

# APSNet for 20070528

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## Austral Peace and Security Network (APSNet)

Twice weekly report from the Nautilus Institute at RMIT, Australia.

**Thursday 28 May 2007**

1. [\\$12m Nuclear Deal Divides Community](#)
2. [Big Spender Nelson Has Questions to Answer](#)
3. [Helicopters Finally Set for Take-Off](#)

Briefing Note: [Cluster Bombs, the CCWT and Australia](#) - Richard Tanter

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1. [\\$12m Nuclear Deal Divides Community](#), Age, 2007-05-26 Aboriginal elders in a remote Northern Territory community have accepted \$12 million for allowing Australia's first national nuclear waste dump to be built on their land. But the secretly negotiated deal has bitterly divided traditional owners of the 2241- square-kilometre Muckaty Station, where the Federal Government may build a dump storing 5000 cubic metres of nuclear waste.
  - [Aboriginal Site Nominated for Nuke Waste](#), AAP, Age, 2007-05-25
  - [Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Legislation Amendment Bill 2006 \(Provisions\)](#), Commonwealth of Australia, 2006-11-30
  - [Outback Station Returned to Owners](#), Media Release, Northern Land Council, 1999-02-18 [PDF]
  - [Muckarty Home Station](#), Northern Territory Government, 2005-10-04

- 2.
3. Big Spender Nelson Has Questions to Answer, Geoffrey Barker, [AFR\\*](#), 2007-05-25 Why has the government been so reluctant to explain why it has raised defence spending to the present record levels? What justifies the spending of billions of dollars on high-tech aircraft and warships and other equipment when it is broadly agreed that there are no threats to Australia's sovereignty.  
\* [Subscription required](#). <http://www.afr.com/home/>  
  - [Executive Summary: The Cost of Defence: Defence Budget Brief 2007-2008](#), Mark Thompson, ASPI, 2007-5-24
- 4.
5. [Helicopters Finally Set for Take-Off](#), Craig Skehan, SMH, 2007-05-26 Australian taxpayers have been spared the loss of more than \$1 billion in the troubled program to acquire new helicopters for the Australian Navy. Sources said the Minister for Defence, Brendan Nelson, was unable to convince cabinet colleagues to dump the acquisition of 11 Super Seasprites, which was the subject of a review amid safety worries.

### **Briefing Note: Cluster Bombs, the CCWT, and Australia - Richard Tanter**

An international conference of governments on the Certain Conventional Weapons Convention (CCWC), which came into effect in 1983, recently concluded in Lima, Peru. One key topic of the conference was the prohibition of cluster bombs. Australia does not use cluster bombs as a matter of policy, and has in the past spoken strongly against their use. Australia chaired the 2001 CCWT Review Conference, and ratified Protocol V on explosive remnants of war (ERW) in December 2006. According to a report in The Age on 27 May, the Australian representative at the Lima conference has argued that

"weapons being obtained by the ADF should not be included in the ban. The ADF argues that unlike older cluster bombs, which use unreliable, unguided 'dumb' bomblets, this new weapon would be 'more discriminating', with a small number of precision bombs that would self-destruct if they did not find a target. The ADF says the new weapons have a self-destruct capability, minimising the risk to civilians from unexploded cluster munitions."

- [Defence Wants Limit on Banned Bombs](#), Tom Hyland, Age, 2007-05-27
- [Cluster Bombs and Land Mines](#), National Conference of the Defence Legal Service, Minister for Defence, Robert Hill, 2004-01-28 [MS Word]
- [Background: The Campaign to Ban Cluster Bombs](#), Lionel Beehner, Council on Foreign Relations, 2006-11-21
- [Factsheet: Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons \(CCW\) at a Glance](#), Arms Control Association, September 2005
- [Documents on Cluster Bombs](#), Human Rights Watch [Updated regularly]
- [Information on the Lima Conference](#), Cluster Munition Coalition, May 2007
- [Cluster Bombs](#), GlobalSecurity, 2006-10-01
- [A Dirty Dozen Cluster Munitions](#), Human Rights Watch

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