

MNI POLITICAL RISK ANALYSIS – Week Ahead 8-14 Nov

by Tom Lake

All timings subject to change.

Monday 8 November:

- **China:** The Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) will hold its sixth annual plenum from 8-11 November. The Central Committee is the largest of the senior policy-making groups within the party. It comprises over 370 full and alternate members drawn from senior positions in the CCP such as region governors, ministers, and heads of regional organisations in the People's Liberation Army. The plenum is expected to deliver an historic resolution equalled only by Mao Zedong's 1945 and Deng Xiaoping's 1981 resolutions. The resolution is expected to focus on the past achievements of the CCP while laying out major policy objectives for years to come. It is also likely to set the stage for President Xi Jinping to seek a third term in office at next year's five-yearly party congress. Xi would be the first to do so, marking him out as a potential leader for life.
- **Eurozone:** Eurogroup meeting in Brussels. Takes place at 1500CET (0900ET, 1400GMT) with press conference at 2000CET (1400ET, 1900GMT). In regular format (just EZ finance ministers), discussion will focus on macroeconomic situation in the bloc, the digital euro, and international meetings attended by Eurogroup president. In inclusive format (involving all EU member state finance ministers), talks will focus on economic governance review, threats to fiscal policy and EMU in the wake of the pandemic, and updates on banking union and SRF.
- **France:** First televised debate in the race for the nomination from the centre-right *Les Republicains* (LR). Comes ahead of the spring 2022 presidential election. President of the Regional Council of Hauts-de-France Xavier Bertrand, President of the Regional Council of Île-de-France Valérie Pécresse, former European Commissioner Michel Barnier, member of the National Assembly Éric Ciotti, and former MEP Dr Philippe Juvin to take part. None of the prospective LR nominees sit in second place in hypothetical first round opinion polls, making their entry into the second round a distant prospect at present.
- **Czech Republic:** Inaugural session of the new Chamber of Deputies following the 8-9 October legislative election. Prime Minister Andrej Babiš is expected to resign, having failed to win enough support in parliament to command a majority. Instead, head of the centre-right SPOLU (Together) alliance Petr Fiala is expected to be invited to form a broad coalition involving his alliance and the centre-left Pirates/STAN partnership.
- **Canada:** The caucus of Liberal members of parliament meets for the first time since the 20 September general election at 1030ET (1530GMT, 1630CET). Comes amid some disquiet among Liberal MPs, angered at the amount of time it has taken for PM Justin Trudeau to face the party and explain how an election called early to take

advantage of strong polling and win a majority resulted in the Liberals standing still, with a net gain of just three seats from 2019.

Tuesday 9 November:

- **European Union:** Economic and Financial Affairs Council meeting takes place. EU finance ministers set to discuss economic governance, with particular focus on the future of the Stability and Growth Pact. Also on the agenda are talks on NextGenEU and the Recovery and Resilience Facility intended to boost economies in the wake of COVID-19. The spike in energy prices and inflation, and the implementation of Basel III reforms also on the list of topics.
- **Russia:** Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov meets with his Belarusian counterpart Vladimir Makei, who is on a two-day visit to Moscow. The meeting comes as tensions between Belarus and the EU continue to escalate as Brussels and member state governments accuse the Belarusian government of funnelling migrants from the Middle East and Asia through Belarus to the borders of Poland and Lithuania. The EU has called out the actions as inhumane and say it risks the further spread of COVID-19.

Wednesday 10 November:

- **United States:** President Joe Biden travels the short distance from Washington, D.C to the city of Baltimore, Maryland to visit the city's large port and deliver an address talking-up the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill. The Bill was finally passed by Congress over the weekend following months of tortured negotiations between progressive and moderate Democrats in the House of Representatives. Separately, Secretary of State Anthony Blinken will hold meetings in Washington, D.C. with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba.
- **France-US:** French President Emmanuel Macron hosts US Vice-President Kamala Harris. The visit comes as the United States seeks to repair relations with France following the furore caused in Paris by the establishment of the AUKUS alliance, which resulted in the cancellation of an EUR50bn submarine contract between France and Australia. Harris to speak at the Paris Peace Forum on 11 November on issues related to global governance.
- **Americas:** Organisation of American States (OAS) holds its 51st annual general assembly. Summit will take place in Guatemala, with much of the focus on the presidential election in neighbouring Nicaragua. Incumbent President Daniel Ortega was re-elected on 7 November with around three-quarters of the vote, but the OAS has expressed alarm over the conduct of the election. In the aftermath a number of international observers have called the vote fraudulent.

Thursday 11 November:

- **European Union:** Foreign Affairs Council (Trade) meeting takes place in Brussels. Trade ministers from across the EU meet to discuss reform to the WTO and preparations for the next WTO ministerial conference. There will be an exchange of views on EU-US trade relations and how these could develop in the future. US Trade Representative Katherine Tai will hold an informal exchange of views with ministers.

Comes in the aftermath of the suspension of tariffs on steel and aluminium between the two sides implemented under former US President Donald Trump.

- **Poland, US:** Public Holiday for Independence Day, Veterans Day.

Friday 12 November:

- **Global:** COP26 summit in Glasgow, Scotland concludes after two weeks. Despite speeches and meetings involving global leaders from some of the world's largest polluters including US President Joe Biden (and Barack Obama), Indian PM Narendra Modi, and German Chancellor Angela Merkel, there are low expectations surrounding any binding resolutions coming out of the summit. The non-attendance of Chinese and Russian leaders at COP26 viewed as a major factor in this.
- **UK-EU:** UK Cabinet Office minister Lord Frost meets with European Commission Vice-President Maros Sefcovic to hold talks on the Northern Ireland protocol. Speculation has intensified that the UK could seek to trigger Article 16 of the Northern Ireland protocol, suspending its application. This would mark the most significant escalation in the row between the UK and EU over post-Brexit relations between the two sides, as well as risking a further increase in tensions between nationalists and unionists in Northern Ireland. The end of November is viewed as the most likely date for the triggering of Article 16, but the decision to do so could take place as early as this week.
- **European Union:** Economic and Financial Affairs Council takes place in its Budget format. Finance and economy ministers from across the EU join to prepare the meeting of the conciliation committee taking place later on 12 November. The conciliation committee seeks to reach an agreement between the Council's and the European Parliament's stances on the 2022 EU budget and have both sides sign up to a joint text.

Saturday 13 November:

- **Asia:** Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) leaders' meeting concludes having begun on 12 November. The summit is being hosted virtually by New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern (who acknowledged how the event has been overshadowed by the in-person G20 and COP26 summits). APEC counts as it members major economies such as the United States, Russia, China, Japan, Australia, and Canada. The most controversial topic of discussion is likely to be efforts from Taiwan and China to join the CPTPP trade pact, and the US' bid to host the 2023 APEC summit.

Sunday 14 November:

- **Bulgaria:** Presidential and parliamentary elections take place. President Rumen Radev is running for a second term and is seen as the strong favourite. The parliamentary elections are Bulgaria's third this year following two failed attempts to form governing coalitions. Polls show the strong likelihood of another inconclusive result that will continue the country's political paralysis while the country deals with a major spike in COVID-19 cases and hospitalisations.
- **Argentina:** Mid-term elections to determine the composition of one-half of the Chamber of Deputies and one-third of the Senate. The incumbent left-wing Peronist/Kirchnerist *Frente de Todos* (Everyone's Front) is expected to be on the

receiving end of a heavy defeat that could see the majority for President Alberto Fernandez's party in the Senate wiped out and its plurality in the Chamber of Deputies in jeopardy. The centre-right *Juntos por el Cambio* (Together for Change) coalition is poised to make notable gains.

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