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Reports

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Americans Want to Turn Away From World's Problems. YaleGlobal. Bruce Stokes. January 16, 2014.

The United States may no longer view itself as the world's leading advocate for military engagements or multilateral efforts to promote freedom, democracy and human rights, suggests a study by the Pew Research Center. Americans are war weary, and about half of 2000 adults surveyed in the fall 2013

suggest that the country is overextended, writes Stokes. Just over half those polled support cooperating with the United Nations, but that's down from 77 percent in 1991. Such opinions are in line with those of foreign policy experts: Another survey of members of the Council on Foreign Relations shows small percentages view strengthening the United Nations, improving living standards in developing countries, or promoting human rights and democracy as top priorities. Since 2001, such endeavors were intertwined with costly wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, contributing to an economic slowdown, and 70 percent polled suggest that the United States has since lost respect internationally.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/americans-want-turn-away-world%E2%80%99s-problems> [HTML format, various paging].

Item#2

Ripples of Change in Chinese Foreign Policy? Evidence from Recent Approaches to Nontraditional Waterborne Security. National Bureau of Asian Research. Andrew S. Erickson and Austin M. Strange. January 2014.

The document examines China's approaches to nontraditional security in the Gulf of Aden and on the Mekong River and explores the extent to which its behavior reflects a broader trend toward increasing flexibility in Chinese foreign policy.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://www.nbr.org/publications/asia_policy/AP17/Advance/AsiaPolicy17_Erickson_Strange_January2014.pdf [PDF format, 34 pages, 484.12 KB].

Item#3

New Realities: Energy Security in the 2010s and Implications for the U.S. Military - Executive Summaries. Strategic Studies Institute. John R. Deni, Ed. January 8, 2014.

The rapidly changing global energy supply situation, coupled with a host of social, political, and economic challenges facing consumer states, has significant implications for the United States generally and for the U.S. military specifically. The U.S. Army War College gathered experts from the policymaking community, academia, think tanks, the private sector, and the military services at the Reserve Officers Association in Washington, DC on 19-20 November 2013 to address first the major 'new realities' both geographically and technologically and then the specific military implications. This compendium of executive summaries is based on the presentations delivered at that conference, which was funded through the generous support of the U.S. Army War College Foundation.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=1194> [HTML format with a link to the full text PDF file, 47 pages, 2.28 MB].

Item#4

Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Kenneth Katzman. January 17, 2014.

Afghanistan has a history of a high degree of decentralization, and resistance to foreign invasion and occupation. Some have termed it the "graveyard of empires...The Obama Administration policy goal is to prevent Afghanistan from again becoming a safe haven for terrorist organizations. The Administration has defined that goal as enabling the Afghan government and security forces to defend the country and govern effectively and transparently. In accordance with a U.S.-Afghanistan joint statement of January 11, 2013, the U.S. security mission formally changed from combat leadership to a "support" role on June 18, 2013. Even with Afghan forces now in the lead, many of the pillars of U.S. and NATO security strategy will remain intact at least until at least the end of 2014. The United States remains partnered with 49 other countries and the Afghan government and security forces. On February 10, 2013, Marine General Joseph Dunford succeeded Lieutenant General John Allen as top U.S. and NATO commander in Afghanistan.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL30588.pdf> [PDF format, 87 pages, 1.4 MB].

Item#5

The 2014 Sochi Olympics: A Patchwork of Challenges. Center for Strategic & International Studies. Sergey Markedonov. Jan 23, 2014.

On February 7, 2014, the 22nd Winter Olympic Games will open in the Russian Black Sea resort of Sochi. Because these games will be the first Olympics hosted by Russia since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, they will be more than a mere athletic competition. They possess a singular symbolic character, important to Russia and particularly to Russian president Vladimir Putin. Climate and costs aside, holding the Games in Sochi presents a number of more difficult challenges. The Sochi area is the focal point of several thorny issues with geopolitical and security implications, and there will also be many difficulties related to the environment, transportation, housing, and public services.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://csis.org/files/publication/140113_Markedonov_2014SochiOlympics_WEB.pdf [PDF format, 34 pages, 2.77 MB].

Item#6

WMD Risks in Civil War: What Syria Can Teach. YaleGlobal. Bennett Ramberg. January 23, 2014.

Civil war has raged in Syria since early 2011, and U.S. President Barack Obama once said the regime's use of chemical weapons would not be tolerated. The weapons were used in summer 2013, and the U.S. struggled to win approval for a military strike as the international community realized that military force may not prevent WMD movement and could lead to prolonged war that would intensify civilian suffering, instability and the risk of weapons landing in extremists' hands. Syria, however, is only one case. The United States and the international community must plan ahead for civil strife in nations like Pakistan and North Korea, suggests author Bennett Ramberg. Urging nations to prepare a range of responses, Ramberg concludes, "thinking the unthinkable deserves broad attention sooner rather than later."

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/wmd-risks-civil-war-what-syria-can-teach> [HTML format, various paging].

Item#7

The Costs of Corruption. Center for Strategic & International Studies. Daniel F. Runde and Sadika Hameed. Jan 21, 2014.

Corruption remains a priority area for both the private sector and development implementers. However, there is no consensus on practical steps to address it on a global level. This issue is especially important in the context of international trade and development as the private sector plays an increasing role in development outcomes.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://csis.org/files/publication/140121_Hameed_CostsOfCorruption_Web.pdf [PDF format, 50 pages, 2.74 MB].

Item#8

China's Off-the-Chart Air Pollution: Why It Matters (and Not Only to the Chinese) - Part One. National Bureau of Asian Research. Claire Topal and Yeasol Chung. January 14, 2014.

Rising levels of air pollution have accompanied three decades of phenomenal economic growth in China. Coal-burning factories and vehicle emissions fouling the air in the country's major industrial and population centers have made deteriorating air quality a leading health concern that until relatively recently had been downplayed or dismissed by Chinese government authorities. Key announcements in the past year, however, have signaled a significant shift as the central government has begun to tackle the difficult question of how to reduce pollutants without slowing down economic growth.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://www.nbr.org/downloads/pdfs/cha/NBR_interview_Gardner_PartOne.pdf [PDF format, 3 pages, 327.04 KB].

Item#9

China's Off-the-Chart Air Pollution: Why It Matters (and Not Only to the Chinese) - Part Two. National Bureau of Asian Research. Claire Topal and Yeasol Chung. January 27, 2014.

The seriousness of China's air pollution is visibly evident to anyone who has seen photographs of Beijing and other major cities enveloped in dense smog or hazy street scenes of Chinese breathing through surgical masks. In part one, Daniel K. Gardner, the Dwight W. Morrow Professor of History and East Asian Studies at Smith College, discussed the dramatic effects of China's polluted air on the health of its people and explained the implications of these health issues for the country's economy. In part two of the interview, Professor Gardner explains how the Chinese government has responded to the country's air pollution crisis and what challenges it will face in implementing policies and measures developed to address the problem. He also discusses the impact of China's air pollution not only on its Asian neighbors but also on the United States.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://www.nbr.org/downloads/pdfs/cha/NBR_interview_Gardner_PartTwo.pdf [PDF format, 4 pages, 285.06 KB].

Item#10

Easing One-Child Policy May Be Too Late. YaleGlobal. Joseph Chamie. January 7, 2014.

A Chinese policy that generally limited families to one child has been revised: Couples can have two children if either spouse is an only child. But China may discover that increasing family size is tougher than reduction, warns demographer Joseph Chamie. "This mid-course correction in population policy will have marginal effect as China is aging at a much faster pace than occurred in other countries," he writes. "This, along with a shrinking workforce and critical gender imbalance, will increasingly tax the government." Chamie presents five projections for China's population through the end of the century, with the current birthrate, China's population could dip below 900 million by 2100; if the policy were scrapped and the birthrate approached replacement level, the population could rise to more than 1.8 billion. A shrinking workforce reduces prosperity, yet global trends point to parents in China and elsewhere limiting family size regardless of government incentives, all spurred by limited social protections on education, jobs or the environment.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/easing-one-child-policy-may-be-too-late> [HTML format, various paging].