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1. [Repression Wins No Fans](#), Geoffrey Barker, AFR*, 2008-04-21

It is to the credit of Prime Minister Kevin Rudd that he insisted that Australians would be free to protest peacefully against the Beijing flame. The defence of human rights is an entirely legitimate international concern, and infinitely more important than the promotion of any sporting event, no matter how lofty its ideals.

* [Subscription required](#).

2. [Pullout from Iraq Delayed](#), Dennis Shanahan, Australian, 2008-04-19

Elements of Australia's 550-strong battle group in southern Iraq will still be in Iraq three months after the mid-year withdrawal Kevin Rudd promised in the election campaign. Troops will begin to leave al-Muthanna province in about eight weeks. But the phased withdrawal is expected to take three months, with the final elements of the battle group not leaving until the end of August.

• [Report Blames Bush for Iraq Debacle](#), Tony Walker, AFR*, 2008-04-21

* [Subscription required](#).

• [Choosing War: The Decision to Invade Iraq and Its Aftermath](#), Joseph Collins, Institute for National

Strategic Studies, National Defense University, April 2008-04 [0.97 MB, PDF]

- [Unraveling Iraq: 12 Answers to Questions No One Is Bothering to Ask about Iraq](#), Tom Engelhardt, TomDispatch, 2008-04-20
- [America Must Talk to Iran if It is to Make Progress on Iraq](#), Amin Saikal, Age, 2008-04-18

3. [Indonesia Arrests E Timor Rebels](#), BBC, 2008-04-18

Indonesia has arrested three men suspected of involvement in the shooting of East Timor's President, Jose Ramos-Horta. President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono said that East Timor had specifically asked for help in arresting the men. But he expressed surprise that Mr Ramos-Horta had made the co-operation public when police had been told to keep it secret.

4. [Assessing the Overall Security Situation in Afghanistan](#), Nick Grono, ICG, 2008-04-17

The decades of conflict have damaged the country's social fabric, undermining state and traditional resolution mechanisms. Without the institutions to tackle grievances the result is chronic local conflicts - not all, or even most of it directly linked to the insurgency itself. NATO's pervasiveness highlights the failure of the Afghan government and its international partners to implement effective community peace-building efforts.

- [Community Peacebuilding in Afghanistan](#), Matt Waldman, Oxfam International, February, 2008 [358 KB, PDF]
- [Afghanistan's Vietnam Portent](#), Paul Rogers, OpenDemocracy, 2007-04-17
- [Afghanistan Moves to Center Stage](#), M.K. Bhadrakumar, Asiatimes, 2008-04-18

5. [Playing the Power Game](#), Bruce Grant, Age, 2008-04-18

Australia has to realise it is a middle power and adjust its international role accordingly. The Rudd Government faces a complex world. The traditional "realist" model no longer helps us to understand how the world works. Middle power diplomacy is equipped to deal with this emerging world. It means an additional effort on issues of interest to others as well as to Australia that we judge are ready for action.

6. [The Illegal Trade in Timber and Timber Products in the Asia-Pacific Region](#), Andreas Schloenhardt, Research and Public Policy Series 89, Australian Institute of Criminology, April 2008

This report examines the scale of the illegal timber trade in the Asia-Pacific region, encompassing the processes and current trends in logging, sourcing, trafficking, manufacturing, importing and consumption of illegal timber and timber products. The report highlights the need for cooperative policies and regulations between countries to resolve sovereignty issues, share information and develop standards.

- [Illegal Logging and Timber Trade](#), Australian Institute of Criminology

7. [The Top 20 Arms Importers, 2003-2007](#), Åsa Blomström & Noel Kelly,

SIPRI, 2008-03-31

This map marks the world's top 20 arms importers for the period 2003-2007. It shows Australia's position as number eight, below China, India, United Arab Emirates, Greece, South Korea, Israel and Egypt.

- [Stockholm International Peace Research Institute \(SIPRI\) Arms Transfers Database](#) 2007

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