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Austral Peace and Security Network (APSNet)

Twice weekly report from the Nautilus Institute at RMIT, Australia.

Thursday 17 May 2007

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Policy Forum 07-11A: [Australia and Regional Cooperation in Northeast Asia: From Hegemony to a Multilateral Security Mechanism?](#) - Peter Van Ness

1. [Climate Threat in Military's Sights](#), Tom Allard, SMH, 2007-05-17The Australian Defence Force has identified climate change as a national security threat as it predicted the military would become more involved in stabilising failing states than fighting conventional wars. Launching 'Joint Operations for the 21st Century' Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston, said the military faced security challenges it had not envisaged before, specifically "climate change and the impacts of global demography".
 - o [Speech to RUSI Conference, Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston, Chief of the Defence Force](#), Media Release CPA 70515/07 Department of Defence, 2007-05-16
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- [Joint Operations for the 21st Century](#), Department of Defence, May 2007 [PDF, 1 MByte]
- 2.
 3. [Fresh Troops Lift Afghan Deployment to 1000](#), AAP, Australian, 2007-05-15A contingent of Australian Army commandos headed for southern Afghanistan was farewelled by Prime Minister John Howard and Opposition Leader Kevin Rudd. The mostly Sydney-based soldiers from the 4th Battalion the Royal Australian Regiment (Commando) will boost Australia's troop deployment in Afghanistan to about 1,000.
 - [Special Operations Task Group Deploy to Afghanistan](#), Media Release Min 41/07, Minister for Defence, 2007-05-15
 - 4.
 5. [Bombs Blasting Afghan Hearts](#), Minds, Agencies, Australian, 2007-05-14A heavy toll of civilian deaths in Afghanistan from US airstrikes aimed at the Taliban is causing severe strain within the NATO alliance. There is growing alarm over a wave of US bombing raids in which 110 civilians have died in the past two weeks. Twenty-one people were killed last week after US special forces called in airstrikes on the town of Sangin in Helmand province. "Sometimes you wonder whose side the Americans are on," said a British official.
 - [War Report, Afghan Archives - Civilian Casualties](#), Project on Defense alternatives [updated regularly]
 - [Civilian Casualties of the War in Afghanistan \(2001-present\)](#), Wikipedia
 - 6.
 7. [Gang Violence in Dili a Week after Elections](#), Karon Snowden interviews Cipriano de Jesus, Jose Teixeira and Alison Cooper, ABC, 2007-05-17 [Audio]Outgoing prime minister Jose Ramos-Horta has been officially declared East Timor's president amid reports of fresh violence. Four homes were burned to the ground as rival gangs clashed in the capital Dili in renewed unrest one week after the presidential poll.
 8. Nelson Explains the Bee in his Bonnet about Hornets, Geoffrey Barker, [AFR*](#), 2007-05-16The Defence Minister says there were sound reasons for overruling the air force on an interim jet fighter. "Once the decision to acquire the Super Hornets was made [Air force chief] Geoff Shepherd said to me, 'We didn't think we would get a minister who would be prepared to actually embrace it ... We strongly support it and believe in it'"
 - * [Subscription required](#).
 9. [Nuclear Veterans Plan Class Action](#), Ean Higgins, Australian, 2007-05-15Australia's 2000 surviving nuclear veterans are planning a class action using a breakthrough study, revealed yesterday, that found their New Zealand counterparts sustained significant genetic damage after being exposed to atomic tests in the 1950s.
 - [DNA Damage to Nuclear Test Vets Prompts Call for Study of Children](#), Press Release, Massey University, 2007-05-15
 - [New Zealand Nuclear Test Veterans' Study - a Cytogenetic Analysis](#), R E (Al) Rowland et al, Massey University and Institut Gustave-Roussy France, 2007 [PDF]
 - [Operations Related to Australian Nuclear Testing](#), Australia Nuclear Veterans Association
 - 10.
 11. [Evil Empire: Is Imperial Liquidation Possible for America?](#) Chalmers Johnson, TomDispatch, 2007-05-15The United States, today, suffers from a plethora of public ills. Most of them can be traced to the militarism and imperialism that have led to the near-collapse of our Constitutional

system of checks and balances. Unfortunately, none of the remedies proposed so far by American politicians or analysts addresses the root causes of the problem.

Policy Forum 07-11A: [Australia and Regional Cooperation in Northeast Asia: From Hegemony to a Multilateral Security Mechanism?](#) Peter Van Ness

Peter Van Ness of the Australian National University notes that Australia will never want to choose between China and the United States. Yet the contrasting approaches of the US and China to security in the post Cold war era are stark. Now, argues Van Ness, "even the defenders of US hegemony acknowledge that American hegemony can no longer be sustained by unilateralist designs." Paradoxically "the crisis over North Korea's nuclear weapons presents the best opportunity yet to build new security institutions in East Asia." Australia, Van Ness concludes, "would not directly participate in the new Northeast Asian institution, but would nonetheless enjoy the public goods generated by that initiative in security cooperation. The opportunity may only be temporary, so it is urgent to undertake the task."

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