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Editor's Notes

The old adage, “quality, not quantity,” sums up the defining criterion that separates the winning schools and countries from the rest in today’s race to win a spot in the cross-border education trade. It is not enough that we have the most number of private tertiary institutions in the world or that we claim to be the third largest English-speaking population, next only to the US and the UK. Indeed, these characteristics offer a very good mileage, especially our functional-level English competency, but these alone do not suffice. As this issue’s main feature notes, international students place a high premium on the quality of education and international recognition of courses. This only suggests the great urgency of taking immediate steps to abate the deteriorating quality of Philippine higher education. Not to forget, a large chunk of our revenues comes from export labor. If we want to uphold the competency of our workforce in the international labor market, we have to ensure that our own students get the best education.

The inside article, meanwhile, is also related to the main feature in that it touches on other important

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Cross-border trade in higher education: What are our chances?

It is estimated that by year 2025, foreign student enrollees will reach eight million, four times more than what it is today based on the statistics of various international organizations. This growth in cross-border higher education and its huge impact on the economies of nations boost the interest of governments around the world to be major providers of higher education.

Still at the forefront of the competition is the United States with its 500,000 foreign students; only a little behind are Australia, United Kingdom, and Germany. The educational institutions in these countries are noted for the high quality of their educational services and the high employability prospects of the students after graduation. The economies of these nations had been definitely helped by the influx of revenues coming from foreign student enrollees.

The past years, however, have seen the aggressive moves of Singapore, Malaysia, and Hong Kong to position themselves as knowledge hubs in the Asia-Pacific region. In the last decade, for instance, the Singaporean government has allowed the collaboration of its higher education institutions (HEIs) with only the best schools in the world, its first alliance being with the National University of Singapore, the Nanyang Technological University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), all in the area of research. Singaporeans working overseas are also being actively recruited to go back to their home country while foreign nationals working in Singapore are enticed to remain in line with the government’s goal of making Singapore a science hub.

Hong Kong, meanwhile, has aspirations of becoming a knowledge hub. Thus, in building its educational services capacity, the government has allowed countries such as Australia to provide courses in its schools.

Malaysia, on the other hand, has been one of the first Asian countries to open its doors to foreign education institutions back in 1996. It has six foreign institutions, four of which are from Australia. The government also partnered with several international universities particularly for its International Medical University. OECD reports in 2001 also revealed that Malaysia generated US\$65 million in export revenues from over 18,000 foreign students that mostly came from China and Indonesia. This figure is a huge leap from the 3,500 foreign student enrollees in 2000.

As the largest English-speaking population in Asia, the Philippines hopes to find its niche in the growing trade in educational services—its competency in the English language and its comparatively low cost of living being marketed as its foremost strengths. But while Singapore, Malaysia, and Hong Kong are geared up for the competition and quite successful in attracting foreign enrollees from China, Thailand, Taiwan, and Vietnam, the Philippines attracts only from 2,000 to 4,000 foreign student each year, a non-existent percentage compared to the 2 million foreign students scattered abroad.

The reasons for this poor showing of the Philippines and the possible solutions the government could take to improve the country's competitiveness in the area of cross-border education are among the points discussed by Dr. Andrea L. Santiago of the De La Salle University in "Cross-border transactions in higher education: Philippine competitiveness," one of several papers commissioned by PIDS for its research project on the services sector.

Quality matters most

The Philippines holds the highest number of private tertiary institutions in the world with 1,353 out of the 1,526 schools established in the country. These private schools, however, are divided into a few schools that offer quality education but at an expensive rate, and the rest are of varied qualities.

The year 1994 marked the creation of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED)

to answer the need for reforms of the country's higher educational system. Upon its creation, CHED began to establish its information system and set up monitoring mechanisms. Then, it began identifying degree programs that has exceptional quality standards and named the program as Centers of Excellence (COE) or Centers of Development (COD), with the commitment of the selected universities to help upgrade the standard of other higher HEIs.

CHED also formed four accrediting bodies under one super body, the Federation of Accrediting Associations in the Philippines (FAAP), to put in place quality assurance mechanisms. Under the FAAP are the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges, and Universities (PAASCU) for the private Catholic HEIs, the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities – Commission on Accreditation (PACU-COA) for nonsectarian HEIs, the Association of Christian Schools and Colleges-Accrediting Agency Inc. (ACSC-AAI), and the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines (AACCU) for public HEIs.

Accreditation, though voluntary, is said to be sought by many institutions for the prestige and privileges that come with the recognition such as autonomy from supervision for higher level accreditation. Yet as of 2002-2003, only 11.32 percent of the 10,240 programs offered by the 1,526 HEIs in the country have been given accreditation, suggesting that only a minimal percentage passed the quality standard and thus could be considered as the only ones offering quality education. As to the type of HEIs, public institutions exhibited a higher accreditation rate as compared with private institutions—16.81 percent vs. 9.36 percent (Table 1). Same is the story in the masteral program where public HEIs' accreditation is at 9.22 percent as opposed to the 5.96 percent of the private HEIs.

In effect, while the country is producing more and more graduates each year, only few are able to land jobs not only because

of lack of employment but also because of lack of competence and skills. Professional board exams have yielded low passing rates through the years, an indication of the deteriorating quality of Philippine tertiary education. This condition is definitely a deterrent to the country's attractiveness to foreign students as a study destination for tertiary education.

Based on Santiago's study, foreign students give chief importance to the quality of education offered by the institutions in a certain country. And a common indicator used in choosing their study destination is the international recognition of the courses, which understandably goes well with their employability prospects after graduation. Sadly, the Philippines appears to be a weak player in this area compared to its neighboring Asian countries, several of which made it to the Top 50 List of *The Times* of London 2004 educational supplement. Included are The National University of Singapore (18) and Nanyang Technological University (50), Kyoto University (29), Hong Kong University (39), Indian Institute of Technology (41), and Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (42); the rest were from the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, and Australia.

Table 1. Number of FAAP- and AACUP-accredited programs, school year 2002-2003

	Baccalaureate	Masteral	Doctoral
Public			
Number of programs	2,695	1,312	266
Number accredited	453	121	49
Accreditation rate	16.81%	9.22%	18.42%
Private			
Number of programs	7,545	1,660	265
Number accredited	706	99	9
Accreditation rate	9.36%	5.96%	3.40%
Total higher education institutions			
Number of programs	10,240	2,972	531
Number accredited	1,159	220	58
Accreditation rate	11.32%	7.40%	10.92%

Source: Compiled by CHED MIS from reports of FAAP and AACUP.

True enough, the Philippines has lagged behind other countries in attracting foreign students. For instance, data of foreign students enrolled in different countries in 2001 showed a measly 2,000 foreign students in the Philippines as opposed to the bigger chunk other nations had enjoyed (Table 2).

Table 2. Foreign students enrolled in selected Asia-Pacific countries, 2001

	Asia	Oceania	Africa	North America	South America	Europe	Unknown	Total
OECD Nations								
Australia	77,849	6,534	3,837	5,477	920	12,763	3,409	110,789
Japan	58,170	443	676	1,474	761	2,106	7	63,637
Korea	3,299	28	44	220	41	135	83	3,850
New Zealand	7,971	1,200	143	648	106	998	3	11,069
Non-OECD Nations								
India	4,004	31	2,558	275	0	120		6,988
Indonesia	266	31	3	26	0	51		377
Malaysia	16,217	57	1,552	67	24	553	422	18,892
Philippines	1,656	28	69	503	4	63		2,323
Thailand	1,445	30	19	113	4	147	750	2,508

Source: OECD (2004, p. 154), "Internationalisation and Trade in Higher Education."

Table 3. HEIs with the most number of foreign students, school year 2003-2004

Name of Higher Education Institution	Region	Number of Foreign Students
Lyceum-Northwestern	1	112
Virgen Milagrosa University Foundation	1	188
Adventist University of the Philippines	4	180
Cebu Doctors College	7	207
Silliman University	7	112
Adamson University	NCR ¹	119
AMA Computer College	NCR	153
Ateneo De Manila University	NCR	288
De La Salle University-Col of St. Benilde	NCR	232
De La Salle University-Manila ²	NCR	100
Fatima Medical Science Foundation	NCR	217
University of Manila	NCR	157
University of Santo Tomas	NCR	252
University of the East-Manila	NCR	170
University of the Philippines-Diliman	NCR	225
Saint Louis University	CAR ³	203
University of Baguio	CAR	195
All Others		1,557
Total	87	4,667

Source: Office of Student Services, Commission on Higher Education.

¹ NCR - National Capital Region

² Statistics provided by the DLSU show that for SY 2002-2003, there were 528 foreign students (and not only 100) enrolled at the university, 279 for the undergraduate level and the remaining for the graduate level. Moreover, an interesting revelation of the DLSU statistics is the separation of foreigners into those born in their country and those born in the Philippines but holding foreign passports. For that school year, there were 381 who were foreign-born and 147 native-born. Students come from 55 countries.

³ CAR - Cordillera Administrative Region

Table 4. Top 10 courses enrolled in Philippine HEIs by foreign students, school year 2002-2003

Top 10 Courses	Level	Percentage
Doctorate	Advanced	7%
Master in Business Administration	Advanced	4%
Master of Arts	Advanced	6%
Medicine	Advanced	11%
Master of Science	Advanced	4%
Arts and Sciences	Higher	30%
Business Administration	Higher	10%
Computer Studies	Higher	9%
Dentistry	Higher	9%
Education	Higher	4%
Engineering	Higher	6%

In addition, results from the list of top Asian universities in the *Asiaweek 2000* included only three schools from the country in terms of number of foreign student enrollees: De La Salle Universities combined at rank 70 with more than 300 enrollees, Ateneo de Manila University at rank 74 with 288 enrollees, and University of Sto. Tomas at rank 75 with 252 enrollees (Table 3).

The most popular courses enrolled by foreign students include arts and sciences in the undergraduate level, followed by medicine, business administration, computer studies, and dentistry. In the advanced level, medicine has been the most popular (Table 4).

Most of the international students come from other Asian countries. Between 1997 and 2003, the largest delegation was from Korea, followed by China and Taiwan. Records show that the country was also able to attract a good number of American students during the same period.

The Asian Institute of Management (AIM) is reputed to be the institution to attract the most number of foreign students in the graduate level. It has the honor of being the only institution in the country that was recognized by the European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS) in March 2003 and the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). AIM is also known to provide the best executive MBA in Asia. It has attracted 618 foreign students in the last five years for its three major programs that account for almost 38 percent of its enrollment.

Other important factors

Safety and security is also a concern among foreign students in selecting their country of destination on which the Philippines has had problems because of its tag as a terrorist lair. It is not of any help that most of the news coming out is of bomb scare and various crimes ill-affecting the Philippines' image. However, it should be stressed that safety must not be addressed simply in the context of attracting possible foreign

student enrollees but because it is the right of every Filipino.

Apart from its strength in the English language, the more affordable tuition fees and the lower cost of living in the Philippines are plus factors. But these alone do not determine student mobility, such as the case of the United States which offers expensive degree courses and yet is still the most popular destination for both undergraduate and graduate levels. A 2004 OECD study also shows that in countries where the tuition fee is relatively low or non-existent, the number of international students is not necessarily large.

What it takes to compete

How then could the Philippines attract foreign students and actively participate in the growing trade in higher education? Santiago outlined a number of recommendations.

The most important step, she emphasized, is to address the quality of education. Foreign students would want to see world-class campuses with competent professors who can deliver relevant curricula. Infrastructure and laws to support this are necessary, including provisions for the mutual recognition of degrees. Already, the legislative branch in the Twelfth Congress and Third Regular Session issued Resolution No. 73, Concurring in the Ratification of the Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas, and Degrees in Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific.

Corollary to improving the quality of education is providing the best incentive possible to teaching personnel and providing them opportunities for professional development such as training or advanced degrees which they can pursue locally or abroad. These may be given through distance education with the reason that while they are acquiring new knowledge and skills, it may help arrest the continuing brain drain in the country.

Corporatization of universities and establishment of single university systems or

Apart from its strength in the English language, the more affordable tuition fees and the lower cost of living in the Philippines are plus factors. But these alone do not determine student mobility...Foreign students give chief importance to the quality of education offered by institutions in a certain country...Safety and security is also a concern...on which the Philippines has had problems because of its tag as a terrorist lair.

regional universities are likewise recommended for the development of the country's tertiary education. Supporting the education sector would also mean broadening the reach of internet-enabled computers to achieve the most number of exchanges of programs.

Santiago also noted that the fields or occupations where Filipino workers are in demand, such as nursing, dentistry, medicine, care giving, language education, maritime field and information technology, are living proof of the country's expertise in these fields. In turn, these areas can be its strongest points in competing in the world market of international students.

In the issue of cross-border trade in higher education, two major restrictions may hamper further developments: commercial presence and movement of natural persons. First, the 1987 constitution does not permit a foreign entity to acquire 100 percent ownership of a business in the country. Second is the constitutional provision in Republic Act 5181 that requires permanent residency and reciprocity in the practice of profession by foreign nationals.



Ideologically motivated conflicts in the Philippines

Exploring the possibility of an early warning system*



A poor, simple and beautiful barrio lass captures the heart of an equally good-looking city boy who also happens to be the scion of the province's most powerful and richest *hacienda*. Such a basic plot used over and over in movies and watched on almost every Filipino television set at home every night. Overused but definitely still a click to the masses—who are not only hopeless romantics but always identify themselves with the underdog. But there is also a subplot in this love story that equally elicits the same strong identification to the viewers: farmers suffering from the cruel hands of *hacenderos* and finding solace not with the government—whom they have long believed has always favored the rich—but with rebel forces who have not only taken the fight for them but also the promise of a society where everyone is equal.

They say art imitates life but is it not also true that real-life dramas make for a good story material for various media? Today's Philippine reality is a bleak picture of pervasive poverty and inequality brought about by lack of employment opportunities and unequal chances for decent living. The country is also soiled in grave corruption as always been alluded to in everyday papers, the reason why the poor are getting poorer and the rich getting richer. But apart from corruption and unemployment as major factors always mentioned on why

the country is poor, there is one factor not always mentioned but is nevertheless very important—the peace situation. Peace here would refer to harmonious living among government leaders and various opposition forces, a situation that can put forward not only an economically sound nation but also help the people achieve their fullest potentials.

As it is, decades of protracted war of the government against the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP)–National Democratic Front (NDF), on one end, and against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), on the other end, have resulted in slower economic growth for many parts of the country and served as a barrier to the personal development and safety of people living in the various conflict areas.

It is thus encouraging to note that for the past years, the participation of the civil society in not only advocating peace in the conflict-ridden areas but also in promoting the importance of conflict prevention

* This condensed version of the paper "Ideologically motivated conflicts: exploring the possibility of an early warning system" authored by Prof. Maria Cynthia Rose Banzon Bautista for the Philippine Human Development Report 2005 was prepared by Ms. Claudette Santos, Information Officer at PIDS.

before conflicts actually occur has increasingly grown.

In the paper "Ideologically motivated conflicts in the Philippines: exploring the possibility of an early warning system" authored by Prof. Maria Cynthia Rose Banzon Bautista of the University of the Philippines for the *Philippine Human Development Report 2005*, the need for an early warning system was highlighted as a critical tool to help mediating groups and peace advocates from various sectors monitor conflict areas and prevent tensed situations to accelerate into full-scale armed confrontations.

The paper aims to draw out the factors that have contributed to the conflicts between the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), on the one hand, and the CPP-NDF, MILF, and MNLF, on the other, from 1986 to 2004 and to arrive at concrete steps that are applicable at the lower levels and may provide possible practical interventions. A preliminary step toward the development of an early warning system is to trace the occurrence of armed conflicts over the last 35 years and explore the factors that contributed to them.

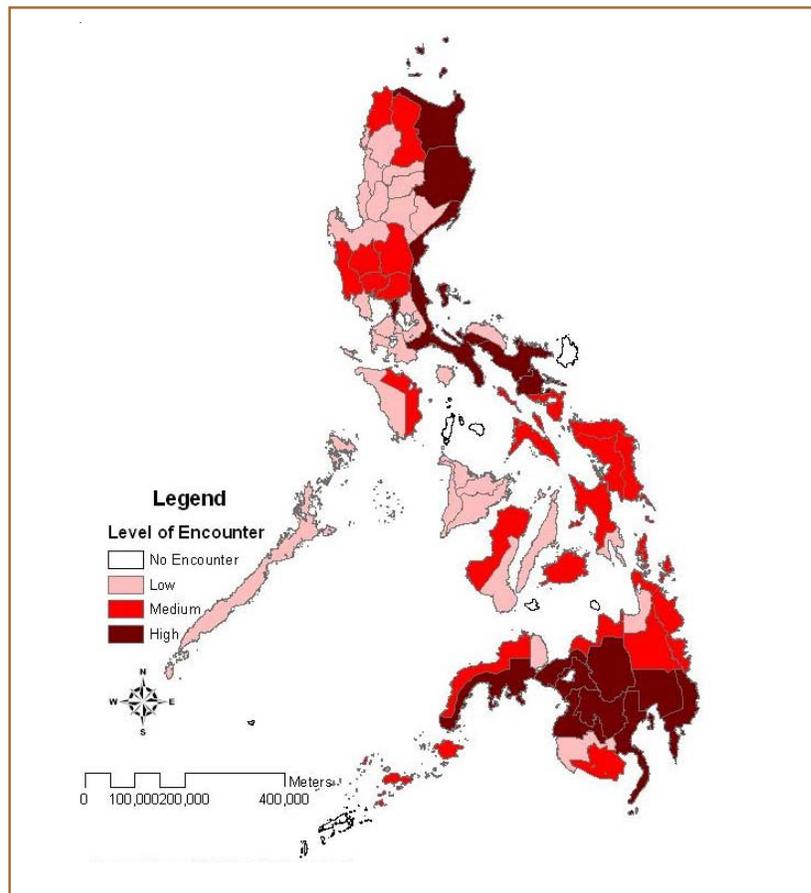
Three dimensions of conflicts are defined in the paper, namely: (a) the incidence of the conflict; (b) the intensity of armed confrontation; and (c) if the conflicts were instigated by rebel groups. Indicators used to measure the three dimensions are: (a) number of reported armed incidents or encounters between AFP and the NPA, MNLF or MILF; (b) number of reported casualties on both sides, including noncombatant sympathizers; and (c) number of reported rebel-initiated encounters. Data on the encounters were obtained from Mr. Patricio Abinales and Mr. Edmund Ramos who culled major newspapers, the Ibon Databank, and the CPP's *Ang Bayan* for information on armed conflicts from 1972 to 2004, in line with a conflict database that they are developing for an ongoing Ford Foundation-funded project on peace-building.

Profile of the Conflicts

Figure 1 shows the level of reported encounters of the AFP, on the one hand, and the NPA/MILF/MNLF, on the other hand. Table 1 lists the provinces with high levels of encounters from 1986 to 2004, in which nine of the provinces are in Mindanao. Meanwhile, the rest of the provinces with relatively high levels of encounters—Quezon, Albay, Cagayan, Camarines Sur, and Isabela—have also been NPA territories before.

The few provinces that were spared from ideologically motivated armed confrontations are the small islands or relatively isolated provinces of Batanes, Camiguin, Catanduanes, Romblon, Siquijor, and Tawi-Tawi, as reported in the Abinales and Ramos and Ibon databases.

Figure 1. Provinces with AFP-NPA/MILF/MNLF Encounters by level (1986-2004)



Source: Abinales and Ramos dataset.

Table 1. Provinces with high* levels of reported AFP-NPA/MILF/MNLF armed incidents, 1986-2004 (ranking)

Maguindanao	(1)	Metro Manila	(9)
North Cotabato	(2)	Cagayan	(10)
Quezon	(3)	Camarines Sur	(11)
Lanao del Norte	(4)	Davao Oriental	(12)
Davao del Norte	(5)	Isabela	(13.5)
Zamboanga del Sur	(6)	Bukidnon	(13.5)
Albay	(7.5)	Lanao del Sur	(15)
Davao del Norte	(7.5)		

* 20+ encounters

Source: Abinales and Ramos dataset (2005).

Figure 2. Reported number of casualties by ideological groups and year, 1986-2004

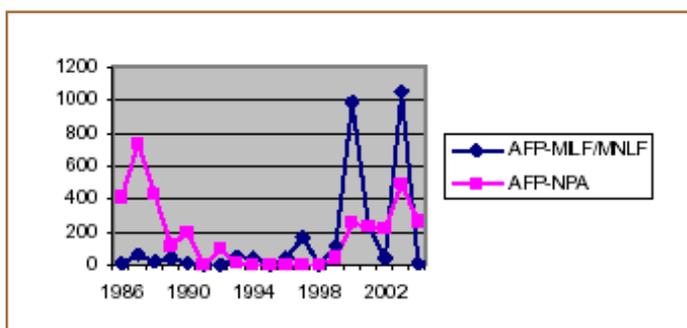
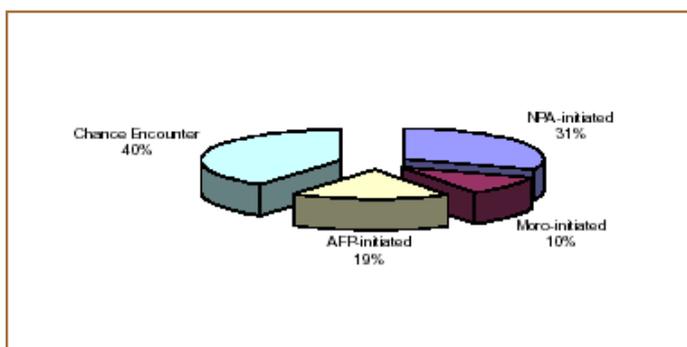


Figure 3. Reported AFP-NPA/MNLF/MILF encounters by type, 1986-July 2004



A review of the encounters throughout the period 1986–2004, however, shows the pattern of recurring conflict. While there is a dramatic decline in the reported AFP-NPA/MILF/MNLF armed incidents after 1988, encounters between the government and combatants from the NPA/MILF/MNLF began to pick up once again in 1999.

An examination of the number of encounters reported in national dailies and the Ibon databank in the last five years of the Estrada and Arroyo presidencies (1999–July 2004) shows that 73 percent of all provinces experienced an increase in the number of ideologically based armed conflicts. Leading the provinces are Mindanao, North Cotabato, Quezon, Lanao del Norte, Albay, Cagayan, Davao del Norte, Camarines Sur, Davao Oriental, Isabela, and Lanao del Sur.

Figure 2 shows the number of casualties of AFP-NPA and AFP-MILF/MNLF encounters, respectively, during the period 1986-2004. It is interesting to note that the highest number of casualties from AFP-NPA encounters occurred during the time of former President Corazon Aquino. In terms of the AFP-MNLF/MILF encounters, meanwhile, the highest number recorded was during the time of former President Joseph Estrada's all-out war against the MILF and Abu Sayaff. Data gathered from newspapers and the Ibon Databank showed that 90 percent of those who were either killed or wounded during the 1986-2004 period occurred after 1997. During the same period, reflecting the CPP-NDF's guerrilla strategy, three out of four armed confrontations were instigated by the NPA. The MILF and the MNLF initiated only one out of four encounters (Figure 3).

Provinces that recorded the highest number of casualties from both sides of the conflict were located in Mindanao, with the exception of eight provinces heavily influenced by the NDF—Quezon, Cagayan, Kalinga Apayao, Isabela, Eastern Samar, and Albay (Table 2). This is because of the geographic concentration of the AFP offensive against the MILF and the conventional form of warfare it used in Mindanao in the late 1990s. The presence of small guerilla units of the NPA all over the country, on the other hand, has resulted in the less-intense AFP strategy against the NPA that resulted in lower casualty counts. Apart from the all-out war against the MILF, two of the top five Mindanao provinces with high casualty levels are areas where both the MILF and NDF operate.

In terms of the AFP-NPA conflict, provinces showing an increase in casualties from the Estrada to the Arroyo administration include Zambales and Bulacan (Table 3). This corroborates the observed resurgence of the Communist rebellion in Central Luzon. Bautista noted that the inclusion of Bulacan seems ironic since it is regarded as least vulnerable to conflict given its score in a vulnerability index that incorporates human development indicators.

Meanwhile, in terms of the AFP-MILF/MNLF conflict, provinces registering higher levels of reported casualties during the Estrada and Arroyo administrations cover all the ARMM provinces (Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Sulu, and Basilan) (Table 4).

Why conflicts have persisted (1986-2004)

The CPP-NDF, MILF and MNLF justify their rebellion as their answer to the concentration of political and economic power in the hands of a few and to the long-standing poverty of the majority of the people. Land is also a big influence in the principles they fight for and is a critical issue for them. Ultimately, the three movements espouse a vision for an alternative state.

While social inequality and poverty have always been mentioned as the main factors for the emergence of social and political unrest in the past years, the findings of the paper, however, indicated otherwise. In particular, the study shows that poverty and inequality are not significant determinants in the incidence and intensity of conflict, between the AFP, on the one hand, and the CPP-NDF and MILF/MNLF, on the other.

Also contradictory to perception is the finding on the effect of land inequality which shows that rebel-initiated conflicts were even higher in provinces where land distribution is even more equal. The reason cited is that the provinces that were studied were unevenly developed and that it is highly probable that armed conflicts occur in poorer and isolated barangays. On the other hand, the relative strength of the CPP-NDF in provinces where government has fully accomplished or even surpassed

Table 2. Provinces with high* levels of reported casualties from AFP-NPA/MILF/MNLF encounters, 1986-2004 (ranking)

Maguindanao	(1)	Isabela	(11)
North Cotabato	(2)	Lanao del Sur	(12)
Lanao del Norte	(3)	Davao del Sur	(13)
Quezon	(4)	Zamboanga del Norte	(14)
Davao del Norte	(5)	Kalinga-Apayao	(15.5)
Zamboanga del Sur	(6)	Surigao del Norte	(15.5)
Cagayan	(7)	Davao Oriental	(17.5)
Basilan	(8)	Eastern Samar	(17.5)
Sultan Kudarat	(9)	Albay	(19)
Agusan del Sur	(10)		

* >100 fatalities or injured persons

Source: Abinales and Ramos dataset (2005).

Table 3. Provinces registering an increase in reported casualties from the AFP-NPA encounters, 1999-2000 to 2001-July 2004 (ranking)

Eastern Samar	(1)	Surigao del Sur	(6)
Albay	(2)	Bulacan	(7)
Davao Oriental	(3)	Batangas	(8)
Zambales	(4)	Rizal	(9)
Bohol	(5)	Camarines Norte	(10)

Source: Abinales and Ramos dataset (2005).

Table 4. Provinces registering an increase in reported casualties from AFP-MILF/MNLF encounters, 1999-2000 to 2001-2004

Maguindanao	(1)	Zamboanga del Norte	(7)
North Cotabato	(2)	Sulu	(8)
Lanao del Norte	(3)	Davao del Sur	(9)
Basilan	(4)	Zamboanga del Sur	(10)
Sultan Kudarat	(5)	Davao Oriental	(11)
Lanao del Sur	(6)	South Cotabato	(12)

Source: Abinales and Ramos dataset (2005).

its land redistribution goals might have contributed to the inverse effect of higher land concentration on rebel aggression.

Results of other studies also show that poverty and inequality are not statistical determinants of conflicts. The wide discrepancy between objective indicators of poverty and subjective perceptions of the adequacy of food, clothing and shelter therefore suggests the need to use other poverty indicators for predicting conflicts.

Subjective poverty, however, is not easy to dismiss because the way social actors define their situation has real consequences for the actions they take.

Indeed, ideological movements have gained momentum despite improvements in the standards of living in some areas and in land distribution because of the critique on the "Is" against the "Ought". An example is the land reform that is being measured against a genuine land reform in a national democratic state. The Communist movement sees the land reform program as a watered down version of the desired land reform and has a very limited scope because of the compromise among different parties and social classes.

In effect, provinces that benefited from the land reform program consider such success inferior to what they were supposed to achieve, thereby leading to a continuous series of encounters between the AFP and the NPA in these areas. Clear signs of poverty even if there have been growths because of the slow nature of changes in the country stifled by governance and economic issues, manifest the wide gap between the present conditions and future visions. It only reinforced the belief among ideologically motivated citizens that only a violent revolution could turn the Philippines around.

A higher number of reported human rights violations also elicited higher number of encounters, casualties and NPA-initiated incidents from 1986 to 2004. It should be noted that reported human rights violations increased with the number of armed incidents, particularly when the population in a conflict area is politically aware, a situation that prevails in many of the provinces influenced by the NDF.

The CPP-NDF and MNLF/MILF have taken different routes in realizing their alternative states, with the latter negotiating with the government through armed struggle and international diplomacy because of their international linkages with other Islamic states. On the other hand, the CPP-NDF follows the Maoist way of

surrounding the cities from the countryside, mass-based building and mobilization, and guerilla warfare. The CPP-NDF also gives premium to armed struggle as a way of achieving a vision state.

In terms of the MNLF/MILF struggle, culture and religion play a role in the processes of economic marginalization and struggle for land that have taken place. These have not surfaced as determinants of conflict in the CPP-NDF fight since religion and ethnicity have no presence in the movement's classic-based Communist principle.

The need for an early warning system

The CPP-NDF and MILF/MNLF ideological frameworks presented conflict as a necessary condition in the realization of a common good at a future time. This could be in the form of an Islamic Bangsamoro society for the MILF/MNLF or a secular socialist society envisioned by the CPP-NDF.

As indicated in the paper, poverty is an important variable in the MILF and MNLF struggle but addressing conflicts with development programs at the local levels is not enough to stop the conflict. For one, the Muslim Mindanao question is linked to the issue of autonomy for the region. It must be made clear, though, that the government cannot assure that the granting of autonomy to the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao would automatically mean the provision of social services and the implementation of effective anti-poverty strategies.

The CPP-NDF situation, on the other hand, shows its strong adherence to the Marxist ideology even in the more developed provinces that points to the need for a high-level negotiation in the party for the conflicts to be resolved.

A paradigm shift is then crucial and imperative for the government, CPP-NDF, and MILF/MNLF in order for all parties to achieve successful high-level negotiations. For the government, bigger concessions on its part is important as well

In terms of the MNLF/MILF struggle, culture and religion play a role in the processes of economic marginalization and struggle for land that have taken place. These have not surfaced as determinants in the CPP-NDF fight since religion and ethnicity have no presence in the movement's classic-based Communist principle.

as the willingness on the side of the Moro and Communist fronts. Indeed, it is the only way to go for future negotiations to flourish.

However, a paradigm shift is unattainable without the necessary pressure from civil society that would advocate for peace, human security, and development. The mediating groups from civil society can facilitate the development of an early warning system that is crucial in recognizing impending armed conflicts in various areas and that may provide the possibility of stopping them before they happen.

The development of an early warning system would help understand the factors that cause the crises and conflicts; agendas and grievances of stakeholders and combatants; and progress of peace-building efforts both in the national and local levels.

More importantly, an early warning system will work well in conducting regular assessments of political economic developments that may cause crises. It is also important, coming from the long-standing ideological armed conflicts in the country, that the early warning system can monitor developments of peace negotiations and agenda and grievances of said movements up to the highest level.

It is also necessary to push for peace-building efforts in the hope of linking peace advocates to a wide network of stakeholders who would jointly develop a warning system.

At the lower level, the development of indicators that would help in understanding how factors at the national level affect the local setting; the history of conflicts in particular areas and regions; key players involved; and critical concerns and issues, is a must to be addressed in order to stifle impending armed conflicts.

The emergence of an early warning system will then be best developed by peace advocates from the academe, private sector, civil society groups, and government who have a stake in diffusing conflict situations and enhancing human security in the areas

Armed confrontations in the Philippines have persisted through the years and continue to undermine the country's development and poverty alleviation efforts, leaving affected Filipinos not only physically in peril but also vulnerable because their whole existence may be jeopardized...The development of an early warning system is a valuable aid in ensuring that possible armed confrontations may be prevented before they could actually escalate.

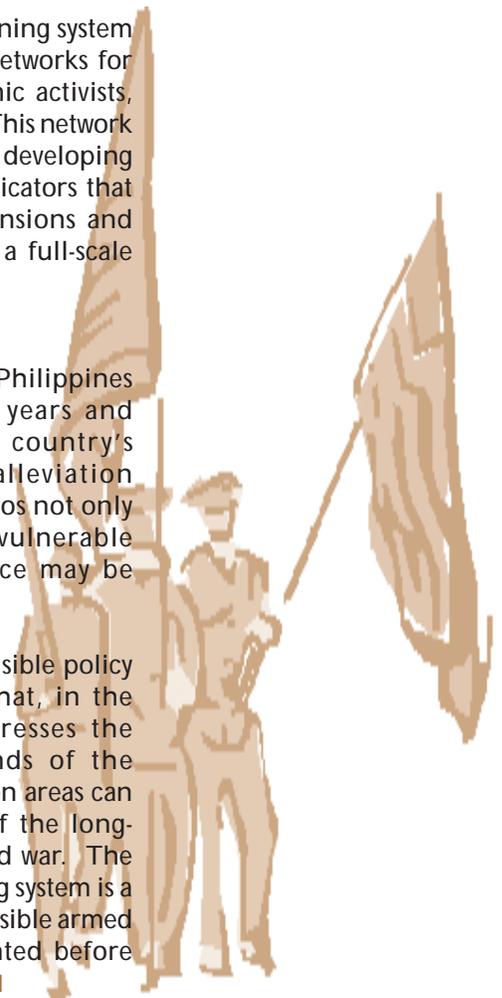
where they live and work. It is therefore important that to begin this process, stakeholders of peace process both at the national and local levels should convene and develop qualitative, and if possible, quantitative indicators of factors that trigger conflict.

A fine example of this early warning system is the Mindanao interrelated networks for peace, consisting of multi-ethnic activists, academics, and private citizens. This network offers a good starting point for developing qualitative and quantitative indicators that may be used to spot rising tensions and prevent them from becoming a full-scale armed confrontation.

Conclusion

Armed confrontations in the Philippines have persisted through the years and continue to undermine the country's development and poverty alleviation efforts, leaving affected Filipinos not only physically in peril but also vulnerable because their whole existence may be jeopardized.

Thus, only a dramatic, highly visible policy of peace and development that, in the shortest possible time, addresses the concrete needs and demands of the population in the conflict-ridden areas can help break the momentum of the long-standing ideologically motivated war. The development of an early warning system is a valuable aid in ensuring that possible armed confrontations may be prevented before they could actually escalate. DRN



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factors that impinge on the country's competitiveness in the services trade--the issues of safety and security. Originally penned for the *Human Development Report 2005*, the article, which appears in this issue in its recast and condensed form, takes a closer look at the decades-long armed confrontation between the government and the rebel groups, and explores the potential benefits from developing an early warning system to recognize tensions and prevent them from escalating into full-scale confrontations.

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Cross-border education... from page 5

To add, the government must have an explicit position regarding cross-border education in terms of the quality of education being improved internally or with the assistance of foreign academic institutions. If quality of education will be improved from within, a need for a stronger CHED is crucial to execute policy changes without meddling from politicians. A more credible accrediting agency with standards that are uniformly adapted, privately owned and managed or otherwise should also be formed.

Meanwhile, improving the country's educational system with the help of foreign academic institutions means the government should start reviewing and addressing issues of ownership and repatriation. Instead of for-profit activities,

the government may invite foreign institutions for capacity-building purposes.

Cross-border trade in higher education certainly spells fortune for the Philippine economy. Sadly, the country has been left behind by the more aggressive actions of its neighboring Asian countries that are now slowly yet steadily benefiting from the trade.

But all is not lost for the Philippines. While it may be trailing behind, the country's proficiency in the English language is still its biggest advantage, as well as the affordability of educational expenses and its proximity to the major consumers of the education trade. What the Philippines needs is just the right focus and stronger kick to start playing in the field of cross-border trade in higher education. DRN