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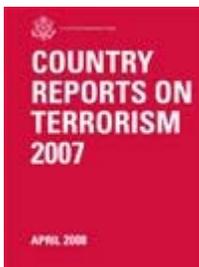
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INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTER
U.S. EMBASSY MADRID

DOCUALERT is a monthly information service highlighting documents from government agencies and think tanks and articles from leading U.S. journals. The materials cover international relations, U.S domestic policies and trends.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

REPORTS



Country Reports on Terrorism 2007

U.S. Department of State

April 30, 2008

U.S. law requires the Secretary of State to provide Congress, by April 30 of each year, a full and complete report on terrorism with regard to those countries and groups meeting criteria set forth in the legislation. This annual report is entitled

Country Reports on Terrorism. Beginning with the report for 2004, it replaced the previously published Patterns of Global Terrorism.

<http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2007/>

Rising Food Prices and Global Food Needs: The U.S. Response

Congressional Research Service

May 8, 2008

Rising food prices are having impacts across the world, but especially among poor people in low-income developing countries. Since 2000, a year of low food prices, wheat prices in international markets have more than tripled, corn prices have doubled, and rice prices rose to unprecedented levels in March 2008. Such increases in food prices have raised concerns about the ability of poor people to meet their food and nutrition needs and in a number of countries have lead to civil unrest. More than 33 countries, most of which are in Sub-Saharan Africa are particularly affected by food prices increases. The World Bank has estimated that more than 100 million people are being pushed into poverty as a result of food-price escalation.

<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/104692.pdf>

Iraq Reconstruction Five Years On

Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR)

April 2008

<http://www.sigir.mil/reports/quarterlyreports/Apr08/pdf/Graph - April 2008.pdf>

Labour Mobility In A Transatlantic Perspective: Conference Report.
European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions.
Peter Ester and Hubert Krieger.
Web posted April 21, 2008.

The seminar brought together about 60 leading European and American researchers and policymakers in the field of labor mobility, in order to examine transatlantic mobility trends and the social, economic and cultural impacts of geographical and long-distance labor market mobility. It focused on long-distance geographic mobility trends in the US and in Europe. Overall, it concluded that increased but improved mobility is needed and that the mobility concept covers different forms and motives

<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2008/26/en/1/ef0826en.pdf>

FACT SHEETS AND ARTICLES

Bush Brings Optimism to Middle East

America.gov
May 14, 2008

Sixty years to the day of Israel's founding, President Bush called on Israelis, who have built the region's most dynamic democracy, to renew their commitment to Middle East peace in that same spirit.

<http://www.america.gov/st/peacesec-english/2008/May/20080514153636idybeekcm7.246035e-02.html>

U.S.-Russia Agreement for Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation

U.S. Department of State. Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs
May 15, 2008

This Agreement represents an historic achievement for the United States and Russia. Once nuclear rivals--today, nuclear partners--the U.S. and Russia now have a framework to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and to advance nuclear energy worldwide while enhancing our joint leadership in preventing nuclear proliferation.

<http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2008/May/20080515141603xjsnommis0.6903345.html>

Free Trade Agreements: Promoting Prosperity in 2008

The Heritage Foundation
May 2, 2008

Despite more than five decades of evidence that freer trade promotes opportunity and prosperity, the impact of open markets on the U.S. economy and its workers remains a hot political issue.

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/TradeandForeignAid/bg2132.cfm>

Fact Sheet: Advancing Freedom and Democracy Around the World

White House

May 1, 2008

May 3 marks World Press Freedom Day. We stand with journalists, editors, and bloggers who continue their work in spite of the risks. We call on all governments to guarantee the inalienable rights of their people, including, consistent with Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the right to freedom of speech and the press. During Fiscal Year 2007, the United States provided \$78 million in approximately 40 countries to promote media freedom and freedom of information. President Bush has met with many journalists and editors who are struggling against forces that seek to suppress media freedom. We salute these courageous individuals, and we recognize the importance of the right to a free press in spreading freedom around the world.

<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2007/06/20070605-6.html>

Implementation: A New Approach To Multinational Coordination In

Afghanistan. Stanley Foundation. Ambassador Ronald E. Neumann. Policy Analysis Brief.

April 2008

Afghanistan is faltering as the Taliban continues an insurgency and the government of President Hamid Karzai struggles to deliver services. Around the world there are calls for new efforts at policy coordination among the donor countries who are aiding Afghanistan. However, former US Ambassador to Afghanistan Ronald Neumann writes that there should be less emphasis on policy coordination and more on implementation in the delivery of services to the Afghan people. In this brief he shows how greater emphasis on implementing existing strategy will produce better results. Further, he extracts lessons from the Afghanistan experience that could apply elsewhere.

<http://www.stanleyfdn.org/publications/pab/NeumannPAB408.pdf>

The Challenge Of Nuclear-Armed Regional Adversaries

RAND 2008, by David Ochmanek, Lowell H. Schwartz

The United States, along with other members of the international community, is striving to convince North Korea, Iran, and other states to forgo the development of nuclear weapons. If these efforts do not succeed, the consequences for U.S. and allied security could be profound.

U.S. conventional and nuclear forces will continue to have deterrent effects on the leaders of regional adversary states, such as North Korea and Iran, even if these states field substantial numbers of nuclear weapons. However, defense planners in the United States and elsewhere must begin now to confront the possibility that, in the face of superior U.S. conventional forces, adversaries of this class could see using nuclear weapons to be in their interest under a variety of circumstances during a conflict involving the United States
http://rand.org/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG671.pdf

U.S. DOMESTIC POLICY AND TRENDS

REPORTS



Venture Capital: A Primer

Electronic Journal. U.S. Department of State
May 2008

This e-journal explores the phenomenon that drives uncounted Americans, and now citizens of other nations, to create fledgling “start-up” businesses that explore and exploit the latest developments in high technology. It also investigates the closely related “venture capital” phenomenon. How investors match their funds to (hopefully) winning ideas is a big part of the start-up

story.

<http://www.america.gov/publications/ejournalusa/0508.html>

Global Climate Change National Security Implications.

Edited by Dr. Carolyn Pumphrey. Strategic Studies Institute. U.S. Army War College. May 2008

On March 29-31, 2007, the Strategic Studies Institute and the Triangle Institute for Security Studies conducted a colloquium on “Global Climate Change: National Security Implications” held in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Contributors to this volume agree that climate change is a threat deserving of serious attention. They stress the need for greater planning and coordination and for further research as well as the utility of engagement, military to military and state to state, on environmental issues. They differ as to whether the Armed Forces should play a leading or supporting role, but agree that they can, and already do, make a valuable contribution.

<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdf/files/PUB862.pdf>

Philanthropy Annual: 2007 Review

Foundation Center.

Web posted May 2, 2008.

The Foundation Center has released *Philanthropy Annual: 2007 Review*, a new annual publication that highlights the news, issues, people, organizations, and giving trends that are shaping the philanthropic field. The focus includes, topical issues covered in the mainstream and philanthropic press, news of individuals who have dedicated their professional lives to working for the public good, in-depth interviews and commentary from widely respected leaders and thinkers, a sampling of books, periodicals, and blogs in the field, and key statistical information about U.S. grant making.

<http://foundationcenter.org/gainknowledge/philanthropy2007/philanthropyannual2007.pdf>

Global Agricultural Supply And Demand: Factors Contributing To The Recent Increase In Food Commodity Prices

Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Ronald Trostle.
Web posted May 2, 2008.

World market prices for major food commodities have risen sharply, to historic highs of more than 60 percent above levels just 2 years ago. Some reasons are slower growth in production and more rapid growth in demand. Increased global demand for biofuels, feed stocks, and adverse weather conditions in the last two years in some major grain- and oilseed-producing areas are other contributing factors. The declining value of the U.S. dollar, rising energy prices and increasing agricultural production costs have also led to food commodity price inflation.

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/WRS0801/>

Food Price Inflation: Causes and Impacts

Congressional Research Service Report
April 10, 2008

The impact of higher food prices on U.S. households varies according to income. Lower-income households spend a greater portion of their income on food and feel price hikes more acutely than high-income families. Higher food costs impact domestic food assistance efforts in numerous ways depending on whether benefits are indexed, enrollments are limited, or additional funds are made available. Higher food and transportation costs also reduce the impact of U.S. contributions of food aid under current budget constraints.

<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/104281.pdf>

Renewable Energy R&D Funding History: A Comparison with Funding for Nuclear Energy, Fossil Energy, and Energy Efficiency R&D

Congressional Research Service Report
April 9, 2008

This report provides a cumulative history of Department of Energy (DOE) funding for renewable energy compared with funding for the other energy technologies —

nuclear energy, fossil energy, and energy efficiency. Specifically, it provides a comparison that covers cumulative funding over the past 10 years (FY1998-FY2007), a second comparison that covers the 30-year period since DOE was established at the beginning of fiscal year 1978 (FY1978-FY2007), and a third comparison that covers a 60-year funding history (FY1948-FY2007).

<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/104708.pdf>

Adapting To Climate Change: A Business Approach

Pew Center on Global Climate Change. Frances G. Sussman and J. Randall Freed. April 2008.

The study describes framework which can be used to identify a company's potential risks from climate change. It contends that, while not all businesses need to follow with action, all need to be aware of the possible threats of climate change. The screening, that can be done easily, using currently available information on climate trends and projections, can identify important risks and also possible opportunities for businesses.

<http://www.pewclimate.org/docUploads/Business-Adaptation.pdf>

FACT SHEETS AND ARTICLES

[Climate Change and Sustainable Development](#)

Paula J. Dobriansky, Under Secretary for Democracy and Global Affairs
Remarks to the Sustainable Development Forum 2008. New York City
May 2, 2008

[Ethanol and Other Biofuels: A Global Warming Solution Worse Than the Problem](#)

The Heritage Foundation
May 2, 2008

There are risks to global warming policy as well as risks to global warming, and although the former could be costlier than the latter, they are often neglected in climate change debate. While it may seem far-fetched to some that responding to the "climate crisis" could do more harm than good, it is in fact already happening. Consider the biofuels mandate, which is contributing to the very global warming problems it was designed to prevent.

[Ohio Adopts Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard](#)

Pew Research Center

On May 1, 2008, Governor Ted Strickland signed substitute Senate Bill 221 into law, establishing an alternative energy portfolio standard (AEPS) for the state of Ohio. The law mandates that by 2025, at least 25 percent of all electricity sold in the state come from alternative energy resources. At least half of the standard, or 12.5 percent of electricity sold, must be generated by renewable sources such

as wind, solar (which must account for at least 0.5 percent of electricity use by 2025), hydropower, geothermal, or biomass. At least half of this renewable energy must be generated in-state.

[Four Groups Of Voters May Be Key To Election](#)

The Wall Street Journal
April 22, 2008

Four groups of voters -- working-class males, young people, rural and small-town Americans and Hispanics -- stand out as the key pieces of that puzzle. All four groups are in flux, and they will provide the leading indicators of where the race is heading.

[Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism Launches Exercise Planning Efforts](#)

US Department of States
April 15, 2008

The United States participated in the first meeting of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism Exercise Planning Group in Paris on April 15, to support the development and execution of international exercises aimed at combating the threat posed by nuclear terrorism. Exercise planners from defense, energy, foreign affairs, law enforcement, intelligence, and other ministries from over 20 nations participated in this inaugural meeting to set the agenda for the Initiative's exercise program.

The Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism is a joint initiative launched by U.S. President Bush and Russian President Putin that expands partner capacity to combat the global threat of nuclear terrorism.

[President Bush Discusses Iraq](#)

The White House
April 10, 2008

Today, President Bush announced that – after detailed discussions with the Secretaries of State and Defense and Joint Chiefs of Staff – he is accepting General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker's recommendations on the way ahead in Iraq. General Petraeus reported that security conditions have improved enough to withdraw all five surge brigades by the end of July. This is a 25 percent decrease of U.S. combat brigades in Iraq from the year before. General Petraeus has explained that he then will need time to consolidate his forces and assess the reduced U.S. presence on the ground before making measured recommendations on further reductions.

[Fact Sheet: Foreign Terrorist Organizations](#)

Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism

April 8, 2008

[The Clean Energy Scam](#)

Time

April 7, 2008 vol. 171, no. 14

Deforestation accounts for twenty percent of current global carbon emissions. Most of the so-called “green fuels” are net carbon emitters; the fuel crops do not sequester as much carbon as the vegetation they replace, and the fertilizer, farm equipment fuel and fermentation plant process heat require large amounts of fossil fuel energy, frequently from coal or natural gas. Even if the entire U.S. corn and soybean crops were turned into ethanol or biofuels, it would offset only twenty percent of the country’s vehicular fuel consumption — but ethanol and biofuels have political support as a result of pressure by the powerful agribusiness lobby. Grunwald writes that “the world is going to be fighting an uphill battle (against global warming) until it realizes that biofuels aren’t part of the solution at all — they’re part of the problem.”

Information Provided by the Information Resource Center
U.S. Embassy Madrid
<http://www.embusa.es/irc>

Views expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect U.S. government policies.