

US

The United Nations and Kosovo's Independence

By John R. Bolton

Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence creates an extraordinary risk of instability in the Balkans. It has immediately exacerbated ethnic tensions, invited further border alterations along ethnic or religious lines, provided a potentially inviting base of operations for radical Islamists from outside Europe and has expanded the growing range of issues once again threatening to divide Russia from the West...

<http://www.aei.org/>

U.S. Ambassador leaves Belarus

By David Marples

A diplomatic dispute between Belarus and the United States reached a new low on March 12, when U.S. Ambassador Karen Stewart was recalled to Washington for talks. Earlier State Department deputy spokesman Tom Casey had declared that the ambassador would remain in Minsk despite the Belarusian government's strong recommendation that she leave, and following the recall of its ambassador in Washington, Mikhail Khvastou...

<http://www.jamestown.org/>

U.S., New Members Backing Nato Membership Action Plans for Georgia and Ukraine

By Vladimir Socor

NATO debates on Membership Action Plans

(MAPs) for Georgia and Ukraine have entered the final stage in the run-up to the alliance's April 2-4 summit in Bucharest. With NATO's approval rating in Ukraine at merely 20-25% in the fourth year of the Yushchenko presidency, political elites are deeply divided on the issue, and security-sector reforms are now on the back burner, Ukraine remains an attractive MAP aspirant primarily by sheer strategic weight. Meanwhile, NATO debates on the MAPs tend to focus more on Georgia...

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CUBA

Oh, Brother! Another Castro Clings to Power in Cuba

By Roger F. Noriega

One step ahead of the devil himself, Fidel Castro is proposing to pass the baton to his revolutionary partner and younger brother, Raúl. With characteristic audacity, the old dictator is hoping that he can bamboozle a gullible international community into recognizing such a succession as a fait accompli. Of course, there is no reason that the successor regime will be able to consummate this arrangement as long as the rest of the world gives the welfare of the Cuban people a second thought. Fidel's disintegration makes way for an extraordinarily expectant time in Cuba's history...

<http://www.aei.org/>

RUSSIA

Putin's Plan: The Future of 'Russia Inc.'

By Clifford G. Gaddy, Andrew C. Kuchins

What exactly is Putin's Plan, and from where does it come? What are its goals? What are its implications for Russia's domestic and international relations?...

<http://www.twq.com/>

Moscow's Missile Gambit

By Robert Joseph and J.D. Crouch II

Six years ago, President Bush announced the U.S. withdrawal from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and our intention to deploy defenses against emerging threats from countries such as North Korea and Iran. Today, the United States and Russia find themselves in opposition on the issue of deploying 10 missile interceptors and supporting radar to Europe—an act of much less strategic consequence than abandonment of the ABM Treaty...

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/>

WORLD

Index of State Weakness in the Developing World

The Index of State Weakness in the Developing World, developed by Susan Rice from Brookings and Stewart Patrick from CGD, ranks and assesses 141 developing nations according to their relative performance in four critical spheres: economic, political, security and social welfare...

<http://www.brookings.edu/>