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- NTS VIEWPOINT
- CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AND NATURAL DISASTERS
- ENERGY AND HUMAN SECURITY
- FOOD SECURITY
- HEALTH SECURITY
- INTERNAL AND CROSS-BORDER CONFLICT
- TRANSNATIONAL CRIME
- WATER SECURITY

Note: Please click on the respective titles or headers for the full report.

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NTS VIEWPOINT

Can Indonesia advance the peace process in Mindanao?

By Margareth Sembiring

In light of the recent violence that shook Zamboanga city in Mindanao in the southern Philippines, Indonesia's offer to act as a peace broker between Manila and the Misuari-led Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) deserves some attention. What can Indonesia contribute to the peace process in Mindanao?

Indonesia certainly has the credentials. Operating under the peace framework of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), it facilitated peace negotiations between the Philippine government and the MNLF in the 1990s. After almost four years of talks, a peace agreement was reached in 1996. Indonesia had also deployed military observers to the region between 1994 and 2002. Also, its de-facto leadership in ASEAN and its current chairmanship of the OIC Peace Committee for Southern Philippines lend it further credibility.

However, brokering peace in Mindanao will not be easy. The 1996 agreement is neither the first nor the only peace accord ever attempted. In fact, various administrations have tried to make peace deals with rebel groups in the area. In 1976, the government and the MNLF signed the Tripoli Agreement, with the OIC playing a mediating role. Another agreement was reached in 1987 on the creation of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). In 2001, Malaysia and Libya played major roles in negotiations that resulted in a unity agreement between the MNLF and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), another rebel group. In 2008, the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain between the Philippine government and the MILF gained some traction but was ultimately ruled unconstitutional by the Philippine Supreme Court.

All of these peace accords subsequently failed for various reasons. The 1996 agreement, for example, frayed due to growing dissatisfaction over Nur Misuari's bad management of the ARMM and a lack of a sense of ownership by tribal communities and non-Muslims who had been largely left out of the negotiation process. As peace has generally been elusive, the signing of the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro between the Aquino administration and the MILF in October 2012 was viewed with notable trepidation. The recent standoff in Zamboanga was therefore not completely unexpected.

Conflicts in Mindanao also involve a number of rebel groups. The MNLF was dominant in the early days, but its influence dwindled following a leadership rift that resulted in the establishment of the MILF in 1978 and the Abu Sayyaf in 1991. The attack in Zamboanga was launched by another breakaway faction of the MNLF, led by its very own founder Nur Misuari.

The proliferation of rebel groups undoubtedly poses a hurdle to a peace settlement. Regardless of attempts at inclusive approaches, the presence of multiple groups with different interests increases the probability of dissatisfaction and disagreements. The sustainability of peace agreements is therefore precarious, as disgruntled groups can easily jeopardise the whole effort by resorting to violence.

Against this backdrop, Indonesia's reliance on its political leverage in ASEAN and the OIC must be buttressed with an excellent understanding of the real dynamics between the different rebel groups. Encouraging other states and private actors to engage with these groups may enhance the capacity to fully understand the sources of their grievances.

At its core, it is imperative for mediators to be able to effectively influence rebel groups to want to compromise on their demands and truly desire sustained peace. This would be key to Indonesia's success in initiating fresh peace talks in Mindanao.

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Additional Info:

- Clapano, Jose Rosel, 'Gov't-MILF talks to resume on July', *The Philippine Star*, 22 June 2013.
- Saragih, Bagus B.T., 'RI "ready" to broker another peace talks between Manila and MNLF', *The Jakarta Post*, 17 September 2013.
- Bertrand, Jacques, 2000, 'Peace and conflict in the southern Philippines: Why the 1996 peace agreement is fragile', *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 1, pp. 37–54.
- Hicken, Allen, 2009, 'The Philippines in 2008: Peace-building, war-fighting, and crisis management', *Asian Survey*, Vol. 49, No. 1, 193–9.
- International Crisis Group (ICG), 2012, 'The Philippines: Breakthrough in Mindanao', *Asia Report*, No. 240.
- Wale, Sebellon M., 1998, 'The Philippine experience in conflict management and peace building', *Community Development Journal*, Vol. 33, No. 2, pp. 170–3.

[^ To the top](#)

CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AND NATURAL DISASTERS



News & Commentaries

- Miers, Henrietta, 'Focus on gender: Climate-violence link needs probing', *SciDev.Net*, 4 September 2013.
- 'Planning and financing low-carbon, livable cities', *World Bank*, 25 September 2013.
- Lobello, Carmel, 'China's newest environmental disaster', *The Week*, 26 September 2013.
- Dodman, David, 'Climate resilient cities: A role for the media', *International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)*, 27 September 2013.
- Mann, Michael, 'The new IPCC climate change report makes deniers overheat', *Guardian*, 28 September 2013.
- 'Typhoon Wutip: Floods in Thailand kill 23, China hunts for 58 missing fishermen', *The Weather Channel*, 1 October 2013.
- Terpstra, Pieter, 'The difficulty of defining adaptation finance', *WRI Insights*, 3 October 2013.
- Holloway, Heron, 'Renewed call to end poverty housing at close of Asia-Pacific Housing Forum', *Thomson Reuters Foundation*, 4 October 2013.
- 'Floods add misery after Philippine rebel siege', *Channel NewsAsia*, 5 October 2013.

Selected Publications

- Landsberg, Florence, Jo Treweek, M. Mercedes Stickler et al., 2013, *Weaving ecosystem services into impact assessment: A step-by-step method, Abbreviated version 1.0*, Washington, DC: World Resources Institute.

This report suggests ways to insert ecosystems as a factor in existing modes of environmental and social impact assessments. This is an important effort as ecosystem services are to a large extent still unaccounted for in impact assessments, even while ecosystem services may have significant implications for a project, both in the immediate and the long term.

- Conservation International, 2013, 'REDD+ market: Sending out an SOS', Arlington, VA.

This brief highlights how an excess supply of Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) credits can pose several challenges to the effectiveness of the REDD+ scheme, and that this will have implications for activities that are geared towards bringing about multiple social and environmental benefits.

- Meltzer, Joshua, 2013, 'The Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement, The environment and climate change', *Brookings*.

This book chapter examines the complex links between trade and the environment with a focus on the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP), a free trade agreement that incorporates socioeconomic and environmental concerns, areas conventionally ignored in trade negotiations.

Events & Announcements

- 'Job: Assistant Professor, Climate Science and Global Environmental Change, Northern Arizona University', Position open until filled.
- 'UN Climate Change Conference (COP19/CMP9)', 11–22 November 2013, Warsaw, Poland.

ENERGY AND HUMAN SECURITY



News & Commentaries

- Siahaan, Tito Summa, 'No subsidy shortcuts on path to nation's energy security, BP chief economist says', *Jakarta Globe*, 4 September 2013.
- Crooks, Ed and Geoff Dyer, 'Energy security: Strength in reserve', *Financial Times*, 5 September 2013.
- Walsh, Bryan, 'America's oil boom won't make it energy-independent from Middle East madness', *Time*, 5 September 2013.
- Collins, Gabe, 'Singapore emerges as LNG trading hub', *Diplomat*, 17 September 2013.
- 'Thailand raises its energy security', *Bernama*, 17 September 2013.
- See, Sharon, 'Energy efficiency a critical concern for S'pore: Vivian Balakrishnan', *Channel NewsAsia*, 18 September 2013.
- Siahaan, Tito Summa, 'Indonesia to run world's biggest gas deficit by 2018', *Jakarta Globe*, 19 September 2013.
- Walsh, Bryan, 'It's not just Obama's carbon rules that are killing coal. It's cheap gas', *Time*, 20 September 2013.
- Desker, Barry, 'Creating some certainty amid an evolving Asean energy landscape', *Jakarta Globe*, 23 September 2013.
- Harfenist, Ethan, 'Greenpeace report calls for renewed vigor in Asean's renewable energy drive', *Jakarta Globe*, 24 September 2013.

Selected Publications

- UN Development Programme (UNDP), 2013, *Achieving sustainable energy for all in the Asia-Pacific*, Bangkok: Asia-Pacific Regional Centre.

Although many countries in the Asia-Pacific have significantly improved electricity coverage, alternatives such as off-grid microhydro systems, solar home systems, and micro-grids can be further utilised to reduce energy poverty. There are however various barriers – technical, economic and financial, political and institutional, social and cultural – that would have to be overcome. To address these, the report recommends engaging development partners to help improve energy access for the poor, adopting bottom-up approaches and creating a knowledge hub in the Asia-Pacific.

- Greenpeace International and Global Wind Energy Council, 2013, *Energy [r]evolution: A sustainable ASEAN energy outlook*, Greenpeace International and European Renewable Energy Council (EREC).

This publication suggests several principles for renewable-energy development in Southeast Asia, including: enhancing energy efficiency and equity, developing decentralised energy systems and large-scale renewables-generated electricity, optimising power grids to support renewables, and developing 'smart' energy grids using information and communications technology.

Events & Announcements

- '3rd International Conference on Power and Energy Systems', 23–24 November 2013, Bangkok, Thailand.
- 'Creative Innovation 2013 Asia Pacific', 27–29 November 2013, Melbourne, Australia.

FOOD SECURITY



News & Commentaries

- Wynne, Brian and Georgina Catacora-Vargas, 'Farming and knowledge monocultures are misconceived', *SciDev.Net*, 3 September 2013.
- Horan, Deborah, 'Understanding food security and land grabs', *Devex*, 5 September 2013.
- 'Obesity, malnutrition pose twin threats to Asia-Pacific's healthy food future', *Asian Development Bank (ADB)*, 5 September 2013.
- Larano, Cris, 'Scientists hope new rice will help children', *The Wall Street Journal*, 9 September 2013.
- 'Populism has no place in agricultural policy', *Bangkok Post*, 10 September 2013.
- 'Food waste harms climate, water, land and biodiversity – New FAO report', *Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO)*, 11 September 2013.
- 'Henmania', *The Economist*, 14 September 2013.
- Piotrowski, Jan, 'Research funding and skills key to food for post-2015', *SciDev.Net*, 19 September 2013.
- Dobrovolny, Michelle, 'World agribusiness R&D controlled by "cosy cartel"', *SciDev.Net*, 21 September 2013.

- Seervai, Shanoor, 'GM crops won't solve India's food crisis', *The Wall Street Journal*, 22 September 2013.
- 'Climate resilient rice: More crops per drop', *Asian Development Bank (ADB)*, 25 September 2013.
- 'Farmers urge rice-pledging scheme continue', *Bangkok Post*, 26 September 2013.

Selected Publications

- Galtier, Franck, 2013, 'Managing food price instability: Critical assessment of the dominant doctrine', *Global Food Security*, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 72–81.

This paper suggests that conventional thinking (the 'dominant doctrine') on managing price instability is flawed. A review of the literature shows that the doctrine underestimates: (1) the magnitude of the price instability generated by grain markets; (2) the degree to which farmers and consumers in developing countries are exposed to this instability; and (3) the resulting effects on welfare. Given this, there is a need to re-examine the efficacy of current approaches, strategies and instruments used to address price instability.

- Asian Development Bank (ADB), 2013, *Food security in Asia and the Pacific*, Manila.

This report highlights the need to reduce poverty and ensure the sustainability of global food systems. It analyses the relationship between poverty, nutrition and access to food; and examines competing demands on available resources and ways to boost productivity amid changing demand and supply. It then provides regional- and national-level policy recommendations for addressing challenges related to food security.

- UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), 2013, *Trade and Environment Review 2013 – Wake up before it is too late: Make agriculture truly sustainable now for food security in a changing climate*, Geneva.

According to this report, simply tweaking the existing agricultural system will not be enough to ensure food security. What is called for is a better understanding of the multi-functionality of agriculture, its pivotal importance for pro-poor rural development and the significant role it can play in dealing with resource scarcities and in mitigating and adapting to climate change.

Events & Announcements

- '7th International Rice Genetics Symposium', 5–8 November 2013, Manila, Philippines.
- '2nd International Conference on Nutrition', 19–21 November 2013, Rome, Italy.

[^ To the top](#)

HEALTH SECURITY

News & Commentaries

- 'Massive groundwater pumping in Asia may poison millions, study', *Asian Scientist*, 12 September 2013.
- 'Bird flu viruses could re-emerge in upcoming flu season', *Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO)*, 16 September 2013.
- Steenhuisen, Julie, 'Drug-resistant "superbugs" deemed urgent threats – US report', *Thomson Reuters Foundation*, 16 September 2013.
- James, John, 'Analysis: Sanitizing the truth – When WASH fails', *IRIN*, 17 September 2013.
- Cooley, Tracy, 'Exploring new solutions for neglected diseases in developing countries', *BIOtechNOW*, 18 September 2013.
- Kelland, Kate, 'Gene sequences of deadly Saudi virus show complex transmission', *Thomson Reuters Foundation*, 19 September 2013.
- 'WHO calls for research and development proposals for medicines, diagnostics and health technologies', *World Health Organization (WHO) Western Pacific Region*, 24 September 2013.
- 'Experts: Be alert of H7N9 amid flu seasons', *AsiaOne*, 26 September 2013.
- Roos, Robert, 'Saudis report more MERS-CoV cases; serologic study draws blank', *Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy*, 30 September 2013.
- 'RI to ratify tobacco control convention', *The Jakarta Post*, 1 October 2013.



Selected Publications

- International Organization for Migration (IOM), World Health Organization (WHO) and UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), 2013, *International migration, health and human rights*, Geneva: IOM.

This report argues that ensuring the protection of migrant rights is advantageous for public health. In line with this, it examines both the impact of the process of migrating on the health of migrants and the human rights instruments that provide protection for migrants irrespective of their legal status. The report goes on to explore the possibilities of harmonising the governance of migration with human rights standards.

- Scott, James and Sophie Harman, 2013, 'Beyond TRIPS: Why the WTO's Doha Round is unhealthy', *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 8, pp. 1361–76.

This article argues that the Doha Development Agenda is not neutral with regard to the state's capacity to provide better health outcomes or the individual's capacity to afford improvements in healthcare. It further argues the need for the global health community to be involved in trade negotiations to ensure that the fiscal weakness of developing countries is not exploited in bilateral arenas.

Events & Announcements

- 'World Congress on Integrated Care', 7–9 November 2013, Singapore.
- '4th Asia Pacific Conference on Public Health', 21–22 November 2013, Nha Trang, Vietnam.

[^ To the top](#)

INTERNAL AND CROSS-BORDER CONFLICT

News & Commentaries

- Whaley, Floyd, 'New clash in the Philippines raises fears of a wider threat', *The New York Times*, 12 September 2013.
- Prak, Chan Thul, 'Cambodian opposition rallies for second day after protest death', *Reuters*, 16 September 2013.
- Barry, Ellen, 'Bangladesh orders death for Islamist in killings', *The New York Times*, 17 September 2013.
- 'Mindanao crisis deepens as displacement tops 100,000', *IRIN*, 18 September 2013.
- Tiwary, Deeptiman, 'Riots threaten to change Muzaffarnagar's land-holding pattern', *The Times of India*, 19 September 2013.
- 'Sri Lanka holds historic vote in Tamil-majority north', *BBC*, 21 September 2013.
- Boone, Jon, 'Pakistan church bomb: Christians mourn 85 killed in Peshawar suicide attack', *Guardian*, 24 September 2013.
- Shadbolt, Peter, 'Australia, Indonesia united on asylum seekers as Abbott travels to Jakarta', *CNN*, 1 October 2013.
- 'Burma's Rakhine clashes kill five as Thein Sein visits', *BBC*, 3 October 2013.



Selected Publications

- Freire, Maria Raquel and Paula Duarte Lopes, 2013, 'Peacebuilding in Timor-Leste: Finding a way between external intervention and local dynamics', *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 20, No. 2, pp. 204–18.

This article explores how interactions between the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and local actors have prompted readjustments in peacebuilding, so as to better adapt to local conditions and thus build sustainable peace.

- *Detention, alternatives to detention and deportation*, 2013, An issue of *Forced Migration Review*, No. 44.

This issue focuses on the controversies over immigration detention across the world. Articles in this issue examine the realities and human rights conditions in detention centres in various countries and they suggest alternative approaches that could help improve the situation.

Events & Announcements

- 'Seminar: The Responsibility to Protect and the Protection of Conflict Induced Internally Displaced Persons: Gender and Global Norms', 30 October 2013, Brisbane, Australia.
- 'Regional Statelessness Course: South East Asia Focus', 4–8 November 2013, Bangkok, Thailand.
- 'The Asia-Pacific Peace Research Association (APPRA) Conference', 12–14 November 2013, Bangkok, Thailand.

[^ To the top](#)

TRANSNATIONAL CRIME

News & Commentaries

- Nossiter, Adam, 'As oil thieves bleed Nigeria, report says, officials profit', *The New York Times*, 19 September 2013.
- 'Indonesia among destinations for stolen Nigerian oil: Report', *Jakarta Globe*, 20 September 2013.
- Fedotov, Yury and John E. Scanlon, 'Wildlife crime ranks among trafficking in drugs, arms and humans', *Guardian*, 26 September 2013.
- Lim, Joyce, '1 in 4 cigarettes in Singapore illegal', *AsiaOne*, 29 September 2013.
- Marshall, Andrew R.C. and Min Zayar Oo, 'Special report: Myanmar old guard clings to \$8 billion jade empire', *Reuters*, 29 September 2013.
- Cawley, Marguerite, 'Mexico is world leader in child pornography: Officials', *Insight Crime*, 30 September 2013.
- 'People-smugglers preying on Syria misery', *The Australian*, 30 September 2013.
- 'Gangs "use budget airlines for crime sprees"', *Sky News*, 2 October 2013.



Selected Publications

- Heintz, Caitriona H., 2013, 'Regional cyber security: Moving towards a resilient ASEAN cyber security regime', RSIS Working Paper No. 263, Singapore: S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS).

This paper outlines cooperation efforts at the regional level in ASEAN to counter serious cross-border cyber threats, and considers whether more might be done to develop a comprehensive approach to cybersecurity in the region. It concludes with several recommendations to create a resilient regional cybersecurity regime.

- Symantec, 2013, *2013 Norton Report*, Mountain View, CA.

According to this survey, the total global cost of cybercrimes against consumers in 2013 amounted to USD113 billion. The average cost per victim was USD298, a 50 per cent increase from 2012. The cost was highest, USD38 billion, for the US, followed by China with USD37 billion. The report also notes that there are 378 million victims each year, with those from Russia, China and South Africa among the most affected.

- Small Arms Survey, 2013, *Small Arms Survey 2013: Everyday dangers*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

This report focuses on small arms and armed violence outside war zones, with chapters on organised crime and gang violence, the use of firearms in intimate partner violence, and violent land disputes. It also relays new findings on illicit weapons recovered in Mexico and the Philippines, the prices of arms and ammunition in illicit markets in Lebanon, Pakistan and Somalia, and the impacts of improvised explosive devices on civilians worldwide.

Events & Announcements

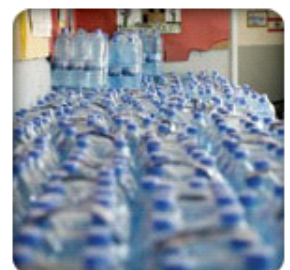
- 'Mapping the Southern Thailand Conflict', 28 March 2014, Bangkok, Thailand.
- '20th International Symposium on Society and Resource Management', 8–13 June 2014, Hannover, Germany.

[^ To the top](#)

WATER SECURITY

News & Commentaries

- Kohli, Kanchi, 'The struggle over riverbed mining in India', *International Rivers*, 26 August 2013.
- Yao, Joanne, 'Iraq's first national park: A story of destruction and restoration in the Mesopotamian marshlands', *Circle of Blue*, 4 September 2013.
- 'Kenya aquifers discovered in dry Turkana region', *BBC*, 11 September 2013.
- Schneider, Keith, 'China tests new strategy to curb coal demand, reduce air pollution, and conserve water', *Circle of Blue*, 13 September 2013.
- Chia, Alice, 'Tuaspring opens – Latest milestone in Singapore's water journey', *Channel NewsAsia*, 18 September 2013.
- 'Johor to review price of raw water to Singapore', *AsiaOne*, 26 September 2013.
- 'Super dam: Egyptian concern for Nile water security spurs cooperation over Ethiopia's new dam', *Circle of Blue*, 1 October 2013.
- Trandem, Ame, 'PR: Fish plunder at stake, Laos announces plans to build Don Sahong Dam', *International Rivers*, 2 October 2013.



Selected Publications

- EU Water Initiative Working Group, 2013, *Mapping of financial support to transboundary water cooperation in Africa*.

Resource flows to support management of transboundary waters in Africa has increased since 2007. However, they still represent less than 1 per cent of Official Development Assistance spending in 2011. This report therefore recommends that the donor community work together with African basin organisations, so that there can be a more coherent, concerted and equitable approach to financing the management of shared water, one that complements initiatives already funded by basin member states.

- Karimov, Akmal, Vladimir Smakhtin, Aslon Mavlonov et al., 2013, *Managed aquifer recharge: The solution for water shortages in the Fergana Valley*, IWMI Research Report No. 151, Colombo: International Water Management Institute (IWMI).

This report examines the possibility of additional subsurface storage of water in a key part of the Syrdarya river basin, the Fergana Valley. The valley experiences water shortage in the summer months, and excess water in winter. Given this situation, the report suggests that managed aquifer recharge (MAR) could be helpful in meeting water demand.

Events & Announcements

- 'Call for Papers: Water-Food Security in Cambodia and the Vietnam Delta', Deadline: 15 November 2013.
- 'Water-Food Security in Cambodia and the Vietnam Delta', 2–3 December 2013, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and 5–6 December 2013, Can Tho, Vietnam.
- 'International Conference on Intelligent Agriculture', 13–14 February 2014, Hong Kong SAR.

[^ To the top](#)

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The Centre for NTS Studies, based in the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), was inaugurated by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretary-General Dr Surin Pitsuwan in May 2008. The Centre maintains research in the fields of Climate Change, Food Security, Energy Security, Health Security, as well as Internal and Cross Border Conflict. It produces policy-relevant analyses aimed at furthering awareness and building capacity to address NTS issues and challenges in the Asia Pacific region and beyond. The Centre also provides a platform for scholars and policymakers within and outside Asia to discuss and analyse NTS issues in the region.

The Centre is the Coordinator of the ASEAN-Canada Research Partnership (2012–2015) supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada. It also serves as the Secretariat of the initiative.

In 2009, the Centre was chosen by the MacArthur Foundation as a lead institution for its three-year Asia Security Initiative (2009–2012), to develop policy research capacity and recommend policies on the critical security challenges facing the Asia-Pacific. It is also a founding member and the Secretariat for the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies in Asia (NTS-Asia).

More information on the Centre can be found at www.rsis.edu.sg/nts.