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SPECIAL UPDATE ON THE STATELESS PEOPLE

Nationality Rights for All, A Progress Report and Global Survey on Statelessness, Refugees International (RI), 11 March 2009.

The world community is no longer silent about statelessness. In recent years, countries such as Bangladesh, Estonia, Mauritania, Nepal, and Sri Lanka have made significant strides to protect the rights of stateless persons. United Nations, non-governmental agencies, legal experts, affected individuals, and others are joining forces aimed at reducing the incidence of this often overlooked global phenomenon. Yet some 12 million people around the world are still stateless, and progress toward ending the problem is limited and slow.

Nationality Rights for All: A Progress Report and Global Survey on Statelessness, provides an updated global survey of statelessness in over 80 countries and assesses progress since 2005 in protecting the human rights of stateless persons and in preventing and reducing statelessness.

Three cases of progress — Bangladesh, Ethiopia, and Kenya — illustrate how improvements can occur, but also what challenges remain for complete and lasting solutions to statelessness. These three cases demonstrate the critical roles of political will (or the lack of it), international and national legal frameworks, liaison efforts by the UN and other agencies, as well as the initiative of stateless people themselves.

In addressing the issue, Refugees International recommends that all states respect and ensure the right of every person to have a nationality, work to facilitate acquisition of nationality, and uphold international standards to protect stateless people and to prevent and reduce statelessness. Refugees International also urges UNHCR to take concrete steps to fully live up to its mandate to help stateless persons. Nongovernmental groups also have an important role to play. Bold efforts to end statelessness are long overdue.

Additional Info:

Nationality Rights for All, A Progress Report and Global Survey on Statelessness,

Refugees International (RI), 11 March 2009, 68 pages.

[Click here to download the report.](#)

Related news:

US Must respond to humanitarian crisis in Somalia

More than two million refugees waiting to come home

MIGRATION

News & Commentaries

- Obama to push immigration bill as One Priority, 8 April 2009, *New York Times*
- Legal, illegal immigration flows react differently to recession; Return Migration, though probably up, is not yet a definitive trend, 2009, in *Migration Policy Institute*
- 'Big rise' in illegal immigrants in the UK, 9 April 2009, *BBC*
- Immigration centre plans go ahead, 10 April 2009, *BBC*
- Remittances increase to \$283 billion in 2008, 2009, *Migration News*
- Asia-Pacific countries meet in Indonesia on Rohingyas, 15 April 2009, *ChannelNewsAsia*

- Bali meeting tackles people smuggling, The Jakarta Post, 15 April 2009.
- Blast victims in secret travel ordeal from Indonesia to Australia, The Australian, 15 April 2009.

Articles

- The International Organization for Migration published a Policy Brief on: The Impact of the Global Economic Crisis on Migrants and Migration.

This paper examines the impact of the economic crisis on the restrictions on movement of migrant workers, their employment and living conditions, the return of migrants to home countries, and the decline of remittances to countries of origin.

- The Migration Policy Institute published a paper on: Migration and the Economic Downturn: What to Expect in the European Union.

The paper examines how the economic crisis is affecting migrant flows to Europe, conditions of workers already in Europe, reactions of natives to migrants during the economic downturn, and policy implications for governments.

Current Events

- Forum: Enhancing the Development Directions in the Utilization of Remittances, 30 April 2009, Manila, Philippines.

The forum aims to provide national policy dialogue on the subject and shall likewise serve as a platform for the Regional Dialogue slated to take place in Rome, Italy on 19-20 May 2009. It will be organized by the International Organization for Migration.

- Policy Dialogue: Harnessing the Development Potentials of Remittances among Overseas Filipinos and Their Families, 19-20 May 2009, Rome, Italy.

The dialogue aims to draw together diaspora groups and migrant communities, government representatives from the Philippines and Italy, civil society organizations, industry groups and development organizations to share knowledge and expertise, discuss issues and explore joint and parallel action programmes towards the pursuit of harnessing the development potentials of remittances. It will be organized by the International Organization for Migration.

INTERNAL CONFLICTS

News & Commentaries

Darfur/Sudan

- ICC issues a warrant of arrest for Omar Al Bashir, President of Sudan, ICC Press Release: 4 March 2009.

The Press Release declares that the International Criminal Court (ICC) has issued a warrant for the arrest of Omar Hassan Ahmad Al Bashir for being "criminally responsible, as an indirect (co-) perpetrator, for intentionally directing attacks against an important part of the civilian population of Darfur, Sudan, murdering, exterminating, raping, torturing and forcibly transferring large numbers of civilians, and pillaging their property."

- ICC's Verdict on Darfur: Whose Responsibility? Mely Caballero-Anthony, Belinda Chng and Roderick Chia, RSIS Commentaries, 31 March 2009.

The Commentaries declared that "For the first time, on 4 March 2009, the International Criminal Court (ICC) indicted a sitting head of state, Sudanese president Omar al-Bashir, for crimes against humanity towards the citizens of Sudan." However in the arena of competing state interests, coupled with the lack of international consensus on the R2P and other pressing global challenges, the step forward is beset by a number of obstacles.

- The official document of the ICC's indictment statement and the ten count of charges imposed

upon the Sudanese President is available via this link here. (click here)

Khmer Rouge/Cambodia

- First Khmer Rouge trial opens, Aljazeera.net, 31 March 2009.

The first trial against a member of the Khmer Rouge regime that killed an estimated 1.7 million people in Cambodia in the 1970s, has got under way. Five judges in the UN-backed tribunal began hearing the case against Kaing Guek Eav, better known as Duch, in the capital Phnom Penh on Monday (30 March 2009).

- Wider Khmer Rouge trial 'risks war', Aljazeera.net, 1 April 2009.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen has rejected calls to put more former Khmer Rouge officials on trial, saying efforts to widen the scope of the United Nations-backed tribunal could plunge the country back into civil war.

For more updates on the ongoing Khmer Rouge Trial visit the Portal via this link. (click here)

Weekly video updates on the trial proceedings can now be viewed online at. (click here)

Sri Lanka

- Conflict Risk Alert: Sri Lanka, ICG Report, 9 March 2009.

The humanitarian crisis in Sri Lanka's northern Wanni region is rapidly becoming a catastrophe. An estimated 150,000 civilians are trapped in an ever shrinking space, forcibly held back by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and exposed to indiscriminate attacks by the Sri Lankan military. Thousands have already been killed and many more wounded, and tens of thousands are facing death or injury due to fighting and lack of food, water and medicine. International leaders must act now.

Papers & Reports

Global Index: Failed States, Peace and Democracy

- The Failed States Index 2008, Foreign Policy.

In its fourth annual Failed State Index, Foreign Policy and The Fund for Peace rank countries where state collapse may just be one disaster away. It uses twelve indicators of state vulnerability - four social, two economic and six political. Click here for a list of the 60 most vulnerable states of 2008.

- Global Peace Index Rankings 2008, Vision of Humanity/Institute for Economics and Peace.

The Global Peace Index (GPI) is a ground-breaking milestone in the study of peace. It is the first time that an Index has been created that ranks the nations of the world by their peacefulness and identifies some of the drivers of that peace. The 2008 GPI, formulated a year after the first GPI of 2007, ranked 140 nations according to their relative states of peace. The index is composed of 24 qualitative and quantitative indicators which combine internal and external factors ranging from a nation's level of military expenditure to its relations with neighboring countries and the level of respect for human rights.

- Democracy Index 2008, The Economist.

The Economist examined the state of democracy in 167 countries and attempted to quantify this with an Economist Intelligence Unit Index of Democracy which focused on five general categories; electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, functioning of government, political participation and political culture.

Responsibility to Protect

- The Responsibility to Protect and the Protection of Civilians: Asia-Pacific in the UN Security Council. Update No. 1. 10 February 2009.

The purpose of this update brief is to analyze the positions taken by Asia-Pacific governments at the most recent Security Council meeting on the protection of civilians and to examine their implications. The most recent meeting was dominated by the situation in the Middle East and reported attacks on the civilian population in Gaza and by the presentation of a new aide-memoire to guide protection practice and the Council's decision-making.

In this context, Asia-Pacific governments chose to not specifically consider the R2P, though China and Viet Nam restated their support for the primacy of the State's responsibility to protect its own population. However, governments identified several avenues for enhancing the Security Council's capacity to protect civilians in armed conflicts.

- Global Consultancy Roundtables on the Responsibility to Protect: Civil Society Perspectives and Recommendation for Actions, Responsibility to Protect Engaging the Civil Society (R2PCS), February 2008-August 2008 Interim Report.

To facilitate building a global coalition with representation from both Northern and Southern NGOs, R2PCS first organized a series of consultative roundtables with NGOs worldwide. The goals of the roundtables were to:

1. increase understanding of R2P and how it applies to conflicts in the region.
2. explore how to strengthen regional and international mechanisms to support R2P.
3. forge partnerships with NGOs who are interested in joining in a core group in building an NGO coalition.

This interim report details the conclusions of the seven global consultative roundtables held from February until July 2008, including common challenges in actualizing R2P, common themes from all roundtables, and participant-suggested strategies and activities to advance R2P.

- Causes of Internal Conflict

In Less Developed Countries Politics and Not Mineral Endowments is at the Root of Violent Conflict Human Security Report project, Human Security Getaway, 25 March 2009.

This report argues that the existence of a link between mineral wealth and conflict has little explanatory worth for the actual onset of the event. In looking at the cases of Angola, Indonesia and Zaire it can be clearly demonstrated that though minerals are of significance they are only so in the context that political choices led to.

The discussion begins with an evaluation of the 'resource curse' argument looking closely at its empirical grounding and two main explanatory models: rent seeking and the rentier state. The robustness of this analysis is then questioned and the relationship of mineral resources and politics to the root of violent conflict is assessed through the use of detailed case studies.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

News & Commentaries

- Group of young Vietnamese women and children rescued, 21 April 2009, reported in *Somaly Mam Foundation*
- Comprehensive regional response launched to combat trafficking in West Africa, 23 April 2009, *UNOHDC*
- UN Commission assesses growing threat of organized crime to security, 16 April 2009, *UNODC*
- United Nations and Inter-Parliamentary Union join forces to combat trafficking in persons, 8 April 2009
- Two human traffickers arrested in Thailand, 5 April 2009, *Mizzima News*
- Human Trafficking on the rise in Cambodia, 23 March 2009, *VOANews.com*

Papers and Reports

- Rights to Survival and Mobility: An anti-trafficking activists' agenda, National Asia Pacific American Womens' Agenda.

This action agenda is built on the rich and extensive history of anti-trafficking community organizing and policy advocacy within the Asian and Pacific Islander (API) women's community. Over many years, API activists and advocates in Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, Seattle, Washington, D.C. and other parts of the country have met, networked, shared resources and deliberated on the unique impact and struggles of API trafficking survivors. In addition, API advocates here in the U.S. have been informed by the decades-long work of their API sisters in Asia and the Pacific Islands.

In 2005, following conversations with API leaders in the anti-trafficking movement, NAPAWF convened API advocates in Seattle, WA, at the University of Washington Women's Center to identify the specific needs and concerns of API survivors of human trafficking. Following the convening, NAPAWF developed a set of guiding principles for its anti-trafficking advocacy. In addition, NAPAWF examined how it could elevate an API women's and girls' perspective within anti-trafficking advocacy and human rights networks. Finally, many of NAPAWF's members and chapters—who had already conducted education forums and held lobby days, mini-conferences and campus campaigns on the trafficking of API women and girls—urged the organization to take on this issue. As a result, NAPAWF responded to the pressing need to develop an action agenda tailored to API women and girls and one that would unify our sisters' voices across the country.

- New Study on Human Trafficking for Labour Exploitation in Logging and Gold Mining Sectors, International Organisation for Migration.

Peru - A new study conducted by IOM and the Catholic University of Peru sheds new light on human trafficking for labour exploitation in illegal logging and gold mining in the Madre de Dios region of the country.

Peru is a country of origin, transit and destination for human trafficking with a predominance of internal trafficking of women for sexual exploitation. However, children and men are often trafficked to work in the mining, logging and agricultural industries.

The Madre de Dios region in southeastern Peru bordering Brazil and Bolivia is a sparsely populated and isolated area with vast natural resources, including precious woods and gold. In the past five years the area has received more than 20,000 internal migrants, leading researchers to believe that attractive job offers are leading poor Peruvians from neighbouring regions to fall prey to human traffickers.

The study confirmed that 90 per cent of the victims are men from the high-Andean region who are trafficked to work in illegal logging activities and the informal gold mining sector. Twenty per cent of the males trafficked are boys between 12 and 14 years old.

- Recommendations on identification and referral to services of victims of trafficking in human beings, European Union Commission on Human Trafficking.

The recommendations call for the establishment of a national mechanism aimed at early identification and assistance to victims, based on close cooperation between governments and civil society organisations. The Council conclusions adopted by the JHA Council on 8-9 November 2007 take note of the Recommendations.

Part I covers the latest developments which occurred within the recent years.

Part II gives a general view of the accomplishments and the acquis at European level of the matter concerned. Click here for the website and both reports.

About Us

The Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies is a research centre of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

Please visit the Centre's website at www.rsis.edu.sg/nts/home.html, for more information or email us at NTS_Centre@ntu.edu.sg.
