



TRILATERAL STRATEGIC DEFENSE CAPABILITY PLANNING SYMPOSIUM

By Dr. Kent Hughes Butts and Lieutenant Colonel Curtis Turner

The Republic of the Philippines (RP) has undertaken a bold initiative to reform its national security architecture in order to more effectively address regional terrorist and other transnational threats. This strategic planning initiative has developed the *Emerging Security Environment to 2022* document, a *National Military Strategy*, a *National Internal Security Plan*, and a *Multi-Year Defense Capability Planning System (MYDCaPS)*. The initiative has its roots in a two-year long series of trilateral, Republic of the Philippines, Australia and United States (U.S.) Senior Leader Strategic Planning Symposia. The Australian Embassy-Manila hosted the latest event, the *Trilateral Strategic Defense Capability Planning Symposium*, from 13-15 July 2004.

The second term of Philippine President Arroyo began with a renewed emphasis on regional security threats. The Department of National Defense signaled its support shortly after the inauguration by conducting the National Security-focused, Trilateral Senior Leader Symposium. This symposium reviewed the threats to regional security and the processes to develop the capabilities necessary to counter those threats. The symposium was the fifth in a series that began as a bilateral Republic of the Philippines-United States endeavor to create a strategic culture in the RP Department of National Defense (DND) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), and to enhance its strategic partnership with the United States. As a trilateral endeavor it has provided a forum for the “best practices” of the three countries in: strategic planning for national security; for the joint strategic planning process; for planning, programming and budgeting; for acquisition; and for human resource management.

The countries were represented by: the Republic of the Philippines Department of National Defense, Armed Forces of the Philippines, and the National Defense College of the Philippines; the Australian Ministry of Defence and the Australian Defence College; and the U. S. Army Pacific (USARPAC) and the US Army War College, Center for Strategic Leadership. The delegates reviewed the Emerging Threats and MYDCaPS documents and developed further recommendations for strengthening the Philippine National Security process and leveraging regional cooperation against the terrorist threat.



Australian Embassy-Manila Charge d'Affaires, Mr. Miles Armitage, delivers Keynote Address

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The Security Environment

Asia is a dynamic region in which multiple variables directly affect the security environment. Demographic trends are creating significant pressures. Over half of the world's 6 billion (2000 census) population lives in Asia. Fifty percent of the world's annual population growth of 77 million people occurs in six countries. Five of the six are Asian: India, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Indonesia. The burgeoning population growth challenges governments to provide jobs, create social infrastructure, and manage the irrepressible forces of urbanization. If governments fail, then destabilizing cross-border migration is quite possible.

Asia's growing economies and populations are driving the consumption of natural resources. Petroleum, strategic minerals, natural gas, water, lumber, and fisheries are but a few of the natural resources that will be increasingly stressed by the region's efforts to provide jobs for their people. China has recently become a net grain importer and is increasingly forced to satisfy its petroleum demand on the international market. Petroleum demand in Asia is growing at only one percentage point less than the average annual gross domestic product and leads all areas of the globe in demand increase. Most of this petroleum is coming from the politically unstable Middle East and passing through critical choke points, such as the Straits of Malacca, that are plagued by piracy and vulnerable to terrorist attacks. China's overheated economy is already consuming vast amounts of resources and driving up the prices of a wide variety of commodities. Moreover, the combination of growing affluence and industrial production is creating an unhealthy environment; thirteen of the fifteen cities with the worst air quality in the world are in Asia.

Infectious diseases are also regional threats with serious political implications. The recent SARS epidemic and the ongoing Avian flu epidemic have raised infectious diseases to a new level of concern for national security strategists. In the last three decades, at least thirty previously unknown diseases have emerged to challenge the medical community. Globalization makes the spread of such diseases increasingly likely and creates a biological vector for terrorist threats. In addition, HIV/AIDS continues to grow stronger with five million new infections in 2003 alone. South Asia and Southeast Asia lead the world in the growth of new AIDS cases with a sharp increase in HIV infections in Vietnam, Indonesia, and China. Asia should overtake Africa in the number of AIDS cases by 2010.

Territorial disputes and flash points abound within the region. The list of conflicts that could erupt into military operations include the Mainland China-Taiwan conflict, the Spratley Islands dispute, the India and Pakistan conflict over Kashmir, as well as the Japan-China conflict over the Senkaku Islands, the Japan and South Korea dispute over the Liancourt Rocks, and the Russia-Japan conflict over the Northern Territories. These and other international conflicts will continue to challenge security planners into the foreseeable future and will require intense management at a time when domestic pressures are growing.

Perhaps the most significant security threat is the growth of transnational terrorist groups. Both Al-Qaida and Lashkar e-Tayyiba have focused on Southeast Asia as a safe, operational training and planning base, and area for recruitment. Al-Qaida has a strong ally in Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), the Indonesian transnational terrorist



Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategic Assessment and International Policy, Republic of the Philippines, Hon. Alejandro P. Melchor III discusses Emerging Security Environment

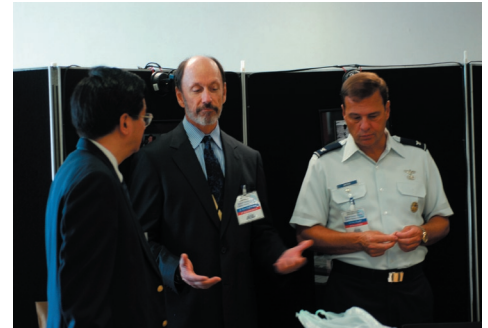
organization that grew out of the Darul Islam separatist movement of the 1950s and 1960s. JI was based in Malaysia in the 1980s and developed the concept of a Southeast Asian Muslim state that included parts of Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and the southern Philippines. JI sent operatives to Afghanistan and the Philippines for training and has a close association with Al-Qaida. Although much of the Muslim population of the region rejects the concept of a larger Muslim state, JI remains a formidable extremist Muslim organization and a continued threat to regional stability.

Capability to Respond

In order to respond to these regional security threats, the Philippine Department of National Defense has developed a multiyear security and defense capability planning system. The purpose of this system is to institutionalize processes in order to formulate strategic, long-term, defense capability development plans, and medium-term capability programs.

It will provide the long-term capability to develop planning, will establish policy baselines to develop broad strategic defense and security capability intentions, and recommend broad strategic defense and security capability development options with which to prepare an eighteen year defense capability development plan. In the mid-term, this system will promote cost effectiveness and efficiency in utilizing defense resources and clarify the logic of acquisition proposals in terms of capabilities and costs in order to gain key stakeholders support for budget requirements.

This system would be based on a newly proposed Philippine National Security Architecture that establishes national security baselines, assesses the strategic environment, evaluates the national security situation, and determines national security policy framework. With a clear framework of the threat and the government's national security objectives, this system will allow the integration of all types of defense resources, personnel, equipment, facilities, and training into a planning process allowing the DND to achieve a specified capability.



Assistant Secretary Hon. Alejandro P. Melchor III, Dr. Kent Butts, and Colonel Gary Snyder discusses National Security Strategy development



Undersecretary for Policy, Plans and Special Concerns Department of National Defense, Hon Antonio C. Santos, JR delivers closing remarks

After the best practices portion of the symposium, three syndicates, composed of Philippine DND, AFP, NDC, and the interagency community, met to discuss the capability planning system and the evaluation of the emerging security environment. In addition, they developed recommendations for an evolved national security architecture that would integrate the existing security documents and provide a formal basis for the development of national security policy.

At the end of the symposium the representatives from Australia, the United States and the syndicate leaders briefed the results of the symposium to Undersecretary of Defense Gacis and Undersecretary of Defense Santos. Both Undersecretary Gacis and Santos commended the work from the symposium and requested a follow-on symposium to be held in the next six months to continue an examination of the national security framework and share best practices, and concepts for addressing the security issues of the region.

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