A stylized map of Myanmar composed of a grid of dots. Most dots are light gray, but several are colored red or dark gray to represent specific regions or conflict zones. The map is positioned behind the title and authors' names.

# The Dynamics of Conflict in the Multiethnic Union of Myanmar

PCIA - Country Conflict-Analysis Study

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- Crucial developments are taking place in Burma / Myanmar's political landscape. Generation change, the change of the nominal political system, and the recovery from a major natural disaster can lead to many directions. Some of these changes can possibly pave the way for violent societal disruptions.
- As an external actor the international community may further add to political tensions through their intervening policies. For this reason it is very important that the international community assesses its impact on the agents and structure of conflict in Burma / Myanmar.
- This study aims at mapping the opportunities and risks that various types of international aid interventions may have in the country.
- The study utilizes and further develops the peace and conflict impact assessment methodology of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.



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## FOREWORD

In the past 10 to 15 years, civil peace building, conflict management and crisis prevention have become important aspects of international relations around development cooperation and have taken root as goals for political action. Although the basic idea that development cooperation always seeks to be a policy for peace is by no means new, what is new is its attempt to contribute directly to peaceful development in conflict situations. This concern is no longer just an overriding, abstract goal: it should be reflected in specific strategies and measures, and the conflict impact of aid is now open to assessment in much the same way as the environmental impacts. The issue of civil peace building acquired a new dimension with the terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001; the debate on crisis prevention and conflict management may provide substantive input in this context.

Civil peace building comprises all non-military measures adopted before, during or after a violent conflict. Its purpose is peaceful conflict transformation and/or the promotion and establishment of structures and mechanisms for non-violent conflict management. Peace cannot be created at the highest political level alone; rather, the whole of society – industry and business, academia and education, faith-based communities, the media and local NGOs (multi-track diplomacy) – must be involved in the peace process. Moreover, peace building is always an intra-societal process which external actors can at best support but cannot implement. Promoting local peace actors and peace constituencies is therefore especially important in facilitating the peace building process.

From the 30 to 50 violent conflicts a year between, but mostly within, countries it is clear how necessary it is to find constructive ways of resolving conflicts. Many countries also find themselves in a grey area between war and peace, in which the Government is undergoing a process of insidious or overt disintegration. Violent disputes are often the core problem. Besides causing enormous human suffering, violent conflicts reverse past progress – including that achieved through development cooperation – and block opportunities for future development. They are also a major burden

on the international community (cost of military operations, reconstruction aid, etc.).

International development cooperation plays a key role in civil peace building, as it is a challenge which requires a coherent, holistic and interdisciplinary approach. The aim is to address the causes of conflict, support structural stability, promote state and non-state peace actors through social and political programmes, and contribute to a sustainable peace in post-conflict societies, e.g. through reconciliation work.

The commitment to conflict sensitivity in all official development activities, for example by the German Ministry of Economic Development and Cooperation (BMZ) and the British Department for International Development (DFID), shows that peace building has now become a priority cross-cutting theme in development cooperation. Non-government actors are equally committed to proactive development-oriented peace work and are engaging in partnership with official development agencies in order to contribute to peaceful conflict transformation at various levels of society.

Since the mid-1990s a number of bi- and multilateral donors (Germany, United Kingdom, Norway, the World Bank among others) and the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) have carried out country and project studies to determine what influence development cooperation has on conflict situations. Past experience can be summarised as follows:

- Relative influence of development cooperation: Expectations of what development cooperation can achieve should not be pitched too high. The responsibility for preventing or ending conflicts rests mainly with the parties concerned. In most cases, development cooperation will be unable to prevent or end violent conflicts on its own. It may, on the other hand, tip the balance between civil and violent forms of conflict.
- Development cooperation is not neutral in conflicts: Development cooperation exerts an intended and unintended influence on conflict in partner countries. These effects are identifiable both at the level of individual measures or

project regions (micro level) and at the level of a country's overall policy (macro level). At micro level the question in many partner countries is whether and, if so, how account has been taken of the ethnic affiliation of the target groups. There is considerable evidence to show that even "purely technical" measures have a positive or negative impact on social tensions and conflict situations.

- Development cooperation and the fight against terrorism: It is not yet possible to say what effect the terrorist attacks will have on German and inter-national development cooperation. Some of the possible implications for development cooperation were, however, already being discussed immediately after 11 September 2001. The discussion shows that development cooperation as a whole may become more important as a result of the new challenges.

To meet these challenges the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung has developed guidelines to offer practical tools for a systematic Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment in country conflict-analysis studies. These guidelines are intended to help international development agencies involved in international development cooperation to:

- carry out a conflict analysis to ensure their work is conflict-sensitive,
- systematically incorporate recommendations stemming from the country-related analysis and the conflict mapping into their project planning,
- monitor changes in the constellation and dynamics of the conflict,
- consider the possible impacts of the project on the conflict and
- draw conclusions about adapting the project planning.

After the EU had formulated its new Common Position in October 2004, FES launched its first engagement projects in Burma/Myanmar. After years of work with different groups in Myanmar society, during which the volume of projects gradually increased, the need for a detailed assessment of the status quo concerning conflict and aid arose. With the prospect of elections in 2010, this seems a good moment to look back and formulate

some recommendations for future engagement in the form of a PCIA study.

The Union of Myanmar is a complex multi-ethnic structure made up of seven Bamar divisions and seven Ethnic States. Myanmar (also known as Burma) gained independence from Britain in 1948 and has been ruled by military Government in one form or another since 1962. The current military Government was established in September 1988. Known initially as the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), it was subsequently renamed the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). In August/September 1988 anti-Government protests were met with a violent military crackdown, which resulted in the killing of thousands of demonstrators, the arrest of human rights activists, the declaration of martial law and the imprisonment of the National League for Democracy (NLD) leader (and daughter of Myanmar's independence hero) Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

Since 1948, over 30 ethnic armed groups have been involved in insurgencies against the central Government. But the SPDC has concluded ceasefire agreements with most of them since the early 1990s, co-opting their leaders with offers of "peace benefits" through economic concessions. The largest ethnic resistance group not to sign a ceasefire is the Karen National Union, with whom clashes continue.

In 1990 free and fair elections were promised. The election was indeed fair enough to demonstrate the popular lack of support for the Government. Afterwards, the opposition felt that the elections had been for a People's Assembly, i.e. a parliament, while the Government claimed they had been for a Constitutional Assembly. This led to continued antagonistic positioning by both the ruling military and the winning party, National League for Democracy (NLD).

In any case, the election results were not honoured: neither was a Constitutional Assembly swiftly convened to draft a new Constitution, nor was a parliament called to determine a new Government. The SLORC remained in power. Aung San Suu Kyi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. A military-picked National Convention was set up to write a new constitution in 1993. Aung San Suu Kyi was released from house arrest in 1995

but her movement was restricted; she was detained again in 2000 and 2003. Over the past 20 years, ASSK has spent more than 14 years under house arrest.

US sanctions were first imposed in 1989, and the EU followed with an arms embargo and a ban on defence cooperation in 1990 and 1991. In 1996 the EU adopted a Common Position imposing restrictions on aid, diplomatic relations and financial relations with Myanmar. However, China and other neighbouring countries have maintained unrestricted relations. Sanctions and the relative international isolation of Myanmar failed to achieve the objective of restoring democracy. Myanmar was admitted into ASEAN in 1997 on grounds of "constructive engagement". China is Myanmar's most important trading partner and investor, and has tended to shield the regime from international pressure.

Poor governance and widespread conflict has allowed Myanmar to become a centre of the drugs trade. Despite generally good relations with Thailand, tensions have risen over drug trafficking, border disputes and illegal migration. India has accused Myanmar's western Sagaing division of being a safe haven for insurgents in India's north-east. Furthermore, Bangladesh and Myanmar have experienced tension over off-shore gas exploration.

August and September 2007 saw the largest protests since 1988 when thousands of monks walked the streets in protest against socio-economic conditions. In late September, the Government reacted with a brutal crackdown, leaving at least 31 people dead and 2,100 in detention. ASEAN expressed "revulsion" at the regime's actions. The US and the EU responded by tightening sanctions. UN efforts to encourage political dialogue and gain the release of political prisoners have had little success. An unhurried dialogue between a Relations Minister and Aung San Suu Kyi began in October 2007.

A new constitution manifesting the military Government's "roadmap to democracy" was adopted in a referendum in May 2008, reserving 25 per cent of parliamentary seats for the military and calling for parliamentary elections in 2010.

In early May 2008 Cyclone Nargis struck the Ayeyarwady Delta and Yangon. The cyclone left

at least 138,000 dead or missing and 800,000 displaced. After some initial difficulties, Nargis brought unprecedented cooperation between the military Government and the international community.

The overall humanitarian situation remains desperate. Authoritarian governance and economic mismanagement mean that 90 per cent of the population live on less than 65 cents a day, and over a third of children under five are malnourished. Be-cause of Western sanctions, Myanmar receives twenty times less aid than other least developed countries. Malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS remain a serious problem in Myanmar, with prevalence rapidly growing. The conflict ridden border areas of the ethnic states are being hit the most severely by these three diseases.

Myanmar is one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the world and throughout its existence as an independent state has experienced a complex set of conflicts between the central Government and ethnic nationalities seeking autonomy. While the world's attention has, for the past decade, focused on the struggle between the military Government and the political opposition over national power, these underlying conflicts perhaps represent a more fundamental and intractable obstacle to peace, development and democracy.

The military capacity and influence of ethnic nationalists has declined significantly over the past decade. Several groups have entered into ceasefire agreements with the Government and been granted de facto administrative authority over areas under their control. They complement a number of political parties formed in areas under Government control to represent local, ethnic interests in the 1990 election (see Map 1). There are also a growing number of religious or community-based organisations that work to further the interests of their communities and have significant local influence.

Many of these organisations are officially banned, and all face severe restrictions by the military Government on their activities. Yet they are important voices for ethnic groups, particular the large percentage who live in their traditional home-lands in the hills and mountains surrounding the central plain.



The most fundamental grievance of ethnic minorities in Myanmar today is their lack of influence on the political process and thus on decisions affecting their lives. Like society at large, they have been disenfranchised by a strongly centralised military state that regards them with intense suspicion. They have felt the loss of political and economic power even more acutely than the majority population, as both the Government and the officer corps are overwhelmingly Bamar in make-up and widely perceived as a foreign force.

Ethnic nationalities consider themselves discriminated against and have openly accused successive Governments of a deliberate policy of “Burmanisation”. They feel not only marginalised economically, but also that their social, cultural, and religious rights are being suppressed.

While many ethnic groups originally fought for independence, today almost all have accepted the Union of Myanmar as a fact and merely seek increased local authority and equality within a new federal state structure. The military Government, however, still suspects them of scheming to split the country and sees this as justification for its repressive, often brutal policies in minority areas.

Since 1988, most ethnic minority organisations have expressed support for democracy, seeing this as their best chance to gain a voice in national politics and press for a redress of their long-standing grievances. But few leaders of the dominant ethnic militant groups are democrats by persuasion or regard democracy as an end in itself. Their main concern is to secure local political and administrative authority and further development of their regions, and to enjoy the right to maintain and practice their language, culture and religion without constraints.

The strength of organisations representing ethnic nationalities has traditionally been measured in military terms. The shift in national politics since 1988 and sub-sequent ceasefires, however, have transferred the main struggle from the battle-field to the political and administrative arena. The primary challenge for ethnic organisations today is, therefore, to build political and organisational capacity – individually and collectively – to ensure that they are not left out of future negotiations about the future of Myanmar and can continue to represent the interests of their communities. They

also need to help rebuild their war-torn communities and economies and re-establish a sense of normalcy and confidence in the future.

Politically, ethnic minorities are divided over goals, strategy and other issues, and have been unable to form any truly effective nationwide or even broadly inclusive fronts. There is also a great discrepancy between available human and financial resources and needs.

To negotiate and eventually overcome these obstacles requires vision, careful balancing of objectives and strategies, and significant implementation capacity. First and foremost perhaps, it requires a genuine commitment to move beyond narrow agendas and build a better life for local communities and the country at large. Most groups, however, lack these skills. In fact, the weaknesses and approaches of the ethnic organisations often mirror those of the central Government and other local authorities.

Many organisations are still dominated by soldiers who have little knowledge of political and social affairs or experience with the relevant tools for organisation and negotiation. They may have significant legitimacy rooted in the struggle for self-determination – or, in some cases, the 1990 election – but strong hierarchies and top-down approaches mean that their links to local communities are often weak. There is also a general shortage of people in these communities who have appropriate education and experience in civilian governance.

Over the past few years, the Ethnic Nationalities Council (in exile) and the Ethnic Nationalities Mediators Fellowship have begun to face up to these problems and started on the difficult task of building networks in long-divided communities and training capable leaders and administrators. Nevertheless, the ethnic nationalities do not yet seem prepared to respond to the actions of the SPDC with sound strategic thinking or by developing an overall and inclusive political blueprint that will bring a satisfactory conclusion to the ethnic problems of the country.

Recent clashes in the Shan State between the army of the military Government and the Myanmar National Democracy Alliance Army (MNDAA of Kokang) have highlighted differences between



the ruling SPDC and the ethnic ceasefire groups as the 2010 election approaches. Attempts by the SPDC to persuade the ceasefire groups to transform themselves into Border Guard Forces or surrender their arms and contest the forthcoming elections as a political party seem to have failed. Ostensibly, the SPDC is trying to pressure the groups to conform to its 2008 Constitution, which states in Chapter VII, Article 338, Defence Services, that "...all armed forces in the union shall be under the command of the defence services".

Faced with a forthcoming constitutional dilemma, the regime had little option but to seek an alternative in dealing with the ceasefire groups. Mindful of China's influence and support for these groups, and also the need to justify its actions, the SPDC manufactured a number of pretexts. There is little doubt that the military Government could have simply turned on those groups that opposed it. Instead, the military Government exploited fissures in the ceasefire group's leadership to create division and to excuse its actions.

Past history has shown, especially in the case of the various splits within the Karen national movement, that the Burmese military is more than capable of using such internal division to further its own interests.

However, the ultimatum for the ceasefire groups to become Border Guard Forces by October 2009, which was delivered by Lieutenant-General Ye Myint, Chief of Military Affairs Security, in April 2009, contradicted all previous SPDC instructions and assurances to the ceasefire groups.

In the past 20 years, the SPDC has always emphasised that it is only a 'transition Government' and does not have a mandate to negotiate political terms with the ethnic ceasefire groups. The latter were told they could retain their arms and that they were to negotiate the surrender of these with the new Government that would have to be elected. After the 2008 referendum, the ceasefire groups were once again reassured when the SPDC announced that the new constitution would only come into effect after the new Government is sworn in.

This assurance was repeated as late as January 2009. Furthermore, the written agreement with the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO),

another ceasefire group, stipulates that the KIO would retain its arms until it obtained the constitutional guarantees that it desires. The KIO has consistently stated that, despite its participation in the National Convention, it is not satisfied with the SPDC's 2008 State Constitution, since none of its own constitutional proposals were accepted by the SPDC-controlled assembly.

Meanwhile, the New Mon State Party and the Zomi National Congress seem to be gearing up to oppose the elections. Whether the SPDC will move militarily against the NMSP – a ceasefire group – remains to be seen. The proximity of NMSP-controlled territory to Thailand and the Karen National Union (a non-ceasefire group) may give the SPDC second thoughts.

However, by the end of October 2009 the Myanmar National Democracy Alliance Army decided to comply in principle with the military Government's "One Country, One Military" proposal and agreed to place a 4,500-strong armed force under the SPDC's control on a step-by-step basis.

So far the Pa-O National Organisation (PNO) and the Kayinni National People's Liberation Front (KNPLF) have accepted the Government's demands. They will transform their armed units into Border Guard Forces and form political parties. The Democratic Kayin Buddhist Army (DKBA) and the New Democratic Army Kachin (NDAK) have accepted, but with some conditions that still have to be worked out. For now they insist on not forming political parties but supporting the 2010 national elections.

In addition, negotiations between the United Wa State Army (USWA) and the North-Eastern Regional Command and the Kachin Independent Army (KIA) and the Northern Regional Command on a proposed Border Guard Force are under way.

These developments seem to have averted a return to armed struggle for the time being. As the 31 October 2009 deadline to transform the ceasefire groups into SPDC-controlled Border Forces looms, negotiations between the military Government and the ceasefire groups seem to be progressing.

At a time when the EU and US Governments are in the process of reopening channels of direct

communication with the military Government, it seems to be high time for the ethnic nationalities to overcome the disunity which persistently dogs the inner circles of each and every ethnic nationality and ceasefire group. Until such time, the military Government will continue to succeed with its divide-and-rule policy and will apply pressure tactics to force the ethnic ceasefire groups to accept its Road Map and support the 2010 elections. Furthermore, the international community will fail to recognise the relevance of the political claims raised by the ethnic nationalities.

In these difficult circumstances, it seems to be quite timely for the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung to

publish this Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment – Country conflict-analysis studies: The Dynamics of Conflict in the Multiethnic Union of Myanmar in the hope of formulating some recommendations for conflict-sensitive development co-operation.

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However, given its sensitive nature and the circumstances under which it was conducted, it is not possible to acknowledge all the people, institutions and organisations that granted their unre-served support and assistance.

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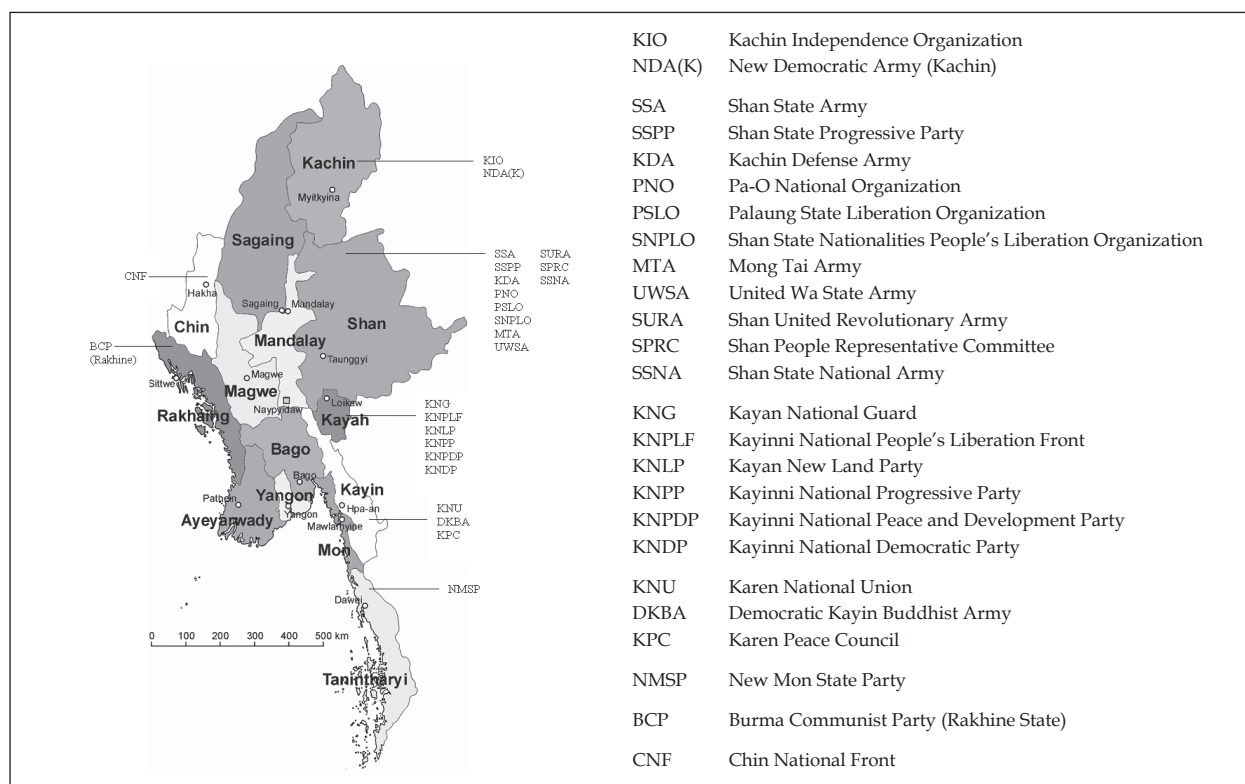
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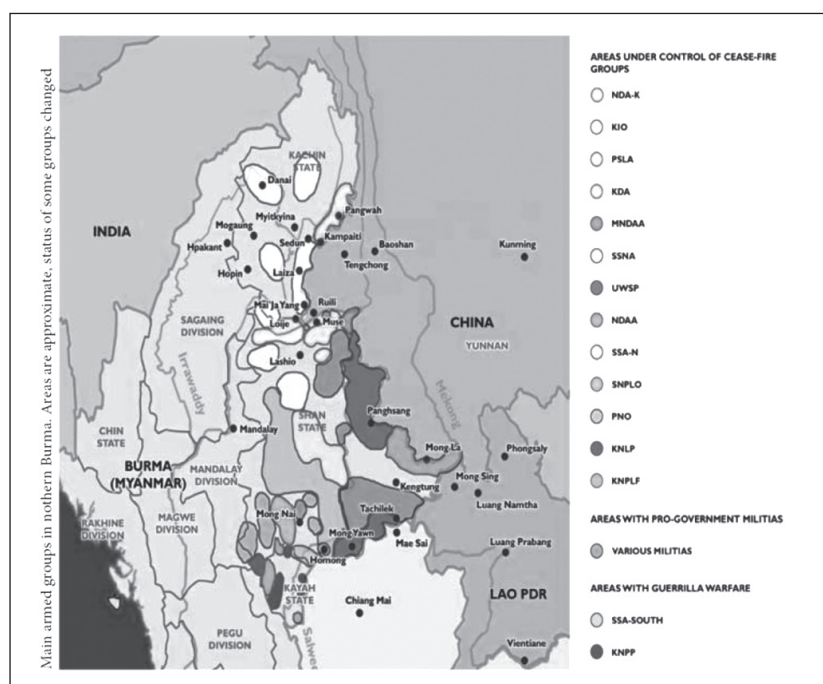
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**Map 1: Approximate distribution of armed groups on Myanmar territory**

Source: Shalom Foundation, Yangon, September 2009

**Map 2: Approximate distribution of armed groups on Myanmar territory**

Source: Tom Kramer, "Ceasefires at Risk", Transnational Institute, Amsterdam, 2009

## PART I: CONFLICTS AND THEIR MAPPING

### Introduction

The first part of this study explicates, develops and further improves the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung's (FES) *Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment* (PCIA) methodology. In the following parts, the improved methodology is then used for conflict mapping Burma/Myanmar.<sup>2</sup> In this respect, the report differs from the usual Peace and Conflict Impact Assessments, as the objective is not only to assess a particular case, but also to analyse and develop the methodology by looking at it in the light of the most recent scholarly understanding of conflicts.

The material used for this study is the following:

- a) comparative research on the relationship between conflict and aid;
- b) methodological guidelines and studies from PCIA, FES and other donors;
- c) documentary material from conflict parties and the EU;
- d) expert analyses on the Burma/Myanmar conflict, and
- e) interviews among stakeholders in Burma/Myanmar.

### Background and Objectives

**Optimising the effect of aid on conflict.** Aid programming, even humanitarian aid, influences causes of conflict and consequently needs to be sensitive to its impacts on conflict potential. In Somalia in the early 1990s, the relationship between humanitarian aid and conflict was felt clearly as, in the absence of a structure of governance, every shipment of food aid increased the level of violence: food was loot to fight over<sup>3</sup>. Aid and conflict were strongly correlated and peaks of aid were reflected in casualty statistics as peaks of battle deaths. Around the same time, aid for integrating combatants into civilian life in Northern Mali contributed to the transformation of conflict structures and the decline in political violence in the country.<sup>4</sup> Clearly, **aid can fuel conflict, but it can also help build peace and settle conflicts.** The starting point for the idea of Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment is the need to map the

conflict and its relationship to the social realities that aid affects, the aim being to optimise the effect of aid on conflict management, dispute resolution and conflict transformation; in other words, to make aid have the effect it had in Northern Mali, rather than the effect it had in Somalia in the 1990s. The FES guidelines on PCIA methodology state that the objective of PCIA is to help make aid more conflict-sensitive, so that “negative impacts [on peace] can be reduced to a minimum and that positive impacts of the project activities are maximised”. Like an environmental impact assessment, PCIA tackles a specific factor in the quality of aid: rather than environmental quality, here we are talking about the conflict resolution and transformation quality of aid.

The objective of this report is to **assess the impact of existing FES, German and international aid in Burma/Myanmar and suggest ways to improve its conflict management, resolution, transformation and peace building qualities.**

**Doing good vs. doing no harm.** The starting point of this assessment is optimisation, and not strict absolute principles of best practice. Even though, for example, the principles of “do no harm” are a standard reference in peace and conflict impact assessments, this assessment does not distinguish between objectives designed to do good (in conflict prevention) and those aimed at doing no harm. If one wants to optimise the peace and conflict impact of aid, one cannot start by ensuring that aid is harmless and then go on to identify ways of doing something constructive. This is especially clear in difficult development partnerships like the ones with civil society organisations in Myanmar. Activities to support civil society inside the country do also minimally support the repressive capacity of the regime. In turn, activities to support the exiled Burmese community in their efforts to fight repressive violence will always also, at least minimally, encourage the overconfidence<sup>5</sup> of violent opposition forces and make them less likely to strike rational compromises in their efforts to avoid violence.

In some cases, humanitarian needs require a tolerance of operations that only have negative conflict



impacts. For example, **humanitarian aid after Cyclone Nargis** was obliged to make compromises between hasty action and perfect planning: in the wake of hasty action, distribution was not always perfectly able to avoid inequality, and so it might have given rise to some conflict motives. Due to the limited safety of implementing agencies, some had to favour the communities they knew best and could trust. As a consequence, Buddhist aid agencies might have favoured Buddhist recipients, and Christian agencies Christian recipients. This might have caused envy among other communities. Yet the absolute humanitarian needs required European organisations to get involved quickly. Also, in more long-term European aid programming, the risks of conflict sensitivity are recognised and tolerated. For example, the Commission's *Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (2007–2010)* recognises the risk that aid may unintentionally improve the image of the military regime: "SPDC manages to secure benefits and/or reap legitimacy as a result of the implementation and impact of EC assistance programmes in Burma/Myanmar." This risk is clearly linked to a risk of increased or more durable authoritarian violence by the military Government.

Thus the question in the above cases is not whether harm can be totally avoided, but whether it is possible **to produce disproportionately more good than inadvertent harm**.

The analysis sets out to achieve two sets of **recommendations**, one specifically for FES, and the other more generally for German and international donors. This is done by following the methodological PCIA guidelines from FES and mapping the conflict situation along with its causal links to and from the socio-economic changes that aid activities affect.

As mentioned earlier, this report also sets out to **further develop the FES PCIA methodology**,

1. by comparing it to the PCIA methodologies of other donors,
2. by drawing on comparative evidence in existing conflict research about the relationship between aid and conflict, and
3. by drawing more general conclusions from experience specific to Burma/Myanmar in order to refine the methodological tools of FES PCIA.

## Elements of Conflict in FES PCIA methodology

**What is conflict?** The FES PCIA Methodological Guidelines define conflict implicitly as something that happens between **actors** across dividing **lines** over **issues** where the agents have an **incompatibility of interests or values**. The idea of focusing on dividing lines follows the latest conflict theory recommendations: mapping conflict should not focus so much on organisations that play an instrumental role in conflict, but should examine, rather, the **cleavages** that divide the conflicting parties and make them create organisations that act as institutional vehicles for policies that address the issues dividing groups of people. Furthermore, for aid agencies, who do not directly negotiate peace, the things that divide people are more significant than any formal divisions between organisational actors. Yet to some extent both the agents and the divisions are relevant in their own way. Efforts by aid to bridge the dividing lines and to address the issues that motivate conflicts would be directly beneficial to conflict prevention, while efforts to avoid emphasising divisions in the organisation of aid and to prevent aid from becoming fought-over "loot" would all be important to conflict-sensitive aid programming.

**Conflict is dynamic**, as it varies in intensity and scale by escalating and de-escalating, both horizontally (by involving more people) and vertically (by increasing in vigour). In part at least, the intensity of conflict depends on the **capacity** of the actors to wage war, but also to resolve conflicts. Again, aid should be careful not to build up the resources for violent action.

Furthermore, the Guidelines link conflicts with specific **structural settings** that make a society more exposed to violent conflicts. Unavailability of non-violent channels of protest and dispute resolution<sup>6</sup>, ethnic divisions<sup>7</sup>, lack of economic growth<sup>8</sup>, economic fluctuations<sup>9</sup>, inefficiency of law enforcement<sup>10</sup> and economic concentration on primary, natural-resource-based production<sup>11</sup> are among the many structural settings that conflict studies have identified as factors exposing a country or society to political violence and conflict. All these structures could be addressed by long-term development cooperation.

The Guidelines discuss the **causes of conflicts** and attribute them in many cases to the structural settings that make societies vulnerable to conflict, to the violent capacity of actors in the conflict and to the issues that motivate conflict.

**What is the difference between disputes and conflicts?** The relationship between disputes and conflicts is explicitly dealt with in the Guidelines (p. 8), which warn against any confusion between violent conflicts and conflicts in general. The former are what FES and PCIA set out to limit, while the latter are a natural part of social life and progress.<sup>12</sup> The same distinction is frequently made in current conflict analysis, but the word “conflict” is often reserved exclusively for violent disputes. The *Uppsala Conflict Data Programme*, for example, classifies an incident as a “conflict” only if it causes at least 25 casualties and as a “war” if it causes more than 1,000 casualties per year.<sup>13</sup> “Conflicts” that are not violent are referred to as disputes. This will also be the conceptual practice in this report.

The importance of distinguishing between conflicts and disputes is crucial since, even though dispute is a necessary condition for conflict, empirical evidence suggests that discouraging disputes will not contribute to progress and not even to conflict prevention.<sup>14</sup> On the contrary, it seems that societies with many openly addressed disputes are actually less conflict-prone than so-called “harmony societies”, which try to suppress expressions of dispute. In fact, **democracy as a political system could be described as an institutionalised dispute mechanism**, and it seems that this system is superior in the prevention of conflicts compared to non-democratic political systems.<sup>15</sup>

**Grievances or greed as motives for conflict?** In facilitating the definition of questions for an assessment, the Methodological Guidelines reveal a bias towards seeing **grievances**, rather than greed and gainful opportunities, as the main motive for conflicts.<sup>16</sup> Grievance-based conflict motives are, undoubtedly, an important source of conflict, and these motives<sup>17</sup>, together with a state’s inability to prevent rebellious mobilisation<sup>18</sup>, were long regarded as the main source of conflict. However, modern conflict analysis has identified **greed** as another important source of conflict motivation<sup>19</sup>.

Hence modern conflict analysis has flagged up further opportunities for conflict prevention: besides addressing grievances, conflict prevention can also help prevent the criminalisation of economic and political life so as to minimise gainful opportunities for violence. In order to map all the opportunities aid has in tackling the conflict problem, one must also carefully assess the possibilities for building obstacles to violence. In most conflicts, there are peace spoilers<sup>20</sup> who benefit from the political economy of conflict – for example, armies that need conflict to mask their illegal economic activities in conflict areas will try to thwart any efforts to resolve conflicts and, instead, stage conflict episodes to emphasise their own importance in the conflict area.<sup>21</sup>

**What are the opportunities for conflict?** Although the Guidelines address the capacity aspect of conflicts, they focus on objective capacities (such as availability of weapons, availability of economic resources etc.) and on opportunities for conflict behaviour (and peace). However, other important factors behind many conflicts include the normative and constitutive opportunities and capacities available to conflicting parties.<sup>22</sup> The discourse around “indigenusness” legitimises – and thus makes it possible for local communities to claim – a certain priority over migrant communities. Without the concept of “indigenusness” and the discourse to which it has given rise, these people would not be able to mobilise violent resistance against migrants. Migrants, in turn, are empowered by their claims within equal rights discourses. Indeed, their capacity to mobilise counteraction often depends on the existence of equal rights norms. Aid could tackle the clash that occurs in its own activities between these facilitating normative discourses by encouraging forums for dialogue where the entitlement of various groups to certain forms of aid can be discussed.

Traditional myths about trance-like conflict rituals, ancestors possessing the body and the performance of religious duties through conflict all offer the conflicting parties a way to bypass the normative codes that normally proscribe violence: one is not responsible for deeds done in a trance or acts committed by an intrusive ancestor. These normative and constitutive conditions help create opportunities for violence, and these opportunities can be blocked by means of cooperation in the



field of education or by providing aid for capacity building. In this way, mapping normative and constitutive obstacles to conflict also helps to develop the tools for conflict prevention.

**The significance of aid in conflict agency.** The basic concept of conflict in the FES PCIA Guidelines tackles the issue of conflict actors and dividing lines. However, it would be helpful if the Guidelines also pointed out that conflict agency is not something objective or given: ethnicity is not necessarily meaningful in conflicts, and neither are religion, territory, gender and other divisions. It is important to realise that the meanings attributed to differences as conflict divisions are created by the conflicting parties. This process of creating conflict divisions out of the differences between people also offers opportunities for aid to intervene. Here, the question is not about motivating violent behaviour, but selecting the targets of violence. The **polarisation of relations between groups** has recently been identified as a factor that predicts conflict better than most other indicators and contributes most fundamentally towards it.<sup>23</sup> These targets can change, and a target group can emerge or disappear without any changes in the objective setting. For example, with its projects to generate employment for both Catholics and Protestants, the International Fund for Ireland alleviated the grievances that motivated violence, but also proved to the conflicting parties that the lack of jobs was a common personal concern and not a collective issue (caused by “outsiders who are getting all the jobs”). Aid should try to affect the emergence of conflicting parties, and the PCIA should map opportunities for such influence.

## Method for Assessing Conflict Sensitivity of Aid and Suggestions for Improvement

**Aid is always political.** The starting-point for FES PCIA methodology is the fact that aid, like any other socio-political cooperation, is never perfectly neutral: any effort to prevent conflicts is always political and it always affects the social setting of the aid partner country in a way that either fuels or helps to inhibit conflict. This is not a typical assumption in the PCIA guidelines of most donor organisations.<sup>24</sup> In the PCIA methodology, however, acknowledging the political nature of con-

flict prevention is an asset, as it stops it from being depoliticised and bureaucratised. If a conflict prevention activity is open to the idea of promoting positive peace, transforming violent structures and advancing dialogue and cooperation links between potential conflicting parties, this activity cannot start from an apolitical platform. It has to recognise that deeper engagement with conflict prevention requires choices that are bound to affect the balance of political power and, indeed, political culture. Burma/Myanmar is probably the best place to make this point: simply tackling the problem of direct violence by preventing actual fighting would not transform the exclusion and violence in the political system, and nor would it reduce the long-term potential for fighting. By admitting that aid always influences conflict situations, and that conflict prevention always influences social, economic and political settings, the FES methodology escapes a criticism commonly levelled at PCIA. This methodology does not bureaucratised the exercise, it does not establish a uniform “neutral project management frame”<sup>25</sup> for proceeding regardless of the wishes of local societies, and it does not reduce conflict prevention to a top-down effort to make society secure. Rather, it concedes that, by being conflict-sensitive, aid will follow local preferences instead of imposing a “rational” neutral logic of conflict prevention.<sup>26</sup>

**Realistic assumptions about conflicts are based on empirical data.** In commissioning a review that relates the empirical assumptions in the FES approach to the latest findings in conflict research, this PCIA methodology is seeking to avoid the second most common criticism to which its counterparts are exposed. This shows that FES does not ignore the importance of empirically tested assumptions and conclusions about causal relations between conditions and conflict. This is laudable in the FES approach, and unfortunately rare among organisations involved in the attempt to improve the conflict sensitivity of aid.

To map conflicts, the FES methodology identifies sectors of conflict, from politics and the judiciary to security, the economy and society. Secondly, it identifies levels of conflict, including national and international levels reflecting the traditional distinction between intra-state and inter-state conflict. Furthermore, the scenario and strategy mapping recommended to donor organisations

is founded on an analysis of issues, conflict lines, agency structures, and the roles of the international community. In addition, the methods for interviewing informants and experts illustrate that the mapping exercise is designed to uncover the root causes of conflicts and consider whether aid might tackle these root causes.

**Drawing mental maps of the conflicting parties is the key to understanding how to influence their strategic behaviour.** The methodology suggests drawing mental maps of the conflicting parties to see how they perceive the structure and elements of the conflict. This is useful and should be regarded as an integral part of any conflict mapping. One cannot influence the strategic behaviour of conflicting parties without penetrating their mindset and observing how they perceive the conflict game. The difficulty we often have in understanding conflicts is precisely the assumption that all conflicting parties are playing the same game, whereas in fact each party constructs the game for themselves and plays it according to the rules they perceive.

The case of Burma/Myanmar suggests that mental mapping should also be applied to the European and German view of conflict elements (for example, various types of political violence and their relationship to aid) in order to understand the limits and settings in which aid that needs to be made more conflict-sensitive operates. One cannot hope to make aid more conflict-sensitive without understanding the general framework in which aid operates. It would, for example, be of limited value to present recommendations on aid work in Burma/Myanmar which conflict with the basic principles of European policies on sanctions. If we do not understand that aid is used as leverage in the European effort to reduce authoritarian violence and authoritarianism, we cannot fully understand what can – and cannot – be done to aid to increase its conflict sensitivity.

While the methodology clearly follows the latest findings in strategic conflict research, it has elements that could be improved to make the methodology consistent with the logic of optimising the conflict prevention quality of aid.

**Conflict-sensitive aid should prioritise conflict conditions/junctures that can be positively manipulated.** In much current peace research and conflict analysis, the idea of there being a root

cause for a conflict has been challenged. The idea of multi-causality has won ground in conflict studies, meaning that attention has shifted from what is seen as the first cause to all the other necessary conditions that are needed for conflicts to start or continue. Once these have been identified, then practical conflict prevention has to prioritise those that can be manipulated, rather than those that are seen as “more fundamental”, or lodged “more deeply” within the roots of conflict. The attention that the FES guidelines, and most of the existing FES conflict analyses, have given to the foundations of conflicts is thus inconsistent with the strategic approach adopted by the FES methodology to “optimise the conflict sensitivity of aid”.

The alternative approach of seeing conflict development as a complex path, with junctures that might be manipulated (blocked or rerouted), could well be more consistent with the internal logic of the FES methodology. Once there are frustrations and conflict motives, developments proceed towards a conflict only if the frustrated groups are faced with other groups whom they see as opposed to themselves (and often as causes for their frustration). However, this development does not proceed, even if such groups can be identified, unless there are objective and normative opportunities for conflict behaviour: arms and ways around the normative constraints on violence. When identifying opportunities for conflict prevention by means of development cooperation, it would be much more useful to frame the activity as something where the analyst follows the path to conflict and tries to identify opportunities to reroute or block that path, rather than seeking some kind of a fundamental, singular, “root cause” for the conflict. The methodology might be more consistent within its strategic logic if it identified scenarios and strategies as junctures in the path towards conflict. At present the methodology identifies scenarios without trying to define their probabilities or their desirability. However, when trying to develop strategic prescriptions or analyse the impacts of aid, reference is made to **positive and negative impacts**. It is not possible to claim that an intervention is positive unless one attaches normative values to scenarios. Intervention is positive in a given juncture if it increases the possibility of the situation developing towards

a desired scenario and reduces the probability of developments in undesired directions.

Instead of scenarios and positive impacts, conflict mapping could identify:

- paths with junctures that can lead to alternative paths regardless of what the aid community does, and
- junctures where the aid community can have an impact.

It is not realistic to model the situation assuming first that there are neutral scenarios and then that only the international community can exert an influence. Instead, conflict prevention is a game where some of the steps (junctures) cannot and some can be influenced by the donor community. To optimise the conflict impact of aid, mapping has to identify the approximate likelihood of alternative paths in those junctures that aid cannot affect, orienting and preparing the donors for the challenges ahead. Equally, the mapping has to identify ways to exert a positive effect on the junctures that aid can influence: the mapping has to reveal how to manipulate the development of conflict agency or the development of conflict motives in order to produce positive, rather than negative impacts.

The reason why the FES methodology does not look for probabilities is likely to lie in the confusion between “manipulable” and “non-manipulable” junctures. It is naturally **not useful to predict outcomes in junctures that one wants to change**: a prediction often becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. But in those junctures that aid cannot change, predictions are in order.

Confusion about the neutrality of scenarios, again, could be caused by the fact that in every conflict situation the path to peace is based on compromises on one side or another. While trying to avoid becoming partisan, the PCIA should not, naturally, try to take sides between peace on one or another party’s terms. However, the PCIA has to consider positive movement towards a situation where mutual interest is no longer compromised by violence. PCIA cannot be neutral between peace and war, but it has to be neutral in the question of contested alternative terms of peace.<sup>27</sup>

Finally, to streamline the strategic approach in conflict mapping, **the methodology will need to be adjusted to the project cycle**. In addition to levels and sectors of conflict, opportunities will have to be identified for country consultations, development interventions, project formulation, appraisal, financing decisions, implementation and monitoring, project completion, and evaluation.

Summary:

### Conducting the PCIA for Burma/Myanmar

Having adjusted the FES PCIA methodology, this report will now move on to the PCIA for Burma/Myanmar. The intention is, on the one hand, to show how the refined methodology works and, on the other, simply to define optimal conflict sensitivity strategies for aid and NGO cooperation in the specific conditions of Burma/Myanmar. In order to do that, this conflict mapping will follow the Guidelines and structure the presentation as suggested in the FES document. In addition to that, it will try to:

1. systematically work out strategies for different phases of the aid programming cycle, the purpose being to **identify options for positive conflict influence** in each of them.
2. For the interviews and questionnaires among conflict stakeholders, this mapping will **add questions about the opportunity side of violence**: “Why did the police not do anything? How did they justify their actions? Why did they not fear retaliation?<sup>28</sup> How do their local customs and norms tolerate this violence?”
3. Furthermore, this mapping will have to **identify mental conflict maps**. This includes tracking the **emergence of antagonistic agency**: the process whereby groups start identifying each others as enemies. How did certain groups start seeing each other as enemies? What kind of situations did the antagonism induce and express? How did the relationship escalate into hostilities?
4. Mapping must also include the **mental map of the donors**, which in turn will condition the options for aid to display conflict sensitivity.

5. Mapping will highlight different **relationships of conflict violence**. Violence by the Government against unarmed civilians, violence between the Government and its armed challengers and conflict between ethnic groups and sub-ethnicities all influence each other. Taking this into account makes it easier to identify aid strategies that will not “do harm” to situations in another type of conflict. For example, preventing spontaneous violence in civil society by supporting an authoritarian machinery of law and order might help contain violence of that kind, but it could simultaneously aggravate repressive conflict.
6. **Building up strategies for conflict-sensitive aid programming will be based on the conflict path analogy**. Here the path to conflict will be reconstructed with all the alternative

routes to conflict and non-violent solutions. The study will then identify the junctures that cannot be influenced by aid. These junctures will have to be taken as given, and yet one needs to be prepared for them, in accordance with their probability. Aid cannot, for example, influence internal power struggles inside the authoritarian leadership. Yet it will have to recognise the probability of sudden splits, and consider various probabilities in order to map the realities around aid activities. PCIA will therefore have to attribute elementary probabilities to the alternative paths from these junctures and indicate the most likely causes of events. Then it will identify the junctures that aid can influence and try to define strategies that could optimise the conflict impact of aid at these junctures.



## PART II: THE CONFLICT MAP OF BURMA/MYANMAR<sup>29</sup>

Burma/Myanmar is a multi-ethnic country with an ethnic Bamar majority. The country received its independence from the United Kingdom in 1948, but has been suffering from political violence during the entire period of its independence. Since 1962 state security has been the main consideration in the political system. Solving state security issues has been characterised by a military approach: instead of dealing with grievances, conflicts are settled by imposing military control over opportunities for revolt and the deterrence of discontent. The military takeover in 1962, provoked by a dispute over how many concessions to make to rebelling ethnic groups, was the watershed when the armed forces decided against the conciliatory approach of civilian leaders. Obsessions with security and the military response to security issues have resulted in an approach to governance that neglects development. The eagerness to focus on development, typical of almost all other East and Southeast Asian Governments, has not been echoed by the Government of Burma/Myanmar, and as a result there has been a drastic decline in almost all aspects of it. Given this neglect of transforming economic grievances and the lack of focus on common development interests, Myanmar has not experienced the decline in conflict casualties associated with political violence that has characterised East and South-east Asia since the Vietnam War.

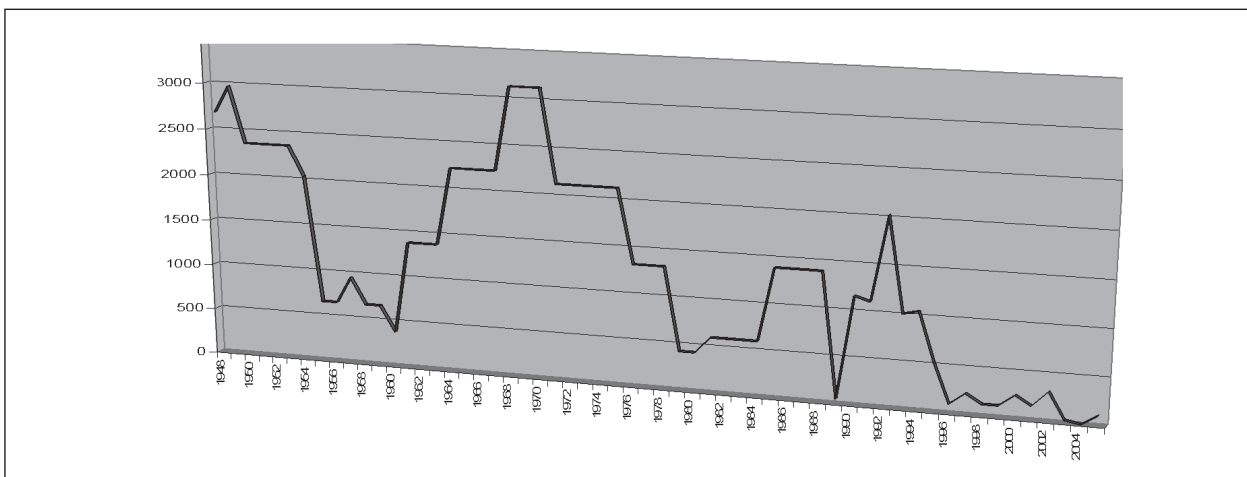
Until the end of the 1980s, Burma's economic orientation was socialist. But in the 1990s this orien-

tation gradually shifted towards a more market-friendly perspective. However, a kleptocratic state obsessed with security has limited the freedom of market actors in the country. This has created obstacles to promoting market instruments as populations become more interdependent politically. Liberal peace – the pacifying development of positive interdependence between potential enemies – has not emerged in Burma/Myanmar as it has almost everywhere else in East and South-east Asia. Instead, underdevelopment has fuelled interests in conflict, further highlighting security and encouraging disregard for developmental priorities. This, in turn, has provoked underdevelopment, conflict motives, security problems, a focus on military solutions, a disregard for development, etc.

### Conflict in Burma/Myanmar

To begin with an analytical view, we can draw a graph based on information from the *Uppsala Conflict Data Programme* on conflict casualties in Burma/Myanmar. This data, however, does not include casualties of repression or non-state conflicts (such as those between ethnic minorities and sub-ethnicities). The definition of direct battle deaths in conflict means that this data is best used to indicate trends rather than for absolute numbers. This is why no absolute figures are given in *Graph 1*

**Graph 1: Battle deaths, 1946–2005**





*Prime divisions of conflict:**Democracy vs. authoritarianism and rights of ethnic groups*

If one looks at the groups that pose a military challenge to the Government, one can easily see that violence in Burma/Myanmar is primarily about:

- democracy vs. authoritarianism, and
- rights of ethnic groups.

Battle deaths seem to peak in Burma/Myanmar whenever the Government backtracks on its conciliatory policies. Whenever hopes of ethnic and democratic movements are frustrated and the Government restores its strict centralist and/or military order, casualties rise. For example, after independence, this happened when the Government backtracked on its commitments to ensure relative ethnic autonomy. The casualty peak in the early 1960s might be attributed to the strengthening position of the armed forces and the eventual military takeover in 1962. In the second half of the 1980s, growing expectations of an end to military rule and hopes for democratisation, combined with heavy suppression of the opposition, possibly contributed to the spread of conflict activities in 1988. After the 1990 elections the Government backtracked on its promises of democratisation and refused to hand over power to the elected representatives, causing frustration and potentially explaining the peaks in armed conflict after 1990.

In general, the pattern in Burma/Myanmar conforms to the general pattern of violence in authoritarian countries: instability and violence are most probable when the Government **backtracks** on its own commitments and starts restoring its stricter centralist authoritarian rule.<sup>30</sup> This suggests that the international community, rather than just demanding new compromises, should focus on building (and expanding) the Government's own commitments to progress and preventing it from reneging on its promises.

*Battle deaths: Communists vs. Government*

According to the cited *Uppsala* data, as well as the majority of experts on Burmese conflicts, most battle deaths were produced in the 1960s and

1970s in the battles between communists and the Government. However, the communists in Burma have not traditionally been simply a political organisation. Rather, many of the groups belonging to the communist movement were in fact ethnic, territorial movements, which were not only fighting for a change in governance, but also for a territory and ethnic rights. So this battle was not, as it sounds, purely ideological, but was very much influenced by ethnic lines of division. China's support for the communists contributed to the symmetry of the battle, as well as to the magnitude of violence. It is difficult to say how many of the casualties are from clashes between various communist groups and the Government and how many of them were actually caused by clashes between different ethnic variants of communists, or simply between various ethnic groups. The ideological factor played a role until the last two decades, after which the dividing lines were drawn either ethnically or politically between democrats and the Government. While the fight of the main ethnic militias has mainly targeted the Government or some sub-ethnicities that interfere with the unity of struggle in the seven ethnic States, the ethnic element has occasionally sneaked into the mental maps of combatants. In the minds of some ethnic fighters, the Government is associated with Bamar ethnicity and Buddhism, making local Bamars or local Buddhists (such as Buddhist Karens) a target for aggression.

*Battle deaths: Democide*

There are no reliable estimates of the casualties from democide<sup>31</sup> in Burma/Myanmar. The counter-insurgency policies of the Burmese military in the 1960s were based on cutting off rebellious villages from food, money, intelligence and recruits. This suggests that democidal practices against ethnic groups are nothing new for the military. Globally, the number of casualties of democide is about 6 times the number of casualties of war.<sup>32</sup> During the Cold War, the ratio in the world rose to about 1:10.<sup>33</sup> Regionally, the ratio is highest in East Asia, where 6 of the world's 10 most genocidal regimes are located. Democide per population ratios are also higher in East Asia than elsewhere.<sup>34</sup> It is highly likely, therefore, that repression and democide also represent the gravest ele-



ment of violence in Burma/Myanmar right now, especially as the country experiences instability after the Government managed to suppress most of the open conflict situations and demonstrations.

### *Indirect casualties: A gender perspective*

An important element of one-sided violence is also relevant from the gender perspective. According to Donald Horowitz, 95 per cent of conflict casualties are men, while 90 per cent of fighters are men.<sup>35</sup> Sociologists of conflict tend to produce similar estimates, even though Timo Kivimäki's field observations in conflicts in Somalia, Mali, South Africa, Finland, Aceh and Papua suggest an even higher percentage. Yet the victims of one-sided violence, occupation and military repression, have a drastically different gender balance. As part of the political economy of occupation in developing countries, leaders who are unable to pay decent salaries to their soldiers will not interfere with rape and abuse of women (or corruption and extortion), which is then seen as a supplement to the low wages. Violence against women is especially typical in countries like Burma/Myanmar which suffer from separatist challenges. Because of separatist pressures, the Government is tempted to rotate its army members in order to avoid the rise of local loyalties among the troops. Often this means that soldiers live apart from their families and this affects relations between troops and local women. As a result, confidential interviews for this project were able to reveal the extent of violence against women in Burma/Myanmar, especially in areas where the rights of the locals cannot be protected by existing institutional mechanisms.

In Buddhist areas, such as the Bamar divisions, influential monks were sometimes able to negotiate ways out of military impunity, while in non-Buddhist areas, such as the Karen State or the Chin State, for example, people were simply too scared to even report cases of rape by the military. In areas with an extensive international presence, such as the post-Nargis Delta area, some of the INGOs have managed to create mechanisms to resist military impunity, while some local NGOs and NGO networks were working on such mechanisms in areas with a lesser international presence.

### *Indirect casualties: Humanitarian disaster*

Finally, the number of indirect casualties has been swollen by the inability and unwillingness to tackle humanitarian disaster and allow international help with this task, especially in rebellious areas and areas which are considered opposed to the Government. The denial of access to international humanitarian organisations in the immediate aftermath of the recent cyclone is an extreme example of a practice that has been going on in peripheral areas of the country for decades.

In his analysis of the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI)<sup>36</sup> Morten Petersen has estimated the magnitude of various types of violence since the country's independence as follows:

- 1,000s of political activists have been murdered, tortured or jailed;
- 10,000s of combatants and non-combatants have been killed in war;
- 100,000s of mainly ethnic minority villagers have been displaced from their homes in conflict zones; and
- 1,000,000s of people from all nationalities have been suffering poverty or illness as a consequence of conflict and resultant emergency governance.

Different types of violence and conflict are inter-linked. Academic generalisations suggest that **authoritarianism** more than doubles the probability of rebellious violence<sup>37</sup>. The **lack of legitimate governance** is also linked to the risk of communities arming themselves for defence (and offence), in the absence of a monopoly of legitimate law enforcement.<sup>38</sup> However, the **perception** of this relationship among the key conflicting parties is at least as important as the relationship between conditions of various types of conflict. This will be tackled in the mental mapping below.

### *Mental Maps of Divisions and Agents*

The starting point for all mental mapping of conflicts is the realisation that **the conflicting parties are not "playing the same game"**. Rather, they all perceive the conflicting parties, rules and strategies of the conflict differently.

In order to understand the moves in this multi-game, one has to be able to see the conflict game

from these different perspectives. The players are perceived differently by the conflicting parties, and the setting, rules, strategy options and consequences are all seen in a very different light in each camp. We identify the self-perception of the various conflict agents and look at how others perceive the identity of each. Through this mapping, we then summarise the relevant conflict agents as well as those dividing lines that are prone to conflict and that aid should be sensitive about. In the summary of agents we also examine cleavages from the point of view of conflict prevention, asking which cross-cutting cleavages might serve as bridges across more serious conflict-prone cleavages.

After that we present the mindset of the conflict setting and look at the options for manipulating the constructs so as to help prevent violence in the chaotic multi-game.

Identification of the agent structure is based on the interviews with stakeholders and the mapping is done on the basis of the informants' visions. To assess the conflict potential of each cleavage, we also drew systematically on previous mappings in the Burma/Myanmar literature and on comparative conflict analysis.

### *The Government*

Myanmar's military order has remained in place since the early 1960s. There are more or less two main periods: the first was dominated by General Ne Win (1962–1988) and the other has been dominated by Senior General Than Shwe (1992–today). While political authoritarianism has been a hallmark of both periods, the economic rhetoric of the State has been more market-oriented during the latter. Since 1997 the ruling organisation of the country has been misleadingly renamed the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). Before that, from 1988 to 1992, it was called the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), which better described the “state security-centred” identity of the Government.<sup>39</sup>

The Government is not, however, just the central Government. Its political structure has always combined elements of regional decentralisation and a degree of recognition of the need to accommodate the ethnic differences of the outer regions

of the country. While the centre with its seven divisions is dominated by the ethnic Bamar core, seven other recognised “national races”: Kachin, Shan, Mon, Karenni (Kayah), Karen (Kayin)<sup>40</sup>, Chin, and the Rakhine people have their own ethnic states. Yet the governance system lacks some central elements of federal decentralisation. Even more importantly, though, even the existing elements of federal governance are regional in nature, rather than ethnic, failing to give ethnic minority groups a substantive say in governance at the national level of Government.

### **Radical mental map:**

#### **The “inexistent” Government**

In the most radical mental maps of the conflict, the Government of Myanmar does not exist, since this Government was defeated in the elections of 1990. This is why “Myanmar”, the new name of the country chosen by the illegitimate Government, is non-existent. However, the effectively close to half a million troops the Myanmar leadership commands, and the economic resources and bureaucratic power it possesses have to be taken as real in any conflict mapping.

### **Official mental map:**

#### **One Government, one military**

In the mental map of Government officials and especially military officers, the Government is united: there are no sub-groups in the Government, no loyalty to military classes (like in Thailand), no regional loyalties, no political difference; just one Government and military. When reminded of the split in the military after Ne Win's rule in the late 1980s, they often refer to this experience as something that justifies and causes the current unity. The military cannot be fragmented; otherwise there is a risk of bloodshed. Furthermore, when reminded of the split between the military intelligence of Khin Nyunt, Prime Minister from 2003–2004, and the rest of the leadership, military officials often state that firing General Khin Nyunt was an example of Government and military unity: “Khin Nyunt tried to develop his own groups within the military and in the name of unity that had to be stopped” (*interview with a senior military officer*).

It seems clear that, when looking at the self-perception of the Government, we can identify one actor with a relatively coherent set of ideas on the conflict situation. However, ordinary people and aid workers seem to have a more diversified view of the Government.

### **Regional vs. central Government**

The relationship between regional troops and the central administration is very interesting. Regional commanders are very well integrated into the central administration, making them an integral part of central Government. At the same time, the centre has a strong grip on its regions through the structure of the ruling body in Burma/Myanmar, the SPDC, which reaches all the way down to township level. However, crucial political decisions are implemented in vastly differing manners in different areas of the country, testifying to relative autonomy for regional administration. According to Morten Pedersen, "Since 1988 there has been a *de facto* devolution of power to regional army commanders, who have almost unlimited authority... in their areas."<sup>41</sup> This was also evident in the implementation of the constitutional referendum in different parts of the country. For example, despite uniform statutory provisions, the ways in which the constitutional referendum was conducted show that regional administrations do have autonomous powers in transposing even the most important Government policies. While in some areas village heads were allowed to vote on behalf of villagers, in others, ethnic groups (for example, most of the Rohingya population in Sittwe) who normally lack citizen's rights were registered and regional authorities voted on their behalf. Some areas stuck to the Government-mandated dates, while in others people voted at their work places in the presence of their local Governmental or semi-Governmental (GONGO) authorities. What was common to all areas was that the administrators responsible for the area reported the results to central Government and were expected to deliver positive results demonstrating popular support for the Government/National Convention Constitution.

### **Civilian vs. military Government**

Ordinary people have distinctly different, often more positive, views on civilian Government from the Government's military personnel. Village heads often represent villagers to the military township administration in cases where the villagers need to "bargain" with the township authorities.

### **Ethnic vs. Bamar Governmental officials**

In the seven ethnic States in the country, people also often distinguish between officials of the same ethnic origin and ethnic Bamar officials, feeling that communicating with non-Bamar officials is easier and safer. Here the Government is caught up in the same dilemma as so many other Governments that rule over people divided between an ethnic majority and several minorities. While the Government itself recognises the dilemma of ethnic diversity as the foundation of the country's vulnerability, comparative conflict analysis seems to suggest that the Burma/Myanmar ethnic dilemma lies not in the country's diversity, but in the fact that Bamars are a majority race. As in Indonesia (with a Javanese majority), Pakistan (Punjabis), Fiji (Fijians), Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosniaks), Brazil (whites), East Timor (Tetum speakers), Afghanistan (Pashtuns) and Rwanda before the genocide (Hutus), minorities in Burma/Myanmar easily see the state/Government as serving the interests of the majority group only. In the minds of minorities, therefore, there is a division between local ethnic administrators and Bamar administrators. To some extent, this division extends to popular perceptions of the armed force. As in many other countries with majority ethnicities, local troops in minority areas are seen as less threatening (even if they are actually often composed of Bamars) than mobile troops.

### **Generational divisions in the Government**

Generations also create divisions in the Government administration. While at the top the position of Senior General Than Shwe has remained unchallenged since he took over as Head of State and Chairman of the SPDC in 1992, his age and physical condition is making him less active in day-to-day Government and military administration.

This enhances the profile of Joint Chief of Staff General Thura Shwe Mann and his generation. As witnessed in Indonesia, where the generational change from Suharto to Jusuf Habibie brought a major shift in orientations, such generation changes can help to reduce one-sided conflict. Regardless of his commitment or lack of commitment to democracy, General Shwe Mann must feel the temptation to make compromises with the people, simply in order to make his own governance smoother. However, while the top-level generational change offers considerable opportunities for the reduction of authoritarian violence, one cannot generalise the generational dynamics too much. While the possibility of a power shift to General Shwe Mann could open a window of opportunity, one should not expect that younger generations in Burma/Myanmar would necessarily have a stronger commitment to democracy or good governance.

#### Technocratic vs. security-oriented officials

Finally, there seems to be a division in the Government between the more technocratic-oriented and the more security-oriented individuals. Many activists and development workers claim that it is possible to get things done with technocratic ministers and their ministries. Different development workers name different people they feel they can work with, but many mention:

- the Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation (Major-General Htay Oo);
- the Minister for Culture (Major-General Khin Aung Myint);
- the Minister for Immigration, Population, Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (Major-General Maung Maung Swe);
- the Minister for Livestock and Fisheries (Brigadier-General Maung Maung Thein);
- the Minister for Telecommunications, Post and Telegraphs (Brigadier-General Thein Zaw);
- the Minister for Hotels and Tourism (Major-General Soe Naing);
- the Minister for Electricity (Major-General Khin Maung Myint);
- the Deputy Minister for Defence (Major-General Aye Myint)
- the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs (Kyaw Thu [until February 2009]).

Many other ministers and ministries are perceived to have a security mentality, which effectively creates an atmosphere of suspicion and makes cooperation for development and humanitarian objectives impossible. The division between technocratic and security-oriented bureaucrats cuts across ministries and offers very limited opportunities for aid work to navigate between individuals with different mindsets. Even under a rational minister, some departments of the ministry can be difficult to work with due to the security mindset of the administrators. Similarly, under security-obsessed ministers, some progressive work for the reduction of political violence can be done by aid actors if they manage to operate within the administrative authority areas of technocratically oriented bureaucrats.

#### Governmental “NGOs”

Important instruments of the Government are the few Governmentally sanctioned “NGOs”:

- Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA);
- Swan Arr Shin (SAS);
- Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation (MWAFF); and
- Myanmar Maternity & Child Care Association (MMCCA).

They all champion the “implementation of Government policies” as their main objective (*interviews with USDA, MWAFF and MMCCA Chairpersons*). Some analysts claim that the Government intends to build up the role of the USDA rather like President Suharto built up the role of Golkar, as a Government-run civil society organisation with a mandatory membership for public servants. A secret communication by one of the ceasefire groups suspected that the Government will even attempt to substitute the parliamentary democracy in the newly drafted Constitution with a system where popular opinion is negotiated through this “civil society” representative. According to the communication, the Government will try to negotiate ways to replace direct elections with consultations under USDA mechanisms after the new Constitution takes effect. Another view also echoes the Indonesian path: perhaps USDA could become a party, just as Golkar did in Indonesia. Others claim, however, that the Government will have to



sacrifice USDA once the new Constitution takes effect. The Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation and the Myanmar Maternity & Child Care Association represent similar Government engineering of civil society, but with less important official roles.

### *The Opposition*

Opposition to the Burma/Myanmar Government has existed ever since the country has had independent leadership. However, while the ethnic opposition is held to date back to the early days of independence, the democratic opposition in its current form is often seen as being born in the aftermath of the student riots in 1988 and the elections of 1990.

#### **Concordance within the opposition**

On the level of sentiments and basic principles, the opposition to the Government is united. If, for example, one looks at their main objections to the Government Constitution, they tend to be very similar. The strongest opposition voices set humanitarian values against authoritarian militarism and oppose the strong, unrestrained role of the military in politics. The fact that the democratic and main ethnic minority groups seek alliances through international pressure makes it natural that their rhetoric sits with internationalism and the international values of humanity.

#### **Governmental vs. opposition patriotism**

Opposition to the ultranationalist militarism of the Government can, to some extent, be read in the light of the Government's discursive strategies of associating the security of the nation with the survival of the regime: in current Myanmar political discourse, some opposition groups find patriotism and nationalism contaminated. They find it difficult to express their own patriotism, which nevertheless, can be just as strong as on the Government side.<sup>42</sup> Any efforts by pro-democracy groups or any ethnic opposition to approach the Government for dialogue will have to make it clear that these groups/individuals willing to initiate peaceful moves are patriotic, despite their opposition. Without this, they are assumed to conspire with foreign forces against the **regime=**

**state= nation= people** of Myanmar (*this claim is based on the observations of track two dialogues as well as discussions with mediators of five processes of ethnic/democratic opposition-Government dialogue*).

The opposition movement is, however, to some extent divided between:

1. organisations that belong to the coalition of political forces **who won the 1990 elections**, and
2. those **who did not**.

The group of **representatives elected in 1990** is led by:

- the election-winning coalition, the National League for Democracy (NLD; <http://www.nldla.org>)<sup>43</sup>;
- the government in exile, the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB; <http://www.ncgub.net>); and
- its Committee Representing the People's Parliament (CRPP; <http://www.ncgub.net/stat-icpages/index.php/CRPP>).

In addition to the Committee representing the parliament, former parliamentarians have other organisations, too, such as the Members of Parliament Union - Burma (MPU). The entire opposition, democratic and ethnic, that claims to have won a legitimate victory in the 1990 election has been organised into a coalition of the National Council of the Union of Burma (NCUB, [www.ncub.org](http://www.ncub.org)).

#### **The legitimacy of the movement**

However, the opposition is more of a movement, with democratic legitimacy and common basic goals, than an organisation with clear decision-making structures. Various umbrella organisations claim to represent various groups, while at the same time the membership of these groups may disagree about their support for the umbrella. Some members commit their groups to certain organisational structures, while others might fight them and commit the group to competing or even conflicting organisational structures. This is why organisational structure and formal organisations as names are less important to mapping conflict in Burma/Myanmar than charting the groups with their different sources of legitimacy and entry points to the conflict. The NLD leadership, CRPP,

NCGUB and NCUB base their claim to legitimacy and power on the election victory in 1990. While this source is consistent with democratic ideals and thus offers ideological authority to the individuals and groups, it is an inconvenient basis for decision-making power in an organisation.

Because this legitimising election took place more than 19 years ago, it is also understandable that the leadership of the mainstream pro-democracy movements is very old. Renewing the ranks without losing democratic credentials is challenging for these groups. Furthermore, due to difficulties in communication, in particular because Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has spent 14 of these 19 years in detention or under house arrest, it is not possible for the legitimate democracy movement to strategise democratic action or negotiate with the Government efficiently and flexibly. Even during the so-called “secret talks” between Aung San Suu Kyi and Major-General Kyaw Win of the SPDC’s *Office of Strategic Studies* in October 2000 and the seven meetings with Relations Minister Aung Kyi between October 2007 and October 2009, the opposition negotiator “had no access to colleagues or advisors to discuss and weigh options” (*confidential source*).

### Divisions within the opposition

On the level of organisation and strategies, however, the resistance movement is more deeply divided. The fundamental difference between the democratic and ethnic minority opposition is acknowledged in their demand for tripartite talks involving the Government, democratic opposition and ethnic minorities. Since the separate identity of a democratic and ethnic opposition is recognised, neither can represent the other. Both have to participate in negotiations and represent themselves.<sup>44</sup> This demand demonstrates how the opposition segment in the mental mapping of conflict parties is divided between two collective identities: ethnic and democratic.

**Democratic opposition.** While the democratic opposition in its current form has a shorter history than the ethnic opposition, it has still managed to develop lines of division. The division between groups that claim their legitimacy by referring to the popular mandate they gained from the 1990 elections and those who do not is naturally deeper

among the democratic opposition than among the ethnic opposition.

**Elected representatives.** The main umbrella for the first camp is the coalition that gained an overwhelming election victory in 1990, the National League for Democracy. However, the NLD is also seen to be divided between

1. the **military elements** (former supporters of ex-dictator General Ne Win),
2. **former communists** and
3. **parliamentary democrats** (former supporters of Burma’s first Prime Minister U Nu and students).<sup>45</sup>

Most experts consider that the first group is the strongest of these three factions. However, time is against them, as most of the influential people in this subset are growing very old and many of the group’s leading figures have already died.

### *Students of the 1988 uprising and other groups.*

Most of the students who started the protests in 1988 and who were released from prison at the turn of the millennium would have liked to join the NLD after being freed. They found it inappropriate to work under the banner of a student organisation twenty years after their college days.<sup>46</sup> However, their movement was not accepted under the NLD umbrella. Consequently, along with many less organised popular opposition groups, such as the spontaneous groups of monks who protested with the people in September 2007, the students of the ‘88 Generation have remained a civil society group without formal affiliation to a democratic mainstream organisation. Moreover, some former members of the NLD have been excluded from the coalition due to disagreements with the party leadership, especially its iconic leader, Aung San Suu Kyi. These people are just as much a part of the civil society movement that resists military rule, but do not organise their protest under the umbrella of the NLD. According to most democracy activists and observers interviewed for this study, the power of this spontaneous protest is stronger than any power held by the groups organised under the banner of the election-winning coalition or its substitute Government and parliament.

However, the movement of the ‘88 Generation is also organisationally weak. Most of its leaders

have been in jail since the September 2007 demonstrations and policy leadership is in the hands of people who do not have the authority to change or negotiate the political course. Furthermore, the movement is divided between:

1. those who want to **open lines of dialogue** with the Government and
2. those who are **less compromising** (like the leader of the group, Min Ko Naing).
3. Between these groups there were **mediating forces** seeking to unite the movement. Rather than achieving unity, the mediators soon found themselves caught in a new faction between the compromising and uncompromising forces.

*Gender and generational divisions. Securitisation of family relations.* In addition to the organisational divisions that can be identified, there are naturally also generational and gender divisions that broadly based aid activities have to take into account. The gender aspect of conflict is often recognised when people are in different camps, such as occupying soldiers and local women. Recent scholarship reveals, however, that there is also violent conflict within the main camps along the gender divide. In most conflict societies, the family relationships of freedom fighters become “securitised”: family fathers (90 per cent of freedom fighters are men) are granted extraordinary prerogatives and the family then has to put up with their often violent expressions of frustration. All this derives from the security framing of family relations. Just as the primacy of State security gives soldiers license to treat women as they please, so the securitisation of families permits fathers to commit domestic violence. While there are no reliable statistics on this issue in the case of Burma/Myanmar, previous examples of domestic violence among freedom fighters in East Timor<sup>47</sup> reveal the pattern. When identifying conflict actors and dividing lines, we must, therefore, recognise the gender line between soldiers and ordinary women, but also between members of conflict families. Aid work can tackle the conflict on both of these “frontlines”.

**Ethnic opposition.** The existence of the NLD coalition and the various organisations linking the ethnic and democratic opposition testify to a degree of unity between these two main strands. However, opposition to the Government tends to be the uniting factor, whereas **future strategies for the coun-**

**try tend to divide the opposition.** Mirroring the Government emphasis on the need for unified Myanmar defence against foreign actors, many ethnic organisations view the need for unified democratic resistance to the Government with suspicion. A member of the 1990 parliament representing an ethnic party summarises this suspicion in the following manner: “I think the NLD is not clear on ... their stance on ethnic rights. I am suspicious of some leaders of the party. Whenever they meet us, they pretend as if they appreciate our right. But they repeatedly committed chauvinistic acts in the past. The ‘88 Generation also has that sentiment. But I think the younger generation is more flexible on the issue. I believe we can make them understand the problem of ethnic minorities.”

Likewise, there is the sense of a dividing line between the ethnic and democratic opposition: “Democracy will not help Kachin nationals (ethnic issue) since democracy concerns only individuals” (*interview material from Kachin State, November 2008*). “What Kachins” and other ethnic minorities “need is not individual, but group rights.”

*Divisions within ethnic groups.* There are also cleavages within ethnic groups. Before 1990, the main cleavage took shape around the relationship to **communism**, with on the one hand:

- ethnic groups within the Burmese Communist Party, e.g.
  - the United Wa State Army;
  - Kokang Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA);
  - the National Democratic Alliance Army, the Mongla group in Eastern Shan State (NDAA), and
  - the New Democratic Army of Kachin (NDAK)
  - and on the other:
- members of the National Democratic Front (NDF) with an anti-communist agenda, e.g.
  - Karen National Union (KNU);
  - Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO);
  - New Mon State Party (NMSF);
  - Shan State Army, North (Shan SSA-N);
  - Pao National Organisation (Pao PNO);
  - Palaung State Liberation Party (Palaung PSLP);
  - Kayan New Land Party (Kayan KNLP);



- Shan SSNLPO, and
- Shan SSNA.

When the Cold War ended, however, the prominent division between communists and anti-communists largely lost its meaning. The new divisions related instead to detailed group objectives and the strategies for achieving them, and the first ceasefire agreements were concluded.

Achieving recognition for ethnic minority rights in national politics and a degree of ethnic autonomy in state politics is an objective shared by all ethnic minority organisations. However, ethnic groups are divided about the operational aspects, as **autonomy rights** are:

1. **defined in relation to different groups** (giving autonomy to different ethnicities) and
2. **sought by different strategies:**
  - a) exile vs. Myanmar-based strategies
  - b) ceasefire vs. violent strategies.

The first division is between:

- groups that define ethnic minority rights as **confined to the seven main historically recognised nationalities**: Shan, Kachin, Karen, Mon, Chin, Rakhine and Karenni, and
- those who say that **smaller ethnic groups should equally enjoy ethnic minority rights** (such as autonomy and representation in national decision-making).

The other is between:

- groups who **try to achieve ethnic minority rights by agreeing a ceasefire with the Government**, and
- those who **continue to fight the Government**.

Strategy also divides the ethnic movement between:

- those fighting for ethnic minority rights **inside** Burma/Myanmar and
- those fighting them in **exile** from outside the country.

For mapping aimed at identifying opportunities for NGOs and aid work, it is more important to establish the principal frontlines than to analyse these organisations in detail. This is simply because **institutions and organisations matter so much less in the reality of aid and conflict than divisions between groups of people**. More about which groups have

signed up to a ceasefire and which are still fighting in an ethnic alliance under the National Democratic Front, and about their political wings in the Ethnic Nationalities Council, can be found in the conflict mapping by Timo Kivimäki and Morten Pedersen (2008), *Burma: Mapping the Challenges and Opportunities for Dialogue and Reconciliation*.<sup>48</sup>

**Complex relations: Sub-ethnicities vs. dominant local ethnicity.** It is not always realised, but many sub-ethnicities feel just as threatened by a dominant local ethnic minority as by the ethnic majority, the Barmars.

In some cases, the problematic position of the smaller groups has led them to form strategic alliances with central Government. The Government has been perceived as the strongest counterbalance to the main ethnic minorities. Too often among members of the main ethnicities, smaller groups are either seen as distractions from the unity of their ethnic state, or, even worse, as an artificial product of Government manipulation.<sup>49</sup> According to many activists and fighters belonging to the seven main ethnic groups, smaller groups are somehow not real. Very often the existence of the seven ethnicities is presented as a natural phenomenon by drawing on notions of biology or political history (notably the historical existence of ethnic states). The very same sources are used to demonstrate the non-existence of the other groups, and the argument is reinforced by invoking the Government's desire to divide its opposition. According to the Director of the Euro-Burma Office, "In political terms, there are only 8 ethnic-based states, not 135 – Arakan (Rakhain), Bamar, Chin, Kachin, Shan, Kayah (Karenni), Karen, and Mon. The so-called 135 national races are actually the number of different dialects spoken by the three major sub-groups. The problem, therefore, is not as complicated as that painted by the military."<sup>50</sup>

However, the fact that members of several smaller groups perceive themselves as ethnic entities constitutes a social reality, and so these groups should be included in a conflict map of agent structure.

At the same time, the Government often states that **Myanmar has over a hundred (135) ethnic nationalities**, a clear acknowledgement that the eight main ethnicities are not the whole story. Yet the Government Constitution differentiates between ethnicities entitled to States and those only enti-

tled to Special Regions. From the outside, it seems apparent that three layers of ethnicity should be taken into account in Burma/Myanmar: the ethnic majority, the main minorities and the smaller groups. While the ethnic minorities fear the unity that democrats need when taking on a dictatorial Government, sub-ethnicities often fear the unity that the main ethnic minorities impose on sub-ethnicities by way of simple majoritarianism. While many ethnic Bamar politicians feel impatient to tackle the question of democracy first, and only afterwards the issue of federal protection for ethnic groups, ethnic minorities feel that protection should first be extended to the seven main ethnic minorities. At the same time, however, sub-ethnic groups feel dissatisfied about the idea of starting federalism with only eight ethnic States.

If the Shan minority obtain full control of the **Shan State**, will they grant any autonomy to the Wa, Pao or Kokang (Laukang or other smaller groups) in the Shan State? If the **Karen State** acquires autonomy, will it extend its minority protection to the Buddhist Karens? If **Rakhine State** becomes autonomous, what will be the position of the Rohingya population or the Myo Chin minority? This is why many smaller ethnicities feel it is a problem if they cannot all be equal despite their historical lack of recognition. In areas controlled by the New Mon State Party, “Mon-ness” is a condition for participating in politics. Similarly, the State exercises ethnic migration control.<sup>51</sup>

Clearly, underneath the main triangle formed by the Government, democratic opposition and main ethnic minorities there lies another **triangle comprising the Government, the main historical ethnic groups** (Chin<sup>52</sup>, Arakan/Rakhine, Kachin, Mon, Karen, Karenni and Shan) **and smaller groups**. Many of the sub-ethnicities or smaller ethnic groups have forged strategic alliances with the Government by joining the Government-controlled National Convention in a bargaining attempt to protect the political influence of smaller groups from the larger groups.

If one looks at the **shadow constitution** by the exiled *Federal Constitution Drafting and Cooperation Council*<sup>53</sup>, composed of the main ethnic minorities, one clearly sees the problem smaller ethnicities are dealing with. The shadow constitution offers a markedly less autonomous role to the sub-ethnicities

than the Government offers in its “imposed” Constitution. For example, according to the shadow constitution, the Wa and Kokang, who are distinct from the Shan, would be subjected to the Shan State authority with no constitutional means of achieving a unit of political governance for themselves. In the Government Constitution both groups would have a status as autonomous special regions with education in their ethnic languages (Chinese-based dialects), administered directly below the State and not subject to the rule of the Shan State.

### The case of the Myo Chin

The question of sub-ethnicities is sometimes benign, as it is less conflict-prone, and yet politically challenging. For example, many Myo Chins feel they are Chin, even though they are officially recognised as Rakhine. In addition, they would like to have their direct representation in national politics as well as perhaps some more autonomy in their own affairs (*interview with Myo students*). In general, many Myos feel that they have been well-represented by the Rakhine, and they do not feel problems with Chin autonomy. They also sympathised with the projects of the main ethnic minorities against the central Government by voting against the Constitution and by joining the anti-Government demonstrations in September 2007. Yet, many would still rather like to be considered an independent ethnic group with the same rights as the seven main ethnic minorities. This is only one sample of many similar cases.

**“Foreign” sub-ethnicities.** However, in the case of some other smaller groups, the relationship with the local ethnic majority is much more tense. In some cases the **distinction between “national races” and foreign races** leaves some ethnicities by definition beyond any political rights. Even these groups are often critical towards the Government.

### The case of the Rohingya

For example, many Rohingya people have had a (sometimes continuing) battle of their own with the Rakhine, the locally privileged ethnic

minority in Rakhine State. At times this division still leads to riots and conflicts, as in Nadjji Village in Sittwe a decade ago. In the case of the Rohingya, discrimination comes equally from central Government and the Rakhine State authorities, as both tend to see this ethnic group as Bangladeshi. It has been suggested that links between certain Rohingya groups and some radical Bangladeshi and international Muslim groups, combined with an obvious disregard by the local, national and international communities of the problems faced by the stateless Rohingya, is a time bomb that could explode into violence at any time.

### The case of the Wa

In the case of the Wa ethnicity, whose origin is often locally traced to China, fighting other Shan groups has a long historical tradition. At the same time, due to the recognition by central Government of the Wa Special Autonomy, this group, like many Shan and other groups, sees more prospects in the Government's plans for decentralisation than in the proposals from groups emphasising Shan autonomy. This is clear in the Wa leader's statements on the National Convention, which was re-adjourned by the Government for the purpose of Constitution-drafting. "We have participated in the National Convention since 1993 and will stay with it to the end – it is the first time since 1948 that we Wa have been able to express our concerns and desires directly to the national Government."<sup>54</sup>

According to the Wa leader of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Special Region, their status as independent from the Shan State is an important issue, and is much appreciated by the Wa. The Wa came out of the National Convention very disillusioned, as the Wa group did not gain a state but had to settle for special region status. In spite of this, the situation for the Wa is undeniably more autonomous under the Government Constitution than it would be under the shadow constitution drawn up by the ethnic majorities in exile.

While the main ethnic minorities seek alliances with the international democratic community, many of the sub-ethnicities and smaller

ethnic groups do not have the same commitment to democracy. According to a UN Official, cited by the International Crisis Group, "The Wa only know Red Guard administration. They extract an opium tax, a rice tax, and hit down hard on any crime... There is no understanding of planning or participation... The security guard is not under control."<sup>55</sup>

Furthermore, almost total independence during the ceasefire period, along with enough military strength to resist any Government attempt to dominate Wa policies, guarantees the group a status much better than under the Shan State, with no guarantees of any autonomy. This direct contact with the central administration, rather than merely being represented in central administration by the larger Shan group, means a lot for the Wa leadership. As the leader of the United Wa State (Army) Party/Special Region 2 put it in the presence of high Myanmar and international officials: "Before, we only talked to the Shan." While high Government officials politely call the Wa "foreign minister" Mr Foreign Minister, and the "prime" and "defence ministers" Mr Prime Minister and Mr Defence Minister in the presence of foreign observers, it is doubtful if any alternative arrangement within the Shan State could match the benefits received by the Wa from the military Government. While the position of the Kokang, Kha/Akha and Pao forces cannot be compared to the military strength of the Wa, the treatment of the officials of Special Region 1 (Kokangs and Shans), Special Region 4 (Kha/Akha and Shans) and the Shan Special Region 6 (Paos) is comparable to what the Wa experience. While Government troops can enter some of the Special Regions of the territories controlled by sub-ethnicities and smaller ethnic groups in some areas (for example, in the Wa and the Kha Akha), they do not have that permit from the special regions. In neither the Kokang (Special Region 1), the Monghla (Shan Special Region 4) nor the Wa (Shan Special Region 2) areas, it is possible to use Myanmar telephone or internet networks or even Myanmar currency, as since they are linked to the Chinese communication systems and use the Yuan as a means of payment. All official communication will be done in the Kokang



and Wa dialects of Chinese. Even the time zone is different from the rest of Burma/Myanmar, at least in Monghla. It is therefore only natural that the local armies of smaller ethnic groups are not only defending the rights of their groups against the power-greedy military regime, but also (if not primarily) against the greater ethnic group of the Shan.

*Sub-ethnicities “belonging to the centre.”* In addition to being foreign, a sub-ethnicity can be marginalised on suspicion of “belonging to the centre”. In some cases, common characteristics with the Bamar people make small groups “centre look-alikes” and hence subject to aggression that is actually being displaced from the centre.

#### The case of Christian Karens

In the case of the Buddhist Karens, the fact that Christianity is an identity marker that distinguishes Karens from the majority population makes the position of the Buddhist Karens difficult. Buddhist Karens often feel discriminated against within the Karen movements, including the movement fighting for Karen independence. Two Buddhist groups have left the Karen National Union, made a ceasefire with the Government and joined the National Convention. According to Phado Aung San and U Tha Htoo Kyaw, discrimination from the Christian Karens in the KNU was the main reason for the separation of these two groups from the KNU.<sup>56</sup> These Buddhist factions now fear the “Christian KNU” as much as they fear central Government. At the same time, the Government and especially the military security affairs branch, which is now responsible for military intelligence and special operations (such as negotiations with insurgent groups), uses these divisions and tries to negotiate with whoever shows willing on ceasefires. Through this Government activity, the perception of the Buddhist groups as semi-central and less Karen than the Christian Karens became a reality: the Buddhist groups that felt discriminated against were happy to negotiate a separate agreement with the Government on transitional autonomy and a ceasefire that allowed them to keep their weapons.

The marginalisation of sub-groups in minority ethnic States is an important dividing line in the Burma/Myanmar conflict and it is not confined to the cases outlined above. The examples described are merely meant to illustrate the frontlines. Many ethnic Bamar in the ethnic States present even better cases of this division between genuine citizens of the ethnic minority States and people who are easily seen as symbolising the central State. This line of demarcation is especially relevant for conflict prevention, given that globally the frustration felt by ethnic minorities often displaces its target from the distant centre to local symbols of central power.<sup>57</sup> If the centre is too strong and frightening, its vulnerable symbols in the ethnic States are in danger of becoming substitutes for the centre in the frustration-based aggression of the ethnic minorities.

*Ceasefire vs. non-ceasefire groups.* There is a basic dilemma about which ethnic groups should enjoy minority rights, autonomy and special access to decision-making at the centre. Moreover, the strategy of fighting for minority rights also creates divisions. The divide between ceasefire groups and non-ceasefire groups, especially the National Democratic Front groups who have continued their armed struggle, is an important line of conflict demarcation. For the security of some of the most cooperative ceasefire groups, those groups still engaged in armed struggle constitute a major threat, a danger greater than the Government.

The position of the 7<sup>th</sup> **Brigade of the KNU** is a good example. After making a ceasefire with the Government in February 2007, the leader of this Brigade, Brigadier-General Saw Tin Maung, and his troops have been under constant threat from the rest of the KNU/KNLA (Karen National Liberation Army, <http://knla.meabs.com>).

Another example: Before the ceasefire by the Kachin Independence Organisation, the two Kachin ceasefire groups, the New Democratic Army of Kachin (NDAK, Kachin State Special Region 2) and the Kachin Defence Army (Shan Special Region 4) were in a relatively similar situation. While trying to emphasise the unity of Kachins or Karens, these groups often clash with non-ceasefire groups, who consider the ceasefire groups to be traitors.

*Ceasefire groups.* However, the ceasefire groups as a set are also **heterogeneous**. Some of them are leading a **double life**, working within the Government Constitution and the National Council while at the same time keeping up the option of armed struggle.

*Ceasefire groups critical of the Constitution.* Several signatories to the National Convention's constitutional principles raised fundamental objections to the official principles before and after their signing. These objections were eventually presented as objections by the **Kachin Independence Organisation** (19 points, see Annex 3), but in reality they were prepared by several groups. As their objections were not even considered, these groups maintained a reserved attitude towards the Constitution. According to one of the interlocutors in a campaign by the three critical ceasefire groups, these groups were even campaigning against it before the referendum on the Constitution in May 2008. As the country is now preparing to mobilise for multi-party elections, these groups are divided between people who play by the rules in the new political situation and those who rely on weapons to challenge these rules, if necessary.

*Ceasefire groups cooperating with the Constitution (but against disarmament).* In addition to ceasefire groups critical of the Constitution, some groups that did not share the KIO's concerns also have their potential conflict issues with the Government. Especially precarious is the question of whether the military forces of these groups will be disarmed and integrated into the national armed forces, or whether they will remain semi-autonomous. In most of the ceasefire agreements (which are verbal "gentlemen's" agreements), the military Government allowed the ceasefire groups to keep their armed units until a new constitution was adopted and a new government took office. However, in April 2009 the Government announced unilaterally that all armed ceasefire groups would have to integrate their armed units into the border guards controlled by the military Government. The Government expects that once the Constitution has been approved there should be no independent troops besides the national army.

However, while this is an ongoing process at the time of writing, our discussions with many of the ceasefire groups reveal that this assumption is not

widely shared. It seems that the **Buddhist Karen** groups had never even heard about the request to disarm, while the **7<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the KNU** mentioned non-disarmament as one of their four non-negotiable stands (*public speech by the leader of the 7<sup>th</sup> Brigade, in the presence of high Myanmar officials*). According to some Kachin State leaders: "Current military Government has been urging **KIO** to surrender arms even before the referendum. It is likely that KIO will even face harder demand from the military Government if KIO plans to participate in the 2010 election as a political party." This issue is especially critical for the Wa ethnic army, the **United Wa State Army**, which is said to be more than 20,000 troops strong. Persuading this army might be a crucial challenge for the Myanmar Government.<sup>58</sup>

Furthermore, many stakeholders and members of organisations who were interviewed felt that in some cases the cooperative and critical ceasefire groups have considerable potential for conflict. According to one activist close to the KIO, for example, "one should not talk about ceasefire groups at all as a coherent group, as some of these groups were never in real conflict with the Government and their ceasefire activities can only be understood in the context of the Government's manipulation." According to the Ethnic Nationalities Council ([www.enburma.org/](http://www.enburma.org/)), which does also represent the political voice of ethnic groups still fighting, some of the ceasefire group leaders joined the legal fold out of interest in financial gains for their leaders, while others gained logging and mining concessions.<sup>59</sup> As entities that are perceived to have been created by the Government's divide-and-rule policies, these groups, likewise, are often substitute targets of resistance, particularly when the resistance sees the Government as too threatening to be hit directly. This has been the pattern in many conflicts, such as in South Africa's transition conflict (clashes between Inkatha and the African National Congress), and in many cases these clashes within the resistance itself claim more lives than clashes between the real enemies.

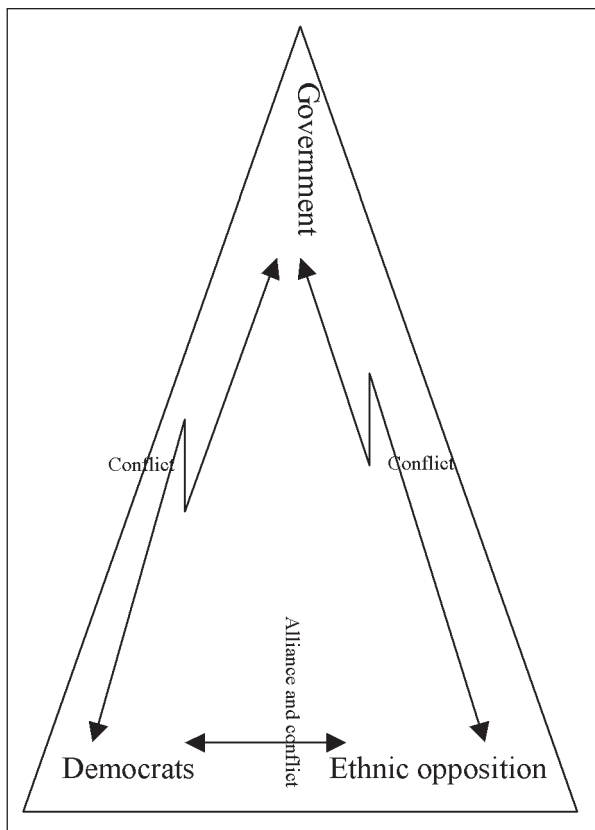
*Political wings ready for compromise vs. armed groups.* Finally, the ethnic groups engaged in fighting are divided between political wings more amenable to compromise and armed groups. This division does not imply a threat of conflict. However, it complicates any peace process. If the polit-

ical wings that are drafting shadow constitutions and negotiating peace agreements are not in control of the fighters, how can peace be negotiated?

### *Conclusion: agents and divisions*

In conclusion, instead of listing names of abstract organisations (which can change quickly and will have a limited relevance anyway), we will draw a map identifying the lines of demarcation and conflict between different positions in the conflict.

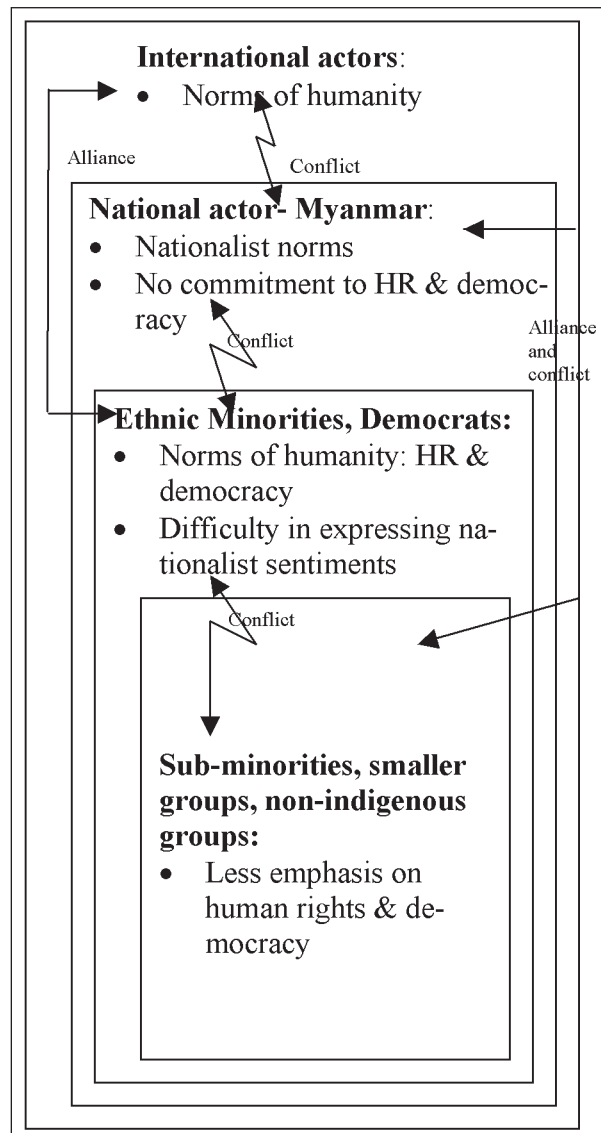
First, the main lines of cleavage have often been described as triangular, where all three players are antagonistic towards each other.



**Figure 1: Basic agent structure**

It has to be admitted however, that this picture is only partially correct, as there seems to be a more complicated hierarchy in the ethnic conflict. To some extent, the ethnic cleavages structure follows the basic logic of human aggression and hierarchy by Konrad Lorenz<sup>60</sup>, where each level seeks alliances among the enemies of their enemies, often on a level right above one's own superior. **The oppressor of your oppressor is your potential friend.**

**Figure 2:**  
**Complex hierarchy of ethnic struggle**



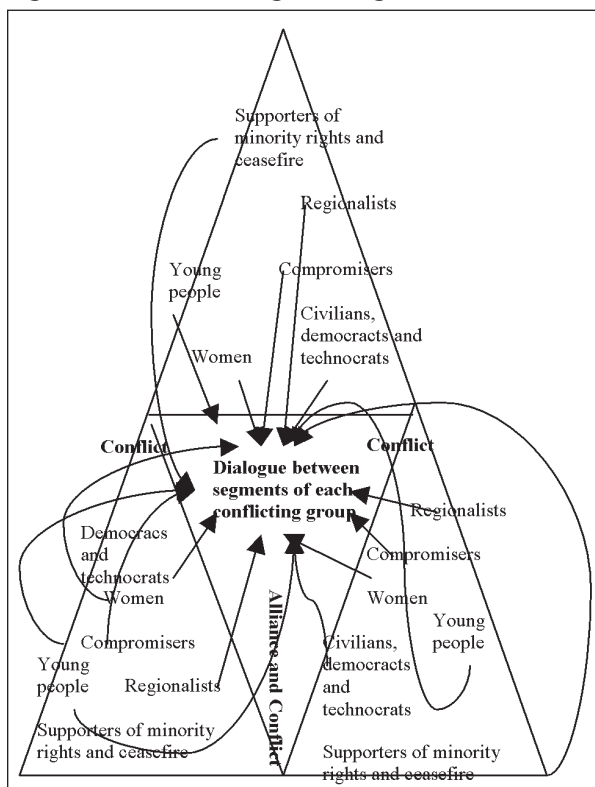
Nevertheless, in addition to the big picture, conflict mapping must systematically identify the cleavages that affect the conflict situation. As we shall see below, comparative studies of conflict have discovered ways not only to bridge conflict-prone cleavages, but also to use cleavages that cut across the frontlines as a tool for bringing conflicting parties together. Peacemaking is full of examples where local peace deals across frontlines have been facilitated by using gender as a cross-cutting cleavage, in settings where women on both sides jointly and in co-ordinated fashion push the conflicting parties towards compromises.<sup>61</sup> In other cases, the common cross-cutting identity of professional groups has managed to aid the peace

process by building a bridge of loyalty between lawyers, soldiers or diplomats.<sup>62</sup>

So the cleavages must be found, summarised and divided into two categories. This means identifying cleavages that can be **used** and those that need to be **bridged** for peace. In some cases, a cleavage that is conflict-prone can itself be used to bridge an even more dangerous cleavage. The following cleavages will later (in Part III: Aid and Conflict) be treated as ones that can be used for peace building:

1. Cleavage between different orientations towards democracy in the Government
2. Generational cleavages in the Government
3. Division between security-obsessed people and technocrats in the Government
4. Cleavages between regional and central governance
5. Cleavage between people of civilian and military orientation, in both Government and opposition
6. Cleavage between opposition figures who want to compromise and those who do not
7. Gender cleavage
8. Cleavage between ethnic minorities and minorities within minorities
9. Cleavage between ceasefire groups and non-ceasefire groups
10. Cleavages between indigenous and non-indigenous ethnicities

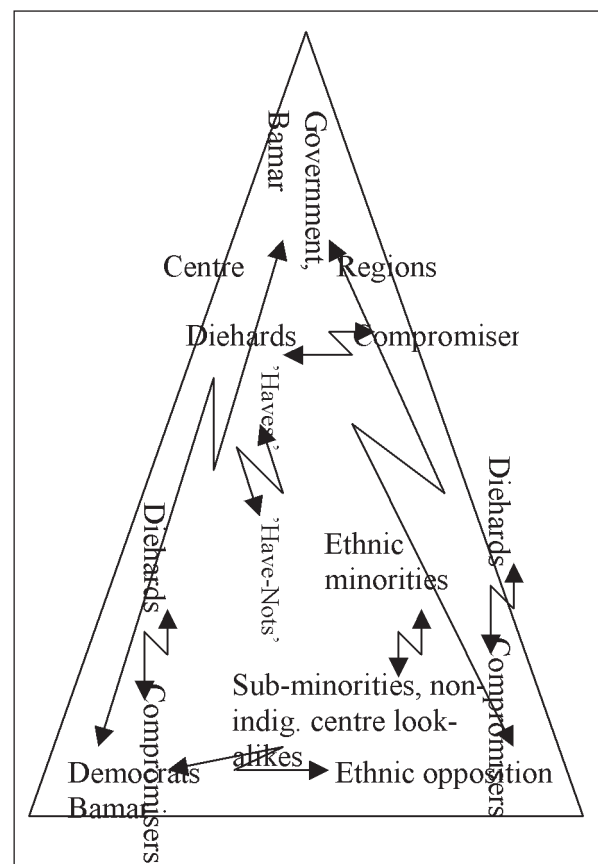
Figure 3: Cross-cutting cleavages



Some of the above-mentioned cleavages might have conflict potential, but so might the ones that can be used for conflict prevention. So some of the cleavages summarised here as needing to be bridged are, in fact, sometimes the same as those listed for cross-cutting and bridge-building. The cleavages that **have developed** and **can develop** into conflict antagonisms are the following:

1. Government and democratic opposition
2. Government and ethnic opposition
3. Major and minor ethnic groups
4. Ethnic and democratic opposition
5. Ethnic groups and sub-ethnicities
6. Indigenous groups and "migrant groups"
7. Centre look-alikes and main minorities
8. "Haves" and "have-nots"
9. Ceasefire groups and Government (especially on disarmament)
10. Ceasefire groups and non-ceasefire groups
11. Diehards and compromisers
  - a. in the Government
  - b. in the democratic opposition
  - c. in the ethnic opposition
12. Exiles/Representatives of 1990 winners and local opposition
13. Gender cleavages

Figure 4: Conflict cleavages





## Mental Maps: Conflict

### *How does the Military Government perceive the conflict?*

Even a superficial mental mapping of authoritative texts on security by the Government reveals the conceptual and mental **association between security and regime survival**. Opposition to the regime is seen as bringing about chaos, external interference, violence and even terrorism<sup>63</sup>, while the casualties of the authoritarian handling of the opposition are attributed to opposition activity. For example, the events of 1988 were used by the Government to argue that the September 2007 demonstrations were an existential security threat to the country and its people. The Government perceives the tragedy of 1988 as totally unjustified unrest by underprivileged elements of society agitated by immature students influenced by Western agents. The Government, then, is a long way from admitting that the over 3,000 casualties were caused by authoritarian violence, which is the perception of the opposition and the international community.<sup>64</sup> In the words of the Minister of Information: "In 1988 the anarchistic unrest took place and the nation's administrative machinery was stopped. The safety of lives and properties of the public was jeopardized."<sup>65</sup> In this mental map, resistance is seen as a security threat that not only places the safety of the people and the State at risk, but also compromises Burmese independence by inviting international infiltration to the country.

### **Distinguishing between the security of the people, security of the state and security of the regime**

There is a tendency not to distinguish between the power of the regime and the security of the people and State. This constitutes an official social reality in which any civil society activity critical towards the regime is seen as a threat to security. More than that: it is associated with violence. For example, any activity advocating a "no-vote" or "vote no" in the constitutional referendum in May 2009 was considered subversive and a security threat. It is clear that a different concept of security is needed, making the distinction between regime survival and systemic, national survival and leaving space

for democracy and for activity to reduce authoritarian violence. In a context where the Government is declaring its willingness to open the country for multi-party elections, this association between regime survival and national survival is a practical contradiction. If the popular will cannot, for instance, be directed against the regime in power in the course of elections, democracy is not possible.

### **Governance challenges vs. territorial challenges**

Because regime and national survival are linked, governance challenges and territorial challenges are treated differently. Governance challenges are by definition security challenges, as they endanger regime survival, while the threat from territorial challenges is more limited. Consequently, territorial challenges can be negotiated. As a result, Government perceptions of democratic protesters and ethnic opposition groups are framed differently. While the latter are seen as a conflict problem, the former are seen more as a matter of fundamental law enforcement. Democratic protest is less legitimate than ethnic protest and so it is not dealt with in a conflict resolution framework. While the Government accepts having to negotiate with ethnic groups, it sees dialogue with the democratic opposition simply as designed to curb its "defiance of all orders, confrontation, imposing four kinds of sanctions, and relying on external elements". Democratic opposition can be engaged only if these policies are renounced. Before restarting negotiations with Aung San Suu Kyi in October 2007, the Government set this very same condition for dialogue.

### **"Myanmar as an inherently vulnerable nation"**

Another important element in the Government's mental map of the conflict is the idea of Myanmar as an inherently vulnerable nation. Discipline and military primacy, and what Western countries see as authoritarian violence, are based on and legitimised by this Government discourse about "Myanmar as a vulnerable state". This vulnerability is caused by the ethnic diversity of the country: "the military likes to advertise that there are '135 national races' in Burma implying that without a **strong military** to hold the country together, the country will fall apart."<sup>66</sup> This is another reason why the Government treats its ethnic opponents,

unlike the democratic opposition, as conflicting parties, and not just a law-and-order problem. Because of the country's ethnic diversity, there is a vulnerability to conflict and disintegration. It follows that there is a need for the centrality of the military establishment in the Myanmar political system.<sup>67</sup> This perception of constant threat **securitises all politics** and downgrades all other priorities in comparison to the security priorities of the State. This mindset is at the core of the indirect casualties in the country's conflicts. For example, at the time of writing this report the Chin State was experiencing a famine. Although manpower is needed to bring rice to the affected areas, it is instead used to carry ammunition to military bases. When the armed forces were needed to tackle immediate humanitarian concerns related to Cyclone Nargis, national security and the survival of the regime required military resources to be spent on implementing the Government's strategy of political change and the constitutional referendum. The priority of narrowly defined State/regime security overrides the priorities of welfare and development, and this contributes to human suffering and seems to be one of the main reasons for the backwardness of the country.

### A "modern developmentalist State"

Yet it is interesting to note that, in the Government's mental map, the interests of development and humanitarian concerns are not compromised by security priorities. According to the Government, Myanmar is building a modern developmentalist State<sup>68</sup>, while headlines in the Government press claim that accusations by Western media that "Myanmar is subject to poverty, famine and eco slump is totally untrue".<sup>69</sup> In addition, accusations of human rights violations and conflict, as well as drug offences are, in the Government's view, untrue.<sup>70</sup> However, discussions with the technocratic-oriented leadership reveal that the total denial of humanitarian and economic and security problems are perhaps more **propaganda** than part of the genuine Government mental map (*sources: confidential interviews with Government officials*). However, it is a short distance from propaganda to Government framing. Many claims that were originally made as propaganda – like the claim that several opposition organisations were

in fact terrorists – have become official truths that the Government lives by. The non-existence of humanitarian problems is an official truth to parts of the Government, but the fact that many technocrats are actually devoting their time to solving these issues demonstrates that the non-existence of these problems is not a reality for them.

### So where does the Government see the "real" conflict?

Ethnic conflict seems to be something the Government treats as a genuine conflict problem and tackles with measures typical of conflict management, such as ceasefires or peace negotiations. However, the main focus is on **non-state conflicts between ethnic minorities and the sub-ethnicities**. The Government is especially eager to emphasise this aspect of conflict to the international community. That is natural, as this type of conflict is more difficult to blame on the Government. Indeed, conflict between ethnicities calls for Governmental arbitration. For the Government, **national consolidation** as an objective means strengthening national unity in the face of an inherent risk of ethnic disintegration.

While the Government's obvious emphasis is on ethnic groups fighting each other, there is also some recognition of **conflict between the ethnic opposition and the Government**. In response to this conflict divide, the Government set up mechanisms for ceasefire negotiations and supervised the constitutional dialogue within the framework of the National Convention, completed in autumn 2007.

Those who remained outside this dialogue were still subjected to normal conflict measures, but also to other measures that affect Western aid even more directly. In order to demonstrate the benefits of peaceful relations with the Government, ceasefire group areas were created (partly to offer access to the Myanmar armed forces, but also to show genuine good-will to the ethnic groups in these areas). By contrast, non-ceasefire areas were not only left without Government development schemes, but foreign donors and humanitarian aid workers were denied access to these areas as well. It was not just that non-ceasefire areas received no **humanitarian assistance**, but the instrument of denying humanitarian assistance to areas critical of the

Government was, according to some aid workers interviewed by the authors, used against villages and areas where anti-Government demonstrations took place in September 2007. None of this is done openly. Rather, the Government explains that humanitarian aid workers cannot be allowed into areas where their security cannot be guaranteed.<sup>71</sup> A slightly more open high Government official also spoke about the **political (non-military) security** threat that operations in these areas could affect. While not specifying what these threats were, it seemed obvious that the reference was to the incitement and encouragement that foreign operators could stimulate in these already vulnerable rebellious areas. Furthermore, the Government reference to political security may also be related to the fact that bad news from Myanmar will produce bad publicity in the international community. This, in turn, could harm the Myanmar regime's efforts to gain international recognition and good-will. **The security the Government talks about is again closer to the security of the regime than security of the State** (let alone people).

### *How do groups opposing the Government perceive the conflict and authoritarianism?*

For the opposition, authoritarian violence and conflict are associated. **Authoritarian violence**, again, is attributed to **the military**, its political power and the lack of a law and order enforcement framework that would place limits on military power and define the consequences of power abuse. All this is very clear from the unanimous reactions against articles in the Government Constitution that grant freedoms and powers to the armed forces (*interviews with a number of ethnic resistance organisations and democracy groups*).

Like the Government, **the fighting groups** also tend to associate their activities with efforts to resist the inherent violence of their enemy, the military regime, and their own activities during conflict. Yet they tend to see repression and their own violence in the context of the conflict and aim to push the Government towards **national reconciliation through tripartite negotiation** between the Government – which, although perceived as illegitimate, is seen as a legitimate negotiation partner – and the ethnic and democratic opposition.

The democratic opposition understands that structural violence emanates from the lack of democracy under Myanmar's military rule, while the ethnic opposition associates violence with the lack of rights for ethnic groups and ethnic self-determination.<sup>72</sup>

### **Democratic opposition, authoritarian violence and conflict**

For the democratic opposition, authoritarian violence can only be countered by pressurising the Government. For the fighting groups, such as the All Burmese Student Association, armed struggle is equally part of the strategy to reduce authoritarian violence. **Provoking the Government** to greater atrocities against the fighting groups could also be one of the main strategic rationales for armed struggle since the Government consolidated its position in the first half of the 1990s. Government action against the democratic opposition always strengthens international pressure against the Government and thus contributes, in the mental map of the democratic opposition, to reducing authoritarian violence. However, due to the prevailing asymmetry of military strength, not much use is currently made of armed struggle. That is why **demonstrations** have been seen as a more useful strategy to **step up international pressure**.<sup>73</sup>

### **Ethnic opposition, conflict and authoritarian violence**

For the ethnic resistance groups, the function of their own violence is more complicated. On the one hand, several groups claim that defending their people against authoritarian violence is the main rationale for their armed presence. On the other, further elaboration often reveals an **identity factor**, too.<sup>74</sup> Ethnic militias normally invite Government action rather than merely defending against it. Areas with an active militia presence are subjected to a much greater level of Government pressure and repression than areas with no insurgency. This is also recognised by the fighting groups whose relative power vis-à-vis the Government is weakening – which means that the physical defence argument is weakening as well. This has made the identity factor all the more prominent.



For example, the role played by the KNU's military wing in the Karen State, the **Karen Peoples' Liberation Army (KPLA)**, has secured an objective infrastructure, including schools and cultural programmes to preserve a separate Karen identity. However, in addition to that, the need to commit to an armed struggle against a common enemy also consolidates the feeling that there is a need for Karen solidarity.

### Exile groups, conflict and authoritarianism

The final political objective of the struggle is sometimes confused. Clearly, especially in the struggle of the exile groups, the objective of putting pressure on the Government is often confused with an objective of defeating the Government or an objective of articulating a social reality where the illegitimate Government does not exist. For example, the insistence by the NCGUB in the Federal Constitution Drafting and Coordination Committee (FCDCC) that the shadow constitution should be treated as valid constitution for the Union of Burma, rather than as the opposition's platform for dialogue, hints at an attitude whereby the organisation pretends that the reality of military rule in Myanmar does not exist. While the articulation of social realities is part of any resistance battle, **acting as if the enemy did not exist rarely leads to rational resistance strategies.**

Furthermore, the strategy of the opposition in exile of **not allowing any positive publicity** or official EU reactions<sup>75</sup> to Myanmar Government policies reflects an underlying assumption that democracy can be introduced by defeating the authoritarian Government. If the intention was to persuade the Government, the best strategy would be to elicit highly contrasting public reactions to moves towards democracy and moves towards authoritarianism. In this way, **persuasion could create incentives for democratisation.** However, exile pressure prevents the positive signals and thus clouds any contrast between reactions to authoritarian and democratic moves. This would only be rational if the objective was not to persuade, but to defeat the military Government, or if the intention was simply to exact revenge for military policies without considering the consequences. Yet most opposition figures admit in

private conversation that **the military Government cannot be defeated – only pressured and persuaded.**

Finally, the opposition declarations and acts reflect a mental map of the conflict where public perceptions and discourse seem to deviate from personal maps. Many opposition figures are less radical in private discussions and many explicitly state that in public they have to take a more orthodox view against the military Government than they would like. It seems that the **drifting apart of private and public mental maps** is a product of the so-called "true-believer culture"<sup>76</sup>: Government efforts to divide and buy off the opposition are resisted by a culture where only extreme views testify to the purity and genuineness of a member of the exile opposition in his/her resistance. Positive and compromising signals towards the Government are suspect and anyone caught up in compromise risks being marginalised in the movement and discredited publicly. This, together with the difficulties in communication between individuals and organisations in the opposition, is probably the most difficult obstacle to a constructive role for the opposition in preventing conflict and authoritarian violence.

### Grievances and Incentives for Violence

Burma/Myanmar suffers from both a **poverty-related lowering of the conflict threshold** and **acute large-scale relative deprivation** capable of triggering conflict. The former, stable poverty affects conflict potential by making it easier to mobilise people and reducing the obstacles for violence: when normal life is a struggle already, people are more ready to take risks by getting involved in violent conflict. Similarly, the sudden relative deterioration of a group's socio-economic position enables people to compare their status with something else, whether their own previous status or that of other groups. This creates a **gap between expectations and experience** and often causes violent frustration, typically rebellion.<sup>77</sup>

### Poverty and global food prices

For some time already, United Nations sources have been alerting the donor community to acute

poverty combined with acute difficulties in paying for basic food and non-food items.<sup>78</sup> ICG's report on the post-Nargis situation<sup>79</sup>, as well as our own surveys<sup>80</sup> summarise in detail the deteriorating situation:

- 30 per cent of the population are living in acute poverty
- 90 per cent are living on less than 65 cents a day,
- more than a third of children under five are malnourished (already in the 2003 UN Report), and
- fewer than half of all children complete four years of primary school.

The situation with basic needs was grim even before Cyclone Nargis hit the delta in May 2008. In October 2007, the UN country team warned that **90 per cent of people were using 75 per cent of their income on food**. It is obvious that impoverishment contributed to the September rioting that year. At the time, the hardship could be attributed to the decision to raise fuel prices, and so the grievance was easily channelled against the Government. After that, food prices rose globally by 43 per cent according to USAID<sup>81</sup> and the price of rice, while reined in temporarily by the global financial crisis, was double the average for 2007, according to the World Bank.<sup>82</sup> Furthermore, prices for most major food crops are projected to remain well above 2004 levels through to 2015. It is easy to calculate that the 90 per cent who were already spending 75 per cent of their income on food at 50 per cent of this year's prices could no longer make ends meet once the global food crisis drove up the cost of food.

### Cyclone Nargis and the national food crisis

On top of the global food crisis, the destruction by Cyclone Nargis of the area that produces 65 per cent of country's rice and 50 per cent of its poultry provoked an immediate national food crisis. While international humanitarian aid cushioned the main hunger season (from May to October before the main harvest)<sup>83</sup>, there were fears of a more long-term impact on rice production in the country due to the destruction of seed stock and farm land. On 15 December 2008, the UN was still expressing concern about the immediate challenges to domestic food security.<sup>84</sup>

There have already been about 30 countries where food riots have destabilised the Government and where peace has been disturbed by extreme human need. In one case at least (Haiti), rioting has cost the regime its power. However, people's reaction to crisis situations also depends on the degree to which they can associate their hardship with the Government. Whereas during the September riots this association was easy to make and built on solid foundations, people normally make the same association readily even if the cause of hardship is international, as in the case of the global food crisis. However, **when it is obvious to everyone that hardship is caused by a natural disaster, rioting is less likely**. In Aceh, for example, the rebels quickly agreed to declare a unilateral ceasefire after the Asian tsunami and later announced an end to the separatist battle. In Burma/Myanmar, too, planned anti-Government demonstrations during and after the referendum were cancelled because of the cyclone. Yet in the long run, the continuing food crisis will make it easy for people to lay the blame for hardship at the Government's door. There is, therefore, a strong possibility that grievance riots like those in August/September 2007 will re-emerge.<sup>85</sup>

### Deprivation of certain regions

In addition to the relative deprivation at national level, there are regions with particular problems. According to UN and ICG reports, as well as our own observations, the **Chin State, Eastern Shan, Karen, Karenni and Tanintharyi Divisions** are likely to be the most economically deprived areas, exposed to relative deprivation-related rebellious violence.

#### The case of the Rohingya

However, ethnicities without citizenship rights, such as the Rohingya, also experience relative deprivation as a community living so close to the better-off Rakhine.<sup>86</sup> Furthermore, the direct discrimination suffered by the Rohingya increases the potential for them to launch a desperate rebellion against the Government or else, by displacing their target, to embark on violence against the Rakhine.



This discrimination relates to the lack of full citizenship. It means, for example, that the Rohingyas<sup>87</sup>:

- are required to obtain permission before marrying (a permit can take several years to secure);
- are required to apply for a permit to travel inside the country, even from one village to another within the state;
- are denied access to medical care and education;
- lack access to employment in any public agencies, including jobs as teachers, nurses and civil servants;
- have limited access to education; and
- are subject to human rights violations by the troops According to a Christian Solidarity Worldwide report, “rape and forced labour are widespread, and Rohingyas are singled out by the authorities for extortion. Soldiers demand money from them, and when they cannot pay, they are arrested and tortured.” In addition to socio-economic and political deprivation, the Rohingya also face **existential cultural and identity threats**. According to a member of the Arakan Rohingya National Organisation (ARNO), “we are a people at the brink of extermination”.<sup>88</sup> According to another Rohingya leader, “the regime is trying to take away our identity.”<sup>89</sup> Cultural survival also seems to be the main concern of many of the ethnic fighting groups all over the country, as the section on mental maps revealed. Growing Government access to the traditional rebel strongholds and the increasing relative military strength and pressure from neighbouring countries have diminished the areas where fighting groups can teach their own language and culture. While the shift in military strength has reduced the actual fighting, it has also created greater cultural deprivation.

While the Rohingyas’ economic, political, cultural and identity deprivation is probably the most blatant among all the peoples of Burma/Myanmar, the links to existing national ideological frontlines are not clear, and this could be the reason why deprivation has not so far led to more widespread political unrest. In the absence of ideological frontlines

that resonate with the grievances, deprivation does not readily translate into violent political action. What is likely, though, is that this deprivation will find international ideological resonance in the global or regional deprivation and discrimination of Muslims (throughout the world or by Buddhist nations such as Thailand and Burma/Myanmar). This could mean that deprivation is translated into desperate violent action, using Islamist terrorist networks and ideologies for mobilisation.

### Discrimination of ethnic minorities in favour of privileged Bamar

The relative deprivation and discrimination that better resonates with national frontlines is the differentiation in status between privileged Bamar and ethnic minority peoples within the ethnic states. According to a KIO informant, “there has been an increase of discrimination against ethnic nationality groups in Government offices and in the army. This will make the process of trust-building between Bamar majority people and ethnic nationality groups more difficult” (*interview in November 2008*).

This relative deprivation could easily make Bamar in ethnic states **displaced targets**. If the Government is difficult to reach, members of the ethnic group to which most of the Government elite belong can be used as a symbolic target for demonstrative aggression.

In addition to ethnic minorities having **different economic opportunities** from Bamar and this causing relative deprivation, there are also differences in development between many of the minorities, causing envy and relative deprivation. The case of Rakhine and Rohingya can again serve as an example, as can the relationship between the poor Chin and the economically dominant Rakhine.

### Rural landlessness

According to many aid workers and agencies, a new source of relative deprivation is developing in rural areas of Burma/Myanmar (at least in the Delta area, in the Rakhine State and to a lesser extent in the Chin State). More farmers are becoming indebted, and with growing frequency have

to sell their lands in order to pay back their debts. This is a trend that has accelerated during recent years and has left up to 80 per cent of farmers landless in some villages, while rich money-lenders from outside the region, often from another ethnicity, manage to acquire large areas of land.

### The case of the Kachin State

In areas of the Kachin State controlled and administered by the military Government (but not in the KIO controlled areas), landlessness is a different, but also escalating problem. There, much of the land was grabbed by the military and what was left is being sold by the military to **Chinese businessmen**. There is not enough land for ordinary people (*interview material from the Kachin State*). Here, the fact that the main problem might be the mighty military does not prevent the predictable outcome that the main target of popular frustration is the softer alternative: Chinese businessmen or the Chinese in general. The fact that Chinese groups have been “local” for decades in Kachin makes the situation even worse. The Chinese ethnicity is easily becoming the displaced target for popular frustration about the armed forces. Given that the grievance is on one side of the ethnic divide and that it is easy to point the finger of blame at the other, this grievance will be the one with possible serious consequences for peace in rural areas. Moreover, the winners in the land ownership crisis are the moneylenders or Chinese businessmen who end up with large holdings. There is a danger that key measures in negotiating remedies to the debt crisis or the crisis of the Kachin landless could be sabotaged. Shoring up the trend that offers gains to the big landowners could even motivate violent action against any efforts to resolve the grievances of indebted farmers or those who have lost their lands to the armed forces.

### Combined sources of deprivation

One massive source of relative deprivation in Burma/Myanmar could be the global financial crisis combined with the global rise in food prices and

the rise of rural landlessness. Like during the double Asian financial and El Niño crisis 11 years ago, the combination of the food crisis with the financial crisis allows no escape from deprivation: the urbanised unemployed cannot return to their villages where their relatives are now landless. Even Myanmar Government sources admit that about a million of its citizens have illegally migrated to neighbouring countries. Due to their unsettled citizenship status, this figure is likely to omit the almost 200,000 Rohingya people<sup>90</sup> illegally settled in Bangladesh. If the host countries – Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore and Bangladesh – experience economic downturn and unemployment, pressure to repatriate these illegal immigrants, as well as hundreds of thousands of legal migrants, will increase. So there is a realistic risk that within a short period of time, tens, if not hundreds of thousands of Burma/Myanmar migrants will return to a country that is itself struggling with acute poverty and large-scale unemployment. **Deprivation, together with unemployment, which might increase the opportunities for violent mobilisation, could challenge social stability in the country.**

Finally, the post-Nargis report by the International Crisis Group warns of a serious relative deprivation in the Nargis areas if hasty action and longer term aid commitment cannot be secured. “Failure to sustain the recovery efforts could have nationwide repercussions in the form of increased food prices and large-scale migration from the delta to other areas already suffering from high pressure on limited jobs and resources.” While the Crisis Group approaches these problems from the humanitarian point of view, the prospects it offers are very relevant from a conflict perspective, too. Migration, unemployment, poor and discriminatory economic governance and existential socio-economic threats, taken together, do predict conflict.

### Existing Opportunities for Violence

Despite the gravity of grievances in Burma/Myanmar, violence is still also dependent on opportunities, not only motives. In fact, even some of the grievance-based motives for violence originate from violent opportunities seized by others. **The lack of checks and balances in the political system** and the resulting relative impunity of individuals in mili-

tary and civilian functions is an important source for grievances of ethnic groups and pro-democracy groups. Many scholars have suggested that the **siege mentality**, the total prioritisation of security issues and the securitisation of politics and society create a setting for state affairs where soldiers and administrators can always hide their incompetence, abuse and corruption, and even human rights violations, behind a veil of security-related state secrets. For example, at the Rakhine State E-Learning Center in Sittwe, the guest book revealed that the centre was not visited by more than a couple of people a week. In other words, the centre was either mismanaged or otherwise relatively useless. But when asked about the number of users, the official refused to reveal the number since it was a state secret. The extent of this practice is quite far reaching. Many informants claimed that **any complaint, including those related to power abuse, risks being labelled as opposition activity**. If an individual citizen (let alone a Rohingya non-citizen) complains about a rape committed by a soldier, she risks being categorised as anti-military, and hence a security threat to the nation (= regime). The number of independent sources testifying to this makes this interpretation rather safe, despite the fact that many senior military officials deny the insensitivity of the regime's centre to human rights abuse. If soldiers make the State unpopular by wrongdoing, the centre will have to call on even more power and resources. It is likely that this is the genuine attitude of some senior officers, but at the same time, mentality on the ground and the lack of efficient and independent institutionalisation of mechanisms to keep the coercive apparatus in check makes it only too easy for soldiers to commit human rights violations with impunity.<sup>91</sup>

The armed forces are also deeply involved in various businesses, ranging from tourism to the exploitation of natural resources. **Making a priority of security also offers businesses opportunities** for deriving gain from violence. In cases of land-grabbing or logging by the regime, the Government can utilise the security discourse by blaming any resistance or criticism of military policies (even in business) as rebel activity. Conflict thus becomes a useful condition for business activities that do not have to be limited by law.

Several aid workers claim that the situation with regard to opportunities for authoritarian violence

has improved in the Delta area, where **international presence has offered some transparency** (even though aid workers are not supposed to report further on governance or political issues).

But opportunistic violence is not all on the Government side. As mentioned earlier in interviews by the project team, many ethnic armies regard **armed struggle as a means of sustaining a community structure and identity for the ethnic group**. While the existence and cohesion of the community is seen as a group preference, it needs to be remembered that as long as the ethnic order can be sustained, the guardians of this order will be appreciated and valued. Sustaining armed struggle therefore also serves the social status of fighters and makes armed struggle an opportunity for those who wage it. This feature is not specific to Myanmar conflicts, but tends to be the rule rather than an exception in ethnic warfare.<sup>92</sup>

Finally, the hard stand of the exile community in many conflicts is partly related to the opportunities provided by such a stand. Myanmar's military elite, time and again, refers to the exiles as "cowards, who from the safety and comfort of foreign country tarnish the reputation of the Myanmar nation."<sup>93</sup> The need to **prove oneself not a coward** is part of the collective psyche of exiles in so many conflicts. It would be foolish to rule out this possibility, as it explains some of the tough-liners in the exile community: a **tough line, political defiance** and militant opposition against the regime may be an opportunity to salvage one's own image and give the lie to the accusation that people have run away from the conflict because they lack commitment to solidarity with their compatriots.

## Paths to Conflict and Non-Violent Outcomes

The **causal path** leading to conflicts in Burma/Myanmar is a complex one, with many possible and alternative routes. In the conflict mapping methodology we have identified three types of junctures (necessary conditions) that the path has to pass before it can lead to conflict:

1. The **conflict agency** has to be born, i.e. an antagonism will have to build up before conflicting parties can attack each other,
2. the **conflict motive** has to emerge, and

**3. conflict opportunities** have to crystallise, i.e. physical, moral and mental obstacles to violence have to break down before violence becomes possible.

However, before the path passes through the crucial junctures of agency build-up, emergence of conflict motivation and opportunity, it will need to be brought into the political and economic “vicinity” of conflict. Furthermore, the build-up of antagonism takes place along a specific path of developments. The accuracy of analysis is improved by examining these junctures as part of the path, since many developments make sense only in their historical context, once one knows where they emerged and where they are leading to (path dependence). Some of the grievances, antagonisms and opportunities are so tied to the context of the process that they cannot be addressed without taking a closer look at the path they belong to.

In this manner, the political and economic context of the conflict setting clearly conditions the antagonisation and the emergence of motives and opportunities for violence.

In Burma/Myanmar **the economic build-up towards a complex humanitarian emergency is the economic context that conditions the conflict path.** Natural disasters or international financial or food crises would not have been needed for this crisis. The crisis in domestic governance has already exposed the country to multiple humanitarian emergencies. However, the international financial crisis and the Nargis crisis have both had an additional impact on the development of the crisis and the structure of economic conflict.

At the same time, the Government implementation of its **Roadmap to Democracy** is the crucial political context and apparently the only game in town, regardless of how one views the legitimacy and credibility of this project. A comparative analysis of cases of democratisation<sup>94</sup> shows that where the authoritarian elite has simply been defeated or sidelined the power-base of the state has been much weaker than in Burma/Myanmar or the elite has been divided. Burma/Myanmar’s elite cannot be sidelined and so the country’s political development depends mainly on opportunities provided by its de facto political elite, the holders of absolute power in the country. Since there is a history of divisions in the elite, one cannot rule

this scenario out in the case of Burma/Myanmar, but even that prospect is likely to relate to the implementation of economic crisis measures or of the Roadmap.

### *Economic crisis and opportunities for change*

Economic grievances, especially the ones related to **landlessness** (in rural areas) and **food security** (in urban areas), can lead to anti-Government conflict motivations and more or less spontaneous grievance demonstrations or riots.

### **Demonstrations**

As in September 2007, these demonstrations can spread widely in the country and at least temporarily render the country ungovernable.<sup>95</sup> However, due to the fact that demonstrators or rioters have to take huge personal risks that no-one outside can protect them from, it is unlikely that outsiders can do anything substantial in preventing or inciting such demonstrations or riots. **Rioting or demonstrations** do not require much coordination or organisation, either. However, building associations between the hardship and the Government could possibly be done through organised activity (for example, by politicising grievances, which the ’88 Generation students were accused of by the Government). Furthermore, sanction research suggests that **sanctions cannot substantially affect the motive of people to demonstrate against their Government.** In their absence, there might be fewer grievances to motivate demonstrations, but then again, whenever sanctions affect the economic well-being of the people negatively, demonstrations are more difficult to direct against the Government. In fact, once sanctions become perceived as something directed at the entire nation, and not just at a dictatorial Government, they tend to fail.

Economic grievances are already a reality and so there is no need to assess their probability. Despite the political opportunities they offer in terms of democratisation, they should naturally be seen as extremely negative, something that, despite the opportunities, the international community should try to limit. This will be shown below with some general calculations of suffering and casualties of economic grievances and authoritarian violence.



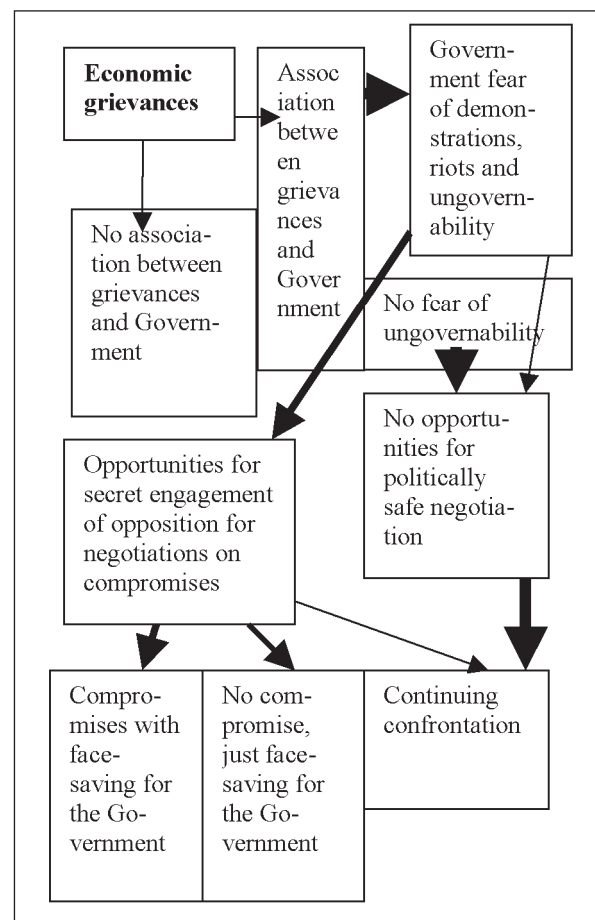
## Ungovernability

It seems also clear from the reactions of respondents in interviews for this project that grievances are being attributed to the Government. There is, therefore, a likelihood of continuing ungovernability, despite harsh repression of popular demonstrations by the Government.

Ungovernability is a scenario that the Government genuinely fears and this fear could be used when bargaining with the Government on issues related to democratisation and the reduction of authoritarian violence. Ungovernability in the face of economic rioting is also the motive for the Government to push forward some initiatives for keeping open secret lines of communication with militant ethnic and democratic opposition movements (*confidential discussions with Government officials after the September 2007 riots*). When the Government is more prepared to communicate with the opposition, it is the duty of the pro-democratic international community to help in the **creation of discreet lines of communication**. Policies of engagement with the ethnic and democratic opposition can create **weak tripartite forms of communication and dialogue**, even if the Government publically continues to be against tripartite negotiations. The activity of creating lines of dialogue is delicate and the Government officials involved need to be able to frame it in a way acceptable even for the hardliners in the Government. Otherwise progress towards tripartite communication will be at risk and forces in Government working for greater openness towards the opposition will be endangered.

Organisations like the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, with strong links in different directions and the ability and flexibility to help arrange secret meetings between the opposition and the Government, should see constructing this kind of *de facto* tripartite formation as an important role in the build-up towards a more peaceful future for the country.

Figure 5: Path to tripartite dialogue



## The inevitability of change

The fear of ungovernability combined with the international pariah position has occasionally led state bureaucracies to believe that the only way out is to yield to democratic pressures. This belief should be seen as something positive, as it seems to offer the least unlikely opportunities for a gradual reduction of authoritarian violence in the country. At times, this feeling of the inevitability of change seems evident when speaking to Government officials with access to the top leadership, while at other times the feeling seems to disappear. The likelihood of this feeling taking over is not merely a matter of the odds, but very much an issue where the international community, including the aid community, can help the situation crucially.

The *European Common Position on Burma/Myanmar* clearly bases European hopes for positive change in Burma/Myanmar on the principle of the **inevitabil-**



**ity of democratisation.** And there seem to be some grounds for this hope if we look at the comparative evidence based on the most spectacular cases of democratisation.<sup>96</sup> The logic of the inevitability of democratisation seems to be present in most cases where a strong Government has yielded to democracy. In some countries the radicalisation of civil society convinced some members of the Government of the inevitability of democracy in their country. In others, international pressure was also an important factor behind the emerging conviction that democracy was inevitable. As a result of this conviction, individual officials started calculating their career moves and decided that it was wise to start building their “**democratic credentials**”. These credentials were useful in salvaging one’s position when the country went democratic. Officials felt that they had to jump onto the bandwagon of democracy in order to survive politically. The more people did this, the more attractive this choice became.

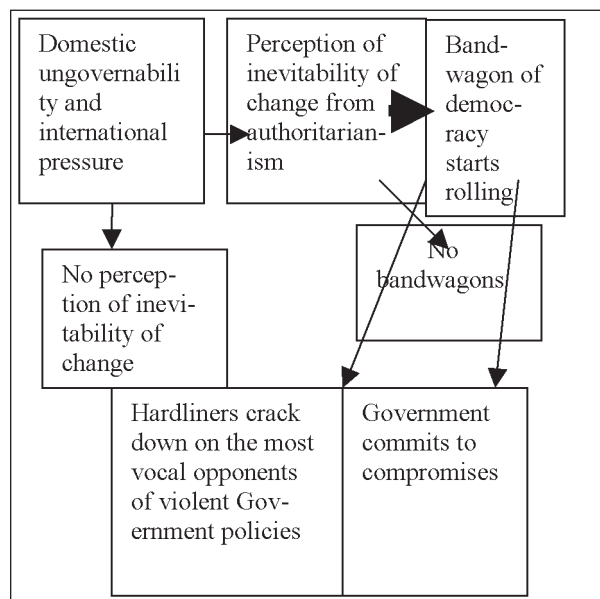
### The bandwagon of democracy

What happens at the macro level when individuals start jumping onto the bandwagon of democracy is hard to control, and it can come as a surprise to the people who made the first moves. Very often though, the process does serve the first movers, and those who move decisively will be able to control the process. In Indonesia the current president was among the first generals to turn against the authoritarian regime of President Suharto. In the Philippines the first military man to defy Marcos’ authoritarianism, General Fidel Ramos, was the country’s president within ten years from the beginning of democratisation. The same phenomenon, whereby the first among an elite to turn against authoritarianism inherit power in a democratic setting, has occurred – with variations – in many other places, including East European countries such as Poland and Russia and Latin America.

The bandwagon of democracy could have been in motion in Burma/Myanmar during the time of Prime Minister Khin Nyunt (2003–2004). While the elite were not seriously divided, scholars identified the emergence of a third way, an approach that pushed the Government towards democracy, even from within the military.<sup>97</sup>

The bandwagon process to democracy is precarious, since fears about one’s political future often vanish when an authoritarian response poses a far more immediate danger to survival. The bandwagon of democracy was moving in Burma/Myanmar in 2003, as it was in China in 1989 and in Indonesia in 1965, but it stopped once the government cracked down on those who were going too far. It is essential, therefore, that international support for processes of democratisation focuses more on **keeping Governments committed to their own reforms to reduce authoritarianism** than on pushing them into new forms of democratisation. According to conflict literature, this can be done by giving maximum publicity to commitments by leaders in a positive context, by interpreting statements as commitments and by rewarding political compromise.<sup>98</sup> The allocation of aid, the way aid relationships are conducted and the types of aid can communicate positive and negative messages that directly reward positive moves on the Government side and punish negative ones.

**Figure 6: Bandwagon of democracy**



### Divisions between hard-liners and soft-liners

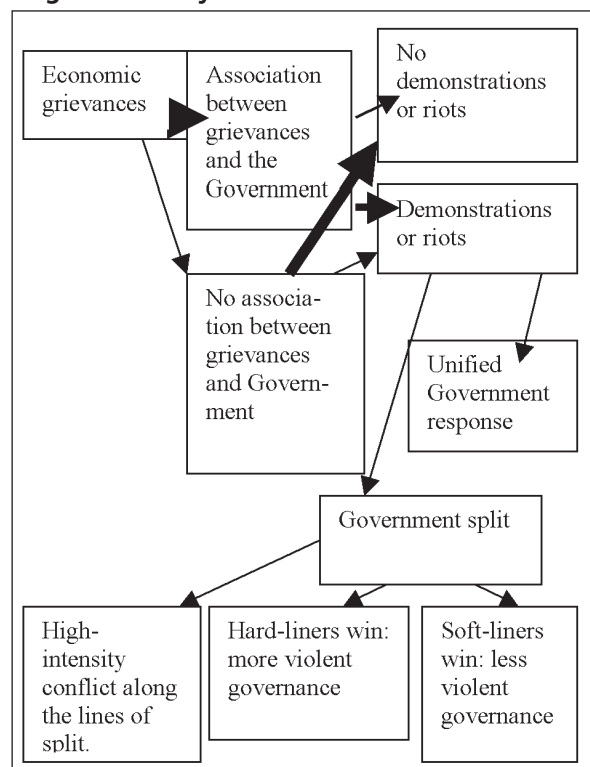
A tough response to economically motivated riots that associate hardship with the Government is also an issue that can divide the Government. There have been reliable reports about the **division between people in the top leadership** supporting and opposing the harsh crackdown on demonstrators in 2007. In the context of generational transition, and opportunities offered to second-generation leaders, one could imagine divisions like this leading to serious consequences. On the one hand, a split in the leadership could create a repetition of the Indonesian situation in May 1998, where the technocratic camp in the Government, less obsessed with security logic, found it easier to strike fundamental compromises with demonstrators, help deal with the problem of ungovernability and gain popular support over their competitors within the top leadership.

On the other hand, it could create a repetition of the Tiananmen Square situation in spring 1989, where security logic was mobilised in a power battle which then went drastically in favour of the hard-liners. Even worse, a power battle at the top could also mobilise potentially bloody infighting. It must be remembered that only the Government can command a serious number of troops and hardware, and so only a Government split would result in sufficient military resources being allocated for substantial high-intensity warfare.

In a potential power battle between hard-liners and soft-liners, it seems that **the international donor community does have a role to play**. Trying to induce a split in the leadership is a dubious undertaking. It can create opportunities for democratisation, but it can equally unleash a civil war.

However, once such a split has occurred, the international community can advance its goals of conflict prevention by helping the soft-liners and technocrats within the Government. While the ultra-nationalistic, suspicious political climate makes any direct external influence counter-productive, international cooperation on development and humanitarian relief can prove valuable to technocrats and soft-liners. Sanctions and a tough international line against everybody, including the entire political elite, misses the chance to help soft-liners gain the upper hand in the political contest.

**Figure 7: Summary of the pressures related to ungovernability**



To summarise and conclude: at macro-level, i.e. the nation as a whole, **aid plays a role in reducing the likelihood of conflict induced by economic crisis**. Aid work should serve as an instrument of dialogue between the main conflicting parties, it should strengthen the hand of technocrats who are responsive to the needs of the people, and it should be offered as a tool for flexible rewards to the Government in order to build up its commitment to reducing authoritarian violence.

### Conflict between non-Governmental elements

In addition to high-intensity warfare, economic crisis could also affect the conflict between non-Governmental elements. The global financial crisis is having effects that could expose the country to violence of this kind. In particular, the **prospect of needing to reintegrate hundreds of thousands of legal and illegal Burmese labour migrants** upon their return from neighbouring countries could exert a drastic impact on the country. Once the problem of unemployment hits Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore these countries are likely to prioritise their own citizens in the labour market. Migrants

without legal protection are naturally the first to lose out in the competition for jobs. However, their return to Burma/Myanmar with so many economic problems will not be easy either. Moreover, competition for the same resources, jobs, and opportunities between locals and returning labour migrants may provoke grievances and antagonism between these two groups. If competition between locals and returnees overlays other lines of conflict, the effect on antagonism is multiplied. Bamars from Kachin returning to the Kachin State, or people regarded as non-indigenous, such as the Chinese and the Rohingya, are likely to meet with harsh discrimination from the ethnic minorities. Similarly, ethnic minorities returning to Bamar divisions will confront hostility.

### The positive role of INGOs and donor organisations

Whereas in the above analysis economic crisis in Burma/Myanmar only seems to offer opportunities for conflict and drastic change, humanitarian aid and NGO work to tackle economic crisis can also offer venues for gradual conflict transformation. Moreover, INGO involvement in alleviating economic crises, especially that caused by the devastation of Cyclone Nargis, has improved transparency in the affected areas and this, in turn, has curtailed opportunities for authoritarian violence by public officials. A strong international and national focus on humanitarian issues has also re-prioritised issues of human survival over the regime's narrow security concerns. All this works in favour of less securitised politics and administration and helps to open up non-violent political channels.

The positive role of the INGOs and donor organisations has also made trust-building between Government technocrats and the aid community possible. This could eventually help the international community to play a constructive role in conflict prevention in the country.

Finally, the establishment of new domestic alliances between businesses and the generals and international alliances between the UN, ASEAN and the Government of Myanmar (for example, the tripartite coordination and monitoring of international post-Nargis aid) to support humanitarian assistance helps technocrats in the bureaucracy and creates new institutional state capacities

for the benefit of citizens. The international donor community would do well if it tried **to build on the models established in this post-Nargis co-operation** and to emulate them in other parts of the country. The *ASEAN Humanitarian Task Force*, an innovative format with representatives from each ASEAN country and advisers from the UN, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, *International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies* (IFRC), China, India and Bangladesh, which provides high-level international guidance for humanitarian relief in the post-Nargis era, and the **Tripartite Core Group**, its operational counterpart that negotiates the day-to-day issues of aid and implements international monitoring of aid activities, deserve international donor support. Institutionalisation that de-securitises humanitarian work and focuses on transparent and responsive implementation of humanitarian relief is very important in fighting grievance-based sources of conflict in Burma/Myanmar. Furthermore, it introduces democratic, responsive and accountable governance models to fields of humanitarian relief, paving the way for gradual democratisation. However, since a large share of the aid internationally coordinated and monitored by the Tripartite Core Group originates from the EU, it would make sense to try to set out political foundations for the humanitarian partnership between the tripartite commission and the EU. This would not contravene the stipulations of the *EU Common Position*, as it would only concern humanitarian aid, but it could at the same time initiate the formation of **a rule-based relationship** between the EU and the Government of Myanmar. With partnership rules already set, this would also prove easier for the EU than obtaining backing for its humanitarian concerns among Government officials. According to a comparative study on human rights bargaining, pressure for human rights in the face of authoritarian violence is much more effective if it can be based on mutually accepted rules, rather than the power logic of *ad hoc* pressure. The success within EU aid of **humanitarian bargaining** with the Caribbean, African and Pacific countries based on the contractual partnership agreements of Lomé and Cotonou testifies to this.<sup>99</sup>

The political process of Government reform

### How does the Government see the reform process?

The political context for the conflict process resides in part in a fact of power: the Government commands about 500,000 troops while the combined armed units of the ethnic ceasefire and insurgency groups command fewer than 50,000. However, for the sake of governability and international respect, the Government has been at pains to insist that it considers itself **temporary** and that it aims to transform the nation into a “peaceful, modern and developed discipline-flourishing democratic country”. To this end, it committed itself on 30 August 2003 to an ambitious, although ambiguous program: the **Seven-Step Roadmap to Democracy**. The steps defined in the roadmap are as follows:

1. **Reconvening of the National Convention** that has been adjourned since 1996. **COMPLETED**
2. After the successful holding of the National Convention, step by step **implementation of the process** necessary for the emergence of a genuine and disciplined democratic state. **COMPLETED**
3. **Drafting of a new constitution** in accordance with basic principles and detailed basic principles laid down by the National Convention. **COMPLETED**
4. **Adoption of the Constitution** through national referendum. **COMPLETED**
5. **Holding of free and fair elections** for Pyithu Hluttaws (Legislative bodies) according to the new constitution. *Announced for 2010*
6. **Convening of Hluttaws** attended by Hluttaw members in accordance with the new Constitution.
7. **Building a modern, developed and democratic nation** by the state leaders elected by the Hluttaw; and the government and other central organs formed by the Hluttaw.

Many Government officials describe the Seven Steps as a train with seven stations to democracy. Any interference with the tracks is only going to delay arrival at the final stop: democracy. This means that the train’s direction cannot be changed, but whoever wants to join the ride may do so.<sup>100</sup>

### How does the opposition see the reform process?

Given the realities of the balance of power between the Government and the opposition, it is likely that when political scenarios are examined, many of them will prove to be related to the Government-planned process of the Seven Steps.

However, it is crucial to see how opposition groups envision the process in order to be able to analyse any chances for compromise between the Government and its opponents. While they emphasise slightly different factors, all **anti-Government groups find consensus** in aiming for

- **Unionism/Federalism**<sup>101</sup> with
  - Autonomy at state level,
  - Equality for ethnicities in representation at the centre,
  - Respect for cultural rights.
- **Democracy** with
  - Popular sovereignty,<sup>102</sup>
  - Strong protection of individual human rights<sup>103</sup>,
  - Civilian supremacy over the military.<sup>104</sup>
- **Tripartite dialogue** as an instrument of transition from military to democratic rule.

The main differences between the democratic and ethnic oppositions and the Government relate to the role of the military, the shape of federalism and the existential question of protecting ethnic identities and cultures.

The **problems with the role of the military** can be summarised in the following constitutional claims, apparently put forward by both the democratic and the ethnic opposition, and which express the main contradictions between the Government Constitution on the one hand and the 19 points of the KIO and the exiled FCDCC shadow constitution on the other. Opposition complaints about the role of the military – some of which result from a very suspicious reading of the Constitution – are<sup>105</sup> (in order of priority starting with the most serious and ending with the least pressing concern):

1. the military will have a **national political leadership role** (Basic Principles 6(f)),
2. the military will have **full autonomy in its internal affairs** (i.e. it will not be subordinate to civilian leadership)<sup>106</sup>,



3. the military will have the right to declare a **state of emergency** and take over State power in the case of a threat to national security,<sup>107</sup>
4. the **ministers of defence, home affairs and border areas** will be appointed by the Commander-in-Chief,<sup>108</sup>
5. the President will have to have **military experience**<sup>109</sup>, and
6. **25 per cent of members of parliament** will be nominated by the Commander-in-Chief.

The FCDCC groups also reject the Government's constitutional principles on the structure of states, which give the 7 ethnic Bamar divisions the same rights as the 7 States of the ethnic groups and thereby reject the concept of ethnic federalism. The Government concept of federalism (even though the word is never used) is territorial: rather than ethnic groups, the regions should enjoy federal autonomy and privileged access to national politics.

However, the opposition also wants **stronger federalism** and they object to the upper house being subordinate to the lower house. These are clearly issues where the disagreement is very real and goes to the core of federation's political order.

In addition differences in political vision, the Government and opposition do not see eye-to-eye on protecting the **cultural identities of minorities**. It is clear that without further specification the Government Constitution will not provide a guarantee against all the existential threats to their culture that some fighting groups share with some ceasefire groups. However, the Constitution does not directly create these threats either. According to Article 22(a) of the general principles, "the Union shall assist to develop language, literature, fine arts and culture of the National races". Furthermore, Article 354 stipulates the rights of individual citizens to ethnic identity and the practice of distinct ethnic cultural traditions. It would be important to negotiate the implementation of these constitutional principles somehow in order to tackle the core interests of the conflicting parties. While some ethnic groups are worried about their identities and cultural existence, central Government could be worried about national unity if separate political, and not only cultural, identities start emerging. Many of the ethnic groups are still suspected of separatism by the military and an arrangement to alleviate their fear would probably

be the other side of a package able to settle the issue of separate identities. Every effort should be made to devise a political package capable of addressing both fears simultaneously.

### Compromise is conflict prevention

Crucial to conflict prevention will be how much compromise can be found between Government and opposition plans and how much the Government Roadmap turns out to be a genuine vehicle for democratisation. The three crucial issues are:

1. How willing are different opposition groups to accommodate the different steps?
2. How willing will the Government be to consult the opposition groups and accommodate their wishes to modify these steps or take on board their views during implementation?
3. To what extent does the Government see the Seven Steps as a genuine transition exercise, as opposed to a way of justifying continued military rule?

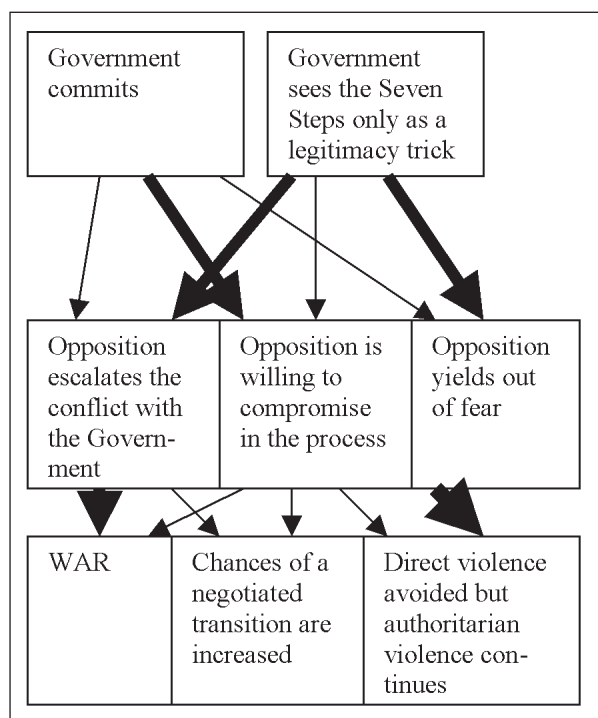
Conflict prevention often adopts a neutral position towards those who are prepared to compromise in the interests of peace. However, total neutrality is not realistic in a report seeking to produce recommendations for European and German development agencies in Burma/Myanmar. Rather than prescribing ways to support pressure on the democratic movement to compromise about crucial principles of democracy, **European aid has to encourage reason and pragmatism** among the opposition while at the same time serving a strategy for fundamental compromise coherent with European pressure on the Government.

### Donors should help the Government commit to its own pledge

If there is no genuine commitment to transformation on the part of the Government, authoritarian violence in the country cannot be tackled. Consequently the order of preference for the first juncture in the following basic scenario is obvious: the donor community should try to help the Government commit to the democratic elements in its own pledge.



**Figure 8:**  
**Government commitment to democratic elements of the Sven-Step Roadmap**



**The importance of maximum differentiation in the European response to non-democratic and democratic moves in implementation of the Roadmap**

Enforcing commitment would require a strong positive response and positive publicity whenever the Government does something that links the Roadmap to genuine progress.<sup>110</sup> When the Government published the timetable for the referendum on the Constitution, the international community should have reacted positively: this was, after all, the first time the Government had asked to hear the voice of the people since 1990. When the Constitution was published, the donor community should have positively published the progress on some of the crucial issues (including terms for the declaration and exercise of martial law) of concern to the opposition. The international community should also have applied positive aid instruments when the Government published its relatively democratic law on how to hold the referendum.

This would have enabled the international community to demonstrate a distinctive response when these democratic principles were almost totally compromised in the actual conduct of the

referendum. Furthermore, if the international community had reacted positively to the announcement of the referendum schedule and law, Europeans could have offered to help with its implementation. While it is clear that the Myanmar Government did not allow formal "election observation", confidential sources close to the top military leadership suggest that there was scope to negotiate international involvement through INGOs and ASEAN that might have made a difference.

A strategy that presses the Government to compromise must be nuanced and flexible; it cannot produce the same negative reaction whatever the Government does.

**Tripartite talks: the role of NGOs in assisting "genuine dialogue"**

In addition to the Government's commitment to democratic elements in its own Roadmap, peace would be assisted if the Government were persuaded to take into account opposition views on transition. Some of those views are procedural, while others relate to the ultimate shape of the political system.

The crucial procedural issue is what the EU has recently called "genuine dialogue" with the opposition forces, ethnic and democratic. For the Myanmar Government, dialogue has already taken place in two forums, the National Convention and the referendum on the Constitution. However, at the same time, it has been willing to tolerate low-key secret liaisons with democratic exiles and fighting groups. Furthermore, there were also clear deviations (or side steps) from strict implementation of the Seven-Step Roadmap when Relations Minister Aung Kyi met opposition leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. While the Government sees these encounters as intelligence operations and as an engagement to co-opt opposition leaders to the Government Roadmap, they were nevertheless initial sidesteps towards something that has the format of tripartite dialogue: Government policy has engaged both the ethnic and the democratic opposition. Again, it would be possible to **try building on what is already there** and seek to deepen the Government's existing commitment. Rather than taking over Government ownership of this "eighth step" by insisting on value-laden concepts such as

tripartite dialogue, aid work and NGO cooperation could try to introduce the substance of tripartite dialogue into Government engagement policies by assisting dialogue between the ethnic opposition and the Government, and between democrats and the military, at all levels. The ability of NGOs to “bargain with the Government”, use the “positive no” in their dialogue and oppose unacceptable terms without endangering the relationship with Government representatives could be the grass-root level component of tripartite talks.<sup>111</sup> There are local NGOs who would like to conduct training and participate in this type of bargaining with the Government. When democracy and human rights are negotiated at village level, we are talking about specific cases of military abuse against individual villagers. Usually villagers are faced with two choices; **non-action or rebellious resistance**. Yet in some cases, with the aid of religious institutions, ethnic affiliation or some other bridge, instances of abuse can be settled if there are civil society organisations with a command of the techniques of mutually beneficial bargaining or non-threatening resistance.<sup>112</sup> By training NGOs or training the trainers, INGOs or donors involved in capacity-building programmes could **help create local capacity for conflict resolution** that would go a long way towards consolidating meaningful low-level dialogue along tripartite lines.

### Complementary platforms for dialogue and the Constitution

At the higher levels, the Ethnic Nationalities Council has led to the adaptation of a **shadow constitution** which serves as a platform for discussion between the ethnic and democratic opposition and the Government on the crucial issue of the Constitution. This process complements the Government-controlled process of high-level dialogue in the context of the National Convention. Furthermore, negotiating the **19 points of the KIO**, which challenged the National Convention principles for the Constitution, served as a platform for discussion and dialogue specifically between the Government and the ethnic opposition. These high-level platforms could have been used in the National Convention but they were not. Neither the platform of the “shadow constitution” nor the 19 points of the KIO were seriously dealt with in the

National Convention process, which nevertheless itself offered a form of one of the three elements of tripartite dialogue. The same platforms have, however, been used in secret dialogue between factions of Government to fine-tune constitutional ideas. The ceasefire talks, too, have offered a channel for dialogue on constitutional issues, even though the political elements have officially been avoided and discussions have focused on the military aspects of ceasing hostilities.

If the Government is committed to the democratic elements in its Roadmap and Constitution, it will see its way to allowing **the development of low-level “bargaining”** on rules of governance and implementation of the law. Given that many Burma/Myanmar initiatives are only corrupted in the course of implementation, this could be crucial to fostering meaningful dialogue. Furthermore, the FCDCC constitution and the 19 points of the KIO could be negotiated in secret liaisons between the Government and individual members of the opposition, and they could be assisted by means of mediation training, and perhaps even high-level unofficial moderation.<sup>113</sup>

As Kivimäki points out in his analysis in the work by Timo Kivimäki and Morten Pedersen published in 2008,<sup>114</sup> **some of the differences between the Government and the opposition are rather misleading** or at least relatively small, and so not much help would be needed for the first compromises to emerge. Any compromises, even on interpretation of the Constitution, could strengthen the hand of moderates on both sides and thus encourage further progress. Aid to the INGOs and exile NGOs should facilitate the creation of discussion platforms, such as opposition negotiations on the Government Constitution. Moreover, while it is not politically possible to encourage the opposition to compromise on core democratic demands, it would be useful to encourage different opposition groups to display **pragmatism and a strategic attitude**, allowing the Government to have ownership of democratic developments, rather than insisting on positioning and repeating value-laden concepts. Instead of repeating the word federalism, the opposition should be encouraged to build on the **federalist elements in the Government Constitution**, bargaining for an interpretation and operationalisation of the Constitution that could in reality make:

- Article 22(a) a vehicle for the protection of ethnic minorities and cultures,
- Article 59(d) of Chapter III the basis for a civilian presidency, and
- the basic principles of the Union a vehicle for promoting genuine federalism.

Helping mediation by **building indigenous mediation capacity** or by offering European help at the highest level of unofficial participation could improve the chances of success. In all these scenarios the starting point will be:

- whether or not the Government is willing to allow substantial discussion on principles without framing all alternative ideas as a security threat,
- whether the opposition is willing to be pragmatic and negotiate instead of trying to defeat an enemy who enjoys military superiority, and
- whether or not the opposition is willing to take a strategic rather than a position-oriented, principled approach.

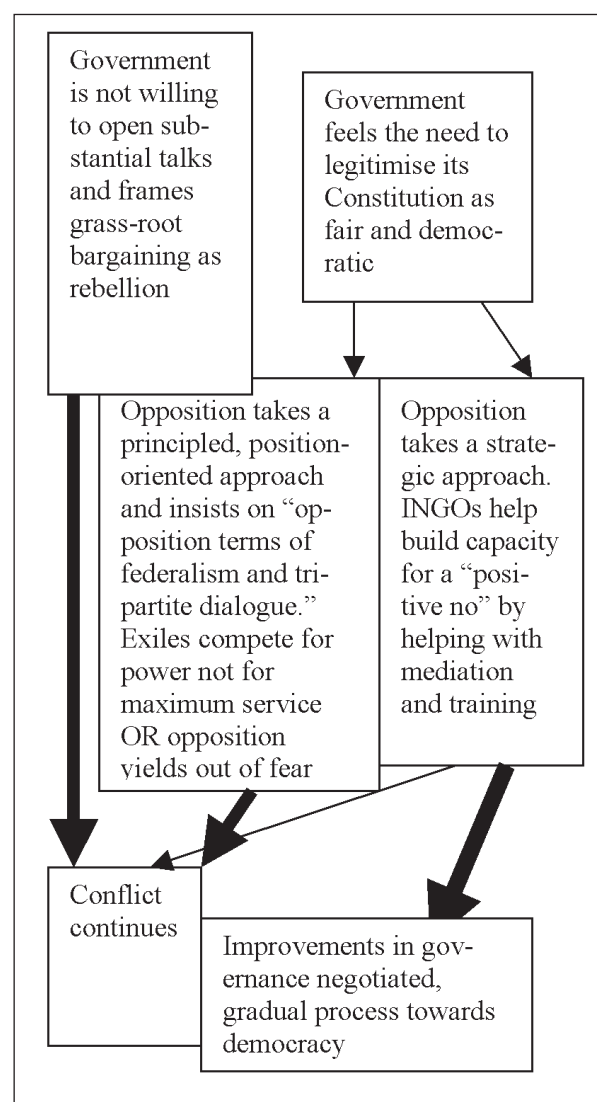
### The role of the exile opposition in conflict resolution

Exiles also have an important role in facilitating a process of negotiated democratisation and this could be enhanced by the donor community. After so many years in exile, many groups tend to be guided by exile psychology and the “true-believer culture” discussed earlier. Their power base often lies in their ability to master internet-based marketing of ideas and lobbying for Western resources. The exile community could, however, be highly instrumental if they were interested in and connected to voices inside the country, and if the international donor community supported them in accordance with their ability **to express the suppressed voices of people back home** rather than principles and ideas of their own. The securitisation of opposition activity means that opposition views have to be expressed outside the country. However, exile communities can only take part in laying the foundations for conflict resolution and democratisation if they manage to establish links with communities inside, instead of vocalising their own positions. For the international donor community, this is a challenge: instead of supporting organisations who derive all their power and

legitimacy from claiming to “represent” the people, the international community should support channels for different voices of the people within the borders of the authoritarian state of Myanmar.

The challenges and scenarios for negotiated, peaceful progress and conflict can be summarised as follows:

**Figure 9:**  
**Path to compromise and path to conflict**

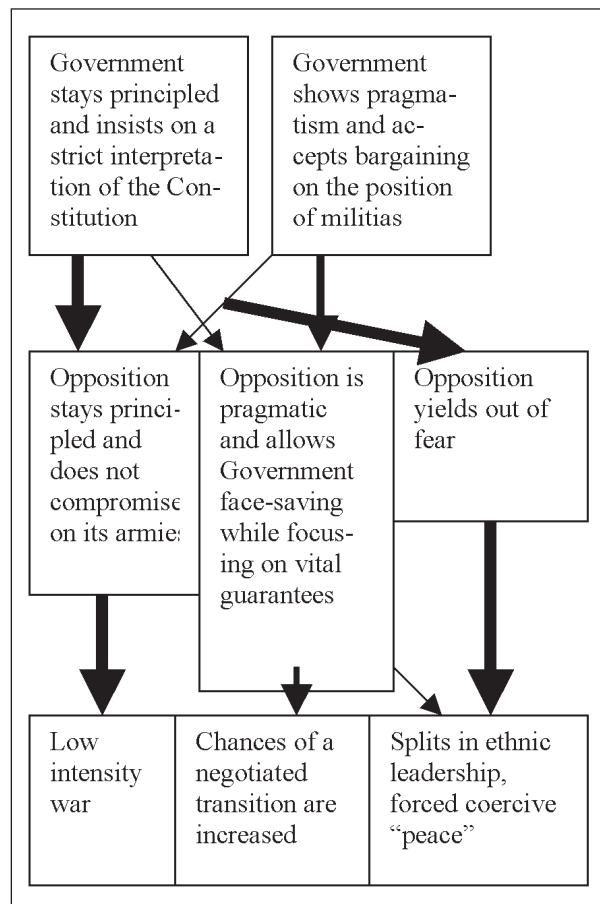


### Disarmament of opposition groups

As we proceed down the paths to conflict and negotiated settlement, at this stage we must introduce the crucial issue of disarming opposition groups. As mentioned above, not even all the ceasefire groups are prepared to **give up their**

arms, but the Government Constitution requires that the various unofficial militias be decommissioned once the Constitution has been accepted. However, various innovative arrangements have been made with certain ceasefire armies for their **formal inclusion into the Myanmar army** without totally scaling down their autonomy. Negotiations with the Wa army especially have shown flexibility and realism on the part of the Government. However, other armies and ceasefire groups like the KIO are not willing to put all their eggs in one basket by simply following the Constitutional path. Some groups within the KIO are preparing to establish political parties, while others are still very suspicious of the Government's democratic commitment, and more importantly its commitment to the ethnic rights of the Kachin. There is therefore a clear risk of clashes between the Myanmar army and the various ceasefire and non-ceasefire armies. Containing this risk and mediating between the various groups requires a willingness on the part of outsiders to push the parties in a more pragmatic direction, while at the same time helping them to identify the options and international lessons about the integration and inclusion of militias into a national army. Although it is not possible to say when it makes more sense to push the militia towards the Government or the Government towards the militia, comparative evidence seems to support the idea of pragmatism in the process and a strict definition of mandates as the outcome.<sup>115</sup> Furthermore, decommissioning as a solution often requires money, as former combatants need to be reintegrated into civilian life. There is another role here for the European donor community.

**Figure 10:**  
**Decommissioning or integration of militias**



The context of relations between the main ethnic groups and sub-ethnicities, indigenous ethnic minorities and non-indigenous ones, and between the “genuine” minority groups and the Government “look-alikes” is largely **conditioned by the relationship between the main ethnic groups and the Government**. The three main scenarios that can be identified from the above paths are the following:

1. Government control and repression is strengthened,
2. Government is more committed to compromises with the opposition,
3. Government splits with considerable chaos.

Following is an analysis of each of the scenarios:

#### **Scenario 1. Control and repression is strengthened**

In a time of harsh Government repression, it is easy for the democratic and ethnic oppositions to find a common enemy and focus on the cleavage



between themselves and the Government. This makes the cleavage between the two opposition groups less conflict-prone. At the same time, constant warfare and repression emphasises the need for an optimal strategy of resistance, exposing the ethnic and democratic oppositions to motives other than their own in order to “unify the resistance” behind core interest (ethnic rights or democracy). As a result, while repression probably makes it easier to avoid antagonism, the urgency of the situation flags up conflict motives across the main dividing line in the opposition.

The sense of emergency under conditions of repression securitises all social relations and influences, such as the gender divide. According to recent comparative evidence, this sense of emergency increases violence against women in the context of family relations, but also in the context of relations between soldiers and civilians.

### Scenario 2. Government is more committed to compromises with the opposition.

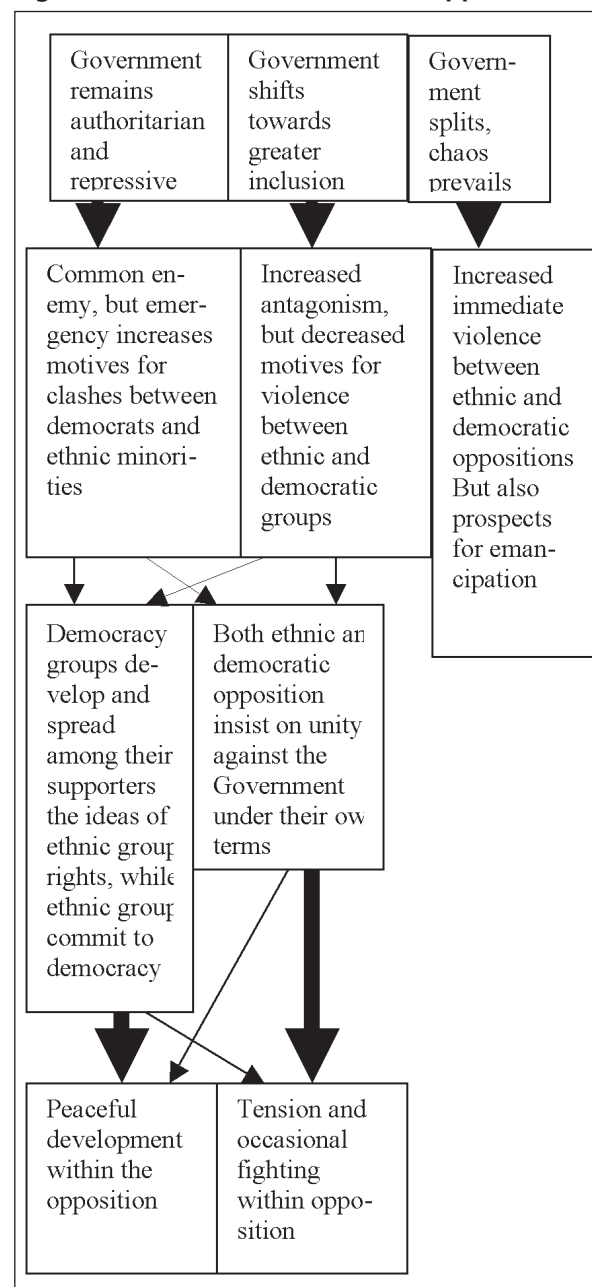
If the Government were prepared to make major compromises, the opposition would need to work out their divisions in order to avoid the eruption of violence. It seems that the main way to do this is to encourage democratic thinking in the ethnic opposition at the same time as emphasising the need for ethnic group rights and autonomy within the democratic movement. The opposition can be united only if the core interests of both main groups are taken into account by both groups. European aid programmes and the FES have supported the National Reconciliation Programme of the Euro Burma Office, whose aims, apart from bridging ethnic cleavages, have been very much along these lines.

### Scenario 3. Government splits with considerable chaos

In the scenario where the Government is split and there is a degree of chaos, it would be very likely that the collapse of their unified enemy would deepen cleavages between the ethnic and the democratic opposition, while at the same time the emergency would generate more motives and opportunities for using violence against each other. At the same time, of course, this situation could offer opportunities for emancipation to both opposition blocs.

The main paths deriving from relations between the ethnic and democratic opposition are summarised below:

**Figure 11: Ethnic and democratic opposition**



On the opposition side, the crucial differentiating factor between scenarios is whether the democratic opposition is willing to focus on protecting minorities and the main minority groups are prepared to protect sub-minorities and non-indig-



enous groups. This is partly dependent on how much the Government compromises.

**Scenario 1. Government accepts only minimal compromises. Opposition maintains its conflicting attitude towards sub-minorities.**

Despite the common enemy, the need for unity against that common enemy, in the form of the authoritarian Government, does not generate healthy prospects for more inclusion within the opposition. The democratic opposition has often hinted that it cannot allow ethnic divisions to weaken opposition against a strong authoritarian opponent. Ethnic issues cannot be addressed until after democratisation. Similarly, the main ethnic minorities tend to argue that it is the Government's divide-and-rule strategy that encourages distinction between sub-ethnicities. This argument about Government toughness militates against greater ethnic inclusion inside the opposition.

**Scenario 2. Government compromises, opposition still does not protect sub-minorities**

Many officials in the Government, however, claim that too many concessions towards the 19 points or the FCDCC Constitution could mean increased repression of sub-ethnicities by the States: for example, of Barmars/Buddhists within the other ethnic States.<sup>116</sup> The same argument could be applied to relationships with non-indigenous groups.

It is crucial for the main ethnic groups to build protection for sub-minorities. Right now, the situation is not encouraging and some of the compromises the Government has made, especially to the genuine ceasefire groups in Kachin, Mon and elsewhere, have enabled harsh discrimination on the basis of ethnicity. The development of a negotiation platform for the ethnic opposition should focus heavily on improving this aspect. If the main ethnic groups do not accept discrimination of the main minorities by the majority, they should not practice it on their sub-minorities either. References to historical interpretations of the existence of ethnic groups will not satisfy the needs of conflict prevention if current self-identification is at odds with these views: if the Wa perceive themselves as a genuine group and if the Myo perceive themselves as an ethnicity, people's sentiments should take a priority over authoritative interpretations of

history. Otherwise, the same grievances that fuel conflict between ethnic minorities and the Barmars will fuel conflict between the main ethnicities on the one hand and the sub-ethnicities, non-indigenous groups and Government look-alikes on the other. Efforts to develop the ethnic opposition platform in a more inclusive direction could also be helped by the INGOs and the donor countries. Training and education in models of multi-ethnic governance could help the intellectual elites of the ethnic states to understand the symmetry of the situation between ethnic minorities and sub-minorities on the one hand and the ethnic minorities and majority population on the other. This would foster understanding among ethnic minorities and make them more aware of minority rights issues facing sub-minorities in their ethnic states.

**Scenario 3. Government compromises and the opposition creates protection for minorities**

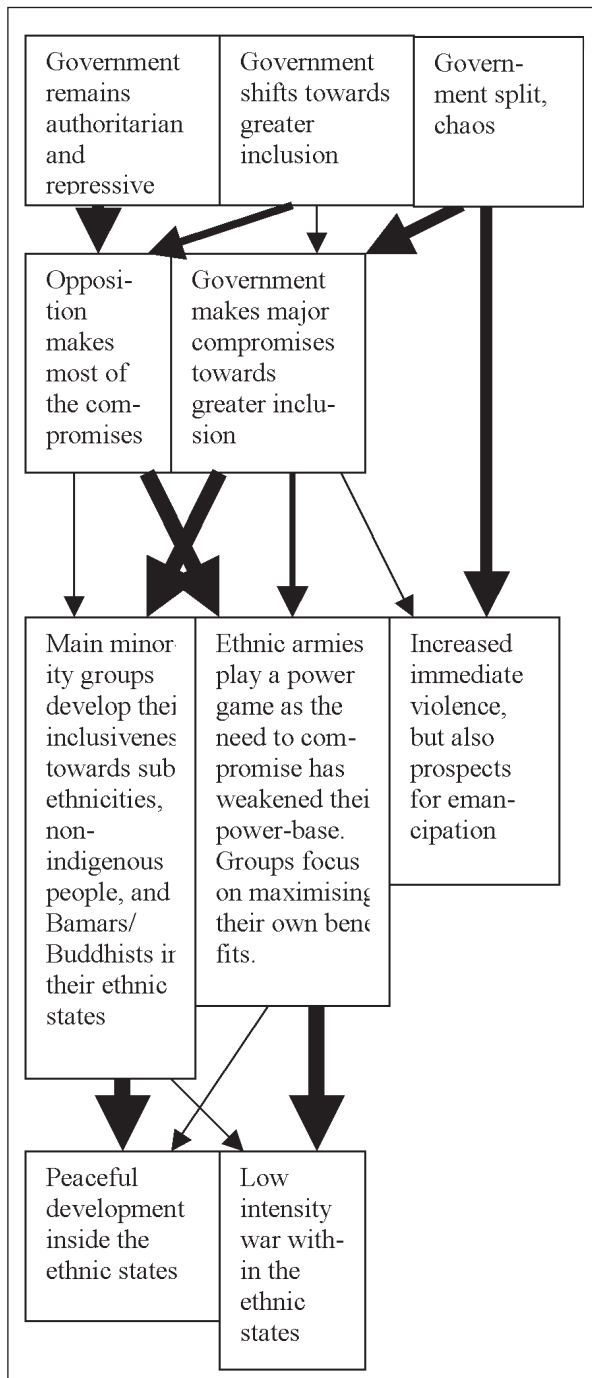
If one follows the logic of conflict theory on target displacement, one could at least predict that less hatred for the centre in the ethnic States should improve, not diminish the position of Barmars, Buddhists and other "Government look-alikes" there. **When there is less hatred towards the distant centre, there will be less need to punish the "agents" (or look-alikes) of the centre.**<sup>117</sup>

The relationship between compromisers and die-hards is often better when compromises have already been wrested from the "enemy" and the deadlock has been broken. However, if the opposition has also had to make hard compromises and especially if the ratio of opposition compromises to Government compromises tilts in the Government's favour, it is likely that the opposition division between "compromisers" and "hard-liners" will be sharpened.

**Scenario 4. Emancipation through chaos**

The situation where the Government is split and in disarray and chaos prevails could offer opportunities for the emancipation of ethnic groups, but the situation could also offer greater violent opportunities against other factions in the ethnic states. It is likely that this alternative would bring about instant suffering along with political opportunities.

The main paths and junctures within the conflict cleavages of ethnic minorities can be summarised as follows:



## PART III: AID AND CONFLICT

### Conflict Prevention and Its Relationship to Other Motives of Aid

Conflicts, within and between states, killed a global average of over 400,000 people a year in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>118</sup> This calculation does not include conflicts that do not involve Governments (non-state conflicts), nor one-sided violence by Governments (sometimes on a pretext of providing security) against unarmed citizens (= violent repression). The former category has become more common during the past three decades, but still causes much fewer casualties than traditional conflicts with Governments as conflicting parties. The latter has always caused many times more casualties than conflicts where both sides frame the situation as a conflict. According to the most widely quoted calculations by Rudolph Rummel, one-sided conflict (as the Uppsala conflict data calls it) or democide<sup>119</sup> (as Rummel calls it) cost an average of 2.4 million lives per year.<sup>120</sup>

Poverty, alleviating which is the main aim of development cooperation for OECD countries, kills close to 10 million people annually. Hunger alone kills about 6 million people<sup>121</sup> each year, while malaria alone has caused more than a million casualties a year and still causes over annual global 880,000 casualties<sup>122</sup>. ECHO reports that its anti-malaria programmes reach 460,000 people in Burma/Myanmar and so, based on the global mortality rate for malaria cases, we can estimate that this action by ECHO saves between 1,600 and 1,700 Burmese lives every year. This is clearly more than the average number of conflict casualties in Burma/Myanmar after independence. During the past two decades, the number of conflict casualties (not including one-sided and non-state conflict) has only once exceeded 1,600. Even the modest official German funding (2-3 million euros per year) for health and poverty alleviation is likely to save more lives than its contribution to conflict prevention could ever do. If, then, we compare the direct contributions to humanitarian aid of conflict sensitivity and efficiency of poverty alleviation, we are bound to conclude that conflict prevention should not be a central objective and that **aid should not excessively compro-**

**mise the efficiency of humanitarian concerns for the sake of conflict prevention.** In the interest of post-Nargis humanitarian concerns, European aid organisations had to accept compromises in their counter-corruption monitoring practices, the principle of not shoring up a repressive regime, their conditionalities and their principle of working with genuine local NGOs. Humanitarian need required rapid, even if imperfect action. The justification for compromising conflict sensitivity was the priority of ensuring that the cyclone was not followed by famine and disease that could have killed tens of thousands – more lives than repression and war could possibly have taken in the foreseeable future.

However, in addition to their limited direct effect, conflicts in general and in Burma/Myanmar in particular have an indirect effect on human suffering, because they have an impact on the quality of governance, the performance of the economy and the ability of national and international actors to tackle humanitarian issues. This impact, together with the direct suffering caused by one-sided conflicts (repression), makes conflict in general, and conflict in Burma/Myanmar in particular, an important consideration for the donor community. Apart from the need to optimise the conflict prevention factor in all humanitarian aid, it is important for conflict mapping **to identify opportunities for aid interventions that focus specifically on conflict prevention and conflict management/ resolution/ transformation.** However, conflict sensitivity should not compromise the efficiency of humanitarian aid, whose basic functions are linked far more directly to alleviating human suffering and loss of life.

### *The EU perspective*

From the perspective of German and European aid, the inter-linkages between aid and authoritarian violence, rebel violence and ethnic conflict are crucial. While the European Common Position clearly steps back from associating conflict vulnerability and authoritarianism, or non-violent protest and conflict, the European focus is on both

traditional violence between armed groups and authoritarian violence. Ethnic conflict and conflict between the regime and its democratic opposition are treated on a similar footing, which explains the EU commitment to the 1994 UN appeal for tripartite talks. In the European frame, the Burmese conflict calls for reconciliation between the three parties – democratic opposition, ethnic groups and the military Government – while the re-consolidation of ethnic relations, especially between the seven main ethnic minorities and the sub-ethnicities, seems to be off the European mental map.

### The EU mental map of Burmese conflict

The relationship in the European mental map of Burmese conflict between authoritarian violence and traditional conflict (ethnic and democratic) is complex. The EU has, in its own debate, operationalised the concept of one-sided, authoritarian violence by signalling the following specific complaints:

1. **Human rights violations**, including
  - forced labour (Common Position 2006)
  - recruitment of child soldiers (ICRC 2001 Recommendations)<sup>123</sup>
  - oppression of popular movements opposing the Government (Common Position 2006)<sup>124</sup>
  - violence, including rape and lawless restriction of rights by troops and security forces against ordinary people<sup>125</sup>
2. **Restrictions on NGOs and international humanitarian organisations at the scenes of humanitarian disaster** (Common Position 2006 & debate after Nargis, before 25/5/2008).

In order to reduce authoritarian violence, the EU would like to see more democracy and dialogue, and it laments:

3. **The detention of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and further members of the NLD and other political detainees** (Common Position 2006)<sup>126</sup>
4. **Continued harassment of the NLD and other political movements** (Common Position 2006)
5. **Disregard for the election result of 1990**
6. **Failure of dialogue between the Government and the democratic forces** (Common Position 2006)
7. **Failure to allow a genuine and open National Convention** (Common Position 2006)

### Europe's dual role in the conflict

On the one hand, Europe supports the democratic opposition and democracy in Burma/Myanmar, but on the other, it also supports measures to facilitate conflict prevention and resolution.<sup>127</sup> In a way, **Europe is a conflicting party** pressurising the authoritarian Government to end the one-sided conflict, but at the same time it tries to be a facilitator of conflict resolution processes. Moreover, in addition to supporting conflict resolution and conflict prevention (a role that this PCIA shares), it is participating with the democratic opposition in a struggle to end authoritarian violence and authoritarianism, an activity often seen as building preconditions for “genuine peace”. According to Javier Solana, for example, “genuine peace, stability and development in Burma/Myanmar can only be achieved through political reform, the granting of fundamental rights and freedoms and full inclusion of all stakeholders.”<sup>128</sup>

This contradiction, and dual role, creates a challenge for conflict mapping, as aid activities for conflict prevention or conflict management/resolution/ transformation will need to take account of the need not to disturb the EU's partisan efforts to put pressure on the Government, a party to the very conflicts that conflict-sensitive aid aims at resolving. At the same time, support for democratic pressure should naturally continue to refrain from building up opposition capacity for violence and military struggle. Otherwise the EU cannot have a credible strategy for conflict prevention and cannot live up to its own principle of “doing no harm” with its aid.<sup>129</sup>

### EU aid as a pressure tool

Another challenge emanates from the European mental map for European donor agencies. Ending authoritarianism is also seen a condition for genuine development, and so development cooperation has been instrumentalised to pressure the Government into compromises with a view to ending authoritarianism and authoritarian violence (one-sided conflict). The Common Position generally disallows aid to Burma/Myanmar, except for humanitarian aid and aid to promote human rights, democracy, good governance, conflict prevention and capacity-building for civil society; health and



education, poverty alleviation and in particular the provision of basic needs and livelihoods for the poorest and most vulnerable populations; aid for environmental protection and, in particular, programmes addressing the problem of non-sustainable, excessive logging resulting in deforestation (Art. 3, Common Position 2006). For the most part, then, this conflict mapping will have to confine itself to the options for humanitarian aid and the limited fields of other types of development cooperation. The mapping may occasionally refer to opportunities that might be available if the EU Common Position was interpreted with a more open mind than is currently the practice, and in some cases it may be possible to imagine opportunities that might present themselves if the Common Position was changed. Options for greater dialogue will be examined in particular, as the main European challenge to the current Common Position comes from those who would relax the articles restricting European-Myanmar Government dialogue, or dialogue between the Government and its opposition in Europe. Nevertheless, most of the analysis must unfold within the political framework of the European Common Position, in order to avoid mapping too many opportunities that will remain unavailable because of political constraints and pressure on the Government to allow democratic reforms.

### How does EU aid operate in Burma/Myanmar?

If European aid operates only in areas it can access and is unsuccessful in protesting about this in country consultations, it is participating in coercive Government bargaining. This is difficult to align with the European role of pressurising the authoritarian Government to cooperate with the democratic and ethnic opposition. This, naturally, is a consideration related to the conflict sensitivity of European aid. While assisting people in humanitarian need, Europe might be shoring up authoritarian repression and hence one-sided violence. The Government<sup>130</sup> argues that it is better for European aid to accept access to the 80 per cent (or more) of areas where the Myanmar Government allows it to operate than to be given no access at all. However, from the point of view of conflict impact, the situation is not as simple as that: working in the “80 per cent of areas” **forces Europe to participate in the Government’s co-**

**ercive bargaining.** It seems clear that this issue should be addressed at a higher level in country consultations. Furthermore, attempts could be made to reach the rest of the country (“the 20 per cent of areas”) through cross-border aid, taking particular care on both sides not to build the warfare capacity of Government troops or the armed forces of the ethnic groups.

The claim of the Government that **Western aid not only feeds rebel soldiers but also encourages and facilitates them** in their armed resistance against Government repression is often echoed by donor organisations and development workers. While it is legitimate to try to “fight” repressive violence and one-sided conflict, aid should limit the harm it does by not encouraging violent struggle, especially since its potential contribution to democratisation is likely to be rather limited. Similarly, of course, while there is a need to recognise the existence of Government structures for humanitarian aid, European aid should limit modes of aid (such as direct budget support) that indirectly facilitate Government repression.

### Conflict Prevention and Its Linkages to Aid Assets and Instruments

Aid and NGO support affect conditions that are directly related to conflict. Comparative evidence shows that if aid manages to bring about **growth**, it reduces the risk of war. According to some economists and conflict specialists, 5% growth can be considered “socially sustainable” in terms of domestic stability. Lower levels of growth tend to risk grievances, which motivate conflict, and unemployment opens up opportunities for violent mobilisation.

Apart from growth, **income levels** are also associated with risks of conflict. Here the comparative findings are even more precise. According to a World Bank calculation, a country with a per capita income of 900 USD or less per year runs a 36 per cent risk of experiencing internal conflict during the next 5 years.<sup>131</sup> The odds shorten considerably if there is conflict history, authoritarianism and many ethnicities with one of them predominant. As shown in Graph 1, Myanmar has had unbroken multiple conflicts almost every year since independence.

Finally, when growth has boosted levels of income and those have enabled the accumulation of wealth, conflict risk decreases because **wealth** tends to elevate the threshold of conflict. People with a lot to lose are not as likely to engage in or promote conflict, at least in their own territory.<sup>132</sup> However, the relationship between wealth and level of development is not linear: desperately poor countries do not tend to have anything to fight for, and so it is the second tier of poor countries that tend to have the greatest conflict risk.<sup>133</sup> In addition to the fact that desperately poor countries lack economic processes that can be looted, Guillermo O'Donnell claims that second-tier poor countries are more at risk of conflict because in order to "take off" in their economic development they will need to start accumulating capital in some sectors. Capital accumulation in poor countries means wealth inequalities, and consequently envy, and this increases the risk of conflict, repression and what O'Donnell calls "bureaucratic authorisation".<sup>134</sup> Unevenly distributed increased wealth in the Chin State or Nagaland could contribute to reinforcing the motivation to fight and to higher levels of violence, especially if the increased wealth is based on revenues from natural resources.

Furthermore, when the first steps to development are boosted by a growth strategy dependent on exploiting natural resources, development will not always be accompanied by stability and non-violence. Scholars talk about a "**resource curse**" in developing countries that have oil or other natural resources as their backbone of development. Competition for natural resources provides high incentives for the use of violence,<sup>135</sup> while at the same time the Government's relative lack of dependence on citizens (if revenue from natural resources secures income for the state machinery) makes developing democracy difficult.<sup>136</sup>

Rather than natural resource-based growth, **aid should support labour-intensive growth** (which distributes benefits on a broader basis). Growth that encourages the emergence of positive interdependence between civil society groups, religious groups, ethnic groups etc. will be optimal for securing peaceful development.<sup>137</sup>

Comparative experience of the **relationship between development and aid** on the one hand and **authoritarian violence** on the other offers contra-

dictory lessons for the donor community in Burma/Myanmar. It seems that higher income levels<sup>138</sup> and the emergence of a capitalist middle class<sup>139</sup> make democratisation more likely. Higher levels of education<sup>140</sup>, associated with development, then make democracies more durable and resistant to populist authoritarianism. However, the third wave of democratisation between 1974 and 1990 shows that economic decline often triggers the downfall of authoritarian Governments.<sup>141</sup> The hope that economic trouble could defeat the authoritarian regime, as it did in many Latin American countries (1974–1986), in the Soviet bloc (late 1980s), in the Philippines (1986) and in Indonesia (1998), is clearly an important motivator behind the restrictions on aid in the European Common Position on Burma/Myanmar. Besides, economic trouble has sometimes, especially in East Asia, been the trigger for setting Government policies on a more peaceful, development-oriented course. Japan 1945, Korea 1993, Indonesia 1965–6, China 1978 and Vietnam 1989 are all examples of countries where economic collapse forced the Government to recast their revolutionary or ultra-nationalist policies into a more developmentalist approach. This reduced the belligerence in Government policies, as development requires peacefulness rather more than revolution or nationalism. In the case of Indonesia this pacification only affected inter-state relations, whereas in other countries on the list it also brought about the pacification of intra-state relations.<sup>142</sup>

For the sake of **preventing authoritarian violence**, it would clearly be helpful if the EU committed itself to a **long-term plan for peace-building** once Burma/Myanmar becomes democratic. It is not the purpose of this assessment to advise whether to expand development cooperation and expect growth to create a critical middle class and educated masses to challenge the military leadership or to trigger regime change by permitting political defiance motivated by the burden of economic hardship.

## Transforming the Antagonistic Agent Structure in Burma/Myanmar

Building bridges across ethnic divides or between the democrats and the Government is an activity prescribed in most conflict resolution literature.<sup>143</sup> However, sometimes bridges between conflicting

parties can only be built by following the ideas of Robert E. Goodin, who argues that “cross-cutting cleavages do seem to moderate social conflict”.<sup>144</sup>

**Divisions inside a collective conflicting party can be used to build bridges of trust to the opposing camp.** This activity does not need to intensify the cross-cutting cleavage, but could actually contain it. Fostering cooperation between democratic women’s organisations and Government women’s organisations or youth organisations, for example, could tackle problems of violence across the gender and generation divide, while cooperation between Government and opposition actors in a common cross-cutting concern for gender or youth empowerment could help de-demonise attitudes and de-escalate tensions between the Government and opposition. This does not have to mean subjecting the opposition to Government policies of divide and rule (using gender, ethnicity or generations as vehicles). Rather, the “division” could happen on a mutual basis (if the opposition gets divided, then so does the Government). Furthermore, one could also perceive this as diversifying the peaceful means of struggle for democratisation: cross-cutting cooperation does not need to abandon the ideals of democratisation or ethnic minority rights, on the contrary.

In Burma/Myanmar collaborating on the basis of cross-cutting cleavage will be difficult due to the trauma and lack of trust across the conflict divide. It is likely that this will only succeed in some cases, in some areas and with some organisations. In some cases there may actually be a need for some kind of healing of the trauma before bridges of collaboration can be built. However, in other cases cross-cutting collaboration can be part of the healing.

In order to build bridges between conflicting parties by using **cross-cutting cleavages as a vehicle**, it is vital to **build competence in working with “the enemy”**. Instead of attacking the conflicting side, or yielding to it, training in “constructive confrontation” and building a culture of “positive no” could be added to NGO cooperation. Confronting the issue while at the same time maintaining respect for the opponent is a conflict resolution tool that has been developed into very concrete training tools in practical conflict resolution.<sup>145</sup> Training in concrete bargaining techniques among civil society organisations could assist

both work with cross-cutting cleavages and work aimed directly at bridging the conflict divide.

*How can cross-cutting cleavages build bridges between potential conflicting parties?*

If we look at the cleavages identified (and numbered) above that could be used for cross-cutting, we can at least single out the following:

### **1. Cleavage between different orientations towards democracy in the Government**

This cleavage is probably the most sensitive one, as building lines of communication to the Government’s democratic opposition is very harshly sanctioned by the Government. In some cases, intelligence gathering from the enemy can offer a safe framing for contacts to the enemy and facilitate mutual learning about the concerns on the other side of the frontline. However, this can also be dangerous, as was demonstrated by the experiences of detention of Military Intelligence officers under former, discredited Prime Minister Khin Nyunt in 2004. In many authoritarian countries where democracy-minded Government officials attempt to contact democratic opposition, it occurs in a context where there is a general assessment that the country is moving towards democracy. This creates an incentive for bureaucrats to “jump onto the bandwagon of democracy” in order to salvage their careers in the event that the country suddenly becomes democratic. This expectation is sometimes present in Burma/Myanmar, and this offers donor organisations the opportunity to point officials with a less negative attitude to democracy towards democratic opposition groups. This could help integrate the democratic opposition into the process of democratisation, allow opposition views to influence the transition process, and reduce the risk of ungovernability and violence in the process.

### **2. Generational cleavages**

While the Government and opposition disagree on many things, younger Government officials have their youth in common with younger members of the opposition. The interests of youth

could offer an entry point for aid organisations in bridge-building projects that allow the participation of younger Government/military officials and younger representatives of civil society or the opposition.

### **3. Division between security-obsessed people and technocrats**

One of the most promising ways to build bridges in aid and humanitarian work derives from specific humanitarian issues that concern Government technocrats, aid workers and civil society organisations alike. Problems of human trafficking, drug abuse and drug smuggling, poverty, famine, humanitarian disaster work, and many other fields of direct activity for donors and aid workers could be used systematically for conscious bridge-building, especially where the issue itself defines the common concern enabling dialogue across enemy lines.

### **4. Cleavages between regional and central mindsets**

Regional concerns can sometimes unite the interests of regional commanders, the regional SPDC presence and regional groups in civil society. Working with these concerns could offer opportunities for bridge-building, especially in those rare cases where regional Government officials are of regional ethnic origin.

Furthermore, democratic initiatives by the Government are frequently watered down by regional bureaucracies and regional commanders because of their private interests. This is problematic for both regional civil society and the plans and legitimacy of central Government. This is another field where central Government and regional democratic and ethnic opposition share common concerns. If humanitarian work upheld the kind of transparency witnessed in the Delta after the Nargis disaster, it would be possible to curb the amount of power abuse conducted in relative impunity.

### **5. Cleavage between people with a civilian and military orientation**

Professional cultures are powerful bridges over conflict frontlines.<sup>146</sup> The use of a common military background has helped build bridges between the Government and some of the ceasefire armies. In

Aceh the international donor community has been able to facilitate this type of interaction by simply arranging regular meetings on communal issues between former irregular combatants and local Indonesian Army personnel. In Burma/Myanmar this may be possible, at least for international donors, by supporting those NGOs implementing local aid which have a systematic focus on post-ceasefire conflict transformation (Metta Development Foundation and Shalom Foundation, for instance).

### **6. Cleavage between opposition figures who are ready to compromise and those who are not**

The ability of compromise-minded opposition and Government sectors to collaborate around compromises has been constrained by the evident dangers of displaying such willingness on the Government side. The experience of the compromise-minded former Prime Minister does not encourage such cooperation. On the other hand, the difficulties of communication on the opposition side have made flexible cooperation on their side difficult. Furthermore, in accordance with the logic of bargaining, it has been disadvantageous for one side to initiate such cooperation as this could be treated as a sign of weakness. Aid could offer an access point to such cooperation. As agents outside conflict bargaining, donor organisations and international NGOs could encourage cooperation across the conflict divide. Aid could also offer paths to initial success that could boost the profile of agents seeking compromise inside both the opposition and the Government. If the management of aid requires mutual compromises between conflicting parties, aid can offer an instant “peace dividend” if parties manage to settle their differences on related technical issues. This dividend plays to the advantage of moderate elements whose approach has been to advance by means of compromise. Aid can demonstrate the utility of soft approaches against hard-line approaches.

### **7. Gender cleavages**

Genuine NGOs have a reluctance about working with Government “NGOs” like the Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation (MWAF) or the Myanmar Maternity and Child Care Association (MMCCA). To tap into the power of cross-cutting cleavages as bridges between conflicting parties, this should, however, be encouraged. Again, the



formula would not need to be support for initiatives by Government NGOs; rather, genuine NGOs could offer elements of training or empowerment action that could link into MWAFF programmes, while cooperation with the Government NGOs could offer access to activities that the Government would otherwise find suspect. Cooperation could be based on mutual learning, even if the ideological origin of the collaborators differs, since there is a shared cross-cutting concern; empowering women. The MWAFF has programmes on the following issues that could interest democratic or ethnic women's organisations:<sup>147</sup>

- micro-credit scheme for women's empowerment and gender-related corporate responsibility and corporate responsibility projects for businesses run by women,
- counselling and training for abused women,
- awareness and reintegration programmes for potential and actual victims of human trafficking.
- programmes related to domestic violence (linked to drinking, incompatibility with in-laws, adultery, etc.).

While political realities and considerations related to authoritarian violence might render European support for the Government NGOs impossible, it should be possible to support cooperative components in gender programmes by genuine gender NGOs.

#### **8. Cleavage between major minorities and the minorities in minorities**

#### **9. Cleavage between ceasefire groups and non-ceasefire groups**

#### **10. Cleavages between indigenous and non-indigenous ethnicities**

The Government has undoubtedly used smaller minorities as means of dividing the ethnic opposition. Thus in a way, the Government has already mobilised the cleavages between minorities and sub-ethnicities, cease-fire groups and non-cease-fire groups, and indigenous and non-indigenous (in Wa, rather than in Rakhine). However, the problem of minorities in minorities is real and the discussion between smaller groups and the Government in the context of National Convention or post-convention conflict transformation is

valuable in the build-up of bridges between the Government and the ethnic groups, as well as in building up the fragile Government commitment to ethnic minority rights. It would be good if FES or other western NGO-supporting agents could help build dialogue, even inside economic development projects, on how ethnic diversity could be taken into account in post-National Convention conflict transformation efforts by local NGOs, like the Shalom Foundation and Metta Development Foundation. Another possibility would be to expose the development planning in ceasefire areas to the ethnic minorities' issue, including small and non-indigenous minority issues, by offering expert consultancy on how ethnic differences can be taken into account in local development (project) planning.

### **Dealing with Conflict-Prone Cleavages**

At the same time, there are cleavages that need to be bridged, as they serve as the main frontline in violent conflict. In some cases, cleavages that serve as bridges between the main conflicting parties are also important conflict cleavages that need to be addressed. We will proceed with our analysis and prescriptive summary by following the conflict cleavages as identified above.

#### **1. Cleavage between the Government and the democratic opposition**

#### **2. Cleavages between the Government and the ethnic opposition**

The cleavage between the democratic opposition and the Government is the crucial cleavage in European policies towards Burma/Myanmar and the focus of much European attention. While there is a lot of interaction between the European donors and the democratic opposition in exile, there is very little effort to build relations between the democratic opposition and the Government. Yet, there are not many convincing arguments suggesting that conflict resolution or democratisation in Burma/Myanmar could succeed without the build-up of this relationship. This is why it is important for the donor community to found its conflict prevention on the following premise: **it is essential to improve communication between the two opponents.**

While the European donor community feels the need to promote the build-up of the relationship between the democratic opposition and the Government in a **triangular format**, one should not assume that this could start with a formal process involving representatives of the ethnic elite, democratic leaders and the Government all gathered around the same negotiation table. This is not how peace processes begin. Instead, INGOs like the FES and countries like Germany should assist whatever liaison is possible in order to facilitate between almost any elements of the democratic and ethnic opposition and the Government. Tackling the relationship and the gradual build-up of a triangular format of dialogue between the ethnic, democratic and Governmental elite will have to start from individual pre-negotiation between various levels and various individuals representing the three corners of the triangle. In such a setting, the well established networks of organisations like the FES can be very useful.

Sometimes the relationship between the Government and the democratic/ethnic opposition might become strained by unacceptable conditions. In these cases, the relationship between adversaries requires confrontation. Confrontation in these situations is a positive and necessary measure in the build-up of better relations. For the build-up of a relationship at grass-root level, it would also be useful to have an **indigenous capacity** among civil society organisations to “bargain” with the Government. Adding the skills of peaceful confrontation and negotiation to the package of NGO training, by offering the basics of the Harvard University School of Negotiation, could help the grass-root level de-escalation of tension between the Government and the democratic/ethnic opposition.

### 3. Cleavages between the ethnic majority and minorities

#### 4. Cleavages between the ethnic and the democratic opposition

Conflict potential across the democratic and ethnic cleavage is unlikely to cause any violence as long as both opposition groups have a more real enemy in the Government. However, if Burma/Myanmar makes a transition to less authoritarian rule, the divisions between democrats and ethnic minorities can become a conflict problem. This is

why it is important in preparing for the transition to pay attention to socialising the need to respect collective cultural rights in the democratic camp, just as it is important to socialise the need for democracy and individual rights in the ethnic states and among exiled ethnic opposition actors. Conflict and difficulties in nation-building are only too common in post-authoritarian countries where the opposition is busy opposing the Government and has not had enough time, and may not be equipped, to discuss sustainable development models and strategic visions for the future. Interview material, as well as the reality experienced by people in the areas administered by ethnic ceasefire groups, shows that the views of the democratic and ethnic opposition on **individual rights** do not match, while some of the rhetoric of some democracy forces totally neglects **group rights** as a factor in a multiethnic nation with a dominant ethnic nationality, the Barmars.

European donors have been supporting activities that focus on creating a **negotiation platform on constitutional issues**. The FCDCC process towards a “federal shadow constitution” and the Ethnic Nationalities Council effort to facilitate negotiated constitutions for the 7 ethnic states have both been supported by FES and other European donors. Both processes have also been tremendously useful, not only in creating a negotiation platform for opposition-Government dialogue, but also in drawing up common visions for the democratic and ethnic opposition. Continued support for this informal dialogue would be very important. However, it should not be done in a way that strengthens the false impression that it is for the opposition to define the constitution or political order of Burma/Myanmar. While creating visions, it is important for the relationship between the opposition and the Government not to stimulate the overconfidence of the opposition in its own position. Over the past 20 years (but also quite recently) there have been lots of comments and declarations by prominent exile opposition figures claiming that it is only a question of time (and some more substantial aid) until the Military Government is overthrown and democracy restored in Burma/Myanmar. This is clearly a demonstration of such overconfidence that undermines strategically more realistic approaches.

The cleavage between ethnic majority and the minorities is also an important conflict-risk factor in-

side the Government, together with the cleavage between the regions and the centre. However, it is unlikely that the donor community could exert very much influence over such a sensitive internal issue. The only possible handle could be intellectual collaboration in the form of, for example, an FES-Myanmar ISIS conference on global experiences of centre-region relations. This could be seen as an opportunity for the Government to explain its visions of the National Convention, and lessons could be presented about the difficulty of giving space to regions while preserving national unity. If nothing else, this setup could convey the **global experience of the correlation between a Government strategy to allow decentralisation** on issues important to the regions and consolidating the unity of a nation.<sup>148</sup> It seems that this is an issue poorly understood by most military leaderships in the world.<sup>149</sup>

## 5. Ethnic groups vs. sub-ethnicities

## 6. indigenous groups vs. "migrant groups"

## 7. Centre look-alikes vs. main minorities

**Capacity building** in community relations and the build-up of a **"culture of positive no"** could help the relationship between ethnic minorities and majorities, as well as between minorities and sub-ethnicities or non-indigenous minorities. However, for the instruments of donors and aid-workers, there are also powerful economic options. One of the main structural factors contributing to the transformation of an antagonistic agent structure is the emergence of **positive interdependence between the potentially antagonistic groups**. If the wellbeing of other groups contributes positively to the wellbeing of one's own group, this economic setting is conducive to a de-escalation of tensions between the groups. This positive interdependence can be engineered in multiple ways. In Northern Ireland the International Fund for Ireland was based on this type of manipulation, which operated by sponsoring economic employment generation schemes with only one condition: employment generating projects had to be based on equal hiring of people from the two opposing groups.<sup>150</sup>

In Burma/Myanmar typical aid projects are ruled out by the sanctions, while capacity building and poverty alleviation schemes are in line with the European Common Position. In these types of interventions the programmes could be designed

in a way that would require **inter-ethnicity in the implementation of projects** or at least in the selection of project targets. Inter-ethnicity should also be made a conflict resolution-related criterion for evaluating any projects conducted in Burma-Myanmar.

If multi-ethnic employment opportunities could be developed, the most sustainable way would be to promote **activities that link traditional ethnic livelihoods of two potentially conflict ethnic groups into one mutually beneficial activity**. For example, in Rakhine state, the Rakhine population dominates trade, but lacks contacts with the geographically most natural foreign trading partner, Bangladesh. At the same time, the livelihoods of the non-indigenous population in Rakhine state, the Rohingyas, are closely linked to cooperation with people in Bangladesh. Finding schemes to market products for Rakhine traders by drawing on the natural connections of the Rohingya people could help create positive interdependence in a way that could spill over from the sponsored economic scheme to other economic activity. At present, this cooperation exists in a very exploitative manner, mostly in illegal sectors, and given recent developments on the Rohingya issue, this is not likely change soon.

Furthermore, since the EU in its newest Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (2007–2010) emphasises access and quality of basic education, the implementation of this priority target could be conflict-sensitive if it mixed **non-indigenous and indigenous people in the same class**. Mixing teachers from various ethnicities, especially along conflict cleavages, could also help create much-needed communication, but also positive interdependence.

## 8. "Haves" vs. "Have-Nots"

Despite the importance of political conflict transformation, the economic distress of Burma/Myanmar also highlights the importance of **transforming economic aspects of conflict agency**. Regardless of the political system, there will be serious conflict problems in the country unless it proves possible to reconcile the landless with those who ended up in possession of their lost land. As it is beyond the scope of this study to provide a diagnosis of the causes of the drastic rise in landlessness and rural grievances, strategies cannot be proposed here for bridging the gap between the "haves" and "have-nots".

## 9. Ceasefire groups vs. the Government

As discussed in conjunction with the scenarios, the crucial urgent issue for bridging the cleavage between the ceasefire groups and the Government (and especially with the genuine ceasefire groups who were not created by the Government) relates to the **confidence-building that could enable solutions to the disarmament issue**. If the Government does not have confidence in the ceasefire group, it will need to make strong demands about the autonomy of ethnic forces within the national military. Similarly, if the ceasefire group does not have confidence in the Government, it will need a lot of autonomy and independent protection for its military muscle. The work by Burma/Myanmar NGOs on the economic conflict transformation of conflict structures in the ethnic states and ceasefire areas goes a long way towards creating the trust needed. Furthermore, aid agencies could make it possible to transform a structure that puts the Government and the ceasefire group in a situation of negative interdependence, or a zero-sum game. If, for example, there is no economic opportunity for some of the combatants to move into civilian sectors, the objective interests of the combatants will obstruct the progress the Government wants on achieving a structure with a monopoly of legitimate law enforcement. The European donor community should be able to mobilise its capacity building and poverty alleviation instruments to create new civilian economic options for the combatants, i.e. “Benefits of Peace” that create employment and other opportunities. In their work EU actors should probably cooperate with the more experienced and connected domestic actors, such as the Shalom Foundation and Metta Development Foundation and their international counterparts like Action Aid, Deutsche Welthungerhilfe, Oxfam and many others.

However, in the end, the conflict between ceasefire groups and the Government links into the process of conflict resolution and guarantees for ethnic group rights in the political system, and so it is mostly an issue of **combating the motives for violence**. For this cleavage too, then, many of the answers and prescriptions for INGOs and aid actors will be tackled in the chapter on addressing the motives for violence.

## 10. Ceasefire groups vs. non-ceasefire groups

### 11. Diehards vs. compromisers

- In the Government
- In the democratic opposition
- In the ethnic opposition

### 12. Exiled opposition and those representing the 1990 winners vs. the local opposition

It is not uncommon for most of the violence in conflicts to derive from fighting inside the conflicting party. Conflicts tend to build mechanisms that help conflicting parties to stay united and tough in the face of their common “enemies”, but these useful mechanisms often become obstacles to compromise and sources of infighting.<sup>151</sup> The situation in the case of Burma/Myanmar is aggravated by the fact that this country has become a common target of image policies: whenever a European politician needs to show her/his democratic, militant or moral credentials she/he can always make extremely uncompromising remarks about the military Government of Myanmar. Principled policies that ignore strategic consequences create an ideological climate that supports the exile psychology and the “true-believer culture”. All of this contributes to marginalising those who compromise by making ceasefires, by dealing with the Government, by engaging in flexible reward and punishment for the Government etc. European aid policies and sanctions directed at the military Government should not reinforce this division of the moderate and radical opposition. Instead, they should **strengthen processes that encourage dialogue between exiles and people inside the country** who have to avoid demonstrative moves and work strategically; they should **contribute to processes of dialogue between fighting ethnic groups and ceasefire groups**, and they should **help to end the fighting between the so-called sell-outs and the true believers** in resistance. Again, the National Reconciliation Programme, and especially the constitutional dialogue processes inside the ethnic states as well as at the level of “federal polity”, are all doing exactly this: bridging internal divides among the conflicting parties.

**Working with technocrats in the military Government** on topics that generate utility for the positive Government objectives of development and stability could also help reduce the marginalisation of compromisers inside the Government.



Nuances and flexibility in collaboration with the Government could also help prevent situations like the one when the Government reacted violently to the progressive forces of former Prime Minister Khin Nyunt and backtracked on many of his democratic initiatives. Aid should help the democratisers within the Government partly in order to avoid their marginalisation.

### 13. Gender cleavages

The FES, European donors and aid, humanitarian and NGO support agencies should make it a general policy in their gender programmes to give a special emphasis to gender training in areas of conflict. The focus should not only be on gender equality but the main idea should be to raise awareness for the problem of **violence against women** in the context of military control of areas by forces outside their ethnic territories, as well as in the context of the role women play in their families in armed conflict. The way to combat the overly securitised setting where men involved in resistance or law enforcement subject women to violence with impunity is through transparency. Ideologically, rape by army personnel and the beating of women and children by men resisting oppression are normatively sanctioned in conflict settings and cannot be branded publically. Public awareness programmes spark discussions between stakeholders and support the arguments of victims against the securitised rationale of these raping or wife-beating heroes of liberation and law enforcement.

### Transforming Conflict Attitudes that Make Resolution Difficult

Our analysis of the mental maps of the conflicting parties showed how many of the mental mechanisms that reinforce the tough bargaining position of the conflicting parties also make progress towards compromises difficult. The unity of a collective conflicting party, for example, requires individuals to fight for the same cause. In order to ensure this, conflicting parties often sediment their positions into **slogans and terms** that members of conflicting parties have to respect. In the case of the Government, for example, the “Seven-Step Roadmap”, the idea of a “discipline-flour-

ishing” society, and “national consolidation” are terms that have become non-negotiable ways of ensuring the unity of the Government position. It goes without saying that the opposition also has similar terms that express its position and commit the members to unity. The opposition is pledged, for example, to a process of “national reconciliation” rather than “national consolidation”. Imagining a process without “tripartite dialogue” or a solution without “federalism” would marginalise an individual member of the opposition. Even the name of the body that created the shadow constitution for Burma, had to be the Federal Constitution Drafting and Coordination Committee.

The problem with these terms is that they convert anything into a **power game** between the conflicting parties and they distract attention from party interests to party positions. Even if the Government is silently creating mechanisms of engaging the democratic and the ethnic opposition, radical opposition figures cannot accept this, as long as the name “tripartite” is not attached to the activity.<sup>152</sup> Dialogue under any name would advance opposition interests, but the strong positional orientation, consolidated by **indoctrination through “authorised terminology”**, makes advancing opposition interests difficult. At the same time, for the Government, using the word “tripartite” would be tricky since this terminology is from the opposition vocabulary.

Nonetheless, conflict resolution would require **a setting where compromises are not seen as defeats** in a power battle and where the focus of attention would be on the interests of the conflicting parties and not on their positions.<sup>153</sup> Battles for relative power are always zero-sum games and positions, unlike interests, cannot ever be reconciled in a way that would allow both parties to win. This is why the donor community should not structure its work according to the opposition or Government liturgy, but should **encourage work that builds the content of selected opposition and Government programmes and interests**. Aid work should aim at helping “engagement policies” that are simultaneously “tripartite dialogue”. It should support the Seven Steps complemented by additional (not alternative) steps involving genuine dialogue with groups that have so far been outside the process of dialogue. Just as in Aceh, aid workers and INGOs should work

for the inclusion of the vital interest of the regions in access to national policy-making and rights for autonomous, self-governing local policies without calling it “federalism” (even though modern political science would do that, as it does in the case of the “Aceh-state” in the “Indonesian Federation”).

On the opposition side, there is the problem of **exile psychology**, common to most conflicts, where the people who had to escape the repression of authoritarian rule to the safety of other countries need to prove their courage by assuming tough stands. Toughness that originates from the need to keep up a show, rather than from strategic concerns, is an obstacle to progress. As mentioned above, this problem is often emphasised by some INGO and aid activity that obtains its funding from politicians eager to sharpen their political profiles in the eyes of radical and moralistic voters. Donor activity does not always sufficiently help those exile organisations that genuinely offer a channel for opinions that are repressed by authoritarianism inside Burma/Myanmar. Instead, resourcing often favours organisations that have politically appealing, principled and vengeful, rather than strategic, visions. Opposing and punishing hated dictators attracts more votes than gradual work to improve the quality of a polity. This is something that should be rectified in donor practices and NGO work: **polarisation is counterproductive for progress in conflict resolution as it also is for the prevention of authoritarian violence.**

The great task in relation to the **Government** conflict mentality is to **de-securitise society**. As long as politics, governance, media, development, aid and all social interaction are seen as an existential threat to the nation, there will be only limited non-violent space for civil society activities, democratic criticism and expression of people’s opinions. At the same time, as long as this space is confined, the country will remain unresponsive to the needs of the people, which creates fertile ground for rebellious activity. Without non-violent channels of protest there will be a need for all forces dissatisfied with governance to utilise the violent channels<sup>154</sup>, no matter how well the Government tries to block them.

While pushing for transition in the political system could help to de-militarise the mental map of the country, there are also other ways to change

the military mind. **Cooperation in humanitarian rescue** has boosted the officials who are less obsessed with security and has shown the administration that international aid is not an existential security threat to the country. It is easy to agree with the International Crisis Group that the association of humanitarian rescue with military intervention in the name of the “responsibility to protect” did not contribute to the de-securitisation of aid work. Rather, aid work should always be decoupled from force and threat.

Technocratic cooperation with those circles that are less obsessed with security threats everywhere in society would in general work against the security mentality that prevents normal civil society participation in public affairs. **Intellectual cooperation and the involvement of officials in international debates** on security and society could also help counter the mistrust that prompts the Government to securitise everything. The joint FES-MISIS workshops on EU-Myanmar relations as well as the ASEAN workshops could do a lot to normalise the highly suspicious mindset of the administration.

In addition to the wide application of this security mindset, there is a problem with the Government narrowness of the concept of security. At the core of the Government’s understanding of security is concern for regime survival. All other types of security, let alone human security, are secondary. As a consequence, the Government is unable to tackle threats to the people, and this leads to their inability to tackle vital human grievances. This, as we know, has resulted in an inability to tackle the roots of conflict motivation: if transporting ammunition from one army camp to another in the famine-afflicted Chin State is such a high-priority security issue, while the provision of rice to people starving in their villages is not, one can understand why the Government believes it will have to use those bullets against its hungry people. **Broadening the security concept to embrace an awareness of human security** would, therefore, help avoid grievance-based violence, while at the same time reducing the Government’s own authoritarian violence.

Again, in addition to pushing for polity transition, **aid can do a lot to broaden the concept of security**. This re-emphasising of human security concerns could be done by facilitating work for

human security with international resources. Co-operation with Government technocrats on issues like the prevention of human trafficking or the drug trade and developing humanitarian relief will strengthen the position of people committed to working with the human security agenda, and at the same time it will promote the human security agenda on the Government's mental map. Furthermore, this would help tackle some of the human security issues that we consider important.

### Addressing Conflict Motives and Opportunities

Grievances and gainful motives occur at many levels in Burma/Myanmar. It would be foolish to think that conflict could be ended simply by offering prosperity for the people. Political problems, especially the lack of accountability in the political system and its ability to respond to the preferences of the people cannot be remedied by growth or poverty reduction. Yet, it would be equally impossible to resolve the country's conflicts simply by solving the political problems, especially the ones at macro level. Conflict grievances also relate to economic problems and problems of grass-root level governance.

### *The Constitution as an opportunity for a commitment to democracy*

As mentioned above, there are several issues that could be resolved to alleviate the high-level political motivations for conflict. Some of the crucial issues of concern for the opposition, especially many of those related to the role of the military in the political system, are issues where the Constitution is ambivalent and the interpretation of the opposition overly suspicious. Building Government commitment to slightly more democratic interpretations of the Constitution would require publicity and clarifications from the Government now, before the political competition is on and there is an interest in twisting the interpretation to the advantage of a specific political aspirant. The donor community should have conducted – and still could – positive publicity about the improvements to the Constitution after adoption of

constitutional principles by the National Convention. The clarification of issues about the nomination of key ministers (by the president, not by the military), the terms for declaration of martial law and the exercise of emergency powers clearly responded to opposition complaints. All this should be publicised in a positive light in order **to reinforce Government commitment to these progressive steps**.

There could, moreover, be some insistence on **further clarifications**. The context of European aid is so conditioned by political developments that it should be possible to justify requests for clarifications on issues such as whether or not the president will need to be a military man, as the opposition fears, or about what the leadership role of the military will mean in practice after the Constitution has been implemented. Again, public clarifications would underscore the price of implementing these provisions in bad faith.

On issues that will still be needed to be negotiated, the donor community could try to offer “behind the scene” assistance by way of **non-official diplomacy** or track two dialogues.<sup>155</sup> Furthermore, to resolve the conflict motives between the Government and ethnic and democratic groups, the donor community should try to negotiate modalities to support various constitutional provisions, such as:

1. minority language and culture teaching in the ethnic States (Constitution Article 22(a)),
2. party formation and mobilisation (Constitution Basic Principles 7 & 39 and Chapter X), and
3. civil society and media capacity building to prepare for elections and multi-party democracy (Constitution Chapter IX).

Since all these are projects that the Government has declared in its Constitution and Seven-Step Roadmap, **the donor community should extend resources to the processes that it considers progressive**, rather than only focusing on the negative elements of the Roadmap.

### *Development cooperation and aid as opportunities for dialogue and capacity building*

Development cooperation and humanitarian assistance could offer venues for higher and lower

level policy dialogue on development-related issues. This could also help resolve some of the conflict motives in the country.

Apart from dialogue, conflict sensitivity training for NGOs, Government officials and international actors involved in humanitarian rescue could provide a venue for discussions and conflict resolution capacity building. The lack of conflict resolution competence is identified as an acute problem by most relevant local NGOs in Burma/Myanmar.<sup>156</sup> Following the experience of the **ASEM Education Hub Conflict Studies Network** ([www.tnpcs.niasnetworks.net](http://www.tnpcs.niasnetworks.net) and <http://aeh.asef.org/initiatives/index.asp?st=197>) in **West Kalimantan**, university-based conflict resolution training for conflict actors – ethnic leaders, religious leaders, the police, the military and civilian administration of the province – could offer a model to be adjusted to the Burma/Myanmar context. In West Kalimantan, the class for ethnic leaders was eventually transformed into a permanent provincial ethnic communication forum. As the function of the class changed from educational to political, the Vice-President's office took over the project in December 2008. Based on discussions in the conflict resolution class, these ethnic leaders who had been mobilising the cannibalistic Kalimantan riots just years before reached several partial conflict resolution agreements during their very first meeting as a communication forum.<sup>157</sup> Even though the context of Burma/Myanmar is much more sensitive, the format of limiting to an educational platform, and being open towards local military intelligence officials, and sticking to issues that are ripe for discussion could serve as a model that can be modified as appropriate.

Cooperation in humanitarian affairs could also help the conflict resolution effort by **strengthening the soft-liners in the Government**. While the ultra-nationalistic, obsessive political climate makes any direct external influence counter-productive, international cooperation on development and humanitarian relief can prove the worth of technocrats and soft-liners. With sanctions and a tough international line against all and sundry, the political elite has no chance of helping soft-liners to gain the upper hand in the political competition.

In addition to the motives, more extensive cooperation geared to human security – in fact, any

international presence – could **build up transparency** that would reveal power abuse and make it more difficult for military personnel to commit violations with effective impunity. This has been the experience of many aid workers in areas like the Delta, where the international presence has been substantial.

### *Media development and transparency promote conflict transformation*

In addition to transparency as a spill-over product, FES and other European INGOs are already engaged in media training. While it is not likely that the Government would like to see (or would allow) the media develop into an independent force, it would still be better to support media development to promote the creation of enough transparency to make it harder to hide individual violations that do not serve the Government. Gradual development of the media could help bring governance closer to the people, not achieving the standards and practices that Europe would like, but at least so that the Government tries to convince the public of its objectives.

### *Poverty alleviation as a peace factor*

However, political and governance issues alone will not pacify the conflict motives or conflict opportunities of the conflicting parties. Violent battle is a way of life if economic deprivation makes life a battle. Poverty alleviation in Burma/Myanmar always contributes to peace in the country as it raises the threshold of conflict behaviour.

### *Addressing inequality between the "haves" and "have-nots"*

Poverty will also have to be addressed before the conflicts can end. Tackling the problems of increasing landlessness, urban unemployment and growing urban poverty are issues that comparative conflict studies particularly highlight as crucial to stability. Even if the European Common Position and the priority of weaning the Government away from authoritarian violence impose limits on how European donors can participate in



economic conflict transformation, plenty of programming opportunities are provided by poverty alleviation and capacity building, not to mention specific conflict prevention activities, and these have a role to play in reducing grievance-based conflict motives.

Furthermore, in humanitarian work there may be ways to **avoid fuelling relative deprivation-based conflict motives**. Convenience should be avoided as a basis for distributing humanitarian assistance, in an effort to prevent unequal treatment of victims of humanitarian disasters. Fear-based distribution by INGOs to people of their own race or religion is also inadvisable. The ability to tackle danger and contain risks without avoiding stranger communities is therefore important for aid work. Implementing agencies should have this capacity available.

### *Genuine local civil society organisations as factors in conflict resolution*

In order to strengthen the sustainable capacity of NGOs in conflict-sensitive aid programming and the conflict resolution capacity of civil society organisations, it is important to ensure that capacity is also built in genuine, local civil society organisations. An ability to grant the local component a greater future role in building up conflict resolution and conflict sensitivity in aid will be required as the political space expands and access to civil society actors increases.

The special challenge in Burma/Myanmar is the existence of **puppet NGOs** who do not really represent civil society, as well a temptation to run operations by using non-Burmese contractors wearing the tag of a local NGO. To build genuine local capacity in conflict resolution and conflict-sensitive humanitarian rescue, INGOs and donors have to be wary of these temptations. Increasing the role of locals in reporting project activities and designing follow-up projects would help to monitor the authenticity of the local component.

### *Access for aid workers to sensitive geographic areas as a way to international transparency*

Finally, both to combat economic grievance-based conflict motives and to tackle the opportunities for authoritarian violence, growing interaction (within the limits of the European Common Position) should build confidence that can be used to bargain for better access for aid workers to sensitive geographic areas, which so far have been beyond the reach of European donors. If those limited areas outside the full control of the Government could be reached, aid work would be able to alleviate economic grievances there while simultaneously extending international transparency to areas where coercive forces (both Governmental and non-Governmental) can operate with relative impunity. This would also allow the European donor community to avoid being part of a deadly deal by the military Government, which attempts to punish rebellious areas by denying humanitarian relief. This should be among the highest priorities of European aid involvement at the level of country consultation.



## PART IV: CONCLUSIONS

### Context of Conflict-sensitive Aid

The context in which aid may be useful in the prevention of conflict and violence in Burma/Myanmar calls for some reorientation of donor policies. The main issues that need to be addressed are the following:

1. **European policies have to show more flexibility towards people in the administration:** Government members of a technocratic mind should not be subject to the same pressure as those obsessed with security. Flexibility could offer opportunities for humanitarian assistance, capacity building, poverty alleviation and NGO cooperation in a way that could help reduce political violence.
2. In order to build on the progressive elements in Government policies, **flexibility should be applied by responding in a differentiated manner to different Government actions:** there has to be a “carrot” in order for the “stick” to work. Besides, if the “carrot” works, aid could be used to reduce political violence.
3. **European policies need to operate at various levels, public and official, high-level and grass-root.** On a number of issues unity is essential, whereas on others it would make sense for Europe to mobilise its diversity to explore ways to peace in Burma/Myanmar.

### Main Recommendations

The agent structure of conflicts in Burma/Myanmar is complex, with cleavages at various levels.

**Antagonism** should be addressed by

1. facilitating communication between conflicting parties, and by
2. using cross-cutting cleavages as bridges between the main conflicting parties.

Aid instruments offer venues and methods for doing both of these. The main cross-cutting cleavages and conflict cleavages are listed in Part II, while the aid instruments to tackle the cleavages are in Part III. The concrete ways to use aid instruments

for bridging hostile communities are summarised in the *Intervention Examples Box 1*.

#### Intervention Examples Box 1

1. FES could support or implement projects on **gender training, micro credits, combating human trafficking and combating domestic violence** that require collaboration between genuine gender NGOs and Government gender NGOs such as MWAFF and Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs' Association (MWEA).
2. FES could support projects that aim to promote local **ethnic language training** in collaboration with ethnic NGOs and Government NGOs such as the USDA.
3. European donors could support **humanitarian relief projects** in Chin famine areas, Delta cyclone areas, areas of extreme Rohingya poverty in Rakhine State and elsewhere, in a way that requires cooperation between Government technocrats and local NGOs for implementation purposes.
4. FES could support mixed NGO/Government official **classes in humanitarian crisis and aid** (with Shalom Foundation and Metta Development Foundation, for instance) by offering them a conflict sensitivity module.
5. FES could try to move in a direction whereby its workshops on EU-Myanmar relations could involve some moderate opposition elements for discussions on how to improve relations with the EU.
6. FES could organise **conflict resolution training** focused on economic development projects and conflicts arising in these projects, or for ethnic or religious leaders, seeking to involve conflicting parties in the same class and thereby to increase communication between potential adversaries (and perhaps pushing for the establishment of ethnic or religious communication forums as a spill-over from the training).

Before conflict de-escalation can proceed to the settlement of disputes and to the removal of conflict motives, a few **mental and cultural obstacles** to conflict resolution have to be tackled.

1. On both sides, **aid work has to focus on the core interests of the conflicting parties**, instead of committing to their position-related “official terminologies”. There are opportunities for building common interests by assisting Government programmes of engagement with the democratic and ethnic opposition and thereby building a “tripartite dialogue” from the Government platform of “engagement policies”. Commitment to partisan terminologies should be avoided so that donor and INGO activities do not encourage the over-confidence of the conflicting parties in their own positions. This over-confidence has been found to be at the core of most conflicts.
2. On the Government side, **donor cooperation must seek to de-securitise** humanitarian rescue, aid, NGO cooperation and society. This can be done by building confidence and showing that international involvement in the country is not an existential threat to the nation.

The Government **concept of security has to be broadened** to highlight the importance of human security, not only the security of the state and the regime. This can be done by working with Government technocrats on human security issues.

#### Intervention Examples Box 2

1. FES could support Myanmar Government engagement policies in a **triangular formation** (involving the Government, democratic opposition and ethnic groups) by organising and facilitating secret meetings of opposition members and the Government.
2. EU donors could **expand their engagement** within the limits of the *Common Position*. This will be useful for creating trust and de-securitise humanitarian rescue.
3. FES could continue its **track two workshop series** with Myanmar ISIS, for example on the ASEAN track, to promote trust building and better mutual understanding. Through this dialogue Myanmar officials would be exposed to experience of the political transition process in Thailand, Philippines and Indonesia.

4. FES could support Government and NGO efforts to **fight human trafficking** and exploitative illegal migration and to strengthen humanitarian crisis response in order to broaden the Myanmar concept of security from narrow state/regime security towards ideas of human security.

FES and the German aid agencies, as well as donors and INGOs in general, have to address **conflict motives** by:

1. **Creating opportunities and capacity at a variety of levels for conflict resolution across the main conflict cleavages.** On the grass-root level, this means building capacity and a culture of “positive no” and constructive confrontation in society.
2. **Facilitating aid-related political conflict resolution.** Aid agencies have instruments that could be used to facilitate both high-level and lower-level exploration of crucial issues related to the interpretation of the Constitution and processes to amend it. Supporting opposition platforms for negotiation by aiding processes of national reconciliation and the drafting of “shadow constitutions” is an important element of this conflict resolution process.
3. **Supporting the progressive elements in the Government Roadmap and constitutional process without committing to the Roadmap as a whole.** This would not only promote conflict resolution, but also help the Government become more committed to these elements. This means, for example, supporting:
  - a) minority language and culture teaching in ethnic states (Constitution Article 22 (a)),
  - b) party formation and mobilisation, and
  - c) civil society and media capacity building to prepare for elections and multi-party democracy.

These could at least promote the resolution of conflict in the country.

1. **Alleviating poverty.** This would lower the conflict threshold in the country and make political violence less likely.
2. **Tackling relative deprivation,** especially in conflict-prone cleavages between the growing landless rural population and the new land-



owners, and between rich urban dwellers and the unemployed urban poor. Furthermore, all aid activities have to be sensitive about the distribution of aid in order to avoid strengthening politically sensitive inequalities. Convenience-distribution and fear-based distribution need to be avoided even in urgent humanitarian rescue.

### Intervention Examples Box 3

1. FES could participate with other European organisations in organising **training in mediation and non-confrontational negotiation techniques** for civil society leaders, NGOs and regional and local officials. The format could be based on teaching the teachers, and it could be placed within higher education programmes and run as EU-Myanmar university cooperation.
2. FES could launch projects to study ways of emulating and developing the **post-Nargis consultation mechanisms** between officials, NGOs, INGOs and communities at various levels with regard to decisions on humanitarian rescue and aid.
3. FES or other European NGO support and capacity building organisations could organise, facilitate or support activities by the FCDCC to continue the **constitutional debate** by focusing on opportunities and problems posed by the Government Constitution.
4. FES could **support the Myanmar Constitution** by supporting minority language and culture teaching in ethnic states and engaging in capacity building for party formation, democratic campaigning and the formation of interest groups. This could help alleviate some of the ethnic conflict grievances, as well as instituting formats for non-violent, democratic conflict resolution.
5. European development cooperation agencies could design projects to counteract relative deprivation-related conflict between communities by **action to combat poverty that targets non-indigenous communities** (such as the Rohingya), urban poor, landless rural population and unemployed youth.
6. FES could organise or support **teaching on minority-sensitive development planning**.

In addition to conflict motives, aid should also address **conflict opportunities** by:

1. **Creating increased interaction and training for the media** with a view to greater transparency that will make power abuse more transparent and thus costly.
2. **Increasing aid engagement** in order to create international transparency and reduce violent power abuse by authorities.
3. **Negotiating better access to the grey zones** of areas unsupportive of the Government. Access to these areas would not only help reduce authoritarian Governmental and non-Governmental violence, but it could also remove the European donor community from the deadly bargaining by the Myanmar Government, which aims to blackmail areas with anti-Government activities by threatening to deny humanitarian relief.

### Intervention Examples Box 4

1. FES could organise **media training** within the limits of the *Common Position*. This training would have to start with an introduction to basic principles of practical journalism since no formal journalism training has been conducted since the 1960s. Capacity building in media could also improve the guidelines and restrictions under which the media is operating. In the long run these courses should also aim to create some degree of transparency to tackle the relative impunity with which local officials operate and wield their power. This could reduce opportunities at least for individual or collective regional abuse of power against the people. Even if this cannot be done in a way that generates international or critical transparency, it could reduce opportunities for any abuse that works counter to the interests of the central administration.
2. EU donors could expand their engagement within the limits of the *Common Position* in order to **increase international presence** in the country. This would create a degree of transparency and could thereby block some of the opportunities for power abuse (as in the Delta after Cyclone Nargis).

ANNEX 1: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES<sup>158</sup>

Interviews and discussions with Union of Myanmar Government officials

- Alvin Law, Canon Singapore Pte Ltd and Myanmar Investment Commission
- Anthony Ngun Uk, Representative of Therthay Township, Chin State
- Aung Bwa, Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies (MISIS)
- Aung Htoo, Director of ASEAN Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Aung Than Htut, Major-General, Commander of North-East Command
- Aung Than, Advisor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Aye Lwin, Myanmar Investment Commission (Retired Director-General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
- Chaw Chaw Sein, Head, International Relations Department
- Hkam Awng, Police Colonel, Joint Secretary, Central Committee for Drugs Abuse Control, Myanmar Police Force
- Kan Zaw, Professor, Rector of Yangon Institute of Economics, University of Yangon
- Khin Ohn Thant, Advisor, ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) Unit, Myanmar Investment Commission
- Kyaw Hsan, Brigadier-General, Minister of Information
- Kyaw Nyunt Sein, Deputy Director-General (Disease Control), Ministry of Health
- Kyaw Thu, Deputy Foreign Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Kyaw Win, former Myanmar Ambassador to London
- Kye Myint, Secretary, Myanmar-ISIS
- Kyi Kyi Sein, ASEAN Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Martin Pun, Director, First Myanmar Investment Company Ltd, Serge Pun and Associates (Myanmar) Ltd
- Mya Oo, Ministry of Health
- Myint Kyi, Professor, Department for International Relations
- Ngwe Thein, Major-General, Director, Directorate of Military Strength, Ministry of Defence
- Nyunt Tin, Ambassador (ret.)
- Paw Lwin Sein, Deputy Director-General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Soe Lin Han, Deputy Director, Political Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Soe Lwin Nyan, Director of Epidemiology, Ministry of Health
- Than Than Htay, Secretary, Myanmar-ISIS
- Than Than Nwe, Chair, Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation (MWAF)
- Than Tun, Joint Secretary, Myanmar-ISIS
- Thant Kyaw, Director-General for International Organisations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Thein Naing, Education Coordinator, National Health and Education Committee
- Thida Aung, Department for International Relations
- Tin Aung Win, Chairman, Social Security Board, Ministry of Labour
- Two anonymous senior officials for Military Affairs, Security (Military Intelligence)
- Win Aung, Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFC-CI) and Myanmar Investment Commission
- Win Kyi, Director, Ministry of Information
- Win Lwin, Ambassador, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Win Mra, Director-General, International Organisations and Economic Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

- Win Thein, Director, ASEAN Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ye Gyaw Mra, Assistant Director, ASEAN Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ye Htut, Colonel (ret.), Director-General, Public Relations Department, Ministry of Information
- Ye Minn Thein, International Organisations Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Yin Myo Thu, Department for International Relations, University of Yangon
- Zaw Min Oo, General Manager, Publications, Ministry of Information

#### Interviews with armed conflicting party organisations

- Several '88 Generation students (both inside and outside Burma/Myanmar)
- All Burmese Students' Democratic Front (ABSDF): Chair, Vice Chair and five other members of the leadership
- All Burma Federation of Students' Union (ABFSU), Foreign Affairs Committee of ABSDF
- National United Party of Arakan (NUPA), Vice President
- Chin National Front (CNF): five members who live inside Burma/Myanmar and one who lives in exile
- Democratic Party for a New Society (DPNS)
- Forum for Democracy in Burma (FDB), Chair and 4 members of the leadership
- Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP), Secretary-General
- Karen National Union (KNU): President, Vice President, Secretary General, Joint Secretary, Foreign Secretary and six other members of the executive committee (including a KPLA Colonel)
- Restoration Council of the Shan State (Shan State Army) (RCSS(SSA)): leader

People from ceasefire groups who have given information for the conflict mapping in interviews with the project team

- Top leaders, Democratic Kayin Buddhist Association (KNU splinter group), October 2006
- Leader, United Wa State Army/Party, Special Region 2
- Mah Tunaw, leader, New Democratic Army of Kachin (NDAK), briefing at Special Region 5, Kaung Lha
- Official (not the leadership), New Mon State Party (NMSP)
- Top leaders, Phayangon Region Peace Group (KNU splinter group)
- Pheung Kya-shin, leader of the Laukkai national race, Kokang group (National Democratic Alliance Army)
- Saw Tin Maung, Major-General, Commander, Karen Peace Council (KPC), formerly Commander of the 7th Brigade of KPLA, 2007

#### Interviews with anonymous informants

- CEC member of an armed ethnic party in ceasefire
- Elected Member of Parliament (MP) from an ethnic democratic party
- Former Central Committee member of the Communist Party of Burma (surrendered in the mid-1960s) and retired CEC member of the National League for Democracy (NLD)
- Former student demonstrator (in the 1970s), member of the underground movement of the Communist Party of Burma and former Chairman of a democratic party
- Former young leader of the underground movement of an ethnic armed revolution party, Coordinator of a CBO in Mon State
- General Secretary and spokesperson of the *Committee Representing People's Parliament* (CRPP)

- Senior leader of the CRPP, Chairman of an ethnic political party, MP (1990 election) and former CEC of an ethnic armed group
- Spokesperson of the United Nationalities Alliance (UNA), Vice Chairman of an ethnic political party
- Township-level NLD leader

#### Interviews with experts, activists, donors and development workers\*

- Aung Min, Myanmar NGO Network
- Aye Han Tha Myint, Spokesperson, NLD, Yangon
- Aye Tha Aung, leader, Arakan League for Democracy
- Ba Aye, TV mechanic, ethnic Rakhine
- Babson, Brad, expert on Burma/Myanmar development and poverty
- Berentzen, Anette, Secretary General, Danish Burma Committee
- Bradley-Jones, Ruth, Second Secretary, British Embassy, Yangon
- C. Thang Za Tuan, Professor, Chin intellectual
- Cho Cho Nyunt, Project Manager HIV/AIDS
- Cuning, Marc, Ambassador, British Embassy, Yangon
- Delpuech, Bernard, Head, European Community Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) Delegation, European Commission, Yangon
- Denis Ngun Thwng Mang, mediator, CNF-Government negotiations
- Senior monk, Datgethan Monastery, Min Gran Ward, Sittwe
- Eugene Gei Khui Shung, Chair, Chu State National Religious Committee
- Geremek, Bronislaw, Polish democracy activist and former politician
- Harn Yawngwe, Director, Euro-Burma Office and National Reconciliation Programme
- Hauff, Michael von, Professor, Technical University of Kaiserslautern, and specialist on Myanmar political economy
- Hauswedell, Dr Christian P., former Asia Director, Federal Foreign Office, Germany and Ambassador (ret.) and Chairperson, German Association for Asian Studies, Germany
- Hla Maung Shwe, Chairman, Myanmar Shrimps Association
- Hla Mying, Sat Tu sub-ethnicity of the Chin, from Mya Pane
- J Kai Aung, Reverend, Sittwe
- Ja Nan Lahtaw, Deputy Head, Shalom Foundation
- Khin San Yee, Professor of Management Studies, Yangon Institute of Economics
- Khin Zar Naing, Gender Coordinator, UNDP
- Kiesler, Matthias, Deputy Head of Division, Southeast Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Pacific, Federal Foreign Office, Germany
- Kirkwood, Andrew, Director, Save the Children, Myanmar
- Kok Suh Sim, Teresa, Secretary of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Caucus on Myanmar, Malaysia
- Lewa, Chris, Coordinator, The Arakan Project
- Lian Sakhong, Vice President, Ethnic Nationalities Council
- List, Andreas, South East Asia Division, Directorate-General for External Relations, European Commission, Brussels
- Luy, Julius Georg, Ambassador, German Embassy, Yangon
- M. Tun Pa, Secretary of the Diocese of Sittwe
- Ma Hwin Wai, Chair of Myanmar Young Women Entrepreneurs' Association
- Ma Thanegi, former secretary of ASSK and author, Yangon

\* In an earlier version of this study, Mr. Bertil Lintner was included in the list of people interviewed. However, Mr. Lintner has not taken part in this research project and should not have been mentioned in the list. We apologize for any inconvenience this misunderstanding may have caused.



- Maguire, Matthew, Department for International Development (DFID), British Embassy, Yangon
- Marsden, Rurick, First Secretary, British Embassy, Yangon (later DFID)
- Maung Lai Nge, student, Technological University, Yangon
- Maung Maung Mya Chan, Metta Development Foundation
- Mi Kyi Win, Coordinator, Cetana Education Foundation, Thailand
- Misainyan, Member, Executive Committee, Mon Women's Organisation
- Nay Oke (Oice), Professor (emerit.) Department of English, University of Yangon
- Nay Win Maung, Secretary General, Myanmar Egress
- Neichii Angami, Metta Development Foundation
- Ngwe Thein, Project Manager, Capacity Building Initiative (CBI)
- Nyan Win, Speaker of the NLD Central Committee, Yangon
- Official, Rakhine State Cultural Museum
- Okk Gar, Trainer/Consultant, Capacity Building Initiative
- Petri, Charles, former UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Myanmar
- Phone Win, Mingalar Foundation
- Pyi Way, Paletwa Tribal Development Organisation (PTDO)
- Razali Ismail, former UN Special Envoy for Myanmar
- Saboi Jum, Reverend, Director, Shalom Foundation
- Salai Ceu Mang, Secretary, Chin Famine Committee
- Salai Isaac Khen, Consultant, Thingaha Gender Working Group
- Saw Simon Tha, member, KNU and mediator between the Government and the 7<sup>th</sup> Brigade KPLA
- Seik Nyan, Mon Women's Organisation
- Sit Aye, Police Colonel, Department of Transnational Crime
- Staerken, Jack, Coordinator, National Reconciliation Programme
- Steinberg, David I., Professor, Director of Asian Studies, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, USA
- Stoltz, Karl, former Deputy Head of Mission, US Embassy, Yangon
- Storey, Ian, expert on China's strategy in Burma/Myanmar
- Stubkjærd, Hendrik, Secretary General, Dan Church Aid
- Swe Sin Mya, Trainer/Consultant, Capacity Building Initiative
- Taylor, Debbie Aung, Country Director, International Development Enterprise (IDE)
- Taylor, Jim, Country Director, IDE
- Tegenfeld, David, Myanmar expert
- Than Tin Sum, Chair, Chin Famine Committee
- Thun Yoo, Ministry for Sports, Pelawan district (SPDC Township)
- Timmermann, Ralph, Counsellor, Deputy Head of Mission, German Embassy, Yangon
- Tin Maung Thann, President, Myanmar Egress
- Tschampa, Frederike, First Secretary (Human rights, Peacekeeping, Americas, Europe and Asia), European Council, Brussels
- Wahlström, Margareta, Assistant Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction and Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action in the Secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, United Nations
- Win Naing, independent politician, former CEC of Democratic Party 1998 and League for Democracy and Peace Party
- Yuza Maw Htoon, Director, Mingalar Foundation
- Zaw Oo, specialist on Burma/Myanmar Political Economy

## ANNEX 2: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Most of the key interviews were conducted by the core team, Timo Kivimäki, Paul Pasch and Khin Zar Naing. However, interviews that were commissioned came with the following instructions and questionnaires:

### Instructions

It is important to emphasize to the informants that their identity will not be revealed in the course of research. It is also important that the interviewers, with local understanding, assess the situation and avoid asking difficult/dangerous questions in the presence of other, perhaps less familiar local people. Also, if there are questions that cannot be asked, or questions that should be asked but are not listed below, the interviewer should inform the study team. For the study it is also important that the interviewer documents all limitations on the ability of the informant to say what the interviewer thinks they would otherwise want to say (for example, if there is somebody listening, or if it is likely that the informant does not trust the interviewer). Finally, it is essential that informants are allowed to state their impressions, rather than the interviewer correcting facts or interpretations even if the informant was clearly wrong about something. The interviewer will be allowed to correct in her/his report whatever misinformation the informant gives, but only as editorial remarks, without changing the original statement of the informant.

### Questions for ethnic informants

#### General

1. After the constitutional referendum, after Nargis, are you optimistic about the prospects your country and your region face? What are the main concerns and main sources of hope in the area? *(The informant should be discouraged from focusing on the facts of what the objective situation is or what the Roadmap says, and instead encouraged to explain the expectations, the common sentiments.)*

2. What do you think should be done in this region and this country to help the situation that people here are experiencing? What would you do, if you had the power?

#### Political situation

1. How did people vote in the referendum on the Constitution? Why do you think that is?
2. The Government has offered a Constitution, freedom to establish parties, and an election in 2010. Do you think these measures could offer opportunities for the improvement of the political situation? Are there risks involved in this opening?
3. How did people feel the Government tackled the Cyclone crisis? How is national and local governance in general felt in this area? *(Are people generally happy with the administration, both nationally and locally?)*
4. There has been tension between the Government and democracy groups (demonstrators/protestors, here reference can be made to the September 2007 protests). Has that been the case in this area as well? Who are these people who oppose the Government? *(Here the informant is assured that this question is not about identifying people, but obtaining a general characterization of them: are they young, are they from a specific place/group, etc.)*
5. Have there been any specific issues where demonstrators have been especially unhappy with the Government? Why do they want to oppose the Government? Why does the Government not like to give them what they want?
6. What about the ethnic situation? What kind of relationship do the various ethnic groups have with one another (locally and nationally)? *(This is to see whether people in the region perceive the local ethnic/sub-ethnic cleavages or the cleavages with the majority ethnicity as more serious, and where they see the dividing lines.)*
7. How is the human rights situation changing in the area? Have there been complaints, have people been satisfied with the way the military

or the police has treated people? (*Here it would be good, in order to investigate how people perceive this relationship, to allow people to talk about rumours, too, and not only their own experience. However, it would also be important for the interviewer to investigate whether what the informant is telling is personal experience or hearsay.*)

8. Do people who do violence get exposed and punished? How do the police and traditional governance mechanisms (village authorities, or others) tackle conflict and violence or crime? (*What do they do, how do they get to know who has done what?*)
9. How are the people in this area traditionally? Are they peaceful, or brave warriors? Now? In history? (*Here also, facts will be studied from books, whereas impressions are what interests the interviewer.*)

#### *Socio-economic situation*

1. How are you and how is your group (ethnic, religious, etc.) doing economically (poor, well-off) compared to other local groups in the area, or compared to Barmans or people in Yangon? Is there envy towards another group? Is the situation improving or deteriorating? (*It would be good for the interviewer not to name the groups, but instead allow the informant to name them. If needed, the interviewer can help. However, it would be good if here the interviewer did not lead the informant and rather appeared ignorant of the ethnic cleavages.*)
2. What do people expect, in terms of economic position, from the Roadmap, and elections, local/state parliaments? Do people think that will change their position? Are people in general optimistic about their economic positions?
3. How do you describe your own ethnic group? How about other ethnic groups in your area? What is their relationship to the national leaders, what to foreign nations?
4. How do you describe your own religious group? How about other religions in your area? What is their relationship to the national leaders, what to foreign nations?

#### *Police/Law enforcement*

1. Are the laws just in this area? Are they being enforced effectively? Can a policeman go to jail if he breaks the law?
2. What is the relationship between national law, local norms, and religious norms? Which is most important? Who follows which (national, local or religious) law?

#### *Media*

1. Where do you get your news from?
2. How did you learn about the referendum, how about the Cyclone?
3. Where do you learn about foreign countries?

#### *International community*

1. What do you expect foreign countries to do to help you and your area?
2. What would you not like foreign countries to do in your area or in Myanmar?
3. What is your experience of aid organisations, local and foreign?
4. Can the international community help build peace in Myanmar/Rakhine State, or are foreigners conspiring for conflict?
5. What do you think about international aid? Should it be increased or not? What do you think about international sanctions imposed against the Government of Myanmar?

#### Questions to people involved in post-Nargis rescue:

1. After the referendum in the Delta area and after the visit of the UN Secretary-General, the Government and the international community managed to create terms of engagement for the international actors in the post-Nargis rescue and reconciliation. Despite security sensitivities, the Government accepted greater access and openness to the affected areas than has been customary in Myanmar. At the same time, the interna-

tional community acted in a more flexible manner, despite the Western sanction-approaches.

- a. Do you think the model and the terms of cooperation in the Delta could offer lessons for future international cooperation on other humanitarian emergencies in Myanmar? Would the post-Nargis cooperation offer models for conflict-sensitive aid programming?
2. One of the concerns of the EU in Myanmar has been the problem of non-responsiveness of governance structures vis-à-vis the needs of the people. In the post-Nargis rescue, Myanmar civil society organisations, business community and soldiers worked together and managed to create ways to communicate popular needs and to act upon them.
  - a. Could any of these experiences be utilized in humanitarian operations elsewhere in Myanmar?
3. The international community has felt it problematic for the sake of prevention of authoritarian violence that the Government does not allow access to aid workers to rebellious areas and areas that have experienced anti-Government demonstrations and activities.
  - a. Do you think that the solutions for political security concerns of the Government in the Delta area could be utilized when working out ways in which the international development and humanitarian work could reach the sensitive areas of Myanmar?

Questions for people who are part of the economic elite, but who did not participate in the post-Nargis rescue

1. How could economic development and the economic elite help prevent conflict in Myanmar?
2. How should the international community (international business and the aid community) play a constructive part in this?

Questions to Government officials

Questions are divided into two areas:

1. Issues that worry the Government concerning European aid (from the security perspective),
2. Qualities that the Government welcomes (as good for security) in European aid.

Informants can respond to the above questions first. This will give a general picture. But then, to be more specific, their ideas and opinions on the following are needed:

- a) What kind of **recipients** would you think would support the stability of Myanmar;
- b) What **types** of aid would benefit peace;
- c) What kind of **channels of aid** would be useful for the reduction of political violence, and
- d) What kind of **principles** of aid would the Government feel support political stability in the midst of Myanmar's political transition?

From a Ministry of Education person we would also specifically like to know whether it would be possible for trusted European INGOs to participate in the implementation of Constitution article 22a by offering help with the minority language and culture teaching in ethnic states.



## ANNEX 3: KIO'S 19 POINTS PROPOSAL FOR CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS AND CLAUSES

### The KIO proposal for constitutional provisions and clauses

From: The Central Committee, Kachin Independence Organization (KIO), Special Region 2.

To: The Chairman, National Convention Commission, and National leaders of the Union

Subject: The KIO strongly urges the adoption of the following amendments in the Constitution.

#### 1. Concerning the foundational system for the organisation of the Union

(1) As currently intended, the Union will be composed of constituent states; we believe that specifying these additional goals clearly and concretely will be necessary. One, that the constituent state union system of state be technically and genuinely a system of federation of states, and two, that this system of state organisation be fully transparent in its implementation. We are mindful of the fact that, whereas, the Constitution of 1947 specified a Union that is a federation of states, what actually transpired was a system where all political power was centralized, as in a **unitary system**, instead of a **federation**, and one constituent state alone held that power.

Therefore, to effectively preclude a recurrence of this fate, and the calamitous results, we urge in the strongest sense possible, that a specific constitutional mandate be included for a federal system of union and for its judicious implementation.

(2) According to the current provisions the country is to be divided into seven major divisions, and seven constituent states; further, that the major divisions and constituent states shall have exactly the same rights and authority.

We most strongly suggest that this idea be completely reconsidered, and the reason for this is clear. The constituent states are intended to be for ethnic nationality communities, and since political self-determination is already inherent in the very concept of the ethnic groups as constituents, we strongly urge that this right be made explicit in the constitution itself.

#### 2. Concerning the division of authority of government

In the system of division of governing authority as currently planned the three major branches of authority are, the legislative, administrative and justice departments. These three branches of government are to apply uniformly in all levels of government, namely, the Union, the major divisions, the constituent states and in specially created self-governing units.

We strongly urge that when this proposed system is actually implemented, the authority situated in the major divisions and the constituent states be fairly and appropriately divided to separate the empowerment of each entity. In other words, major divisions and constituent states should not be identical copies of each other. We believe that much more legislative power should be granted to the major divisions and constituent states than currently envisaged. We especially want to point to the situation in constituent states where the legislatures must have the capability to function as self-governing bodies.

We propose that the legislative functions of the major division and constituent state level must be given more authority than currently conceived. We cite as example the situation where constituent state legislative bodies must make laws affecting the nationality groups in their states, but that authority clearly is not applicable in a major division.

#### Examples-

(1) The right of an ethnic nationality community to offer language and literature programs to promote and preserve cultural heritage, to offer instruction programs in schools, and to recognize the primary ethnic national language of the state as the second official language.

(2) In matters related to the preservation and promotion of ethnic cultures.

(3) To enable ethnic national communities to use their customary laws and practices legally and appropriately.

(4) To protect ethnic national affairs according to law.

### 3. In matters concerning administrative domains –

(1) If the president of the Union desires to assert direct control on constituent state affairs it will be tantamount to the Union government placing direct control on state affairs. This will have the same effect as the centralized power of a unitary system.

(2) We believe that since the head of the government of a constituent state represents the people of the state, he or she should be a member of that particular national community. During the years of AFPFL parliamentary system of Government, the minister of a state represented the national community of that state, and was chosen from among their elected members of parliament. And in the era of BSPP system of government the head of the state council was selected from the national community of the state.

There is therefore, an established tradition that is consistent with the history of the founding of the Union concerning the recognition of the basic rights of constituent communities as national policy. We believe therefore, that the Union constitution now in the process of being written should adhere to that tradition.

(3) In the matter of forming constituent state government:

(a) The head of constituent state government shall be elected by members of the state legislature by secret ballot, and the person elected by majority shall be appointed the head of the state by them, and he or she shall then be appointed minister of the state by the president of the Union.

(b) The head of a constituent state shall, in collaboration with the state legislature, create the office of the head of state, specify the number of state ministries, and carry out the functions of governance of the state. The Union president will accept this procedure and recognize the system of the constituent state.

(c) The chief justice and chief accounting officer of the state shall be appointed by the head of state in collaboration with the legislature.

(d) The chairmen of self-governing areas in a state shall be appointed by the head of the state.

(e) In the event that a state minister resigns from office the head of state shall accept the letter of

resignation, and he or she shall, in collaboration with legislative leaders, make necessary arrangements to continue the functions of that office. If the head of a state is to resign the president of the Union must accept the resignation letter.

(f) If there is security concern in a state the head of state shall, after consulting with legislative leaders, report to the president of the Union. Upon receiving the report the president will consult with the head of the state to assess the problem before the security situation is informed to the public.

(g) In the selection of personnel by authorized persons for state government employment candidates from the home state shall be given preference.

(h) The head of state has full rights to supervise directly the police force of the state.

(i) Subsequent to electoral approval and acceptance of the constitution, all members of ceasefire armed organisations, and any citizen of the state, shall have the right to serve in their state as defence force units of the national armed forces command, but under the control of the head of state.

4. In matters concerning territorial boundaries, whether of the Union or a constituent state, or changing an existing name of a state, no change shall be made without prior consent of the majority of the citizens of the state concerned.

5. In the laws concerning religion and the practice of belief systems we want full constitutional guarantees for non-discrimination, and non-interference from the state.

6. The National House of Representatives is concerned with the affairs of national communities, as such, we want to see a clause in the constitution that stipulates that each constituent state shall send to the House of Representatives only elected representatives of the national community of that state.

7. We do not agree that a specific Union government ministry for the border areas or regions is necessary. Any security matter in a border area can be managed by national defence department officials and the government of the state concerned. We raise this objection because a separate ministry for the border areas will have the same effect as direct centralized control of constituent state affairs.

8. We believe that those constituent states with international boundaries should have the legal authority to issue permits for short-term cross-border travel and trading. If state and federal authorities can work together in such a framework there will be better overall fairness and less illegal activities.

9. The legislature of a constituent state should have the authority to make laws requiring equitable sharing of benefits between the state and the federal government, from commercial developments of natural resources in the state. For instance, in the matter of precious (gem) stones, in addition to allowing constituent states the right to carve and polish stones, they should be permitted to also explore for such resources, develop mining industries and to sell the products. Additionally, the authority to develop accommodation facilities and transportation media should belong to the state legislature.

10. Regarding agriculture we want to see the following matters to be also included among the responsibilities of state legislatures; the classification of land for cultivation and reserved wilderness areas, boundary and site inventories, mechanized farming and agricultural research, classification of water resource and watershed priorities, the management of production and use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and setting aside grazing and furloughed lands.

11. Concerning taxes levied on timber production, the current system states that except for teak and specified hardwood varieties, a state may collect tax on all other forest products. We ask that this stipulation be amended to say, with the exception of teakwood, a state can levy tax on all the remaining forest products.

12. Concerning transportation and communication, we want to see appropriate authority vested in state legislatures in these areas; developing or sustaining river and tributary systems, communication media including postal, wireless, telephone, facsimile, electronic mailing, internet, intranet and similar media, satellite relay system for audio-visual transmission and reception, and broadcasting and recording.

13. In matters concerning communities, we want to see state legislatures authorized to pass laws to allow: private schools and instructional programs; private charitable hospitals and dispensaries; pri-

vate medical practice; special aid programs for children, women, handicapped persons, geriatric patients, and aid for the homeless.

14. In matters concerning the following also we want state legislatures to have authorities: general administration, dividing rural, municipal and township areas, regulating house and land leasing, civic organisations, border area development programs and census surveys.

15. Concerning the territorial entity of Kachin State, we want its boundaries to be exactly as it was when the state was originally recognized.

16. A constitution can become the law of the land only if the required majority of its citizens give their approval; accordingly, we want to include in the constitution a specific clause to say it is the fundamental duty of every citizen to protect that right.

17. Concerning citizenship. In the same sense that citizenship of the Union exists, we suggest that there is need for state citizenship as well, and that the law for this should be written. The reason why we support this position is this: in future elections will be held according to democratic practice, and assumption of duties by elected representatives will occur. But if there exists only federal law governing this, then we cannot say that the future will not be free of problems of ambiguity and conflict between state and federal electoral jurisdictions.

18. We want to see the laws governing constituent states written in a manner that does not contradict federal laws; however, one region of the country may be very different from other regions from the standpoint of what needs to be in state law to reflect conditions. For this reason, in order for the Union to be strong constituent states must have the authority to write laws that reflect their needs, instead of a top-down legislative system in which state law will be written elsewhere.

19. The defense forces charged with the responsibility to protect the whole country should be a force where all Union nationalities are adequately represented, and only such an integrated force should be called the Tatmadaw of the Union.

The statement is issued by the Central Committee of the Kachin Independence Organization in mid-July, 2007.

## ANNEX 4: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENHANCED COOPERATION BETWEEN EU AND MYANMAR

		MDG	COMMON POSITION
1.	<b>PEACE &amp; NATIONAL INTEGRITY</b>	8. Develop a global partnership for development	<b>Article 3:</b> <b>3(a):</b> support of HR democracy, good governance, conflict prevention and building capacity in civil society <b>3(b):</b> health and education, poverty alleviation, and in particular the provision of basic needs and livelihoods for the poorest and most vulnerable populations
2.	<b>EDUCATION</b>	2. Achieve universal primary education	<b>3(a)</b> <b>3(b)</b>
3.	<b>HEALTH</b>	4. Reduce child mortality	<b>3</b> <b>3(a)</b> <b>3(b)</b>
4.	<b>DEMOCRACY, RULE OF LAW &amp; GOOD GOVERNMENT</b>	8. Develop a global partnership for development	<b>3(a)</b>
5.	<b>FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION</b>	8. Develop a global partnership for development	<b>3(a)</b> <b>3(c):</b> environmental protection and, in particular, programmes addressing the problem of non-sustainable, excessive logging resulting in deforestation
6.	<b>ECONOMIC PROGRESS</b>	8. Develop a global partnership for development	<b>3(a)</b> <b>3(b)</b> <b>3(c)</b>



POTENTIAL MEASURES/PROJECTS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Local ethnic language training (Myanmar Constitution, Art. 22a)</li> <li>■ Civil society capacity building to prepare for elections and multi-party democracy</li> <li>■ Civic education</li> <li>■ Media training in responsible election reporting and parliamentary reporting</li> <li>■ Conflict resolution and mediation training</li> <li>■ Establishment of communication forums with ethnic groups</li> <li>■ Initiation and support of second-track dialogues on a variety of topics in order to generate understanding, support and expertise (e.g. FES-MISIS Track Two Dialogue)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ University cooperation/academic exchange/academic networks (e.g. through the Erasmus Mundus programme)</li> <li>■ Education policy dialogue with donors, including curriculum development, teacher training</li> <li>■ Ethnic language training</li> <li>■ Civic education</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Expanded health policy dialogue with donors</li> <li>■ Awareness-building campaigns about HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis</li> <li>■ Expansion of projects to improve access to and quality of treatment and preventive measures related to the three diseases (under the 3D Fund)</li> <li>■ Treatment, rehabilitation, training and after-care services for ex-addicts and their return to a productive lifestyle</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Lobbying for the introduction of a programme on biodiversity, sustainable timber production and export certification (e.g. FLEGT)</li> <li>■ Conflict resolution and mediation training</li> <li>■ Establishment of ethnic communication forums</li> <li>■ Local ethnic language training (Myanmar Constitution Art. 22a)</li> <li>■ Training for parliamentarians, political parties and civil servants</li> <li>■ Development of a code of conduct for parliamentarians and civil servants</li> <li>■ Civil society capacity building to prepare for elections and multi-party democracy</li> <li>■ Civic education</li> <li>■ Initiation and support of second-track dialogues on a variety of topics in order to generate understanding, support and expertise (e.g. FES-MISIS Track Two Dialogue)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Lobbying for the introduction of a programme on biodiversity, sustainable timber production and export certification (e.g. FLEGT)</li> <li>■ Civic education</li> <li>■ Training for parliamentarians, political parties and civil servants</li> <li>■ Development of a code of conduct for parliamentarians and civil servants</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Enhanced policy dialogue on economic planning, including energy security (e.g. alternative fuels) and mitigating the effects of climate change</li> <li>■ Conflict resolution training focused on sustainable economic development</li> <li>■ Transfer of expertise through companies and universities through training and study visits</li> <li>■ Micro-credit training/schemes</li> <li>■ Introduction of FLEGT</li> <li>■ Lobbying for participation in GSP</li> <li>■ Basic business courses for present or future small entrepreneurs throughout the country</li> <li>■ Poverty-reduction projects targeting non-indigenous communities, urban poor, landless rural population &amp; unemployed youth</li> <li>■ Civic education</li> <li>■ Promoting a Code of Conduct for sustainable investment</li> <li>■ Promoting a Code of Conduct for sustainable tourism</li> </ul>

		MDG	COMMON POSITION
7.	<b>FIGHT AGAINST FORCED LABOUR &amp; LABOUR MALPRACTICES</b>	<b>1.</b> Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger <b>8.</b> Develop a global partnership for development	<b>3(a)</b>
8.	<b>POVERTY ERADICATION</b>	<b>1.</b> Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger <b>8.</b> Develop a global partnership for development <b>7.</b> Ensure environmental sustainability (slum dwellers)	<b>3</b> <b>3(b)</b>
10.	<b>ERADICATE DRUG PRODUCTION</b>	<b>7.</b> Ensure environmental sustainability <b>8.</b> Develop a global partnership for development	<b>3(a)</b> <b>3(b)</b> <b>3(c)</b>
11.	<b>ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION &amp; SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>7.</b> Ensure environmental sustainability	<b>3(c)</b>
12.	<b>DEVELOPED MEDIA</b>	Media can be an important factor in disseminating vital information for the achievement of all MDGs	<b>3(a)</b>

⇒ Source: Marina Kramer, December 2009, “A Call for Constructive Engagement - Some Observations on the Prospects for Myanmar-EU Relations”, FES

**POTENTIAL MEASURES/PROJECTS**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Enhancing policy dialogue about labour rights and legal framework</li> <li>■ Training for workers and officials on the legal framework for labour rights</li> <li>■ Agreement on a Voluntary Partnership Agreement under FLEGT</li> <li>■ Lobbying for reinstating the GSP</li> <li>■ Anti-human trafficking projects</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Micro-credit training/schemes</li> <li>■ Lobbying for participation in GSP</li> <li>■ Basic business courses for present or future small entrepreneurs throughout the country</li> <li>■ Conflict resolution training focused on sustainable economic development</li> <li>■ Transfer of expertise through companies and universities through training and study visits</li> <li>■ Introduction of FLEGT</li> <li>■ Poverty-reduction projects with non-indigenous communities, urban poor, landless rural population &amp; un-employed youth</li> <li>■ Gender training</li> <li>■ Anti-domestic violence projects</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Help with the eradication of opium fields and planting alternative crops</li> <li>■ Treatment, rehabilitation, training and after-care services for ex-addicts and their return to a productive lifestyle</li> <li>■ Training in planting alternative crops such as rice, sugar cane and rubber</li> <li>■ Measures to ensure the access to markets and services for ex-opium farmers</li> <li>■ Humanitarian aid</li> <li>■ Reintroduction of FLEGT</li> <li>■ Lobbying for participation in GSP</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Enhanced policy dialogue on environmental protection, biodiversity, deforestation</li> <li>■ Training on the environmental sustainability of agricultural measures</li> <li>■ Establishing effective nature protection areas, promoting ecological tourism</li> <li>■ Reintroduction of FLEGT</li> <li>■ Lobbying for participation in GSP</li> <li>■ Demining projects</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Capacity building for state and independent media outlets, especially targeted towards responsible election and parliamentary reporting</li> <li>■ Training in responsible quality journalism</li> <li>■ Knowledge transfer for editorial skills in news editing, copy editing, sub-editing, page design, photo-editing and product positioning, for example by enlisting help from ASEAN experts and regional organisations such as the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) and the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC)</li> <li>■ Development of media guidelines</li> <li>■ Attachments and internships with leading national and international English-language newspapers for journalists, editors, designers, display &amp; classified advertising managers (e.g. in China, Singapore etc.)</li> </ul>

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> This project mobilises academic perspectives to achieve practical policy benefits for conflict prevention in the context of Asia-Europe cooperation. As such, it is consistent with the objectives and operational principles of the *Thematic Network on Peace and Conflict Studies* of the ASEM Education Hub ([www.tnpcs.niasnetworks.net](http://www.tnpcs.niasnetworks.net)). This is why the *Network* resources were utilised in the analysis, while the *Network* also participated in financing the project costs for this study.

<sup>2</sup> In 1989 the military leadership changed the English name of the country from the “Union of Burma” into the “Union of Myanmar”, claiming that “Myanmar” was closer to the actual Burmese pronunciation of the country’s name. Many countries demonstrate their non-recognition of the legitimacy of the military Government by refusing to yield to the new official English naming of the country. In European countries both names are used: the old translation denotes their *de jure* disapproval of the military regime and the new name indicates acceptance of the *de facto* existence of the regime and its decision to change the country’s English name.

<sup>3</sup> For an analysis of the impact of aid in the conflict in Somalia, see Timo Kivimäki, 2001, *Explaining Violence in Somalia*, CTS, Helsinki ([www.conflicttransform.net](http://www.conflicttransform.net)).

<sup>4</sup> For an analysis of the impact of aid in the conflict in Mali, see Timo Kivimäki, 2001, *Integrated Approach to Security in Northern Mali*, CTS, Helsinki ([www.conflicttransform.net](http://www.conflicttransform.net)).

<sup>5</sup> According to Gochman and Blainley, overconfidence in one’s own relative bargaining/fighting position and strength is common to all conflicts, and is thus a necessary condition of conflict. See Charles Gochman, 1979, “Studies of International Violence. Five Easy Pieces?”, in David Singer, ed., *Explaining War, Selected Papers from the Correlates of War Project*, Sage, London; and Blainey, Geoffrey, 1973, *The Causes of War*, New York, Free Press.

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Ted Robert Gurr, 1993, *Minorities at Risk*. United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington DC, p. 123; Nils Petter Gleditsch and Harvard Hegre, 1997, “Peace and Democracy. Three Levels of Analysis”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 41, no. 2, April, pp. 283-310.

<sup>7</sup> Alvin Rabushka and Kenneth Shepsle, 1972, *Politics in Plural Societies: A Theory of Democratic Instability*, Merrill, Columbus, Ohio. According to recent evidence, it is bipolar ethnic division that exposes a society most to conflict violence: see Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, 2002, *Greed and Grievance in Civil War*, Centre for African Economic Studies, Oxford University, Working Paper Series, available at [www.caes.ac.uk](http://www.caes.ac.uk).

<sup>8</sup> Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, 2002, *Aid, Policy and Peace. Reducing the Risks of Civil Conflict*, Centre for African Economic Studies, Oxford University, Working Paper Series, available at [www.caes.ac.uk](http://www.caes.ac.uk).

<sup>9</sup> Ted Robert Gurr, 1980, “Introduction”, in Ted Robert Gurr, ed., *Handbook of Political Conflict*, The Free Press, New York, pp. 1-16.

<sup>10</sup> Charles Tilly, 1978, *From Mobilization to Revolution*, New York, NY and McGraw-Hill; Paul Collier, Anke Hoeffler and Måns Söderbom, 2008, “Post-Conflict Risks”, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 45, no. 4, pp. 461-78.

<sup>11</sup> Paul Collier, 2003, “Natural Resources, Development and Conflict: Channels of Causation and Policy Interventions”, World Bank and Philippe Le Billon, 2006, “Fuelling War: Natural Resources and Armed Conflicts”, *Adelphi Paper* 373, IISS and Routledge.

<sup>12</sup> This is further clarified in another FES publication, see Thania Paffenholz, 2005, *Peace and Conflict Sensitivity in International Cooperation: An Introductory Overview*, FES, Bonn, IPG-Redaktion.

<sup>13</sup> UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict dataset v.4-2008, 1946–2007. See Lotta Harbom, Erik Melander and Peter Wallensteen, 2008, “Dyadic Dimensions of Armed Conflict, 1946–2007”, *Journal of Peace Research* 45(5), pp. 697-710.

<sup>14</sup> J.P. Lederach, *Preparing for Peace: Conflict Transformation across Cultures*, New York, Syracuse University Press, 1995.

<sup>15</sup> Rudolph J. Rummel, 1995, “Democracies ARE less Warlike than Other Regimes”, *European Journal of International Relations* 1, pp. 457-79.

<sup>16</sup> This bias is not systematic in FES publications *Krisenprävention und Zivile Konfliktbearbeitung: Demokratie und Frieden*, available at [http://conflict.th-vi.com/conflict\\_prevention.htm](http://conflict.th-vi.com/conflict_prevention.htm).

<sup>17</sup> T. R. Gurr, 1970, *Why Men Rebel*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press.

<sup>18</sup> Charles Tilly, 1978, *From Mobilization to Revolution*, New York, NY, McGraw-Hill.

<sup>19</sup> Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, 2002, *Greed and Grievance in Civil War*, Centre for African Economic Studies, Oxford University, Working Paper Series.

<sup>20</sup> The problem of peace spoilers was first discovered by Stephen Stedman. See Stephen John Stedman, 1997, “Spoiler problems in Peace Processes”, *International Security*, Fall, pp. 151-162.

<sup>21</sup> The gainful side of conflict is very sufficiently dealt with in the FES PCIA on Aceh by Felix Heiduk (2006), even though the PCIA Guidelines neglect this side of conflict dynamics.

<sup>22</sup> Martha Finnemore was among the first to discover the importance of socially constructed realities that structure the opportunities and capacities in conflict: see Martha Finnemore, 1993, “Norms, Culture and World Politics: Insights from Sociology’s Institutionalism,” *International Organisation* vol. 50, no. 2, pp. 325-347. Of the studies by FES, the work by Medehane Tadesse comes closest to mapping socially constructed realities and the opportunities for conflict prevention offered by these realities. See Medehane Tadesse, 2004, *Turning conflicts to cooperation: towards an energy-led integration in the Horn of Africa*, Addis Ababa, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Ethiopia Office.

<sup>23</sup> See the special issue on Polarization and Conflict in *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 45, no. 2, March 2008.

<sup>24</sup> For opposite, more neutralist, technocratic points of departure, see DFID (Department for International Development), 2002, *Conducting Conflict Assessments: Guidance Notes*, London; DFID; Sida (Swedish International Development Agency), 2006, *Manual for Conflict Analysis*, Stockholm; Sida, OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), DAC, *Guidelines on Helping Prevent Violent Conflict*, OECD, Paris; OECD, 1997, *DAC Guidelines on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation on the Threshold of the 21st Century*, Paris, OECD; USAID (United States Agency for International Development), 2005, *Conducting a Conflict Assessment: A Framework for Strategy and Program Development*, Washington DC, USAID.

<sup>25</sup> This criticism can be found in Benedikt Korf, 2004, “Die Ordnung der Entwicklung: Zur Ethnographie der Entwicklungspraxis und ihrer ethischen Implikationen” [The Order of Development: on the Ethnography of Aid Practice and Its Ethical Implications], *Geographische Zeitschrift* 92(4), pp. 208-226.



<sup>26</sup> For this criticism, see Roland Paris, 2002, "International Peacebuilding and the 'Mission Civilisatrice'", *Review of International Studies* 28(4), pp. 637–656; Roland Paris, 1997, "Peacebuilding and the Limits of Liberal Internationalism", *International Security* 22(2), pp. 54–89; Oliver Richmond, 2007, "Critical Research Agendas for Peace: The Missing Link in the Study of International Relations", *Alternatives* 32(2), pp. 247–274; Oliver Richmond, 2004, "The Globalization of Responses to Conflict and the Peacebuilding Consensus", *Cooperation and Conflict* 39(2), pp. 129–150.

<sup>27</sup> This particular mapping is, however, to some extent bound to be partisan, as in the case of Burma/Myanmar conflict (between the military Government and the democratic opposition) Germany and the EU donors prefer peaceful solutions that are closer to the ideas of the democratic opposition than to those of the military leaders of Myanmar.

<sup>28</sup> According to Randolph Collins, fear is the greatest hindrance in war, but also a motive for aggression. Often communities deal with fear by creating myths that "make people invulnerable". These myths are part of the reality that makes warfare possible and thus important to tackle when conflicts are being prevented. For the theory of fear in wars, see Randal Collins, 2008, *Violence: A Micro-Sociological Theory*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press.

<sup>29</sup> In 1989 the military leadership adopted the name "Union of Myanmar" for English transliteration, as "Myanmar" is allegedly closer to the actual Burmese pronunciation of the country's name. Many countries demonstrate their non-recognition of the legitimacy of the military Government by refusing to yield to the new official English naming of the country. In European countries, both names are used: the old translation denotes their *de jure* disapproval of the military regime and the new name indicates acceptance of the *de facto* existence of the regime and its decision to change the English name of the country.

<sup>30</sup> Kristian S. Gleditsch and Michael D. Ward, 2002, "Peace and War in Time and Space: The Role of Democratization", *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 44, pp. 1–29.

<sup>31</sup> In addition to direct killings by the Government, the concept of democide covers cases in which death is caused by intentional or knowingly reckless and depraved disregard for life (thus constituting *practical* intent).

<sup>32</sup> Rudolph Rummel, 1994, *Death by Government*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick.

<sup>33</sup> Timo Kivimäki, 2003, "The Era of Terrorism: The Global Context of Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism", in Timo Kivimäki, ed., *Development Cooperation as an Instrument in the Prevention of Terrorism*, Copenhagen, Danish Foreign Ministry Publications. The calculation is based on data provided by Rummel, *ibid*.

<sup>34</sup> Timo Kivimäki, 2005, "The EU and Asian Security: Introduction", in Timo Kivimäki and Jørgen Delman, eds., *The Security Situation In Asia: Changing Regional Security Structure?* Report to the Danish Foreign Ministry, Copenhagen, NIAS Press.

<sup>35</sup> See Donald L. Horowitz, 2001, *The Deadly Ethnic Riot*, California University Press, Berkeley.

<sup>36</sup> Morten Pedersen in Timo Kivimäki and Morten Pedersen, 2008, *Burma: Mapping the Challenges and Opportunities for Dialogue and Reconciliation*, A Report by Crisis Management Initiative, Martti Ahtisaari Rapid Reaction Facility, Helsinki, available at [www.cmi.fi/files/Burma\\_report%202008.pdf](http://www.cmi.fi/files/Burma_report%202008.pdf).

<sup>37</sup> Rudolph J. Rummel, "Democracies ARE less Warlike than Other Regimes", *European Journal of International Relations* 1, 1995, pp. 457–79.

<sup>38</sup> James Fearon, 1995, "Rationalist explanations for war", *International Organisation*, vol. 49, no. 3, Summer 1995, pp. 379–414.

<sup>39</sup> Before 1988, the Government could be identified as one party, the Burmese Socialist Program Party (BSPP).

<sup>40</sup> The names "Kayah" for Karenni and "Kayin" for Karen are official names insisted on by the military Government. However, these names are not generally used by people that belong to these ethnic groups. Most English language scholarship refers to the groups by the names that are not in parentheses.

<sup>41</sup> Morten Pedersen, 2005, "The Challenges of Transition in Myanmar", in Yin Hlaing Kyaw, Robert H. Taylor and Tin Maung Maung Than, eds., *Beyond Politics to Societal Imperatives*, ISEAS, Singapore, p. 168.

<sup>42</sup> According to some informants, the national anthem is no longer respected, especially by the disillusioned youth of Burma/Myanmar. Informants often referred to the difficulty of expressing nationalism without equating it with support for the regime: by associating these two things, the Government has to some extent succeeded in producing a social reality that links them and places nationalism on their side.

<sup>43</sup> NLD has an office in Yangon, but no ability to master NLD's information policies. This is why it is the NLD in "liberated areas" – the NLDLA – that manages the propaganda warfare of the NLD.

<sup>44</sup> The word "tripartite" has become so much part of a power battle between the opposition and the Government that some opposition figures are suggesting the word should be dropped entirely from their vocabulary, although they will continue working on the content. Confidential interview material about discussions with Gambari reveals that several opposition figures suggested this to him before various rounds of talks with the Government. The demand for tripartite dialogue dates back to the early 1990s, and it was explicitly reiterated by Aung San Suu Kyi in a press conference on 23 April 2003.

<sup>45</sup> This analysis is mainly from the democracy groups outside the NLD: people close to the '88 Generation students and democrats who try to work within the constitutional framework. However, some NLD sympathisers also felt that the movement was divided along these lines.

<sup>46</sup> Interview with a member of the '88 Generation "students", Yangon, February 2008.

<sup>47</sup> See for example, Christine Mason, 2005, "Women, Violence and Nonviolent Resistance in East Timor", *Journal of Peace Research* 42:6, November. Mason's forthcoming book with NIAS Press will be even more revealing on the dynamics of domestic violence in Fretilin families.

<sup>48</sup> A Report by Crisis Management Initiative, Martti Ahtisaari Rapid Reaction Facility, Helsinki, available at [www.cmi.fi/files/Burma\\_report%202008.pdf](http://www.cmi.fi/files/Burma_report%202008.pdf).

<sup>49</sup> While this is clear among the military wings, it is reflected in the thinking of the political wings as well. For the accusation by some organisations that smaller ethnic groups are products of Government bribes, business concessions or coercion, see, for example, Ethnic Nationalities Council, Strategic Studies Committee, 2008, *Trading Legitimacy: The SPDC's Use of Ceasefire Groups in Burma*, Working Paper 1, ENC Press, Chiang Mai.

<sup>50</sup> Harn Yawngwe, undated (2001), *Bringing About Change in Burma*. Euro-Burma Office, Brussels, p. 9.

<sup>51</sup> Group interview of six Mon activists close to the NMSP.

<sup>52</sup> This mapping uses the name of the ethnic group that the ethnic group itself normally uses for itself. It is perhaps important to clarify that the names of these groups used by the Myanmar Government sometimes differ from the names groups use for themselves. While the Karens call themselves "Karen", the Government calls them "Kayin" and "Karenni Kayah". While most Rakhine interviewed for this study used the name "Rakhine" for their group (the same name the Government uses), many fighting Rakhine groups use the name "Arakan".

<sup>53</sup> Federal Constitution Drafting and Coordination Committee (FCDCC) undated, *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of the Union of Burma, First*

*Draft*, NCUB Press, Mae Sot; Chao-Tzang Yawngnhe and Lian H. Sakhong, eds., 2002, *The New Panglong Initiative: Rebuilding the Union of Burma*, UNLD Press, Chiang Mai.

<sup>54</sup> This statement was given in the presence of several senior officials of the Myanmar Government and some international observers.

<sup>55</sup> International Crisis Group, 2003, *Ethnic Minority Politics*, Asia Report No 52, May, p. 9.

<sup>56</sup> Group interview in the presence of Myanmar officials, October 2006.

<sup>57</sup> Daniel Horowitz introduced the concept of target displacement in his book *The Deadly Ethnic Riot* (California University Press, Berkeley, 2001, pp. 135-46). The problematic was clear in Papua, where ethnic Asians were perceived as symbols of the Indonesian state, and thus legitimate targets for the separatist rebel movement. See, Timo Kivimäki, 2006, *Initiating a Peace Process in Papua: Actors, Issues, Process, and the Role of the International Community*, East-West Center, Washington.

<sup>58</sup> High officials of the national army sometimes reveal openly that due to logistic concerns and the strength of the Wa army, the national army will not be able to challenge the Wa in their own territory (separate confidential discussions with two military officers, March 2007).

<sup>59</sup> Strategic Studies Committee of the Ethnic Nationalities Council, 2008, *Trading Legitimacy: The SPDC's Use of Ceasefire Groups in Burma*, Working Paper 1, ENC Press, Chiang Mai.

<sup>60</sup> Konrad Lorenz, 1966, *On Aggression*, New York, Harcourt, Brace & World.

<sup>61</sup> In Somalia, many local peace agreements have been reached by Mennonite conflict transformation efforts using Somali women as messengers of concern on both sides. Women were not perceived as threatening and thus they were the only people who could cross the frontlines and forward messages and ideas (interview with one of the Somali "mediator women", March 1996, Nairobi).

<sup>62</sup> Gunnar Sjöstedt, 2003, *Professional Cultures in International Negotiation: Bridge or Rift?*, Lexington, Lanham.

<sup>63</sup> The terrorism argument has been forcefully promoted by the Ministry of Information, but also by the Ministry of Home Affairs. See Information Committee of the SPDC, 2006, *Documentary on Press Conference 4/2006*, Ministry of Information, Yangon. According to *Press Conference 1/2006* "NCGUB of expatriate Sein Win, FTUB of Pyithit Nyunt Wai, KNU and all members of NCUB are actually terrorists".

<sup>64</sup> SPDC Information Committee, 2007, *Announcement no. 1/2007 & 2/2007*, Ministry of Information, Nay Pyi Taw; Kyaw Hsan, 2007, *Clarifications by Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan to UN Secretary General's Special Envoy Mr. Ibrahim Agboola Gambari*, Ministry of Information, Nay Pyi Taw.

<sup>65</sup> Information Ministry, 2006, *Documentary on Press Conferences (1/2006 and 2/2006) of the Information Committee of the SPDC*, Information Ministry, Yangon.

<sup>66</sup> Harn Yawngnhe, undated (2001), *Bringing About Change in Burma*, Euro-Burma Office, Brussels, p.8.

<sup>67</sup> I have shown elsewhere that this logic rests on two false empirical premises. On the one hand, ethnic diversity is not associated with increased risk of conflict, and on the other, military centrality is clearly associated with increased, not decreased risk of war and disintegration. See Timo Kivimäki, 2008, "Authoritarian Bargaining in Burma/Myanmar", *Asia Europe Journal* 1/2008.

<sup>68</sup> See, for example, Ministry of Information, 2005, *Myanmar Building a Modern State 2005*, Yangon.

<sup>69</sup> Information Committee of the SPDC, 2006, *Documentary on Press Conference 6/2006*, Information Ministry, Yangon, p. 3.

<sup>70</sup> Kyaw Hsan, Brig-Gen, Minister of Information, 2006, Clarifications to EU delegates at the Seminar on Myanmar-EU Relations, Information Ministry, Yangon.

<sup>71</sup> FES Group discussions with the Minister of Health. Interviews with two senior health ministry officials indicated that for many Government technocrats this is really the only rationale for disallowing foreigners to conflict spots.

<sup>72</sup> This observation is clearly supported by all the interviews among opposition organisations, illegal in Myanmar (see list in Annex 1), but also in documentary sources of the political wings of these organisations, such as the Ethnic Nationalities Council of the Union of Burma, 2006, *Policy Papers, Letters and Statements*, Peaceful Co-existence: Towards Federal Union of Burma (Series no. 12), UNLD Press, Chiang Mai.

<sup>73</sup> Interview by Timo Kivimäki with ABSDF (All Burmese Students' Democratic Front), Chair and Vice Chair + 5 members of the leadership, and 6 members of the '88 Generation students (both inside and outside of the country), including some informants who were rumoured to have been involved in the mobilisation of the September riots.

<sup>74</sup> This analysis is based on discussions with the leader of RCSS(SSA) Restoration Council of the Shan State (Shan State Army), Secretary General of Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP), Vice President of Arakan, NUPA, and KNU President, Vice President, Secretary General, Joint Secretary, Foreign Secretary, and 6 other members of the executive committee (including a KPLA senior officer).

<sup>75</sup> Interviews and discussions, in particular with EU Council officials, reveal that the domestic European political constraints of Burma/Myanmar policies are strict. As a result, the Council (which is more directly dependent on political opinions in Europe) is not able to implement policies that it, and especially the European Commission, would see as rational. Reciprocating a move of the Myanmar Government in a democratic direction with an endorsement would be the rational response for persuading the Government to continue in that direction, but, due to the radical pro-democracy influence in Europe, this is not politically possible most of the time.

<sup>76</sup> This phenomenon has been theorised by Eric Hoffer, 2002/1952, *The True Believer. Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements*, HarperCollins, New York, NY. It was brought to the phenomenon of exile psyche in Juha Auvinen and Timo Kivimäki, 2001, "Conflict Transformation in South Africa", *Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies* 28(1), May.

<sup>77</sup> For the influence of stable poverty on conflict, see Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, 2004, "Aid, policy and growth in post conflict societies," *European Economic Review*, 48, pp. 1125-1145; World Bank, 2003, *Breaking the Conflict Trap*, Washington DC. For the effect of sudden deterioration of the relative socio-economic position of a group of people, see Ted Robert Gurr, 1980, "Introduction", in Ted Robert Gurr, ed., *Handbook of Political Conflict*, The Free Press, New York, pp. 1-16.

<sup>78</sup> First such reports were not published due to the fact that the Government still insisted that there was no widespread poverty in the country. Yet two reports have been widely cited: UN Country Team, Yangon, *Myanmar: A silent humanitarian disaster*, Yangon, 30 June 2001, and UN Country Team, Yangon, *A Review of Humanitarian Situation in Myanmar*, unpublished monograph, February 2003. More recently the ICG refers to two sources: *Statement on UN Day*, 24 October 2007, by the UN country team; and *End of Mission Report*, UN resident coordinator's report, April 2008.

<sup>79</sup> International Crisis Group, 2008, *Burma/Myanmar after Nargis: Time to Normalise Aid Relations*, Asia Report N°161, 20 October 2008.

<sup>80</sup> Unpublished FES survey "Micro-Governance in Nargis-hit Delta Villages".

<sup>81</sup> USAID, 2008, *Global Food Insecurity and Price Increase Update #1*, 13 May 2008, available at [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNADL297.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADL297.pdf).

<sup>82</sup> World Bank, 2008, *Rising Food and Fuel Prices: Addressing the Risks to Future Generations*, 12 October 2008, Human Development Network (HDN), Poverty Reduction and Economic Management (PREM) Network, the World Bank, Washington, p. 2

<sup>83</sup> Save the Children, 2008, *Myanmar's Cyclone Nargis: Recovering Food Security and Livelihood Strategies*, available at <http://74.125.77.132/search?q=cache:VjCM1OJG7JUJ:myanmar.humanitarianinfo.org/recovery/Technical%2520Guidance/Myanmar%E2%80%99s%2520Cyclone%2520Nargis%2520Recovering%2520Food%2520Security%2520and%2520Livelihood%2520Strategies.doc+Myanmar%E2%80%99s+Cyclone+Nargis:+Recovering+Food+Security&hl=da&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=dk&client=firefox-a>.

<sup>84</sup> UN News Centre, 2008, "Needs are still great for Myanmar's cyclone victims, says UN-backed group", 15 December, 2008, available at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=29304&Cr=myanmar&Cr1=cyclone>.

<sup>85</sup> For an argument in favour of this prediction, see Zin Linn, 2008, "Burma heading toward a new civil strife due to fall in rice production", Sun, 15 June 2008, available at <http://www.asiantribune.com/?q=node/11788>.

<sup>86</sup> Following the logic of Ted Gurr's theory of relative deprivation, the danger of Chin rebellion is more related to the acute deterioration of their economic position than to the fact that their position is much worse than that of many other ethnicities. This is because of the fact that the Chins are more isolated from other communities than the Rohingyas, for example.

<sup>87</sup> This list is from the Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 2008, *Briefing Burma, Visit to the Bangladesh-Burma Border*, August 28-31, 2008.

<sup>88</sup> Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 2008, op.cit., p. 3.

<sup>89</sup> Benedict Rogers, 2008, "Burma's Muslim Rohingya Minority Dwell at the 'Brink of Extermination'" 6 October, [www.theCuttingEdgenews.com](http://www.theCuttingEdgenews.com). While probably reliable in its citations, this report seems to contradict very strongly the observations of the project team on the level of solidarity between the Rohingyas and Rakhine. While Rogers claims that there is a peoples' alliance, our observation was that while both groups oppose the Government, the opinion of ordinary Rakhine does not really differ from the Government's interpretation of the Rohingya status as a national race.

<sup>90</sup> While the Bangladeshi Government estimates that they have 258,000 Rohingya refugees from Burma/Myanmar, many aid workers estimate that the figure is higher. The figure of 300,000 refugees is from the Arakan Rohingya National Organisation (ARNO).

<sup>91</sup> Ngwe Thein, Major General, Director, Directorate of Military Strength, Ministry of Defence and Lt Gen Zaw Win, Office of the Adjutant General, explained in a briefing organised for European experts and diplomats how the central system of military recruitment by his directorate prevents the recruitment of children and how the office of the Adjutant General makes sure the military does not participate in human rights violations. However, independent evidence from many civil society and Government groups of abuse is mounting, while the number of punitive action cases is very limited. This is because of the lack of independence of the checking mechanism: soldiers are being kept in check by other soldiers, and later in their careers the roles change and the checked become checkers. It is natural that there is a professional interest in avoiding the creation of a strict mechanism.

<sup>92</sup> See, for example, Timo Kivimäki and Ruben Thorning, 2002, "Democratization and Regional Power Sharing in Papua/Trian Jaya", *Asian Survey*, August 2002; Timo Kivimäki and Liisa Laakso, 2001, *Greed Grievance and Weak States, Overview of African Conflicts*, IDS and Department of Political Science, University of Helsinki.

<sup>93</sup> The citation is from a speech to an international audience by the Minister of Information, October 2006.

<sup>94</sup> See Timo Kivimäki, 2008, "Can the International Community Help Prevent Conflict in Burma/Myanmar", in Johan Lagerquist, ed., *Between Isolation and Internationalization*, Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Stockholm, pp. 85-110.

<sup>95</sup> Our interviews reveal that the September 2007 riots were widespread, but mostly in urban areas. The picture of the riots as limited to Mandalay and Yangon seems totally unjustified. For a documentation of the developments see Hans-Bernd Zöllner, *Neither Saffron Nor Revolution – A Commented and Documented Chronology of the Monks' Demonstrations in Myanmar 2007 and their Background, Part I + II*, Südostasien Working Papers no. 37, Berlin 2009.

<sup>96</sup> For a systematic treatment of the comparable evidence, see Timo Kivimäki, 2008, "Can the International Community Help Prevent Conflict in Burma/Myanmar", in Johan Lagerquist, ed., *Between Isolation and Internationalization*, Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Stockholm, pp. 85-110.

<sup>97</sup> Larry Jagan 2004. "Military divisions may delay Myanmar talks" in Dawn, the internet edition, 07 March 2004, available at <http://www.dawn.com/2004/03/07/int15.htm>

<sup>98</sup> B.M. Staw, "The Escalation of Commitment to a Course of Action", *Academy of Management Review*, 1981, 6 (4), 577-587; Mitchell, C.R., *Gestures of Conciliation*, Basingstoke, MacMillan, 2000; G.R. Salancik, "Commitment and the Control of Organisational Behavior and Belief", in *New Directions in Organisational Behavior*, eds. B.M. Staw and G.R. Salancik, Illinois, St Clair Press, 1977.

<sup>99</sup> See Timo Kivimäki's analysis in Timo Kivimäki and Morten Pedersen, 2008, *Burma: Mapping the Challenges and Opportunities for Dialogue and Reconciliation*, A Report by Crisis Management Initiative, Martti Ahtisaari Rapid Reaction Facility. Helsinki, available at [www.cmi.fi/files/Burma\\_report%202008.pdf](http://www.cmi.fi/files/Burma_report%202008.pdf) and Liisa Laakso, Timo Kivimäki and Maaria Seppänen, 2007, *Evaluation of Coordination and Coherence in the Application of Article 96 of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement*, Studies in European Development Co-operation Evaluation no. 6, Amsterdam, available at <http://www.three-cs.net/content/download/516/5246/file/TripleC6.pdf>.

<sup>100</sup> This formulation was more or less consensually accepted among the medium and senior Government officials at the FES-MISIS roundtable discussion just one day before the "train took an extra stop" by inviting discussions with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

<sup>101</sup> See Chapter 1 of the FCDCC constitution.

<sup>102</sup> See Chapter 4(B) of the FCDCC constitution.

<sup>103</sup> See the entire Chapter 2 of the FCDCC constitution.

<sup>104</sup> This is clearly stated in Articles 156 and 154(D) of the FCDCC constitution.

<sup>105</sup> The list is based on discussions with more than 30 leading opposition figures. It seems that there is wide agreement on these points.

<sup>106</sup> Reference here is to Article 20(b) of the general principles of the Constitution, according to which the military "has the right to independently administer all affairs concerning the forces".

<sup>107</sup> Basic Principles of the Constitution, Articles 40 and 411 are clearer than the constitutional principles of the National Convention on the issue of emergency. According to Article 411, it is explicitly the President who declares the state of emergency. Article 40 defines that the President is also the principal user of emergency powers, while the defence services will be authorised to "prevent that danger and provide protection" in case there is an emergency that "threatens people or property" (40(b)). Only if sovereignty is threatened, or areas are about to separate from the Union "Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services has the

right to take over and exercise State sovereign power in accord with the provisions of this Constitution" (40(c)).

<sup>108</sup> Here, too, the Constitution (Article 232) is clearly at odds with the fear of most of the opposition figures interviewed before the publication of the Constitution, but after the publication of the *Fundamental Principles and Detailed Basic Principles adopted by the National Convention*.

<sup>109</sup> This fear might be justified in the political practice of the immediate future, but it is not substantiated by the text of the Constitution. The only reference that could be interpreted in a way that may justify opposition fear is in Article 59(d.) which says that the President "shall be well acquainted with the affairs of the Union such as political, administrative, economic and military."

<sup>110</sup> Again, some reference to literature on how to build compromise commitment is in order: B.M. Staw, "The Escalation of Commitment to a Course of Action", *Academy of Management Review*, 1981, 6 (4), 577-587; C.R. Mitchell, *Gestures of Conciliation*, Basingstoke: MacMillan, 2000; G.R. Salancik, "Commitment and the Control of Organisational Behavior and Belief", in *New Directions in Organisational Behavior*, eds. B.M. Staw and G.R. Salancik, Illinois, St Clair Press, 1977.

<sup>111</sup> The idea of a "positive no" refers to a bargaining strategy that starts with the ability to object to a situation that the negotiator finds unacceptable at the same time as being positive about the need to rescue the relationship with the person, group, institution or country that one needs to object about. See William Ury, 2007, *The Power of a Positive No: How to Say NO and still Get to YES*, Bantam Books.

<sup>112</sup> See, for example, *ibid.* and Roger Fisher and William Ury, 2003, *Getting to Yes*, Random House Business Books, 7 August, 2003; H.C. Kelman, and S.P. Cohen, "The problem-solving workshop: A social-psychological contribution to the resolution of international conflicts", *Journal of Peace Research*, 13, pp. 79-90.

<sup>113</sup> For plans about this see Timo Kivimäki and Morten Pedersen, 2008, *Burma: Mapping the Challenges and Opportunities for Dialogue and Reconciliation*, A Report by Crisis Management Initiative, Martti Ahtisaari Rapid Reaction Facility, Helsinki, available at [www.cmi.fi/files/Burma\\_report%202008.pdf](http://www.cmi.fi/files/Burma_report%202008.pdf).

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> Fearon has proven convincingly that in an arrangement where self-defence is communally organised without a clear monopoly of legitimate violence, communities will end up in a domestic security dilemma: one's security is everybody else's insecurity. Clearly, the empirical evidence favours a monopoly of the armed forces, see James Fearon, 1995, "Rationalist explanations for war", *International Organisation*, vol. 49, no. 3, Summer 1995, pp. 379-414. See also David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild, 1997, "Containing Fear", in Michael E. Brown, Owen R. Coté, Jr., Sean M. Lynn-Jones and Stephen E. Miller, eds., *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict. An International Security Reader*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, pp. 97-131.

<sup>116</sup> This was presented both in confidential discussions and in public FES-MIS seminars.

<sup>117</sup> For this interpretation in a generalised form, see Donald L. Horowitz, 2001, *The Deadly Ethnic Riot*, California University Press, Berkeley.

<sup>118</sup> The most reliable (even if conservative) estimates of casualties of each war and conflict can be found at UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict dataset v.4-2008, 1946-2007. See Lotta Harbom, Erik Melander and Peter Wallensteen, 2008, "Dyadic Dimensions of Armed Conflict, 1946-2007", *Journal of Peace Research* 45(5), pp. 697-710.

<sup>119</sup> Rummel specifically lists the following cases as democide:

- a) deadly conditions in prisons, concentration camps, under forced labour, for prisoners of war, or in recruit camps
- b) murderous medical or scientific experiments performed on human beings;
- c) torture or beatings;
- d) encouraged or condoned murder or rape, looting and pillaging during which people are killed;
- e) a famine or epidemic during which Government authorities withhold aid or knowingly act in a way which makes conditions more deadly; or
- f) forced deportations and expulsions resulting in deaths.

<sup>120</sup> Rudolph Rummel, 1994, *Death by Government*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick. Rummel has updated his calculations on his website. The calculation of the average here is based on the updated statistics.

<sup>121</sup> UN/FAO Report, quoted by BBC News, Tuesday, 22 November 2005, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4459348.stm>.

<sup>122</sup> Sarah Bosley, 2008, "Malaria Deaths Cut, but More Work Needed", *Guardian*, 19 September 2008.

<sup>123</sup> See also: European Commission, "The EU's relations with Burma / Myanmar" [http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external\\_relations/myanmar/intro/](http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/myanmar/intro/).

<sup>124</sup> See also: ICRC, 2007, "Myanmar: ICRC denounces major and repeated violations of international humanitarian law", News release 82/0729-06-2007, <http://icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/myanmar-news-290607-?opendocument>.

<sup>125</sup> See for example *ibid.*

<sup>126</sup> The detention of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is an important concern of all EU countries, but especially for the UK. The fact that she is trying to fight the Government's politically marginalising interpretation that she is British and hence not native Burmese makes this special concern for UK diplomacy a two-edged sword. The more concerned the UK is about the treatment she gets, the more arguments the Government has to exclude her from politics as a foreigner.

<sup>127</sup> Article 3(a) in the *Council Common Position 2006/318/CFSP of 27 April 2006*.

<sup>128</sup> Javier Solana, 2007, "EU High Representative for the CFSP urges authorities in Burma/Myanmar to exercise utmost restraint", Brussels, 25 September 2007 (S260/07).

<sup>129</sup> This principle has been accepted as an unwritten rule for German and European development cooperation and humanitarian aid. Its intellectual foundation can be found in Mary B. Anderson, 1999, *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace – or War*, Boulder, Colorado, Lynne Rienner Publishers.

<sup>130</sup> Discussion with the Minister of Health by the FES team, November 2006.

<sup>131</sup> See, for example, Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, 2004, "Aid, policy and growth in post conflict societies", *European Economic Review*, 48, pp. 1125-1145 and World Bank, 2003, *Breaking the Conflict Trap*, Washington DC.

<sup>132</sup> Zeev Maoz and Bruce Russett, 1993, "The Democratic Peace Since World War II," pp. 77-98, in Bruce Russett, ed., *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post Cold-War World*, Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, p. 85.

<sup>133</sup> Timo Kivimäki, 2003, "The Study of Ethnic Conflicts in Multi-Cultural Societies", in Dewi Fortuna Anwar, Rizal Sukma, Glenn Smith, eds., *Ethnic Conflict in Southeast Asia*, LIPI, Jakarta.

<sup>134</sup> Guillermo O'Donnell, 1978, "Reflections on the Patterns of Change in the Bureaucratic-Authoritarian State", *Latin American Research Review* 13:1.



<sup>135</sup> Paul Collier and Anke Hoefler, 2000, *Greed and Grievance in Civil War*, World Bank Development Research Group, available at [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2000/06/17/000094946\\_00060205420011/Rendered/PDF/multi\\_page.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2000/06/17/000094946_00060205420011/Rendered/PDF/multi_page.pdf).

<sup>136</sup> Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, 2006, *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

<sup>137</sup> Mark Gasiorowski and Solomon Polachek, 1982, "Conflict and Interdependence: East-West Trade and Linkages in the Era of Détente", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 26, no. 4, pp. 709-729; Dylan Balch-Lindsay and Andrew J. Enteline, 2000, "Killing Time: The World Politics of Civil War, 1820-1992", *International Studies Quarterly*, 44.

<sup>138</sup> Adam Przeworski, et al., 2000, *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

<sup>139</sup> Michael Mousseau, 2000, "Market Prosperity, Democratic Consolidation, and Democratic Peace", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 44, no. 4, pp. 472-507.

<sup>140</sup> Przeworski, *op. cit.*, 2000.

<sup>141</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, 1991, *Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman, University of Oklahoma Press.

<sup>142</sup> For this argument, see Stein Tønnesson, forthcoming, "Explaining the East Asian Peace, 1979-2009", *Asian Perspective*.

<sup>143</sup> See, for example, Roger Fisher and William Ury, 2003, *Getting to Yes*, Random House Business Books, 7 August, 2003; H.C. Kelman, and S.P. Cohen, "The problem-solving workshop: A social-psychological contribution to the resolution of international conflicts", *Journal of Peace Research*, 13, pp. 79-90.

<sup>144</sup> Robert E. Goodin, 1975, "Cross-Cutting Cleavages and Social Conflict", *British Journal of Political Science* vol. 5, no. 4, pp. 516-519. The idea of the theory of pluralism by Robert A. Dahl is based on the power of cross-cutting cleavages. See for example, Robert A. Dahl, 1971, *Polyarchy, participation and opposition*, New Haven, Yale University Press. The idea of treating conflict cleavages as sources of conflict and bridges is from Sven Gunnar Simonsen, 2005, "Addressing Ethnic Divisions in Post-Conflict Institution-Building: Lessons from Recent Cases", *Security Dialogue* vol. 36, no. 3, pp. 297-318.

<sup>145</sup> For the theoretical premises of the idea of constructive confrontation, see the main publications of the *Processes of Negotiation* of Harvard University: William Ury, 2007, *The Power of a Positive No: How to say NO and still Get to YES*, Bantam Books; Roger Fisher and William Ury, 2003, *Getting to Yes*, Random House Business Books; William Ury, 1998, *Getting past No*; William Ury, *The Power of a Positive No*, 2008. For their application in NGO conflict resolution, see Simon Fisher et al., 2000, *Working with conflict: Skills and strategies for action*, London, Zed Books; M. W. Isenhardt and M. Spangle, 2000, *Collaborative Approaches to Resolving Conflict*, Thousand Oaks (Ca), Sage Publications.

<sup>146</sup> For a more detailed analysis on how cross-cutting professional cultures can be used as bridges across conflicting/negotiating parties, see Timo Kivimäki, 2003, "Finland's Membership Negotiations with the European Union", in Gunnar Sjöstedt, *Professional Cultures in International Negotiation: Bridge or Rifi?*, Lexington, Lanham.

<sup>147</sup> The analysis of compatibility-in-principle of genuine gender and women's organisations on one hand and Governmental gender organisations on the other is based on discussions with Daw Than Than New, Chairperson of the MWAF, and two of her closest aides in the Federation. Furthermore, the analysis is based on discussions with Ma Hwin Wai, Chair of Women Entrepreneurs' Association, on the Government side, and Salai Isaac Khen, Consultant at the Thingaha Gender Working Group, Khin Zar Naing, gender trainer, Seik Nyan, Mon Women's or-

ganisation, Mi Kyi Win, coordinator of Cetana Educational Foundation (Buddhist women's foundation, based in Thailand), Daw Cho Cho Nu-unt and Misainyan, Executive Committee member of the Mon Women's organisation. However, the prescription of cooperation is not shared by all the informants and experts.

<sup>148</sup> Ted Robert Gurr and Mark Irving Lichbach, 1979, "Forecasting Domestic Political Conflict", in J. David Singer and Michael D. Wallace, eds., *To Auger Well: Early Warning Indicators in World Politics*, Beverly Hills, CA, Sage; Ted Robert Gurr, *Minorities at risk*, United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington DC, 1993, p. 319.

<sup>149</sup> During the peace process in Aceh, there was a plan to organise a visible conference comparing the experiences of regional self-governance in Europe and Asia. The intention was to show to Jakarta that genuine special autonomy with wide self-governance in Aceh will not be the first step to the disintegration of Indonesia. This plan failed due to incompetence and a lack of strategic attitude in the European diplomatic community. As a result, nationalist arguments claiming that the peace deal in Aceh would break up Indonesia became the greatest obstacle for the party reform that was needed for the Aceh Peace Agreement.

<sup>150</sup> For an analysis of how the Fund for Ireland helped to transform conflict structures in Northern Ireland, see Willie McCarter, 2008, "Economics of peace making: the case of The International Fund for Ireland", pp. 93-99, in Timo Kivimäki, ed., *Lessons of Peace Processes*, Special Edition of Asia Europe Journal, no. 6.

<sup>151</sup> For the logic of this process in the context of South Africa and Papua, see Timo Kivimäki, 2006, *Initiating a Peace Process in Papu*, East-West Center, Policy Studies no. 25, Washington DC, and Timo Kivimäki, *Encouraging Negotiation in South Africa. How, Who and When*, Studies in a Nutshell, no. 3, CTS, Helsinki and Copenhagen, 2001.

<sup>152</sup> The collective logic of true-believer culture is clear from the fact that individually, many leading opposition members admit that they should build content without caring about the "correct terms". However, when they go public, they insist on the "correct terminology".

<sup>153</sup> Roger Fisher and William Ury, 2003, *Getting to Yes*, Random House Business Books, 7 August 2003; H.C. Kelman, and S.P. Cohen, "The problem-solving workshop: A social-psychological contribution to the resolution of international conflicts", *Journal of Peace Research*, 13, pp. 79-90.

<sup>154</sup> On the global empirical relationship between conflicts and the unavailability of non-violent channels of protest, see Ted Robert Gurr, 1993, *Minorities at Risk*, United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington DC, pp. 317-9.

<sup>155</sup> This option has been elaborated further in my "Conclusions and Recommendations" chapter in Timo Kivimäki and Morten Pedersen, 2008, *Burma: Mapping the Challenges and Opportunities for Dialogue and Reconciliation*, A Report by Crisis Management Initiative, Martti Ahtisaari Rapid Reaction Facility, Helsinki, available at [www.cmi.fi/files/Burma\\_report%202008.pdf](http://www.cmi.fi/files/Burma_report%202008.pdf).

<sup>156</sup> This was clearly one of the main conclusions of the "World Cafe" brainstorming on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2008, organised for this PCIA project with representatives from more than 20 local NGOs and CBOs.

<sup>157</sup> See, for example, *Equator* Newspaper, 14 December 2008, pp. 1 and 7, *Equator*, 13 December 2008, p. 1 and *Equator*, 7 December 2008, p.1.

<sup>158</sup> Many of the interviews were conducted in the context of group discussions, sometimes with compromised utility. Some discussions that are listed here were not held in the interview format, as they only later became relevant for this project. These compromising conditions are always mentioned whenever an interview or a discussion is explicitly referred to in this publication.



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The FES conflict management team is working to design and implement its Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA), which – in keeping with the classic approach of a political foundation – places a particular emphasis on the socio-political environment. For more information please refer to <http://www.fes.de/gpol/en/pcia.htm>

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