Human Security in the Context of Violence and Conflict
Sub Session II: Southeast Asia
Discussion

Dr. Chaiwat Satha-anand:
"Thank you Imtiyaz. I think we have been treated to a very rich discussion of three cases, three papers, coming from Sri Lanka from the Philippines and, although you are from the Philippines your work is on Indonesia. I think there is some common island element in all this. You are from the Philippines working on Indonesia also funded by Japan, another island. Is something strange about these islands? I think these three papers provide wonderful lessons in how we can approach the issue of human security and I would put forward only three words: culture, geography and time. Now let me elaborate. The most concrete perhaps of the three papers was the one on Sri Lanka. And when I say concrete I mean the paper that brought into focus several issues. Frankly speaking, I don't find some of his conclusions extraordinary. The conclusion that the level of accountability effects efficiency and equitable distribution of aid almost goes without saying. There are some problems in terms of concepts which have been used by the World Bank and then you adopted them. For example weak human security is a result of weak political security or the questions about economics or politics as dignity and all those things. I don't want to go into details. The things I learned from Razaak are much more interesting. I think he reminds us of the role of agencies in dealing with issues which are detrimental to human security. I think he is the only one who talked about political parties. The question about political parties, I would very much see how different political parties in this country will compete in the coming election if there is any election at all…you see you are in Thailand and can therefore never be so sure if anything can happen. But I have yet to see political parties coming out to say how they are going to deal with issues like the problem in the south. So bringing in agencies, such as political parties, could be quite refreshing. To ask questions at least about the role of it. But the most interesting thing to me from Razaak's paper is the significance of geography that he plays. I think this point is important for any study of human security. I say that because I think there is a need to push for the border in studying human security. And what Razaak has shown is that he's arguing the effect of what he calls coastal topography on human security. I think this is fascinating. I say that because what you have there is that you have a shift in terms of cartography as a result of both natural disasters and ethnic conflicts. The shifting of topography is fascinating and one could argue that the case of Ache and the defeat of Guam is to some level a result of the Tsunami. And it is very welcomed by the Indonesian government that the TNI could not do a lot of more because the Tsunami destroyed the power base of Guam to the point of it needing a political solution rather than a military one as used in the past. This is quite refreshing to bring in the significance of geography in a discussion of human security particularly when you talk about natural disasters, because it affects that.
The question of time in Rosalie's paper is quite interesting. She again reminds us of a question of whose responsibility is human security. Maybe this is one of the reasons why there is so much resistance to the notion of human security. Whose responsible for human rights? Everyone is. But whose responsible for people's security? Security is the sacred cow of state. Isn't it? So when you ask the question: whose responsibility is it to

ensure that there are some levels of human security in Sri Lanka, in the Philippines, in Ache, then you are introducing or inviting rather different sovereignties to work in the space where one rule dominates. And the state doesn't like that. So I think your question has many more implications than you value it in the paper. You could expand on that. I would be very much thrilled by how you do that.

The second thing that is very interesting about Rosalie's paper is the issue of civil military interface. In the interest of time I simply post two questions. Regarding interface, what levels that you are talking about because the civil military interface at different levels function differently? On the ground there may be fewer interfaces than at the policy level. And in certain contexts, like the relief context, there will be more interface than in the context of ethnic violence. Both Razaak and Rosalie's paper are quite interesting because you have two things at the same time; natural disaster alongside ethnic conflict. So the question of civil military interface becomes much more problematic. When you have a natural disaster, you have an economic possibility for a lot of corrupted military who will attempt to benefit from all of the various relief agencies and aid given.

I would like to see Rosalie integrate the question of time into her paper. The question of time is of paramount importance if you want to talk about the civil military relationship. I find there is a dichotomy between civil military that you use in your paper, which is a little bit too rigid. It is too rigid in the sense that it applies only in what I would call normal time. But in the case of a natural disaster and/or deadly violence, such as in Sri Lanka, southern Thailand, Mindonow, it robs us of the normality of time. And therefore you are talking about a different type of government. When you think in terms of Feugodian analysis they talk about this body of government. What you have now is the governmentality of time where you are operating within an exceptional time where the normal relationship does not apply. When this normal relationship doesn't apply then the issue of emergency law, the issue of suspension of rights, the issue of…you know…even we will provide housing for all because this is security related. Normal situations are quite different from what I have described but all of you are dealing with issues of emergency.

The question of culture comes from the gun control paper. Jasmine was talking about gun culture. But she talked briefly about it. You talked about the macho culture and all that. But I think that gun culture is quite interesting because she was arguing that guns in the Philippines are seen as problem of personal security. This is interesting because when guns are seen as a problem of personal security you have the criminalization of the issue. When you see gun security as human security what you have there is the politics of human security. These are two different things. If you look at gun issues as personal security then it is a matter that could be dealt with by the police, the law and other legal instruments. But if you deal with gun security as an issue of human security then a lot more people have to be involved. It becomes extremely political. And I think this is quite important for us to recognize. She also reminds us of the various pathways to stop the flow of guns. What is missing, however, is the economy of how to stop the pathway of guns. You said yourself that guns in your country costs sometime fifteen dollars. Is that an M16? It that a local gun? I think here we can get an M16 for about 1,500 baht, or 2,500 baht I'm not quite sure. Cheaper, I think. So actually the issue of stopping the pathway of guns has something to do with the economy that guns produce in a society. If

the economy is such that it is big enough, and there are so many parties involved, it will be extremely difficult to stop the flow. This third issue is the rearmament in deadly situations. By that I mean the threat to security is defined very narrowly in terms of life threatening situation. There's a need for civil groups to get together and rearm themselves. And that gives rise to the proliferation of more guns. So guns become something that you need to protect yourself from. But when the need to protect oneself assumes political significance it then become a cause for different parties in societies to utilize it and provide guns. In southern Thailand there is ample evidence to suggest that Buddhist groups in southern Thailand are now being rearmed. There are cases of teachers who publicly call to rearm themselves. So you can have a visual of teachers who need protection and the military who want guns for themselves. It means that they no longer believe that their security comes from their relationship with the people but from guns. This also means that the situation has been redefined using violence as the predominant culture. And there's no way out because it reinforces what is going on. And therefore the three papers put into play the three concepts which are important for human security: different geographies and the way in which geography impacts human security, the role of culture, and the role of time. Thank you."

[Name inaudible]:

"Thank you very much. my question is are natural disasters bad for human security? If you look at the case of Ache, tsunami actually contributed or partly solved the problem of the conflict in Ache. On the other hand, with the case of Sri Lanka, tsunami worsened the situation. As I suggested yesterday, I mentioned that we should design another concept where humans threatened by natural disasters as compared to man-made threats, like war and so on. In other words, we should differentiate whether it is real human security issues, or what I suggested yesterday, if we can refer to it as human safety issues. Related to that question, we can learn something from peace studies. What can peace studies add to empower these humans within the context of human security? Thank you very much."

[Name inaudible]:

"Well, I liked the proposition expounded by [name inaudible] that when we talk about guns we can perceive it in terms of criminalizing it or in terms of using it as a tool of politics. Based on my personal experience, it may be unique because I have used guns myself twice in my life. When I was nineteen, I participated in the arms resistance movement against the Pakistani Occupation Army. Many of my friends were killed and we killed many enemies. Now at this age, if I go back and try to analyze the mind set of the young people thirty years ago, I think I made a mistake. Now I have a family, I have an apartment, I have a job. I cannot really rationalize the conflict in my present day situation. I try to evaluate the incidents that took place in 1971. In 1975 and 1976, I again took up arms because I was in a class war. Two years I was in hiding. At the time, many killings took place and I used to get a sort of divine pleasure in killing people. So that was the age actually. Now many of my friends who were involved in JBP now say 'no, now I am a Ghandian'. So it is very easy to be Ghandian in the 50's or 60's but, in the

20's, it isn't appealing actually. We have to understand the politics of glorifying Ghandism or assailing Ghandi or Mandela because that did not really help create a lot of change. There are many more cross-currents. So Ghandi became Ghandi because there are other cross-currents too. There was a rich communist resistance movement in India and South Africa at the time. So I don't think that we should have a sort of unipolar analysis of any situation. And I really appreciate that we have to consider the situation, the context of time and space. If I say I killed someone now at this age I repent, but at the time I didn't repent. Time has changed the world and people's perceptions have changed as well. But at the time I thought I did the right thing."

Razaak M. Ghani:

"Thank you, I have a comment to make rather than an answer for Dr. Chaiwat. In fact, I wrote about the political parties into my paper. One reason for the inclusion of this political party is to compare the situation in Ache to that of Sri Lanka. In Sri Lanka, we missed an important opportunity brought on by a natural disaster. The natural disaster didn't consider the ethnic diversity of Sri Lanka – it affected Muslims, the Tamils, the Singhalese, everybody. If you compare what the Sri Lankan political parties or the government missed – they didn't bring important mechanisms to distribute aid to the country. Actually it was fair. The Sri Lankan government and political parties tried to bring post-tsunami rehabilitation mechanisms but, due to their different perspectives and political differences, these mechanisms didn't take root. Therefore, it is actually a missed opportunity which the natural disaster brought to Sri Lanka. Therefore the people in the election used a more [inaudible] way rather than mitigating the situation.

As far as her question is concerned. I can't say natural disasters affected more on human security than man-made disasters like conflict. Man-made disaster can last twenty years or more and have a huge impact on overall levels of human security. Human security situations are much worse in conflict affected areas when compared to the 2004 Tsunami affected areas for example. As far as the state and other non-governmental organizations, they are much more effective in conflict areas regarding the relief and rehabilitation they provide. The situation in bringing back human security in natural disaster affected areas is faster and effective compared to man-made disasters like conflict areas in the north and in the east. Thank you."

Jasmin Nario:

"I acknowledge what our discussant has said - it really is difficult to stop the flow of arms especially in a context where the peace and order of the situation is really chaotic and the justice system is flawed. Here I'm talking about the Philippines. The people arm themselves to protect themselves. There are two things that we can do here: we can address the demand side or the supply side. So addressing the demand side on why are people arming themselves. Addressing the causes of dissidents is one. Looking into development efforts and perhaps a concrete pathway is perhaps diverting resources from military to socio-economic services. If there is a lot of budget allocated for military purposes perhaps a lot of that can be rechanneled for the provision of socio-economic services. This is one concrete pathway I can think of. And then there's the supply side—I think at the community level, particularly in the Philippines, they are creating space for zones of peace which are actually spaces where people of different cultures and ethnicity

and forms of expressions can talk and negotiate. But I'd like to let you know that on the global level there are solutions that are also being proposed. There is an arms treaty that is being drafted now in the United Nations; if you can lobby your own countries to ratify or to help in the formulation of this treaty that would be really good. In the ASEAN region you can have regional arrangements by which you can control the flow of arms. For example on CNN this morning there was news that China had an arms deal with Iraq and was selling hundred million dollars worth of armaments to Iraq. Of course we know that United States has sold about two billion dollars worth of armaments to Iraq and we know what's happening in Iraq right now. So if we can just stop the flow of arms in countries where there are human rights violations, where there's war on going. In Rwanda for example, 800,000 people were killed and we know that machetes were used, but while this was going on, while genocide was going on, armaments, small arms were being shipped from France and Afghanistan. So if we're going to have an ATT, an arms treaty, then we can control the flow of arms especially in nations where armed conflicts are ongoing. I'd like to address your question about peace studies because I am in peace education. What can we do in situations like this? I think it is the role of educators to analyze the root causes of human insecurity. But we should not just stop at analyzing. We have to think of alternatives. We have to think of pathways by which we can build a culture of peace. The days are gone when people would just say 'stop so and so, stop imperialism, stop capitalism'. The days now call for hope. We have to think of alternative pathways. Ways by which we can help build a culture of peace. After all, as UNESCO has said, if wars or armed conflicts begin in the minds of men or humans, it is also in the minds of men and women that peace must be constructed. So let's construct those now. Thank you."

Rosalie Arcala Hall:
        "Thank you Dr. Chaiwat for your comments. I will take those considerations into account when I prepare my final report for this project. Certainly you're right about the civil military interface. There's a great difference depending on whether you're talking about operations on the ground, the level of policy-making or whether you are facing a disaster situation. I must say, however, that civilian humanitarian organizations by and large are very skeptical of military, whether in disaster situations or conflict situations. And that kind of built-in skepticism of what the military is doing is a very important factor in analyzing civil-military interface. Of course this skepticism and distrust of the military manifests itself more fully when you are providing humanitarian assistance in a conflict situation. Unless we are talking about natural disasters. Yet what I'm looking at right now in Ache…"[Tape ends]

Rosalie Arcala Hall [Continued from the previous tape]:
        "…humanitarian agency civilians who were there expressed the same kind of skepticism. There line is like this: if we can help it, we won't work with the military. That just presents a lot of complicating factors. If they need some logistics, they rather work with IOM, the International Organization for Migration, because this is the organization that has it. If they can help it, they will not work with the military just because there are some complications. And it is a cost – host and foreign militaries, won't work for them if they can help it. So I think that is also a point to consider. Are you dealing with a disaster

or conflict situation? You may be dealing with an emergency situation in a normal compressed time frame where various actors are tasked to respond to a situation immediately. And doing something makes all the difference. In that situation it is more difficult to sit back and say 'that's your task, this is mine, and this is how we're going to do it'. In many cases it is utter chaos in the first couple of days in an emergency following a disaster. And I would argue at this point that in an emergency situation, whether we like it or not, it is the military that is best placed to respond. International civilian humanitarian organizations may not like it but it is a fact. They are the ones that are most mobile and have the right equipment – they have cargo planes and Blackhawks, which gives them the opportunity and the capability to provide for these important needs. Alternatively we can look at other countries with separate forces that deal with natural disasters. Like the Americans have FEMA. Other places also have a similar instrument which is not necessarily the military. They have specialized forces that deal with disaster situations. But if you're a country like Indonesia and the Philippines it all boils down to the fact that you still need the military to do these things. Once they're deployed, what are they doing on the ground, and who bears responsibility for that? This is the better question to ask."

Dr. Chantana:
      "Chaiwat would you like to say something? Alright, let's bring an end to this session by giving a hand to the presenters this afternoon. Now we break for lunch."