"The State of the World in 2027: Major Developments, Crises, & Opportunities"

by

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October 13, 2026

Mr. Sullivan posited that the world of geopolitics is at a *plastic moment* – rigid structures are melting away but new ones are not yet set. In such a formative period, major international developments will take on disproportionate weight in shaping a new order.

He offered 3 *headlines* likely to play this disproportionate role.

- First, is the current *standoff i*n the ongoing US-Iran war.
    - It appears that Tehran relishes mixing it up with the US, and may be confident in its ability to withstand punitive strikes.
- Second, an aftershock of the Iran war and destabilized Middle East, is Washington's pursuit of a deal to buy diesel fuel from Russia.
    - This will shake Washington's Alliances and provide Putin with resources to continue pummeling Ukraine.
- Third, is how the US and other major powers, cope with Artificial Intelligence (AI).
    - AI executives are sounding an alarm over this technology's potential for harm as well as good.

These three concerns are not isolated issues, but rather are indicative of larger tectonic shifts. Three broader trendlines underlay such issues.

- First is US-China competition.
    - Beijing sees this as the historical moment in which China catches up to and surpasses US capabilities.
- Second is the process of US partners hedging away from Washington's leadership.
    - Mr. Sullivan cited Canadian PM Carney's recent speech at Davos which characterized this not as a transition but as a *rupture*.
- Third is the AI revolution and the need to oversee it.
    - Mr. Sullivan suggested that a precedent might be the history of Soviet-American arms control, which at the time was not necessarily seen as feasible.

Mr. Sullivan concluded by saying that challenges such as structurally driven competition, ruptured relationships, and surviving AI cannot be solved by military force, but require disciplined diplomacy. The plastic moment means that actions now can help shape how the emerging order firms up.

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