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1. Ties with Russia at turning point: Rudd, Age, 2008-09-18

Kevin Rudd fears the west is at a turning point in its relations with Russian. He said the Russian intervention in Georgia was now a very complex situation and the international community's response to it was a very difficult challenge. But he refused to rule out sales of Australian uranium to Russia, despite a Labor-led parliamentary committee recommending delaying the ratification of a treaty between the two nations.

- Australia-Russia Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, Frequently Asked Questions, DFAT, August 2008

2. Base Deal in New Caledonia, Patrick Walters, Australian, 2008-09-18

Australia and France have moved to strengthen bilateral security ties, with the defence force now able to use New Caledonia as a logistic support base for operations in the South Pacific. The agreement will allow Australian naval and military forces to re-supply and refuel as well as use repair facilities in the French territory.

- 'Two Great Pacific Powers -- Australia and France': Morin, Pacific Magazine, 2008-09-15

3. Defence to Move to Countering Terror: Robert McClelland, Patrick Walters, Australian, 2008-09-16

Australians must get used to a much broader national security agenda that goes well beyond traditional security threats with a shaper focus on preventive measures when it comes to countering terrorism, Attorney General Robert McClelland said. Mr McClelland said both the pace of technological change and emerging threats such as climate change pose formidable challenges for national security planners.

- Check against Delivery, Robert McClelland, Attorney-General, Security in Government Conference, 2008-09-16
- Rise in Cyber-espionage Adding to Spooks' Workload, Julian Bajkowski, AFR*, 2008-09-18
  * Subscription required.

4. When War Criminals Hide Out in the Open, Piers Akerman, Daily Telegraph, 2008-09-16

The Rudd Labor Government has dudded its constituency on almost every domestic issue and is now turning its back on core principles of humanity. Joanna Ximenes, an East Timorese woman living in Sydney, says she has identified the man who she believes was responsible for the death of her brother, and the Rudd Government seems reluctant to treat the matter seriously.

5. Tomgram: Tariq Ali, Has the U.S. Invasion of Pakistan Begun? Tom Dispatch, 2008-09-16

Already Pakistan's sovereignty has functionally been declared of no significance by our President, and so, without a word from Congress, the American war that already stretches from Iraq to Afghanistan is threatening to widen in ways that are potentially incendiary in the extreme.

6. NATO Tries To Reduce Afghan Casualties, Thom Shanker, IHT, 2008-09-17

Senior American military commander, General David McKiernan, in Afghanistan said that in an effort to reduce civilian casualties, he had tightened the rules around when NATO troops here may use lethal force. He said that the military mission in Afghanistan was still short-handed by thousands of troops. The additional forces are required to stem violence across Afghanistan, which is up about 30 percent compared with this time last year.

7. Is It Really Too Dangerous To Downgrade The Terrorist Threat? Daniel Flitton, Age, 2008-09-18

The terrorist threat level in Australia is officially rated as medium; it would take a brave analyst to lower it. What if, among all the rumour and intelligence "chatter" about plots, an attack slips through in the following days and weeks? Every judgement by security agencies will be second-guessed, every scrap of intelligence pored over with the benefit of hindsight. Yet the open-ended nature of such questions makes a rating meaningless.

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