The New York Times

Back to Bagram
As it works to shut down the detention camp at Guantánamo Bay, the Obama administration faces a no less pressing challenge in bringing the larger military detention center at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan squarely within the rule of law and fundamental notions of fairness. Recent developments are cause for both real encouragement and serious concern.

Missile Sense
President Obama made a sound strategic decision, scrapping former President George W. Bush's technologically dubious plan to build a long-range missile defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic. Instead, the Pentagon will deploy a less-ambitious — but more feasible — system of interceptors and sensors, first on ships and later on land.

A Better Missile Defense for a Safer Europe

The future of missile defense in Europe is secure. This reality is contrary to what some critics have alleged about President Obama's proposed shift in America's missile-defense plans on the continent — and it is important to understand how and why.

New Statesman

Why we should scrap Trident

OK, let's cut to the chase - let's not get bogged down in statistics or projected spending figures or discussions about "initial gates" and "main gates" (more about them later): Trident is a nuclear weapons system and nuclear weapons are WRONG.

The Washington Post

More Than a Numbers Game in Afghanistan

It's hard to read Gen. Stanley McChrystal's assessment of the Afghanistan war without hearing one of those horror-movie voices that seem to come from everywhere and nowhere, a voice that grows louder and more insistent with every page: "Get out. Get out. Get out."

Israel's Gaza Vindication

When it was launched last December, Israel's invasion of the Gaza Strip looked to most people in Washington to be risky, counterproductive and doomed to futility. Not only pundits like me but senior officials of the Bush administration predicted that the Israeli army would not succeed

either in toppling Gaza's Hamas government or in eliminating its capacity to launch missiles at Israeli cities. Instead it would subject the Jewish state to another tidal wave of international opprobrium and risk its relations with West Bank Palestinians and Egypt.

Wavering on Afghanistan?

It was only last March 27 that President Obama outlined in a major speech what he called "a comprehensive new strategy for Afghanistan" that, he added, "marks the conclusion of a careful policy review." That strategy unambiguously stated that the United States would prevent the return of a Taliban government and "enhance the military, governance and economic capacity" of the country. We strongly supported the president's conclusion that those goals were essential to preventing another attack on the United States by al-Qaeda and its extremist allies.

The Guardian

New nuclear resolve

This week, Barack Obama will chair a summit of the UN security council to discuss nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. This is one of the most critical issues we face. Get it right, and we will increase global security, pave the way for a world without nuclear weapons and improve access to affordable, safe and dependable energy – vital to tackle climate change. Get it wrong, and we face the spread of nuclear weapons and the chilling prospect of nuclear material falling into the hands of terrorists.

We are on the brink of failure in Afghanistan. This is our last chance

The crucial question on Afghanistan today is not whether this war is important. It is. It is not whether the consequences of failure are serious. They are. It is a much more brutal question: can we win? And the answer is no. Unless we change both our current policies and our present attitudes, failure is inevitable.

US missile defence: Shooting down Bush's plans

The missile defence shield which George Bush planned to deploy in eastern Europe was a system that did not work, for a threat that did not exist, to defend countries that had not asked for protection. Not our assessment, but that of Zbigniew Brzezinski, hardly a Russian apologist. He is, however, an American realist. Barack Obama's administration had already hinted at dropping plans to deploy a sophisticated radar station in the Czech Republic and 10 ground-based interceptors in Poland, so yesterday's confirmation was hardly unexpected. Still, the announcement represents a U-turn – a welcome one – and it will have regional and global consequences.

Financial Times

The west's finger-wagging will not force Iran into line

The west has spent the past several years in an effort to bid up the price Iran must pay for the pursuit of its nuclear programme. The sanctions strategy is running out of road. The time has come to change the argument, turning a threat into an offer. Unless the US and Europe want to join Benjamin Netanyahu's Israeli government on a shortening path to war, they should set out what Iran would gain from lifting its pariah status.