimir Putin stands for re-election for the fourth time. The polls predict a comfortable victory, meaning he could stretch his dominance of the Russian political scene into a third decade.
<i>March 20th</i>	<b>15 years since the Iraq war.</b> A milestone that marks the climax but also the decline of the North American hyperpower. The fall of Saddam Hussein opened the door to greater Iranian influence in the region and encouraged the rise of the embryonic Islamic State.
<i>March 20th</i>	<b>2nd anniversary of the Turkey-European Union migration agreement.</b> Two years after its implementation the agreement has substantially reduced the volume on the Turkey-Greece migration route. A good time to discuss the effects of border externalisation policies at global level.
<i>March 23rd to 25th</i>	<b>Summit of the Americas 2018.</b> To be held in Peru with the following title: "Democratic Governance against Corruption". The first summit of both the post-Castro and Trump eras.
<i>April</i>	<b>New presidency in Cuba.</b> After Raúl Castro's announcement that he will not stand for re-election the National Assembly of People's Power will have to elect a new president and the country will enter a new era.
<i>April/May (date to be decided)</i>	<b>Parliamentary elections in Hungary.</b> Nobody doubts the re-election of Viktor Orbán as prime minister; the governing party Fidesz is best placed to win. But will Jobbik secure better results? Hungary's rightward turn is assured.
<i>April 4th</i>	<b>50th anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King.</b> The leading icon in the fight against racism who gave the famous "I have a dream" speech. A good time to analyse the progress in the fight for civil rights in the United States.
<i>April 16th</i>	<b>25th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.</b> To be held in the United Kingdom, with Brexit in full swing. That decision could lead the British government to seek to strengthen its ties with the countries that make up the Commonwealth.
<i>April 26th</i>	<b>20th anniversary of Bishop Gerardi's assassination.</b> Assassinated two days after presenting the report "Guatemala: nunca más" (Guatemala: never again) in which he demonstrated that the Guatemalan government had been responsible for killing 200,000 indigenous Maya people in the 1980s.
<i>May 3rd to 30th</i>	<b>50th anniversary of May '68.</b> Though its epicentre was in France it had global reach. How was it possible for a wave of social movements to be generated at the same time in a series of countries with completely different social systems and political regimes?
<i>May 6th</i>	<b>Parliamentary elections in Lebanon.</b> The country will hold parliamentary elections almost nine years after the last ones, and with a question mark over the impact of the Hariri affair.
<i>May 6th</i>	<b>Local elections in Tunisia.</b> Elections that have been repeatedly postponed. If they are held it will be a good sign of the consolidation of the Tunisian democratic transition.
<i>May 8th (deadline)</i>	<b>Presidential elections in Egypt.</b> Field Marshal al-Sisi is doing everything possible to prolong his time in power. The fight against terrorism and socioeconomic challenges will shape the country's political agenda.
<i>May 12th</i>	<b>Parliamentary elections in Iraq.</b> Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi will attempt to take advantage of the defeat of Islamic State and his opposition to the independence referendum of Iraqi Kurdistan in September 2017.
<i>May 20th (deadline)</i>	<b>General elections in Italy.</b> Europe will be paying close attention to the possible rise of Eurosceptic forces. Italy is seen as a systemic risk in both political and economic terms.
<i>May 24th</i>	<b>25th anniversary of the independence of Eritrea.</b> 25 years of uninterrupted government by Isaias Afewerki amid constant condemnation of human rights violations by international organisms.
<i>May 27th</i>	<b>Presidential elections in Colombia.</b> The country faces its first presidential elections since the peace agreement was signed with the FARC, who, having already formed a political party, are standing in this election.

<b>June 8th and 9th</b>	<b>44th G7 Summit.</b> Brings the G7 leaders together in Canada to debate and seek agreement on some of the global problems of the day. On Trudeau's agenda are the fight against climate change, advancing gender equality and promoting respect for diversity and inclusion.
<b>June 14th to July 15th</b>	<b>Football World Cup</b> A resurgent Russia hosts the latest tournament. Putin will use the event to give the country global impact. It will also be a good time to debate corruption in the world of sport and the challenges Qatar faces in hosting the 2022 event.
<b>June 24th</b>	<b>Saudi women can drive.</b> A end to one of the country's greatest anachronisms with the decision approved by King Salman last September. His son Mohamed bin Salman is attempting to strengthen his popularity among young people and women to consolidate his power.
<b>July</b>	<b>General elections in South Sudan.</b> Many doubts remain over whether the country is finally ready to hold the general elections that were suspended in 2015. This country hosts one in four of the main humanitarian emergencies on the planet.
<b>July 1st</b>	<b>Federal elections in Mexico.</b> In an uncertain setting in the post-Peña Nieto era there are three main electoral choices: López Obrador, the eternal candidate, will again attempt to win the presidency against the candidates from the PRI and the new Por México al Frente coalition.
<b>July 9th to 18th</b>	<b>High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.</b> Taking place in the United States, this is the main United Nations platform for the monitoring and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.
<b>11th and 12th July</b>	<b>29th NATO Summit (Belgium).</b> A good moment to assess the state of transatlantic relations and to check if members have met their military spending commitments. It will also be the first summit after the decision of the European members of the alliance to join the Permanent Structured Cooperation on security and defence (PESCO).
<b>July 25th</b>	<b>40th anniversary of the first test tube baby.</b> Louise Brown becoming the first test tube baby was a milestone in medical history. A good reminder of how technology is changing our lives.
<b>September 13th</b>	<b>25th anniversary of the Oslo Accords.</b> Signed in 1993 between Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin, under the auspices of Bill Clinton, they established the international recognition of the Palestinian Authority as the administrative body in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Donald Trump's unilateral decision to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel calls its validity into question.
<b>September 15th</b>	<b>Tenth anniversary of the fall of Lehman Brothers.</b> The collapse of one of the largest investment banks in the world was the detonator for the largest financial crisis since 1929.
<b>September 17th</b>	<b>40th anniversary of the Camp David Accords.</b> Under the auspices of the president of the United States, Jimmy Carter, Israel and Egypt signed a peace agreement. In 2018 the White House will try to push a new peace agreement through between the Israelis and their Arab allies. Washington's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital makes this highly improbable.
<b>September 18th to 25th</b>	<b>73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly.</b> An annual meeting where world leaders take the opportunity to attack their enemies and maintain bilateral relations at the highest level.
<b>September 23rd–24th</b>	<b>Intergovernmental conference on migration.</b> To include the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which seeks to handle all aspects of international migration, including humanitarian, development and human rights issues, among others.
<b>October</b>	<b>Presidential elections in Venezuela.</b> Maduro will stand for re-election after a sweeping victory in the 2017 municipal elections, which were boycotted by the opposition. The opposition is likely to decide to mobilise in the streets, given the impossibility of competing in equality of conditions.
<b>October</b>	<b>Agreement for the United Kingdom to leave the EU.</b> Both parties have proposed concluding a final Brexit agreement which must then go through the adoption processes. We will see whether it leads towards an orderly exit or not.
<b>October 7th and 28th</b>	<b>General elections in Brazil.</b> In the midst of an economic recession the country wants to close the Temer era as soon as possible and look to a new presidency in which, if former president Lula is ultimately able to stand for election, may return the Workers' Party to the Palácio do Planalto.
<b>October 12th</b>	<b>50th anniversary of the independence of Equatorial Guinea.</b> The only Spanish-speaking country on the African continent celebrates its independence from Spain in the shadow of the dictator Teodoro Obiang.
<b>October 23rd</b>	<b>150th anniversary of the Meiji era.</b> A period marked by Japan's modernisation and increased global presence. The current emperor's abdication is predicted in 2019.
<b>October 24th</b>	<b>20th anniversary of Hurricane Mitch.</b> The greatest modern environmental catastrophe in Central America, which caused the deaths of tens of thousands of people and inestimable material damage, and has hindered the development of the region until now.
<b>November (deadline)</b>	<b>Referendum in New Caledonia.</b> This French overseas territory will decide whether to become independent from France. The last territory to gain independence from France was Vanuatu (1980).
<b>November 6th</b>	<b>United States legislative elections.</b> The first electoral test at national level of support for the Trump administration. All of the 435 seats in the House of Representatives will be contested as well as 33 of the 100 Senate seats.
<b>November 11th</b>	<b>Centenary of the end of the First World War.</b> A war that marked the beginning of the end of the Euro-centric global order and which, with the dismembering of the Ottoman Empire, led to the creation of the current state system in the Middle East.
<b>November 15th and 16th</b>	<b>XXVI Ibero-American Summit.</b> With the title "A thriving, inclusive and sustainable Ibero-America", the latest summit will be held in Guatemala.
<b>November 20th</b>	<b>20th anniversary of the International Space Station.</b> The most significant milestone in international space cooperation will be celebrated in a context of space escalation after Donald Trump announced that astronauts will again be sent to the moon.
<b>November 30th to December 1st</b>	<b>13th G20 Summit.</b> Argentina will be the first South American country to host a G20 meeting.

<i>December 10th</i>	<b>70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.</b> A good time to analyse the commitment of its signatories, the advances since then and the tasks on the agenda.
<i>Second half of the year</i>	<b>General elections in Zimbabwe.</b> After Mugabe's departure from the government and Mnangagwa's rise to the presidency a period of uncertainty has begun in the country that these elections seek to resolve.
<i>Second half of the year</i>	<b>General elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.</b> Mired in the largest current humanitarian crisis in Africa, elections should be held that will mean the departure of the current president, Joseph Kabila.
<i>Pending</i>	<b>10th BRICS Summit.</b> South Africa will host the latest summit, which brings together Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. This bloc has been losing strength because of crisis situations in one or other of its members and the lack of a proposal for an alternative global order.
<i>Pending</i>	<b>III EU-CELAC Heads of State and Government Summit.</b> The situation in Venezuela meant the summit planned to be held in El Salvador in 2017 was postponed.
<i>Pending</i>	<b>Presidential and parliamentary elections in Mali.</b> President Keita is likely to seek re-election after winning his first mandate in 2013. Insecurity will be a crucial consideration for a normal electoral process, as for practically the whole of 2017 the country has been in a state of emergency.
<i>Pending</i>	<b>Palestinian general elections.</b> After the reconciliation agreement last October, Palestinians will return to the ballot boxes to elect a new president for the first time since 2005. Donald Trump's decision to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel will radicalise the contenders' positions.
<i>Pending</i>	<b>Presidential and parliamentary elections in Libya.</b> Holding elections poses a great challenge due to the critical internal situation of the country, which is mired in deep political divisions and where insecurity prevails.
<i>Pending</i>	<b>Syrian National Dialogue Congress.</b> Announced by Erdoğan and Putin, this new structure has the task of writing a new constitution and holding elections under UN supervision.