APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, February 23, 2009

Recommended Citation

"APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, February 23, 2009", APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, February 23, 2009, https://nautilus.org/apsnet/apsnet-23-february-2009/

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1. Jobs Boost From New $15b Submarine Fleet, Andrew Probyn and Nick Butterly, SMH, 2009-02-20

A $15 billion fleet of Australian-built submarines will be the centrepiece of the Federal Government's blueprint to shore up the nation's defences and provide high-tech naval deterrence against Indonesia and China. The 15- to 20-year project, nicknamed SEA 1000, will aim to replace the Royal Australian Navy's fleet of six Collins Class submarines based at Garden Island, Western Australia.

- The Enemy Below: Anti-Submarine Warfare in the ADF, Andrew Davies, ASPI, 2007-03-01
- Keeping Up With the Neighbours: Submarine Fleets in the Asia-Pacific and Australia's Response, Andrew Davies, Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), January 2008 [PPT, 450 KB]

2. ADF Prioritises Anti-Rocket Radar System, Cameron Stewart, Australian, 2009-02-20

The Australian Defence Force wants to buy a radar-based warning system to protect its troops in Afghanistan from Taliban rocket attacks. The move follows the death of Australian commando Greg Sher in a rocket attack last month and the growing incidence of such attacks by Taliban insurgents in Oruzgan province, where Australian troops are based.

- Aussies to Get US Chopper Support in Afghanistan, Patrick Walters, Australian, 2009-02-21

3. NATO Allies Reluctant to Increase Afghan Presence, AP, IHT, 2009-02-20

NATO defense ministers concluded two days of talks with indications that few allies were willing to offer significant numbers of additional combat troops for Afghanistan but that they might seek to compensate by deploying more civilians to train local security forces and build the country's economy.

4. Obama Upholds Detainee Policy in Afghanistan, Charlie Savage, NYT, 2009-02-21

The Obama administration has told a federal judge that military detainees in Afghanistan have no legal right to challenge their imprisonment there, embracing a key argument of former President Bush’s legal team.

- US Expands Prison in Afghanistan, Al Jazeera, 2009-02-20
- Detainee policy - Afghanistan and Iraq, Australia in Afghanistan, Nautilus Institute

5. Pyongyang Needs a Good Neighbour, Cynthia Banham, SMH, 2009-02-23

The Obama Administration's early emphasis on East Asia is good news for Australia, which needs the US to be engaged in our region. But Australia should take some initiative and offer ideas on how it could assist its number one ally in regional diplomacy.

6. Gareth Evans: The State Of Nuclear Non-Proliferation, Peter Mares, ABC, 2009-02-23 [Audio]

There’s a real commitment from the Obama Administration to move forward quite significantly on these fronts, not just on non-proliferation, but to genuinely make a move on the disarmament part, which if followed through will fundamentally change the international psychological landscape and pick up the intellectual momentum that was generated by the Kissinger, Schultz, Nunn, Perry article and turn it into real political momentum.

7. A Strange Tale of Two Diplomats, Geoffrey Barker, Inside Story, 2009-02-12

The case was the $1.5 million three-year pursuit of diplomat Trent Smith following an unsubstantiated accusation by another diplomat, Matthew Hyndes, whose private and professional credibility was compromised. DFAT's willingness to rely on an officer with damaged credibility suggests that its desire to pursue Smith overcame its judgement and sense of justice. There were even suggestions that the department might have been complicit in moves to destroy documents relating to the death of Merv Jenkins.

- The Death of Mervyn Jenkins, Australian Forces Abroad, Nautilus Institute

8. Defending the Home Front is Top Priority, Anthony Bergin, Age, 2009-02-20

We now need to face up to climate change as a fundamental national security challenge. The same approach to planning and preparation as well as the vessels, aircraft and troops that are sent overseas should be turned to the humanitarian business of helping Australians in harm's way on the home front.

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