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1. [Australia Acknowledges need for an Nuclear Weapons Convention](#), ICAN, 2008-04-30 [167 KB, PDF]

Australia today delivered a statement on nuclear disarmament to the Non-Proliferation Treaty meeting in Geneva. It included a reference to the need for a nuclear weapons convention (NWC) for the first time ever. This is something which disarmament experts have described as quite significant. The only other countries so far to have mentioned an NWC at the meeting have been Costa Rica, Malaysia and Iran.

- [Statement on Cluster One Issues](#), Treaty on the Non-Proliferation for Nuclear Weapons, Second Session of the Preparatory Committee, Statement by Caroline Millar, Ambassador for Disarmament, Permanent Representative to the United Nations, 2008-04-30 [PDF, 168 KB]
- [Delegates Statements, Prepcom 2008](#), 2010 Review Conference, Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), UN, 2008-04-28
- [Background Information, Prepcom 2008](#), 2010 Review Conference, Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), UN
- [2008 NPT Preparatory Committee 28 April - 9 May, Geneva](#), Women's International league for Peace and Freedom

- [Nuclear Weapons Convention Submitted to United Nations by Costa Rica and Malaysia](#), 2020 Vision Campaign

2. [UN Has Torture Questions for Rudd, Mark Dodd, Australian](#), 2008-05-01

Questions were raised yesterday by the UN Committee Against Torture in its review of Canberra's compliance with the international conventions on torture, cruelty, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment. Australia was praised for closing down offshore detention centres for asylum-seekers, but the UN wanted to know why the Government was building a new centre on Christmas Island.

- [Committee against Torture Hears Response of Australia](#), United Nations Office at Geneva, UN, 2008-04-30
- [Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment](#), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

3. [Military Planners Face Crunch Time](#), Patrick Walters, Australian, 2008-0-29

The evolving insurgency in Oruzgan province is such that Australia's military effort is simply not sufficient to guarantee the long-term success of the mission. Our 1000-strong ADF contingent does not have enough boots on the ground to make a qualitative difference to the long-running counter-insurgency against the Taliban.

- [No More Diggers for Afghanistan, Fitzgibbon Pledges](#), Patrick Walters and Mark Dodd, Australian, 2008-05-01
- [Australian Soldier Wounded in Battle with Taliban](#), Brendan Nicholson, Age, 2008-05-01
- [Oruzgan Province](#), Australia in Afghanistan, Nautilus Institute

4. [Insurgents Take Troops by Sandstorm](#), Jonathan Pearlman, SMH, 2008-0-29

Australian soldiers in Iraq have come under heavy rocket fire in Baghdad's green zone after sandstorms sent blankets of dust across the city and provided cover for insurgents. The attacks, which appeared to be some of the biggest clashes in weeks, showed that some rogue fighters have defied an order by an anti-American Shiite cleric, Moqtada al-Sadr, to observe a ceasefire.

5. [Sabre-Rattling Will Draw Near With Globalisation](#), Paul Dibb, SMH, 2008-05-01

Threats to our national security should be restricted in definition to events that could seriously undermine our territorial sovereignty, democratic freedoms and rule of law, and basic economic prosperity. It is not good enough to invoke generalised threats that could inconvenience us, such as illegal people movements, trans-national crime or climate change.

6. [Timor Leste, Indonesia to Complete Border Issues](#), Desy Nurhayati, Jakarta Post, 2008-04-30

Timor Leste and Indonesia agreed Tuesday to greater cooperation on many issues, with the leaders of the two nations expressing a commitment to preserving good bilateral ties. The two leaders discussed the completion of border demarcation and agreed on 97 percent of the land border spanning 268.8 kilometers. The two countries have also agreed to boost defense cooperation.

7. [The Cost of Crime in East Timor](#), Loro Horta, *Asia Times*, 2008-04-29

United Nations and local police raids have exposed embattled East Timor as a hotbed for Asian organized crime syndicates engaged in narcotics and the sex trade. Smugglers, realizing only two aging gunboats patrol a 870-kilometer coastline, are also increasing operations. Timor is losing an estimated US\$45 million annually from smuggling and poaching activities, equivalent to 11% of the government's current annual budget or more than the entire police and defense budget combined.

8. Policy Forum 08-05A: [Elections in Tonga Re-Affirm Call for Change](#) - Nic Maclellan

Australian journalist and researcher Nic Maclellan writes that following public protests in the Kingdom of Tonga in recent years, the re-election of key pro-democracy figures in elections last month ensures that "reform of existing political structures will remain high on the agenda". Tonga, notes Maclellan, "is largely ignored by Australia's media, except in moments of crisis like the destruction of businesses and public buildings in the central business district on 16 November 2006 - even though the deployment of Australian troops and police in support of the Tongan authorities in November 2006 has set a significant precedent for operations by the ADF and AFP in support of the government and monarchy in Tonga." He concludes that "the Australian government's attitude to democratic reform in Tonga will be a significant factor in the changes to come."

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