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# Week in Review: International News Updates

Genny Sheara, Staff Reporter

## Nordic Countries Consider NATO

With Russia's invasion of Ukraine, tension has spiked in Eastern European countries. Sweden and Finland, two countries that have remained neutral so far, announced that they are considering joining NATO out of fear of military pressure from Russia. Though this proposition has garnered public support from some former U.S. and NATO-allied military officials, Russia recently presented a treatise draft to the organization that vowed "military-technical" action should they be met with aggression from the West. Experts have noted that this unprecedented move would expand NATO's borders and boost their military power, which may provoke a Russian response. Both Sweden and Finland meet the criteria to join NATO, but even a rapid admission could take months.



## Presidential Election in the Philippines

Ferdinand Marcos Jr, the son of the nation's former dictator Ferdinand Marcos, has been elected the nation's next president. Vice President Leni Robredo had gained a wave of support from the young population in the Philippines. Despite being second to front-runner Ferdinand Marcos Jr, her voter base rallied behind her campaign. Her supporters pointed to frustrations with President Rodrigo Duterte's handling of the war on drugs and COVID-19 pandemic. Marcos, the son of the late 10th president of the country, built his campaign with promises to continue his father's legacy, which he describes as a "golden age." Critics and supporters of Robredo view this claim as a distortion of history, but the candidate still managed to gain the approval of the majority of voters.

## Seattle's Spring Showers

Though the city is notorious for its rainy and dreary weather, the spring and summer months usually bring much appreciated sunshine. However, in a single week, Seattle beat its average monthly rainfall for May. Experts predict that even more is on the way for the next six to 10 days, with the weather remaining damp for at least a few more weeks. The rainfall accompanies unusually low temperatures for this time of year, as the Seattle-Tacoma area is expected to remain below 60°F for the majority of the month.

## African Art in the Digital Arena

Access to unique art in the digital world has become increasingly popular with the rise of NFTs (Non-Fungible Tokens). Many are considering its real-world applications and implications. Nigerian creative designer Chidi founded Looty, a “digital repatriation of art to the Metaverse.” He intends for the website, which officially launches May 13, to be a platform to access African art that was taken from the continent by British colonists and is currently housed in European museums and private collections. By going to these museums and taking pictures of the art, Chidi and his anonymous team replicate the pieces in digital 3D renderings, which are then offered for purchase. This project asks questions about ownership, not only of NFTs and digital art, but of art removed from its original birthplace.

#### The International Impact of Scorching Heat

This week, millions in India and Pakistan suffered from record-breaking heat as temperatures consistently reached 104°F and 116°F respectively. As schools closed and warnings to stay indoors spread, attention has turned to the global climate crisis and its international impact. India is a major wheat producer, which both global companies and individuals globally rely on. The recent streak of high heat damaged crops in some of India’s states. Though experts predict the coming weeks will offer some respite, climate scientists warn that heatwaves like this will only become more intense and frequent.

#### Seized Yachts for Sale

In President Joe Biden’s recent statement on the war in Ukraine, he remarked on the House’s bill to sell Russian oligarch’s seized yachts and liquidate their assets. This would be part of the effort to fund military efforts in Ukraine. So far, the United States’ response to Russia’s attacks on Ukraine has been economic, including sanctions imposed on the country out of worry about a direct military response and its repercussions. Recently, the POTUS has been encouraging legislators to wield their economic power more firmly.

“The cost of failing to stand up to violent aggression in Europe has always been higher than the cost of standing firm against such attacks,” Biden wrote in a letter to Congress asking for approval of \$33 billion in aid for Ukraine.

The House’s legislation and the President’s remarks on the situation represent a shift to a more aggressive attitude towards Russia.