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1. [Australia Offers More Help, Military Training To Pakistan](#), Matt Wade, Age, 2009-02-18

Australia will increase economic aid to Pakistan and quadruple the number of Pakistani army officers it trains as the nation battles terrorism and economic crisis. The number of Pakistani security and defence personnel offered training in Australia will be increased four-fold to more than 40. Foreign Minister Stephen Smith said the Government was committed to strengthening Pakistan's ability to combat terrorism, narcotics, people-smuggling and money-laundering.

- [Australian Government Policy - Afghanistan](#), Australia in Afghanistan, Nautilus Institute

2. [Is the U.S. Repeating Soviet Mistakes in Afghanistan?](#) Jonathan S. Landay, McClatchy Newspapers, 2009-02-14

Some Afghan experts are worried that the United States and its NATO allies are making some of the same mistakes that helped the Taliban's forerunners defeat the Soviet Union. Among the mistakes

are relying too heavily on military force, inflicting too many civilian casualties, concentrating too much power in Kabul and tolerating pervasive government corruption.

- [Putting Stamp on Afghan War, Obama Will Send 17,000 Troops](#), Helene Cooper, NYT, 2009-02-18
- [Support for US Plummet Amid Afghanistan's Ongoing Strife](#), ABC, 2009-02-09 [PDF, 92Kb]
- [Afghan Civilian Deaths Rose 40 Percent in 2008](#), Dexter Filkins, NYT, 2009-02-17

3. Secrecy and Denial as Pakistan Lets CIA Use Airbase to Strike Militants, Times, 2009-02-17

The CIA is secretly using an airbase in southern Pakistan to launch the Predator drones that observe and attack al-Qaeda and Taliban militants on the Pakistani side of the border with Afghanistan. The strip, which is about 30 miles from the Afghan border, allows US forces to launch a Drone within minutes of receiving actionable intelligence as well as allowing them to attack targets further afield.

- [Pakistan Lends Support for U.S. Military Strikes](#), Matthew Rosenberg, Siobhan Gorman and Jay Solomon, Wall Street Journal, 2009-02-18

4. Afghan Militia Gears Up to Fight the Taliban, Graeme Smith, Globe And Mail, 2009-02-18

The first stages of a plan to raise militias against the Afghan insurgency will involve giving 1,200 assault rifles to local men with little training, according to documents that reveal fresh details about the controversial program.

The Afghan Public Protection Force was cloaked in secrecy when its existence was announced last month, as government officials refused to confirm even the location where the new units are being recruited. The few details released so far have raised concerns that the APPF will repeat previous failed experiments with tribal militias in Afghanistan, where hired gunmen have a long history of stoking disarray and rebellion.

5. The UN's Lame Security Review for Timor-Leste, Jim Della-Giacoma, Lowy Interpreter, 2009-02-17

While the UN in New York has worked on its security sector reform doctrine, it has neglected the practice in the field, where SSR has often been seen as a technical exercise conducted by 'experts' drawn from armies and police forces rather than a political effort involving elected officials. The time seems to have passed for the comprehensive security sector review, as it is lost in the micromanagement of advisory board meetings, sub-committees, and piecemeal projects.

- [Timor Leste: No Time for Complacency](#), ICG, 2009-02-09 [PDF, 302 KB]

6. Australia, Indonesia Discuss Free Trade, Sandra O'Malley, SMH, 2009-02-18

Australia and Indonesia are tipped to give the green light to talks on a free trade deal as ministers from both countries gather in Sydney to consider ways to enhance already strong ties. Prime

Minister Kevin Rudd will officially open the Australia and Indonesia: Partners in a New Era conference on Thursday night.

- [Australia to Raise Import Concerns with Indonesia](#), Linda Mottram, ABC, 2009-02-17

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