

**Week: 05 – 11 February 2007**

## GLOBAL REALITY: THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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

### Threat Summary

	<p><b>Inter-State Conflict.</b> Iraq in flames, Afghanistan being “fought backward,” Israel incites Palestinians.</p> <p><b>Proliferation.</b> See Other Atrocities. Malaysian PM says Bush and Blair have killed more than SH/AQ.</p> <p><b>Terrorism.</b> UN acceptance of women in its ranks attracting attacks. Hawala banking hard to attack.</p>
	<p><b>Poverty.</b> Information access and tools are most important after meeting basic water and food needs.</p> <p><b>Infectious Disease.</b> Ignorance of AIDS. Meningitis on the rise. Poultry trade spreading avian flu.</p> <p><b>Environment.</b> .Environmental emissions attracting religions. UN/ Google Earth doing before/after.</p> <p><b>Civil War.</b> Somalia trying, Kosovo could erupt, Cote d’Ivoire on the brink, Palestine evolving.</p> <p><b>Genocide.</b> Armed gunmen attack aid workers in Darfur. World continues to ignore other genocides.</p> <p><b>Transnational Crime.</b> Transnational anti-gang unit emerging. Drug lords winning against Mexico.</p>
	<p><b>Other Atrocities.</b> 250,000 child soldiers. Debt slavery in India. 51,000 political disappearances.</p>

### Policy Summary

	<p><b>Diplomacy.</b> SecDef on soft power. Africa Command. Sunni-Shi’ite confrontation. GE no on NATO.</p> <p><b>Security.</b> Norwegian seed diversity program. Senate on lies from Pentagon re Iraq. Cyberspace weak.</p> <p><b>Society.</b> Barak Obama claims mantle of new generation, but lacking in substantive policy ideas.</p>
	<p><b>Immigration.</b> From Miami to Texas, raids are effective, in one case almost creating a ghost town.</p> <p><b>Water.</b> 5 US states in water wars. UN focusing on water wars. India short on resolution re Cauvery.</p>
	<p><b>Debt.</b> Good news off the record: Medicare outyears costs can be cut by 90% using fair pricing in US.</p> <p><b>Economy.</b> US Economy Risks and Strategies for 2007-2017 available for review.</p> <p><b>Education.</b> No Child Left Behind lacks common sense—no one addressing Web 2.0 education needs.</p> <p><b>Energy.</b> Brazil-US create ethanol standard. Most R&amp;D on weapons, not energy. Algae fuel in sight.</p> <p><b>Justice.</b> Nothing of real substance noted.</p>
	<p><b>Agriculture.</b> A complete lack of attention to agriculture-poverty-water inflection points.</p> <p><b>Family.</b> Nothing of real substance noted. <i>Family</i> must be elevated to Global Warming panic status.</p>

### Major Player Summary

	<p><b>Iran.</b> Iran beating US on many fronts—Iraq, carriers in missile range, stealth drone, Pakistan pipeline.</p>
	<p><b>Venezuela.</b> Cuban doctors departing Venezuela. Direct flights from Iran. US demonizing Venezuela.</p>
	<p><b>Brazil.</b> President accuses rich countries of hypocrisy on climate change issues. US killed Doha.</p> <p><b>China.</b> China continues to absorb Africa. New jet fighter, fourth space port, Islamic Uyghur problems.</p> <p><b>India.</b> Yemen and Libyan oil. Trillion dollar GDP. Watching Gulf. New institute for climate change.</p> <p><b>Indonesia.</b> Jihadist revival on one hand, rebel leader installed as governor of Aceh on the other.</p> <p><b>Wild Cards.</b> Zimbabwe on brink. Pakistan vulnerable. Turkish-Kurdish stand-off. Crime &amp; poverty.</p>
	<p><b>Russia.</b> Putin visits Saudi. Dialog with Japan. Ready to help in Afghanistan. Refining own crude.</p>

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

↗ Alert	[none]
↘ Deteriorated	<b>Guinea, India (non-Kashmir), Israel/Occupied Territories, Lebanon, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Uganda</b>
↗ Improved	<b>North Korea, Northern Ireland (UK)</b>

[International Crisis Group](http://www.icsg.org)

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## Threats

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

### Poverty

[news list](#)[forecast](#)

- **Intel** and **USAID** have signed an MoU committed to providing access to *information technology* in *developing countries* ["emerging markets"]. [One of the most important things for the developing world after food and water is *access to information*.]

The **World Food Programme** Regional Director for *Southern Africa* joins the debate on whether *food aid* destroys local poor economies -- [Another View of Food Aid](#) More than half of **South Africa's** children - 10 million - do not have enough money to survive. "*Nearly half of the population of sub-Saharan Africa lives below the international poverty line, a higher percentage than in any other region.*"

### Infectious Disease

[news list](#)[forecast](#)

- **Meningitis** has killed 96 in **Burkino Faso** -- "*Meningitis is an often fatal airborne infection transmitted through sneezing and coughing that infects the brain and spinal cord.*"

Ignorance about **AIDS** is widespread in **Malawi**, as is the disease -- "*Around 14% of Malawi's 13 million people are infected with HIV.... There are about 78 000 Aids-related deaths every year.*"

Michel **Kazatchkine**, **France's** ambassador for **HIV/AIDS** and communicable *diseases*, has been appointed to lead the **Global Fund** [a global disease eradication fund].

The **UN** says "*this season's wave of avian flu was largely passed through the poultry trade*" -- authorities and locals are refusing to use commonsense in maintaining *quarantine* areas. **FAO** again warns that domestic and feral *cats* may play a dangerous new role in the spread of **H5N1**. **Indonesia's** refusal to share **H5N1** samples without a promise of non-commercial use has been called *reprehensible* -- it was then called *wise*. [*Intellectual property* and rights to life forms are at play here.]

### Environment

[news list](#)[forecast](#)

- A Texas **Baptist** Group is fighting the fast-tracking 18 new *coal-fired power stations* -- "*This is cutting edge stuff for Baptists - even moderate Baptists.*" [Will the big issues assume more of a *moral values* component?]

The **US** will help **Vietnam** clean up some **Agent Orange** hotspots -- "*millions more will be needed to pay for the damage caused by dioxin in Vietnam.*"

Sir Richard **Branson** and former Next President **Al Gore** announced a *prize* for the most innovative way of reducing *greenhouse gases* in the atmosphere -- "*the Earth cannot wait 60 years.*"

The **Kyoto Protocol** is important but is seen as merely an *interim* measure, merely buying the planet 20 years -- "*South Africa, China and India are sitting on coal reserves that could send all the West's efforts to combat climate change up in smoke.*"

The **UN Environment Programme (UNEP)** will work with **Google-Earth** and others to produce demonstrative before-and-after images of *climate change*.

**UK Prime Minister Blair's** main idea for action on *climate change* is cooperative development of *carbon sequestration*, perhaps the only emergency action that is possible. French petro-giant **Total** and partners are starting a major *carbon sequestration* project may be a do-or-die for the technology.

The effects of " *censorship*" on *climate science* by the **Bush** administration are said

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to linger but some agencies are trying to redress the past -- *"This revised policy should resolve most or all of the recent complaints by some NOAA scientists."* The **US Senate Environment and Public Works Committee** attacks the **EPA** on a range of issues, saying it has gone *"too long without meaningful oversight"*.

Higher than usual **rainfall** has caused an outbreak of **dengue** fever affecting more than 15,000 people in **Brazil** and neighboring areas. [The new weather patterns of climate change will bring new disease patterns.]

**China's** legacy to the world: cheap white-goods and biblical **pollution** -- *China's Filthiest Export* . China so far declines to accept **mandatory emissions** caps but says **developed countries** can do more.

The **EU** is promulgating a range of offences for **"green crimes"** -- *"The heaviest sentence - at least 5 to 10 years of jail - will apply to "green crimes" committed intentionally that kill or seriously injure people."* The **vehicle** industry in **Europe** is required to produce an 18% cut in **CO<sub>2</sub> emissions** -- *"Transport is the only sector in Europe that has shown dramatic increases in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions over the last 15 years."*

French President Jacques **Chirac** says the Earth needs a **UN environment organization**.

**Inter-State Conflict**  
[news list|forecast](#)

↓ The **US Army** is struggling with a huge backlog of **equipment** damaged in action -- *"There's a big problem right now because they simply don't have enough equipment."* **US General Pace** says there is not yet enough **equipment** to support the "surge" in Iraq -- *"Pace said it will be July before enough equipment is in place."*

Some **Iraqi** insurgents are said to have offered a **peace deal** in Iraq -- *"The present terms would be impossible for any US administration to meet..."* but perhaps it's the thought that counts. The **Iraqi** health minister was arrested suspected of killings and of funneling money to **Sadr's militia**. Ethnic rivalry in **Kirkuk** [northern Iraq] have become tense -- any attempt to reverse the **"Arabisation"** of **Kurdish** Kirkuk under **Saddam** will not be simple. An **Iraqi** police officer says *"I sold my Glock pistol and my bullet-proof vest for \$1,500 so that I can feed my family until I find a safer job."* Investigations show that pallet-loads of billions in **cash** were sent to **Iraq** -- somebody's palms were crossed with silver; whose remains largely undocumented. Five were charged over alleged **Iraq** contracting scams, with stealing \$8.6 million from the **Coalition Provisional Authority**.

A **US Senate Committee** concludes the **Office of Special Plans** acted *inappropriately* with pre-war **Iraqi intelligence**. The **Pentagon** is now recruiting **"officers with PhDs"** to advise on war efforts. [Back-room **boffins** can win wars, but maybe it's too late for these.]

*"Unlike Iraq, Afghanistan is a war fought backward"*. One possible **US** ally in Afghanistan, Bashir Noorzai, is in a **US** jail for **drug** offenses.

**Pakistan** says it could use more needs more help in policing its wild-west border with **Afghanistan**; it is not just a matter of desire -- *"if it were that simple it would have been resolved long ago in Palestine, in Lebanon and Iraq and in Afghanistan. Obviously it's more complicated."*

**Palestinians** have rioted in **Jerusalem** where **Israel** is doing excavations -- *"I think they want to change the view of the al-Aqsa mosque so when anyone looks at it from the outside they will see only Jewish tradition."* **UNESCO** called on **Israel** "to

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	<p><i>suspend any action that could endanger the spirit of mutual respect until such time as the will to dialogue prevails once again.</i></p> <p>The <b>UN Secretary General</b> says the <i>Department on Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)</i> should be split it into two - <i>peace operations</i> and <i>field support</i>.</p>
<p><b>Civil War</b> <a href="#">news list forecast</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amid sporadic mortar attacks, there are attempts at reconciliation talks in <b>Somalia</b> -- "<i>Many Somalis are deeply distrustful of any peacekeeping mission after a disastrous United Nations-led mission in the 1990s.</i>" In one incident senior <i>military</i> at a ceremony were killed and wounded. Both <b>Somali</b> neighbors, <b>Kenya</b> and <b>Ethiopia</b>, are now hosting large numbers of <i>refugees</i>.</li> </ul> <p>Independence of <b>Kosovo</b> has now become – along with <i>energy</i> -- a major issue between the <b>EU</b> and <b>Russia</b>. <i>Serbs</i> have promised not to cooperate with an independent Kosovo – “Serbs in Kosovo will react as any occupied people would do.”</p> <p>With cynical opportunism, President <b>Mugabe</b> of <b>Zimbabwe</b> says <i>white farmers</i> can get their <i>crops</i> in before losing their land; Zimbabwe is <i>starving</i>.</p> <p>The <b>Hamis</b> and <b>Fatah Palestinian</b> factions seem to have reached an agreement on a unity government -- "<i>I hope this agreement will be a serious and official one and not like the previous agreements.</i>"</p> <p><b>Cote d’Ivoire</b> is on the brink and no party is blameless -- at the end of his two year tenure, the <b>UN Special Representative</b> says "<i>You can say there are no angels in Cote d’Ivoire</i>".</p> <p>It was revealed that <b>UK Tamils</b> had been pressured into donating money to <b>Tiger</b> rebels [<b>Sri Lanka</b>]- "<i>unlike with al-Qaeda-linked terrorist groups, the police do not have the resources to act.</i>"</p>
<p><b>Genocide</b> <a href="#">news list forecast</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Armed gunmen raided an <i>aid workers</i> camp in north <b>Darfur</b>, fueling delay in offers by countries to contribute to the hybrid Darfur force.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other Atrocities</b> <a href="#">news list forecast</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In a case that is just one of many, 200 <i>bonded workers</i> in <b>India</b> tricked into debt and work at a <i>brick kiln</i> were freed from virtual slavery.</li> </ul> <p>A three day conference in <i>Paris</i> examined the issue of an estimated 250,000 <i>child soldiers</i> coerced into fighting throughout the world. <b>Sudan’s child soldiers</b> find it hard to give up their guns even after freed of coercion -- "<i>they have social status with a gun and they just can’t get back into their communities.</i>"</p> <p>An experts panel says <i>human trafficking</i> is increasing each year "<i>panelists said not even the United States has conquered the problem.</i>" A separate item confirms this: a <i>Jacksonville</i> federal jury convicted the wife of a man already sentenced to 30 years for running a <i>slave-labor</i> farm.</p> <p>The <b>US</b> has not [yet] signed the new UN Convention on <i>political disappearances</i> -- over 51,000 people have been "disappeared" by governments in over 90 countries since 1980; 41,000 remain missing.</p> <p>Former <b>Malaysian</b> Prime Minister <b>Mahathir</b>, speaking at a <i>peace conference</i> he organised in <i>Kuala Lumpur</i>, observed that <b>Bush</b> and <b>Blair</b> have murdered more than <b>Saddam</b> and <i>al-Qaeda</i> -- while stressing that terrorism could not be condoned, Mahathir stressed nor could "<i>cruel retaliation by powerful countries</i>".</p> <p><b>Ecuador</b> takes harder line against <i>human smugglers</i> and finds an industry -- "<i>a</i></p>
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	<p><i>coyote is not just the one person with whom the emigrant makes contact -- it's a <b>network</b> that includes lawyers, congressmen, bankers and police..."</i></p>
<p><b>Proliferation</b>  <a href="#">news list forecast</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An argument about whether it matters or not if <b>Iran</b> has "<b>the Bomb</b>" -- <i>The Mullahs and the Bomb: Chirac's Analysis</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Terrorism</b>  <a href="#">news list forecast</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What chance do modern <b>anti-laundering</b> methods have against <b>HAWALA</b>, the underground money transfer system that has survived more than a thousand years?</li> <li><b>Yemen</b> is launching a large operation against <b>Shi'ite Houthis</b> in the <b>Saada</b> region and has cut all communications in the area.</li> <li><b>Egypt</b> has freed a cleric at center of <b>CIA</b> kidnap ["<b>rendition</b>"] case because there was "<i>no obvious reason why Nasr should remain in custody any longer.</i>"</li> <li>Coming days after a grenade attack on <b>Save the Children Fund</b>, an attack on Red Cross [<b>ICRC</b>] in <b>Pakistan</b> seems motivated by outrage at the <b>UN's</b> unseemly habit of working with <b>women</b>.</li> <li>Charges have been laid in the <b>UK</b> against most of those recently arrested for plans to kill a <b>UK Muslim soldier</b>.</li> <li>Gordon <b>Brown</b>, <b>UK prime minister presumptive</b>, says <b>radical Islamism</b>, like <b>communism</b> of the <b>Cold War</b>, needs to be fought "at all levels" -- "<i>the sad truth at the moment is that the other side, <b>al Qaeda</b>, are doing it better.</i>"</li> <li>The <b>UK Chatham House</b> think-tank says "<i>We need to deal with the prospect that the first <b>nuclear terrorist</b> is in fact more likely to be American or European.</i>"</li> <li>The wave of seven <b>letter bombs</b> in the <b>UK</b> seem to be related to a local issue such as <b>speeding fines</b> but is terrorism nevertheless. [It gives insight into how a sense of <b>powerlessness</b> can lead even "normal" people to terrorist acts.]</li> </ul>
<p><b>Transnational Crime</b>  <a href="#">news list forecast</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Luis Correa</b> has been removed as head of <b>Venezuela's National Anti-drug Office</b>. Assailants gunned down seven <b>police</b> in <b>Acapulco</b> -- <b>drug cartels</b> continue their war against <b>Mexico's</b> police; and win.</li> <li>The <b>US</b> along with <b>El Salvador</b>, <b>Honduras</b>, <b>Guatemala</b> and <b>Belize</b> have a new initiative that includes "setting up a <b>transnational anti-gang unit (TAG)</b>" to combat cross-border gangs. "<i>As a general rule, the guys who have more status in the gangs in <b>El Salvador</b> are the ones who have been deported from the <b>United States</b>.</i>"</li> </ul>
<p><b>Policy</b></p>	<p><i>see daily items with links to full stories on the web at <a href="#">PDB-Policy</a></i></p>
<p><b>Agriculture</b>  <a href="#">news list forecast</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>[nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]</li> </ul>
<p><b>Debt</b>  <a href="#">news list forecast</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>[nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]</li> </ul>
<p><b>Diplomacy</b>  <a href="#">news list forecast</a></p>	<p>↓ Secretary of Defense <b>Gates</b> says the <b>US</b> needs to boost its "<b>soft power</b>". [Secretary Gates is perhaps the first in the Cabinet to know about "soft power" but it may take more than knowing the term which until now has been the reserve of nations such as <b>India</b>.]</p> <p><b>Germany</b> adds to the pressure building against the <b>US</b> idea of an all-purpose <b>NATO</b> -- "<i>Sometimes I doubt if all questions can be addressed in the <b>NATO</b> context</i>". President <b>Putin</b> of <b>Russia</b> is more clear -- "<i>The <b>UN</b> must not be replaced either by <b>NATO</b> or the <b>European Union</b></i>" – and launches a full-frontal attack on <b>US foreign policy</b>; he says the <b>US</b> has "<i>made the world a more dangerous place and left</i></p>
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	<p><i>successive conflicts unresolved".</i></p> <p>Creation of the new <b>AFRICOM</b> to replace shared responsibility of three Commands recognizes <i>Africa</i> as a vital front in the "war on terror" [contention with Islamic militantism] and talks have commenced with <b>Kenya</b> on implementation of the new arrangement which will "project US <i>soft power</i> as well as military might".</p> <p>There is increasing evidence that <b>Saudi Arabia</b> (the home of <i>Wahhabism</i>) is taking a growing role to counter <b>Iran's</b> influence in <b>Iraq</b> and beyond – [again the US chooses regrettable bedfellows]. An Assyrian Christian source poses an extreme [straw-man] forecast: "<i>Iraq will disappear from the map. Iran and Kurdistan are now the dominant regional powers, with unconditional US support.</i>" <b>Jamal Jafaar Mohammed</b>, convicted <i>in absentia</i> of <i>bombing</i> US embassies, is a member of <b>Iraq's</b> parliament.</p> <p>The proposed budget gives a slight increase in <i>aid</i> for <i>Latin America</i>, with <b>Colombia, Ecuador and Haiti</b> getting most. The <b>US</b> administration is stepping <i>media campaign</i> into <b>Cuba and Iran</b> (and DPRK) – [hoping perhaps to bring back the good old days of <i>Batista</i> and <i>the Shah</i>].</p> <p>Critics of Secretary of State <b>Rice</b> say "<i>Rice's talent and experience was supposed to make up for what Bush lacked. It has not.</i>"</p>
<p><b>Economy</b> news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• see <a href="#">US Economy Risks and Strategies for 2007-2017</a></li> </ul> <p>The <b>Association of Academic Health Centers</b> says the proposed <i>budget</i> threatens "<i>the nation's highest priority -- the health of its people</i>".</p>
<p><b>Education</b> news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes are expected [needed] to <i>No Child Left Behind</i> -- "<i>The aim is to inject more common sense into the law ...</i>" – for example, including <i>special needs</i> children in a school's <i>aggregate</i> was immensely stupid.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Energy</b> news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Brazil</b> and the <b>US</b> are join forces to create an <i>ethanol standard</i> -- "Both countries want to create <i>standard certifications</i> for the product to become a <i>commodity</i> and be traded on the <i>futures market</i>."</li> </ul> <p>Closer review of the <i>budget</i> shows that the healthy <i>R&amp;D</i> component is mainly <i>weapons</i> systems, with little devoted to <i>energy</i> futures. The new <b>US budget</b> proposal does relatively little for <i>wind</i> energy -- "<i>overall funding for wind power was decreased to \$40 million.</i>"</p> <p><b>Russia</b> and <b>Qatar</b> – who dominate the world <i>gas</i> market -- are said to be discussing, along with <b>Iran</b>, a <i>gas version of OPEC</i> -- but they deny this.</p> <p>The theoretical potential is clear -- <i>algae</i> can produce <u>far more fuel per acre than soybeans</u>.</p>
<p><b>Family</b> news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]</li> </ul>
<p><b>Immigration</b> news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recent <i>Immigration (ICE)</i> raids have almost turned <i>Cactus, Texas</i> into a ghost town. Around <i>Miami</i> the <i>Immigration</i> raids have `people in a panic' -- last month, 424 undocumented immigrants were deported from Miami; 131 had criminal convictions.</li> </ul> <p><i>Nashville</i> makes <i>English</i> its <i>official language</i> -- a symbolic, perhaps unfriendly, act.</p>
<p><b>Justice</b> news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]</li> </ul>
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<b>Security</b> <a href="#">news list forecast</a>	↓	<p>The <b>Norwegian</b> a "<i>global permafrost safety facility</i>" -- a doomsday seed vault in the Arctic -- will address the loss of <i>biological diversity</i> and vulnerability to <i>climatic changes</i>.t</p> <p>The <b>US</b> will test certain <i>anti-nuclear detection devices</i> in <i>New York</i>, thereafter in other cities. The federally funded <b>Homeland Security Institute</b> – which is tasked by <b>Homeland Security's</b> undersecretary for <i>science and technology</i> – has a new head.</p> <p><b>Hackers</b> hit key Internet traffic [DNS] computers in "<i>one of the most significant attacks against the Internet since 2002</i>". An interview with <b>RSA Security</b> -- <a href="#">Cryptography's future</a></p> <p>A <b>US Senate Committee</b> again examines pre-invasion <i>intelligence</i> on <b>Iraq</b> -- "<i>The bottom line is that intelligence relating to the Iraq-al-Qaida relationship was manipulated by high-ranking officials...</i>" The new <b>US budget</b> seeks funds for additional <i>policy advisors</i> on <i>North Korea, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Central Asia</i> on "<i>pressing financial issues</i>" [<i>terrorism related money-laundering</i>]. The new <b>DNI</b> says review of the rules on <i>foreign-born US citizens</i> – such as <i>Arab-speaking Americans</i> -- is one area needing "<i>the greatest deal of attention and improvement</i>".</p> <p>The <b>Senate</b> proposes a <i>National Space Intelligence Center</i> within the office of <b>DNI</b> to meet modern <i>space threats</i>.</p>
<b>Society</b> <a href="#">news list forecast</a>	•	<p>Presidential candidate <b>Barack Obama</b> pledges a "new generation of U.S. leadership" – defending his short time in Washington, he says "<i>but I've been there long enough to know that the ways of Washington must change.</i>"</p>
<b>Water</b> <a href="#">news list forecast</a>	•	<p>The <b>UN</b> gives examples of water <i>cooperation</i> -- <a href="#">From water wars to bridges of cooperation: Exploring the peace-building potential of a shared resource</a>.</p> <p>In the <b>US</b>, <i>Montana, Wyoming, Nebraska, Kansas, South Dakota</i> (and others) are involved in <i>water wars</i>, just a taste of those to come.</p> <p>In <b>India</b>, the decision of the <i>Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal</i> has fallen short of what both <i>Karnataka</i> and <i>Tamil Nadu</i> had demanded.</p>
<b>Challengers</b>		<i>see daily items with links to full stories on the web at <a href="#">PDB-Challengers</a></i>
<b>Brazil</b> <a href="#">news list forecast</a>	•	<p>A top <i>policeman</i> has been suspended -- "<i>He was a top adviser to the previous government and when the new police chief took over and learned of [his] links to the militias, he was suspended.</i>"</p> <p>President <b>Lula</b> accuses rich nations of hypocrisy on <i>climate change</i> issues -- "<i>The wealthy countries are very smart, approving protocols, holding big speeches on the need to avoid deforestation but they already deforested everything.</i>" Brazil blames the <b>US</b> for the breakdown of the <i>Doha Round</i> negotiations -- "<i>It is not fair that a farmer in a developing country must compete with the treasury of a rich country.</i>"</p>
<b>China</b> <a href="#">news list forecast</a>	•	<p>China's <i>execution</i> of a "splitist" [<i>separatist</i>] in the <i>Turkic-speaking Islamic Uyghur</i> western "autonomous" region is symbolic of difficulties to come.</p> <p>China stresses there are <i>no strings</i> attached to its dealings with <i>Africa</i> -- critics say that is one of the <i>problems</i>. China has launched an <i>economic and trade cooperation zone</i> in <i>Lusaka (Zambia)</i>, the first of its kind in Africa.</p> <p>China has produced a <i>jet fighter</i> that rivals the world's best -- "<i>It has enabled China to create a cadre of experts that will be building ever more advanced aircraft over the next 50 years.</i>" China will establish its <i>fourth space port</i> on <i>Hainan island</i> (along</p>

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		with a theme park).
<b>India</b> <a href="#">news list</a> <a href="#">forecast</a>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>India opened new links to <i>petroleum sources</i> in <b>Yemen</b> and <b>Libya</b>. India is about to join the “trillion-dollar club”, in dollars of <b>GDP</b>.</li> <li>India will increase <i>maritime security</i> in the <b>Persian Gulf</b> -- India regards the Gulf as part of its “strategic neighborhood” [as does <b>Iran</b> and the <b>US</b>].</li> <li>India says it will establish an institute to tackle <i>climate change</i> -- “not only set up new technologies but also disseminate information on how to fight this global menace.”</li> </ul>
<b>Indonesia</b> <a href="#">news list</a> <a href="#">forecast</a>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inauguration of a former <i>rebel leader</i> as <b>Governor of Aceh</b> is a symbolic conclusion of a 29 year conflict.</li> <li><i>Cell phones</i> have been seized from jailed <b>Bali bombers</b> -- a Bali bomber on death row had delivered teachings to militants in <b>Sulawesi</b> via a smuggled mobile phone. A summary of the <b>ICG</b> (<i>International Crisis Group</i>) opinion on the possible consequences of Poso (<b>Sulawesi</b>) arrests -- <a href="#">Indonesia’s jihadist revival</a></li> <li>The respectable Indonesian <i>school</i> implicated in an attempted smear of presidential candidate Barack <b>Obama</b> is peeved -- “I feel this school has become a victim of irresponsible American politics.” Indonesia urges <b>Israel</b> to end provocative <i>excavation</i> near the <b>Al-Aqsa Mosque</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Iran</b> <a href="#">news list</a> <a href="#">forecast</a>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High-tech <i>explosively-formed projectiles</i>, undoubtedly of Iranian origin, are an increasing hazard in <b>Iraq</b> as roadside <i>bombs</i>. <b>US</b> Defense Secretary Robert <b>Gates</b> signals a “moderation” in the US stance towards Iran.</li> <li>Iran successfully tests newly-supplied <b>Russian TOR-M1 missiles</b> -- “The contract is for defensive weapons, which cannot be used for offensive purposes a priori.” Iran gives a friendly warning that all <i>foreign warships</i> in <b>Persian Gulf</b> within range of its <i>missiles</i>. Iran says it may launch its own <i>spy satellite</i> -- if the claims are correct, the launcher can put <u>300 kilograms</u> (660 pounds) into <i>earth orbit</i> ... or <u>anywhere</u> in the world. Iran boasts that it has developed and now producing a <i>stealth drone</i> with a 700km-range drone -- “The material and the shape of this drone make it undetectable for radars.”</li> <li>Iran and <b>Pakistan</b> have agreed on the <i>gas</i> price to be delivered by the proposed Iran-Pakistan-India <b>IPi pipeline</b>, a project the <b>US</b> opposes.</li> </ul>
<b>Russia</b> <a href="#">news list</a> <a href="#">forecast</a>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>President <b>Putin</b> has made the first <i>visit</i> by a Russian leader to <b>Saudi Arabia</b>. Moscow says it is ready for dialogue with <b>Japan</b> on the <b>Kurils</b> -- the four southern Kurils were not specifically mentioned in the 1951 <i>Treaty of San Francisco</i> and have been under <i>dispute</i> since then. Russia warns <b>EU</b> the keep its diplomatic hands off the dissident ex-Soviet regions <b>Moldova</b>, <b>Georgia</b> and <b>Azerbaijan</b>.</li> <li><i>Unprocessed raw materials</i> rose from 80% in 2000 to 85% in 2005 – President <b>Putin</b> says this reliance on raw material exports trend should cease. The head of <b>LUKoil</b> insists Russia should aim to refine all <i>crude oil</i> on Russian soil -- “...transition to the tougher <b>Euro-5 car emissions standard</b> by 2015 will require a \$5 billion investment in Russian refining facilities.”</li> <li>Russia says it is willing to help the <b>US</b> stabilize <b>Afghanistan</b> -- “We will of course never send our servicemen there, but everything else is open for discussion.”</li> </ul>
<b>Venezuela</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many poor neighborhood <i>health clinics</i> are in crisis as <b>Cuban doctors</b> depart – they</li> </ul>
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <span>↓ deteriorated</span> <span>• steady</span> <span>↑ improved</span> <span>↗ ALERT</span> </div>		



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are leaving at the end of their three year term, or for other unknown reasons. A Venezuelan loan will aid **Bolivian** President Evo **Morales** in a project to commercialize *coca* ... into legal products such as *coca tea*. **Iran** and Venezuela are to begin *direct flights*. *Meat* and *sugar* are reported scarce in Venezuela's shops – some say it is *government price controls* to blame; others that it is "unscrupulous *speculators*" manipulating the markets.

Venezuela's foreign minister dismisses the cut in cooperation with the **US** and **US anti-drug funding** -- the nation is not interested in funding coming from "the devil". **US** Secretary of State **Rice** believes **Chavez** is "destroying" Venezuela -- "I do believe that the president of Venezuela is really, really destroying his own country, economically, politically." Newly seated **US** Deputy Secretary of State **Negroponte** says the "*radical populism*" of **Chavez** is a threat to "democracies in the region" [how is not clear].

**Wild Cards**

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↓ **Zimbabwe** is on the brink of total collapse -- *doctors* and *teachers* are on strike; *inflation* is 1,280%; *water treatment* has collapsed bringing *cholera*, and President **Mugabe** says protest "will not be tolerated". South Africa's President **Mbeki** has again vowed to wage war on *crime* and *poverty* -- delivery on promises has proven far slower than the population will tolerate. Will *Africa* follow *Latin America* in rejecting elite-driven pseudo-democracies? -- [Will the Latin American Leftist Wind Blow Into the Continent](#)

Another attack on **Pakistan's** public infrastructure -- *Islamabad's international airport* – is thought connected to militant tribesmen in the *border region* near **Afghanistan**. The **US** is unapologetic about firing into **Pakistan** against **Afghan** cross-border insurgents.

Despite **US** demands, **Nicaragua's** President **Ortega** will keep the arsenal of more than 1,000 *SAM-7 missiles*, because Washington is giving *aircraft* to neighbor **Honduras**.

The *unlawful military government* of **Fiji** has disarmed the *police* Tactical Response Division.

*Washington Times* attempts an analysis of the **Turkish-Kurdish** standoff - "*the Kurds are feeling emboldened by the autonomous Kurdistan of Iraq and we see how Turkey is not very comfortable*"; [Solving the Kurdish problem](#)

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