

PARTNERSHIP FOR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND SECURITY

March 29, 1999

PARTNERSHIP LAUNCHES GLOBAL CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS PROGRAM WITH MARCH 24-26, 1999 ASIA REGIONAL SEMINAR

PRELIMINARY REPORT

The newly formed Partnership for Democratic Governance and Security, a multinational, nongovernmental initiative to enhance civilian capacity to strengthen democratic governance in the security field, launched its global civil-military program with a regional seminar in the Philippines from March 24 to 26, 1999. Hosted by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and the Manila-based Institute for Strategic and Development Studies (ISDS), the seminar brought together more than 20 experts in the field of civil-military relations from Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and the United States to discuss the relationship between civilian institutions and the military in these countries.

In many cases, transitions to democratic rule are complicated by a legacy of military influence in domestic political affairs which has left newly elected leaders with neither the expertise nor the institutional mechanisms necessary to ensure civilian control of the armed forces. Some promising new democracies have had their political development slowed or reversed by military intervention. As new democracies move beyond landmark first or second elections, issues such as civil-military relations require attention to ensure continued democratic advances. Recognizing the unique demands required to address civil-military matters, NDI and four leading international NGOs formed the Partnership for Democratic Governance and Security (PDGS) in 1998 to serve as a source of expertise and information on developing effective democratic, civilian control of the military (*see addendum for Partner information*). The Partnership is funded through a grant from USAID.

The Asia seminar was jointly led by Major General William L. Nash (U.S. Army, Retired), Director of NDI's Civil-Military Programs, and Dr. Carolina Hernandez, President of ISDS. Regional participants included active and retired members of various armed forces and governments, scholars, and leaders of nongovernmental organizations. Hoping to learn lessons to help her own nation's immediate civil-military difficulties, also attending was the Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Defense from Lesotho, a small African nation whose nascent democracy has been regularly threatened by military coups.

The noted expert on Asian political-military affairs, Dr. Harold Crouch, of the Australian National University, opened with a keynote address on the current state of civil-military relations in the countries of the region. Presentations on specific countries followed as well as cross-regional subjects, including human rights, guided the conversations. The seminar concluded with consideration of best practices in promoting healthy relations between armed forces and civilian authorities in Asia, and the next steps to be taken to enhance civil-military relations in the region and around the world.

The Partnership's civil-military program is based on the premise that democratic, civilian control of the military is a major contributor to a country's democratic development. To further evaluate the factors important to positive civil-military relations, the seminar began with in-depth case studies of several of the region's most important developments in their civil-military relations including the Philippines, South Korea and Thailand. Indonesia's unfolding democratization process, as well as examples from Cambodia, Malaysia and Taiwan, were also discussed. Despite diverse country-

specific political histories, several common themes were evident. More specifically, successful democratic, civilian control of the military requires constant attention to many variables--the following of which were agreed upon by the participants:

- A military's respect for civilian control is directly related to its perception of a civilian government's capacity to govern. There appears to be a correlation between a government's ability to competently manage political, economic and social affairs and the threat of a military intervention in the political process.
- Civilian government officials must also spend time developing relationships with military leaders so that they can, among other things, convey to the military their capacity to understand and provide leadership on security-related issues. This reduction of barriers between the military, political leaders, and the public -- both institutionally and personally -- is crucial in developing effective civilian control.
- Countries need to reach national consensus on the role of the military. Defining the military's role to deal exclusively with external threats appears to be the most effective model. Often the military's role has been poorly defined, leading to its involvement in political, economic and social matters. Such involvement over time creates a culture, in both civilian and military communities, that expects or tolerates political interference by the military. It is therefore equally important to clearly define internal security responsibilities to be handled by the police. The establishment of clear lines of responsibility -- constitutionally, statutorily, doctrinally and in practice through training -- helps define a military's role and often reduces human rights violations against its own citizens. Furthermore, by removing the military from internal security matters, a large step is often taken toward enhancing public confidence in the legitimacy of the military as a national institution.
- A national consensus that the military is a servant of the state and is not to engage in domestic politics, or be used by certain interests to pervert or thwart the political process, is extremely important. This pledge is particularly important for those who may want to compete for political power. It is not only legitimate and healthy to debate military matters, but all must agree that the military must not be used to gain power by circumventing the democratic political process.
- Civilian governments must address legitimate concerns of the military. The failure of elected leaders to demonstrate respect for the military and its mission or to provide adequate resources can jeopardize civilian control. Successful transitions to democratic, civilian control of the military have included serious commitments by those elected officials to provide training, modernization, and reform within the military. Often such programs can be combined with restructuring and efforts to instill a new military culture around a newly defined role. Addressing legitimate concerns also requires efforts by civilian leaders to educate themselves about matters of national security and the conditions of those serving in the military.
- Military modernization and reform programs must address matters of human rights, both within the service and in its external actions. Resolving prior violations of human rights may not be easy and no particular model appears to fit all countries. However, failing to address them in the future can create serious challenges. Countries must make human rights training part of the military curriculum and include human rights NGOs as partners in the process. The Philippines provides a noteworthy model in which military promotions require certification by a human rights commission.

Participants at the Manila gathering concluded that attention to these matters -- particularly enhancing the capacity of civilian institutions to oversee the armed forces -- appears to have significantly reduced the threat of military coups in many nations that only recently were under military rule. The ability of many governments to competently address matters of political, social and economic development over the last decade has made militaries realize that they are not equipped to govern. That Asia's recent economic crisis did not threaten its newest democracies suggests that the threat of regional coups appears genuinely diminished. Nevertheless, healthy civil-military relations do not necessarily produce perfect harmony between elected governments and the military. While there will always be legitimate political debates about such military issues as doctrine, budget, personnel and missions, the challenge is to conduct these debates respectfully and confine them to the political arena.

Participants also concluded that establishing democratic civilian control of the military takes time and should not be expedited. Democratic governments that replace military regimes often experience coup attempts in their first term. The challenge is to invest time and resources to improving these relations--an area where participants strongly agreed the Partnership could be of assistance by providing best-practices, experts, and training courses.

The Partnership will use seminar deliberations to further develop its educational network of best-practices. Concurrently, country-specific technical assistance programs will be developed for implementation later this year.

Additional information, including the newly created best practices clearinghouse, and biographical information on the Asia seminar participants, can be found on the new PDGS Internet site at www.pdgs.org.ar. A more detailed conference report will be available shortly. For additional information, please contact Bill Nash at 202-745-4510 or via email at wnash@ndi.org, or Susan Kupperstein at 202-797-4797 or via email susank@ndi.org.

Partnership for Democratic Governance and Security

The Partnership for Democratic Governance and Security is managed by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs and funded principally through a cooperative grant with the United States Agency for International Development. Its membership consists of the following five organizations from Argentina, the Philippines, and the United States: 1) *The National Democratic Institute* (Washington, D.C.) is a nonprofit organization working to strengthen and expand democracy worldwide; 2) *The Center for Civil-Military Relations* at the Naval Post-Graduate School (Monterey, CA) is the premier implementing organization of the U.S. Department of Defense's Expanded-International Military Education and Training Program and has amassed both scholarly and practical expertise educating civilian and military defense professionals; 3) *The Institute for Strategic and Development Studies, Inc.* (Manila, the Philippines) is a leading international organization acknowledged for its regional expertise, publication experience and relations with key actors throughout Asia; 4) *SER en el 2000* (Buenos Aires, Argentina) is a security affairs think tank that publishes a journal on regional security issues and is the creator of the Security and Defense for South America Internet site; and 5) *The Universidad Torcuato di Tella* (Buenos Aires, Argentina) is a renowned academic institution that boasts a distinguished faculty with practical and academic experience in good governance, public policy and civil-military relations.

The goal of the PDGS is to achieve democratic, civilian control of the military. This will be accomplished by improving the capacity of civilian institutions within emerging democracies to provide the requisite leadership, direction, management and oversight of their military forces. The PDGS conducts its civil-military programs in cooperation with local legislatures, political parties, civic organizations, academic institutions, media and the civilian elements of the defense establishment.

List of Participants

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TAIWAN

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Department of Political Science
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INDONESIA

Partnership for Democratic Governance and Security (PDGS)

Regional Seminar on Civil-Military Relations in Asia

Program (Revised)

24-26 March 1999
Edsa Shangri-La Hotel
Manila, Philippines

Day One 24 March 1999, Wednesday

Participants Arrive in Manila

1930-2100 **Reception for Participants** -Cocktails
Poolside, Edsa Shangri-La Hotel

Day Two 25 March 1999, Thursday

0800-0830 **Registration**
Foyer of Kamia 1 & 2

0830-0900 **Opening Ceremony**

Welcome Remarks

Dr. Carolina G. Hernández
President, Institute for Strategic and Development
Studies, Inc. (ISDS), Philippines.

Introduction of NDI and Civil Military Programs

Major General William L. Nash (ret.)
Director
Civil-Military Relations Program National Democratic Institute

0900-1030 **Keynote Address: Civil Military Relations in Asia Today**

Dr. Harold Crouch
Department of Social and Political Change
Research School for Asia and the Pacific
Australian National University

1030-1100 **Coffee Break**

1100-1215 **Country Presentation One: The Philippines**

Moderator *Lic. Jaime Garreta*
President
SER en el 2000

Presenter *Dr. Carolina G. Hernández*
President
Institute for Strategic and Development Studies, Inc. (ISDS)

1230-1345 **Lunch**
Garden Café

1400-1515 **Country Presentation Two: Thailand**

Moderator *Dr. Andrew N. D. Yang*
Secretary General
Chinese Council of Advanced Policy Studies (CAPS)
Taiwan

Presenter *Dr. Suchit Bunbongkarn*
Director
Institute of Security and International Studies (ISIS)
Thailand

1515-1530 **Coffee Break**

1530-1645 **Country Presentation Three: Indonesia**

Moderator *Lic. Marcela Donadio*
Director
SER en el 2000

Presentors *Major General Sudi Silalahi*
Assistant for Socio-Political Affairs
Indonesian Armed Forces

Dr. Samsu Rizal Panggabean
Program Director
Center for Security and Peace Studies
Indonesia

1700-1815 **Country Presentation Four: South Korea**

Moderator *Major General William L. Nash (ret.)*
Director
Civil-Military Relations Program
National Democratic Institute

Presenter *Dr. Kie-Duck Park*
Director
Policy Studies Program
Sejong Institute, Seoul

1900-2100 **Dinner**
Santan I, Garden Wing

Day Three 26 March 1999, Friday

0900-1000 **Human Rights and Civil Military Relations**

Moderators *Major General William L. Nash (ret.)*
Director
Civil-Military Relations Program
National Democratic Institute

Major General Dr. Koesparmono Irsan (ret.)
Member
National Commission on Human Rights
Indonesia

1000-1030 **Coffee Break**

1030-1130 **Best Practices of Civil-Military Relations in Asia**

Moderator *Dr. Carolina G. Hernández*
President, Institute for Strategic and Development
Studies, Inc. (ISDS), Philippines

1145-1230 **Next Steps and Conference Wrap-up**

PDGS Partners

PM Departure, Free time

Day Four 27 March 1999, Saturday

Participants depart

Acknowledgement

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USAID