



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



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Article Alert: March, 2015

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 487000 ext. 7406 /7012.

SPOTLIGHT: TECHNOLOGY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

1. "The Web as a Right"

Kosta Grammatis. *Technology Review*, March/April 2015, 2 pages.

The author discusses the need to consider Internet access as a basic human right, the value of Internet access in making people a part of a global citizenship, and importance of the Internet as a place where people can meet as equals to engage in the global digital society.

2. "Rights 2.0"

David Rothkopf. *Foreign Policy*, January/February 2015, 2 pages.

As Internet access becomes increasingly necessary to full participation in the world, the author examines human rights and constitutional law in the areas of information and Internet access, focusing on why it should be recognized as a human right.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

3. *"Innovators of Inequality"*

Alice Hu. *Harvard International Review*, Fall2014/Winter 2015, 4 pages.

The author discusses the lack of credibility and the failure of U.S. efforts to improve women's rights to bring about real change, and the inconsistent position and exclusive approach of the U.S. to women's rights.

4. *"Labor Pains"*

Rebecca Traister. *The New Republic*, February 2015, 6 pages.

How are women punished for having children in their careers? The author discusses the career development of women and mothers in the United States and the number of working mothers in the United States in 2015.

ASIA

5. *"Pivot 2.0: How the Administration and Congress Can Work Together to Sustain American Engagement in Asia to 2016"*

Michael J. Green, et al. Center for Strategic and International Studies, January 2015, 28 pages.

The report analyzes Obama administration's goal of a "pivot" or "rebalance" to the Asia-Pacific region and outlines concrete areas for action on trade, China, defense, Korea, India, and Southeast Asia.

6. *"Asia in 2014: A Pretty Good Year"*

Lowell Dittmer. *Asian Survey*, January/February 2015, 11 pages.

Facing more risks and challenges, is Asia still the most dynamic and promising regional in the world? The author, a professor of political science at the University of California, analyzes Asian security and economic issues in the past year.

7. *"The United States and Asia in 2014: Reconciling Rebalancing and Strategic Constraints"*

William T. Tow. *Asian Survey*, January/February 2015, 9 pages.

Was U.S. efforts to sustain influence in the Asia-Pacific in the past year success? The author examines the U.S. foreign policy toward Asia during 2014, citing that the United States increasingly faced the challenge of reconciling its international security interests with its "pivot strategy" in Asia.

8. *"US in the Asia-Pacific: Toward a more effective Asia strategy"*

Michael Mazza. American Enterprise Institute, January 30, 2015, 4 pages.

Since its inception in late 2011, the Obama administration's pivot to Asia has failed to live up to its promise. The author outlines how the United States can start on a path toward a more effective Asia strategy.

9. *"The New Asian Order"*

Evan A. Feigenbaum. *Foreign Affairs*, February 2, 2015, 6 pages.

As Asian countries increasingly rely on one another for trade, investment, and other economic public goods, how could Washington avoid risks ceding leadership and missing opportunities? The author, Vice Chairman of the Paulson Institute, examines a pan-Asian economic and institutional order, and discusses why the United States must adapt to the contours of a changing Asia.

GLOBAL ECONOMY

10. "Follow the Money"

Gregory Dunn. *Harvard International Review*, Fall2014/Winter2015, 3 pages.

The author discusses the rise of economics in contemporary geopolitics and the use of economics as a tool of foreign policy, focusing on how leveraging economics for the purpose of foreign policy is a useful strategy in times of economic crisis, and how economic trouble can result in failure in diplomatic cooperation.

11. "A "New Mediocre" for the Global Economy?"

Barry Eichengreen. *Current History*, January 2015, 6 pages.

The author, a professor of economics and political science at the University of California, discusses the economic conditions throughout the world, with a particular focus on economic growth and economic stagnation.

12. "Start-Up Slowdown"

Robert Litan. *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2015, 7 pages.

The author discusses the economic implications of the declining number of startups in the United States and what that means for technological innovation and entrepreneurship.

13. "The Power of Market Creation"

Bryan C. Mezue, et al. *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2015, 8 pages.

The authors discuss the importance of market creation in supporting economic and employment growth, focusing on how company-level innovation leads to national prosperity and its impact on markets.

DEMOCRACY

14. "Democracy Aid at 25: Time to Choose"

Thomas Carothers. *Journal of Democracy*, January 2015, 16 pages.

The author, vice-president for studies at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, examines how democracy assistance has evolved over the last twenty-five years and what challenges lie ahead. The state of global democracy aid and its development since the late 1980s is discussed.

15. "Crisis and Transition, But Not Decline"

Philippe C. Schmitter. *Journal of Democracy*, January 2015, 14 pages.

The author argues that democracy as a practice has confronted the crisis and transition, but not decline, and analyzes dubious conclusions of decline from sources like Freedom House and Economist Intelligence Unit, focusing on the importance of accountability processes and citizens' accord of legitimacy.

JOURNALISM AND SOCIAL MEDIA

16. "21st-century censorship"

Philip Bennett and Moises Naim. *Columbia Journalism Review*, January/February 2015, 13 pages.

The authors discuss the impact of the Internet on media, the use of state-controlled media outlets, and the methods used by various nations around the world to censor the media in the 21st century.

17. "Let's Really Be Friends"

Kyle Chayka. *The New Republic*, March/April 2015, 2 pages.

The author examines the history of relationships on social media, from Internet Relay Chats beginning in the 1980s to social-media companies MySpace and Facebook that emerged in the 21st century, focusing on the evolved character of online communities.

HEALTH

18. "Let Them Eat Junk"

Kiera Butler. *Mother Jones*, March/April 2015, 7 pages.

The author discusses peoples' eating habits and how physical surroundings—everything from supermarket layout to food packaging to the color of kitchen walls—affect what and how people eat.

19. "Eternal Youth for All!"

Ronald Bailey. *Reason*, March 2015, 7 pages.

Why should you want to live forever? Can we afford to live longer and stop the process of aging? The author explores longer life span and the quest to slow down the aging process. How advances in medicine have enabled people to enjoy longer lives as well as the practice of diagnosing diseases early to increase chances of survival are examined.

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

20. "Battery Powered"

Steve LeVine. *Foreign Affairs*, March 2015, 6 pages.

The author discusses a future of battery-backed renewables and why battery is the key to unlocking renewables' potential. The development of renewable electric batteries and the relationship between the electric battery industry and the petroleum industry are discussed.

21. "Facing the Truth about Climate Change"

Jeffrey Ball. *The New Republic*, February 2015, 6 pages.

The author examines the environmental impact of climate change and the urgent action needed to prevent extreme weather. How U.S. politicians have responded to climate change threats from scientists and the need for renewable power development in the United State are discussed.

EDUCATION

22. "Rank Delusions"

John Quiggin. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 20, 2015, 7 pages.

What accounts for the remarkable stability of university rankings? What implications does this have for university management and higher-education policy? The author discusses university rankings and the statistical role of mean reversion in maintaining stable rankings over time.

23. "Learning in the Making: A Comparative Case Study of Three Makerspaces"

Kimberly M. Sheridan, et al. *Harvard Educational Review*, Winter 2014, 27 pages.

The authors explore makerspaces as learning environments, and discuss how participants learn and develop through complex design and making practices. How makerspaces help individuals identify problems, build models, learn and apply skills is discussed.

24. "Self-Directed Learning and Technology"

Valerie C. Bryan. *Education Digest*, February 2015, 3 pages.

The author, a professor in educational leadership & research methodology in adult and community education at Florida Atlantic University, discusses the benefits of technology for self-directed learning and the challenges to self-direct learners with the mass of digital tools.

25. "Teacher Retreating: The Little Known Behavior That Impacts Teaching and Learning"

Nancy J. Ratcliff, et al. *Education*, Winter 2014, 8 pages.

The authors discuss the impact of classroom environment on both teaching and learning, focusing on teacher retreating which is a behavior that occurs in the classroom when a teacher backs down after one or more students undermine the teacher's authority by failing to comply.

26. "Sliding Into Search"

Georgina Devar. *Online Searcher*, January/February 2015, 5 pages.

The author explores how information professionals can effectively search for PowerPoint presentation slides in the Internet and search techniques of specialized syntax.