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2. Federal Officers to Assist Afghan Police
3. Labor in Backflip on Missile Defence Shield
4. Protesters Cleared for Entering Spy Base
5. Quadrilateral Dialogue

1. Solomons Exit a Step Closer, John Kerin, AFR*, 2008-02-23

Australia and the Solomon Islands have taken the first step towards an exit strategy for the 700-strong regional assistance mission in one of the Rudd government's first policy responses to handling the Pacific arc of instability. A meeting of Pacific Island Forum ministers has endorsed the biggest revamp of RAMSI since its inception in 2003.
* Subscription required.

- Smith Optimistic of RAMSI - SIG Development Partnership, Solomon Times, 2008-02-25
- Solomon Islands Withdraws Decision to Reject RAMSI Report, RNZI, 2008-02-24
- Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI), Australia in Solomon Islands, Nautilus Institute
- About, Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI)

2. Federal Officers to Assist Afghan Police, Tom Hyland, Age, 2008-02-24

The Federal Government is considering expanding the AFP's role in Afghanistan - currently restricted to just four officers - as part of its plan to widen Australia's effort in the war-torn country.

The army and police needed to grow to "hold our military gains and enforce the rule of law", Defence Minister Joel Fitzgibbon told Parliament. The AFP has about 500 of its 6400 officers already serving overseas.

- Afghanistan, Australian Federal Police
- AFP in Afghanistan, Australia in Afghanistan, Nautilus Institute

3. Labor in Backflip on Missile Defence Shield, Daniel Flitton, Age, 2008-0--25

Australia could soon join the US missile defence shield. Foreign Minister Stephen Smith said the Government would carefully examine new technology to improve the missile defence system in consultation with Washington. The 2007 ALP National Platform also says missile defence could "derail world progress towards nuclear disarmament and have serious consequences for Australia's national security".

- Australia-United States Ministerial Consultations Joint Communiqué, US Embassy (Canberra), 2008-02-23
- AUSMIN, Interoperability, Australian Forces Abroad, Nautilus Institute

4. Protesters Cleared for Entering Spy Base, Phoebe Stewart, Northern Territory News, 2008-02-23

Four anti-war protesters have been acquitted of national security charges for penetrating the Northern Territory's Pine Gap spy base. It took Chief Justice Martin and Justices Trevor Riley and David Angel just minutes to agree that there had been a "miscarriage of justice", as the four had not been allowed to argue before a jury that Pine Gap was not a "defence facility" for Australia.

- Pine Gap and the Coalition Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, Richard Tanter, Australia in Afghanistan, Nautilus Institute, 2007-06-13 [PPT]
- Iraq, Afghanistan and Pine Gap, Bibliography - Joint Defence Facility, Pine Gap, Australian Defence Facilities, Nautilus Institute

5. Quadrilateral Dialogue, Rory Medcalf, Lowy Institute, February 2008

The quadrilateral dialogue among the US, Japan, Australia and India was never as substantial as its champions or its detractors claimed it to be. A new conservative leadership in Seoul might fancy the quad’s revival, this time in five-sided form. And the US Navy continues to develop practical cooperation with its counterparts in Australia, Japan and increasingly India, while Australia-India, Australia-Japan and Japan-India security ties steadily strengthen. China’s quad-watchers won’t be quitting just yet.

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Richard Tanter,
Project Co-ordinator

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Nautilus Institute
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:
nautilus@nautilus.org