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[1. Troops to Train with Jakarta Force Once Linked to Terrorists](#), Tom Hyland, Age, 2009-01-18

Australian troops will expand counter-terrorism training with Indonesia's special forces - a unit Kevin Rudd once suggested could not be trusted because of its alleged links with terrorists. Known as Unit of Detachment 81 and part of the Kopassus special forces, the unit has also been linked to atrocities in East Timor during the 1999 independence vote and the suppression of dissent during the Suharto era.

[2. Confusion Clouds Afghanistan Talks](#), Tom Hyland, Age, 2009-01-18

Question marks over the Afghan war will dominate the agenda when Foreign Minister Stephen Smith holds talks tomorrow with his visiting Dutch counterpart Maxime Verhagen. The bulk of Australia's 1000-plus troops in Afghanistan serve with a Dutch-led force in Oruzgan province. But the Dutch commitment is due to end next year, raising doubts about Australia's role in Afghanistan, where the Federal Government says Australia is committed "for the long haul".

- [Afghanistan: We Can Do Better](#), Secretary General of NATO, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, Washington Post, 2009-01-18

3. [Timor Officials 'Took' \\$13.3 Million](#), Mark Dodd, Australian, 2009-01-16

An urgent search is under way in East Timor for \$13.3 million that was allocated to various government ministries but is unaccounted for, amid growing corruption concerns. News of the missing millions is a severe embarrassment to the Gusmao Government, which is heavily dependent on aid from the UN and foreign donors, of which Australia is one of its biggest.

4. [Secure Afghanistan](#), Mary Kaldor, Marika Theros, Open Democracy, 2009-01-11

A surge will be pointless unless it also involves a fundamental change of approach. At present, the thrust of the international intervention remains within a traditional security narrative that focuses on stabilizing the state militarily and prioritizes the hunt for terrorists and insurgents over the protection of civilians. What is needed is not withdrawal, but a new human security approach that would prioritise the protection of individuals in Afghanistan as well as in neighbouring states.

- [Afghan Conflict Will Be Reviewed](#), Karen DeYoung, Washington Post, 2009-01-13

5. [Canberra Hikes Fiji Aid Relief to \\$3m](#), Rowan Callick, Australian, 2009-01-17

Foreign Minister Stephen Smith has announced that Australia would increase to \$3million its relief package for Fiji, where floods have this week killed 12, forced 10,500 people to be evacuated and devastated the economy. This is despite continuing tense relations with the Fiji Government, led by military chief Frank Bainimarama. Mr Bainimarama indicated in a radio interview that he might not attend a leaders' summit of the Pacific Islands Forum in PNG on January 27, saying he was more needed in Fiji to direct relief efforts. The summit will consider whether to suspend Fiji from the forum.

6. Policy Forum 09-1A: [The Muria Peninsula Nuclear Power Proposal: State of Play](#) - Richard Tanter with Arabella Imhoff

Richard Tanter and Arabella Imhoff from Nautilus Institute at RMIT University write that the Indonesian government proposal to build a large nuclear power station on the north coast of Central Java on the Muria Peninsula gave rise to considerable local opposition on the basis of concerns about unacknowledged seismic and volcanic risk, a lack of financial transparency, and corruption in the nuclear regulatory agency. In 2008 National Atomic Energy Agency (BATAN) responded publicly by claiming to consider alternative sites in Java and Kalimantan. However, Tanter and Imhoff conclude that "there is good reason to doubt that BATAN has in fact abandoned its long-held plans, and that the issue has just been removed from the public agenda for the duration of the election campaigns. While the case for a nuclear response to Indonesia's electricity requirements is a weak one, the social forces backing nuclear power inside the country and abroad remain powerful."

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