

New York Times

The Subject Was Nuclear Weapons

With President Obama chairing the session and 13 other leaders around the table, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution on Thursday intended to strengthen the fraying rules that are supposed to stop the spread of nuclear weapons.

What Mr. Obama Said, and Didn't Say

With his speech to the United Nations General Assembly on Wednesday, President Obama took another step toward repairing America's battered image. There was no bombast and bullying, but he still managed to challenge other countries to take more responsibility and this country to ask more of itself. No one can argue with the importance of the issues he dwelled on: nuclear proliferation, climate change, the global economy and Middle East peace.

A Long-Term Fix for Medium-Range Arms

Last week President Obama announced his decision to discard plans for antiballistic missile shields in Eastern Europe in favor of smaller interceptors on ships and planes. But the key issue is not where the United States should place its defenses. The problem is that medium-range missiles exist at all. In all the confusing debate on this topic, Mr. Obama has overlooked one simple option: outlaw these missiles altogether.

Washington Post

Go All-In, Or Fold

Sitting in an air-conditioned office within this gargantuan NATO encampment in southern Afghanistan, a U.S. officer pointed to a map of Kandahar province that indicated, with small, rectangular boxes, where soldiers deployed by President Obama earlier this year were now operating.

Dealing With Iran's Deception

Tehran could soon have humankind's most frightening weapon if substantial diplomatic progress is not made in the coming days. The United States, along with its partners Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany (known as the "P5 plus one"), will sit down on Thursday with a representative of Iran.

Britain's Afghan Wisdom

When it comes to Afghanistan, the British have a special perspective: Every mistake the United States has made recently, they made 150 years ago. So it's worth listening to British experts in the debate over Afghan strategy.

A Middle East Handshake

The summit President Obama convened Tuesday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas fell well short of the administration's hopes. Mr. Obama had wanted to announce agreement on the opening of talks on the creation of a Palestinian state, with a deadline of two years. He wanted to outline agreements on how those negotiations would proceed and some of the principles that would underpin them. And he expected to reveal a series of opening confidence-building measures by the two sides, including a freeze on Israeli settlement construction and steps toward normalization by several Arab states.

The Economist

The quantity theory of foreign policy

At the start of his presidency Barack Obama squared up to the issues of the day with breathtaking vigour. In America he set about rescuing the economy and reforming health care. Abroad, he charged into areas where George Bush had become bogged down—peace in the Middle East, relations with Russia, climate change, Iran's nuclear programme and war in Afghanistan. This eagerness to transform everything at once was not just youthful ambition.

The Guardian

Iran: Time to come clean

When Iran was forced to acknowledge the existence of a uranium enrichment plant at Natanz in 2002, the inspectors of the International Atomic Energy Agency could not believe what they saw. They discovered a programme which had developed clandestinely over 18 years. The IAEA reacted to yesterday's revelation that the Iranians have built a second enrichment plant near Qom with a demand for an immediate inspection. The likelihood that Iran's nuclear programme is wholly civilian, as its leaders continue to claim, diminishes with each unpleasant surprise.

A very foreign policy

Barack Obama's decision to cancel the

missile defence programme by closing radar bases in eastern Europe has provoked predictable derision on the Republican right. From Senator John McCain down, it has accused the president of naivety, weakness and, worst of all, ceding the Eurasian "heartland" to Russia. But while they might position themselves as modern, strategic realists, today's neocons are in fact bewitched by the foreign policy prescriptions of a late Victorian imperialist.

This is not disarmament

Gordon Brown is presenting the government's intention to cut the number of new Trident nuclear missile submarines from four to three as disarmament. It is nothing of the kind.

Israeli-Palestinian conflict: Not for faint hearts

He inherited two wars, a banking crash and years of inaction on the world's most intractable dispute

◆ the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Is it any wonder that, eight months on, Barack Obama's outstretched hand has still to pluck its first fruit? And yet movement is so slow, it barely registers. The US special representative George Mitchell has conducted five tours of the region. Last week he shuttled back and forth between the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli prime minister's office seven times.

The Independent

Has America reached the turning point in Afghanistan?

Six months after proclaiming a new commitment to the war in Afghanistan, President Barack Obama is under growing pressure to make what would amount to a U-turn in US policy and scale back America's commitment to a conflict that many experts ◆ and a majority of the public ◆ now fear may be unwinnable.