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1. [Military Exercises in East Timor under Fire](#), Philip Dorling, Canberra Times, 2008-07-09

The Australian Defence Force has begun a series of controversial exercises in East Timor involving Black Hawk helicopters firing live machine-gun rounds. Advertisements warning of the exercises appeared in East Timorese newspapers last week. But no special precautions were being taken apart from the newspaper advertisements.

2. [Taliban Conflict 'Cannot be Won' in Afghanistan](#), Sally Neighbour, Australian, 2008-07-10

The fact that the conflict is un-winnable is clear. Amid the turmoil, there is growing debate over what was once unthinkable - negotiating a settlement with the Taliban. The growing quagmire is causing some to question the fundamental premises of the Western effort in Afghanistan. No one has the answers, but everyone agrees the task is grim.

- [Sixth Aussie Death in Afghanistan: But is the West Winning?](#) ABC, 2008-07-09
- [Casualties - ADF](#), Australia in Afghanistan, Nautilus Institute

3. Iraq Raises Idea of Timetable for US Withdrawal, Qassim Abdul-Zahra and Sebastian Abbot, AP, ABC News, 2008-07-07

Iraq's prime minister said Monday his country wants some type of timetable for a withdrawal of American troops included in the deal the two countries are negotiating. Many Iraqi lawmakers had criticized the government's attempt to negotiate a formal status of forces agreement, worried that U.S. demands would threaten the country's sovereignty.

- [US Still Aiming for July Iraqi Security Pact](#), ABC, 2008-07-09

4. Nuclear Disarmament and Its Limits, Rod Lyon, ASPI, 2008-09-07

Australia is in a delicate position. It is both a direct beneficiary of extended nuclear deterrence and a major uranium exporter. Because nuclear weapons are an important constraint on major power war we should be cautious about getting rid of them. And we should accept that while full nuclear disarmament can be achieved, it can occur only in a world substantially different to the current one.

5. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's Tough Stance on Sect Illustrates Influence of Muslim Hardliners, Stephen Fitzpatrick, Australian, 2008-07-08

Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono is in thrall to hardline Muslim groups as national polling and community sentiment suggest he will fight an uphill battle in general elections next year. An ICG report argues that radical groups are increasingly influencing government policy, taking as its example a recent Yudhoyono decree on the Ahmadiyah Muslim sect.

- [Indonesia: Implications of the Ahmadiyah Decree](#), ICG, 2008-07-07

6. China, India Snub World on Targets, Katharine Murphy, Age, 2008-07-10

China, India and other major developing nations have rejected a push by the world's richest countries for them to commit to firm targets on cutting greenhouse gas emissions. In closed-door negotiations involving the G8 nations and leaders from eight other countries, only Australia, Indonesia and South Korea backed the G8 position on climate change.

- [Rudd Seeks Climate 'Grand Consensus'](#), Peter Williams, Australian, 2008-07-09

7. Austral Policy Forum 08-06A, US Chemical and Biological Warfare Tests in the Pacific - and Australia? Nic Maclellan, 2008-07-10

Nic Maclellan of the Nautilus Institute at RMIT writes that a recently revealed United States request to the Australian government in the early 1960s to allow nerve gas testing in Queensland "was part of a much wider program of testing chemical and biological weapons during the Cold War" about which much remains unknown. Maclellan notes that under Project 112 and SHAD, weapons with sarin, VX and other chemical and biological agents were tested in Hawai'i, Panama, and the Marshall Islands in the 1960s. These experiments "involved about 4,300 US military personnel, mostly from the Navy." Maclellan concludes: "the Australian government must call on the United States to release further details, to clarify whether any such tests were actually conducted in Australia or other locations in neighbouring Pacific island countries."

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Richard Tanter,
Project Co-ordinator

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Nautilus Institute
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:
nautilus@nautilus.org