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Research Reports

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Committee: General Assembly 1
Issue: Fostering Democratic Progress in Myanmar
Student Officer: Manas Bajaj

Description

Myanmar, a country with great Buddhist heritage and a penchant for producing the most teak is now recognized as one of the countries with the most unstable governments. Over the years, again and again the people of Myanmar have had to withstand immense pressure due to the constant insurgency and change in government. This has made Myanmar a country that is disliked by most countries. The root cause of this is the internal rift between the varying groups in the country, this is a country whose groups even argue about the name of the country that they live in. This is mostly because of their rich history which is largely them being colonized and belittled by the British. Many other countries with colonial history, such as India are divided on many issues. What separates Myanmar from other countries with many diverse groups is the way in which they utilize religion as a rallying point, in Myanmar it is common for monks to lead rallies and protests. The Key to fostering democratic progress in Myanmar is to satisfy the needs of the individual rebel groups, also attempting to understand and assess the problems of the population of Myanmar and make an attempt to reconcile the different sections of the population.

Recent History and Problems

Burma was declared an independent democratic republic in 1948. Unfortunately, Democratic rule ended in 1962 when General Ne Win led a military coup d'état. He ruled Burma for 26 years, subscribing to the socialist form of government. Between 1962 and 1974, General Win ordered a revolutionary council headed by him, to control almost all aspects of society (business, media, production). In an effort to consolidate power, General Ne Win and many top generals resigned from the military and took civilian posts and, from 1974, introduced elections in a one party system. Between 1974 and 1988, Burma was ruled by General Ne Win through the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP).

Almost from the beginning there were sporadic protests against the military rule, many of which were organized by students, and these were almost always violently suppressed by the government.¹ In 1974, the military violently suppressed anti-government protests at the funeral of U Thant. Student protests in 1975, 1976 and 1977 were quickly suppressed by overwhelming force.

In 1988, unrest over economic problems and political oppression by the government led to widespread pro-democracy demonstrations throughout the country known as the 8888 Uprising. Security forces killed

thousands of demonstrators, and General Saw Maung staged a coup d'état forming the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC). In 1989, SLORC declared martial law after widespread protests. The military government finalized plans for People's Assembly elections in May 1989.

SLORC changed the country's official English name from the "Union of Burma" to the "Union of Myanmar" in 1989. In most cases the nation is called Burma. By not acknowledging the name Myanmar, one refuses to acknowledge the legitimacy of the military junta as well. This is not just among human rights groups but many governments such as Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and France, legally refer to the nation as Burma. Some countries suggest the point made by advocates of democracy is irrelevant, since the name Burma was given to the country by the colonial British. Also, since the founding of the first democratic government, the name Myanmar appeared on the nation's currency.

In 1990, the government held free elections for the first time in 30 years. The party of Aung San Suu Kyi, won, but the election results were declared null by SLORC, which refused to relinquish its position.

Led by Than Shwe since 1992, the military regime has made cease-fire agreements with most ethnic guerrilla groups. In 1992, SLORC unveiled plans to create a new constitution through the National Convention, which began in 1993.

In 1997, in spite of being not remotely democratic Burma was admitted into the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The National Convention continues to convene and adjourn. Many major political parties, particularly the NLD, have been absent or excluded, and little progress has been made. On 27 March 2006, the military junta, which had moved the national capital from Yangon to a site near Pyinmana in November 2005, officially named it Naypyidaw, meaning "city of the kings". Burma has a long way to go, if it even wants to come close to fulfilling democratic ideals, in its most recent elections 25 % of voters had engaged in fraud.

Myanmar and the West

The country's foreign relations, particularly with Western nations, have been strained. The United States has placed a ban on investments by U.S. firms, an import ban, and an arms embargo on Myanmar, as well as frozen military assets in the United States because of the military regime's ongoing human rights abuses, and the ongoing detention of Nobel Peace Prize recipient Aung San Suu Kyi, as well as refusal to honor the election results of the 1990 People's Assembly election. Similarly, the European Union has placed sanctions on Burma, including an arms embargo, cessation of trade preferences, and suspension of all aid with the exception of humanitarian aid. U.S. and European government sanctions against the military government, coupled with boycotts and other direct pressure on corporations by western supporters of the democracy movement, have resulted in the withdrawal from the country of most U.S. and many European companies, this

has crippled the economy of Myanmar, and if anything the chance that Myanmar will become a democracy completely vanishes in this case.

2. United Nations Initiatives in Myanmar-

In response to some of the problems facing democratic progress in Myanmar, the United Nations has taken action. In 2005, the United Nations General Assembly annually adopted a detailed resolution about the situation in Burma by consensus. In January 2007, Russia and China vetoed a draft resolution before the United Nations Security Council calling on the government of Myanmar to begin a democratic transition. However, soon the issue had been forced onto the agenda against the votes of Russia and the China by the United States (veto power applies only to resolutions).

The following September after the uprisings began and the chances of Burma transitioning successfully deteriorated, the Secretary-General dispatched his special envoy for the region, Ibrahim Gambari, to meet with the government. After seeing most parties involved, he returned to New York and briefed the Security Council about his visit and how the situation had returned to normalcy. He said, "Currently, people all over the country are holding peaceful rallies within the bounds of the law to welcome the successful conclusion of the national convention, which has laid down the fundamental principles for a new constitution and to demonstrate their aversion to recent provocative demonstrations".

Key Players

Thailand- Myanmar has always had border issues with its more illustrious neighbour.

Recent Events:

2001: As a result of the continuing civil war in Myanmar (formerly known as Burma), combat between the government and the various ethnic and political rebel guerrilla armies occasionally spills over the border into Thailand. In February, 2001, the Thai military responded to one such spillover with artillery. The Myanmar army responded in kind, and both sides suffered casualties.

In May, 2001, fighting between the Myanmar army and the Shan State Army rebels also resulted in incursions into Thailand. Again, the Thais responded with mortar fire.

Both nations accuse the other of supporting rival ethnic rebel groups involved in a lucrative cross-border drug trade and of waging a proxy war against each other.

US and China- not too long ago the United States imposed sanctions on Myanmar. According to Aung San Kyi. "They expressed their revulsion to Myanmar Foreign Minister Nyan Win over reports that the

demonstrations in Myanmar are being suppressed by violent force and that there has been a number of fatalities," the statement said.

"They strongly urged Myanmar to exercise utmost restraint and seek a political solution. They called upon Myanmar to resume its efforts at national reconciliation with all parties concerned, and work towards a peaceful transition to democracy."

Myanmar is an ASEAN member, along with Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

China came under increasing pressure to use its regional influence to urge Myanmar's ruling junta to show restraint in dealing with the protests.

China refused to condemn Myanmar and ruled out imposing sanctions, but for the first time agreed to a Security Council statement expressing concern at the violent crackdown and urging the country's military rulers to allow in a U.N. envoy.

The U.N. special envoy, Ibrahim Gambari, headed for Myanmar at Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's request to try to promote a political solution and reconciliation efforts. U.N. deputy spokeswoman Marie Okabe said Ban had been told by Win that Gambari "will be welcomed by the Myanmar government."

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu said in Beijing that "China hopes that all parties in Myanmar exercise restraint and properly handle the current issue so as to ensure the situation there does not escalate and get complicated."

Timeline

1948 A conflict for power began that involved the Karen, a group of people from eastern and southern Burma.

1950 Sein Lwin commanded a military unit that tracked down and shot dead the leader of a rebellion against the government of Burma by the country's ethnic Karen minority.

1960 Apr 1, Burma elected U Nu as premier.

1961-1971 U Thant of Burma served as the Secretary-General of the UN.

1962 Mar, Army commander Ne Win staged a coup against a civilian government and took over control

of Burma.

1967 The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was formed by Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Brunei, Myanmar, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

1972 In Burma Sein Lwin headed the army unit that exacted a deadly suppression of workers' protests.

1974 In Burma Sein Lwin headed the army unit that suppressed demonstrations by students and Buddhist monks in connection with the funeral of former U.N. Secretary General U Thant.

1986 Karen refugees established the Huay Ko Lok refugee camp in Thailand. The camp was burned 3 times between 1996-1998 by the Burmese military. Residents were relocated in Aug, 1999, to Um Phien.

1988 Mar, Burmese riot police shot to death 200 demonstrators as students began an uprising for

1988 Sep 24, In Burma Aung San Suu Kyi formed the National League for Democracy party.

1988 Sep, In Burma over 10,000 students led by Htun Aung Gyaw took to the jungles to organize an armed resistance against the military regime. Gyaw was arrested by Thai authorities in 1992 and took refugee status in the US. Military rulers killed thousands of pro-democracy activists during the suppression of demonstrations. Hundreds of pro-democracy supporters were killed in Rangoon. A film was made called Beyond Rangoon that depicts the terror and bloodshed of the period.

1989 Jun 19, Burma's government renamed the country Myanmar. Rangoon was renamed Yangon.

1992 Apr 23, Myanmar Gen'l. Saw Maung stepped down as chairman of SLORC because of illness. He was replaced by Gen'l. Than Shwe.

1993 The Mong Tai Army took up arms against the Myanmar government.

1997 Jul 23, The ASEAN trade bloc admitted Laos and Myanmar but barred Cambodia.

2001 Feb, Russia's Atomic Energy Ministry announced plans to build a 10-megawatt nuclear research reactor in central Myanmar. The deal was finalized in July.

2003 Nov 28, A Myanmar court sentenced 9 people to death for high treason, including the editor of a sports magazine. The government said the suspects were accused of plotting to overthrow Myanmar's military

junta through bombings and assassinations.

2003 Dec 23, Myanmar's largest guerrilla group said it is committed to peace talks with the military government, but it wants future rounds held in the Thai capital to preserve neutrality.

2003 Myanmar's SPDC unveiled a 17-point "road map" to democracy.

United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy

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<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burma>

Committee: General Assembly 1st Committee (Disarmament & International Security)

Issue: Maintaining international peace and security in South-east Asia in response to climate change

Student Officer: Kahyun Park

Definition of key terms:

South-East Asia: A sub region of Asia, commonly referring to the mainland and islands situated south of China, east of India and north of Australia. Mainland South-East Asia (Indochina) section comprises Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. Maritime South-East Asia (Malay archipelagos) comprises Brunei, East Timor, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Singapore. All 11 nations (except East Timor) are part of the Association of South East Asia Nations (ASEAN), a geo-political and economic organization. South-East Asia, situated on the intersection of geological plates, is one of the most active volcanic regions in the world.



Climate change: the term refers to a significant change in the weather that a specific region usually experiences. The magnitude of the change is measured by the average change of temperature, rainfall and wind patterns among other indicators of weather. In addition to natural fluctuations in climate, researchers and the general public nowadays converge on the ramifications of human impact, referring to human activities' contribution to global warming.

Global warming: the term refers to the rise in average temperature via the greenhouse effect, whereby the accumulated CO₂, methane and other greenhouse gases trap the heat from escaping Earth's surface and therefore raise the temperature. The significance of global warming in the 21st century lies in the effects of human activity, with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concluding that "most of the observed increase in globally averaged temperatures since the mid-twentieth century is very likely due to the observed increase in anthropogenic (man-made) greenhouse gas concentrations."

General overview of issue:

Why Climate Change in South-East Asia is a significant problem

Climate change is unlike any other global problem in that it threatens the provision of basic living resources of humans. Due to climate change, dry areas become drier, irregular floods and droughts occur for longer periods of time, crop failure leads to intensified competition of food, and new epidemics scourge the lives of people. The developing nations, which already work under precarious institutions facing frequent conflicts, famine and disease, when faced with the damages due to climate change are prone to be subject to economic and social turmoil.

Currently, workable mechanisms to control climate change are disproportionate in different regions around the world. In essence, the countries most vulnerable to the impact of climate change (developing nations) are subject to less strict regulations and are halted in their attempts to develop and manage green technology due to financial instabilities. On the other hand, those countries that are capable of devising sustainable energy means are situated in relatively more favorable geographical conditions, and thus are taking more defensive strategies. The majority of South-East Asian nations currently rank as developing countries.

Regarding South-East Asia's climate change and its impact on international peace and security, two major issues arise.

1) Migration:

A significant area of the South-East Asian lands is in geographically unfavorable sites, constantly on the alert for earthquakes and other natural disasters. As climate change entails more irregular weather, the catastrophic aftermath of the tsunami on Indonesia's Sumatra Island in December 2004 is to be prepared for. Without migration policies in place in preparation for effective evacuation, this problem could raise potential conflicts between border countries.

2) The proposal of nuclear energy as a potential alternative resource: \

Vietnam and Indonesia have already suggested building large capacity generators by the end of the decade and many others are following behind par. However, nuclear energy remains a precarious agenda as it poses threat on international security for its possibility to serve as a means to weapons proliferation.

The solution to the South-East Asian nations at present time points towards sustainable development through the implementation of environmental-aware policies while also aiming for political stability and continual economic development. However, the dilemma lies in appropriating this balance between development and environment.

Background to the topic:

Analysis of the different climate change induced threats

Famine: In addition to existing famine in different parts of the South-East Asian nation as a marking factor of developing countries, the crop failures due to irregular cyclones, hurricanes, droughts and inundations add to the toll of malnutrition related deaths. In the period between 1989 and 2002, Thailand suffered more than US\$ 1.25 million in the agricultural sector due to intensifying tropical cyclones.

Disease: Malaysia has recently seen a heightened outbreak of dengue fever in the last 30 years. Researchers point to climate change as the cause behind the proliferation of disease-transmitting mosquitoes, as the rising temperatures provide a more favorable breeding environment. In Indonesia, for example, the deaths occurring from dengue fever doubled in 2007 as compared to 2005, reflecting the trend in rising temperature.

Waterborne diseases such as malaria and diarrhea are killing residents living around riverside areas and those exposed to unhealthy drinking water.

Floods & Droughts: Exceptionally prolonged periods of droughts have plagued Vietnam in recent years with dry seasons unfit for any kind of agriculturally activity. Furthermore, many of the region's estimated 500 million people, especially those living in the maritime South-East Asian regions, will face calamity if sudden floods cause water levels to rise significantly.

Destruction of Rainforests: As with the destruction of the Amazon Rainforests in South America, major forests and jungles are being destructed for developmental purposes, namely in the Malaysian states of Sarawak and Sabah on Borneo island, Cambodia, Laos and in Indonesia's Sumatra Island.

Countries and Organizations involved:

Group of 77: a loose United Nations coalition of developing countries aiming to share advice and seek cooperation in economic growth. The group started off with 77 member nations at its launch in 1964, but since has been expanded to 130 nations. All 11 South-East Asian nations are member states in this coalition.

APEC(Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation): APEC is an economic forum of 21 member economics with coastlines on the Pacific Ocean established in 1989. The headquarters are situated in Singapore and of the South-East Asian nations, Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam are members. Laos is currently vying for membership.

ASEAN(Association of South-East Asia Nations): ASEAN is an association of 10 South-East Asian nations cooperating to achieve geo-political and economic stability in the region as well as maintaining peace and security in the area. It was formed in 1967 by Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines and Thailand.

Greenpeace SEAsia: Greenpeace SEAsia was formally established in 2000, and has since then been holding campaigns mainly in the Philippines, Taiwan, India and Indonesia. The SEAsia branch runs under the banner of “Safeguard environmental rights, Expose and stop environmental crimes, Advance clean development.”

Timeline of events:

1979: First World Climate Conference adopts climate change as major issue and calls on governments "to foresee and prevent potential man-made changes in climate."

1987: Warmest year since records began. The 1980s turn out to be the hottest decade on record, with seven of the eight warmest years recorded up to 1990. Even the coldest years in the 1980s were warmer than the warmest years of the 1880s.

1991: Mount Pinatubo erupts in the Philippines, throwing debris into the stratosphere that shields the Earth from solar energy, which helps interrupt the warming trend. Average temperatures drop for two years before rising again. Scientists point out that this event shows how sensitive global temperatures are to disruption.

1997: Kyoto Protocol agrees legally binding emissions cuts for industrialized nations, averaging 5.4%, to be met by 2010. The meeting also adopts a series of flexibility measures, allowing countries to meet their targets partly by trading emissions permits, establishing carbon sinks such as forests to soak up emissions, and by investing in other countries. The precise rules are left for further negotiations. Meanwhile, the US government says it will not ratify the agreement unless it sees evidence of "meaningful participation" in reducing emissions from developing countries.

2005: Second warmest year on record. Researchers link warming to a record US hurricane season, accelerated melting of Arctic sea ice and Siberian permafrost, and apparent disruption of the global ocean current that warms Europe. The Kyoto Protocol comes into force. In December, Kyoto signatories agree to discuss emissions targets for the second compliance period beyond 2012, while countries without targets, including the US and China, agree to a “non-binding dialogue” on their future roles in curbing emissions.

Timeline sources-

<http://environment.newscientist.com/channel/earth/climate-change/dn9912-timeline-climate-change.html>,

<http://www.aip.org/history/climate/timeline.htm>

Relevant UN treaties & UN resolutions:

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 1992

(<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/conveng.pdf>)

The Kyoto Protocol, 1997

(<http://unfccc.int/cop3/resource/docs/cop3/protocol.pdf>)

World Climate Change Conference [A/RES/57/258](#), UN resolution adopted in General Assembly 57th session, 2002

(<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N02/556/36/PDF/N0255636.pdf?OpenElement>)

Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind [A/RES/61/201](#), UN resolution adopted in General Assembly 61st session, 2006

(<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N06/506/43/PDF/N0650643.pdf?OpenElement>)

Overview of United Nations activities relating to climate change [A/RES/62/8](#), UN resolution adopted in General Assembly 62nd session, 2007

(<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N07/464/25/PDF/N0746425.pdf?OpenElement>)

Previous attempted solutions: Analysis of their failures/successes

Kyoto Protocol: Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam have ratified the 1997 Kyoto Accord to the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. However, under Non-Annex 1 nation (nations that do not have greenhouse gas reduction targets to meet until 2012) status, these South-East Asian nations are not under compliance for greenhouse gas reduction targets. Although the climate change agenda currently comes up frequently in ASEAN conferences, the public interest and governmental policies do not prioritize environmental protection over economic development. Singapore, as an exception stands in the forefront in leading green-technology development, but also ranks significantly higher than the rest of the South-East Asian nations regarding national GDP. However, as the original Protocol expires in 2012 and negotiations for Kyoto Protocol Phase 2 is undergoing, South-East Asia will face greater spotlight and entailed responsibilities.

Clean Development Mechanism (CDM): Clean Development Mechanism is provided as an incentive and option for developed nations to implement mechanism for green technology in developing nations in return for diminished reductions in their respective countries. The CDM, as part of the Kyoto Protocol attempts to achieve emission levels in developed nations as well as technology transfer to developing nations, thus achieving global cooperation in combating climate change. However, as of mid-November 2006, of the 173 CDM projects established or seeking registration in East Asia, 70% were in India, 14% in China and only 12%

in Southeast Asia. Furthermore, there arise concerns for fake registrations and exploitation of developing countries' companies.

Transition to alternative energy resources:

Bio-fuel- Many South-East Asian nations have recently diverted to bio-fuel as a viable alternative energy source, cultivating especially palm-oil. However, backlashes such as deforestation in Indonesia's Sumatra to clear land for palm-oil plantations and the consequent haze that affects nearby Malaysia and Singapore while burning down forests impose side-effect environmental hazards.

Natural Gas- The final product natural gas is a much cleaner component than greenhouse-gas-emitting coal. However, the twofold problem of incurred environmental pollution in the filtering process and the delay in the establishment of pipelines remains to be solved.

Nuclear Power- In the past 18 months, interest in nuclear power has significantly risen in the region of South-East Asian nations as a relatively cheap, safe resource. Vietnam and Indonesia have already planned to build large capacity generators. However, concerns for nuclear waste and nuclear weapons proliferation remain to be answered.

Public Transportation: Singapore is renowned for its excellent urban city planning; Bangkok, formerly labeled as one of the world's major polluters have recently implemented an effective underground rail system, thereby encouraging public transportation; and Vietnam has also established transit systems in major cities as Hanoi.

Plagiarism checklist / bibliography

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Appendix: Useful links

Asia Times online: http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/IE26Ae01.html

Greenpeace SE Asia: <http://www.greenpeace.org/seasia/en/>

Economy and Environment Program for Southeast Asia: <http://www.eepsea.cc-sea.org/>

[International Institute for Sustainable Development](http://www.iiisd.org/) (IISD): <http://www.climate-1.org>

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC): <http://unfccc.int/2860.php>

The Global Environment Facility (GEF): <http://www.gefweb.org/>

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA): <http://www.iaea.org>

United Nations General Assembly Resolution archive: <http://www.un.org/documents/resga.htm>

Committee: GA 1st Committee

Issue: Combating the illegal small arms trade in South Asia

Student Officer: Jingshen Zhao

Date of Report: August 20, 2008

Definition of Key Terms

Small arms: Portable weapons that can be carried by one person, including shoulder-fired and handheld small arms like pistols, rifles, mortars, grenades, and machine-guns.

South Asia: The southern region of the continent Asia, which comprises of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Sometimes also includes the British Indian Ocean Territories, Iran, Myanmar and Afghanistan.



General Overview

Small arms are the most easily transportable weapons. Although they are small, they can kill and threaten people on a widespread scale (because militants or insurgents can each bear/carry these portable weapons). This makes small arms the weapons of choice in gang warfare, civil conflicts, organized crime, forced disappearances. Terrorist groups in South Asian countries suffering from political instability and abject poverty also prefer small arms.

Ongoing civil conflicts from Afghanistan to Sri Lanka, to Maoist rebels in Nepal and the thirty years of conflicts over Kashmir, have increased the need for small arms. Opposition and separatist groups, often seek continuous supply of these arms and ammunition through illicit channels. Over these prolonged conflicts, and with the staggering lack of government regulation, the demand for small arms inevitably increased the size of the black market in the region.

Regardless of the cause these South Asian insurgents are fighting for, the illicit transfer of small arms endangers personal safety, and undermines peace, economic prosperity and political stability of not only individual nations, but the South Asian region as a whole.

Background

Leaking government stockpiles

The Small Arms Survey 2007 indicated that much of the ammunition circulated among and used by non-State groups are somehow **illicitly diverted** from state security forces; many examples can be found in Afghanistan. In addition, many stockpiles are **poorly guarded**. It is often suspected to be caused by **connivance of government officials**, especially during civil unrest.

The nature of small arms

They are easy to handle and conceal, and with the steady flow of them in the well-established black market networks, they can be very hard to target. Also, the large number of producers makes supply-side controls very difficult to enforce.

Porous borders and parties in exporting countries supporting illegal activity in importing countries

Reports say the Indo-Nepal border is not well guarded due to geography and other reasons. This allows rather easy entry into India for Chinese pistols and other arms used by the Naxalites (Communist) anti-government insurgents in India, especially those having ties with the Maoist party in Nepal.

From state forces to civilians, and to the black market

Governments support their sympathetic non-state actors in proxy wars. Inadequate regulation allows civilians to purchase leaked or sold small arms from security forces, which then get passed on to the black market. Tactful **brokers** then use fake paperwork or other legal loopholes to trade firearms through a third country. These brokers are intermediaries who bring together transportation agents, buyers, sellers, and financiers, but do not take ownership or possession of the small arms at any point.

Financing the arms trafficking with the sale of narcotic drugs

A 2006 joint report by Oxfam, Amnesty International and the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) indicates that an estimated 95 percent of the world's opium comes from war-torn nations. Armed groups in Afghanistan and Myanmar utilize the revenue from the sale of **drugs to finance the trafficking of small arms**. Therefore arms and drugs go different directions on the same route.

Major Organizations and Conferences

South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is an economic and political organization of eight countries, namely Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Bhutan, representing a population of **1.5 billion**. It has observers from China, Iran, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mauritius, the USA, EU, Australia and Myanmar. The SAARC holds annual talks which are mainly focused on issues that are affecting the whole subcontinent, such as anti-terrorism (including the reduction in illegal small arms trade). However, the Association has many limitations in **directly** dealing with sensitive bilateral political issues, such as Kashmir and the long rivalry between Pakistan and India – one of the root causes of the illicit small arms trade issue.

World Customs Organization (WCO) recommends standards and sets frameworks for government customs authorities to **increase accountability** for firearms imported/exported, and **enhance the capacity** of these authorities in combating illegal small arms trade and brokering.

INTERPOL – The International Police. It is very much relied on for the tracing of illicit small arms. The I-24/7 system provides governmental officials with access to its databases, combating crimes in international trade and financing terrorism.

Amnesty International, Oxfam, and the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) have acted together to produce reports on the issue, and lobby the policymakers for more attention.

The South Asia Small Arms Network (SASANet), a member of IANSA, is a civil society network that brings organizations and activists together to lobby South Asian government policymakers and bring public awareness to the issue.

Major Countries and Territories

There are an estimated number of 75 million pieces of illegal small arms in current worldwide circulation, according to Daily Times which quoted a joint report by Oxfam, Amnesty International and the International Network on Small Arms (IANSA). **India alone is accountable for 40 million out of the total in current circulation.** In addition, there is an equal if not larger amount of small arms being manufactured in Indian provinces of **Uttar Pradesh and Bihar**, which are rolling into north and central India black markets for cheap prices. These arms fuel the **Kashmir** crisis, and the riots in Karachi, Pakistan. Not only does India produce these arms, its anti-government groups also illegally smuggle small arms from Nepal, Myanmar, China (through Myanmar and Nepal) and Pakistan, as stated earlier.

Myanmar's insurgent groups, such as the Karen National Union, illegally buy firearms from smugglers in Thailand.

Sri Lanka has been in a civil war since 1983, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) separatist group continuously smuggles in arms from India and other South Asian neighbours by sea. They have built an effective maritime supply network. In the ceasefire period ending in January 2008, the LTTE illegally landed 10 shipments of ammunition. Now the conflict is still ongoing due to the inability to control the flow of these small arms.

Beyond the South Asian region itself, world powers like the **USA** are also becoming concerned. They are threatened by terrorist attacks (e.g. by the Taliban) and assassinations. The more technologically advanced countries are beginning to understand that small arms actually affect the lives of many more people than nuclear weapons. Many member nations are hoping and helping to shut down black markets and provide technologies necessary for tracing illicitly traded small arms to their manufacturers or their last legitimate holders.

Timeline of Events

1983 – The Sri Lankan Civil War began, there has been large-scale arms smuggling by the **LTTE**.

2000 – June 20-23 Colombo Declaration conference was held in Sri Lanka. It dealt with the proliferation of small arms in the South Asia region.

2001 – UN Member States adopted the **Programme of Action** to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The implementation of this document is reviewed biennially.

2001 – The **War in Afghanistan** began. The weapons delivered to both sides together represent the single most significant source of small arms in the South Asia subcontinent.

2003 – Global Arms Control campaign launched in Colombo, Sri Lanka, jointly by Oxfam, Amnesty International and the IANSA (representing 500 NGOs altogether).

2008 – July 14-18 UN Biennial Meeting of States on Small Arms (BMS)

<http://disarmament.un.org/cab/bms3/1Draft%20Report/draftReport-E.pdf>

2008 – August **SAARC** Summit 2008, the Heads of State recognized linkages between small arms trade, growing **terrorism**, and illegal trafficking in narcotic and psychotropic substances.

Statistical References – production, illegal trade, and effects

There are more than 1,000 companies in about 100 countries involved in some aspect of small arms production. Estimates are that **8 million small arms are produced a year** around the world, according to a 2008 UN Secretary General's report.

Small arms cause 60 to 90 percent of all deaths in conflicts every year. Small arms and weapons have been the weapons of choice in **46 out of 49 major conflicts** and have claimed on an average of 3,000,000 lives. 90% of those killed are civilians. (IANSA statistics)

According to IANSA, there are an estimated 75 million firearms in South Asia. 63 million are believed to have fallen into civilian hands. India accounts for 40 million of the arms and Pakistan: 20 million.

According to Zee News, the global trade in small arms approximates \$4 billion a year, of which **\$1 billion is illegal**. 80 to 90 percent of black market trade originate from state-sanctioned trade.

Relevant UN Treaties and UN Resolutions

- 2006: International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (The **International Tracing Instrument**).
- 2007: A/RES/52/37 (The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects) and also previous resolutions under this Question.

In the scope of this research, there has been no resolution passed on this specific issue (illegal small arms trade in South Asia). The UN regards the detailed implementation and enforcement of programs in the field of combating illicit trade of small arms as regional and sub-regional issues.

Previous Attempted Solutions: Analysis of Their Failure/Success

In protocols established by the UN, especially the 2006 International Tracing Instrument mentioned in the previous section, the tracing of illicit small arms has been increasingly effective. Small arms are mostly manufactured legally and sold to its first licensed owner (with a few exceptions where large combatant groups manufacture their own weaponry). The tracing of an illicit small arm can often reveal the last legitimate owner of the small arm. This gradually decreases the incentives for a small arms owner to transfer arms to the black market, as he could be held accountable for such actions.

Various resolutions and policies of individual governments have attempted to cut back on the level of redundant small arms stockpiles in government-controlled military divisions, hoping it could decrease the possibility of leaking to the black market. Even when the surplus of the stockpile is destroyed, the illegal arms trade problem is hardly alleviated because the destroyed small arms are usually obsolete and undesirable anyway. Also, license numbers from these destroyed arms are sometimes “recycled”. Illegitimate gun manufactures use them on the guns they produce for the black market.

Another difficulty is that many UN members and Security Council countries provide small arms and light weapons, among other military supplies, to South Asian countries. For example, China and the Russian Federation provide arms to the Myanmar military Junta. Although the United States of America and the

European Union, unlike China, have imposed arms embargo on the military regime, they are not likely to be in favour of a comprehensive UN resolution to stop arms trade in the area, as they do not want to open up precedents “which may require them to stop the profitable sales of arms the next time a dictator starts killing its innocent civilians” (Global Policy Forum). Leaks in government-controlled stockpiles are more likely to occur as more bilateral weapons supply deals are made. The inevitable result would be an ever-increasing number of illegal small arms in circulation.

Small arms are the real Weapons of Mass Destruction. When the world takes the issue of small arms trade in South Asia as seriously as the trade of WMDs, the problem can hopefully be solved.

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UN Security Council. Report of the Secretary General on Small Arms. Online 19 August 2008. <<http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/smallarms/2008/0417sgreport.pdf>>.

UN Security Council Will Not Impose Strict Restrictions on Arms Deals. Online 19 August 2008. <<http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/smallarms/articles/2007/1006irony.htm>>.

Appendix – Useful Links

South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation: <http://www.saarc-sec.org/>

International Action Network on Small Arms: <http://www.iansa.org/>

Global Policy Forum: <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/smallarms/salwindx.htm>

NGO report: <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/smallarms/2006/09armswithoutborders.pdf>

The Chair's MUN research archives: <http://mun.jingshen.co.cc/>

News Agencies in the region

India: <http://in.reuters.com/> <http://www.zeenews.com/> <http://www.samachar.com/>

Pakistan: <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/> <http://www.sananews.com.pk/> <http://www.paktribune.com/>

Sri Lanka: <http://www.dailynews.lk/>

Afghanistan: <http://www.afghannews.net/> <http://www.aopnews.com/>

Bangladesh: <http://newsfrombangladesh.net/> <http://www.thedailystar.net/>

Nepal: <http://www.nepalnews.com/>

BBC: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/default.stm

Committee: General Assembly 1st Committee (Disarmament & International Security)

Issue: Rights of national sovereignty against incursions by neighboring states in light of the Colombian incursion in Ecuador

Student Officer: Kahyun Park

Definition of key terms:

National Sovereignty: the term refers to the exclusive right of a nation to have control over its own territory and its people. In terms of International Law, the concept is expanded to allow full control of a nation's affairs within territorial boundaries to each respective nation. National sovereignty is considered as the fundamental basis of all diplomatic negotiations and decisions.



Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC): The FARC, since its establishment in 1964, stands as Colombia's largest guerrilla group. FARC's second in command leader Raul Reyes and up to 20 guerrilla fighters were killed due to the Colombian air-strike attacks on the temporary guerrilla camp on March 1st 2008. The temporary encampment was situated in an area 1.8km inside the Ecuador border.

Andean Crisis of 2008: The Colombian incursion in Ecuador on March 1st 2008

Hot pursuit: "Hot pursuit" is a term with historical background, coined by the U.S Coast Guard during the prohibition era. Regarding International Treaty Law, the term refers to the prioritization over National Sovereignty laws in times of urgency when law enforcement officers and agents of one jurisdiction are allowed to cross over into another in pursuit of fleeing criminals or for pre-emptive purposes

Causus belli: a Latin term meaning the justification for war offense

Safe conduct: the term refers to a pass or document allowing trespassers to enter a given territory without being subject to harassment in exceptional circumstances of international conflict. It is usually used to refer to the grant given to enemy subjects

Chargé d'affaires: title of a class of temporary diplomatic agents. Their roles are much like ambassadors and delegates in that they represent their countries. The only essential difference lies in the meaning of the status, as a resemblance of low-level diplomacy

Background to the topic:

The description of the Colombian incursion in Ecuador and the points of controversies

On March 1st 2008, Colombian government officials undertook an air-strike mission on the temporary guerrilla encampment in an area 1.8km inside the Ecuador border. The Colombian government claims that it was a rightful act, since the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) have been involved in notorious scandals for drug trafficking and human rights abuses, including taking in hostages. The United States has so far backed the side of the Colombian government in its claims.

However, the Ecuador government claims that the Andean Crisis of 2008 was a clear violation of Ecuador's national sovereignty and that the action could not be justified as a "hot pursuit," considering that the air-strike attacks were in the middle of the night when all FARC members had been asleep. Furthermore, as the Colombian attack on FARC members in Ecuador territory came just days after the guerrilla group released hostages for the second time, the consensus of party nations and neighbor states points to Colombia's unnecessary violation of International Law.

The Colombian incursion in Ecuador has sparked fervent discussion among neighboring Latin American countries as well, with Venezuela and Nicaragua representing strong stances by breaking economic and political ties with Colombia after the incident. Ecuador even gathered an inventory of Colombian assets to nationalize all assets and to halt trade. Venezuelan President Chavez condemned Colombia's act as a "pre-planned massacre of a sleeping encampment." Both Ecuador and Venezuela dispatched additional troops to the borderlines after the crisis, leading the way for possible military clashes.

Myriad allegations currently complicate the scene with various interpretations of the incident. According to Colombian sources, one of the laptops from the FARC camp proves that the Ecuadorian government was in fact supporting the FARC and that Venezuela provided over US\$300 million dollars for FARC maintenance. On the other hand, The U.S has been connected with Colombia, allegedly having spent close to US\$5 billion funding the Colombian government's war on leftist rebels under the auspices of "war on drugs," and "war on terrorism."

General overview of issue:

Backlash for neighboring countries in light of sovereignty violations

National sovereignty is both a right and a safeguard for security. The cause of the Andean Crisis of 2008 can be traced back to Colombia's violation of Ecuador's national sovereignty, intruding upon alien territory

without official arrangements. As represented by the majority of neighboring Latin-American countries voicing opposition to Colombia's incursion, the notion of national sovereignty is one of paramount importance in today's diplomatic world.

When an involved party's sovereignty is infringed, the reactions usually include: cutting off diplomatic ties, halting trade, deploying additional troops to the border, and attacking the counter-party.

Diplomatic ties: Neighboring country Venezuela decided to cut all diplomatic ties with Colombia after the incident. Nicaragua among other neighboring Latin-American countries also reduced ties with Colombia in accordance.

Trade: Neighboring country Venezuela decided to halt all trade amounting in an annual trade volume of US\$ 5 billion. As a result, Colombian companies such as Grupo Nacional de Chocolates, Cementos Argos, Compañía Colombiana de Inversiones (Colombia's largest food company, cement maker and investment holding company respectively) are expected to lose their shares sharply in the region.

Deployment of additional troops: With expanded military presence, rebel activity and drug trafficking near the border comes the risk for armed conflicts close to neighboring territories. Furthermore, there were 300,000 displaced people in Ecuador alone after the crisis, which raise concern for the unexpected influx of refugees to neighboring countries.

Counter-attacks: After the Colombian incursion in Ecuador, the FARC members bombed the Transandino oil pipeline in Putumayo Province. The oil pipeline was out of service for at least 3 days after the attack.

Countries and Organizations involved:

Organization of American States (OAS): an organization headquartered in Washington D.C and comprising 35 independent states of the Americas. The goals of the organization are represented by Article 1 of the Charter which came into effect in 1951, "to achieve an order of peace and justice, to promote their solidarity, to strengthen their collaboration, and to defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity, and their independence." The OAS adopted a resolution acknowledging Columbia's violation of International Law in breaking Ecuador's national sovereignty

The Carter Center: a nongovernmental, non-for-profit organization established in 1982 by former U.S President Jimmy Carter and his wife in collaboration with Emory University. Carter received the Nobel Peace Prize for his works through this organization whereby he helped ameliorate living conditions for people in more than 70 countries. Jimmy Carter played the leading role in mediating the post-Andean Crisis and achieved low-diplomacy at the level of chargé d'affaires status between Colombia and Ecuador

Colombia: officially named Republic of Colombia, the nation is located in northwestern South America, bordering Venezuela on the east and Ecuador in the south. The nation's capital is situated in Bogotá, with Álvaro Uribe Vélez presiding as its President in the Representative Democratic Republic.

Ecuador: officially named Republic of Ecuador, the nation borders Colombia in the north. The nation's capital is situated in Quito, with Rafael Correa presiding as its President in the Representative Democratic Republic

Venezuela: officially named Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the nation borders Colombia to the west. The nation's capital is situated in Caracas, with Hugo Chávez Frías presiding as its President in the Socialist Republican government

Timeline of events:

2008 Mar 1: Colombia's defense minister said security forces killed Raul Reyes (59), a leading commander of the FARC rebel group, in combat and air strikes in neighboring Ecuador. Twenty other rebels were also killed and a laptop computer was seized with documents indicating a close relationship between the rebels and Venezuela's President Chavez. Colombia later acknowledged that an Ecuadorian was killed during the raid.

2008 Mar 2: Venezuela and Ecuador ordered troops to their borders with Colombia, sharply raising tensions after Colombia killed a top rebel leader on Ecuadorian soil. Ecuadorian troops recovered the seminude bodies of 15 rebels in their jungle camp. Soldiers also found three wounded women at the camp, a Mexican philosophy student injured by shrapnel and two Colombians, who were evacuated by helicopter for treatment.

2008 Mar 3: Ecuador's president said that his government was in "very advanced" talks with Colombian rebels to free 12 hostages, including former presidential candidate Ingrid Betancourt and three US contractors, but was thwarted by Colombia's military raid. Venezuela and Ecuador expelled Colombia's diplomats and cracked down on trade across the border.

2008 Mar 5: The Washington-based OAS declared Colombia's attack on rebels in Ecuador a violation of Ecuador's sovereignty and called for OAS Secretary-General Jose Miguel Insulza to lead a delegation to both countries to ease tensions. But the resolution stopped short of explicitly condemning the assault. Pres. Chavez said Venezuela will search for other countries like Ecuador, Brazil and Argentina to replace products imported from Colombia.

2008 Mar 7: At a summit in the Dominican Republic, the presidents of Colombia, Venezuela and Ecuador agreed to end the bitter dispute.

2008 Jun 6: Colombia's presidential spokesman said Colombia and Ecuador are restoring diplomatic ties at the charge d'affaires level following mediation by former US President Carter.

Timeline sources-

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/country_profiles/1212826.stm,

<http://timelines.ws/countries/ECUADOR.HTML>

Relevant UN treaties & UN resolutions:

Although not directly related to the national sovereignty issues regarding the Colombian incursion in Ecuador, the UN resolutions below are examples of previous attempted solutions safeguarding national sovereignty-

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories over their natural resources, [A/RES/53/196](#), UN resolution adopted in General Assembly 53rd session, 1998

(<http://daccess-ods.un.org/TMP/8624732.html>)

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, [A/RES/58/229](#), UN resolution adopted in General Assembly 58th session, 2003

(<http://daccess-ods.un.org/TMP/1792882.html>)

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“[The Colombian Incursion into Ecuador and some of its Consequences in Mexico](#),” May 6th 2008,

<http://mexico.foreignpolicyblogs.com/2008/05/06/the-colombian-incursion-into-ecuador-and-some-of-its-consequences-in-mexico/>

“COLOMBIAN MILITARY INCURSION INTO ECUADOR SPARKS REGIONAL CRISIS,” March 4th 2008, <http://upsidedownworld.org/main/content/view/1162/61/>

“Colombia’s Incursion into Ecuadorian Territory: Justified Hot Pursuit or Pugnacious Error?” March 10th 2008, http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1105393

“Colombia's Incursion Into Ecuador Is Widely Condemned (But Not By Bush, Obama, & Clinton),” March 6th 2008, <http://news.infoshop.org/article.php?story=20080306154111607>

“Ecuador and Colombia Presidents Accept President Carter's Proposal to Renew Diplomatic Relations at the Level of Chargé d'Affaires, Immediately and Without Preconditions,” June 6th 2008, http://www.cartercenter.net/news/pr/EcCol_060608.html

“Correa: Uribe’s aggression "extremely grave" and "deceptive”,” March 3rd 2008, <http://www.granma.cu/ingles/2008/marzo/lun3/correa.html>

Appendix: Useful links

Foreign Policy Association Mexico: <http://mexico.foreignpolicyblogs.com>

The Carter Center: <http://www.cartercenter.net>

Organization of American States (OAS): <http://www.oas.org/>