

# **RÉVOLUTIONNAIRE 9/2007**

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## CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT

### [Colombia's New Armed Groups](#)

*International Crisis Group – 10 May 2007*

The disbanding of the paramilitary United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (AUC) between 2003 and 2006 is seen by the administration of President Alvaro Uribe as a vital step toward peace. While taking some 32,000 AUC members out of the conflict has certainly altered the landscape of violence, there is growing evidence that new armed groups are emerging that are more than the simple “criminal gangs” that the government describes. Some of them are increasingly acting as the next generation of paramilitaries, and they require a more urgent and more comprehensive response from the government.

### [Kosovo: No Good Alternatives to the Ahtisaari Plan](#)

*International Crisis Group – 14 May 2007*

The debate on Kosovo's future status has reached a crucial point. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has begun to consider elements of a draft resolution to determine the entity's future, which could be put to a vote in the coming weeks. The best way of ensuring regional peace and stability and lifting Kosovo out of an eight-year-long limbo, with a tired, temporary UN administration and an undeveloped, low-growth economy, is a resolution based squarely on the plan of UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari. This would supersede UNSC Resolution 1244 (1999), define Kosovo's internal settlement and minority-protection mechanisms, mandate a new international presence and allow for supervised independence.

### [Ethnic Tensions Fuel Pakistan Violence](#)

*Time Magazine – 14 May 2007*

It will have come as little surprise to the 15 million residents of Karachi that their city is at the epicenter of Pakistan's latest upsurge in political violence. That's because the port city, Pakistan's largest metropolis, is a hotbed of ethnic and sectarian divisions always primed to explode on the streets.

### [The Middle of Nowhere](#)

*The Prospect – May 2007*

Why are middle east experts so unfailingly wrong? The lesson of history is that men never learn from history, but middle east experts, like the rest of us, should at least learn from their past mistakes. Instead, they just keep repeating them. The first mistake is "five minutes to midnight" catastrophism. The late King Hussein of Jordan was the undisputed master of this genre. Wearing his gravest aspect, he would warn us that with patience finally exhausted the Arab-Israeli conflict was about to explode, that all past conflicts would be dwarfed by what was about to happen unless, unless... And then came the remedy—usually something rather tame when compared with the immense catastrophe

predicted, such as resuming this or that stalled negotiation, or getting an American envoy to the scene to make the usual promises to the Palestinians and apply the usual pressures on Israel. We read versions of the standard King Hussein speech in countless newspaper columns, hear identical invocations in the grindingly repetitive radio and television appearances of the usual middle east experts, and are now faced with Hussein's son Abdullah periodically repeating his father's speech almost verbatim.

## **Counter Terrorism**

### [Indonesia: Jemaah Islamiyah's Current Status](#)

*International Crisis Group – 3 May 2007*

In late March 2007, arrests by Densus 88, the police counter-terror unit, netted seven detainees in Central and East Java (an eighth was killed); a huge cache of explosives and weaponry; and documents that seemed to suggest a new military structure for Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), the region's largest jihadist organisation. The arrests followed directly from information obtained from operations in Poso, Central Sulawesi, in late January. Wildly differing assessments of JI's state in the aftermath of the March raids suggest a more systematic stock-taking is in order. What remains of the organisation today? What are its aims, and funding sources? Where are its strongholds? Who are its leaders? What is its relationship with other jihadist organisations at home and abroad? Crisis Group believes JI retains a solid core that probably totals more than 900 members across Indonesia. It likely is not growing but it retains deep roots and a long-term vision of establishing an Islamic state.

### [Al Qaeda Loses and Iraqi Friend](#)

*Time Magazine – 14 May 2007*

Al-Qaeda has lost its most powerful friend in Iraq: Harith al-Dari, the country's most influential Sunni cleric and a prominent anti-American figure, has rejected al-Qaeda's vision of an Islamic state, telling TIME that Iraqis "will not accept such a system." In a sharp departure from his long-standing view of the terror group, al-Dari now says al-Qaeda has "gone too far." He also repudiates recent statements on Iraq by Osama bin Laden's deputy, saying: "Ayman al-Zawahiri doesn't represent Iraqis."

### [How to Win](#)

*Foreign Policy – May 2007*

Network" is the word most often used to describe terrorist organizations since 9/11. Yet, nearly six years into the first great armed conflict between nations and networks, the nations are still fighting the last war. There has been hardly a hint that the pursuit of al Qaeda and its allies is guided by any serious thinking about the new types of problems posed by adversaries who operate in small, interconnected bands, with minimal central control.

## **DEFENCE STRATEGY**

### [Sri Lanka Bolsters Air Defences](#)

*Janes Defence Weekly – 10 May 2007*

Sri Lanka has moved to upgrade its air-defence capabilities in the aftermath of several air strikes by the secessionist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). A JY-11 3-D radar valued at USD5 million has been ordered from China National Electronics Import Export Corporation, with the delivery schedule accelerated in view of the air threat. Negotiations are also under way on the proposed acquisition of three mobile radars. The 3-D radar is to be airlifted to Colombo within weeks once the clearing and preparation of a site near the capital is completed.

### [Japan, US Reiterate Established Security Policies at Meeting](#)

*Janes Defence Weekly – 2 May 2007*

Japan and the US conducted their annual Security Consultative Committee (SCC) meeting in Washington on 1 May, with the joint communique issued on its conclusion largely reiterating established policies and developments. The SCC brought together Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Aso and Defence Minister Fumio Kyuma with their US counterparts, Defence Secretary Robert Gates and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Discussion centred on the continuing transformation of the Japan-US security alliance, which is anchored by the 1960 Treaty of Mutual Co-operation and Security.

### [EC Bolsters First European Space Policy](#)

*Janes Defence Weekly – 3 May 2007*

The European Commission (EC) adopted Europe's first space policy on 30 April. It was drafted together with the European Space Agency, with which the EC seeks closer and more efficient co-operation. Günter Verheugen, EC vice president and commissioner for enterprise and industry, stated: "For the first time, a European space programme will be established and space activities at national and European level will be co-ordinated to achieve maximum complementarity and transparency," with "more synergy and co-ordination between defence and civil space programmes."

## **DEFENCE TECHNOLOGY**

### [China Unveils Recent Weapon Developments](#)

*Janes Defence Weekly – 11 May 2007*

A video produced to celebrate the recent achievements of the China Flight Test Establishment (CFTE) reveals a wealth of evidence for new Chinese weapons programmes and the pace of weapons systems development by the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF). The official footage, which has now appeared on the internet,

shows an entirely new class of air-to-surface missiles, airborne launch trials of the Kh-31 high-speed anti-radiation missile (ARM) and the PL-12 active radar beyond-visual-range air-to-air missile (BVRAAM) , heavy air-to-surface loads for the Chengdu J-10 and Shenyang J-11B fighters, plus extensive test and development activity with virtually every front-line combat aircraft in Chinese service.

### [US Hypersonic Engine Test Points Way Ahead](#)

*Janes Defence Weekly – 4 May 2007*

The US Air Force conducted a hypersonic engine test in late April that marks a breakthrough in the development of an engine that may eventually propel cruise missiles hundreds of nautical miles in a matter of minutes. Air Force chief scientist Mark Lewis told Jane's on 3 May that his team ran a scramjet hydrocarbon-fuelled engine for 50 seconds in a wind tunnel at NASA's Langley Research Center in late April. The only barrier to running the engine for several minutes, Lewis said, was that the wind tunnel itself could not handle an engine running at M5.5 any longer.

### [Rough and Tumble Laptop Now Available](#)

*National Defense magazine – May 2007*

Computer maker Dell Inc. of Round Rock, Texas, is now producing a ruggedized laptop PC for military and civilian customers. Called the Latitude ATG, for all terrain grade, the portable processor features a super bright 14.1 inch display that is designed for better viewing in sunlight.

### [Explosive Detection Kits Provide on the Spot Results](#)

*National Defense magazine – May 2007*

Want devices that quickly ascertain the existence of TNT, RDX, chlorate and peroxide-based explosives? Mistral Group of Bethesda, Md., is offering two test kits — Expray and DropEx — that offer rapid results. They are able to detect a wide range of explosive residues on both people and surfaces.

### [Japanese Scientists in Eye of Storm....with Goggles](#)

*Space War – 14 May 2007*

Japanese scientists who want to be in tune with their work can now stand in the eye of a typhoon or observe close-up walls of whirling wind -- with the help of some goggles. In what is billed as unique technology, Japanese researchers have created three-dimensional images from stocks of data culled over the years and fed into computers. "Thanks to this system, we can discover so much more new data -- it's like discovering diamonds!" said Tetsuya Sato, a professor who

heads the project at the state-run Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology. Researchers -- and, once a year, the general public -- can observe the three-dimensional simulations of natural phenomena, including earthquakes, tornadoes and tsunamis.

## **ENERGY SECURITY**

### [Flip the Switch](#)

*Foreign Policy – May 2007*

Slowly, quietly, the oil world has been transformed. The major international oil companies that dominated energy markets throughout the latter half of the 20th century—the ExxonMobils, BPs, and Royal Dutch Shells—now own less than 10 percent of the world's oil and gas. They've been pushed aside by government-controlled national oil companies, which now command close to 80 percent of the world's remaining oil reserves, overwhelmingly dominate oil production and pricing, and aren't afraid to flex their geopolitical muscle.

### [Making Buildings Behave Better](#)

*The Economist – 14 May 2007*

UNLESS you were a specialist in the matter you probably didn't rush to read the report of the third working group of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), when it came out earlier this month. A pity. It focused on the economics of mitigating climate change, and it came up with some striking news for town and city types.

### [The Energy Nexus of Russia and Central Asia](#)

*Space War – 15 May 2007*

Last Thursday, Russia's President Putin arrived in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan, for the start of a week-long visit to Central Asia, which will focus on energy. But the visit is not just about oil and gas. Electricity generation and transmission and atomic energy were also on the agenda, with Moscow and Astana agreeing to establish an international uranium enrichment center originally proposed in 2006.

## **NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION**

### [The Nuclear Option](#)

*Foreign Policy – May 2007*

The diffusion of new technology, whether gunpowder or cell phones, is unstoppable. Nuclear weapons technology is no exception. On the contrary, U.S. policies for preventing proliferation have actually accelerated it. First, the United States shared its nuclear knowhow with Britain and France. Then it was benignly permissive toward Israel's clandestine program. More recently, its swift reversal from hostility to accommodation of India's and Pakistan's programs—after each demonstrated a nuclear explosion—has made a joke of the Nuclear NonProliferation Treaty and the global nonproliferation regime.

[Ahmadinejad Warns US Against Military Action](#)

*Space War – 14 May 2007*

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad warned the United States on Monday that Tehran would retaliate severely to any possible attack over its controversial nuclear programme. "They (the Americans) understand that if they should make this mistake, the retaliation of the Iranian people will be severe and they will repent," he told reporters in Abu Dhabi at the end of a landmark visit to the United Arab Emirates. He later travelled to Oman, the second and final stop of his trip, where he was holding talks with Sultan Qaboos.