



Week: 08 – 14 January 2007

GLOBAL REALITY: THE WEEK IN REVIEW

You may not be interested in reality, but reality is interested in you.

Threat Summary

	Inter-State Conflict. US “surge” widely seen as escalation against Iran as well as unwise policy. Terrorism. Salafi Jihadism considered the main threat—attacks outside US likely to increase.
	Poverty. “Must Read” Top 10 Underreported Crises from Doctors Without Borders Environment. 2006 warmest on record for US. 20-50 tons discarded electronic waste each year. Civil War. 39,000 unemployed former fighters in Liberia—typical destabilizing factor, need jobs. Genocide. Cultural genocide of Tibet by China continues. Reviews of DVD Cry of the Snow Lions. Transnational Crime. Insufficient reporting on a threat that generates \$2 out of \$7-9 trillion a year.
	Infectious Disease. Tuberculosis making a come-back and resistant as well. Needs tens of billions.
	Other Atrocities. Global legal process catching up with extra-judicial killers.

Policy Summary

	Diplomacy. Jewish Red Diamond joints Red Cross and Red Crescent as recognized assistance agency. Security. GoogleEarth and hidden webcams level the surveillance playing field for all parties. Social Security. 744,000 homeless, many newcomers to the USA. Universal health coverage rising.
	Immigration. Illegal immigrants can be caught and released as many as six times. Water. ...
	Debt. US Trade Deficit on the order of three quarters of a trillion dollars a year for 2006. Economy. ... Energy. Should probably go to ORANGE soon. US vulnerability to oil interdiction is very severe. Justice. ...
	Agriculture. ... Education. There is no established definition or process for defining a “highly-qualified” teacher. Family. Catholic Church exposure in Poland again calls into question commitment to values.

Challenger Summary

	Iran. All indications are that Israel and US will attack Iran soon, with severe consequences for all. Venezuela. Iranian President visits, Venezuela moves toward socialism and restructuring of economy.
	Brazil. Troops deployed against gangs in Rio de Janeiro—gangs are skilled at urban warfare. China. China leveraging every opportunity to deploy troops overseas with UN forces. India. Five new petro-energy hubs, new energy infrastructure, four satellites launched, two for others. Indonesia. Sulawesi again in conflict.
	Wild Cards. Afghanistan, Bangleadesh, Pakistan prominent; Turkey opposes Kurdish autonomy. Russia. Useful perspective in Misreading Russia.

World Crises (extracted from **monthly** assessments by *International Crisis Group*)

↗ Alert	Lebanon
↘ Deteriorated	Basque Country (Spain), Bolivia, Egypt, Fiji, Iran, Israel/Occupied Territories, Kyrgyzstan, Somalia, Sudan, Turkmenistan
↗ Improved	Guinea

[International Crisis Group](#)

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Threats	see <i>daily items with links to full stories on the web at</i> PDB-Threats
Poverty news list forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are more <i>malnourished children</i> in India than in <i>Sub-Sahara Africa</i> -- "<i>Poor hygiene condition and illiteracy among women, particularly in rural India, were among the prime causes of malnutrition among children in India.</i>" <p>The US is counting on Brazil to get the stalled <i>Doha</i> talks restarted -- "<i>We encourage Brazil to play a leadership role in moving the G-20 towards a successful Doha outcome ...</i>"</p> <p><i>Transnational corporations</i> are not doing African countries a favor -- through <i>transfer pricing, tax avoidance</i>, and biblical <i>pollution</i> they owe big.</p> <p>The ninth annual list released by Medecins Sans Frontieres highlights the millions affected by the world's "invisible" conflicts. see Top 10 most underreported crises of 2006</p>
Infectious Disease news list forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "<i>Neglected tropical diseases</i> (NTDs) affect several hundred million people, and kill at least half a million annually." <p>An Indonesian woman is another death by H5N1.</p> <p>A few billion from do-gooders is not enough to eradicate <i>tuberculosis</i> world-wide – it will need a one-time effort of many billions.</p> <p>Kenya welcomes US help against an outbreak of <i>Rift Valley Fever</i> -- the highly contagious viral disease is spread from animals to humans through <i>mosquito</i> bites.</p> <p>Ghana, Kenya, Gambia, Mozambique, Tanzania and Senegal are currently taking part in the phase two trials of a <i>malaria vaccine</i> that may be available for use by 2011.</p>
Environment news list forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 was <i>warmest</i> on record for the US -- "<i>That's 2.2 degrees warmer than average and 0.07 degree warmer than 1998, the previous warmest year on record.</i>" <p>"... the world's population discards 20 to 50 million tons of <i>electrical and electronic waste</i> each year ...</p>
Inter-State Conflict news list forecast	<p>↓ A Kurdish Brigade is set to be deployed to Baghdad -- "We do not represent any sect or ethnic group" say the Kurds; but not all will agree. It is evident that insurgents in Iraq are using <i>Google maps</i> to hit UK troops -- "...raids on the homes of insurgents last week uncovered print-outs from photographs taken from Google." The US announced it will also name a Reconstruction Coordinator in Iraq. The UK wishes President Bush well with his Iraq "surge" plan but Britain will not do the same. Highlights of Bush's Iraq plan -- a checklist of the major points.</p> <p>Reports claim that <i>air-raids</i> in Somalia have won few friends -- "...bombs have hit vital water sources and large groups of nomads and their animals who had gathered round large fires at night to ward off mosquitoes." Somalia is still far from quiet -- "This is not something that is going to stop. Until the Ethiopians leave, people will be determined to kill them." Contrary to earlier reports, the US ambassador to Kenya and Somalia says Fazul Abdullah Mohammed and other targets of the US air-raid/s had not been killed.</p>
Civil War news list forecast	<p>↓ About 39,000 former fighters in Liberia with nothing to do are a cause for concern – they have yet to be placed in <i>skills</i> and <i>job</i> training programs.</p> <p>More than 200 people have died in clashes between <i>ethnic African farmers</i> and</p>
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	<p><i>nomadic Arabs</i> in South <i>Darfur</i> in the past week ..." Clarity and resolution in Darfur is hindered by rebel divisions -- in 2003 there were two rebels groups; in May 2006 there were three; now there are dozens. Rebels in Chad say they have opened a new <i>battlefront</i> in northeast. There are now more than 220,000 Darfur refugees and over 100,000 internally displaced Chadians.</p> <p>Somali President Abdullahi Yusuf entered the Somali capital for the first time since taking office in 2004; he rules out talks with the Islamists. The Somali parliament declares state of emergency amid fears that "Mogadishu could slide back into the kind of anarchy that gripped the city since 1991."</p> <p>In Nepal, although the <i>Maoist</i> insurgency may be over, hard-line breakaway factions could continue the violence."</p> <p>Indian External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee says peace talks between the <i>Tamil Tigers</i> and <i>Colombo</i> are highly unlikely in the near future.</p>
<p>Genocide news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Rights Watch says the <i>Lhasa railroad</i> confirms concerns about China's continuing cultural genocide in Tibet. <p>The international <i>trial</i> of the commander of the <i>Sarajevo siege</i>, Bosnian Serb general Dragomir Milosevic, commences. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) has commenced the <i>trial</i> of a former Kigali governor of genocide and complicity in the death of 800 000 Tutsis.</p>
<p>Other Atrocities news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maria Estela Martinez de Peron has been arraigned and released on bail in Spain following issue of an arrest warrant in Argentina for involvement in extra-judicial <i>killings</i>.
<p>Proliferation news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radionuclides from medical and a range of other applications such as those that would probably be used in a "<i>dirty bomb</i>" do NOT come within the purview of the UN nuclear watchdog, the IAEA. <p>A meeting of <i>African</i> states declared they were "entitled to reap the benefits of <i>atomic energy</i>" -- "<i>Ministers and officials from at least 45 countries pledged in a joint statement to promote the safe and accountable use of nuclear energy.</i>"</p>
<p>Terrorism news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An insight perhaps into Taliban recruitment difficulties -- "<i>An Afghan insurgent leader ...sent about 200 ill-equipped fighters, some wearing plastic bags on their feet, into Afghanistan, where most were killed...</i>" <p>ASEAN nations have agreed on a unified list of <i>terrorist groups</i> -- "... the first in the world to spell out concrete measures against terrorist groups...". [The agreement uses the UN <i>definition</i> of Terrorism.].</p> <p>The US is trying to block wider diffusion of the Islamist <i>al-Zawraa cable channel</i> in Egypt and beyond – but "<i>if the Egyptians submit to US pressures, the Europeans will not.</i>"</p> <p>The top-dollar Homeland Security Terrorism Task Force finds: "Salafi Jihadism is the main threat" and "<i>There is every indication that the number and magnitude of attacks on the U.S., its interests and its allies will likely increase.</i>" It is estimated (but not confirmed) that the FBI is investigating around 8,000 for terrorism in the US -- but, compared with the UK, "<i>We see relatively fewer active plots involving physical attacks within the United States</i>".</p> <p>The <i>Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat</i> (GSPC) says it is "awaiting</p>

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		instructions from Osama bin Laden " before it begins attacks on French interests in Algeria. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak reiterates the dangers of simplistic <i>democracy</i> and political freedom – if Egypt were a free democracy it would probably be an <i>Islamist</i> regime.
Transnational Crime news list forecast		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police seized \$20 million in <i>cocaine</i> in suburban <i>Philadelphia</i>. <p>Despite ongoing Mexican military and federal police operations, killings in <i>Tijuana</i> continue unabated.</p>
Policy		<i>see daily items with links to full stories on the web at PDB-Policy</i>
Agriculture news list forecast		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]
Debt news list forecast		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>US Trade Deficit</i> improved for the third straight month -- "<i>Despite the improvement, however, the US stands to finish 2006 with its largest imbalance on record, eclipsing the \$716.7B figure for 2005.</i>"
Diplomacy news list forecast		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The US State Department announces another effort to promote the <i>US image</i> abroad -- <i>Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy</i> Karen Hughes says America's image abroad is shaped by "a complicated tapestry". The Council on Hemispheric Affairs says new Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte is Latin America's "Mr. Danger" - "<i>In Honduras, Negroponte was more a conspirator than a benign diplomat.</i>" Domestic Greek <i>terrorists</i> seem to be behind an <i>RPG</i> attack on the US embassy in <i>Athens</i> - the group "November 17" carried out a similar attack against the embassy in 1996, causing minor damage and no injuries. <p>The strategic communications plan for Iraq still has ("to be determined") under the IRAQI MESSAGES section -- maybe the US will never know what to say there.</p> <p>The Times [UK] says that the Somalia operation was long in the planning -- "<i>'professional assistance' was recruited by officials based in the US embassy in Nairobi at the end of 2005 as part of a deniable operation.</i>" An evangelical Christian general responsible for the Somalia attack may soon go -- "<i>Gates feels it all went out of control, that they're doing too many things in too many places.</i>"</p> <p>The <i>Red Diamond</i> (a geometric transform of the <i>Star of David</i>) has now come in to force as an international emblem equivalent to the <i>Red Cross</i> and <i>Red Crescent</i> -- "In return for being allowed to join, Israel had to acknowledge the <i>Palestinian Red Crescent</i>..."</p>
Economy news list forecast		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]
Education news list forecast		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>NCLB</i> law is does not offer any acceptable way to define what a "<i>highly qualified</i>" <i>teacher</i> is -- "<i>It's not a process that gets at the fundamental issues of quality or effectiveness.</i>"
Energy news list forecast		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ Experiments with <i>biofuel</i> production in Senegal has raised concern; as a local energy source the technologies are sound; as a massive <i>monoculture crop</i> for base-load energy it would devastate the country -- "<i>When we are talking about using it as a major energy source, it is a wrong direction.</i>" <p>The US will remain vulnerable to oil supply -- "... <i>the idea of 'energy independence' is a myth...</i>". An analysis concluded the <i>Anglo-American</i> "empire" is losing the "Great Energy Game" -- "While China and Russia continue to 'win' in <i>Central Asia</i>,</p>

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Earth Intelligence Network

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	the <i>West</i> continues to lose political and economic clout everywhere."
Family news list forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The scandal surrounding Polish Bishop Stanislaw Wielgus and cooperation with the communist era <i>secret police</i> had an echo of the <i>pedophile</i> scandals in the US – the Church puts its own interests above common decency and openness -- "<i>Pope Benedict refused to withdraw his support of Wielgus until the very last hours when he realized he was in a public relations fiasco.</i>"
Immigration news list forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although DHS Secretary Chertoff four months ago declared an end to the "catch and release", it seems that some <i>illegal immigrants</i> are still being released and re-arrested as much as six times. A US Border Patrol agent shot dead a Mexican migrant during arrest.
Justice news list forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]
Security news list forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deletion of the words "<i>issued under the authority of section 102(a) of the Act</i>" in the latest version of the US Army manual has some concerned about aspects of <i>wiretapping</i>. Separately, it was not previously known that the Pentagon and the CIA have been using their own "noncompulsory" versions of <i>national security letters</i>. <i>The Economist</i> [UK] said that constant restructuring of US intelligence arrangements could cause <i>chronic instability</i>. Defense workers and contractors were warned about being planted with fake Canadian <i>coins</i> that concealed RFID "<i>tracking devices</i>" -- "Top suspects, according to intelligence and technology experts: China, Russia or even France...." NORTHCOM's Joint Task Force Civil Support has helped coordinate federal efforts to help <i>civil authorities</i> prepare for and manage the effects of possible CBRN terrorist attacks. The source of a <i>gas plume</i> (probably hydrogen sulphide H₂S) across New York is still a mystery [but gives good data on how a CBRN plume might distribute]. The US has completed an operations guide to dealing with <i>pandemics</i>. People will now be able to register on the MI5 [UK] website to receive <i>SMS</i> updates when the threat level changes." FBI and DHS have urged public facilities to "review" their arrangements to avoid "open observation of security measures" on <i>webcams</i> over the <i>internet</i>.
Social Security news list forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boston is pressing Congress for tougher <i>gun laws</i> -- "<i>We need to convince Congress to pass common sense gun laws -- laws that punish immoral gun dealers and protect our citizens.</i>" There are estimated 744,000 <i>homeless</i> people in the US -- "<i>It's a whole influx of new people, and that's the really scary part.</i>" California is now the fourth (and largest) state to attempt near <i>universal health coverage</i> for its citizens (with Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont).
Water news list forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]
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Challengers

see daily items with links to full stories on the web at [PDB-Challengers](#)

Brazil news list forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first <i>troops</i> arrive in Rio de Janeiro 20070114 to secure the city against heavily
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	<p>armed <i>gangs</i> but it is not yet clear where and how they will be deployed.</p>
<p>China news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beijing promised in its bid for the <i>Olympiad</i> that it would work to improve its <i>human rights</i> record, but Rights groups say human rights conditions in china are getting worse. <p>Since 1990, China has sent 5,915 military personnel to participate in 16 UN <i>peacekeeping operations</i>, more personnel than any other permanent member of the <i>Security Council</i>.</p> <p>China reports that a camp of the <i>East Turkestan Islamic Movement</i> has been captured in the <i>Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region</i>.</p>
<p>India news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Misgivings are growing on the restrictive provisions of the <i>US-India nuclear deal</i> -- India's Special Envoy on the Nuclear issue says India will not accept any legally-binding provision on future nuclear <i>testing</i>. <p>Some the detainees in the 7/11 <i>Mumbai bombing</i> were already on the FBI's terrorist list.</p> <p>India envisages five new <i>petro-chemical hubs</i> across the country as part of the new <i>energy infrastructure</i>. India successfully launched four <i>satellites</i>, including one for Indonesia and one for Argentina.</p> <p>Following the killing of 68 people in three days - mostly <i>Hindi</i>-speaking migrants from <i>Bihar</i> – by the <i>United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA)</i>, the Army launched a major offensive against ULFA bases in jungles of <i>Assam</i> and <i>Arunachal Pradesh</i>. <i>Tamil Nadu</i>[India] is setting up 12 Marine Police stations as part of heightened coastal security to check <i>smuggling</i> of <i>weapons</i> and <i>explosives</i> to Sri Lanka.</p> <p>The Army is about to launch its <i>doctrine</i> on <i>sub-conventional</i> operations -- "... <i>low intensity conflicts, counter terrorism</i> and <i>counter insurgency</i> operations...."</p>
<p>Indonesia news listforecast</p>	<p>↓ Conflict reignites in <i>Sulawesi</i> -- Indonesian police kill militants in raid and an <i>angry mob</i> beats to death a police officer during the funeral for those killed.</p>
<p>Iran news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US forces raided the Iranian consulate in Iraq's northern city of <i>Arbil</i> and arrested five of its staff believed to be operational members of the al-Q'uds brigade. <p>As Iran prepares to execute seven <i>Arab Muslims</i> for sabotage in <i>south-west</i> Iran, and blames "the occupiers of Iraq" for fomenting anti-government activity in the region, three <i>bombs</i> are set off.</p> <p>"People shiver in an energy-rich land" -- Iranian <i>gas</i> consumption has risen by 45% over last winter but infrastructure can not support demand. The US urged China to reconsider a \$16B deal with Iran on the <i>development of oil and gas fields</i>."</p> <p>The US Treasury has proscribed the Iranian state bank -- "A US treasury official said state-owned <i>Bank Sepah</i> was the "financial lynchpin" in Iran's <i>missile</i> procurement network."</p> <p>An analyst observes that doing "nothing" about the Iran <i>nuclear</i> issue may leave Israel obliged to act unilaterally -- "<i>From an Israeli point of view, the ayatollahs are not a putative threat but a proven aggressor.</i>"</p>
<p>Russia news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Russia is sending detectives to the UK for their own investigation of the "spy poisoning" -- Alex Goldfarb, who runs (fugitive oligarch, alleged criminal) Berezovsky's Foundation for Civil Liberties in New York, says this is a stunt to

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deflect attention from Moscow.

Foreign Policy in Focus said "Instead of a one-man dictatorship, the Kremlin administration more closely resembles a struggling, fractured corporation that at best is trying to become transparent...". see [Misreading Russia](#)

Venezuela
[news list|forecast](#)

↓ President **Chavez** announced radical moves that seem to take even his advisors by surprise -- "We're moving toward a socialist republic of Venezuela, and that requires a deep reform of our national constitution". The **US** said "We would expect Venezuela to follow through on all of its contractual obligations". **Petroleum** interests, referring to talks on *state control of assets*, said that Venezuela had suddenly become a *dictatorship*. As for Venezuela's well-connected **Church**, Chavez threatened a fight - "I do not want to return to the era of confrontation with the **bishops**, but it's not my choice, it's that of the Venezuelan bishops."

As **Nicaragua** became the fourth member of *Alternativa Bolivariana para las Américas (ALBA)*; Venezuela pledged 200 years of *oil* at modest prices and to build *refineries*. The **Iranian** President visited to "strengthen ties".

wild-card
[news list|forecast](#)

↓ In **Bolivia** supporters of President **Morales** set fire to the *Cochabamba* to demand the resignation of the conservative governor.

Turkey reiterates its adamant opposition to *Kurdish* autonomy in northern **Iraq**.

↓ As street clashes and more *blockades* paralyze **Bangladesh**, a *curfew* is imposed, *elections* are postponed and an *emergency* is declared – there is concern a that "Bangladesh, a predominantly Muslim country of 140 million people, is heading into a period of political instability."

President **Musharraf** ignored security advice to visit **Pakistan's North West Frontiers Province** and make popular *development* announcements. A senior **UN** official called on **Pakistan** and **Afghanistan** to play nicely and address Afghanistan's problems together --"This war of words, this rhetorical contest between two governments, between two partners in this region must end."

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