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1. [Foreign Minister to Visit US and Japan](#), Daniel Flitton, Age, 2008-01-24

Mr Smith is going to Washington. On his first trip as Foreign Minister, Stephen Smith will meet top US officials to defend the Federal Government's plans to pull Australian combat forces out of Iraq. Mr Smith is also expected to canvass Australia's military deployment to Afghanistan, and possibly flag an increase in Australian troops to combat Taliban fighters.

- [Australia: New Foreign Minister in Mission to US and Japan](#), Sen Lam with Richard Tanter, ABC, 2008-01-24 [transcript]

2. [Putting Diplomacy to the Test](#), Geoffrey Barker, AFR*, 2008-01-23

China is Australia's largest trading partner and main regional strategic rival to our key ally the US. How Kevin Rudd manages this relationship will determine how successfully Australia avoids a tributary relationship with Beijing. In geo-political terms China's long-term interest is to erode the

so-called three pillars of which the Rudd government foreign policy is based: US alliance, active UN membership and comprehensive regional engagement.

* [Subscription required](#).

3. [Whalers Refuse to Accept Injunction](#), Rosslyn Beeby, Canberra Times, 2008-01-24

A Japanese whaling company has refused to accept delivery of an Australian Federal Court injunction ordering them to stop killing whales in Australian waters. Officials at the Tokyo headquarters of Kyodo Senpaku Kaisha, told an interpreter the court documents would be "thrown away immediately" into a rubbish bin.

- [Whale Watch](#), Sydney Morning Herald.

4. [Muhammadiyah: Thai Govt Should Use Soft Power in Dealing with the South](#), Antara, 2008-01-24

The Muhammadiyah, second biggest Islamic organization in Indonesia, called on the Thai government to use soft power in solving the conflict in South Thailand.

5. [North Korea to Close its Embassy in Australia to Save Costs, Diplomat Says](#), AP, IHT, 2008-01-22

North Korea can no longer afford its embassy in Australia and will close it at the end of January, an official said. "While the closure of any embassy is regrettable, we will continue to maintain diplomatic relations with the DPRK through our embassy in Beijing which is accredited to the DPRK," Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith's spokesman, Andrew Dempster, said.

6. [Indonesia's Ailing Suharto Eludes Court](#), Anthony Deutsch, AP, 2008-01-18

"There is enough evidence against Suharto to try him under international law for crimes against humanity and genocide", said Richard Tanter. "The idea of pursuing old, sick men is unattractive, but the basic deterrence function of such prosecutions largely outweighs" the drawbacks, Tanter countered. "For the ghosts of all the slaughtered and tortured, I'd like to see justice."

- [Deadlock at Dawn](#), Budi Setyarso and Dwi Riyanto Agustiar, Tempo Magazine No. 21, 2008-01-22.
- [Suharto](#), Times Topics, New York Times
- [In Praise of a Dictator](#), Tom Hyland, Age, 2008-01-20
- [Soeharto, Bribes and a Culture of Corruption](#), Michael Backman, Age, 2008-01-23
- [Suharto, War Criminal](#), Richard Tanter, Inside Indonesia No.55, July/September 1998

7. [Further UN Support Crucial in Timor-Leste](#), Press Release, UN News Centre, 2008-01-23

The Secretary-General recommends a 12-month extension of UNMIT's mandate, stressing that its continuation "is crucial... to support Timorese-owned solutions and self-reliance in addressing the many challenges ahead." This recommendation is made as a result of the Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (for the period from 21 August

2007 to 7 January 2008).

8. [Climate Change: Marshalling Asia to Act](#), Christine Loh and Simon Tay, Global Asia, Vol 2, No. 3, 2007

Developing countries in Asia are not yet ready to agree to a specific greenhouse gas stabilization goal or binding national targets. Taking this short-term view, emissions reductions leading to stabilization can best be achieved by aligning Asia's crucial interest in energy security and sustainable development by pursuing energy efficiency and a low-carbon future more aggressively.

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