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Ghana Deploys West Africa's Most Advanced Airport Scanners

PAGE 03

SolitAir expands its China network with launch of new route to Tianjin

PAGE 04

Reforming Tourism from the Superstructure to the Substructure.

PAGE 05

A Japanese Wake-Up Call for America

PAGE 09


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Ghana Deploys West Africa's Most Advanced Airport Scanners

By Dominick Andoh

Passengers travelling through Ghana's main international gateway will soon experience significantly faster and more convenient security screening as the Ghana Airports Company Limited (GACL) begins deploying advanced three-dimensional (3D) security screening technology at the Accra International Airport.

The new state-of-the-art screening equipment has been installed at passenger checkpoints in Terminals 2 and 3 and will initially operate alongside existing security procedures before the current screening protocol is fully phased out.

The gradual deployment marks one of the most significant upgrades to passenger security processing at Accra International Airport in recent years and aligns Ghana with a growing number of leading international airports adopting Computed Tomography (CT) screening technology.

According to a public notice issued by GACL, the new system is designed to strengthen aviation security while dramatically improving passenger convenience.

Once fully operational, passengers will no longer be required to remove laptops and other large electronic devices from their cabin baggage during security screening.

Travellers will also be allowed to keep their shoes and belts on unless specifically requested during secondary security profiling.

Another major improvement is that liquids, aerosols and gels (LAGs) of up to 100 millilitres can remain inside cabin baggage during screening, eliminating one of the most time-consuming aspects of airport security checks. The existing international restriction on containers exceeding 100ml, however, remains unchanged.

GACL has also introduced an Automatic Tray Return System, enabling screening trays to circulate automatically and reducing congestion at security checkpoints.

Transition Being Done in Phases

Although the equipment has now been deployed, AviationGhana understands the new scanners are not yet operating at full capacity.

The company is implementing the technology progressively while maintaining existing security protocols to ensure operational continuity and allow staff to complete final familiarisation and system integration.

This phased approach is consistent with international best practice whenever new aviation security technologies are introduced.

Keeping Pace with Global Aviation Standards

The deployment follows earlier reports by AviationGhana that GACL had acquired the advanced 3D scanners and was undertaking extensive staff training ahead of their introduction.

The technology generates highly detailed three-dimensional images of cabin baggage, enabling security personnel to inspect contents from multiple angles without requiring passengers to unpack electronic devices or remove permitted liquids.

Beyond improving passenger convenience, the enhanced imaging capability strengthens threat detection while reducing screening times, the two priorities increasingly shaping airport investments worldwide.

As passenger numbers continue to grow, the adoption of advanced screening technology is expected to improve processing capacity, shorten queues and reinforce Kotoka International Airport's position as one of West Africa's leading aviation hubs.

The GACL, in the public notice, appealed to passengers and airport stakeholders to cooperate with security personnel during the transition period as operations gradually migrate to the new screening system over the coming weeks.

SolitAir expands its China network with launch of new route to Tianjin

SolitAir, the UAE's dedicated B2B, airport-to-airport cargo airline, has announced the launch of a new route connecting its hub at Dubai World Central (DWC) to Tianjin Binhai International Airport (TSN), further strengthening the carrier's presence in China following successful operations to Hong Kong and Urumqi.

The inaugural flight carried a VIP cargo shipment, highlighting the strategic importance of the new corridor for customers requiring bespoke, secure, reliable and time-critical air freight solutions. The Tianjin route marks another key step in expanding the carrier's connectivity across the country.

Located in northern China, the 14 million-inhabitant port city is one of the country's largest industrial and logistics centres and serves as the principal maritime and air gateway for the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei economic region, which contributed 8.5% of China's GDP in 2025.

Tianjin Port ranks among the world's busiest ports, handling more than 23 million TEUs annually, while Tianjin Binhai International Airport provides vital air cargo connectivity for advanced manufacturing sectors including automotive, aerospace, electronics, pharmaceuticals and high-value industrial equipment. The city also plays an increasingly important role in facilitating trade under the Belt and Road Initiative.

Hamdi Osman, Founder and CEO of SolitAir, said: "China continues to be one of the most important growth markets for global trade and expanding our network to Tianjin reflects our commitment to serving the evolving needs of our customers. Tianjin gives us direct access to one of northern China's most dynamic manufacturing and logistics hubs while strengthening the US$111 billion non-oil trade links between China and the UAE."

The Tianjin launch builds on SolitAir's established presence across China, which already includes operations to Hong Kong and Urumqi and comes hard-on-the-heels of the carrier's recent entry into Europe with its inaugural route to Sofia, Bulgaria.

Since its operational launch in October 2024, SolitAir has grown to 56 routes across 33 countries, including an 18-city network across Africa and continues to add destinations that connect commercially vital, time-sensitive trade corridors between Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Europe.

SolitAir operates a fleet of seven Boeing 737-800 BCF freighters, each with 20-tonne cargo capacity, optimised for the reliability, range and versatility required to carry dangerous goods, pharmaceuticals, perishables, valuable and oversized freight. The airline is targeting fleet growth to 20 aircraft, operating from its 20,440-square-metre cargo hub at Dubai World Central (DWC), Al Maktoum International Airport.

Reforming Tourism from the Superstructure to the Substructure.

by Professor Kobby Mensah, CEO Ghana Tourism Development Company (GTDC)

Ghana must build a more resilient, competitive, and sustainable tourism sector, and we must do so by going beyond incremental improvements and fundamentally reform both the superstructure and the substructure of the tourism ecosystem. The future of tourism will not be determined solely by the number of attractions we possess, but by how effectively we organise, market, and deliver tourism experiences in a rapidly changing global environment.

Reforming the Superstructure: The Three Ds

At the superstructure level, tourism reform should be anchored on three strategic pillars: digitalisation, deconcentration, and domestication.

Digitalisation

Modern tourism has evolved far beyond brick-and-mortar operations. Today's tourist begins the travel journey online, discovering destinations, comparing experiences, making bookings, sharing reviews, and often ending the experience online as well. Consequently, the management of tourism destinations must equally become digital-first.

Failing to place digitalisation at the centre of Ghana's tourism strategy is effectively surrendering our competitiveness to destinations with stronger digital visibility, such as Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa. In today's marketplace, destinations are increasingly selected not because they are inherently better, but because they are more discoverable, accessible, and engaging online. Digital transformation is therefore no longer an option; it is a prerequisite for economic sustainability.

Deconcentration

The second pillar is deconcentration.

Ghana's tourism market still operates largely through an M-shaped distribution structure, where international tour operators aggregate tourists abroad and channel them through local intermediaries before visitors finally reach destinations and attractions. This model has served the industry for decades and dates back to a period long before the internet transformed global commerce.

While the system has historically played an important role, it has increasingly become a gatekeeping mechanism. It concentrates market power in the hands of intermediaries, limits direct interaction between tourists and tourism providers, and disproportionately favours already established destinations.

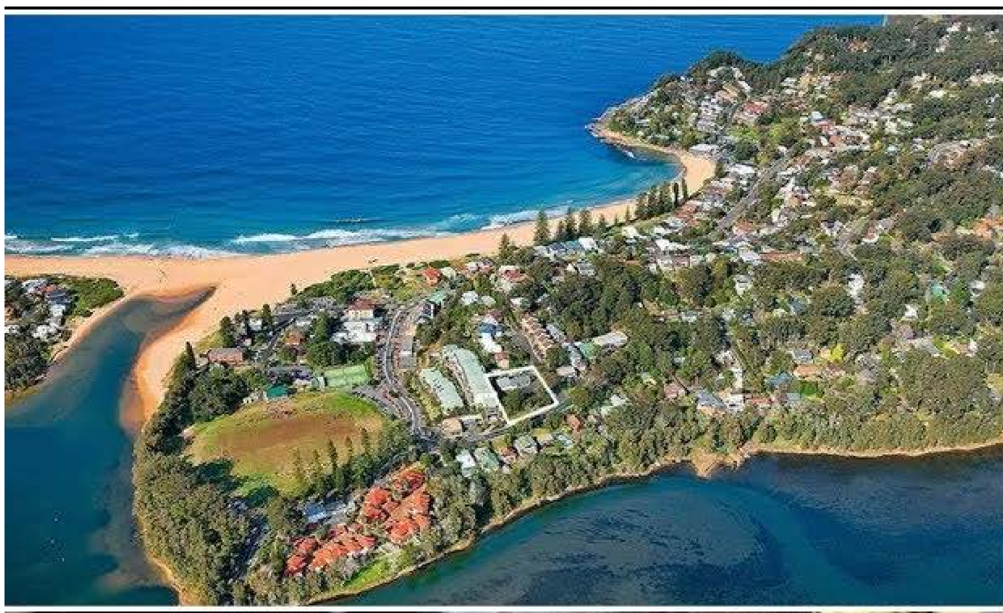
It concentrates demand in the hands of established destinations and attractions and limits, and to some large extent prevents the future growths of new and emerging destinations and attractions. Whereas the middleman of the source market becomes the gatekeeper of the top destinations like Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa, those in the downstream locally become the gatekeepers of established destinations and attractions in country such as Accra, Cape Coast, and a few others.

As a result, destinations and attractions such as Cape Coast and Kakum continue to dominate visitor flows, while equally compelling destinations

Continue on Page 06

Continued from Page 05

in Northern Ghana, Sunyani, Takoradi, and many emerging tourism areas struggle to gain visibility. Sustainable tourism requires a more democratised market structure, one where a digital platform enables consumers direct access to discover destinations and where every community has a fair opportunity to participate in tourism growth. This critique is not about condemning the current structure in favour of a fragmented one, but to make a case for a middle ground where both market structures can co-exist.



Domestication

Perhaps the greatest challenge is domestication.

Despite decades of discussion, Ghana has yet to build a truly vibrant domestic tourism culture. We remain heavily dependent on international arrivals, leaving our sector vulnerable to global economic downturns, pandemics, and geopolitical disruptions.

Domestic tourism should not merely be promoted but become a national movement. We need sustained social marketing campaigns that inform, educate, and persuade Ghanaians about the value of travel within their own country. Tourism improves physical and mental wellbeing, strengthens national identity, deepens appreciation of our cultural, natural and social heritage, and builds confidence in our collective national story.

Unfortunately, many Ghanaians still perceive tourism as an activity reserved for the wealthy. This perception must change, and we must do so through mass education. Tourism is not a luxury for the economically privileged; it is a social good that benefits individuals, families, communities, and the nation.

Mass media, digital platforms, educational institutions, and faith-based organisations all have critical roles to play in embedding domestic tourism into everyday Ghanaian life. A strong domestic tourism market provides the best insurance against external shocks, as demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic by countries that were prepared, while also delivering long-term economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

Reforming the Substructure

Reforming the superstructure alone is insufficient. The foundations of the tourism industry, the substructure, must also evolve.

Three priorities are essential.

First, we must diversify our tourism product. Beyond culture and heritage, there are enormous opportunities in eco-tourism, leisure, wellness, creative arts, sports tourism, business events (MICE), culinary, educational, and community-based tourism.

Second, accessibility must improve. Destinations should be easier to reach physically through better transport infrastructure, pricing and improved information sources, booking systems, and visitor services.

Third, strong regulatory regime yields attitude for quality. Consistent standard evaluation and monitoring across accommodation, attractions, tour operations, transportation and visitor experiences are fundamental to competitiveness. Quality underpins sustainability.

Delivering these reforms requires sustained investment, modern and sustained regulation, and a private sector that is bold, innovative, and forward-looking. The tourism entrepreneur of the future must think beyond short-term survival and daily revenue. Success will belong to businesses that understand changing consumer behaviour, technological advancement underpinning the structure the industry, investing in quality, and continuous innovation.

Building Tourism for the Future

Tourism is no longer simply about showcasing attractions. It is about creating an ecosystem that connects people, places, technology, and experiences in ways that generate lasting economic, social, cultural, and environmental value.

If we are committed about building a tourism industry that is resilient to future shocks and competitive in the global marketplace, then reform must begin from the top of the tourism building, the superstructure, and extend all the way to its foundations, the substructure. Only then can the sector achieve sustainable growth that benefits every region, every community, and every Ghanaian.

This is exactly what we are trying to achieve at GTDC, building innovative and technologically driven processes, systems and services that facilitate market reform, offer diversification and ensure sustainable tourism future.

What AI Governance Demands

By Ana Palacio

One way to represent the AI age is with a steep curve and a gradual slope. The curve rises almost vertically: models rapidly grow cheaper, more powerful, more accessible, and more deeply embedded in production, science, education, finance, administration, security, and war. Beneath it, the slope moves on a far shallower incline. This is the capacity of society to absorb change.

The slope encompasses updates to regulatory regimes, legal structures, and the competencies of public administrations. It also includes changes to school curricula, business models, workflows, and jobs. And it covers citizens' ability to function in this new landscape—including their capacity to distinguish truth from simulation, persuasion from manipulation, and assistance from dependency. It is the social metabolism through which a technological shock is integrated into a functioning order.

To be sure, previous technological and industrial revolutions could also be represented by such a curve and slope. Technologies advanced and spread faster than regulations, business models, education systems, labor markets, and lifestyles could adapt. Transitions were often painful and never automatic. But the gap between curve and slope was smaller: in speed and scale, the AI-driven transformation appears to be in a league of its own.

Discussion about how to manage this transition usually boils down to the question of how much regulation strikes the "right balance" between innovation and safety. We do not want to put a bureaucratic lid on progress any more than we want to leave societies to absorb, alone and at speed, the consequences of a technology that is transforming our most basic understanding of work, knowledge, power, accountability, and judgment.

But this question is too narrow. Regulation has a crucial role to play, but it alone does not amount to governance. For that, we must determine the conditions needed to enable societies to live with AI without being overrun by it.

The first step is to stop thinking of AI as intangible—some ethereal technology that exists in the "cloud" and delivers whatever the prompt demands. AI depends on tremendous quantities of capital, cutting-edge chips, cybersecurity systems, supply chains, and talent. It also relies on massive data centers, which emit noise, light, and heat, and require land and permits, as well as huge amounts of electricity and water.

The communities hosting the physical foundations of this supposedly weightless technology are now being forced to confront major disruptions and bear high costs, as their lands are bought, their grids are strained, and their water supplies are drained and polluted. Difficult decisions about zoning, electricity prices, and environmental protection must be made.

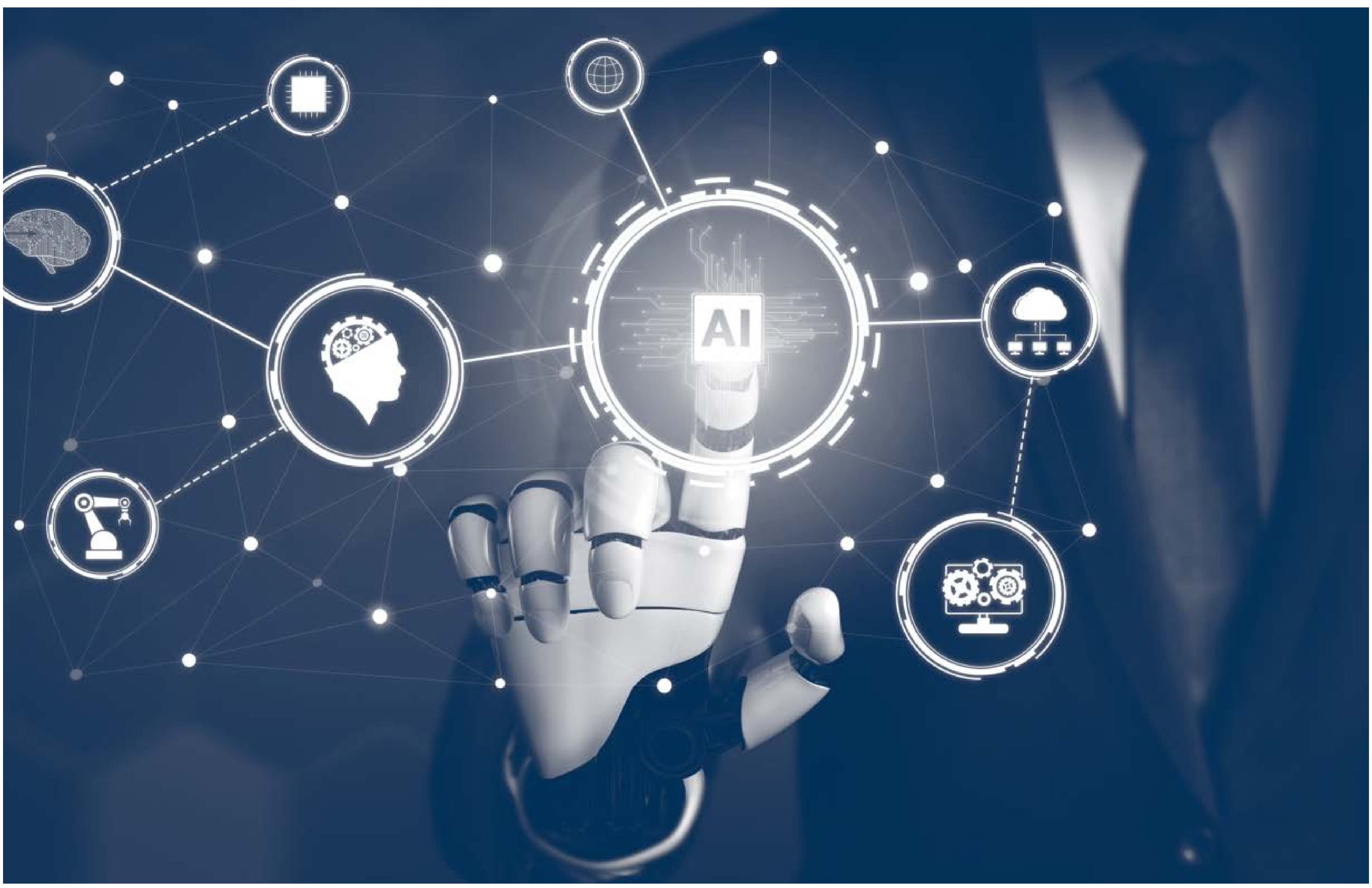
But AI governance is not just a community-level challenge. The technology is increasingly central to the infrastructure of national power: military targeting, cyber operations, intelligence analysis, scientific discovery, industrial automation, surveillance, financial modeling, and political influence.

Continue on Page 8

Continued from Page 7

Whoever controls the most advanced models, chips, compute clusters, and talent holds not merely a commercial advantage, but a strategic one.

This is not lost on the United States and China, which are competing doggedly for AI leadership: each believes that falling behind would leave it militarily, economically, or politically vulnerable. Much like with nuclear weapons, the stakes feel existential. This is a recipe for secrecy, mistrust, pre-emption, and unchecked acceleration.



The risks are compounded by the fact that AI is more diffuse than nuclear technology, more commercially embedded, and more broadly applicable. Moreover, its output is hard to verify, and once capabilities are encoded in software, proliferation is easy.

AI governance must account for all of these factors, from the technology's material requirements to its effects on individuals, communities, businesses, labor markets, the environment, national security, and international strategic competition. To this end, a comprehensive architecture of verification-based trust—broader than national AI regulation and more flexible than a classic treaty—is essential.

The 2015 Paris climate agreement offers a useful model. It created a living framework encompassing voluntary commitments, mutual pressure, regular updates, reliable measurement, and broad participation. But an analogous AI agreement must also reflect a key lesson of non-proliferation regimes: where political trust is weak, it must be supplemented by testing, limits, and verification.

The resulting framework would combine the flexibility of climate diplomacy with the discipline of nuclear control. Evolving commitments would be matched by mechanisms for assessing the credibility and impact of those commitments. State action would be accompanied by responsibilities for corporations.

An "AI Paris Agreement" would provide common definitions for frontier models; thresholds for enhanced scrutiny; mandatory incident reporting; shared evaluation standards; protection of model weights; rules for deployment in sensitive sectors; and independent testing of systems that pose risks to cybersecurity, biological safety, critical infrastructure, or military decision-making. Each of these elements would be regularly reviewed and strengthened over time, by technical bodies that understand the evolving technology and political bodies capable of imposing consequences when commitments are ignored.

Of course, not every application requires the same treatment. A narrow tool used in low-risk settings requires limited oversight. By contrast, a frontier model capable of affecting cybersecurity, biological design, military operations, or the autonomy of critical systems must be subject to stricter requirements and, in extreme cases, intervention.

Some might argue that this would stifle innovation. But no one would board an aircraft or take a new drug if safety depended solely on the goodwill of manufacturers. In these fields, regulation does not eliminate risk; it makes risk socially bearable. The same is true for AI.

Such a framework cannot be presented as a European project, an American instrument, or an alliance aimed at countering China. Its legitimacy would depend on inclusion, with countries at the technological frontier, "middle powers," and developing economies all given a voice. Universities, companies, and civil-society organizations should also be involved.

The curve will keep getting steeper. We cannot flatten it by decree, nor obscure it with speeches. But we can decide whether it rises ungoverned or within an architecture that can keep up.

Ana Palacio, a former foreign minister of Spain and former senior vice president and general counsel of the World Bank Group, is a visiting lecturer at Georgetown University.

A Japanese Wake-Up Call for America

By Desmond Lachman

Japan appears to be on the cusp of a full-blown currency and bond-market crisis. Although the Japanese authorities spent more than $70 billion in May to prop up the yen, the currency has slumped to a 40-year low and is estimated to be at least 15% undervalued against the US dollar. Meanwhile, Japanese long-term bond yields have surged to multi-decade highs following the end of the Bank of Japan's yield-curve-control policy. And with no signs of Japan addressing the underlying causes of its currency's downward spiral anytime soon, there is every reason to fear that the crisis will deepen.

Japan's current challenges should be a wake-up call for other countries that appear to be on unsustainable public-debt paths, not least the United States, as well as France, Italy, and the United Kingdom. After all, an economic and financial crisis in one country often draws the market's attention to other countries facing similar problems. That was certainly the case with the Asian currency crisis in 1997, when a Thai currency devaluation triggered similar devaluations in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and South Korea. It was also the case with the eurozone crisis in 2010, when a Greek sovereign-debt crisis triggered similar crises in Ireland, Italy, Portugal, and Spain.

There appear to be two main drivers of Japan's currency and bond market woes: its unsustainable public finances and its relatively low interest rates (compared to the US). At 230%, Japan has by far the highest public debt-to-GDP ratio among G7 countries, and it still runs a primary budget deficit, which adds to the existing debt. Then there is Japan's declining and aging population, as well as a government that has shifted from targeting a single-year primary budget surplus to a vaguer medium-term debt stabilization policy. Is it any wonder that markets are growing uneasy about the country's public-debt trajectory?

Continue on Page 10

Continued from Page 09

It does not help that Sanae Takaichi, Japan's new prime minister, seems uninterested in putting the country on a sounder budget footing anytime soon. Among her first economic-policy moves was to adopt a supplemental budget that increased energy subsidies in response to the shock to international oil prices from the closure of the Strait of Hormuz.

Japan's large debt burden makes it difficult for the BOJ to raise interest rates even at a time when inflation appears to be accelerating. Tightening monetary policy would only exacerbate the country's public-finance problems by increasing interest payments. While the US Federal Reserve's short-term interest rate is at 3.5%, the BOJ's policy interest rate is at just 1%.

That spread continues to give investors an incentive to borrow cheaply in Japanese yen and lend in higher-yielding dollar-based assets (the "carry trade"). This will remain the case as long as the yen continues to depreciate.

But Herb Stein's famous aphorism bears repeating: If something cannot go on forever, it will stop. In principle, Japan could get off its unsustainable debt path in an orderly manner if the government made a preemptive and timely economic-policy U-turn to avert a currency and bond-market crisis. Or it could do so in a disorderly manner if a full-blown currency and bond crisis forced the government's hand. That is what happened in the UK in 2022 in response to Prime Minister Liz Truss's ill-advised budget measures. Unfortunately, all available signs suggest that Japan is heading in this direction.

A deepening Japanese currency and bond-market crisis is bound to draw attention to other countries with troubling public finances, and especially to the US. At around 100%, the US debt-to-GDP ratio is considerably lower than that of Japan; but the country is on track to maintain a budget deficit of more than 6% of GDP as far as the eye can see. That means its debt ratio will soon reach its highest level since the end of World War II.

Worse, additional factors are making the US more vulnerable to a bond-market crisis. Consider, for example, that foreigners own around one-third of all Treasury bonds outstanding, and that the government is increasingly reliant on hedge funds rather than on more stable bondholders (like insurance companies and pension funds) to meet its borrowing needs.

The bottom line is that highly indebted countries like the US, France, Italy, and the UK all have good reason to address their shaky public finances. The prospect of spillovers from an early Japanese currency and bond-market crisis have made the task only more urgent.

Desmond Lachman, a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, is a former deputy director of the International Monetary Fund's Policy Development and Review Department and a former chief emerging-market economic strategist at Salomon Smith Barney.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