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Austral Peace and Security Network (APSNet)

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

Monday 17 September 2007

1. Afghanistan: Canberra Asks for NATO to Do More
2. Iraq: Larger US Troop Pull-Out 'Possible'
3. East Timor: Alkatiri Eyes Return to Power
4. Timor-Leste: Health Sector Resilience and Performance in a Time of Instability
5. Provincial Premiers in Solomon Islands Suggest Re-Deployment of Some RAMSI Staff
6. NZ Fisheries Minister Dismisses Call for More Help for Pacific Nations to Counter Pirate Fishing

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1. Canberra Asks for NATO to Do More, Craig Skehan, SMH, 2007-09-17The Federal Government is concerned at the findings of an advisory group that the 50,000 NATO troops in Afghanistan are insufficient to make a conclusive breakthrough against the Taliban and al-Qaeda. One Australian official said the NATO countries had made a limited contribution, despite having 2.4 million military personnel. Both the Australian and Canadian governments are attempting to increase pressure on NATO members to do more.
    - Afghanistan: Assessing Progress and Key Challenges for the Alliance, Frank Cook, NATO Parliamentary Assembly, September 2007

2.
3. Larger US Troop Pull-Out 'Possible', Al Jazeera, 2007-09-15Robert Gates, US defence secretary, has hinted that US forces in Iraq could be reduced to about 100,000 by January 2009: a reduction of around 69,000 troops from the current level. Gates' comments went much further than the announcement by George Bush of a partial withdrawal by the end of this year. Meanwhile, the White House has issued a report saying Iraq's leaders have failed to meet half of their key goals.
   - Benchmark Assessment Report, Secretaries of State and Defense; Commander, Multi-National Force-Iraq; the US Ambassador to Iraq; and the Commander, US Central Command, 2007-09-14 [primary source, PDF]
   - Iraqi Military Called Unprepared, Juan Cole, Informed Comment, 2007-09-16
   - Iraq Commander Petraeus: Report to Congress, You Tube [AudioVisual]
   - Iraq: War and Reconstruction Products since January 2002, US Government Accountability Office
4.
5. Alkatiri Eyes Return to Power, Asanobu Sato, Yomiuri, 2007-09-14Former Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri said that his Fretilin party will launch an antigovernment campaign. Meanwhile, Alkatiri made clear his opposition to the presence of 1,000 Australian troops in East Timor, "This is an agreement between two states. It needs to be ratified by the parliament. And up to now the agreement was not ratified. It means their presence is completely illegal," said Alkatiri, adding that the troops are "lacking in neutrality."
6. Timor-Leste: Health Sector Resilience and Performance in a Time of Instability, Anthony Zwi et al, School of Public Health and Community Medicine, UNSW, September 2007 [PDF]The research report documents the Timorese health sector response to the national crisis - and in particular the significant achievements in maintaining services during a period of instability. It is a real time analysis of a health system response to an emergency. The experiences in Timor Leste raise issues which deserve consideration by other countries.
7. Provincial Premiers in Solomon Islands Suggest Re-Deployment of Some RAMSI Staff, RNZI, 2007-09-16Provincial Premiers have recommended that the presence of RAMSI officers be scaled down in provinces that have very low crime rates. They recommended that officers posted to these areas be re-deployed to other provinces which are yet to fully recover.
   - The Provincial Leaders Raise Concern over RAMSI's Brief Appearance at Conference, Pacific Magazine, 2007-09-16
   - RAMSI Disappointed by Lost Opportunity at Premiers' Conference, Qila Tuhanuku, RAMSI, 2007-09-14
8.
9. NZ Fisheries Minister Dismisses Call for More Help for Pacific Nations to Counter Pirate Fishing, RNZI, 2007-09-16New Zealand's minister for fisheries has dismissed a repeated call by Greenpeace for New Zealand to do more to help Pacific countries prevent illegal fishing. Greenpeace is again calling for more surveillance, funding and training to combat illegal fishing in the region and to help small island nations to use their resources better.
   - Sustainable Fishing, Greenpeace
10.

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