

GLOBAL CHALLENGES: THE WEEK IN REVIEW

Destabilizing Threats, Stabilizing Policies, and Global Powers at a Glance

Threat Summary

- Environment.** Earth's ability to produce food degrading to point of looming catastrophe.
- Inter-State Conflict.** Iraq fails on 13 of 18 benchmarks. Taliban resurgent in AF. US lacks strategy.
- Proliferation.** US flies armed nuclear devices cross-country, also has one gun per person
- Poverty.** Poverty in US worsens, 36.5 million living in poverty.
- Infectious Disease.** Congo produces a new deadly disease, started in pigs and chickens, now humans.
- Civil War.** Lebanese troops beat Fatah Islam militants. Thailand's top teachers in south being killed.
- Genocide.** Fresh new genocide looms in Rwanda-Congo region.
- Transnational Crime.** Afghan poppy harvest jumps 18% (Pakistan does most of the processing).
- Other Atrocities.** More delays on Liberian trial, Chilean general gets life sentence.
- Terrorism.** UN appoints counter-terrorism official. India says only half of its terrorism is Islamist.

Policy Summary

- Diplomacy.** Cuba -UN good. US-Canada-Mexico talks (could strengthen 27 secessionist movements).
- Security.** Another 9/11 could cost \$420 billion. Meanwhile, US clueless, planning to attack Iran.
- Society.** The cheating culture continues, with Dick Cheney as the poster child for treason & corruption.
- Economy.** Sub-prime mortgage crisis alive and well,
- Education.** No major news, but our estimate is that US high schools are in rapid decline.
- Health.** California pushes for universal health care, useful lead for all other states.
- Immigration.** US courts stop IRS from chasing 140,000 individuals with incorrect social security #'s.
- Water.** Water not accepted as a human right. Research increases. One-sixth of Chinese drink pollution.
- Agriculture.** Secretary of Agriculture wants to increase subsidies that lead to wasted food.
- Energy.** Solar power the only option, and a very good option, in many remote villages.
- Family.** See the topical stack.
- Justice.** Alberto Gonzalez, a disgrace to all Latinos, finally resigns.

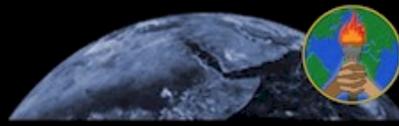
Major Player Summary

- Iran.** Iran following PRC model with Guard and economy. [OSS CEO posts 13 reasons not to attack.](#)
- Brazil.** Brazilian e-commerce grows 50% a year, accounts for 17% of all sales.
- China.** Active on all fronts—peacekeeping, energy, reducing military dependence on computers.
- India.** Indian navy into Gulf. Clearer picture of cross-border terrorism. Bangladesh border resolved.
- Indonesia.** Negotiated Taliban release of Koreans. Eyes on Australian uranium.
- Russia.** Claims North Pole Seabed at UN. "Sinister youth group" targets UK.
- Venezuela.** Threatens British if they oppose Argentinian recapture of the Falklands. Rejoins Andean.
- Wild Cards.** Turkey drifts toward Russia, creeping Islamic subversion feared. Pakistan rocky.

World Crises - from monthly assessments by [International Crisis Group](#) - AUGUST 2007

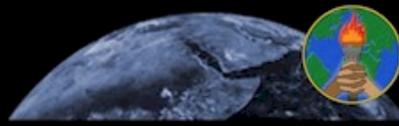
-  **Alert: Democratic Republic of Congo**
-  **Deteriorated:** Bangladesh, Burundi, DR Congo, Georgia, Guatemala, India (non-Kashmir), Iraq, Philippines, Somalia
-  **Improved:** Sierra Leone, Turkey
- Unchanged:** Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Basque Country (Spain), Belarus, Bolivia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chechnya (Russia), China (internal), Colombia, Comoros Islands, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Gambia, Georgia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Indonesia, Iran, Israel/Occupied Territories, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Liberia, Macedonia, Mali, Moldova, Myanmar/Burma, Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan), Niger, Nigeria, North Caucasus (non-Chechnya), Northern Ireland, North Korea, Pakistan, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Solomon Islands, Somaliland (Somalia), Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Syria, Taiwan Strait, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Western Sahara, Yemen, Zimbabwe

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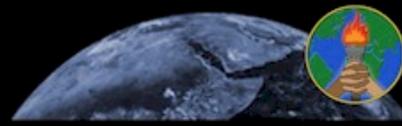
Threats		see <i>daily</i> items with <i>links to full stories</i> on the web at PDB-Threats
Poverty news list forecast	↓	Poverty in U.S. might get worse -- <i>Census</i> figures released this week show more than <u>36.5 million people</u> living in poverty in the US .
Infectious Disease news list forecast	↓	WHO experts in Congo to study deadly mysterious disease -- "The disease started three months ago in chickens and pigs but <u>later spread to human beings</u> ."
Environment news list forecast	↓	A forum of experts in Iceland is considering the bottom-line, the Earth's ability to produce food; "... land degradation and desertification are undercutting the soil's ability to produce more food, causing an environmental crisis that <u>affects one-third of all people on Earth...</u> " -- Between Hungry People and Climate Change, Soils Need Help .
Inter-State Conflict news list forecast	↓	"... the Taliban have driven government forces out of roughly <u>half</u> of a strategic area in southern Afghanistan that American and NATO officials declared a success story ..." -- Afghan Police Are Set Back as Taliban Adapt . Returning Korean Hostages Offer Thanks and Apologies . [Heedless of reality, Christian evangelicals again aggressively interpose themselves where they do more harm than good.] The GAO will report that at least 13 of the 18 benchmarks to measure the surge of U.S. troops to Iraq are <u>unfulfilled</u> ahead of a Sept. 15 deadline -- Audit Gives Iraq Leaders Failing Grade . One of the several unsolicited assessments Gen Petraeus receives each week stresses the broader political context in Iraq -- New Strategy Urged in Briefing to Petraeus . The head of the British Army during the 2003 invasion, now retired, calls the US post-invasion policy " intellectually bankrupt " -- Second British general bashes US strategy in Iraq .
Civil War news list forecast	•	Lebanese troops have finally won a battle against Fatah Islam militants started on 20 May 2007 for the <i>Nahr el-Bared</i> camp near Tripoli -- Militant-Held Camp Falls to Lebanon Army . "... Mugabe's cash- strapped government in Zimbabwe cannot afford to pay for 36,000 tonnes of wheat stuck at the nearest seaport of Beira in Mozambique ..." -- Cash-strapped Zimbabwe cannot afford to import wheat consignment . Insurgents in southern Thailand have long killed teachers at government schools, but now they seem to be targeting teachers known to be <u>exceptionally good</u> -- ' Top teachers targeted '.
Genocide news list forecast	↗	New tensions in the Rwanda-Congo region threaten a replay of earlier genocides; "We are Congolese Hutu's and we fear that the Tutsis headed by Nkunda and Rwandan forces will attack us." -- On the Brink of Fresh Congo War .
Other Atrocities news list forecast	•	Hugo Salas Wenzel becomes "the first senior member of Augusto Pinochet's military government to be given a life sentence for human rights abuses ..." -- Chile ex-general jailed for life . Like most other international high crimes trials , the trial of Charles Taylor , former president of Liberia , has been manipulated into more delays . -- Liberian Ex-Leader's War Crimes Trial Is Stalled .
Proliferation news list forecast	↓	Audit finds U.S. nuclear weapons parts misplaced -- "We're not going to be able to provide any additional information due to national security." From the winner, the US , with <u>one gun per person</u> to the UK and India with <u>4 to 6</u>

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	<p><u>per 100 persons</u> ... universally guns filter down the food chain to miscreants. -- <i>Global study says civilians now holding 650 million small arms.</i></p>
<p>Terrorism news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ban names Australian as senior UN counter-terrorism official</i> -- "The position was established by the Security Council in a resolution in 2004 to bolster the 15-member body's ability to monitor the implementation of a landmark resolution [following 9/11]" <i>Inside the Terrorist Screening Center</i> -- "We pretty much are the one-stop-shop mechanism for any kind of terrorist encounter." In India, about <u>half</u> of "terrorism" is "Islamist"; a useful clarification that the two are not synonymous -- <i>Half of terror toll due to Islamist extremism.</i>
<p>Transnational Crime news listforecast</p>	<p>↓ Despite <i>Climate Change</i>, war and enemies in high places, the Afghan poppy harvest has enjoyed an <u>18% increase</u> this year, the <u>sixth consecutive increase</u> since 2001 -- <i>Afghanistan poppy harvest jumps 18 per cent.</i></p>
<p>Policy</p>	
<p>Agriculture news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The US Agriculture Secretary suggests lowering the <i>income threshold</i> for receiving <i>farm subsidies</i> from \$2.5M to \$1M -- <i>Ag Secretary Wants Lower Income Limits.</i>
<p>Diplomacy news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More on the US case against Eritrea as a '<i>state sponsor of terrorism</i>' -- "<i>U.S. Will Declare Eritrea as State Sponsor of Terrorism</i>", says US Assistant Secretary of State. <i>Cuba ends 20-year boycott of UN human rights experts</i> -- this follows action by the <u>new UN Human Rights Council</u> to remove Cuba from the list of countries under <i>permanent observation</i>. Leaders at the US-Canada-Mexico Security and Prosperity Partnership meeting took pains to deny any secret agenda of [EU-style] <i>political union</i> -- <i>Integrate the North American economy.</i>
<p>Economy news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both President Bush and Fed Reserve chair Bernanke have held back from any major intervention in the <i>sub-prime mortgage</i> crisis.
<p>Education news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]
<p>Energy news listforecast</p>	<p>↑ <i>Solar</i> can bring <i>amenity</i> to the <i>isolated</i> places which are unlikely ever to get reticulated electricity; luxury to Indian villages -- <i>Chandigarh villages to have solar streetlights.</i></p>
<p>Family news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]
<p>Health news listforecast</p>	<p>↑ <i>Schwarzenegger</i> pushes <i>universal health care</i> for California -- Governor Schwarzenegger's support for <i>health-care</i> gained him the <u>Democrat support</u> to win in 2006; at present only <i>Massachusetts</i> has statewide universal health-care.</p>
<p>Immigration news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Illegal immigrants in US get reprieve</i> -- A US Federal Court has stalled a DHS move to send about <u>140,000 letters</u> to <i>employers</i> querying the incorrect <i>Social Security</i> details of some employees.
<p>Justice news listforecast</p>	<p>↑ <i>Attorney General Gonzales</i> resigns -- a Bush aide said Gonzales was pushed out by a Democrat "<i>jihad</i>."</p>
<p>Security news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another <i>terrorist attack</i> like 9/11 against US airlines could cost the air travel industry as much as <u>\$420 billion</u> -- <i>New terror attack would be costly for airlines.</i>
<p>Society news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]

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Water

news list|forecast

- **Desalination - A Solution to Water Needs** -- a tutorial from the *Indian Desalination Association*.
- Australia funds water loss research** -- Loss through *evaporation* (*evapotranspiration*) is a crucial part of the water equation.
- Murky Future for Rights Treaty on Water** -- "... the possibility of getting a **convention** approved and ratified on **water as a human right**, in the foreseeable future, is zero."

Challengers

Brazil

news list|forecast

- A leading economy of the '**South**', Brazil has a 'North'-like involvement in **E-Commerce** -- *In Brazil E-commerce Grows 50% a Year and Accounts for 17% of Sales*.

China

news list|forecast

- **China promises more military transparency** -- "*The Chinese government has decided to report annually to the Secretary-General of the United Nations basic data of its **military expenditures** for the latest fiscal year.*"
- Chinese see military dependence on computers as weakness** – by all accounts, China is becoming a world leader in **electronic warfare**; "*It is part of China's concept of **unlimited war**.*"
- Virtual police patrol China web** -- The animated figures, a man and a woman, will appear on users' screens every 30 minutes "to remind them of internet security".
- China Replaces 5 Senior Officials** [More consolidation than redirection.]
- River pollution affects a sixth of Chinese population** -- "*Two rivers supplying water to one sixth of the people in China are heavily **polluted** and threaten the **health** of the population, according to state media.*"
- China plans \$925 million energy efficiency fund** -- "*If the country did not speed up efforts, it would miss ambitious **targets** for reducing **energy intensity** ...*"
- Chinese general to head UN mission in Western Sahara** -- "... the first such appointment for a Chinese military leader in **UN peacekeeping operations** ..."

India

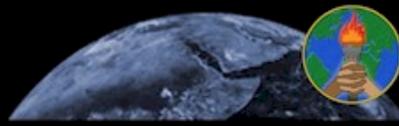
news list|forecast

- **India seeks expansion of naval ties with Gulf countries** -- "*Most of Indian **oil requirements** is sourced from the Gulf countries.*"
- India left again hardens line on US nuke deal** -- "*But the **communists** -- who say that the deal undermines India's independent **foreign and nuclear policy** and draws New Delhi into **Washington's strategic orbit** -- are against further talks, unless their concerns are addressed.*"
- India believes it is getting a clearer picture of how "**terrorist** " groups are operating; "*... a new network of terror where the brains trust may have links across the border, in **Pakistan and Bangladesh**, but where locals are increasingly being used to plan, plot and conduct the strikes.*" -- *Terror's new face Babu Bhai sits in UP jail, joins dots from Dhaka to Hyderabad via Delhi.*
- Indo-Bangla Border to be demarcated by May 2008** – India and **Bangladesh** "*agreed to resolve the **border problem** by erecting **demarcation pillars** across the 263-kilometer long border shared by the two countries, including **submerged areas** ...*"

Indonesia

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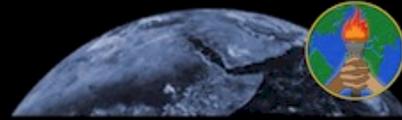
- Fulfilling Indonesia's ambition to be a more useful international actor, an Indonesian **negotiator** was involved in negotiation with the **Taliban** over release of the Korean evangelists -- *Indonesian role in hostage release important: South Korea President*.
- In the wake of **India's** deal on **Australian uranium**, Indonesia says there is no



	<p>reason Australia will not also sell to Indonesia; "Mr Kalla [vice president] said this should mean that Australia would sell uranium to Indonesia." -- Indonesia eyes Australia's uranium.</p>
<p>Iran news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iran replaces Revolutionary Guards chief and Iran's Revolutionary Guards ex-commander plays down his replacement -- "A change after almost ten years is quite natural and predictable as such an appointment does not last longer than a decade" General Yahya Rahim-Safavi said on state television. <p>A profile of Iran's Revolutionary Guard; "Now, all the money that's coming in serves to make them <u>the most powerful force in Iran</u>. They have a massive hand in the economic sector." -- Iran's Revolutionary Guard branches out.</p> <p>IAEA Notes 'Significant Step' On Nuclear Crisis -- A step forwards but "still far from enough to defuse the crisis over Iran's nuclear work."</p> <p>Iran claims production of a new indigenous "smart bomb"; "these equipment and instruments are meant to reinvigorate sustainable peace, <u>stability and security in the region</u>." -- Iran inaugurates "smart bomb" production line.</p>
<p>Russia news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putin's fanatical youth brigade targets Britain -- A glimpse into Russia's new 'sinister youth group' Nashi, an undiplomatic UK ambassador ... and the rabid Murdoch press. <p>At UN, Russia's Claim to North Pole Seabed Is Set Forth, Murky Allegiances of Commission Members -- A good insider report on the workings of the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf.</p>
<p>Venezuela news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "A total of 41 Colombians accused of plotting against Hugo Chavez have been pardoned." -- Chavez frees Colombian 'plotters'. <p>Peru welcomes Venezuela's attempt to return to Andean Community [Until now President Chavez has rejected the "old" trade groupings Andean Community and Mercosur in favor of the trade group of his own making ALBA.]</p> <p>Chavez vows revenge for Falklands war -- President Chavez says his new-generation military "would be used to destroy the British fleet if it attempted to return to the South Atlantic."</p>
<p>Wild Cards news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pakistan reiterates [as it and India regularly do] that nuclear power [and weapons] are synonymous with survival; "I want to make it clear that we will continue our nuclear programme, which is essential for meeting our energy requirements." -- Pakistan will maintain 'nuclear parity' in South Asia, says Kasuri. <p>Sensing a political quagmire, President Musharraf backs away from emergency rule; "Martial Law, emergency <u>are not the solution to our future</u>, but Pakistan comes first." -- Martial law and emergency no solution: Musharraf.</p> <p>Former President Bhutto says talks with President Musharraf have stalled; "I saw my country destabilized by my absence." -- Pakistan's Bhutto Says Musharraf Talks Have 'Stalled'. [Ms Bhutto's comments are sometimes naïve, even for a politician.]</p> <p>Turkey Drifts Eastward, Toward a Strategic Alliance With Russia -- "Turkey has been drifting <u>eastward</u> -- but not toward the Islamic world."; the EU is not Turkey's only hope for a future.</p> <p>Gül sworn in as Turkey president " despite the objections of a powerful military that fears a creeping subversion of the country's secular order under the former Islamist."</p>

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