



Roundup: U.S. condemns photos of soldiers with Afghan corpses

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Editor's Note: The following is reprinted with the permission of the [Council on Foreign Relations](#).

U.S. officials condemned photos of U.S. soldiers who allegedly posed with the corpses of Afghan insurgents during a 2010 deployment to Afghanistan. The actions depicted in the photos, which were [revealed by the *Los Angeles Times*](#) yesterday, violated U.S. military regulations and its "core values," U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta said. President Barack Obama called for a full investigation into the incident. Meanwhile, the [United States and its NATO allies reached an agreement \(NYT\)](#) at a NATO summit in Brussels yesterday on bringing the war in Afghanistan to a close by the end of 2014, while still keeping some international troops there beyond that point.

Analysis

"These pictures were apparently taken in Zabul province, in 2010. In theory, they could have come to light any time since then. In practice, they are the fourth mortifying reminder in four months of what this war has come to look like—a war that has gone on too long, with [soldiers who don't seem to know why they are in Afghanistan](#)," writes the *New Yorker's* Amy Davidson.

"These [horrible acts are one of the outcomes of war](#). You have these incredibly dehumanizing and horrific events and you have essentially young boys thrown into it. From the outside, these acts appear horrific—and these are definitely despicable acts—but when you're in the situation, at the time they happen, they can seem quite normal," war photographer Danfung Dennis told the *Daily Beast*.

"The [war in Afghanistan tragically feels like the movie *Groundhog Day*](#): reliving and retelling the same stories repeatedly but with the situation worse than it was the previous time. The United States is perpetually stuck in a repetitive series of setbacks and scandals that damage the mission. It cannot escape the shadow that ruinous events cast over the prospect of defeating the Taliban," writes Malou Innocent for the *National Interest*.

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PACIFIC RIM

EU to Suspend Myanmar Sanctions

The EU agreed to suspend most [sanctions targeting Myanmar for a year \(BBC\)](#), with the exception of an arms embargo—a decision that could be approved at a meeting of EU foreign ministers on Monday. The

United States and Australia have also eased some sanctions on Myanmar's military-backed civilian government.

CHINA: Officials launched an investigation into the [billions of dollars of government spending \(WSJ\)](#) engineered by former leader Bo Xilai in the city of Chongqing. Bo, who was removed from his post last month, and his wife are at the center of a corruption and murder scandal that has shaken the Chinese leadership.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA

India Tests Long-Range Missile

India successfully test-fired a long-range, [nuclear-capable missile \(IndianExpress\)](#) today, which officials say has the ability to reach far into China and Eastern Europe. The move adds India to the small list of countries that produce inter-continental ballistic missiles, including the United States, Russia, France, and China.

This CFR Global Governance Monitor interactive offers an overview of the [international challenge of nuclear proliferation](#).

MIDDLE EAST

UN Chief Says Syria Failing to Implement Peace Plan

Syria has failed to implement almost [all aspects of a UN-Arab League peace plan and cease-fire \(NYT\)](#), UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in a letter to the UN Security Council. At the same time, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad has hindered the movement of an advance team of UN monitors in Syria.

IRAQ: A [series of coordinated bombing attacks \(al-Jazeera\)](#) in Baghdad, Kirkuk, and Samarra left twenty-six people dead. The attacks largely targeted Shiite neighborhoods.

AFRICA

U.S. Warns on Boko Haram

The U.S. embassy in Nigeria warned yesterday that the radical Islamist separatist group Boko Haram may be planning attacks against [hotels and other targets frequented by Westerners \(SAPA/AFP\)](#) in the capital of Abuja.

Widening violence by Boko Haram has caused concerns about its [possible links to international terrorist groups](#), explains this CFR Backgrounder.

SUDAN: President Omar al-Bashir vowed to [retake the disputed region of Heglig \(Reuters\)](#)—captured by neighboring South Sudan last week—and vowed to "liberate" the South from its rulers. Bashir's rhetoric comes amid mounting tensions between the two nations over their shared oil-rich border.

EUROPE

New Trial for Former Ukrainian PM

Ukraine opened a new trial against former prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko today for [allegedly evading taxes \(DeutscheWelle\)](#) while serving as the head of an energy firm in the 1990s. Tymoshenko is already

-serving a seven-year prison sentence after being convicted last year of abuse of office, a case the EU condemned as politically motivated.

Last year's sentencing of Tymoshenko reflects her [rivalry with President Viktor Yanukovich](#) and could affect Ukraine's eurozone bid, *New York Times* Moscow bureau chief Ellen Barry said in this CFR Interview.

NETHERLANDS: The Dutch coalition government is in [talks over new austerity measures \(WSJ\)](#) that would bring the country's budget deficit below the EU limit of 3 percent of GDP by 2013. Credit rating agency Fitch has indicated it would lower the Netherlands from its triple-A rating if it fails to tackle its debt burden.

AMERICAS

U.S. Agents Dismissed Amid Prostitution Scandal

Three U.S. Secret Service agents implicated in a [prostitution scandal in Cartagena, Colombia \(LAT\)](#)—which reportedly took place ahead of President Barack Obama's visit there for an economic summit last week—are being forced out of the agency as investigators examine potential security breaches.

HONDURAS: Thousands of [farm workers are occupying disputed land \(BBC\)](#) in locations throughout the country. The farmers say the areas constitute public space, while the government says the farmers are invading private property.

CAMPAIGN 2012

Weighing Foreign Policy Positions

[Conor Friedersdorf in the Atlantic](#) says that future foreign policy differences between President Obama and GOP front-runner Mitt Romney are largely "unknowable."

Steven Hurst of the Associated Press says the ["hot partisan fight"](#) over the economy so far has overshadowed Romney's grievances with the Obama foreign policy," but Romney hopes to ultimately prove his foreign policy is tougher than Obama's.

[On the campaign trail \(ClevelandPlainDealer\)](#) in northeast Ohio, Obama talked about links between education, the economy, and his policy proposals, particularly in the Rust Belt, where the economic downturn has hit hard and recovery has been slow.

Editor's Note: For more information on the presidential election and foreign policy check out CFR's campaign blog, [The Candidates and the World](#).

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