



Information Resource Center (IRC)
Public Diplomacy Section
U.S. Embassy, Vientiane, Laos



=====
Article Alert: March, 2014

Dear All,

The U.S. Embassy's Information Resource Center is very pleased to offer you **ARTICLE ALERT**, the monthly current awareness publication of the U.S. Embassy Public Diplomacy Section. Article Alert is designed to keep IRC users abreast of issues and concerns in the United States. **Full texts of all listed articles are available upon request** at irc.vientiane@state.gov or call us: 021 267089/267263, fax: 021 267160.

SPOTLIGHT: ASIA

1. "Thailand in 2013: The Politics of Reconciliation"

[James Ockey](#). Asian Survey, January/February 2014, 8 pages.

The author, an associate professor in Political Science at Canterbury University, examines the challenges the Thai government faced in 2013, particularly a gradual decline in popularity, continuing insurgency in the South, and difficult relations with the military.

2. "Southeast Asia in the US Rebalance: Perceptions from a Divided Region"

[Euan Graham](#). Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International & Strategic Affairs, December 2013, 28 pages.

The author explores perceptions and reactions across Southeast Asia towards the Obama administration's "pivot" or "rebalance" to Asia and the challenges America faces in enhancing its political leadership role in the region.

3. "Asia in 2013: Peace and Prosperity amid Rising Tension"

[Lowell Dittmer](#). Asian Survey, January/February 2014, 11 pages.

Was 2013 a year of prosperity and growth for Asian countries? The author, professor of political science at the University of California, explores the situation in Asia during the past year including the growing market integration and the forward march of democracy in the region.

HUMAN RIGHTS

4. "Think Again: Prostitution"

[Aziza Ahmed](#). *Foreign Policy*, January 2014, 5 pages.

Why do zero-tolerance policies for prostitution not make good public policy? Can we abolish prostitution by making it illegal? Why do anti-prostitution campaigns often end up harming those they are intended to benefit? The author, a law professor at Northeastern University, discusses sex worker issues and their rights.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

5. "Converging Economic Destinies"

[Uri Dadush](#). *Current History*, January 2014, 4 pages.

The author, a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, discusses the economic convergence of the developing world with advanced nations, particularly the concept of economic growth of developing nations as being tied to catching up with the technological innovations and market practices of advanced countries.

6. "The Ever-Emerging Markets"

Ruchir Sharma. *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2014, 5 pages.

Why do economic forecasts on the emerging markets nations fail? The author, head of Emerging Markets and Global Macro at Morgan Stanley Investment Management, discusses sources of forecasting errors, including extrapolating past trends into the future, focusing exclusively on a single causal factor to explain economic growth, and ignoring the impact of political factors on economic policy.

7. "Addressing Currency Manipulation through Trade Agreements"

[C. Fred Bergsten](#). *PIIE Policy Brief 14-2*, January 2014, 11 pages.

The author, a senior fellow and director emeritus of the Peterson Institute for International Economics, examines currency manipulation—the practice of governments suppressing the value of their currencies to increase net exports at others' expense – and why incorporating the currency issue in trade deals will clear the way for a more open global economy.

THE UNITED STATES AND WORLD AFFAIRS

8. "The Decision-Makers"

Foreign Policy, November/December 2013, 7 pages.

The author explores political leaders and decision makers for various nations in the 21st century including U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and his work with high-level nuclear talks with Iran, his efforts to persuade Palestinians and Israelis to relaunch peace talks, and push for a political solution in Syria.

9. "Old World, New World: The Evolution and Influence of Foreign Affairs Think-Tanks"

[Donald E. Abelson](#). *International Affairs*, January 2014, 18 pages.

The author, professor of Western University's Department of Political Science, explores the evolution and transformation of prominent foreign affairs and defense policy think-tanks and discusses how a small group of American think-tanks have become active and vocal participants in the policy-making process.

GLOBAL POPULATION AND ENVIRONMENT

10. "The Human Population Unbound"

[Nicholas Eberstadt](#). *Current History*, January 2014, 4 pages.

The author, a political economist at the American Enterprise Institute, discusses population and global demographic changes, focusing on the growth of population during the 20th century, changes in life expectancy, increases in literacy and education during the period of population growth, and other trends in population growth and demography during the early 21st century.

11. "Grasses for a Greener World"

[Rick Docksai](#). *The Futurist*, January/February 2014, 3 pages.

As changing climate and increasing populations cause drought, heat waves, and foot traffic that damage the lawns and fields maintained by communities, the author explores research on new grasses and improvements in turf grass.

GLOBAL HEALTH

12. "An Indirect Way to Tame Cancer"

[Rakesh K. Jain](#). *Scientific American*, February 2014, 8 pages.

The author, director of Edwin L. Steele Laboratory for Tumor Biology at the Massachusetts General Hospital, examines how the matrix structure of cancerous tumors squeezes blood vessels, preventing the effectiveness of drug treatments, and the use of angiotensin-blocking drugs to counteract this.

13. "Why We Will Need Genetically Modified Foods"

[David Rotman](#). *Technology Review*, January/February 2014, 10 pages.

The author, an editor of *MIT Technology Review*, discusses the need of genetically modified foods as climate change make crop production more difficult along with the growing population, citing the advantage of using genetic engineering to help crops adopt to climate changes.

JOURNALISM AND SOCIAL MEDIA

14. "Facebook's Two Faces"

[David Talbot](#). *Technology Review*, January/February 2014, 3 pages.

The author, *MIT Technology Review's* chief correspondent, examines the strategic plan of social networking site Facebook to connect people around the world by improving its operations and developing ways of information delivery.

15. "Unmuzzled"

Stephen Bates. *The Wilson Quarterly*, Autumn 2013, 3 pages.

The author explores the history of the U.S. government's broadcast institution Voice of America (VOA) from 1941 through the early 2013, focusing on the turning point for the VOA when the U.S. Congress lifted the ban on domestic dissemination of VOA content in 2002, enabling the American public to see award-winning documentaries and other contents that have been available to the rest of the world for the first time.

EDUCATION

16. "Technology in the Classroom: It's Not a Matter of 'If,' but 'When' and 'How'"

Alice Armstrong. *Education Digest*, January 2014, 8 pages.

The author discusses educational technology in the classroom and its effectiveness, focusing on how technology is transforming students into explorers and teachers into guides.

17. "Zero to Eight: Children's Media Use in America 2013"

Common Sense Media. *Education Digest*, February 2014, 5 pages.

The article examines the impact of new media technologies on children, focusing on the role media plays in their lives, which platforms they use, the activities or content they engage on those platforms, and how their media use patterns varied by age, gender, or socioeconomic status.

18. "That Was Then, This Is Now: Replacing the Mobile-Optimized Site with Responsive Design"

[Hannah Gascho Rempel](#) and [Laurie Bridges](#). *Information Technology & Libraries*, December 2013, 17 pages.

Oregon State University's librarians discuss mobile technologies and library mobile website usability, focusing on what tasks users actually carry out on a library mobile site and why a mobile site with responsive design is a long-term solution for addressing both designers' and users' needs.

19. "Social Contexts of New Media Literacy: Mapping Libraries"

[Elizabeth Thorne-Wallington](#). *Information Technology & Libraries*, December 2013, 13 pages.

The author, a doctoral student in the Department of Education at Washington University, explores the role that libraries play in offering access to new media literacy technologies, and how mapping and geographic information systems (GIS) can help illuminate the cultural and social factors related to how and where students access and use new media literacies and digital technology.

DISCOVER AMERICA

20. "Secrets of Yellowstone"

Elizabeth Quill. *Smithsonian*, January 2014, 2 pages.

The author explores evolution in Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming, with a map featuring various points of evolutionary interest, including a petrified forest, Lamar Cave, and an area that holds fossilized trilobites.