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1. Nautilus Awarded Australia-Japan Foundation Grant for Nuclear Disarmament Study

The Australia-Japan Foundation has awarded the Nautilus Institute at RMIT $40,000 to support Nautilus Institute's response to the increased danger of nuclear war and proliferation through Australia-Japan cooperation for nuclear disarmament. This project seeks to supplement the Australian initiative to establish the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, which will be co-chaired by Australia and Japan, with parallel work at the civil society level. The project, in collaboration with researchers and civil society groups in Australia and Japan, will centre on a three-day sequence of an expert research workshop with Australian and Japanese specialists, a scenarios building workshop with these experts and others to explore uncertainty in pathways to non-proliferation goals, and a high profile public forum.

- Australia-Japan Foundation
- Australia-Japan Civil Society Cooperation for Nuclear Disarmament, Nautilus Institute.

2. Australian Forces Kill Taliban Leader: Defence, ABC, 2009-01-12

The Defence Ministry says Australian special forces in Afghanistan have killed a senior Taliban commander involved in recruiting fighters. Mullah Abdul Rasheed played a "primary role" in improvised bomb attacks against foreign troops in the southern province of Uruzgan. Rasheed is believed to be the organiser of the rocket attack that struck a remote patrol base in the Baluchi Valley just over a week ago, killing Australian Private Gregory Sher.

- Afghan Women, Children Die in Clashes Involving Diggers, Tom Hyland, Age, 2009-01-11
- Drone Bomb Theory on Afghan Deaths, Rory Callinan and Hashim Shukoor, Australian, 2009-01-10

3. Aim to Withdraw Diggers from Afghanistan by 2012, Leo Shanahan, Age, 2009-01-12

The commander of Australian forces in the Middle East, Major-General Michael Hindmarsh, has indicated that Operations Plan 2012 is aimed at handing over control of Oruzgan province - where the majority of Australian forces are serving - by 2012. However Lieutenant-General Mark Evans has said there is no timeline for the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan and that this is a decision for the Australian Government.

- Australian government policy - Afghanistan, Australia in Afghanistan, Nautilus Institute.

4. Navy Plans Pirate Fight, Sarah Smiles, Age, 2009-01-09

Heavily armed pirates off Somalia could face the Australian Navy, which is considering sending a warship to join an anti-piracy force there. The US reportedly has asked Australia to join a 20-nation counter-piracy force. Defence head Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston said Defence would consider sending a warship now that Australia's role guarding Iraq's offshore oil facilities had ended.

- No More Naval Gazing as China Takes to the Sea, Rory Medcalf, Age, 2009-01-05

5. Defence Warns of Climate Conflict, Jonathan Pearlman and Ben Cubby, SMH, 2009-01-7

Rising sea levels could lead to failed states across the Pacific and require extra naval deployments to deal with increases in illegal migration and fishing, a Defence Force analysis says. The Defence analysis was completed in November 2007 for the head of strategy, Michael Pezzullo, who has since been appointed to oversee the preparation of the Defence White Paper.

6. Navy Puts Focus on Security in Straits of Malacca, New Straits Times, 2009-01-07

The Royal Malaysian Navy will be placing more emphasis on security in the Straits of Malacca this year, in anticipation of a rise in pirate activity due to the global economic crisis.

Navy chief Admiral Datuk Seri Abdul Aziz said the RMN would cooperate with its counterparts in Indonesia, Thailand and Singapore in stepping up patrols in the straits.

- Indonesia to Make 12 Malacca Strait Surveillance Radars Operational Soon [Indonesian language], Media Indonesia, 2009-01-05

7. Failure of Justice in Indonesia, Tim Lindsey and Jemma Parsons, Australian, 2009-01-09

On New Year's Eve, the notorious South Jakarta District Court gave Indonesia an unwelcome new year gift. Acting seemingly with legal propriety, it acquitted Muchdi Purwopranjono, the man many Indonesians believe ordered the murder of one of their most respected human rights advocates, Munir Said Thalib.

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