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1. A second nuclear age
2. Indonesia: Survey sees progress in graft fight
3. U.N. Security Council Unanimously Approves Extension of NATO-Led Forces in Afghanistan
4. Gates cautions against rapid US buildup in Afghanistan
5. Projects group 'should split from Defence'
6. Two Papuan asylum seekers return home
7. Study Of Satellite Imagery Casts Doubt On Surge's Success In Baghdad

1. A second nuclear age, Martine Letts, Australian, 2008-09-24

The wisdom of the decision to open the door for sales of nuclear equipment and material to India is being hotly debated. A more nuanced view is that nuclear suppliers have concluded they need to work outside the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to preserve it, coaxing India into the tent. They understand that the NPT, while still the gold standard for nuclear arms control and disarmament, is not sufficient to manage an increasingly complex and dangerous nuclear world.

2. Survey sees progress in graft fight, Abdul Khalik, Jakarta Post, 2008-09-25

Indonesia scored better on this year's Corruption Perception Index (CPI), thanks mostly to an aggressive crackdown by the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), an annual global survey revealed Tuesday. However, the survey by Transparency International still ranked Indonesia among the world's most corrupt nations, a batch of 71 countries rating below the critical score of three.

- PNG 'most corrupt in Pacific', Age, 2008-09-24

- Corruption Perceptions Index 2008, Transparency International

3. U.N. Security Council Unanimously Approves Extension of NATO-Led Forces in Afghanistan, AP, Fox News, 2008-09-22

The council condemned "in the strongest terms all attacks ... and abductions targeting civilians and Afghan and international forces and their deleterious effect on the stabilization, reconstruction and development efforts in Afghanistan." The resolution extended the mandate of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force until Oct. 13, 2009.

- Legal mandate - ADF in Afghanistan, Australia in Afghanistan, Nautilus Institute

4. Gates cautions against rapid US buildup in Afghanistan, AFP, SpaceWar, 2008-09-23

US Defense Secretary Robert Gates cautioned Tuesday against a rapid US military expansion in Afghanistan, stressing instead the need to build up the Afghan army. A top military adviser to Gates also told lawmakers that there were practical obstacles to a rapid shift of forces from Iraq to Afghanistan which could not be fully overcome even if a US drawdown in Iraq were accelerated.

- U.S., Afghans and Pakistanis Consider Joint Military Force, Ann Scott Tyson, Washington Post, 2008-08-23
- Sarkozy Wins Approval for French Role In Afghanistan, Washington Post, 2008-09-22.

5. Projects group 'should split from Defence', Patrick Walters, The Australian, 2008-09-24

The Defence Materiel Organisation, which manages defence projects worth $100 billion, should be separated from the Defence Department, a review has recommended. If the Rudd Government accepts the key recommendations of the review chaired by businessman David Mortimer, the DMO would become an executive agency responsible to the Defence Minister rather than the Defence Department.

- Mortimer Review of Defence Procurement and Sustainment, 2008-09-23 [PDF, 2.6 Mb]
- Iron Colonels outgunned in well-drawn battle plan, Geoffrey Barker, AFR*, 2008-09-24
  * Subscription required.

6. Two Papuan asylum seekers return home, Age, 2008-09-24

Two of the 43 Papuan asylum seekers at the heart of a diplomatic rift between Australia and Indonesia two years ago have returned to their homeland.

7. Study Of Satellite Imagery Casts Doubt On Surge's Success In Baghdad, Science Daily, 2008-09-22

"Essentially, our interpretation is that violence has declined in Baghdad because of intercommunal violence that reached a climax as the surge was beginning," said lead author John Agnew, a UCLA professor of geography and authority on ethnic conflict. "By the launch of the surge, many of the targets of conflict had either been killed or fled the country, and they turned off the lights when they

left."

- Baghdad nights: evaluating the US military ‘surge’ using nighttime light signatures, John Agnew et al, Environment and Planning A, 40 (10), 2008 [PDF, 5 Mb]

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