



APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, February 23, 2006

Recommended Citation

"APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, February 23, 2006", APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, February 23, 2006, <https://nautilus.org/apsnet/apsnet-for-20060223/>

APSNet for 20060223

Austral Peace and Security Network (APSNet)

Bi-weekly report from the Nautilus Institute at RMIT, Australia.

Thursday 23 February 2006

1. [200 More Troops for Afghanistan](#)
2. [Relief for Stretched Hercules to Cost \\$2b](#)
3. [Defence Papers for Cole Inquiry](#)
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Special Report: [UN And Europe Are Right: Guantanamo Must Close](#)

Austral Policy Forum: [The Modern House of Tokelau: Self-determination in a Pacific Atoll Nation](#)

1. [200 More Troops for Afghanistan](#), AAP, Age, 2006-02-20 2000 extra Australian soldiers will be sent to Afghanistan in July, taking the total number of Australian troops there to around 500. Mr Howard said the troops would be part of a Dutch-led provincial reconstruction team (PRT) and a mixed security and reconstruction.
 - [Troops Walking Into More Trouble In Afghanistan, Says US General](#), Cynthia Banham and Craig Skehan, SMH, 2006-02-22
- 2.
3. [Relief for Stretched Hercules to Cost \\$2b](#), Tom Allard, SMH, 2006-02-21 The Federal Government

is poised to buy at least four C-17 Globemaster transport planes to relieve pressure on its fleet of Hercules C-130s in Iraq. Australia has had to borrow aircraft from the US, Britain and Russia to supply its forces, causing resentment from allies, logistical headaches and even danger for forces and dignitaries.

4. [Defence Papers for Cole Inquiry](#), John Kerin, AFR*, 2006-02-20The Defence Department has been drawn into the AWB kickbacks scandal inquiry. Dr Nelson said he had handed three documents over to Mr Cole, hinting they were related to the work of the Iraq Survey Group and Australians embedded in the Coalition Provisional Authority.
* [Subscription required](#).
5. [Nelson Tells Military to Cut Court Fights with Personnel](#), Geoffrey Barker, AFR*, 2006-02-20Defence Minister Brendan Nelson has ordered limited reforms to Australia's military justice system without delay. Against a background of rising concern over the impact on recruitment of Defence spending millions of dollars annually fighting cases against victims of military justice, he said: "It does not pass my commonsense test."
* [Subscription required](#).
6. [AIDS Threat in PNG of African Levels, Warns Downer](#), Deborah Snow, SMH, 2006-02-23Minister Alexander Downer, says PNG could face a catastrophic AIDS epidemic if urgent action is not taken. The Government will give up to \$25 million over 4 years through the Clinton Foundation's HIV/AIDS Initiative to China, Vietnam and PNG.

Briefing note: UN And Europe Are Right: Guantanamo Must Close (Age editorial)

"Until recently 'gulag' was a term associated only with the least democratic of political regimes. Yet it is the word Amnesty International used in its annual report last year to describe the Guantanamo Bay prison camp at the US Naval Base in Cuba. That report accused the US of being responsible for an upsurge in global human rights violations and called for the camp to be closed."

Age Editorial, 2006-02-18

[UN And Europe Are Right: Guantanamo Must Close](#), Editorial, Age, 2006-02-18

The European Parliament this week voted overwhelmingly for a resolution urging that the prison be closed and inmates given a fair trial. A British High Court judge observed: "America's idea of what is torture is not the same as ours and does not appear to coincide with that of most civilised nations." While the Howard Government has been obsequious in its dealings with the Americans, Britain has managed to secure freedom for its nine citizens held at Guantanamo, without damaging its alliance with the US.

- [Going Wrong On Rights](#), Steven Freeland, Age, 2006-02-21
- [Joint Report on Situation of Detainees at Guantanamo Bay](#), United Nations Commission on Human Rights 62nd Session, 2006-02-15 [PDF].
- [Human Rights Experts Issue Joint Report on Situation of Detainees in Guantanamo Bay](#), Press Release, United Nations, 2006-02-16
- [Members of European Parliament \(MEPs\) Back UN Call for Guantanamo Camp Closure](#), Lisbeth Kirk, EU Observer, 2006-02-17

- [Lawfulness of Detentions by the United States in Guantanamo Bay](#), Resolution 1433 (2005), Parliamentary Assembly, Council of Europe, 26 April 2005
- [Guantanamo Bay](#), Wikipedia. [Note from original web page: "The neutrality of this article is disputed."]
- [Hicks 'Treated Harshly'](#), Brendan Nicholson, Age, 2006-02-21

Austral Policy Forum 06-03A: [The Modern House of Tokelau](#)

Nic Maclellan of the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Movement backgrounds the recent vote on self determination in the small Pacific nation of Tokelau. While the vote subsequently narrowly rejected the option of free association with New Zealand, another vote on self-determination is likely in the near future.

Maclellan writes:

"Even though many donor governments promote good governance and human rights in the Pacific, the right to self-determination is rarely mentioned. But the issue of self-determination is still a crucial issue on the regional agenda, as shown by the violent conflicts in New Caledonia in the 1980s, Bougainville in the 1990s and West Papua today."

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Austral Peace and Security Network is issued late on Mondays and Thursdays (AEST) by the Nautilus Institute at RMIT, Melbourne, Australia.

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Permalink: This issue of Austral Peace and Security Network can be found at <http://nautilus.rmit.edu.au/2006/20060223.html>.

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