



SHEDDEN PAPERS



Philippines 2010 and Beyond: The Need for Institutional Peace-Building

Lysander Suerte

Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies
Australian Defence College

2010

Abstract

This paper asserts that the Government of the Philippines must reassess its response to the ongoing communist insurgency in the country. It suggests that the government needs to transform the way it operates which involves formulating policies based on human security and institutional peace-building frameworks, rather than relying on military operations alone. It suggests a two-pronged approach. First, the government should Stop The Armed Response (STAR); and, in a complementary rather than sequential move, implement genuine reform and economic development termed Peace And Reform And Development (PARADE).

This document is approximately 10,000 words, excluding its bibliography. It prints off at 35 pages.

The Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies (CDSS) is the senior educational institution of the Australian Defence College. It delivers a one-year Defence and Strategic Studies Course, a postgraduate-level educational programme which places emphasis on practical, rather than theoretical research, on teamwork and support for the personal and professional goals of all course members. Course members and staff share a commitment to achieving scholarly and professional excellence, with course members graduating with a Master of Arts awarded by Deakin University or a Graduate Diploma awarded by the CDSS. These papers have been submitted as coursework and have been chosen for publication based on their scholarly attributes and the timeliness of their topic.

For further information about the CDSS publications please visit:

http://www.defence.gov.au/adc/hqadc_shedden.htm

© Commonwealth of Australia

This work is copyright. It may be downloaded, displayed, printed and reproduced in unaltered form, including the retention of this notice, for personal, non-commercial use or use for professional purposes. Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, all other rights are reserved. To replicate all or part of this document for any purpose other than those stipulated above, contact the CDSS.

Shedden Papers: ISSN 1836-0769

Disclaimer

This work is the sole opinion of the author, and does not necessarily represent the views of the Centre for Strategic and Defence Studies or the Department of Defence. The Commonwealth of Australia will not be legally responsible in contract, tort or otherwise, for any statement made in this publication.

Editor, Stephanie Koorey, CDSS Publications Editor.

About the Author

Colonel Lysander Suerte is an army officer serving with the Armed Forces of the Philippines. He graduated from the Philippine Military Academy in 1982 and has commanded an infantry platoon, an armoured company and an infantry battalion. He has extensive training and experience in comptrollership and civil-military operations and holds an MBA with a major in Human Resource Management. Colonel Suerte completed the Armoured Officers Advanced Course in Fort Knox, Kentucky, USA in 1992 and is the current Chief of Staff of the 10th Infantry Division, Philippine Army, based in Mindanao. He graduated from the Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies in 2008 with a Master of Arts.

*Protracted conflict, not insurgent victory, is the threat.*¹

*A hungry man is an angry man.*²

Introduction

This paper takes a new look at the ongoing communist insurgency in the Philippines and proposes fresh insights and frameworks for a national security response. It examines the historical persistence of the insurgency, provides a paradigm shift in analysis of the communist movement, and offers policies anchored in human security concepts within an institutional peace-building framework.

Its main recommendations are:

1. Stop The Armed Response (STAR) This requires the government to call an immediate and unilateral halt to its military response to the armed struggle waged by the communist-led New People's Army (NPA). The focus of military operations should shift to protecting civilian communities from insurgent intimidation and ensuring that their economic development continues unhindered. Illegal insurgent activities should then be managed by the police and other law enforcement agencies, allowing the government to claim the moral high ground and challenge the primacy of the armed struggle espoused by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).
2. A programme of Peace And Reform And Development (PARADE). This should complement the STAR. This programme should see the simultaneous implementation of peace processes, governance reforms and accelerated development. Peace is the overriding aim of the proposed policy, to be nurtured and sustained by genuine reform and development.

Human security is broadly defined as not only 'freedom from fear' but also 'freedom from want' and 'freedom from humiliation'.³ The resolution to a 'protracted people's war' lies in accelerated development, addressing the primary causes not as subsets of a counterinsurgency campaign, but within the framework of human security, to genuinely 'serve the people' and, in the process, win the battle for their hearts and minds, effectively sidelining the armed revolution.

¹ Steven Metz, *Rethinking Insurgency*, Strategic Studies Institute monograph, June 2007, p. 50.

² Antonio Guterres, UNHCR, in *The Epoch Times*, Australia, October 8–14, 2008, p. 1.

³ Human Development Network, Philippine Human Development Report 2005 (2nd edn.), pp. 1–2, available at: <http://www.hdn.org.ph/files/2005_PHDR.pdf> accessed 5 June 2008.

Background

The communist and Muslim insurgencies in the Philippines—now almost four decades old—are two of the longest running armed insurgencies in the world. These insurgencies are elements of a tumultuous Philippine history that began with colonisation by Spain lasting over 300 years. With the ouster of the Spanish, the United States of America (USA) then occupied the country for the first half of the last century. The modern history of the Philippines is littered with extraordinary events such as the extra-constitutional ouster of two presidents, Marcos in 1986 and Estrada in 2001. The country also suffers the adverse effects of uncontrolled population growth and high levels of economic inequality. The compounding issues of poor governance and endemic corruption are also approaching crisis proportions.

These challenges make the Philippines one of the weakest states in South-East Asia. Long-term colonisation undermined the pre-existing state structures and produced an unhealthy mix of religious and state powers. Issues of feudalism, imperialism, and bureaucrat-capitalism remain very much alive in the nation's consciousness. Under the American education system the Philippines become one of the most literate countries in Asia and the third largest English-speaking country in the world. Yet, American colonisation also left the legacy of heavy economic dependence on the USA.⁴ A more profound product of colonisation is cultural confusion—Filipinos live in Asia, but are Western in outlook and tastes.

The country's recent history of misgovernment, particularly during the period of martial law, has made the Philippines a very difficult country to govern.⁵ The relationship between the state and an intractable civil society is highly ambivalent. Most Filipinos distrust the state, remaining wary of its powers and seeking increasingly to implement tighter controls over the government—but also expecting it to perform well. If the state remains weak, however, failure is inevitable. It is imperative for the country's leaders to build a strong state, but first they must win the support of, and encourage the development of a strong and vibrant civil society. Only then can they focus on the two main causes of the country's woes: the enduring armed conflicts and the high rate of population growth. Additional problems including economic slowdown, worsening inequality, endemic corruption and emigration must also be addressed.

Both the Filipino people and the state have shown great resilience in the past in weathering crises of various types and proportions. Against the odds, the

⁴ Government of the Republic of the Philippines website, 2008, available at: <<<http://www.gov.ph/aboutphil/general.asp>>> accessed 19 May 2008.

⁵ President Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law in 1972 and its official lifting in 1981 was generally regarded as merely symbolic. For much of the population, martial law was synonymous with Marcos's rule, which ended in a bloodless 'People Power' revolution in February 1986.

government has functioned adequately and preserved the integrity of its territory.⁶ The next decade will inevitably produce yet more tests for the Filipino people and the state, as the country will struggle to resolve current problems while continuing to confront issues from the past.

The communist and Muslim insurgencies in particular will make nation-building and state-building extremely difficult, testing the resolve of the government as it struggles to address the nation's burgeoning crises. Only if the country can finally resolve its historical issues will the government be able to focus on current problems and prepare for future challenges. Thus, ending the long-running communist and Muslim insurgencies is one of the most urgent tasks for the Government of the Philippines.

The human security policies proposed in this paper seek to consolidate the gains and avoid the pitfalls of past and present counterinsurgency campaigns. While both the communist and Muslim insurgencies will be discussed, this paper will be necessarily limited to the communist insurgency which is broader in scope and longer in duration.⁷ While the proposed policies may also be applicable to the Muslim insurrection, the communist insurgency is far more complex and therefore requires a separate assessment and a more comprehensive policy approach.

This paper will focus on the intense military campaign currently conducted by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) acting on the directive of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to crush the insurgency by 2010—the end of her term.⁸ The policies proposed in this paper are anchored in human security concepts that address the root causes of the insurgency and its eventual resolution.

Thus far, AFP assessment reports are guardedly optimistic that the targets of the directive are within reach. Since the current campaigns focus largely on military targets with emphasis on the traditional parameters (including body counts and firearms exchange ratios), their success will likewise be measured by assessments of the military impact on the insurgents. Yet the achievement of enduring peace is also linked to victory on the socio-political and economic fronts.

The time-frame for the policy recommendations contained in this paper is 2010–2022, corresponding to two presidential terms under the current political system.

⁶ Patricio N. Abinales and Donna J. Amoroso, *State and Society in the Philippines*, Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, 2005, p. 3.

⁷ Armed revolution began in the 1950s with the Huks, originally an anti-Japanese guerrilla force during World War II, which later became a communist guerrilla army under the Partido ng Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), the forerunner of the present-day CPP.

⁸ President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, directive to the Armed Forces of the Philippines, 16 January 2006.

A Country Marked by Internal Strife

Transnational terrorist threats aside, instability within the Philippines originates not outside, but within its shores and within the ranks of its own people. Currently, four major groups pose serious security threats to the Philippines, and will continue to hinder the country's political stability, economic development and international prestige. They are:

- a. The communists, led by the Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army/National Democratic Front(CPP/NPA/NDF);
- b. the terrorists, led by Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) which is linked to Al Qaeda, and the JI-inspired Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG);
- c. the Muslim secessionists or Southern Philippines Secessionist Groups (SPSGs) led by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and its military arm the Bangsa Moro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF), and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and Misuari Breakaway Group (MBG); and
- d. the ultra-rightist groups, comprising politico-military groups which attempt to seize power through destabilisation/military adventurism and/or *coups d'état*.⁹

The Communist Insurgency

The communist insurgency is led by the CPP whose re-establishment on 26 December 1968 is referred to as the 'First Great Rectification Movement'.¹⁰ The group's rebirth was designed to showcase its departure from the errors of the past and the failed leadership of the former Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP—Communist Party of the Philippines).¹¹ Guerrilla leader Jose Maria Sison subsequently formed an alliance with Bernabe Buscayno (also known as Commander Dante) who headed a small group of 60 fighters in Central Luzon.¹² The group merged with the CPP on 29 March 1969 to become its military arm, subsequently known as the New People's Army (NPA).

The other element of the communist insurgency is the NDF, founded on 24 April 1973 as the revolution was gaining strength. The NDF won the support of various groups dissatisfied with the martial law regime of President Ferdinand Marcos. The NDF is a loose confederation of different organisations, predominantly formed along

⁹ Department of National Defense, *Strategic Defense and Security Outlook: The Emerging and the Future Defense and Security Environment*, Government of the Philippines, May 2007, pp. 1–4.

¹⁰ This is the term coined by Jose Maria Sison (writing under his nom-de-guerre Amado Guerrero). See Jose Maria Sison (with Rainer Werning), *The Philippine Revolution, The Leader's View*, Taylor and Francis, New York, 1989, pp. 203–204.

¹¹ The CPP split from the former Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP, Communist Party of the Philippines), often referred to as CPP-68 to emphasise its new form, leadership and direction under Jose Maria Sison.

¹² Human Development Network, *Philippine Human Development Report 2005 (2nd edn.)*, p. 84.

sectoral and class lines, many presenting themselves as cause-oriented groups with advocacies that meet revolutionary principles in substance and form. These groups often act as the mouthpieces of the CPP in denouncing the three basic problems of Philippine society which, according to Sison, are feudalism, US imperialism, and bureaucrat-capitalism.

The CPP continues to maintain the primacy of the armed struggle, described by Sison as:

*the main form of struggle in so far as it is the most effective method for carrying out the central task of seizing political power for the people. But this form of struggle must be complemented by legal forms of struggle in order to win over greater numbers of people in both urban and rural areas. The party coordinates all forms of struggle.*¹³

Graphically, the CPP/NPA/NDF has been portrayed as a warrior whose 'head' is the CPP, its 'sword' the NPA, and its 'shield' the NDF.¹⁴

The CPP/NPA/NDF platform is based on a revolution that 'seeks the overthrow of the national ruling system and its radical replacement through the armed seizure of central political power.'¹⁵ The revolution reached its peak when Marcos's strongman rule was declining in the 1980s. The return of democracy in 1986 and the symbolic failure of communism in the collapse of the former Soviet Union triggered intra-party ideological conflict which later led to a brutal purging of the revolutionary ranks and ultimately split the party into two main groups, the Reaffirmists (RA) and the Rejectionists (RJ). The split was also exacerbated by the effective counterinsurgency strategy developed and implemented during Corazon Aquino's presidency. The communist cause was hit hard and lost much of its support. From its peak strength of 25,200 in 1987, insurgent numbers fell to 11,920 in 1992 and dropped further to 6,020 in 1995.¹⁶

The CPP split was a consequence of the launching of the 'Second Great Rectification Movement' in 1992 which called for the 'reaffirmation' of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist thought, a call rejected by the RJs, hence the group's name 'Rejectionists'.¹⁷ The rectification movement was launched at the same time as the CPP was holding peace talks with the government of President Fidel Ramos (1992–1998). The Ramos government had demonstrated its desire for peace by implementing a National Peace and Unification Programme and, more significantly for the CPP, repealing the

¹³ Human Development Network, Philippine Human Development Report 2005 (2nd edn.), p. 165.

¹⁴ The NDF serves to 'shield' party members and fighters through legal and logistical means, providing financial support as well as propaganda.

¹⁵ Human Development Network, Philippine Human Development Report 2005 (2nd edn.), p. 82.

¹⁶ Raymond Jose Quilop et al., 'Putting an End to Insurgency: An Assessment of the AFP's Internal Security Operations', Office of Strategic and Special Studies, Armed Forces of the Philippines, Cleofe Prints, Quezon City, Philippines, 2007, pp. 9–10.

¹⁷ The 1968 re-establishment of the CPP was referred to as the 'First Great Rectification Movement'.

Republic Act 1700, commonly known as the Anti-Subversion Law.¹⁸ The CPP's rectification movement was aimed at the recovery of lost guerrilla and mass population bases. By 1995 insurgent numbers had increased again, reaching 8,950 in 1998, and almost 12,000 in 2001 (see Figure 1). The government reacted by shelving its plan to shift the AFP's focus to external defence and reluctantly ordering the AFP to return to face the old communist enemy.

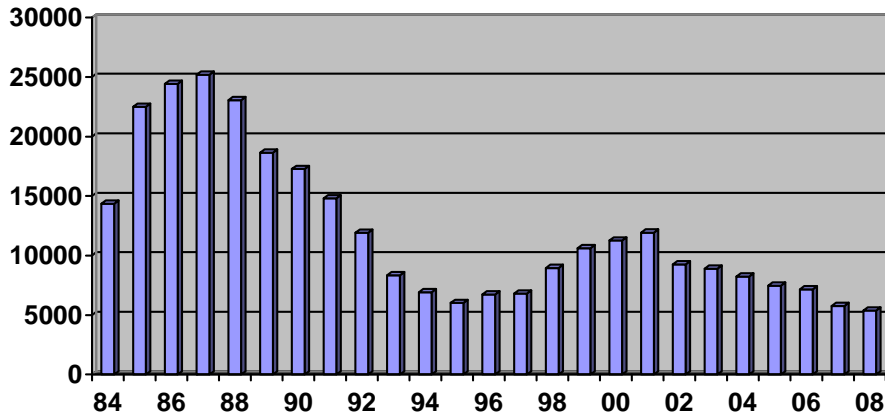


Figure 1. CPP/NPA strength from 1984 to 2008²⁰

In August 2002, with the declaration of the Global War on Terror, the CPP/NPA was listed as a foreign terrorist organisation by the USA.²¹ This tag proved to be a major obstacle to the peace process, as the CPP vehemently condemned the label, and continues to insist that the government remove the tag prior to any resumption of the peace process. Since 2002, with the launching of intensified military campaigns, insurgent strength has declined again from 9,260 in 2002 to 8,240 in 2004, 7,170 in 2006, and further to 5,380 in mid-2008.²²

¹⁸ The Anti-Subversion Law of 1957 outlawed membership to communist/subversive organisations. Its repeal in 1992 was intended to persuade members to join the mainstream political system and set aside the armed struggle which, of course, did not happen. The rectification was launched at almost the same time as the law was repealed.

¹⁹ Data supplied by J2, AFP Intelligence Office.

²⁰ Data supplied by J2, AFP Intelligence Office.

²¹ BBC News, 'Guide to the Philippines Conflict', available at:

<<<http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/1695576.stm>>> accessed 19 May 2008.

²² Data supplied by J2, AFP Intelligence Office.

Past and Current Strategies

In 2001, President Arroyo issued Executive Order 21 to implement the National Internal Security Plan (NISP). The NISP proclaims that:

[I]nsurgency...pose[s] a serious threat to national security...[Thus,] government response...requires a holistic approach consisting of political, socio-economic/psychological, security and information components to address the root causes and armed threats of insurgency.²³

The NISP identifies the major threat groups and recognises the complex nature of the insurgency. In addressing the insurgent threat, the NISP focuses on four areas or 'lines of operations': political/legal/diplomatic, socio-economic/psychosocial, peace and order/security, and information. The NISP mandates close coordination and integration of all government agencies at local and national levels, including partnership with non-government organisations. One element of the NISP is a general counterinsurgency plan involving military and police operations, public information drives, relief and rehabilitation operations, citizen development, and civil programmes (social, political, and economic).²⁴

Even before the formulation of the NISP, this holistic approach had been advocated through AFP Internal Security Operations (ISO) from Lambat Bitag in 1988 to the current Bantay Laya II. AFP ISO campaigns from 1988 to 2002,²⁵ and the current campaign which began in 2006, are summarised in Table 1 on page 11.²⁶

²³ Raymond Jose Quilop et al., 'Putting an End to Insurgency: An Assessment of the AFP's Internal Security Operations', pp. 24–25.

²⁴ Raymond Jose Quilop et al., 'Putting an End to Insurgency: An Assessment of the AFP's Internal Security Operations', pp. 24–25.

²⁵ Raymond Jose Quilop et al., 'Putting an End to Insurgency: An Assessment of the AFP's Internal Security Operations', pp. 25–27.

²⁶ Bantay-Laya II Briefing Materials. See AFP Internal Security Operations Plan (Bantay Laya) Review Report, September 2006.

Year	Campaign Plan	Description
1988	Lambat Bitag	Under Lambat Bitag, the AFP conducted 12,882 ground operations that contributed to the decline of the CPP/ NPA/NDF.
1994	Unlad Bayan	Unlad Bayan focused on nation-building through the AFP's involvement in various development activities.
1996	Pagkalinga	Executive Order 216 and RA 6975 (an act establishing the Philippine National Police under a reorganised Department of Interior and Local Government) section 12 form the legal basis for Pagkalinga. As a follow-through to cement the gains of Lambat Bitag and to give direction to and synchronise AFP efforts in counterinsurgency, Pagkalinga's primary mission is to conduct ISO to decimate and dismantle the remaining CPP/NPA politico-military infrastructure and those of other threat groups. Pagkalinga also facilitated further coordination of AFP-PNP efforts against the insurgency.
1997	Kaisaganaan	Kaisaganaan aimed to address various AFP concerns such as national security, peace initiatives, national development, AFP modernisation, and commitments relating to defence and security cooperation. The name is derived from KAISA meaning 'one for' and KASAGANAAN meaning 'progress'. KAISAGANAAN's aim of 'being one for progress' served as the AFP's guide towards its achievement of 'Philippines 2000'.
2000	Balangai	Balangai is the AFP's implementation of the National Peace and Development Plan (NPDP) which contains the 'total approach' strategy as well as the clear-hold-consolidate-develop methodology of the Philippine Government.
2002	Bantay-Laya	Bantay-Laya embodies a strategic orientation that links it to national plans and strategies. It has a core three-fold priority, namely: (1) to reduce the capabilities of the communist terrorists; (2) to degrade the capability of the MILF; and (3) to continue efforts to destroy the ASG. The strategic objective of Bantay Laya, as specified in the document is 'to decisively defeat the insurgent armed groups'.
2006	Bantay-Laya II	Launched after the President's directive to 'crush the CPP/NPA/NDF by 2010'. Its strategic goal is 'to defeat all groups posing a threat to national security in order to enhance security and peace and order conducive to national growth and development'. The AFP core mission is 'to defeat the CPP/NPA/NDF by 2010, destroy the ASG and JI soonest and contain the SPSG.'

Table 1: Summary of AFP ISO Campaign Plans

The new-found holistic intent of the NISP is not without its critics. As Cruz rightly observes,

*the National Internal Security Plan (NISP) is holistic only on paper, not in its implementation. The NISP lacks a chief architect who can unify multilateral, multidimensional, and multi-organizational elements into a single effective effort.*²⁷

The insurgency is characterised by resilience, surviving and continuing despite the numerous campaigns launched against it by the government. While any fall in insurgent numbers is generally interpreted as an indication of the effectiveness of the AFP's campaign, the question remains whether this is sufficient basis for a declaration of victory. The events of the 1990s suggest that, while the AFP is capable of weakening the movement, it is unable to actually destroy its enemy. Thus its most pressing issue remains fundamentally unresolved.

The insurgency persists because, as Sison frequently proclaims, 'the objective conditions for the revolution are better than ever before.'²⁸ As much as Sison's intransigence is an irritant, it is difficult to disagree with his assessment. In short, the insurgency persists because conditions within Philippine society have remained basically the same—or deteriorated—and government approaches have done little to arrest this deterioration. Now is the time to formulate new paradigms and concepts.

Concepts and Frameworks for Policy

*Embracing Human Security Concepts: the Moorings of a Sound Policy*²⁹

Human security describes a situation in which people are secure and free in the exercise of their choices, confident that their opportunities for development will remain for the foreseeable future. Human security entails safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease and repression. It involves protection within the usual patterns of daily life in the home, in the workplace and in the community—in short, a life free from unwanted disruption. Human security emphasises the ability of people to take care of themselves—it is not a defensive concept, as is implied in territorial or military security.

Human security can be classified into seven categories.

1. Economic security involves the certainty of a basic income in return for meaningful work. Income security and job security are related; rising trends in 'precarious' employment have accompanied increasing insecurity in income. Economic insecurity is apparent in rising and chronic unemployment and

²⁷ Francisco N. Cruz Jr, 'Quick War Strategy: Ending the Insurgency by 2010', AFP Civil-Military Operations School, Civil Relations Service, Armed Forces of the Philippines, 2007, p. 10.

²⁸ Jose Maria Sison (with Rainer Werning), *The Philippine Revolution, The Leader's View*, pp. 203–204.

²⁹ Human Development Network, *Philippine Human Development Report 2005 (2nd edn.)*, p. 5.

underemployment, reduced income, high inflation rates and one of the worst indicators of economic insecurity, homelessness.

2. Food security promises physical and economic access to food. Food availability is an essential condition, although it does not necessarily reflect food security. Some useful indicators of food security include a rise in per capita food production, a fall in the food import dependency ratio and an increase in the daily per capita calorie intake.

3. Health security refers to nutrition and the safety of the environment. Poor health security is a result of bad nutrition and a hazardous environment, for example, dirty water. The poorest members of the population usually suffer most when health security is compromised. Women can be particularly affected as a rise in maternal mortality can be a symptom of a lack of health security. Other symptoms include lack of access to health services, often measured in terms of the ratio of doctors to population, and the size of the annual health care budget per capita.

4. Environmental security is reflected in a healthy physical environment and is threatened by the scarcity of water, a high level of pollution and pressures on productive land such as deforestation, desertification and salinisation. Threats to environmental security can be chronic and long lasting or sudden and violent such as the Chernobyl nuclear reactor accident in 1986.

5. Personal security refers to safety from physical harm. Threats to personal security include torture, war, ethnic tension, street crime, assault, harassment, and child exploitation. Crime, especially violent crime, is the greatest source of anxiety for many people in the Philippines.

6. Community security involves membership of a group which provides people with a cultural identity and values, and from which they derive a sense of security. Within a community, threats may appear in the form of oppressive practices perpetuated by traditional groups or from other groups who may not share the same values. Ethnic tensions can be exacerbated by unemployment and the absence of critical social services.

7. Political security refers to respect for basic human rights. State repression often presents the primary threat to basic human rights. Human rights can also be compromised by the government's willingness to prioritise military/defence spending over the provision of social services.³⁰

Human security concepts illustrate clearly that isolated or localised threats can affect people further afield. Moreover, these threats are often globally shared and indivisible—threats that originate in one country can quickly spill beyond state boundaries. In the Philippines, the most pressing threats include uncontrolled

³⁰ Human Development Network, Philippine Human Development Report 2005 (2nd edn.), p. 5.

population growth, inequality, unregulated international migration, environmental degradation, drug trafficking and transnational terrorism.

Severe personal, economic, political and environmental insecurity can produce a national crisis.

*Policy and Strategic Frameworks*³¹

The Philippine government's policy on armed conflicts has generally conformed to one of three models:

- a. the military-victory position;
- b. the pacification and demobilisation position; or
- c. the institutional peace-building position.

The military-victory position simplifies insurgencies to the status of threats that must be neutralised through decisive military action. This is usually the model adopted when an insurgency is in its incipient stage, based on the belief that the problem can be 'nipped in the bud'. In the Philippines, this model has clearly proven ineffective in addressing the communist and Muslim insurgencies, and was characterised by high levels of violence in the 1970s. Despite the apparent failure of this approach, advocates continued to argue that this option should not be abandoned, but rather intensified, reasoning that the failure in the initial use of force was due to lack of resources and commitment. In short, more force was needed to win. This argument held sway for an extended period without producing the desired result. The escalation of conflict under this model frequently resulted in increased resistance and retribution, and was characterised by a rise in non-combatant casualties, human rights violations and adverse social and economic consequences. Insurgents justified their use of terror tactics as a response to the application of superior force. The conflict continued unabated, engendering a vicious and protracted cycle of violence and destruction.

A military response should be an option used not only at the start of the conflict, but as a decisive weapon to break a stalemate or impasse when the conflict escalates and approaches a crisis point. The military option is, however, prone to manipulation through the provoking of ceasefire violations, sabotage or terror attacks, a constant feature of the military-victory model during the Marcos regime.

The pacification and demobilisation model bears some similarity to the military model, although its goal is a ceasefire and demobilisation leading to a peace agreement with the insurgents. This model is still considered a 'hard' approach as it seeks peace with minimal compromise or dialogue. The coercive use of force remains an option, especially if it will weaken the insurgents' position while strengthening that of the government. This approach almost always seeks to thin the insurgent ranks through the lure of positions, alternate livelihood or assimilation while setting aside the deeper issues of the conflict, which remain unresolved. Any

³¹ Human Development Network, Philippine Human Development Report 2005 (2nd edn.), pp. 33–34.

settlement achieved under this position is at best tenuous, as the neutralisation of insurgent leaders does not prevent the rise of new leaders. The deeper roots of an insurgency, if left intact, will produce a new generation of insurgents. The historical evidence is clear in the evolution of the Huks to the CPP/NPA and, in the Muslim insurgency, from the MNLF to the MILF.³²

The pacification and demobilisation option is often preferred by governments as it is usually acceptable to a majority of the population, particularly to vested interests. This is the line of least resistance, and most often the line of choice for the Philippine government. Accommodation of selected communist and Muslim leaders, on the one hand, and periodic military operations on the other, have been a constant feature of the security policies of the last four administrations of Aquino, Ramos, Estrada and Arroyo.

Yet, from the perspective of human development and human security, the pacification approach is gravely flawed given that its purpose is to stop the conflict without resolving the issues that spawned the insurrection. This option is limited to the neutralisation of the insurgent ranks by military action, co-option, corruption, or a combination thereof. It seeks to ameliorate only the most critical issues, merely curing the symptoms of the problem. In this respect, it resembles the military-victory model which is essentially reactionary and palliative.

The framework of human development, however, can be accommodated only within what is termed 'institutional peace-building', the goal of which is 'the adoption and implementation of the policies necessary to achieve sustainable, long-term peace and the articulation of institutions to implement and consolidate those policies and central tasks.' While pacification is aimed at securing a peace agreement, an institutional approach considers this merely the beginning. Within an institutional approach, the government is obliged to address the issues the insurgency has raised, seeking meaningful solutions in a 'search for a just and lasting peace'.

Such an approach, however, is by no means easy. Every government finds it difficult to subject itself to intense scrutiny and meet demands for social and political change. Any form of internal examination necessarily extends to those repressive measures employed against its people in the past and this is extraordinarily difficult for any institution.

Yet, facing this challenge does not spell capitulation for a government that is willing to address the issues at the heart of a conflict. The advantage in this approach is that the government has a genuine chance of achieving its goals without the hindrance of conflict, with effective governance of a unified nation the ultimate prize.

³² The Huks were the forerunners of the present CPP/NPA while the MILF was formed from a faction of the MNLF.

Thus, the framework for peace must change. The approach must involve institutional development from within the state and from within civil society. The process must begin, however, with the government acting decisively to stop, or at least reduce, the armed conflict.

Policy Recommendations: Arguments and Rationales

Stop the Armed Response (STAR)

The first major policy shift this paper proposes for the government of the Philippines is to stop the armed response to the insurgency. Security should be refocused on protecting civilian communities and ensuring that economic activities are shielded and enhanced. Illegal insurgent activities should be managed primarily by the police.

The main rationale for this policy shift lies in the long-overdue realisation that NPA members are mostly rural poor who were exploited by CPP cadres during socialisation and recruitment activities. Thus, most NPA members can be categorised not as hard-core enemies of the state, but as victims of the prevailing social order. In truth, they are victims twice over: first, because of their abject poverty and, second, because of their exploitation by the communist insurgents. Having been arguably deceived into joining the revolution, these peasants-cum-NPA combatants have become the hapless victims of government search and destroy operations.

By implementing STAR, the government will assume a more balanced threat perspective. The NPA has been drastically weakened over the last five years and now constitutes a low-level threat to the overall security of the state. This is not to suggest that it has lost its offensive capacity, as it is still highly capable of launching selective attacks (liquidations, bombing of cell sites, limited raids and ambushes against soft targets). Should the military response cease, however, the NPA guerrillas will immediately be placed on the defensive in the eyes of the people who form their support base. This will upset the CPP political line and will pressure them to review their stand in maintaining the primacy of the armed struggle. The government then needs to develop a strategic communications plan to broadcast its message to the different sectors of society and to the international community. The armed struggle will be rendered irrelevant if the government, supported by civil society, demonstrates a genuine desire for peace and makes a deliberate effort to address the issues that have historically cloaked the revolution in a semblance of legitimacy.

Some will argue that halting the armed response is not feasible, perhaps even foolhardy, asserting that such a move could embolden the NPA. Stopping the armed response could also be regarded by the NPA as government capitulation, and the state's relinquishment of its duty to protect its people. On the contrary however,

STAR will improve the government's capacity to protect the people and the communities. Instead of wasting its efforts (and limited budget) on launching offensive operations aimed at finding and killing insurgents, the military can focus on security operations that aim to protect the people from insurgent intimidation (and those of other criminal or threat groups), and ensure that economic activities are protected and enhanced. Certainly the military needs a purposeful re-orientation to perform this role effectively, and this is one of the essential elements in successful policy implementation.

Can and Will the AFP do it?

The Philippine military is certainly capable of filling this new role. The past four decades have demonstrated the AFP's capacity to rise to the occasion when properly led. If one measures military achievements alone, the counterinsurgency campaigns appear to have been relatively successful—the missing components of the holistic approach cannot be traced to the military. The AFP, however, has overstepped its role many times, performing several functions that are the domain of other agencies simply because its soldiers have felt compelled to act in the absence of a government response to specific problems which threatened their tactical objectives. It is safe to conclude that in the current policy framework, and given the political, social and economic environment, the AFP has done very well. Should a policy shift occur and a new strategy be adopted, the AFP will be up to the task.

The AFP has successfully implemented security policy reforms in the past. Following the February 1986 revolution, the new government embarked on a fresh policy that resembled the pacification and demobilisation option, a clear departure from the largely militarist approach of the Marcos regime. When peace talks were held, the AFP respected ceasefire agreements. During this period, in fact, the NPA committed more ceasefire violations than the AFP, significantly improving the AFP's image which was bolstered by its key role in the fall of Marcos. During the early post-Marcos period, an effective counterinsurgency concept, the Special Operations Team, was developed and implemented. For over two decades now, the AFP has proven itself capable of adapting to its varied roles, from combat to stability operations to non-combat and development tasks. In short, the policy requiring the AFP to cease offensive actions and focus on security tasks is likely to be welcomed by the AFP rather than opposed.

In mid-2008, media mileage was generated by the new AFP Chief of Staff who proposed a three-year ceasefire with communist rebels to mark the resumption of the peace process.³³ His proposal was publicly condemned by the Defense Secretary who declared that the 'communist threat must be won with military force, not without.'³⁴ The controversy was quickly suppressed when the two men were admonished from several quarters and urged to speak with one voice on matters of policy. But the fact that the proposal came from the military was not lost on keen

³³ The AFP Chief of Staff is equivalent to Australia's Chief of the Defence Force.

³⁴ Julius Fortuna, 'Include Yano's Proposal in Peace Talks', *Manila Times*, 31 July 2008, online edition.

observers who noted that the AFP appeared to have become tired of the fighting and keen to seek a peaceful end to the conflict. The soldiers have suffered the brunt of the counter-insurgency campaigns.

Knowing the 'Enemy' and Reconceptualising the Problem

The concept of 'the enemy' in the communist insurgency must be reviewed. For many years, the CPP/NPA/NDF has projected itself as one solid homogenous organisation and has been viewed by the government as a single entity that must be neutralised by direct action.

In the search for an appropriate policy and strategy, this paper looks at the CPP/NPA/NDF in two ways. First, the composition of the CPP/NPA/NDF group illustrates that most insurgents are not ideologically aligned. Of the total number of 5,380 insurgents, 2,599 are CPP members and 2,781 are NPA combatants.³⁵ The majority of NPA combatants are peasants or poorly paid workers who joined the rebel cause to seek retribution for perceived injustices and shared a pervasive feeling of frustration with society. They were most likely attracted to the communist movement through propaganda spread by communist cadres. Likewise the goals of the party and its fighters are not one and the same. Most party ideologues are 'generally alienated intellectuals strongly committed to Marxism-Leninism', while NPA members are 'estranged peasants committed to social justice.'³⁶ It is easy to see that the 'CPP's national-democratic revolution is more of a political revolution to seize political power than it is a social revolution to solve certain social grievances related to structural disparities.'³⁷

In this context, the armed response is a trap that has successfully ensnared the government for decades. It has been said time and again that an insurgency benefits from government overreaction—exemplified in the use of force—particularly if state forces are perceived to use force indiscriminately and violate human rights. The armed response, which was primarily directed at the NPA fighters who are mostly rural poor, served to illustrate the 'revolutionary situation' postulated by the CPP. In reality, the armed response has inadvertently raised the level of violence rather than hastening the end of the conflict. If the government now adopts a peaceful strategy, this will rob the NPA combatants of their justification for their continued violence—particularly in the eyes of the people who comprise their support base. The CPP will also find it difficult to direct and motivate its foot soldiers to continue fighting a government that does not respond to their brand of violence. How will they convince the tired, emaciated guerrillas to continue fighting when there is no opponent taking up the fight? How would the CPP justify the continuation of the armed struggle? Creating such dilemmas for the CPP is precisely the strategic outcome that this policy shift aims to achieve.

³⁵ Data supplied by J2, AFP Intelligence.

³⁶ Human Development Network, Philippine Human Development Report 2005 (2nd edn.), p. 83.

³⁷ Human Development Network, Philippine Human Development Report 2005 (2nd edn.), p. 83.

Is the NPA a Serious Threat to National Security?

By mid-2008, the CPP/NPA strength had fallen to 5,380.³⁸ This number represents approximately 0.006 per cent of the 2008 Philippine population of around 90 million. A look at the detailed NPA strength by province illustrates that its numbers have fallen significantly and the deployment of forces to those provinces can now be rationalised commensurate with insurgent strength.³⁹ With the right mix of military and police action within the STAR framework, the insurgents will be contained, isolated and ultimately marginalised from the population.

It is worth noting that in its desire to wipe out the insurgents, the government has been consumed in its focus and attention to the communist problem. The result is that many other threats to the nation are 'under perceived and unattended', such as drug trafficking and narco-politics.⁴⁰

The STAR policy does not suggest absolute abandonment of military action against the insurgents—far from it, in fact. Police and intelligence operations against insurgent leaders—particularly CPP members—will be focused and intensified under this policy. These intense operations will require the allocation of more resources to achieve the desired results. The primary aim of these military operations, however, will remain protection of the population and the safeguarding of economic activity.

What if the CPP/NPA continues to pursue the armed struggle despite the STAR policy? The answer lies in public information: a strategic communications plan with the twin themes of the search for lasting peace and the implementation of genuine reform. This will effectively mark a shift from armed conflict to political warfare which is preferable, and make it difficult for the CPP/NPA to justify continuing the armed struggle.

The Terrorist Tag must be Lifted

The government must reverse its support for the US-led terrorist listing of the CPP, the NPA and Sison, and seek to have this label removed. Over the past five years the policy of labelling these organisations terrorist groups has effectively negated the gains of the past and shifted the holistic strategy initially conceptualised by President Arroyo in 2001 to a militaristic one, aligned with the US Global War on Terror. What has started as a holistic plan in the form of the NISP has been influenced by the Global War on Terror, and its principles and strategies. With the peace process scuttled by the terror tag, peace has been sidelined, a subordinate objective within the counter-insurgency/anti-terror framework, obscured by the preoccupation with the 'bigger war'.

³⁸ Data supplied by J2, AFP Intelligence. See Figure 1.

³⁹ See the table at the end of this paper for data by province.

⁴⁰ Romeo J. Intengan, 'Armed Forces of the Philippines: Defender of the Nation, Guardian of Democracy, and Servant of the People', Centre for Strategic Studies, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, Philippines, available at: <<<http://www.css.org.ph>>>, accessed 14 June 2008.

Law Enforcement over Military Operations: Security Sector Reform

Steven Metz notes that insurgencies have a tendency to transform into criminal organisations and asserts that a counterinsurgency strategy must be flexible so as to address this tendency at some stage of the conflict.⁴¹ He stresses the need for a campaign to adapt to defeat organised crime syndicates or gangs, which means that law enforcement must take over a counterinsurgency that is facing insurgents whose motivation is no longer grievance but greed.

Recent incidents illustrate the increasing involvement of some CPP/NPA members in illegal activities. There have been reports of party members involved in extortion and harassment, sexual opportunism, rape and exploitation, as well as the bombing/destruction of cellular sites and other high-value equipment used in development projects throughout the countryside. While some are party-sanctioned incidents, others are the work of local insurgents motivated by financial gain. These incidents signal opportunities for corresponding shifts in policy.

This paper recommends the adoption of a realistic, sustained and focused investment in developing the capabilities of the country's police forces once the STAR policy is in place. In the mid 1990s when the insurgent numbers were at their lowest the lead role was relegated to the police. What was lacking however was a program to develop police capacity to assume the lead role in finishing off the remnants of the insurgency. Unfairly, the police force was blamed for the resurgence of the communist threat.

This demonstrates the urgent need for a major investment in the basic organisation, training and equipment of the Philippines police force, an imperative that would have existed even without the communist threat. The existence of a mature communist organisation with the characteristics of a criminal group, however, makes a far more compelling case for such an investment.

In the context of institutional peace-building, the reform of the security sectors, especially those of the military and the police, is paramount. Law enforcement must be a strong component of the campaign to neutralise insurgent cells that have evolved into criminal groups. Police actions are always preferable to a military response as they preclude the excessive use of force usually attributed to military operations.

It is worth noting here that the incidence of abuse in military operations can be explained, in part, by the nature of military training. Military organisations have been traditionally designed to conduct conventional operations against external aggression, thus their deployment in counterinsurgency makes them highly incompatible to this internal task, making them commit mistakes, and in the process hurt the very people they are mandated to protect. While this is going on, its main mission to prepare for external defence likewise suffers, its capability being

⁴¹ Steven Metz, 'New Challenges and Old Concepts: Understanding 21st Century Insurgency', *Parameters*, Vol. 37, No. 4, Winter 2007–2008, p. 28.

undermined by incessant internal security campaigns of indefinite duration, with undesirable consequences for national security and political development⁴². The AFP's pre-occupation with internal security operations over many decades has made it one of the most ill-equipped in Asia, having missed opportunities for modernisation in favour of counterinsurgency, which it still has not won.

Learning the Principle of Discrimination

The AFP's current counterinsurgency campaign is characterised by the absence of the principle of discrimination which guides the proportional treatment of insurgents, suspected supporters or sympathisers.⁴³ This paper proposes a scalar approach based on three criteria to determine the treatment of captive insurgents and their supporters:

- a. their actions (past and present) and the threat they pose (their **conduct**);
- b. their **status** (either as combatant, ordinary civilian, or something in between); and
- c. their **guilt** (moral guilt or innocence, extent of involvement in the conflict).

The principle of discrimination involves the application of proportionality—a generally accepted principle under the laws of armed conflict. The approach proposed uses the three criteria listed above—conduct, status and guilt—to guide the behaviour of government forces in conflict situations.

Amnesty for NPA Combatants

In 2007, President Arroyo issued Proclamation 1377 granting amnesty to members of the CPP, NPA and NDF.⁴⁴ Until late 2008, this proclamation remained stalled in Congress awaiting ratification and thus has had little or no impact on the conflict.⁴⁵ By contrast, this paper recommends an amnesty programme for NPA members only, implemented in a simple and timely manner. NPA guerrillas who surrender with serviceable firearms, for example, should qualify for a graduated incentive scheme according to the calibre of the firearm. The awarding of incentives should be delegated to tactical commanders at brigade and battalion levels and to equivalent units of the police and local governments.

The recent move to increase the incentives for surrendered NPA combatants to a total of 120,000 pesos (A\$3,400) also constitutes a step in the right direction, but the implementation must be delegated to the tactical commanders, local police, and local

⁴² Kit Collier, 'The Armed Forces and Internal Security in Asia: Preventing the Abuse of Power', *Occasional Papers*, Politics and Security Series No. 2, East-West Center, December 1999, p. 9.

⁴³ Betsy Perabo, 'The Proportionate Treatment of Enemy Subjects: A Reformulation of the Principle of Discrimination', *Journal of Military Ethics*, Vol. 7, No. 2, 2008, pp. 136–156.

⁴⁴ Joel Guinto, 'Arroyo Presses Senate on Amnesty', *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 16 October 2008, available at: <<http://services.inquirer.net/print/print.php?article_id=166725>> accessed 14 July 2009.

⁴⁵ As at early 2010 the Bill had been passed by the House of Representatives, and was awaiting action by the Senate.

governments.⁴⁶ The slow pace of paying the cash rewards was a major flaw in previous incentive programmes and any new scheme must involve prompt payment of these rewards. With tactical commanders, local police and local government executives responsible for implementing the STAR policy, the real power will be devolved to the local level. The amnesty programme and incentive package will become their new weapons. The amnesty scheme will incorporate a simple validation process which will safeguard the programme from spurious claims.

Amnesty for CPP Members

An amnesty proclamation for CPP members should be issued separately, as its timing will depend on the CPP's reaction to the STAR policy. The rationale for the separate amnesties will send a message to the general public that the CPP and the NPA are two distinct groups and can be treated as such, rather than viewed as one homogenous fighting force. This will also clearly signal the government's understanding that many NPA members are peasants and workers who may have been coerced or compelled to join the NPA ranks. The harder line taken against the CPP will drive home the message that a deceptive, unreformed and unrepentant party will not be permitted to operate outside the law. The duplicitous behaviour of the CPP in launching a rectification campaign and reaffirming the primacy of the armed struggle even as it accepted the peace overtures of the Ramos administration must be clearly—and publicly—condemned. The CPP availed itself of the democratic processes through the party list system but continued, and even intensified, its armed revolution.⁴⁷ The party list system will be included in the strategic communications plan which is aimed at generating higher, issue-driven levels of debate on the wisdom and efficacy of the protracted armed struggle. In short, part of the policy recommendation is aimed at raising the level of public awareness of the violent policies of the CPP, particularly among the educated and elite classes.

There is, however, one apparent contradiction in granting amnesty to CPP members. The repeal of the *Republic Act 1700* in 1992 granted legitimacy to the CPP—membership of the CPP was thus no longer illegal. It now seems absurd for the government to grant amnesty to members of an organisation whose status within the legal political system has been affirmed. This could explain why the CPP has simply ignored the amnesty proclamation.

⁴⁶ Jocelyn Uy, 'Incentives for Surrendered NPAs Upped', *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 20 October 2008, available at: <<http://services.inquirer.net/print/print.php?article_id=167273>> accessed 20 October 2008.

⁴⁷ The House of Representatives includes a number of reserved seats for party list groups, a provision of the Constitution of the Philippines.

Counterinsurgency Role

Cruz recommends the scrapping of the *Republic Act* which assigns the counterinsurgency role to the AFP.⁴⁸ His argument, that giving this role to the AFP prevents a more holistic approach, is sound. The main reason the NISP is not fully embraced by other agencies is that it is heavily identified with the military establishment. The mechanism for transfer of responsibility from the AFP to the police and other agencies must, however, be gradual, as these agencies, particularly the police, require further development of their capability before they can operate effectively.

Peace And Reform And Development (PARADE)

This acronym is formed when the first letter of 'And' is capitalised, to denote the indivisibility and oneness of the three elements, which must always go together to effect success. This means that peace, reform and development must be simultaneous goals, not sequential milestones. Success in one element reinforces the others. This is a three-pronged strategy; immediate peace, genuine reform and accelerated development.

Costs of Armed Conflict

The staggering costs of armed conflict (illustrated in Table 2) form a strong argument for peace. In addition to the loss of life, conflicts—particularly protracted conflicts—hinder development and progress, especially in the intangible aspects of nation-building. Conflict has a particular effect on culture, social cohesion, national pride and image.

	Non-economic	Economic
Local Direct	Deaths and injuries among combatants and civilians due to fighting and displacement. creation of a diaspora	Property and infrastructure destroyed, lost output, military spending on both sides, social spending.
Local Implicit	Loss of cultural identity and social cohesion, loss of personal dignity.	Foregone investment, alternative use of local resources.
Spillover	Prejudices, ethnic and social tensions, rise in kidnap-for-ransom, drug trafficking and other illegal activities.	Lost output, foregone investment, alternative use of national funds.

Table 2: The Costs of Armed Conflict⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Francisco N. Cruz Jr, 'Quick War Strategy: Ending the Insurgency by 2010', p. 6.

⁴⁹ Human Development Network, Philippine Human Development Report 2005 (2nd edn.), p. 3.

Peace Process: A Consistent Peace Policy

The government must revive the peace talks with the communist leaders. This may be a painful and frustrating process, but talking has more advantages than fighting. The government must also formulate a consistent peace policy to end both the communist and Muslim insurgencies. Previous policies have been criticised for their inconsistency and have appeared to negate the gains of the past. In the framework of institutional peace-building, small, incremental, consistent gains are always significant.

Warrior: 'It's a Different Kind of War'

Resolution of deep-seated grievances and healing of the wounds of war will not come easily, especially for those who were actually in the middle of all the violence who paid for it with their youth and the lives of their families and friends. For the grievance to stop, and for the healing to begin, however, the violence must stop first. The story of a former Moro fighter who believed in the promise of the Final Peace Agreement of 1996 despite its shortcomings, is worth relating in this context.⁵⁰ This former fighter is currently one of the driving forces behind the peace accord, with high hopes that former battlefields can be transformed into peaceful communities. This is a goal he pursues relentlessly, arguing that fighting for peace and development is 'a different kind of war.'⁵¹ If nations can send their sons into harm's way fighting other people's wars, however lofty the terms in which such ventures are couched, can they not be sent in the name of peace and development? It is unfortunate that those who have endured violence are not always given the chance to survive the pursuit of peace.

Philippine Defense Reform Programme

The Philippine Defense Reform Programme (PDR) must be pursued relentlessly. The PDR is a proposal to transform the capability of the military establishment as it confronts contemporary and emerging security threats. The PDR has key initiatives that involve: the implementation of a strategy-driven, multi-year defence planning system, a multi-year capability upgrade programme and an information management development programme; improvement in the operational and training capacity of the AFP, logistic capacity, and personnel management system; creating a professional acquisition workforce and establishment of a centrally managed defence acquisition system; optimising the defense budget and increasing the ability of the AFP to conduct civil-military relations, and creating a centrally managed defence acquisition system.⁵²

The government has historically been criticised for the slow pace of implementation of the PDR. Indeed the programme has been in place since 2004, yet no substantial

⁵⁰ The 1996 Final Peace Agreement was negotiated between the Philippine government and the MNLF

⁵¹ Gail Ilagan, 'A Different Kind of War', *Mindanews*, 11 November 2008, available at: <<http://www.mindanews.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=5429&Itemid=70>> accessed 11 November 2008.

⁵² Gilberto Teodoro, 'Reforming Philippine Defence', *Military Technology*, Vol. 32, No. 9, 2008, pp. 108–109.

progress is evident. This may be symptomatic of the fact that the government has been so consumed by the communist insurgency that it has neglected other concerns—the PDR among them. It is time the government pursued its declared priorities, regardless of the state of the insurgency.

Restructuring the AFP

In 2004, an army colonel wrote a controversial article describing the decline in officer-to-soldier ratio over the past few years.⁵³ Ricardo Morales argued that, while the organisation has grown in strength, officer recruitment has lagged, with disastrous consequences in terms of small unit leadership—an essential element of counterinsurgency. Table 3 (based on information provided in the article) illustrates that from 1975 to 1980, when soldier strength almost tripled (from about 23,000 to 61,000), the number of officers increased by around 600, reducing the officer-to-soldier ratio from 1:6 to 1:14.⁵⁴ That this situation was allowed to continue reflects once again the preoccupation of the AFP leadership with the day-to-day operational tempo, and the consequent lack of attention to broader and longer term policy issues.

<u>Year</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>2000</u>
Total							
Army	13,500	22,812	61,062	50,240	68,833	62,037	54,403
Officers	2,002	3,872	4,499	4,318	5,064	4,632	4,261
Ratio							
EP/O	7	6	14	12	14	13	13

Table 3. Army Total Strength, Officer Strength and EP-Officer Ratio, 1970 to 2000⁵⁵

It is urgent that the problem of officer procurement is faced head on, and this must include the re-examination of the usefulness or capability of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) to provide for the officer requirements of the AFP. From 1992 to 2002, an average of 175 officers a year were commissioned into the Army. Of this number, about 50 per cent came from PMA, while the rest were from other sources. These are Call to Active Duty – 27 per cent, Officer Candidate School– 15 per cent and Moro National Liberation Front integreees – 8 per cent. There must be an aggressive effort towards improving officer recruitment to achieve the appropriate officer-to-soldier ratio.

Morales' article also proposed organisational change, asserting that mere 'reform' is no longer sufficient and that, for the AFP to be effective, it must 'transform' itself. He recommended top-level reorganisation of the Defense Department, the General

⁵³ Ricardo Morales, *'Transforming, Not Reforming, the AFP'*, 2004, pp. 4–6 (paper held by author).

⁵⁴ This figure does not include the effect of the July 2003 Magdalo Mutiny involving hundreds of company-grade (Army Captain) officers, who are still in jail and undergoing trial.

⁵⁵ Ricardo Morales, *'Transforming, Not Reforming, the AFP'*, 2004, pp. 4–6.

Headquarters of the AFP and the major services, essentially streamlining the organisation for efficiency.⁵⁶ Proposals such as this deserve serious attention and consideration.

Empowering Women

According to Steven Metz, women's empowerment is a vital component of any strategy against insurgency, not least because it provides a 'brake on the aggression of disillusioned young males'.⁵⁷ Historical evidence tends to support this argument, suggesting that cultures with a propensity to repress women are more susceptible to violence.⁵⁸ There has been substantial progress towards the empowerment of women in the Philippines, as illustrated in the increasing role and influence of women in politics, the media, academia and other sectors. The role of women continues to warrant serious political consideration, not only as a factor in addressing the insurgency, but as a general approach for social re-engineering that promotes social cohesion.

Job Creation and Development

Carles Boix's study of the economic roots of insurrection throughout the world highlights the role of economic development in the alleviation of conflict. This study reveals that 'the use of openly violent means in the political arena will most likely occur in countries that are highly unequal and where wealth is mostly immobile.'⁵⁹ Understandably, for those who are economically disadvantaged, violence is an easy option for effecting political change, particularly where a large proportion of the economy is controlled by the wealthy.⁶⁰ In any counterinsurgency strategy, 'businesses started and jobs created are as much "indicators of success" as insurgents killed or intelligence provided.'⁶¹ Economic and social development provide the best antidote to agitation and subversion and effectively work to eliminate the breeding-ground for insurgency. A human security framework provides freedom from fear as much as freedom from want.

Agrarian Reform

The agrarian reform programme is also key to the elimination of the seeds of insurgency. The slow pace of agrarian reform and the inefficiency of its implementation are currently among the major platforms of the revolutionary movement. In fact, the CPP has launched its own version of revolutionary land reform, albeit with limited success. The government must signal that it intends to address issues of concern with the implementation of the agrarian reform programme, one of the major thrusts of the 1987 Constitution.

⁵⁶ Ricardo Morales, *Transforming, Not Reforming, the AFP*, 2004, pp. 9–10.

⁵⁷ Steven Metz, 'New Challenges and Old Concepts: Understanding 21st Century Insurgency', p. 29.

⁵⁸ Steven Metz, 'New Challenges and Old Concepts: Understanding 21st Century Insurgency', p. 29.

⁵⁹ Carles Boix, 'Economic Roots of Civil Wars and Revolutions in the Contemporary World', *World Politics*, Vol. 60, No. 3, April 2008, p. 392.

⁶⁰ Carles Boix, 'Economic Roots of Civil Wars and Revolutions in the Contemporary World', p. 392.

⁶¹ Steven Metz, 'New Challenges and Old Concepts: Understanding 21st Century Insurgency', p. 28.

Adherence to Humanitarian Law

The last six years have seen hundreds of extrajudicial killings in the Philippines, prompting an investigation by a United Nations Special Rapporteur. Most of those killed have been linked to the communist insurgency, or at least perceived to be sympathetic to the movement. Members of organisations known as ‘fronts’ of the CPP/NPA have been systematically targeted and the criminal justice system has become a tool of the counterinsurgency. The AFP refuted the findings of the United Nations Special Rapporteur and blamed NPA ‘purges’ for the killings. But the AFP response was widely condemned as a ‘cynical attempt to displace responsibility.’⁶² Government forces must be seen as the true guardians of humanitarian laws and principles. To this end, members of the armed forces must be trained in the enforcement of basic human rights, and mechanisms to ensure compliance with human rights must be reinforced.

National Strategy and Budget Reform

The policies and strategy proposed in this paper will not require additional government funding, but rather a re-examination of current priorities. Counterinsurgency allocations have been a regular feature of the Philippine defense budget for many decades. What is now needed is the reallocation of funds to different activities. For example, with the stopping of the armed response to the insurgency, the AFP will have the freedom to realign funds intended for combat operations to intelligence and civil-military operations. The refocusing of efforts to securing the communities and economic centres would still require operational funds, but to a lesser degree than when an all-out war was in effect.

This paper argues that the government should pursue its priority programmes, like the PDR, despite the insurgency. It proposes that government proceeds with its business of governance even if the insurgency is not fully resolved. The main idea is for government projects to proceed unhampered by the insurgency.

Counterinsurgency Center

The AFP must create a Counterinsurgency Centre ‘for the purpose of the research, study, development, and employment of effective counterinsurgency tactics, operations, and strategy’⁶³ This will provide much-needed focus on the development of appropriate tactics for counterinsurgency operations.⁶⁴ The Counterinsurgency Center can be established using existing AFP personnel and resources, with minimal supplemental budget from the government.

⁶² Philip Alston, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Extra-Judicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions*, United Nations, 2007, pp. 2–3.

⁶³ Paul Melshen, ‘Mapping Out a Counterinsurgency Campaign Plan: Critical Considerations in Counterinsurgency Campaigning’, *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Vol. 18, No. 4, December 2007, p. 690.

⁶⁴ Paul Melshen, ‘Mapping Out a Counterinsurgency Campaign Plan: Critical Considerations in Counterinsurgency Campaigning’, p. 690.

National Development Command

The creation of AFP National Development Command in 2007 to orchestrate development projects in insurgency-affected areas is commendable in intent, but its role must be clarified as transitory in nature, and it must support the formation of appropriate agencies and organisations to perform the essential development roles.⁶⁵ Allowing the AFP to retain this role for an indefinite period runs counter to the institutional approach.

Broadening the Concept of Security

According to Kit Collier, governments must avoid relying on military and paramilitary repression and pursue the meaningful institutionalisation of security sectors. This involves broadening the concept of internal security from the traditional militarist view, which is in itself often associated with the abuse of power, and instead promote a healthy, holistic appreciation of the nexus between security, development and human rights policy. It is only through ensuring government and military accountability and developing the role of civil societies, national institutions and international humanitarian organisations that the overall infrastructure of security is strengthened.⁶⁶

Challenges for Reform and Policy

Admittedly, the road to economic and government reform is fraught with danger. For a weak state such as the Philippines which lacks a monopoly over the use of force (as evidenced by the number of armed groups across the country), and lacks the capacity even for efficient tax collection, the risks are even greater. History has shown that reform invites political turmoil and often forces leaders to seek the safety of political expedience, rather than confront the nation's most pressing dilemmas. A weak state that seeks reform usually suffers some form of destabilisation; yet, only reform can solve its problems. The reform programme must be accompanied by another delicate process: state-building. The state must consolidate its sovereignty; it must monopolise the use of force by disarming the insurgent groups, and enforce tax collection effectively so that it can afford economic development.⁶⁷

A further issue with protracted conflicts is that they spawn new problems. One is that the political and economic elite may view actions to resolve insurgency as a threat to their status. They may have become so used to the conflict that they view it as a lesser evil than a strong and effective armed forces. History shows that *coups d'etat* have brought down more governments than insurgencies. Perhaps

⁶⁵ 'Activation of the AFP National Development Command: A Concept Paper', 2007.

⁶⁶ Kit Collier, 'The Armed Forces and Internal Security in Asia', Occasional Papers, Politics and Security Series No. 2, EastWest Center, December 1999, pp. 16–20.

⁶⁷ Nate Haken, 'Economic Reform in Weak States: When Good Governance Goes Bad', *Fund for Peace*, 2006, available at:

<<http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/images/stories/programs/haken_governance_reform.pdf>> accessed 9 July 2008.

predictably, weak regimes then seek to keep their armed forces inept and fragmented.⁶⁸

Collier's point is that only when the roles of civil societies, national institutions and international humanitarian organisations are fully developed can the country consider its overall security strengthened, steering away from the repressive practices of security forces. Kothari further argues that the state must be transformed in order to be relevant, and it must be informed by the transformation of civil society, not vice versa.⁶⁹ It is therefore crucial that regimes establish and nurture the trust and confidence of civil society—however tenuous that may be—not just to secure support for its policies but, more importantly, to derive the genuine strength and lasting stability that are the result of constructive interaction with civil society.

The rationale of stopping the conflict and shifting from military to political warfare includes opening up civil society's participation in the political discourse. The process will not be easy, but in the end, the quality of discourse between the state and civil society is what defines a nation.

Conclusion

The new transformative policy this paper puts forward is derived from the realisation that the Philippine state today is perhaps at its weakest, largely as a result of the protracted communist insurgency. Ultimately, 'to break free, the nation must transform itself'.⁷⁰ Indeed, as Kothari proposes, the state must be transformed, and that transformation can be achieved in four ways.⁷¹

First, the transformation of the state must come after, and be informed by, the transformation of civil society, not vice versa. Second, there must be acceptance and realisation of the decline in the role of the state. Apart from those functions reserved for the central authority, the state must operate in tandem with other players in civil society. Third, the state should be empowered to break free from the claws of dominant interest groups and elite classes, and it should be slowly reconfigured and remodelled away from its image as an instrument of oppression. In the process, however, the survival of the state must be safeguarded, and it must be strengthened by this process, as a moderating player in conflicts that necessarily occur among key players in civil society as the discourse proceeds. Fourth, the nation-state concept that has inspired authoritarianism and hegemonism in recent times must be reconceptualised. It must be recognised that, as long as the state rules with an iron fist, 'the masses cannot and will not come into their own.'⁷²

⁶⁸ Steven Metz, 'New Challenges and Old Concepts': Understanding 21st Century Insurgency', pp. 29–30.

⁶⁹ Rajni Kothari, *Rethinking Democracy*, Zed Books, London, 2007, pp. 53–54.

⁷⁰ Rafael M. Alunan III, 'MAPping the Future: The Case for National Transformation', *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 3 August 2008.

⁷¹ Rajni Kothari, *Rethinking Democracy*, pp. 53–54.

⁷² Rajni Kothari, *Rethinking Democracy*, pp. 53–54.

The need for the nation-state will continue, not least as a player facing the threats and challenges of globalisation. Yet, as the state is transformed, it will once again be regarded as an instrument of freedom, equity and liberation—its original reason for being. To regain that role, however, it needs to be informed from below by the new political forces developing within its constituency—the people it serves. In this way, the state becomes part of, and not a hindrance to, the people’s aspirations, and becomes relevant to them once again.⁷³

The protracted communist insurgency and the government’s counterinsurgency response are clearly destined for more violent collisions over the immediate future unless a new paradigm is introduced to create conditions conducive to the resumption and successful conclusion of the peace process.

The insurgency has survived the evolution of the government response from the military-victory model to the pacification and demobilisation model. The trend is now towards the weakening of the insurgents, and it is time a new policy and paradigm is introduced to adopt the institutional peace-building approach that will not only hasten, but also prepare for, the much-needed resolution of the conflict.

The strategy that this paper proposes to stop the conflict and restart the peace process is aimed also at paving the way for more meaningful government reform and accelerated development. In the end, only peaceful means can really ‘win’ the war, and only reform and development can preserve the peace.

⁷³ Rajni Kothari, *Rethinking Democracy*, pp. 53–54.

CPP/NPA STRENGTH BY PROVINCE

(1995, 2000, 2005, 2007)

REGION/PROVINCE	STRENGTH				REGION/PROVINCE	STRENGTH			
	1995	2000	2005	2007		1995	2000	2005	2007
NCR	1,020	1,182	607	644	REGION 6				
REGION 1					Aklan	29	40	10	17
Ilocos Norte	13	22	10	7	Antique	45	62	40	43
Ilocos Sur	18	65	98	64	Iloilo	88	126	138	116
Pangasinan	0	43	41	41	Capiz	22	75	63	71
La Union	0	0	0		Gumaras	0	0	0	
Other Units	16				Negros Occidental	437	248	307	239
Sub-Total	47	130	149	112	Sub-Total	621	551	558	486
REGION 2					REGION 7				
Cagayan	71	28	63	56	Negros Oriental	149	484	259	96
Isabela	81	65	80	68	Cebu	36	191	30	34
Nueva Vizcaya	31	14	10	8	Bohol	43	385	119	52
Quirino		14	10	8	Siquijor	0	0	0	
Other Units	29				Sub-Total	228	1,060	408	182
Sub-Total	212	121	163	140	REGION 8				
CAR					W. Samar	126	120	275	269
Abra	32	95	101	89	E. Samar	105	132	204	108
Apayao	29	0	0	0	N. Samar	108	228	381	308
Kalinga	43	37	50	56	N. Leyte	140	100	173	59
Benguet	5	26	11	12	S. Leyte	64	60	37	
Mt. Province	14	54	87	91	Biliran	0	0	0	
Ifugao	28	19	0	0	Sub-Total	543	640	1,070	744
Other Units	60				REGION 9				
Sub-Total	211	231	249	248	Zamboanga del Norte	61	114	51	35
REGION 3					Zamboanga del Sur	53	68	97	50
Aurora	120	153	65	37	Zamboanga Sibugay			32	20
Nueva Ecija		178	67	51	Sub-Total	114	182	180	105
Bataan	187	165	130	115	REGION 10				
Bulacan	48	134	71	71	Bukidnon	53	121	134	76
Pampanga	34	105	137	108	Misamis Oriental	106	164	63	38
Tarlac	40	153	116	77	Misamis Occidental	30	109	62	71
Zambales	47	104	52	86	Lanao del Norte	212	137	22	11
Other Units	22				Sub-Total	401	531	281	196
Sub-Total	498	992	638	545	CARAGA				
REGION 4					Agusan del Norte	36	212	107	35
Laguna	86	386	47	44	Agusan del Sur	81	356	229	175
Quezon	141	928	183	74	Surigao del Norte	46	187	164	35
Batangas	50	324	156	35	Surigao del Sur	102	310	261	98
Rizal	20	198	41	38	Sub-Total	265	1,065	761	343
Oriental Mindoro	56	140	60	46	REGION 11				
Occidental Mindoro	57	89	23	43	Compostela Valley		252	236	255
Romblon	-	28	0	0	Davao del Norte	262	317	97	127
Marinduque	-	7	15	2	Davao Oriental	85	144	112	113
Cavite	10	14	14	19	Davao del Sur	170	366	251	275
Other Units	-	-	177	134	Sub-Total	517	1,079	696	770
Sub-Total	420	2,114	716	435	REGION 12				
REGION 5					North Cotabato	100	200	109	65
Camarines Norte	174	128	84	85	Sultan Kudarat		46	54	54
Camarines Sur	150	202	131	84	South Cotabato	120	138	93	46
Albay	123	198	99	119	Sarangani	65	109	96	27
Sorsogon	98	167	105	82	Sub-Total	285	493	352	192
Masbate	96	106	79	93	GRAND TOTAL	6,023	11,255	7,467	5,761
Catanduanes	-	18	21	23					
Other Units	-	-	70	97					
Sub-Total	641	819	589	583					
Palawan	-	65	50	36					
Total		65	50	36					

Bibliography

- Abinales, Patricio N. and Donna J. Amoroso. *State and Society in the Philippines*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Lanham, MD, 2005.
- Acop, Dencio. 'Assessing RP's National Security Strategies: The Alternative Views', Commandant's Paper, AFP Command and General Staff College, 2006 (copy held by author).
- AFP Briefing to President Arroyo on 7 January 2008, (copy held by author).
- AFP Internal Security Operations Plan (Bantay Laya) Review Report, September 2006 (copy held by author).
- AFP National Development Command (AFPNDCC): A Concept Paper, 2007 (copy held by author).
- Alston, Phillip. *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Extra-Judicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions*, United Nations, 2007.
- Alunan III, Rafael M. 'MAPping the Future: The Case for National Transformation', *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 3 August 2008.
- Amoroso, Donna. 'Inheriting the "Moro Problem": Muslim Authority and Colonial Rule in British Malaya and the Philippines', in *The American Colonial State in the Philippines, Global Perspectives*, Julian Go and Anne L. Foster (eds.), Duke University Press, London, 2003.
- Aquino, Jr, Benigno S. 'What's Wrong with the Philippines?' *Foreign Affairs*, July 1968.
- Arugay, Aries. 'Civil Society and Security Sector Reform(SSR) in the Philippines', *The Indonesian Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No. 4, 2007, pp. 344–359.
- BBC News, 'Guide to the Philippines Conflict', available at: <<<http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/1695576.stm>>> accessed 19 May 2008.
- Boix, Carles. 'Economic Roots of Civil Wars and Revolutions in the Contemporary World', *World Politics*, Vol. 60, No. 3, April 2008, pp. 390–437.
- Chalk, Peter and Carl Ungerer. 'Neighbourhood Watch', *Australian Strategic Policy Institute*, Australia, 2008.
- Collier, Kit. 'The Armed Forces and Internal Security in Asia: Preventing the Abuse of Power', Occasional Papers, Politics and Security Series No. 2, *EastWest Center*, December 1999.
- Collier, Paul. 'Prevention of Threats and Emergency Responses: Challenges to Policy Making', Centre for the Study of African Economies, Oxford University, January 2008.

Country Profile – Philippines, Fund for Peace (unpublished, advance copy provided to the author by Fund for Peace).

Cruz, Francisco N. *'Quick War Strategy'*, Armed Forces of the Philippines Civil-Military Operations School monograph, 2007 (copy held by author).

Department of National Defense. *Strategic Defense and Security Outlook: The Emerging and the Future Defense and Security Environment*, Department of National Defense, Manila, May 2007 (copy held by author).

Department of National Defense. 'DND and AFP: Transforming while Performing', 2008, available at: <<
http://www.dnd.gov.ph/DNDWEBPAGE_files/PDR-NEW/dnd-afp.htm>> accessed 19 May 2008.

Diamond, Larry. 'The Democratic Rollback', *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2008.

Fortuna, Julius. 'Include Yano's Proposal in Peace Talks', *Manila Times*, 31 July 2008, available at: <<
<http://www.manilatimes.net/national/2008/july31/yehey/opinion/20080731/opi2.html>
>> accessed 11 November 2008.

Geyer, Georgie Anne. *Guerrilla Prince: The Untold Story of Fidel Castro*, Boston, Little Brown, 1991.

Gompert, David and Gordon IV, John (eds.). *War by Other Means*, RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, USA, 2008.

Guinto, Joel. 'Arroyo Presses Senate on Amnesty', *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 16 October 2008, available at:
<<http://services.inquirer.net/print/print.php?article_id=166725>> accessed 17 October 2008.

Haken, Nate. 'Economic Reform in Weak States: When Good Governance Goes Bad', Fund for Peace, 2006, available at:
<<http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/images/stories/programs/haken_governance_reform.pdf>> accessed 9 July 2008.

Human Development Network. Philippine Human Development Report 2005 (2nd edn), available at: <<http://www.hdn.org.ph/files/2005_PHDR.pdf>>, accessed 5 June 2008.

Ilagan, Gail. 'A Different Kind of War', *Mindanews*, 11 November 2008, available at:
<<http://www.mindanews.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=5429&Itemid=70>> accessed 11 November 2008.

Intengan, Romeo J. 'Armed Forces of the Philippines: Defender of the Nation, Guardian of Democracy, and Servant of the People', Centre for Strategic Studies, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, Philippines, available at: <<<http://www.css.org.ph>>> accessed 14 June 2008.

Intengan, Romeo J. 'Program Points for Addressing the Revolutionary Situation', Centre for Strategic Studies, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, Philippines, available at: <<<http://www.css.org.ph>>> accessed 14 June 2008.

Ismail, Salleh. 'Elements of National Power', *Asian Defence Journal*, June 2008, pp. 4–5.

Kothari, Rajni. *Rethinking Democracy*, Zed Books, London, 2007.

Mallaby, Sebastian. *The World's Banker*, The Penguin Press, New York, 2004.

Melshen, Paul. 'Mapping Out a Counterinsurgency Campaign Plan: Critical Considerations in Counterinsurgency Campaigning', *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Vol. 18, No. 4, December 2007, pp. 665–698.

Metz, Steven. 'New Challenges and Old Concepts: Understanding 21st Century Insurgency', *Parameters*, Vol. 37, No. 4, Winter 2007–8.

Metz, Steven. 'Rethinking Insurgency', *Strategic Studies Institute*, United States Army War College, June 2007.

Montlake, Simon. 'Philippines Fights Leftists, Fair or Foul', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, April 2007.

Morales, Ricardo. '*Transforming, not Reforming the AFP*', 2004 (paper held by author).

Perabo, Betsy. 'The Proportionate Treatment of Enemy Subjects: A Reformulation of the Principle of Discrimination', *Journal of Military Ethics*, Vol. 7, No. 2, 2008, pp. 136–156.

Quilop, Raymond Jose et al. 'Putting an End to Insurgency: An Assessment of the AFP's Internal Security Operations', Office of Strategic and Special Studies, AFP, Cleofe Prints, Quezon City, Philippines, 2007.

Republic of the Philippines official government website, 2008, available at: <<<http://www.gov.ph/aboutphil/general.asp>>> accessed 19 May 2008.

Scholte, Jan Aart. 'Globalization and the States-system', in *The Globalization of World Politics* (2nd edn), John Baylis and Steve Smith (eds.), Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001.

Sison, Jose Maria (with Rainer Werning). *The Philippine Revolution, The Leader's View*, Taylor and Francis, New York, 1989.

Teodoro, Gilberto. 'Reforming Philippine Defence', *Military Technology*, Issue 9, 2008.

The Epoch Times, Australia, October 8–14, 2008.

Timberman, David G. *A Changeless Land: Continuity and Change in Philippine Politics*, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 1991.

Uy, Jocelyn. 'Incentives for Surrendered NPAs Upped', *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 20 October 2008, available at:
<<http://services.inquirer.net/print/print.php?article_id=167273>> accessed 20 October 2008.

Vitug, Marites Danquilan and Gloria, Glenda M. *Under the Crescent Moon: Rebellion in Mindanao*, Ateneo Center for Social Policy and Public Affairs/ Institute for Popular Democracy, 2000.

Yingling, Paul. 'Failure of Generalship', *Armed Forces Journal*, May 2007.

