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**UNRAVELLING THE FILIPINO DIASPORA'S  
RELATIONS WITH THE PHILIPPINE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT**

Jacinto, Mario De Leon

Monterey, CA; Naval Postgraduate School

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**NAVAL  
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**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

**THESIS**

**UNRAVELLING THE FILIPINO DIASPORA'S  
RELATIONS WITH THE PHILIPPINE COMMUNIST  
MOVEMENT**

by

Mario De Leon Jacinto

December 2019

Thesis Advisor:  
Co-Advisor:

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**UNRAVELLING THE FILIPINO DIASPORA'S RELATIONS  
WITH THE PHILIPPINE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT**

Mario De Leon Jacinto  
Colonel, Philippine Army  
BS, Philippine Military Academy, 1993

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN DEFENSE ANALYSIS  
(NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS)**

from the

**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL  
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## **ABSTRACT**

Since the Communist Party of the Philippines began waging its insurgency in 1968, it has presented a persistent security challenge for the Philippine government. Numerous studies have examined the New People's Army (NPA), but little attention has been given to the National Democratic Front (NDF)'s efforts, particularly its International Solidarity Works (ISW), to surreptitiously establish an international organization to support the insurgency. Studies suggest that diaspora communities consistently emerge as a source of external support for homeland struggles. Because external assistance often improves insurgents' capabilities, it makes counterinsurgency harder and costlier. Given the existence of the Filipino diaspora as a newer diasporic community, the Philippine communist movement could have already been receiving assistance from Filipino migrants, a possible contributing factor to the movement's resilience. This thesis examines the role of the ISW as part of the NDF strategy and the benefits it gains by internationalizing the Philippine communist movement while at the same time disrupting the Philippine government's existing international relations. By drawing on Gordon McCormick's diamond model and Doug McAdam's political process model, this thesis explores how the ISW weaponizes the Philippine diaspora and affects Philippine national security.



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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
BSM	broad solidarity movement
COIN	counterinsurgency
CPP	Communist Party of the Philippines
FGN	Philippine Group Netherlands
GAM	Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, or Free Aceh Movement
ISW	International Solidarity Works
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
NDF	National Democratic Front
NGO	non-government organization
NPA	New People's Army
OFW	overseas Filipino worker
ORW	Overseas Revolutionary Work
TUF	Tamil United Front
TULF	Tamil United Liberation Front

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

Since the insurgency movement waged by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) began in 1968, a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist inspired revolution has been a persistent security challenge for the Philippine government. The movement is considered the longest ongoing communist insurgency in Asia. In recent years, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) have focused primarily on the armed struggle waged by the CPP and its military arm, the New People's Army (NPA). Little attention has been given to the National Democratic Front (NDF)'s efforts to surreptitiously found international organizations and groups supportive of the insurgency.<sup>1</sup> As an umbrella organization established in 1973, the NDF, according to Victor Corpus, has functioned "to win all possible allies to totally isolate the ruling regime and to give direct and indirect support to the armed struggle being wage [d] in the country side."<sup>2</sup> This support to the armed struggle includes "political, diplomatic and financial activities."<sup>3</sup> Its political activities, in particular, have aroused suspicions and attracted the AFP's attention. Reducing the impact of the NDF's deceptive activities has become a priority in military operations: these actions may have given the AFP the upper hand in its counterinsurgency campaign.<sup>4</sup> However, the results are still inadequate to completely defeat the CPP, which just celebrated its 50th anniversary in December 2018.

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<sup>1</sup> The National Democratic Front (NDF) is engaged in expanding and collaborating with other valuable, relevant organizations in accomplishing the insurgency's goals. "About the Revolutionary United Front Organization of the Filipino People," National Democratic Front of the Philippines, accessed November 30, 2019, <https://ndfp.org/about/>.

<sup>2</sup> Victor N. Corpus, *Silent War* (Quezon City, Philippines: VNC Enterprise, 1989), 57.

<sup>3</sup> Soliman M. Santos Jr. and Paz Verdades M. Santos, "Part Two: Armed Group Profiles," in *Primed and Purposeful: Armed Groups and Human Security Efforts in the Philippines* (Quezon City, Philippines: South-South Network for Non-State Armed Group Engagement and Small Arms Survey, 2009), 263, <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.432.9002&rep=rep1&type=pdf#page=51>.

<sup>4</sup> The NDF can initiate massive demonstrations or rallies called people strikes involving different sectors of society, including government workers, which can easily paralyze the government. This activity undermines the government but also affects the economic condition of the people who join the rally and earn a daily living. See Olle Törnquist, "Communists and Democracy in the Philippines," *Economic and Political Weekly* 26, no. 27/28 (1991): 1683-1691.

The CPP-NPA-NDF modeled its armed struggle after the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China by establishing an international front organization called International Solidarity Works (ISW). Its objectives initially included establishing ties with foreign non-government organizations (NGOs) and, later, organizing Filipino migrant communities to be involved in the movement.<sup>5</sup> Through ISW, the NDF coordinates the founding of international organizations and groups supportive of the CPP, such as Migrante International, an advocacy group for overseas Filipino workers (OFWs).<sup>6</sup> Some of these international organizations are beyond the AFP's reach and lie in the realm of diplomacy. Moreover, because of the AFP planners' limited understanding and appreciation, ISW is often ignored in formulating strategies to end the insurgency. This is the very reason further study of it must be undertaken.

This thesis examines the role of the NDF's ISW in the ongoing insurgency waged by the CPP with a goal of overthrowing the Philippine government. By evaluating the utility of ISW to the insurgency movement, military, and civilian leadership can better evaluate its effect on counterinsurgency efforts and help formulate a more effective plan. This will be accomplished by examining various CPP and NDF/ISW activities, in particular, the international ones, and other related case studies on external supports' roles and their effect on insurgency. Numerous studies have already been conducted about the NPA insurgency, but they focused primarily on the armed struggle rather than on the activities of the NDF/ISW. This limited understanding of ISW is the gap this research intends to fill.

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<sup>5</sup> Armed Forces of the Philippines, "CPP-NPA-NDF ISW" (presentation at the DOF-AFP Meeting, Manila, Philippines, November 2018).

<sup>6</sup> Founded in 1996, this organization claims to have 200 members in 23 countries. *Migrante* is a Filipino term for migrant. See "Home Page," Migrante International, accessed April 2, 2019, <https://migranteinternational.org/>.

## B. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the role of ISW in the Philippine insurgency and its effect on counterinsurgency?
2. Is the Filipino diaspora ISW's target?
3. How can the Filipino diaspora affect the ongoing insurgency problems in the Philippines?

## C. LITERATURE REVIEW

Insurgency, or internal war, according to O'Neill is a "general overarching concept that refers to conflict between a government and an out group or opponent in which the latter use [s] both political resources and violence to change, reformulate or uphold the legitimacy of key aspect of politics."<sup>7</sup> This emphasizes that an insurgency is foremost *political in nature*, an idea to which various scholars subscribe; Taber defines it as "the extension of politics by means of armed conflict" while Galula stresses it as a "political war."<sup>8</sup> The goal is to first win the support of the population to ensure its active participation and consent. To borrow Mao's phrase, the "population can be compared to a pond where the fish [in this case, the insurgents] can swim."<sup>9</sup> The wider and deeper the support, the more space and freedom the insurgency has to operate. The CPP adopted this concept because of its proven effectiveness.

Since the population is fundamental to the conflict's outcome, it is essential for the insurgents to convert as many people as possible to embrace the cause of the movement at

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<sup>7</sup> Bard E. O'Neill, "Foreword," in *War of the Flea: The Classic Study of Guerrilla Warfare*, ed. Robert Taber (Washington, DC: Brassey's, 2002), viii.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Taber, *War of the Flea: The Classic Study of Guerrilla Warfare* (Washington, DC: Brassey's, 2002), 18; David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare Theory and Practice*, PSI Classics of the Counterinsurgency Era (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006), 4.

<sup>9</sup> Samuel B. Griffith, *Mao Tse-Tung on Guerrilla Warfare*, FMFRP 12-18 (Washington, DC: Marine Corps, 1989), 8.

an early stage and to establish a base of support.<sup>10</sup> Insurgents, to some extent, must be propagandists, agitators, and organizers to effectively influence the people to join or support the cause.<sup>11</sup> And in places where they have relative control and an organized population, a base of support is easy to establish, which can be utilized to extend their influence in neighboring areas and replicate the earlier process.<sup>12</sup> This pattern of developing a base of support resembles Mao Tse Tung's approach of controlling the countryside first and absorbing the outlying areas, until the urban center is encircled.<sup>13</sup> The communist insurgency in the Philippines follows a similar pattern of initially establishing a mass base.

At the same time, as the insurgents established their base of support, the party, being "the basic instrument for the [insurgents'] entire process," is built, developed, and strengthened.<sup>14</sup> During this stage, insurgents must be inconspicuous in building their base, the party, and armed insurgents so as not to "appear as [a] serious challenge to the counterinsurgent [government forces]."<sup>15</sup> However, the insurgents, knowing that armed conflict is inevitable, will still hold off, which as Arreguin-Toft notes is to their advantage: "In asymmetric conflict, delay favors the weak."<sup>16</sup> But for those who opt to fight, engagement must be employed only as an educational tool and propaganda for the insurgency forces.<sup>17</sup> The Communist Party of the Philippines has employed these tactics and procedures.

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<sup>10</sup> At the early stage, insurgents focus on base building by politicizing and mobilizing the people to freely support the movement, portraying it as the "Peoples War." See Corpus, *Silent War*, 25.

<sup>11</sup> Taber, *War of the Flea*, 12.

<sup>12</sup> Corpus, *Silent War*, 34.

<sup>13</sup> Griffith, *Mao Tse-Tung on Guerrilla Warfare*, 21.

<sup>14</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare Theory and Practice*, 30.

<sup>15</sup> Galula, 6.

<sup>16</sup> Ivan Arreguin-Toft, "How the Weak Win Wars," *International Security* 26, no. 1 (2001): 93–128.

<sup>17</sup> Taber, *War of the Flea*, 27.

Another dimension of an insurgency is the establishment of a united front, a means of marshalling allies around the party;<sup>18</sup> these are organizations whose primary purpose is to provide cover for the insurgent, composed of different sectors of society.<sup>19</sup> As a political tool, these organizations use the economic and social dimensions to foment social unrest that discredits the government, encouraging sympathy for the insurgency. One example is highlighting students and workers staging rallies and strikes, which news outlets pick up as a sign of unrest and anarchy. This may seem trivial, but it can have huge impact on the economy and on international perceptions. It can put pressure on the government so that it loses its will to fight because of losing popular support. This scenario corroborates Mack's idea that "success for the insurgent arises not from the military victory on the ground . . . but rather from the progressive attrition of their opponents' political capability to wage war."<sup>20</sup>

The NDF is the CCP's united front in the Philippines. It serves as its "major umbrella organization," supervising sympathetic non-communist organizations and alliances.<sup>21</sup> By providing support and protection to the insurgency directly or indirectly, these alliances seek to undermine the government's political, economic, and social functions. The NDF also serves as a conduit for the NPA's numerous underground organizations by linking them to a network of legal organizations with similar goals and views at the regional and national levels.<sup>22</sup> The NDF's role can be compared to a shield that protects and safeguards the CPP and NPA.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare Theory and Practice*, 31.

<sup>19</sup> Taber, *War of the Flea*, 24.

<sup>20</sup> Andrew Mack, "Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict," *World Politics* 27, no. 2 (1975): 175–200, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2009880>.

<sup>21</sup> Jose Magno and A. Gregor, "Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in the Philippines," *Asian Survey* 26, no. 5 (1986): 501.

<sup>22</sup> An example was the National Association of Peasants in the early 1970s, an underground peasant union supporting the NPA and allied with the NDF. See Francisco Lara and Horacio R. Morales, "The Peasant Movement and the Challenge of Rural Democratization in the Philippines," *Journal of Development Studies* 26, no. 4 (1990): 153, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220389008422177>.

<sup>23</sup> Corpus, *Silent War*, 56.

The 1987 Philippine Constitution provides for the establishment of party-list organizations, “political parties representing marginalized sectors of the society such as workers, and peasants.”<sup>24</sup> These provide insurgents with a legal gateway to infiltrate the political system.<sup>25</sup> The CPP, through the NDF, set up Bayan Muna, a political party that participated in the first party list election in 2001.<sup>26</sup> The success of Bayan Muna encouraged the NDF to establish numerous political parties that gained seats in the Philippine Congress; they have been supporting the interests of the communist movement since then.<sup>27</sup> And these parties are often viewed by senior government officials as “part of the insurgency.”<sup>28</sup> Holden quotes a former Philippine national security adviser who said, “We are no longer dealing with a traditional guerrilla campaign; these guerillas have infiltrated our democratic process.”<sup>29</sup> This is one of the many ways that the NDF has aided the CPP to attain its goal of overthrowing the Philippine government.

The communist struggle in the Philippines has endured for 50 years without, for the most part, relying on external assistance.<sup>30</sup> Limited international support came from European solidarity groups that channeled funds through the NDF’s international head office at Utrecht—which, notably, is where the exiled CCP founding chairman Jose Maria Sison now lives.<sup>31</sup> Scholars debate the importance of external assistance to insurgencies. Jeffrey Record argues, “External assistance may be required to convert superior will to

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<sup>24</sup> William N. Holden, “Ashes from the Phoenix: State Terrorism and the Party-List Groups in the Philippines,” *Contemporary Politics* 15, no. 4 (2009): 381, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13569770903416422>.

<sup>25</sup> Holden, 381.

<sup>26</sup> Dominique Caouette, Stephan Feuchtwang, and Alpa Shah, “Ups and Downs of a Contemporary Maoist Movement: Shifting Tactics, Moving Targets and (Un)Orthodox Strategy: The Philippine Revolution in Perspective,” in *Emancipatory Politics: A Critique* (Open Anthropology Cooperative Press, 2015), 154.

<sup>27</sup> Caouette, Feuchtwang, and Shah, 136.

<sup>28</sup> Holden, “Ashes from the Phoenix,” 385.

<sup>29</sup> Holden, 385.

<sup>30</sup> Initially, China tried to supply firearms, but they were intercepted. CPP leadership sought the support of the Soviet Union in 1987, but support waned as Moscow advanced relations with the United States. See Alvin H. Bernstein and Armando B. Heredia, “Communist Insurgency in the Philippines,” *Comparative Strategy* 8, no. 3 (1989): 279–295, <https://doi.org/10.108/01495938908402784>.

<sup>31</sup> Bernstein and Heredia, 291.

victory.”<sup>32</sup> According to Galula, it is unnecessary in the early stages of an insurgency, but as guerilla warfare transforms into a higher form of warfare, it is definitely helpful.<sup>33</sup> As early as 1991, the NDF affirmed that it had “gained the support of organizations, political parties, and liberation movements in over twenty-six countries in Europe, North America, Asia Pacific, Latin America and Africa.”<sup>34</sup> What could be the NDF’s goal in gaining international support? Was it the result of lessons learned from Hukbong Bayan Laban sa Hapon (HUKBALAP)’s failure?<sup>35</sup> The HUKBALAHAP, according to Galula, failed to develop due to lack of external support.<sup>36</sup>

External support received by insurgents, based on recent studies, can have a profound effect on an insurgency war.<sup>37</sup> According to Salehyan, Gleditsch, and Cunningham, “Civil wars with outside involvement . . . typically last longer, cause more fatalities, and are more difficult to resolve through negotiation.”<sup>38</sup> This study, however, centers on formal “state sponsorship,” which has provided outside assistance to numerous insurgencies. But at the end of the Cold War, the characteristics of external support and the personality of the benefactors changed dramatically so that the external support was no longer limited to state sponsors.<sup>39</sup> Diaspora and other non-state actors, such as “refugees, foreign guerilla movements, religious organizations, wealthy individuals,” and advocacy

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<sup>32</sup> Jeffrey Record, “Why the Strong Lose,” *Parameters* 35, no. 4 (Winter 2005–2006), EBSCO.

<sup>33</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare Theory and Practice*, 26.

<sup>34</sup> Edwin J. Ruiz Lester, “After National Democracy: Radical Democratic Politics at the Edge of Modernity,” *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 16, no. 2 (1991): 182, <https://doi.org/10.1177/030437549101600204>.

<sup>35</sup> The HUKBALAP or Nation’s Army against the Japanese Soldiers was a communist organization defeated by government forces in 1955. See Christopher Paul, *Paths to Victory: Detailed Insurgency Case Studies*, RR-291/2-OSD (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2013), 31.

<sup>36</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare Theory and Practice*, 27.

<sup>37</sup> Idean Salehyan, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and David E. Cunningham, “Explaining External Support for Insurgent Groups,” *International Organization* 65, no. 4 (2011): 710, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818311000233>.

<sup>38</sup> Salehyan, Gleditsch, and Cunningham, 710.

<sup>39</sup> Superpowers or state-supporting insurgencies were common during the Cold War, often changing local conflicts into international contests. See Daniel Byman et al., *Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2001).



groups, have emerged, all offering to lend their support to insurgencies.<sup>40</sup> The influence and roles of these new external supporters of insurgencies vary, depending on the insurgent needs and the context of the struggles being promoted.<sup>41</sup>

Diasporas have been recently recognized as an emerging player in providing various types of supports to their homeland's insurgents.<sup>42</sup> This support includes publicity and propaganda, donating funds and sometimes becoming the de facto representative to the diaspora's host country.<sup>43</sup> Strong kinship ties and the feelings of compassion toward their fellow countrymen who are left behind and suffering from domestic struggles are two common motivations that lead members of these migrant communities to help insurgencies.<sup>44</sup> A diaspora, according to Ricardo Hausmann, "is often a reminder of a country's darker moment" since most migration happens during times of civil wars and political and economic turmoil.<sup>45</sup> This social unrest can evoke strong connections and feelings of empathy for migrant communities toward the armed struggle in their homeland. Byman et al. suggest, "Diaspora may become more important to insurgencies in the future because they are more reliable in funding and do not seek to exert control over a movement, and insurgencies have an already-established bond with immigrant communities that they can exploit."<sup>46</sup>

The recently published 2016 CPP Constitution and Program outline the role of ISW, namely to "arouse, organize, and mobilize Filipinos compatriots abroad" to directly participate in the insurgency and "work for recognition of the status of belligerency" of the

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<sup>40</sup> Byman et al., xvi.

<sup>41</sup> Byman et al., xix.

<sup>42</sup> Byman et al., 41.

<sup>43</sup> Byman et al., 41.

<sup>44</sup> Byman et al., 55.

<sup>45</sup> Ricardo Hausmann, "The Diaspora Goldmine," Project Syndicate, June 25, 2015, <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/remittances-not-only-benefit-to-homeland-economies-by-ricardo-hausmann-2015-06>.

<sup>46</sup> Byman et al., *Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements*, xv.

insurgency movement.<sup>47</sup> ISW tactics are similar to those of NDF maneuvers, infiltrating or recruiting first non-communist but sympathetic organizations or persons to the cause who can then later be mobilized to support the movement.<sup>48</sup> Could this be the reason why left-leaning political parties such as Gabriela and Migrante established international offices, to mimic the NDF at the international level? What are the other reasons for establishing ISW aside from seeking assistance in the international community for the advancement of the movement? Is ISW trying to mobilize overseas Filipino workers (OFW) or the Filipino diaspora?<sup>49</sup> Or is it part of elevating the conflict to the realm of diplomacy and international propaganda? Another question concerns the security implication of these NDF international organizations to the current security challenges of the Philippines in the West Philippine Sea. These are some of the gaps about ISW that this study tries to address.

#### **D. METHODOLOGY**

This study draws on Gordon McCormick’s diamond model to examine the role of ISW and its effect on counterinsurgency (COIN).<sup>50</sup> The model, as illustrated in Figure 1, provides a paradigm for optimizing COIN operations by holistically addressing all aspects

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<sup>47</sup> By achieving the status of belligerency, the CPP can gain diplomatic and trade relations with other countries as well as enjoy some of the privileges accorded a normal state in the United Nations and international organizations. See “CPP Constitution and Program,” Philippine Revolution Web Central, accessed March 17, 2019, 95, <https://www.philippinerevolution.info/2016/11/07/cpp-constitution-and-program/>.

<sup>48</sup> Magno and Gregor, “Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in the Philippines,” 504.

<sup>49</sup> The term *overseas Filipino worker* (OFW) is used to denote Filipino labor migrants who, according to Semyonov and Gorodzeisky, “leave their countries of origin in search of temporary job [s] to help support the household members left behind, with no real intention to make the country of destination their home.” See Moshe Semyonov and Anastasia Gorodzeisky, “Occupational Destinations and Economic Mobility of Filipino Overseas Workers,” *International Migration Review* 38, no. 1 (2004): 8, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2004.tb00186.x>. According to 2015 data from the Philippine Statistical Authority, there are 9.1 million Filipinos overseas, and approximately 5,000 leave the Philippines every day. See Commission on Filipinos Overseas, Philippine Statistics Authority, “Philippine International Migration Data” (presentation at the UN Regional Workshop on Strengthening the Collection and Use of International Migration Data, Bangkok, Thailand, 2017), <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/meetings/2017/bangkok--international-migration-data/Session%203/Session%203%20Philippines.pdf>.

<sup>50</sup> Eric P. Wendt, “Strategic Counterinsurgency Modeling,” *Special Warfare* 18, no. 2 (September 2005): 2–13, ProQuest.

of conflicts.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, it explicitly underscores the international actors' role in COIN, often minimized in the literature. By drawing on this model, this study can explore the possible link between ISW and international actors and how ISW can influence other actors highlighted in the model. Moreover, the model serves as a guide in analyzing the dynamics of the different actors, particularly ISW, in the current COIN campaign of the Philippine government.

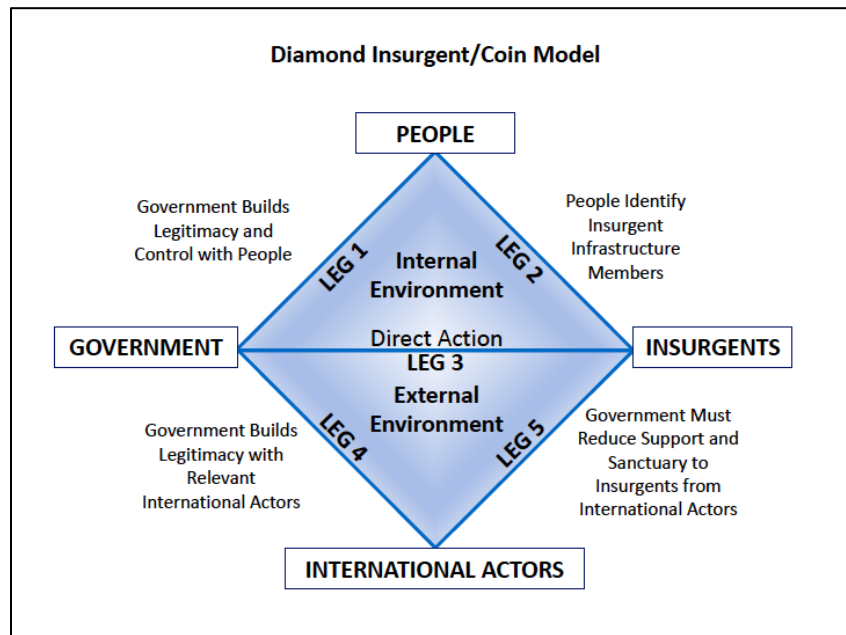


Figure 1. Gordon McCormick's Diamond Model<sup>52</sup>

The four points of the diamond represent the various actors involved in insurgency and counterinsurgency: the people (population), the government, the counter-government, and the international actor.<sup>53</sup> The population is located at the top, signifying its importance, and the government and the counter-government, which constantly seek to win the

<sup>51</sup> Wendt, 5.

<sup>52</sup> Adapted from Wendt, 6.

<sup>53</sup> Jonathan P. Hastings and Krishnamurti A. Mortela, "The Strategy-Legitimacy Paradigm: Getting It Right in the Philippines" (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2008), 23.

population's support, are located on either side of the diamond directly below the people.<sup>54</sup> Finally, international actors, which are other states and international organizations, are located at the bottom. The line between any two actors indicates they will likely interact, and the various legs indicate the order by which the government should engage the other actors.<sup>55</sup> The model is useful because it highlights the importance of international actors in the insurgency.

Doug McAdam's political process model is also used to analyze and assess ISW's role.<sup>56</sup> The model (see Figure 2) identifies the factors that need to be in place for a social movement, such as insurgency, to emerge: expanding political opportunities, indigenous organizational strength, and the development of insurgent consciousness.<sup>57</sup> Expanding political opportunities are a "relatively long-term social processes yield shifts in the political status quo, which are in effect changes in the opportunity structure."<sup>58</sup> Indigenous organizational strength refers to how an aggrieved or discontent population uses existing resources to improve its prospect as a result of adjustment in the political structure.<sup>59</sup> What the model highlights is that these resources must reach a point where the population is willing to act. Finally, the development of an insurgent consciousness directly results from the expansion of political opportunities and the increase in organizational strength and is the collective belief of the aggrieved population, that "change is not only necessary, but possible."<sup>60</sup> The model is of interest here because it highlights the importance of organizations in the furtherance of a social movement—in this case, an insurgency.

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<sup>54</sup> Hastings and Mortela, 23.

<sup>55</sup> Hastings and Mortela, 23.

<sup>56</sup> Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930–1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985)

<sup>57</sup> Michael Armato and Neal Caren, "Mobilizing the Single-Case Study: Doug McAdam's Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930–1970," *Qualitative Sociology* 25, no. 1 (2002): 95, <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1014360308993>.

<sup>58</sup> Armato and Caren, 94.

<sup>59</sup> Armato and Caren, 95.

<sup>60</sup> Douglas A. Borer, Sean F. Everton, and Moises M. Nayve, "Global Development and Human (In)Security: Understanding the Rise of the Rajah Solaiman Movement and Balik Islam in the Philippines," *Third World Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (2009): 181–204, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436590802622615>.

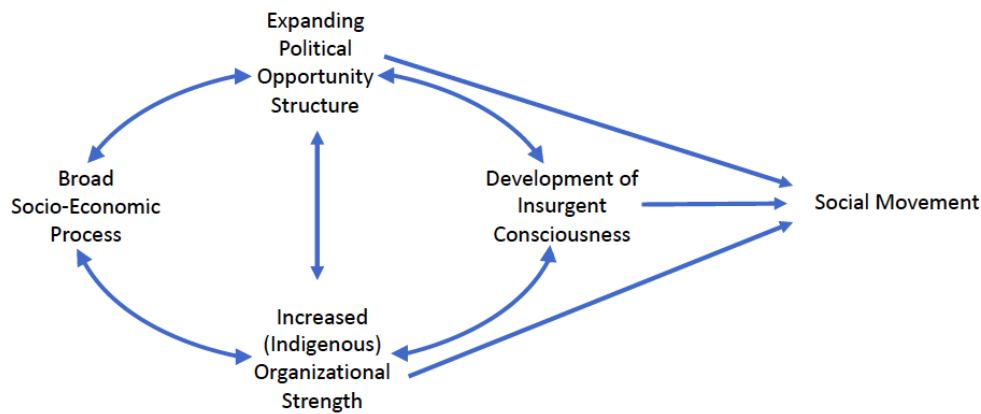


Figure 2. Doug McAdam's Political Process Model<sup>61</sup>

Historical and comparative research complements the diamond model and explores the possible role and influence of ISW in the insurgency movement. The role of the Tamil diaspora in the insurgency waged by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) against the government of Sri Lanka is used as a case study.<sup>62</sup> Despite the LTTE's defeat in 2009, the Sri Lankan government believes that Tamils living abroad are still committed to and supportive of the call for a separate state.<sup>63</sup> Another example is the case of Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, or the Free Aceh Movement, an Indonesian separatist movement that has received support from Acehnese living overseas.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Adapted from Borer, Everton, and Nayve.

<sup>62</sup> International Crisis Group, "The Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora after the LTTE," February 23, 2010, 24, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-asia/sri-lanka/sri-lankan-tamil-diaspora-after-ltte>.

<sup>63</sup> International Crisis Group, 24.

<sup>64</sup> Antje Missbach, "The Waxing and Waning of the Acehnese Diaspora's Long-Distance Politics," *Modern Asian Studies* 47, no. 3 (2013): 1055–1082, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0026749X12000571>.

## II. THEORIES AND MODELS

This chapter discusses two models: Doug McAdam's political process model and Gordon McCormick's diamond model. These models provide the frameworks and help guide the analyses of the case studies presented in the following chapter. Moreover, by using these two models, the study hopes to see patterns of explanations that will answer the research question, What is the role of diaspora in insurgency and its effect on counter insurgency?

### A. THE POLITICAL PROCESS MODEL

The political process model explains the emergence of an insurgency on the basis of convergence and dynamics of different external and internal factors relative to the movement's formation.<sup>65</sup> It subscribes to the idea that a social movement is a political, not a psychological, occurrence.<sup>66</sup> Thus, all elements that have influence in the established political activities can be utilized to explain social insurgency.<sup>67</sup> Moreover, the model considers movements to be "a continuous process from generation to decline, rather than a discrete series of developmental stages."<sup>68</sup> And, according to McAdam, "any complete model of social insurgency should offer a framework in analyzing the entire process of movement development rather than a particular phase of the same process."<sup>69</sup>

The political process model reflects a Marxist influence in that it acknowledges "the power disparity between elites and excluded groups" as significant and an unavoidable state of affairs.<sup>70</sup> What is unavoidable, according to this idea, is the succession to power by the masses as the elites' influence lessens.<sup>71</sup> Another notable Marxist influence

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<sup>65</sup> McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency*, 2.

<sup>66</sup> McAdam, 36.

<sup>67</sup> McAdam, 36.

<sup>68</sup> McAdam, 36.

<sup>69</sup> McAdam, 36.

<sup>70</sup> McAdam, 37.

<sup>71</sup> McAdam, 37.

reflected in the model is a concept of “subjective process in the generation of insurgency.”<sup>72</sup> This concept describes the transformation of an insurgent consciousness, initially from a feeling of powerlessness among its members to the realization of a group’s potential to pursue a social movement.

McAdam defines a social movement as the “rational attempt by excluded groups to mobilize sufficient political leverage to advance collective interests through noninstitutionalized means.”<sup>73</sup> Jeff Goodwin and James Jasper draw on Sidney Tarrow’s mobilization definition, arguing it is “a form of association as collective challenges by people with common purposes and solidarity in sustained interaction with elites, opponents and authorities—challenges that employ disruptive direct action against elite authorities, other groups or cultural codes.”<sup>74</sup> Either one works with the political process model. Of more importance are the three sets of factors that the model identifies as crucial to the development of a social insurgency. Each factor is necessary but insufficient to trigger a social movement alone.<sup>75</sup> It is only through their dynamic combinations that a potential insurgency can prosper.

### **1. Expanding Political Opportunities**

Any prospective social movement will initially face serious challenges before it can successfully mobilize due to its weak and limited bargaining position. Overcoming these disadvantages requires the exploitation of any possible political opportunities that will help increase its political leverage. Moreover, according to Dan Meyer, “The key recognition in the political opportunity is that activist’s prospects for advancing particular claims, mobilizing supporters, and affecting influence are context-dependent.”<sup>76</sup> Tarrow defines political opportunities as “those dimensions of the political environment that provide

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<sup>72</sup> McAdam, 38.

<sup>73</sup> McAdam, 37.

<sup>74</sup> Jeff Goodwin and James Jasper, “Caught in a Winding, Snarling Vine: The Structural Bias of Political Process Theory,” *Sociological Forum* 14, no. 1 (1999): 30–31, <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1021684610881>.

<sup>75</sup> Borer, Everton, and Nayve, “Global Development and Human (In)Security,” 186.

<sup>76</sup> David S. Meyer, “Protest and Political Opportunities,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 30 (2004): 126.

incentives for people to undertake collective action by affecting their expectations for success and failure.”<sup>77</sup> Examples of the insurgents’ expanding political opportunities include political instability, an enhanced political position of the aggrieved population, ideological openness, and threats (see Figure 3).<sup>78</sup>

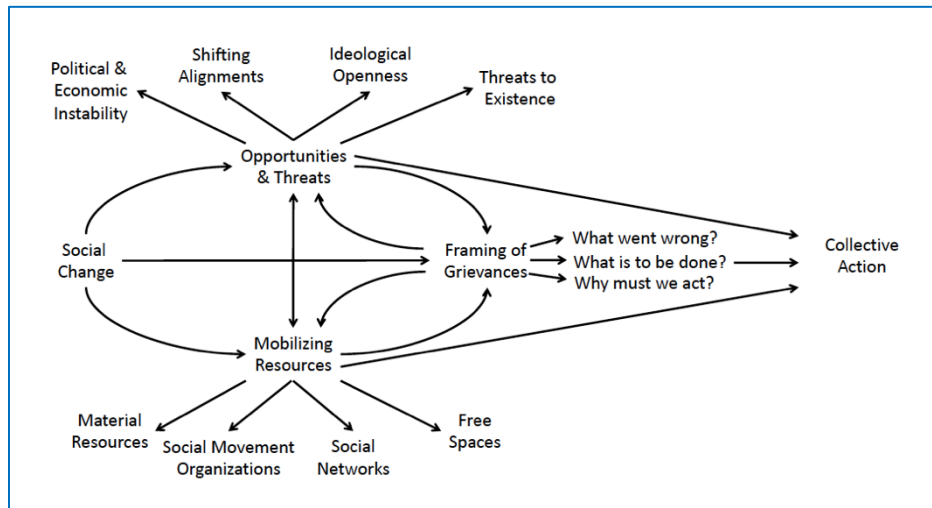


Figure 3. Expanded Political Process Model<sup>79</sup>

Political opportunities appear when any events or broad socio-economic processes challenge the structured political establishment.<sup>80</sup> According to McAdam, “Among events and processes likely to prove disruptive of the political status quo are wars, international political realignments, prolonged unemployment, and widespread demographic changes.”<sup>81</sup> Such changes can become a great equalizer; in an instant they can reverse an existing state of affairs. They can cause political instability, which can weaken the existing political order and motivate a group to mobilize and fight for a new political order.<sup>82</sup> And

<sup>77</sup> Goodwin and Jasper, “Caught in a Winding, Snarling Vine,” 33.

<sup>78</sup> Borer, Everton, and Nayve, “Global Development and Human (In)Security,” 187.

<sup>79</sup> Source: Sean F. Everton, “Lecture on Theories of Social Revolution” (presentation, August 2019).

<sup>80</sup> McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency*, 41.

<sup>81</sup> McAdam, 41.

<sup>82</sup> McAdam, 41.



during the ongoing changes of events and developing social processes, an aggrieved population can advance and enhance its political position over time.<sup>83</sup> Once in a position of power, the risks associated with the movement's participation lessen, giving the insurgents relative freedom to promote ideological openness or alternative ideas related to the movement's objectives.<sup>84</sup>

## 2. Increase Indigenous Organizational Strength

A favorable political atmosphere provides only an opportunity for an insurgent movement to mobilize successfully.<sup>85</sup> And such opportunities can only be exploited if needed resources support the insurgent movement. According to McAdam, "To generate a social movement, the aggrieved population must be able to 'convert' a favorable 'structure of political opportunities' into an organized campaign of social protest."<sup>86</sup> This means that an insurgent movement needs to have indigenous "infrastructure" capable of unifying members of the aggrieved population or an established "associational network" for "an organized campaign of mass political action."<sup>87</sup> The following four resources are crucial to organizational strength: social movement organizations, social networks, material resources, and free spaces.

First, a social movement organization is defined as "a complex or formal organization which identifies its goals with the preference of social movement or a countermovement and attempt to implements its goals."<sup>88</sup> It include leadership, cadres, constituents, members, formal and informal structures, processes, tactics, and a strategy.<sup>89</sup> An emerging organization can initially affiliate with existing organizations for assistance in establishing networks, setting up the organization, and providing people and resources

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<sup>83</sup> Borer, Everton, and Nayve, "Global Development and Human (In)Security."

<sup>84</sup> McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency*, 42.

<sup>85</sup> McAdam, 43.

<sup>86</sup> McAdam, 44.

<sup>87</sup> McAdam, 44.

<sup>88</sup> John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory," *American Journal of Sociology* 82, no. 6 (1977): 1218, <https://doi.org/10.1086/226464>.

<sup>89</sup> Gemma Edwards, *Social Movements and Protest* (Cambridge University Press, 2014), 58–63.

during mobilization. Second, a social network is “a set of actors”—which could refer to discrete individuals, subgroups, organizations, communities and nation states and so on, involved in social relation—“that share ties with one another.”<sup>90</sup> Through their existing networks of ties incipient organizations can obtain resources essential for their development such as information, contacts, communications, and funding. Third, material resources are tangible resources like funding, labor, organizational infrastructure, administrative and logistical requirements, and other support facilities or infrastructures.<sup>91</sup> By securing these material resources, a budding organization can efficiently perform its routine operations. Finally, free spaces are areas or zones where a social movement is unrestricted and state interference is limited, such as meeting places, safe houses, social media sites, and overseas support groups. The free zone helps an organization to conduct activities necessary for its development without restriction or free from government persecution. According to McAdam, “Insurgent groups must be able to exploit the initial successes of the movement to mobilize those resources needed to facilitate the development of a more permanent organizational structure required to sustain insurgency.”<sup>92</sup>

### **3. Development of an Insurgent Consciousness**

The combination of both political opportunities and organizational strength is necessary but not enough to cause a social movement.<sup>93</sup> It only creates an opening, and it all depends on the insurgents’ seizing that chance—if the prospect is worthy of the movement’s goal.<sup>94</sup> The “transformation of consciousness”—a state where people as a group collectively develop an awareness of their plight and the idea that collectively they can act to change their predicament—must occur first before a protest movement can

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<sup>90</sup> Sean F. Everton, *Disrupting Dark Networks*, Structural Analysis in the Social Sciences, no. 34 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 9.

<sup>91</sup> Edwards, *Social Movements and Protest*, 44.

<sup>92</sup> McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency*, 54.

<sup>93</sup> McAdam, 48.

<sup>94</sup> Edwards, *Social Movements and Protest*, 91.

emerge.<sup>95</sup> Christian Smith has called this transformation “the development of insurgent consciousness.”<sup>96</sup> Drawing on McAdam, Smith argues that it is a “collective state of understanding that perceives, interprets and explains a social situation in such way that it compels people to organize and act in order to change the social situation.”<sup>97</sup> A social movement must construct and communicate the insurgency’s ideas and what it stands for, if it is to influence audiences to act and become involved with the movement.

This occurs through cultural framing processes, which is where the movement’s broader ideology or key ideas are repackaged into a bumper-sticker version or an image and symbol for easy identification.<sup>98</sup> Framing involves presenting and conveying “action oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that call forth and legitimize social movement activities and campaign.”<sup>99</sup> Social movement leaders must constantly manufacture and sustain themes or meaning through framing if they are to actively engage constituents, antagonists, and bystanders.<sup>100</sup> And this requires paying attention to the core framing tasks of diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framing.<sup>101</sup> Diagnostic framing analyzes the cause of the problems requiring change and to whom blame will be attributed.”<sup>102</sup> It answers the questions “What went wrong?” and “Who or what is to blame?”<sup>103</sup> Prognostic framing focuses on examining possible remedies or solutions for achieving a social movement’s objective.<sup>104</sup> It helps answers the question “What is to be done?”<sup>105</sup> Finally,

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<sup>95</sup> McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency*, 49–54.

<sup>96</sup> Christian Smith, *The Emergence of Liberation Theology: Radical Religion and Social Movement Theory* (University of Chicago Press, 1991), 61.

<sup>97</sup> Smith, 62.

<sup>98</sup> Glen E. Robinson, “ Hamas as Social Movement,” in *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, ed. Quintan Wiktorowicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 129, ProQuest.

<sup>99</sup> David Snow and Scott Byrd, “Ideology, Framing Processes, and Islamic Terrorist Movements,” *Mobilization* 12, no. 2 (2007): 133.

<sup>100</sup> Snow and Byrd, 123.

<sup>101</sup> Snow and Byrd, 124.

<sup>102</sup> Snow and Byrd, 124.

<sup>103</sup> Snow and Byrd, 124.

<sup>104</sup> Snow and Byrd, 126.

<sup>105</sup> Snow and Byrd, 127.

motivational framing provides motives or rationale inspiring people to strongly commit to the collective action, overcome the fear of risk related to joining the movement, and solve the problem of the “free rider.”<sup>106</sup> It answers the question “Why must we act about it?” and overrides the temptation of members of the aggrieved group to free-ride on the efforts of others.<sup>107</sup>

#### **4. Summary**

To summarize, the political process model recognizes three sets of factors critical to the development of social insurgency: political opportunities and threats, resource mobilization, and the framing of grievances. Political opportunities and threats are the conditions that incentivize people to undertake collective action with the possibility of increasing their political leverage, which presents new chances for the group to succeed and prosper. Resource mobilization provides the needed infrastructure to acquire resources to sustain the insurgency movement until the formal organization is established. Framing grievances presents identifiable narratives of beliefs and ideas where prospective members can relate and force themselves to commit and make necessary actions for the movement’s objectives. Each factor is necessary, but for an insurgent movement to prosper, a collective presence is essential.

#### **B. GORDON MCCORMICK’S DIAMOND MODEL**

Gordon McCormick’s Diamond Model provides a framework for examining the actions of different players and strategies in an insurgency. With a clear understanding of the dynamics and roles of players in relation to each other, and in reference to their strategy, planners can work toward a more coherent, holistic strategy. The diamond model itself is also a tool for evaluating the relative advantages and disadvantages of a given strategy. Therefore, in using the model, potential weaknesses in a COIN strategy can be identified and corrected at an early stage.

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<sup>106</sup> Snow and Byrd, 128.

<sup>107</sup> Everton, “Lecture on Theories of Social Revolution.”

## **1. The Players**

This sub-section provides brief descriptions of key players relevant to insurgency and COIN: populations, government, insurgents, and external actors.

### ***a. The Population***

The population (people) refer to the individuals of a family, group, organization, clan, tribe, village, or community at any given place or territory. According to McCormick and Giordano, the “population is divided into conditional and unconditional participants.”<sup>108</sup> Unconditional participants are usually the small mobilizable portion of the population considered “hard core” supporters of both the government and the insurgents.<sup>109</sup> Conditional participants, on the other hand, “are the large middle group of individuals who are prepared to support one side or the other depending on the result of the struggle.”<sup>110</sup> Both the government and insurgents vie to obtain the support of this large middle group of individuals.

### ***b. The Government***

The government is the main COIN force competing against the insurgents. It can employ various elements of national power in an integrated, synchronized fashion to maintain its political authority. A government has everything at its disposal at the start of an insurgency. These government assets include “diplomatic recognition; legitimate executive power, legislative, and judiciary branches; control of administration and police; financial resources; industrial and agricultural resources; transportation and communication facilities; use and control of information and propaganda media; command of the armed forces and the possibility of increasing its size.”<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Gordon McCormick and Frank Giordano, “Things Come Together: Symbolic Violence and Guerrilla Mobilisation,” *Third World Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (2007): 317, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436590601153705>.

<sup>109</sup> McCormick and Giordano, 317.

<sup>110</sup> McCormick and Giordano, 301.

<sup>111</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare Theory and Practice*, 3.

**c. *The Insurgency***

The insurgency or counter-government is a group of people or organization with an intent to “destroy an existing society and its institutions and to replace them with a completely new state structure.”<sup>112</sup> Aside from engaging guerilla warfare against the government, an insurgency also conducts political mobilization and other related works to attract assistance from abroad.<sup>113</sup> An insurgent organization normally emerges from a core group of activists.<sup>114</sup> To understand the insurgency’s roles in the model, one must examine “its origin organization, nature of its support, the movement’s governing doctrine and theory of victory and the character of its rural and urban campaign.”<sup>115</sup>

**d. *The International Actors***

International actors are external players that have the capability of aiding either the insurgency or the government. International actors include states and non-state actors, such as diaspora, refugees, foreign guerilla movements, religious organizations, international organizations, and wealthy individuals.<sup>116</sup> Support from international actors could be in the form of moral, political, technical, financial, or military support.<sup>117</sup> Political support is any diplomatic action that can put pressure on the government or insurgents, such as severing diplomatic relations or refusing to recognize them in an international forum.<sup>118</sup> International actors provide moral support by expressing public sympathy and opinions through communication media.<sup>119</sup> Technical support is any form of advice that can relatively improve organizational, strategic, political, and military operations.<sup>120</sup> Financial

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<sup>112</sup> Griffith, *Mao Tse-Tung on Guerrilla Warfare*, 7.

<sup>113</sup> Byman et al., *Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements*, 5.

<sup>114</sup> McCormick and Giordano, “Things Come Together,” 295.

<sup>115</sup> Gordon McCormick, *The Shining Path and the Future of Peru* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1990), 2, <https://www.rand.org/pubs/reports/R3781.html>.

<sup>116</sup> Byman et al., *Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements*.

<sup>117</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare Theory and Practice*, 25–26.

<sup>118</sup> Galula, 25.

<sup>119</sup> Galula, 25.

<sup>120</sup> Galula, 25.

support is monetary assistance that can be either overt or covert.<sup>121</sup> Military support can occur through direct intervention or by offering safe havens or training facilities.<sup>122</sup>

## **2. The Strategies**

The diamond model graphically depicts players' relationships with one another, so planners or policy makers can determine available strategies. In Figure 4, Leg 1 (the line between the government and the people) represents possible government actions or policies to engage the people. In a similar manner, Leg 2 (the line between the people and insurgents) denotes the insurgents' efforts and activities designed to entice the people to join the insurgency movement. But through the implementation of a viable strategy, the government can disrupt insurgent efforts in Leg 2, as both Leg 1 and Leg 2 are within the Internal Environment space (the upper half of the diamond model). The Internal Environment is the area where both government and insurgents battle for the population to achieve legitimacy. Leg 4 and Leg 5, on the other hand, are in the External Environment space, which is the arena of competition for the support of international actors. Leg 3 lies in between and captures interaction between the government and the insurgents.

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<sup>121</sup> Galula, 26.

<sup>122</sup> Galula, 26.

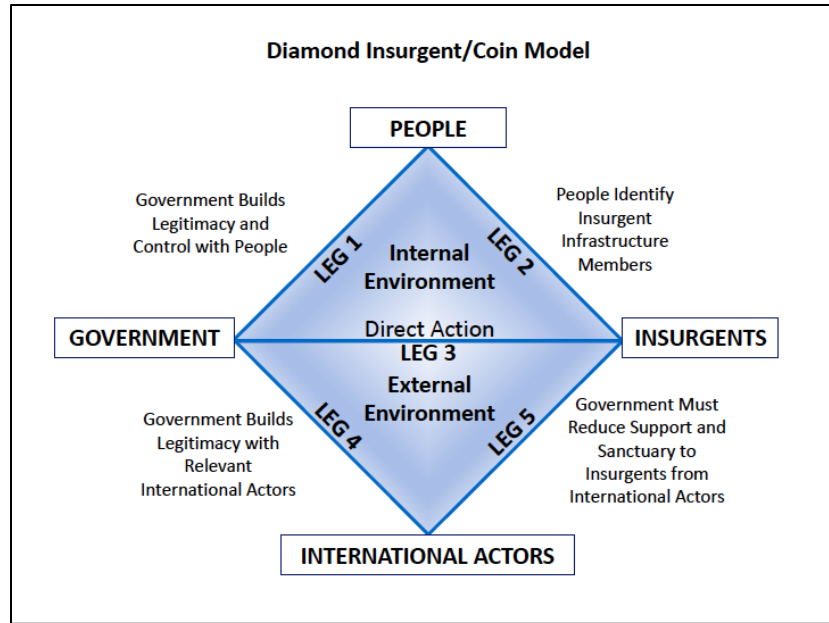


Figure 4. Gordon McCormick’s Diamond Model

Figure 5 illustrates possible strategies available to the state and to insurgents. Using the arrow to depict strategy, both the government and insurgents have an interest in gaining the support of both the people and various international actors. As the model suggests, both sides share similar objectives. However, their actual strategies differ. The model displays five strategies: gaining the population support (blue and red #1 arrows); disrupting the opponent’s bid for support from the population (blue and red #2 arrows); direct action against the opponent (blue and red #3 arrows); establishing ties with international actors (blue and red #5 arrows); and disrupting the opponent’s ties with international actors (blue and red #4 arrows).<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Peter J. Canonico, “An Alternate Military Strategy for the War on Terrorism” (master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2004).



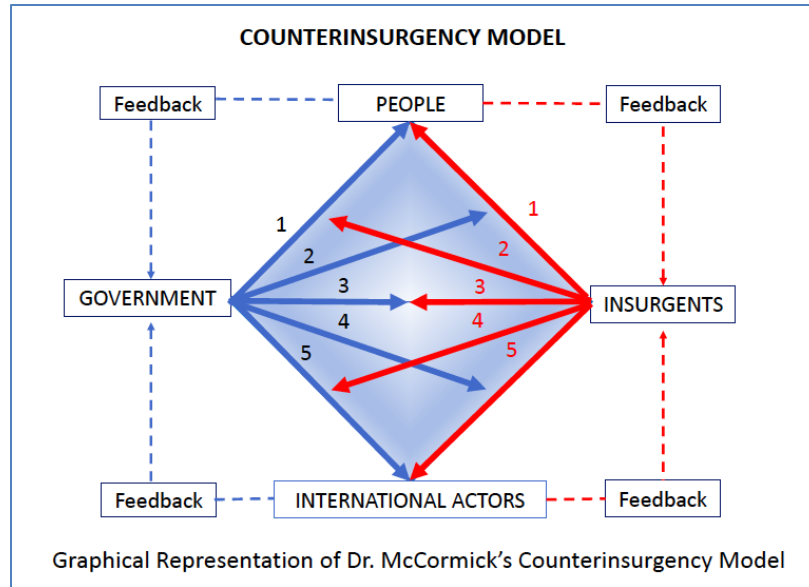


Figure 5. Possible Strategies in Gordon McCormick’s Diamond Model<sup>124</sup>

*a. Strategy 1: Gaining Population Support*

For this strategy, the government’s goal is to maintain its legitimacy and control over the population.<sup>125</sup> To sustain legitimacy, a government must perform its mandated functions and provide good governance, such as taking care of the people’s well-being, providing infrastructure and economic development, maintaining peace and order, and safeguarding individuals’ rights and liberties. A government can attain legitimacy if the majority of the population freely supports and participates in its programs.

For an insurgency to survive during its earliest stage—when it is typically weak—it must establish a base of support, conventionally in the countryside together with a handful of selected cadres. It is from these bases where recruitment, indoctrination of members, organizational expansion, and trainings happened. The expansion and development of a guerilla base of support, membership, other affiliated organizations, and

<sup>124</sup> Adapted from Canonico.

<sup>125</sup> Wendt, “Strategic Counterinsurgency Modeling.”

the insurgent armed group without government interference over time are strong indicators of the insurgents' success in this strategy.

**b. Strategy 2: Disrupt the Opponent's Bid for Population Support**

The strategy requires the government to address the root causes of the insurgency because the problem is as “much a political one as a military one.”<sup>126</sup> To destroy the insurgents' political base, the government must first eliminate “the sources of popular unrest through broad based policy of social and political reform.”<sup>127</sup> McCormick emphasizes that “the military in this scheme would play a secondary role in defeating the insurgency by permitting the government to clear and hold rural areas long enough to ‘win the hearts and minds’ of the local inhabitants.”<sup>128</sup> An effective employment of this strategy should yield actionable intelligence that can help identify the insurgency's members, infrastructure, and front organization.

For the insurgents, their front organizations are established to operate openly and be “part of ‘a broad mobilization’ to get ‘deep into the heart of the masses,’ to ‘agitate,’ and to ‘open the Party’ and ‘help prepare for the beginning of the popular war.’”<sup>129</sup> The intent of this strategy is to provoke the government and the military to commit repression against the people.<sup>130</sup> Such a move would “polarize society, further undermine the popular trust in the regime and swell the ranks in the movements supporters, all of which will be preconditions to victory.”<sup>131</sup> For the insurgent, a successful outcome for this strategy means growing popular unrest against the government and a strengthening of the insurgency movement.

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<sup>126</sup> McCormick, *The Shining Path and the Future of Peru*, 31.

<sup>127</sup> McCormick, 31.

<sup>128</sup> McCormick, 31.

<sup>129</sup> McCormick, 12.

<sup>130</sup> McCormick, 12.

<sup>131</sup> McCormick, 12.

***c. Strategy 3: Direct Action against the Opponent***

A government needs a coherent national strategy to combat an insurgency. Direct action is not limited to military operations where doctrine, capabilities, equipment, and trainings are reconfigured for COIN. It also includes the employment of other forms of state power. Enacting laws that make membership, entities supporting the insurgency movement, and the inciting or encouraging of terrorism criminal offenses can be a form of direct action.<sup>132</sup> A successful strategy can neutralize the insurgent propaganda and armed struggle.

Using this strategy, insurgents use force only for the purpose of psychological effect. Although poorly armed, they can utilize various guerilla tactics such as ambush, raids, sabotage, and assassination of officials to compensate for their shortcomings, inflict casualties, and exert maximum damage against the government. Such tactics often force a military to be on the defensive and adopt a reactionary posture.

***d. Strategy 4: Disrupt the Opponent's Link to International Actors***

The government, using its existing diplomatic ties with the international community, carries out internationally accepted activities such as public diplomacy and information caravans to prevent or disrupt the insurgency from establishing international connections and support. The end state of these activities is to confine the insurgency problem within the country's territorial limits, where the state can employ and maximize its potential power. The insurgents, on the other hand, will campaign to discredit the government for the purpose of severing their ties with the international community, especially with those that support the ongoing COIN effort. The presence of an international observer or critic sometimes restricts or inhibits COIN operations.

***e. Strategy 5: Establish a Link with International Actors***

Like Strategy 1, both the government and the insurgency will try to gain popular support, except here the goal is to gain access and solicit support from international actors.

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<sup>132</sup> McCormick, 12.

The government already has diplomatic ties; its goal is to secure consent and support in the ongoing COIN operations. The insurgency, on the other hand, initially seeks recognition and possible support from international actors other than the state. It may establish ties with international organizations with similar agendas to shift its grievances from the local to the international level. By gaining outside help, the insurgency can acquire opportunities like free spaces or international protection, so it can pursue its goals unhampered by COIN forces.

### **3. Summary**

In summary, McCormick's diamond model provides a framework that illustrates possible strategies a government or an insurgency can undertake to win the support of the population and various international actors. Although both share similar goals, their strategies to undermine their opponent's bid to dominate the internal and external environment space depends on the resources and opportunities they have. Disrupting an opponent's strategy undercuts the adversary from achieving its objectives while creates leverage that diminishes one's disadvantages.

## **C. CONCLUSIONS**

This chapter presented and explained the political process and diamond models. The frameworks provided by both are utilized in the next chapter as a guide for cases in which diasporas have supported insurgencies. The political process model highlights the three essential factors needed for an insurgency movement to flourish in the face of socio-economic events that disrupt the prevailing condition of the society. The first factor involves political opportunities or threats. These are a set of external conditions that incentivize, or disincentivize, an incipient movement to carry out collective action. The second factor is mobilizing resources. These include material resources, social movement organizations, social networks, and free spaces, which provide logistical requirements and a safe area needed by the organization in its day-to-day operations. Finally, the framing of grievances highlights the formation of insurgent consciousness and answers the following questions: What went wrong? What is to be done? and Why must we act? These three factors are used in analyzing the formation of a diaspora. The diamond model, on the other

hand, underscores the international actors' role in COIN and how both the government and insurgents vie for their support. The analysis focuses on the role and effects of a diaspora being an international actor. Drawing on this model guides the analysis of how the diaspora is used in a strategy. The goal of using the model is to explore the possible link between the diaspora and insurgency, and how it can influence other actors in the model as well.

### III. CASE STUDIES

Chapter III explores two case studies: the Tamil diaspora of Sri Lanka and the Acehese diaspora of Aceh Indonesia. Both supported insurgencies in various ways for more than two decades with mixed outcomes. Each case is analyzed to derive tentative conclusions about the role of a diaspora and its effect on insurgency movements and COIN operations.

#### A. SRI LANKA’S TAMIL DIASPORA

This section considers the role and influence of the Tamil diaspora in Sri Lanka’s conflict. The focus of the analysis is to determine the diaspora’s support and value to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the main insurgent movement in Sri Lanka. Part of the analysis is determines how the Sri Lankan government defeated the LTTE despite its perceived superiority. The case is organized into the following subsections: origin of the conflict, the players involved in the conflict, analysis of the case, and conclusion.

##### 1. Origin of the Conflict

When Ceylon—as Sri Lanka was formerly known—gained its independence in 1948, tension was already simmering between the two major ethnics groups in the country, the Sinhalese and the Tamils, “over the distribution of the resources and goods, and the ideological direction of the country.”<sup>133</sup> Even before gaining independence, the Buddhist Sinhalese resented the Hindu Tamils because the Tamil minority (12.7 percent of Sri Lanka’s population) occupied more positions in civil and military services.<sup>134</sup> The Tamils, on the other hand, were skeptical of the Sinhalese majority rule, and policies and programs

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<sup>133</sup> Ahmed S. Hashim, *When Counterinsurgency Wins: Sri Lanka’s Defeat of the Tamil Tigers* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 2.

<sup>134</sup> At that time, the Sinhalese constituted 74 percent of Sri Lanka’s 10 million population. See Hashim, 53–59.

of which were perceived to be discriminatory to minorities (and especially to the Tamil population).<sup>135</sup> Each side “felt itself to be the genuinely aggrieved party.”<sup>136</sup>

In the early 1950s, Sinhalese Buddhist cultural nationalism underwent a major revival of which Sinhalese nationalists took advantage.<sup>137</sup> By employing nationalist rhetoric to win a “large constituency of politically enfranchised Sinhalese from the lower class,” Sinhalese politicians dominated Sri Lankan politics.<sup>138</sup> Discriminatory policies included the “Sinhala Only Language Act,” which provoked an impassioned Tamil response.<sup>139</sup> The Sri Lankan government also imposed several policies to diminish the Tamils’ representation in universities, the civil service, and military organizations. By the 1960s, the nationalist government had successfully transformed the armed forces into “a Buddhist Sinhalese entity,” and the Sinhalese had monopoly control of the private and public sectors.<sup>140</sup> The resulting powerlessness of Tamil political groups and their later expulsion from the Sri Lankan parliament led to the formation of extremism.<sup>141</sup>

## 2. The Players

As mentioned earlier, the actions and roles of different players are discussed to provide a clear understanding of how they contributed to the dynamics of the insurgency and COIN in the Sri Lankan conflict. This sub-section describes the following players: insurgents, the government, and the Tamil diaspora.

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<sup>135</sup> Sylvester Perera, “The Sri Lankan Civil War: A Personal Reminiscence,” *CTX* 5, no. 4 (November 2015): 1, <https://globalecco.org/the-sri-lankan-civil-war-a-personal-reminiscence-col-sylvester-perera-sri-lankan-army>.

<sup>136</sup> According to Hashim, the Sinhalese were insecure with the Tamils and believed that “the Tamils may be a minority in Sri Lanka but there are millions of them across the Palk Strait in the state of Tamil Nadu in India—65 million to be precise. Sri Lanka, on the other hand is the only home of the Sinhalese people and Sinhala language.” See Hashim, *When Counterinsurgency Wins*, 2.

<sup>137</sup> Hashim, 66.

<sup>138</sup> Hashim, 65–67.

<sup>139</sup> Hashim, 67.

<sup>140</sup> Hashim, 71–75.

<sup>141</sup> Hashim, 82.

*a. Insurgents*

The adoption of the 1972 constitution conferred the preeminence of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, which further discriminated against Tamils as second-class citizens and pushed them to form the Tamil United Front (TUF).<sup>142</sup> The TUF, which in 1976 became the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), subscribed to the idea of “militant separatism based on the first millennium Chola Empire,” whose state symbol was the tiger.<sup>143</sup> TULF, an alliance of radical Tamil groups, promoted “Tamil Eelam,” or Tamil independent state, by means of armed struggle.<sup>144</sup> Initially, several groups claimed to stand for the revolutionary cause, but according to Paul Moorcraft, only five groups could effectively represent Tamil Eelam.<sup>145</sup> By 1980, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam became the dominant independence movement, absorbing all other revolutionary groups either through persuasion or by force.<sup>146</sup>

Velupillai Prabhakaran, or VP, founded LTTE in 1976. According to M. R. Narayan Swamy, “VP considered himself the messiah of the Tamils—and the man ordained to decide the future of the community.”<sup>147</sup> VP was passionate about the establishment of a Tamil nation and the need to secede from Sinhalese-majority Sri Lanka. Secession, apparently in VP’s view, could only be achieved through the “primacy of the gun.”<sup>148</sup> He was ruthless; anyone who disagreed with him was considered an opponent to the Tamils’ cause, branded a traitor, and condemned to death.<sup>149</sup> But despite VP’s violent

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<sup>142</sup> Paul L. Moorcraft, *Total Destruction of the Tamil Tigers: The Rare Victory of Sri Lanka’s Long War* (Barnsley, South Yorkshire: Pen & Sword Military, 2012), 10. See also Hashim, *When Counterinsurgency Wins*, 81.

<sup>143</sup> Moorcraft, *Total Destruction of the Tamil Tigers*, 13.

<sup>144</sup> Moorcraft, 13.

<sup>145</sup> Moorcraft, 13.

<sup>146</sup> Moorcraft, 13.

<sup>147</sup> M. R. Narayan Swamy, *The Tiger Vanquished: LTTE’s Story* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2010), lvi.

<sup>148</sup> Narayan Swamy, lvi.

<sup>149</sup> Narayan Swamy, lvi.



nature, he transformed the LTTE from a handful of members to a formidable insurgent group. The following is Swamy's description of the LTTE during its peak:

The Tigers were unusual cocktails of classical insurgency and sheer terror. Besides being the only insurgent outfit to own a shipping fleet, the LTTE had its own army, a small but lethal naval wing, a nascent air force, artillery units, a feared intelligence wing, a police force, a clandestine radio, and an efficient logistic division to buy and ferry war material from around the world in the most secretive and sophisticated manner. The group [']s tentacle [s] reached almost every country. . . . The LTTE's ability to kill any person, in the military or the government, inevitably dented the state's counterinsurgency, making Prabhakaran look exactly like his childhood comic hero—the Phantom, the masked jungle hero who could never be vanquished.<sup>150</sup>

**b. Government**

As the LTTE emerged, the Sri Lankan Armed Forces, although they had experience in COIN, were ill equipped to fight the threat.<sup>151</sup> Initially, the Sri Lankan military employed a conventional strategy, focusing on a single objective that produced limited success.<sup>152</sup> From 1976, several Sri Lankan governments tried different means to destroy the LTTE, which had become more resilient over time. When Mahinda Rajapaksa assumed the presidency in 2005, the LTTE destruction became his government's foremost objective.<sup>153</sup>

The Sri Lankan government during the Rajapaksa term displayed political will unlike the earlier governments, which were described as “weak, indecisive and disunited vis-à-vis the LTTE.”<sup>154</sup> Moreover, the country actively pursued regional and international engagement to seek assistance in its campaign against the LTTE.<sup>155</sup> Rajapaksa also endeavored to win the population's participation and support, deemed crucial in COIN

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<sup>150</sup> Narayan Swamy, xix.

<sup>151</sup> Moorcraft, *Total Destruction of the Tamil Tigers*, 17.

<sup>152</sup> Perera, “The Sri Lankan Civil War,” 2.

<sup>153</sup> Narayan Swamy, *The Tiger Vanquished*, xvii.

<sup>154</sup> Hashim, *When Counterinsurgency Wins*, 180.

<sup>155</sup> Hashim, 183.

efforts. The Sri Lankan Armed Forces undertook a massive restructuring across the board that assisted them in covering multiple fronts along different axes successively and helped them adopt more innovative and flexible tactics.<sup>156</sup> All these changes were made during the Rajapaksa government and facilitated the defeat of the LTTE militarily.

*c. Tamil Diaspora*

The outward migration of Sri Lankan Tamils started during the British occupation due to economic opportunities, especially for Tamils who knew how to speak English, who were hired predominately to work in the government of the Federated Malay States.<sup>157</sup> But as the new government of Sri Lanka exhibited preferential treatment toward the Sinhalese, Tamils began migrating to the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and the United States in 1956.<sup>158</sup> More Tamil migrations followed as violence and conflict escalated. It was estimated that “one-third of the Sri Lankan Tamil community of 3 million lived outside Sri Lanka” in 2002.<sup>159</sup>

**3. Analysis of the Case**

This section analyzes the case of the Tamil diaspora using the political process and diamond models presented in the previous chapter. The political process model helps to determine how the Tamil diaspora formed and why it helped the LTTE in its struggle against the Sri Lankan government. The diamond model, on the other hand, aids in assessing the strategy of the two opposing forces to determine the efficiency and influence of the diaspora support.

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<sup>156</sup> Hashim, 185.

<sup>157</sup> C. Christine Fair, “The Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora: Sustaining Conflict and Pushing for Peace,” in *Diasporas in Conflict: Peace-Makers or Peace-Wreckers?*, ed. Hazel Smith and Paul B. Stares (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2007), 179.

<sup>158</sup> Fair, 179.

<sup>159</sup> Fair, 179.

*a. The Tamil Diaspora's Role Using the Political Process Model*

The ethnic persecution and conflict in Sri Lanka were the social changes that compelled Tamils to migrate. According to Christine Fair, those who left the country during these disruptive events were highly politicized.<sup>160</sup> Once settled, as in the case of Western countries, they possessed political opportunities mostly absent in their home country, such as freedom of expression and anti-discrimination laws.<sup>161</sup> These inspired the Tamil diaspora to engage in political activities, such as publishing, organizing, lobbying, and fundraising, all of which were impermissible for ethnic Tamils in Sri Lanka.

Living in democratic societies also offered them free and safe spaces to become involved in Sri Lanka's armed struggle. It also helped them to establish organizations, networks, and fundraising activities to bolster the LTTE's domestic and international operations. Some organizations, based in cyberspace, promoted transnational Tamil identity and revealed the deplorable conditions confronting Sri Lankan Tamils.<sup>162</sup>

The common experience of the Tamil diaspora as victims and its aspiration for Tamil Eelam were reframed by the LTTE to develop linkages and sympathy. The LTTE asserted that its efforts were "the only way to achieve autonomy and security for the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora."<sup>163</sup> For these reasons, the Tamil diaspora established organizations that not only catered to growing Tamil refugee populations but also supported LTTE operations, including economic, political, military, and socio-cultural aid. The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora contributed \$60 million annually, which funded 90 percent of the LTTE's international military procurement as well as maintained offices and activities worldwide.<sup>164</sup> The LTTE utilized diaspora organizations for propaganda and publicity to influence political and lobby groups in host governments to sympathize with

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<sup>160</sup> Fair, 180.

<sup>161</sup> Fair, 175.

<sup>162</sup> Fair, 180.

<sup>163</sup> Fair, 182.

<sup>164</sup> Fair, 181–82.

Tamil rights issues and criticize Sri Lankan government abuses.<sup>165</sup> Financial contributions from the diaspora also helped the LTTE procure war materials needed to fight the Sri Lankan government. The Tamil diaspora communities continuously promoted Sri Lankan Tamil socio-cultural concerns to rekindle their shared political aspiration toward Tamil Eelam.<sup>166</sup> According to Fair, these contributions further escalated the conflict in Sri Lanka.<sup>167</sup>

***b. Analyzing the Strategy Using McCormick's Diamond Model***

This sub-section uses McCormick's diamond model to examine the strategies of the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE to determine the reasons behind the defeat of the once seemingly indestructible Tamil Tigers. Another focus of the analysis is to determine the relevance of the Tamil diaspora's support of the LTTE.

**(1) Strategy 1: Gain Population Support**

Over the years of fighting and violence in Sri Lanka, the public developed war-weariness, especially with rising casualties. The Rajapaksa government, before launching offensive operations against the LTTE in 2006, secured first the full support of the Sinhalese by presenting the notion of victory through propaganda. Population support was vital in conducting a war, especially when massive recruitment and mobilization were required.

The LTTE, on the other hand, failed to seek the support of the remaining Tamil population in Sri Lanka. In desperation for recruits to augment their dwindling combatants, the LTTE implemented forced conscription and abducted minors, especially those orphaned in the 2004 tsunami catastrophe.<sup>168</sup> The LTTE's terror tactics and violent

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<sup>165</sup> Fair, 184.

<sup>166</sup> Fair, 186.

<sup>167</sup> Fair, 181.

<sup>168</sup> Narayan Swamy, *The Tiger Vanquished*, xlv.

activities alienated them from the population. And, according to Swamy, the insurgents' actions were like the LTTE declaring war on the Tamil people.<sup>169</sup>

(2) Strategy 2: Disrupt the Opponent's Bid for Population Support

In 2004, Vinayagamurthy Muralitharan, widely known as Karuna, the LTTE's longest serving regional commander, broke away from the group "over long-simmering frustration with the movement's inequitable treatment of Sri Lanka's eastern Tamils."<sup>170</sup> Karuna's defection became a coup for the Sri Lankan government, which took the defector together with his loyal troops under its protection. The defector's knowledge proved invaluable in defeating the LTTE. Moreover, Karuna's surrender disrupted the LTTE's influence in the east, greatly favoring Sri Lanka's armed forces. The LTTE's efforts in this strategy encouraged the sympathetic Tamil media not to report the group's atrocities as a means of improving public perception.

(3) Strategy 3: Direct Action against the Opponent

When the Sri Lankan government went on offensive in 2006, they were totally prepared. The size of the Sri Lankan Armed Forces was increased to support the objective of clearing every territory of the LTTE. Military equipment essential for the strategy was procured. Command and coordination, including intelligence, were also improved. The restructuring, revitalization, and innovation of the Sri Lanka Armed Forces proved effective because, during the offensive operations, "the LTTE started losing one ship after another and suffered unprecedented battlefield reverses."<sup>171</sup>

The LTTE, on the other hand, failed to notice the development of the Sri Lankan Armed Forces, causing the degradation of its situational awareness.<sup>172</sup> This intelligence failure proved detrimental for the LTTE as it led them to be overconfident. According to Perera, the LTTE adopted a strategy that "shifted to an open offensive posture using semi-

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<sup>169</sup> Narayan Swamy, xliv.

<sup>170</sup> Fair, "The Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora," 173.

<sup>171</sup> Narayan Swamy, *The Tiger Vanquished*, 1.

<sup>172</sup> Hashim, *When Counterinsurgency Wins*, 193.

conventional tactics, such as establishing camps and bases and holding defensive lines.”<sup>173</sup> Moreover, by engaging in a war of attrition, the LTTE’s declining combatants were no match for the Sri Lankan military.

(4) Strategy 4: Disrupt the Opponent’s Link to International Actors

The Sri Lankan government admitted its ineffectiveness in countering the LTTE transnational organization.<sup>174</sup> The government’s predominant effort for this strategy was to keep India out of the war, as India’s state of Tamil Nadu had millions of Tamils, whose politicians were anti-Colombo and members of the coalition government.<sup>175</sup> Colombo established “direct, high-level channels of communications” to regularly apprise New Delhi of their actions.<sup>176</sup>

There is no evidence that the LTTE attempted to influence any international actors to withdraw support from the Sri Lankan government. However, during the offensive, some Western countries were unwilling to support Sri Lanka for humanitarian considerations.<sup>177</sup>

(5) Strategy 5: Establish Link with International Actors

The Rajapaksa government actively sought to establish ties with international actors to gain assistance in crushing the LTTE, and several countries that responded greatly contributed to the success of the Sri Lankan campaign. However, President Rajapaksa adopted a policy of disregarding and not compromising with any domestic or international pressure during the war.<sup>178</sup> For him, capitulating to any external pressure would interrupt the operational tempo and provide breathing space for the LTTE.

The LTTE lobbying efforts, according to Fair, “were extremely successful in cultivating states support for its movements in state capitals throughout the world during

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<sup>173</sup> Perera, “The Sri Lankan Civil War,” 11.

<sup>174</sup> Hashim, *When Counterinsurgency Wins*, 183.

<sup>175</sup> Hashim, 184.

<sup>176</sup> Hashim, 184.

<sup>177</sup> Hashim, 184.

<sup>178</sup> Moorcraft, *Total Destruction of the Tamil Tigers*, 78.

1980s and 1990s. Up until about 2001.”<sup>179</sup> Despite the LTTE’s global network of offices and cells across at least 40 countries, these foreign governments had minimal relations or leverage in Sri Lanka’s political and domestic affairs.<sup>180</sup> Also, the enforcement of anti-terrorism measures in the aftermath of 9/11 had a negative impact on the LTTE’s international relations activity for being labeled a foreign terrorist organization.<sup>181</sup>

#### 4. Conclusions

The principal role of the Tamil diaspora in the LTTE’s strategy was foremost in providing financial resources, which allowed the LTTE to procure material and equipment, giving it an initial military advantage over the Sri Lankan government that lasted for more than 30 years. As Moorcraft has noted about the LTTE: “no other insurgency developed such extensive capabilities and over such a long period, relying largely on its own initiatives.”<sup>182</sup> Aside from the financial assistance, the diaspora network also helped the LTTE establish international diplomacy and linkages with different countries and international organizations.

Overreliance on the Tamil diaspora’s financial support led the LTTE to neglect the population, which had political and military implications for its strategy. Alienating itself from the remaining Tamil population constrained the LTTE to fight conventionally, instead of unconventionally. If the LTTE had access to the sanctuary and social support in Sri Lanka, it could have conducted alternative indirect defense strategies, which may have proved beneficial. As Arreguin-Toft notes, “When strong actors attack with a direct strategy and weak actors defend using an indirect strategy, all things being equal, weak actors should win.”<sup>183</sup> He further emphasizes that “in asymmetric conflicts, delay favors the weak.”<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Fair, “The Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora,” 183.

<sup>180</sup> Fair, 181. See also Hashim, *When Counterinsurgency Wins*, 183.

<sup>181</sup> Fair, “The Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora,” 185.

<sup>182</sup> Moorcraft, *Total Destruction of the Tamil Tigers*, 106.

<sup>183</sup> Arreguin-Toft, “How the Weak Win Wars,” 108.

<sup>184</sup> Arreguin-Toft, 107.

The efficacy of the diaspora’s influence—economic, political, and military—depends on the degree of linkages and leverage its host countries or sympathetic international actors have over the home country. Countries and international organizations sympathetic to the Tamil diaspora were not critical of the Sri Lankan military campaign against the LTTE. As Moorcraft emphasized, “The US, France and the UK could exert diplomatic pressure on Sri Lanka, but only India could directly affect the military campaign.”<sup>185</sup> To be effective, diaspora support should be incorporated into the overall strategy.

## **B. INDONESIAN ACEHNESE DIASPORA**

This section studies the role and influence of the Acehese diaspora in the Indonesian conflict. The focus of the analysis is determining the value of the diaspora’s support to the Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM), or Free Aceh Movement, the main insurgent movement in Aceh, Indonesia. Part of the analysis determines how the diaspora helped in promoting a peaceful resolution to the conflict. The case is organized into the following subsections: origin of the conflict, the players involved in the conflict, analysis of the case, and conclusion.

### **1. Origin of the Conflict**

The historical context of the conflict emanated from the failure to meet the promise made by President Sukarno, the first president of Indonesia, to bestow special status on Aceh for “its contribution to the struggle for Indonesian Independence.”<sup>186</sup> The conflict was also linked to “Aceh’s reputation for its restive and Islamic militancy,” which declared the establishment of an Aceh Islamic State to protect Aceh’s regional and ethnic character from the government’s perceived partiality to the Indonesian Communist Party in 1953.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Moorcraft, *Total Destruction of the Tamil Tigers*, 79.

<sup>186</sup> Kirsten Schulze, “The Free Aceh Movement (GAM): Anatomy of a Separatist Organization,” *Policy Studies*, no. 2 (2004): vii.

<sup>187</sup> Geoffrey Robinson, “Rawan Is as Rawan Does: The Origin of Disorder in New Order Aceh,” in *Violence and the State in Suharto’s Indonesia*, ed. Benedict R. O’G Anderson, Studies on Southeast Asia, no. 30 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 2001), 215. See also Schulze, “The Free Aceh Movement (GAM),” vii.



Aceh in the 1960s through the early 1970s had no economic bearing in Indonesia, so it was left alone by the central government. But it all changed when liquid natural gas production started in the mid-1970s: “Aceh became a magnet for the greedy and the powerful, and therefore a site of economic and political contention.”<sup>188</sup> Even Aceh was given a minor concession as “special region status”—the unrest still continued because the Acehnese perceived themselves as marginalized and not benefitting economically from the major development projects in Aceh.<sup>189</sup> The mixture of these grievances and conditions led to the establishment of the Free Aceh Movement.

## 2. The Players

This sub-section discusses the actions and roles of different players to provide a clear understanding of how they contributed to the dynamics of the insurgency and COIN in the Indonesian conflict. The players include the insurgents, the government, and the Acehnese diaspora.

### a. *Insurgents*

The GAM was established by Hasan di Tiro as the Aceh-Sumatra National Liberation Front in October 1976.<sup>190</sup> The movement, according to Geoffrey Robinson, “demand [ed] for political and economic independence, with religious concerns mentioned only in passing.”<sup>191</sup> The movement was composed initially of 70 well-educated men who were close associates of di Tiro.<sup>192</sup> After its inception, the GAM was easily crushed by Indonesian COIN operations. By 1979, most of its leaders fled into exile, and its members either were imprisoned or went underground.<sup>193</sup> From then on, Hasan di Tiro continued the Free Aceh Movement while in exile.

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<sup>188</sup> Robinson, “Rawan Is as Rawan Does,” 225.

<sup>189</sup> “Free Aceh Movement,” Global Security, accessed September 28, 2019, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/aceh.htm>.

<sup>190</sup> Schulze, “The Free Aceh Movement (GAM),” 4.

<sup>191</sup> Robinson, “Rawan Is as Rawan Does,” 218–19.

<sup>192</sup> Schulze, “The Free Aceh Movement (GAM),” 4.

<sup>193</sup> Schulze, 4.

In 1989, the conflict renewed when hundreds of Libyan-trained GAM insurgents returned and consolidated in several areas in Aceh to train more guerillas.<sup>194</sup> But, in 1991, the GAM was defeated once more by Indonesian armed forces; however, significant numbers of its members escaped to Malaysia where they found safe haven and support from the Aceh diaspora.<sup>195</sup> GAM commanders established their operational command in Malaysia until 1998 and regularly traveled to Aceh to supervise the movement and keep it alive.<sup>196</sup> After the fall of Suharto in 1998, the conflict was suspended because Indonesian forces withdrew and lifted military operations for a year.<sup>197</sup> During pauses between battles, the GAM “recruited, trained, expanded and consolidated its position.”<sup>198</sup> After series of hard bargaining, in February 2005, the GAM announced that it would set aside the goal for independence and accept the self-government solution for Aceh within the Indonesian state.<sup>199</sup> In August that year, the Helenski Memorandum of Agreement was signed, ending the conflict in Aceh.

**b. Government**

During the authoritarian regime of President Suharto, the government implemented the “New Order,” a policy intended to improve the Indonesian economy, and one of its programs was to develop domestic oil production.<sup>200</sup> However, the expected economic benefits from this policy did not reach Aceh due to corruption, favoritism, and the centralized economic decision-making of the government, which further reinforced

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<sup>194</sup> Schulze, 4.

<sup>195</sup> Schulze, 5.

<sup>196</sup> Schulze, 31.

<sup>197</sup> Damien Kingsbury, “The Free Aceh Movement: Islam and Democratisation,” *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 37, no. 2 (2007): 171, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00472330701253759>.

<sup>198</sup> Schulze, “The Free Aceh Movement (GAM),” 49.

<sup>199</sup> Edward Aspinall, “The Helsinki Agreement: A More Promising Basis for Peace in Aceh?,” East-West Center, December 15, 2005, <https://www.eastwestcenter.org/publications/helsinki-agreement-more-promising-basis-peace-aceh>.

<sup>200</sup> “Suharto,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed October 4, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/print/article/572060>.

Acehnese feelings of marginalization and neglect.<sup>201</sup> And when the GAM was organized, the Indonesian government and military responded by sending thousands of troops to hunt down the handful of insurgents to ensure stability in the area, particularly near oil production facilities.<sup>202</sup> People in Aceh experienced “the hard edge of the regime” because Indonesian COIN was marked by terror and the forced mobilization of civilians.<sup>203</sup> Such military and economic practices continued unabated even after the demise of the New Order in 1998.

As the new government was being established, violent conflict continued in Aceh, and at the same time, negotiations with the GAM were held in 2000 to pacify the movement, but they failed.<sup>204</sup> A peace initiative brokered by the Henri Dunant Center persuaded the government and the rebels to sign a peace agreement in 2002. After a short ceasefire, conflict resumed in 2003—until the GAM signed the Helsinki Memorandum of Agreement with the Indonesian government.

*c. The Acehnese Diaspora*

Acehnese migrants, according to Antje Missbach, were already working and living in Malaysia before di Tiro established the GAM in 1976.<sup>205</sup> The surge of Acehnese diaspora occurred in 1980s, in response to increasing violence and a lack of economic opportunities.<sup>206</sup> Life as migrants and refugees was unpleasant, and their situation became harder when economic crisis struck Malaysia in 1997.<sup>207</sup> With assistance from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, migrant Acehnese resettled in Western

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<sup>201</sup> Robinson, “Rawan Is as Rawan Does,” 222.

<sup>202</sup> Robinson, 223.

<sup>203</sup> Robinson, 225.

<sup>204</sup> Global Security, “Free Aceh Movement.”

<sup>205</sup> Missbach, “Waxing and Waning,” 1063.

<sup>206</sup> Missbach, 1063.

<sup>207</sup> Missbach, 1063.

countries.<sup>208</sup> At the height of the conflict, there were 80,000 Acehnese living overseas, representing 2.5 percent of the 4.2 million Aceh population.<sup>209</sup>

### **3. Analysis of the Case**

The case of the Acehnese diaspora is analyzed using the political process and diamond models. The political process model allows an understanding of how the Acehnese diaspora formed and why it supported the GAM against the Indonesian government. The diamond model, on the other hand, helps to assess the strategies of the two opposing forces and determine the efficiency and influence of the diaspora support.

#### ***a. The Acehnese Diaspora's Role Using the Political Process Model***

Conflicts and the absence of economic prospects compelled the Acehnese to leave Indonesia. Malaysia was the major gateway for exiles, migrants, and refugees due its proximity and existing Acehnese settlement.<sup>210</sup> Political opportunities in Malaysia were minimal, usually in the form of political meetings held during religious gatherings and social occasions. In 1988, as the Acehnese community grew, the National Assembly, or the command center, was founded in Malaysia, tasked with organizing meetings among supporters, communicating with GAM leadership exiled in Sweden, raising funds, and organizing supplies from abroad.<sup>211</sup> Di Tiro and other GAM leaders endeavored to build networks and offices in various countries while undertaking diplomatic and public relation activities without impediments from the Swedish state authority. The fall of Suharto in 1998 and the Indonesian preoccupation in East Timor presented another political opportunity for the GAM to explore other strategies to advance Acehnese aspirations.

In mobilizing resources, despite the constant threat of arrest, deportation, and maltreatment from the Malaysian authorities, Malaysia provided a safe haven from

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<sup>208</sup> GAM leadership, including di Tiro, had already fled to Sweden in the 1980s. See Missbach, "Waxing and Waning," 1064.

<sup>209</sup> Missbach, "Waxing and Waning," 1065.

<sup>210</sup> Karla S. Fallon, "Making Noise: The Transnational Politics of Aceh and East Timor" (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2009), 85, Semantic Scholar.

<sup>211</sup> Missbach, "Waxing and Waning," 1066.

Indonesian COIN operations and the freedom to pursue other political activities to meet, organize, and fundraise.<sup>212</sup> The recruits trained in Libya were all recruited from the Acehese diaspora in Malaysia. The students and activists abroad helped to expose the dismal conditions in Aceh “by organizing conferences, distributing information and establishing transnational networks,” all of which attracted the attention of international NGOs and civil societies.<sup>213</sup>

For the Acehese in exile, suffering still lingered even after leaving Aceh. Life in Malaysia was not easy, but those feelings established a sense of emotional connection and solidarity among themselves, about their perceived “community of suffering,” which helped to create the Acehese diaspora.<sup>214</sup> Antje Missbach reframes the diaspora’s grievances: “Facing massive collective pressure and deprivation, Acehese in Malaysia reacted to depend [on] themselves, but they also directed their attentions to the other source of their collective hardship—the homeland conflict.”<sup>215</sup> Western support was harnessed by framing grievances based on the “shared principles of democracy, human rights and an emphasis on a need to create political space in Aceh for a humanitarian assistance and civil society.”<sup>216</sup>

Despite the fewer Acehese compared with other diaspora around the world, they were more influential in homeland politics. The Acehese diaspora, according to Missbach, “provided moral and ideological support rather than financial and material contribution,” which was “crucial to the progress of conflict in Aceh . . . [and] in finding peaceful resolution for the conflict.”<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> Missbach, 1067.

<sup>213</sup> Missbach, 1066.

<sup>214</sup> Missbach, 1063.

<sup>215</sup> Missbach, 1064.

<sup>216</sup> Fallon, “Making Noise,” 220.

<sup>217</sup> Missbach, “Waxing and Waning,” 1065.

*b. Analyzing the Strategy*

Once again, this sub-section uses McCormick's diamond model to examine the strategy of the Indonesian government and the GAM to assess the diaspora's role behind the resolution of conflict in Aceh.

(1) Strategy 1: Gain Population Support

The Indonesian government in two instances pledged to grant special status and autonomy to Aceh to pacify and appease the Acehnese. Both instances were unsuccessful, partly due to the government's insincerity and failure to deliver on the promises. The misunderstandings during negotiations and dialogues between the two parties affected the peace talks.

The GAM had strong population support from the people of Aceh, who often looked up to GAM leadership and the Acehnese abroad as their "nursery of hope."<sup>218</sup> The Acehnese left in Indonesia expected their compatriots from abroad to seek aid in their favor.

(2) Strategy 2: Disrupt the Opponent's Bid for Population Support

The state education system assisted the government of Indonesia in influencing Acehnese support and promoted the central government's programs. The government's efforts to use schools and mass media, according to GAM leadership, were destroying Acehnese "nationality, culture, polity and national consciousness."<sup>219</sup>

The abuses perpetrated by Indonesian COIN efforts facilitated an increase in GAM membership, whose motivation for joining was to seek revenge and justice. Other tactics to discredit the government included supplanting the local government structure by coercing and recruiting civil servants into the GAM-controlled administration. By 2001, the GAM had influenced or controlled 80 percent of Aceh villages.<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> Missbach, 1070.

<sup>219</sup> Schulze, "The Free Aceh Movement (GAM)," 36.

<sup>220</sup> Schulze, 35.

(3) Strategy 3: Direct Action against the Opponent

As mentioned earlier, the Indonesian armed forces responded to the security threats with terror and violence by deploying overwhelming forces. They also compelled civilians to participate in COIN operations and be part of the military's spy network. These methods only promoted a continued cycle of violence and sowed disorder in Aceh, which created resentment toward the government and sympathy for the insurgents.

Even though the GAM was successively beaten in its attempts to wrest military control, it aimed to make it harder for the Indonesian government to control Aceh, bled the government financially, and kept the movement alive. GAM commanders subscribed to the guerilla warfare strategy of Mao Tse Tung. This was emphasized by a GAM fighter who said, "We don't have to win the war, we only have to stop them from winning"—expressing a classic case of protracted warfare.<sup>221</sup>

(4) Strategy 4: Disrupt the Opponent's Link to International Actors

The Indonesian government's effort for this strategy was preventing the GAM from getting international media mileage by enforcing restrictions on foreign media and NGO access. By blocking Aceh from the outside world, the GAM was denied the information and propaganda needed to further its cause in the international community.

The GAM, on the other hand, forged closer interactions with human rights organizations, particularly friendly local and foreign NGOs. These organizations assisted the movement's public relations strategy by providing awareness and validating the narratives of conflict, which garnered international sympathy and support. Other organizations in the Acehnese diaspora complemented the GAM's activities, organizing groups that raised awareness regarding the conditions in Aceh, petitioning politicians in Washington, initiating press statements, and organizing rallies as well as international conferences. These efforts influenced international actors to pressure the Indonesian government for reform and change its military policy in Aceh.

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<sup>221</sup> Schulze, 34.

(5) Strategy 5: Establish a Link with International Actors

The government of Indonesia maintained its normal diplomatic relationship with other countries as conflict in Aceh developed. Its COIN operation was unimpeded from any external pressure despite the reported violence, except in 1998 when the International Monetary Fund imposed reforms toward democratization that affected the Indonesian policy in Aceh.

The GAM's leadership was promoting the strategy of internationalization, whereby it sought out the international community to communicate the movement's domestic and international legitimacy and presented itself as the true representative of the Acehnese people.<sup>222</sup> The strategy aimed to win the international community's involvement, oblige it to take on the Acehnese cause, and condemn Indonesia's policy in Aceh. The end state was to pressure Indonesian policy externally.

#### 4. Conclusions

The Acehnese diaspora, although smaller in number than the Tamil diaspora, provided support for the Free Aceh Movement as well as moral, political, technical, financial, and military support.<sup>223</sup> The Acehnese diaspora and the GAM leadership provided moral support because they were viewed in Aceh as a beacon of hope, who the people believed would rescue and liberate them from their economic and political sufferings. Through the strategy of internationalization, the diaspora harnessed the political support of international governments and NGOs, which helped them pressure the Indonesian government to loosen its policy in Aceh, thus strengthening the movement's legitimacy both domestically and internationally. While in exile, GAM leadership was exposed to various ideas and developments, which it employed in the movement. One notable technological innovation the GAM proudly adopted was the use of SMS in leading

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<sup>222</sup> For Tarrow, "Internationalization has sometimes been defined as deepening interstate relation [s] and sometimes as international economic integration." Sidney G. Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism*, Cambridge Studies in Contentious Politics (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 8. See Schulze, "The Free Aceh Movement (GAM)," 53.

<sup>223</sup> Galula termed this assistance "outside support." See Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare Theory and Practice*, 25–26.



a war.<sup>224</sup> The financial support coming from the Acehnese diaspora was one of the GAM's key sources of funding, which helped it access arms networks and smuggle firearms directly into Aceh.<sup>225</sup> This external support coming from the diaspora contributed to the GAM's resiliency.

The GAM's safe haven in Malaysia constrained Indonesian COIN operations. David Galula in his "border doctrine" states that "the border areas are a permanent source of weakness for the counterinsurgent . . . usually exploited by the insurgents . . . often able to escape pressure or, at least, to complicate operations for his opponent."<sup>226</sup> The border doctrine between nation-states further complicated the situation in Aceh. The Indonesian COIN was helpless against GAM fighters or diaspora members, who continued their political protests and activities from Malaysia.

The GAM kept the war in Aceh going for more than two decades with the help of the diaspora. The apparent domestic conflict in Aceh had a feature of international identity with the participation of the Acehnese diaspora, which led to difficult, costly COIN operations on the part of the Indonesian government. GAM leadership, through diaspora support, helped establish networks and links that proved beneficial in pressuring Indonesia to pursue the peace process and elevating the GAM's cause in the international community. This worldwide exposure led the GAM leadership to reframe its grievances and advocacies to be more acceptable in Western societies, attracting more supporters who condemned Indonesia's Aceh policy.

Even though the Acehnese diaspora helped prolong the conflict, it was also the main factor in pushing the GAM to a peace settlement. The case of the Aceh conflict shows that a diaspora can also be used to make peace.

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<sup>224</sup> Missbach, "Waxing and Waning," 1057.

<sup>225</sup> Schulze, "The Free Aceh Movement (GAM)," 33.

<sup>226</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare Theory and Practice*, 23.

### **C. CONCLUSIONS ON THE ROLES OF DIASPORA**

The two case studies illustrate that a diaspora can provide financial, moral, political, technical, or military support for an insurgent movement. Converting such external support into a strategy can transform an insurgent movement into a potent force. In both cases, insurgents supported by the diaspora made COIN operations difficult and costly, prolonging the conflict and, in some cases, making it more violent.

Diaspora participation in the insurgency movement transforms the conflict from the domestic to the international level because a diaspora possesses a transnational identity. State power is limited to the territory it controls and rules, which imposes constraints on any COIN efforts; thus, its effectiveness is reduced when dealing with transnational actors who operate beyond the border.

The diaspora's support of an insurgency does not guarantee that an insurgency will succeed. The potential influence of a diaspora or its network depends on the strength of its ties to its host country or the international community. The home country's vulnerability to a diaspora's influence also depends on the degree of linkages—economic, social, or transnational, for example—a host country can leverage. To neutralize the effect of a diaspora's support of the insurgency, a government strategy that attracts diaspora support while disrupting the insurgency from gaining diaspora backing must be implemented.

The ideas developed on the roles of a diaspora provide a basis for analyzing the Filipino diaspora in the succeeding chapter. The focus of the analysis is on the supporting roles it provides to the communist movement and its influence in COIN. The next chapter evaluates the impact of the Filipino diaspora's support on the insurgents' strategy and investigates whether the government has a counter-strategy to mitigate its effect.

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## IV. THE ROLE OF THE PHILIPPINE DIASPORA IN INSURGENCY AND COUNTERINSURGENCY

This chapter discusses the history and formation of the Filipino diaspora and International Solidarity Works. Then, it explains how the Filipino diaspora is used to pursue the Philippine communist strategy. Moreover, the diamond model helps to assess the Philippine government's Executive Order 70—the “National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict”—and to draw conclusions.

### A. THE FORMATION OF THE FILIPINO DIASPORA

Filipino migrations have spanned Philippine history, the sojourn beginning even before the founding of the republic in 1946. Robert Lawless describes Philippine migration in periods and waves: the prehistoric period, the Spanish period, the American period with four waves, and the global periods.<sup>227</sup> At present, no actual documentation of Filipino migration during the prehistoric period exists, but it is highly probable that migration happened before Spain's arrival. The existence of the Sultanate of Sulu, with its domain extending up to North Borneo, is a convincing reason for migration to nearby territories.

During the Spanish colonial period, Filipinos were introduced to other civilizations, particularly those under Spanish rule. Accordingly, early Filipinos, mostly seaman from Spanish galleons, immigrated along Spain's trading and exploration route, including Guam and Mexico.<sup>228</sup> Filipinos coming from the elite class also migrated to Spain and other parts of Europe to pursue higher education.<sup>229</sup> Since there was no orderly documentation of migration during the period, the possibility of migrating Filipino seafarers and students to Europe continued even after Spain ceded the Philippines to the United States.

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<sup>227</sup> Robert Lawless, “Philippine Diaspora,” in *Encyclopedia of Diasporas: Immigrant and Refugee Cultures around the World*, ed. Melvin Ember, Carol R. Ember, and Ian Skoggard (Boston: Springer, 2005), 244, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-29904-4\\_24](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-29904-4_24).

<sup>228</sup> Lawless, 245.

<sup>229</sup> Filomeno V. Aguilar Jr., “Is the Filipino Diaspora a Diaspora?,” *Critical Asian Studies* 47, no. 3 (July 2015): 448, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14672715.2015.1057392>.

When the Philippines became an American colony in 1902, reliable documentation of Filipino migration started.<sup>230</sup> The first wave of Filipino migration to the United States, mostly farm workers and students, occurred from 1908 to 1934.<sup>231</sup> Since the Philippines possessed colonial status, these early migrants could freely enter and leave the United States but could not gain citizenship.<sup>232</sup> The second wave of migration happened from 1946 to 1965; they were the first migrants granted naturalized U.S. citizenship.<sup>233</sup> The third wave occurred from 1966 to 1975 when Filipino immigrants, mostly professionals, brought their families along with them.<sup>234</sup> Filipinos who migrated to the United States after the Immigration Act of 1990 constitute the fourth wave of migration.<sup>235</sup>

The global period of Filipino migration commenced in 1974 when President Marcos enacted the Labor Export Policy under Presidential Degree 442.<sup>236</sup> The program was initiated as a stopgap to address the economic crisis besetting the country. E. San Juan Jr. explains that the Philippines had been experiencing “severe deterioration in the lives of 80% of Filipinos, rising unemployment and serious foreign debt problems,” which led the government to initiate the “warm body export.”<sup>237</sup> Succeeding Philippine governments continued the program whereby, through the years, migrant remittances had become vital in keeping the country’s economic condition afloat. The significant contribution of Filipino

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<sup>230</sup> Lawless, “Philippine Diaspora,” 245.

<sup>231</sup> Lawless, 245.

<sup>232</sup> Maruja M. B. Asis, “The Philippines: Beyond Labor Migration, toward Development and (Possibly) Return,” *Migration Policy*, July 11, 2017, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/philippines-beyond-labor-migration-toward-development-and-possibly-return>.

<sup>233</sup> Lawless, “Philippine Diaspora,” 245.

<sup>234</sup> Aguilar, “Is the Filipino Diaspora a Diaspora?,” 448. See also Lawless, “Philippine Diaspora,” 246.

<sup>235</sup> “Enacted on November 29, 1990, the Immigration Act of 1990 was an amendment in United States immigration law that increased the number of legal immigrants that entered into the United States every year. The act revised previous United States immigration law that prohibited the granting of visas to immigrants from certain countries.” “Immigration Act of 1990,” *Immigration Laws*, accessed November 16, 2019, <https://immigration.laws.com/immigration-act-of-1990>. See also Lawless, “Philippine Diaspora,” 246.

<sup>236</sup> E. San Juan, “Overseas Filipino Workers: The Making of an Asian-Pacific Diaspora,” *Global South* 3, no. 2 (2009): 102, <https://doi.org/10.2979/GSO.2009.3.2.99>.

<sup>237</sup> San Juan, 102.

migrant workers to the economy earned praises from the Philippine government, which recognized them as modern-day heroes.

With the continuous migration of Filipinos around the world, questions emerged: Could they be considered a diaspora? Was there a Filipino diaspora? The word *diaspora* had recently become a catchall term to describe an overseas migrant community, according to David Camroux.<sup>238</sup> Camroux cited Michael Bruneau who rejects the notion of a Filipino diaspora and instead “prefers to categorize overseas Filipinos as a ‘transnational community,’ for these communities ‘do not possess the historic depth of diasporas’ and significantly, because they are ‘linked to a (sending) state which attempts to use its emigrants in order to become a transnational state.’”<sup>239</sup> Filomeno Aguilar, on the other hand, insists on the presence of a diaspora and argues that “the global migration of Filipino labor is amenable to the construction of a diaspora” and further reframes them as “a labor diaspora.”<sup>240</sup> Camroux concludes that Filipino communities abroad demonstrate the many attributes of a diaspora, although in “diffuse and diluted forms.”<sup>241</sup> The existence of the Filipino diaspora was resolved when the authoritative *Encyclopedia of Diasporas: Immigrant and Refugee Cultures around the World*, published in 2005, included Filipino migrants on the list. This makes the Filipino diaspora, according to Aguilar, “the newest diasporic community in the whole world.”<sup>242</sup>

The Philippine government has three categories for the more than 10 million Filipino migrants: permanent, temporary, and irregular.<sup>243</sup> Permanent migrants are Filipinos who have taken the citizenship or naturalized in their host country.<sup>244</sup> They constitute the 4.9 million Filipinos who settled primarily in the United States, Canada,

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<sup>238</sup> David Camroux, “Nationalizing Transnationalism? The Philippine State and the Filipino Diaspora,” *Les Études du CERI*, no. 152 (December 2008), 8, <http://sciencespo.fr/ceri/en/content/nationalizing-transnationalism-philippine-state-and-filipino-diaspora>.

<sup>239</sup> Camroux, 8.

<sup>240</sup> Aguilar, “Is the Filipino Diaspora a Diaspora?,” 456–57.

<sup>241</sup> Camroux, “Nationalizing Transnationalism?,” 23.

<sup>242</sup> San Juan, “Overseas Filipino Workers,” 116.

<sup>243</sup> Asis, “The Philippines.”

<sup>244</sup> Camroux, “Nationalizing Transnationalism?,” 12.

European countries (a small percentage), Australia, and New Zealand—64 percent of these are in the United States.<sup>245</sup> Temporary migrants are those with fixed contract work who have no chance of gaining nationality in their host countries.<sup>246</sup> These migrants include “land based and sea-based Filipino workers, intracompany transferees, students, trainees, entrepreneurs, businessmen, traders and others whose stay abroad is six month or more.”<sup>247</sup> They total 4.2 million, mostly in the Middle East, with Saudi Arabia accommodating one million OFWs.<sup>248</sup> Irregular migrants are undocumented Filipinos or those without work permits or valid residence abroad.<sup>249</sup> Based on one estimate, there are 1.2 million illegal migrants, and 10 percent are either victims of illegal recruitment or human trafficking.<sup>250</sup>

Improving one’s economic condition is the primary reason for Filipinos to migrate. As Aguilar underscores, “The major dispersals of population from the Philippines have been mainly of relatively low-wage labor. . . It is not abject poverty from which most labor migrants are fleeing; rather, their global movements are driven by desires for upward social mobility that are constrained by Philippine social structure.”<sup>251</sup> The OFWs’ decision to work abroad is motivated by their aspiration to provide their families a brighter future, which also benefits the country from the remittances they send back. This aspiration for their families’ future tend to make the Filipino diaspora non-politicized, unlike other diasporas who have been forced to depart their country due to ethnic conflict or violence. The Filipino diaspora is different, according San Juan, because “Filipinos identification is not with a fully defined nation but with regions, localities and communities of languages and traditions.”<sup>252</sup> Lawless also articulates this non-politicized status of OFWs, who are

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<sup>245</sup> Asis, “The Philippines.” See also Camroux, “Nationalizing Transnationalism?,” 12.

<sup>246</sup> Camroux, “Nationalizing Transnationalism?,” 12.

<sup>247</sup> Asis, “The Philippines.”

<sup>248</sup> Asis. See also Camroux, “Nationalizing Transnationalism?,” 12.

<sup>249</sup> Asis, “The Philippines.”

<sup>250</sup> Asis. See also Camroux, “Nationalizing Transnationalism?,” 14.

<sup>251</sup> Aguilar, “Is the Filipino Diaspora a Diaspora?,” 449–51.

<sup>252</sup> San Juan, “Overseas Filipino Workers,” 116.

called *balikbayan* when they return to the Philippines. He further explains by quoting Rafael, who points out that, “The term joins the Tagalog words *balik* (to return) and *bayan* (town, at least from the late nineteenth century on, or nation). As a *balikbayan*, one’s relationship to the Philippines is portrayed as a sentimental attachment to one’s hometown, extended family, and ethnic group rather than one’s loyalty to the nation-state.”<sup>253</sup>

## B. HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY WORKS

As mentioned earlier, the economic crisis experienced by the Philippines was a disruptive event in the early 1970s, forcing the government to implement the Labor Export Policy. This policy provided opportunities not only for Filipinos who dreamed of greener pastures abroad but especially for those communist cadres trying to escape the government’s ongoing COIN campaign. In 1976, high-ranking members of the NDF, Luis Jalandoni and Consuelo Ledesma, became “the first Filipino political refugees in the Netherlands.”<sup>254</sup>

Although there were very few Filipino migrants in the Netherlands, there was an existing organization known as the Philippine Group Netherlands (FGN), established in 1975. The FGN was an informal group in which members discussed Philippine situations on a weekly basis and served as a platform to inform the Dutch public about their analysis.<sup>255</sup> By joining the FGN, Jalandoni and Ledesma acquired a base of support and subsequently established the NDF’s international office in Utrecht. The office was co-located with the FGN, which according to Sharon Quinsaat, “led to . . . blurring the lines between FGN as an international solidarity organization and NDF as national movement . . . Activists spun through revolving door between the solidarity and diaspora

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<sup>253</sup> Lawless, “Philippine Diaspora,” 251.

<sup>254</sup> Sharon Madriaga Quinsaat, “Diaspora Activism in a Non-Traditional Country of Destination: The Case of Filipinos in the Netherlands,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 39, no. 6 (2016): 1022, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2015.1081967>.

<sup>255</sup> The FGN founders were former volunteers and missionaries during the Dutch development cooperation and missionary works in the Philippines in the mid-1960s. Accordingly, the cooperation resulted in the mobilization of Dutch citizens “into the national democratic movement adherent and sympathetic allies.” Some FGN members were also friends of the Jalandoni couple. Quinsaat, “Diaspora Activism,” 1020.



movement.”<sup>256</sup> The NDF international office also benefited politically from the Dutch government’s receptiveness to help the Philippines, being a predominantly Catholic country, on matters pertaining only to human rights, not armed struggle.<sup>257</sup>

These political opportunities were further enhanced when the FGN helped the NDF mobilize resources. The FGN’s activities shifted to organizing infrastructure devoted to acquiring material and political support for the NDF, including publicizing propaganda to the government, media, and other social movements; organizing meetings among exiled national liberation movements; and fundraising for daily operations.<sup>258</sup> FGN support to the NDF was invaluable. The FGN provided space for the NDF in the Netherlands to mobilize before the latter could seize political resources in the host society to engage in diaspora mobilization. Essentially, the FGN incubated the diaspora movements while the mobilizing structure was transplanted or replicated in host societies and while creating and anticipating favorable conditions for mobilization.<sup>259</sup>

The weak communication ties between the Philippine government and the Netherlands at that time also freed the NDF from possible diplomatic protests from Manila. Instead of focusing on the idea of armed struggle and communist ideology to overthrow the Marcos regime, the NDF’s international office reframed grievances using popular policy discourse of the time, such as human rights and democracy. The combination of political opportunities, mobilization of resources, and the reframing of ideological ideas greatly benefitted the NDF. In a session on the Philippines of the “Permanent People’s Tribunal” held in 1980, the NDF was conferred “legal status in international society. They [were] empowered . . . to enforce the rights of their peoples, by armed struggle if

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<sup>256</sup> Quinsaat, 1022.

<sup>257</sup> Quinsaat, 1021.

<sup>258</sup> Quinsaat, 1022.

<sup>259</sup> Quinsaat, 1022.

necessary.”<sup>260</sup> The declaration gave them some form of legal recognition in the international community and, at same time, a basis to conduct a people’s war in the Philippines.

The NDF’s international office in the Netherlands, once established, began operations in 1980. The office serves as the NPA’s European operations. Its international activities are referred as Overseas Revolutionary Work (ORW) and can be classified as providing both direct and indirect support.<sup>261</sup> Direct support supplies materials to the NDF, while indirect support involves activities that increase the NPA’s solidarity movement.<sup>262</sup> ORW was later recognized as the International Solidarity Works (ISW) and became the NDF’s network “in building international solidarity relations with parties, organizations, institutions and movements in so many countries” (see Figure 6).<sup>263</sup>

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<sup>260</sup> “The Permanent People’s Tribunal . . . is an internationally recognized civil society human rights tribunal functioning independently of state authorities. It applies internationally recognized human rights law and policy to cases brought before it. It does not rely on state-based legal authority but instead acts independently of states, politics and vested interests.” “What Is the Permanent Peoples’ Tribunal?,” Permanent Peoples’ Tribunal on Human Rights, Fracking and Climate Change, accessed November 16, 2019, <https://www.tribunalonfracking.org/what-is-the-permanent-peoples-tribunal/>. See also Executive Intelligence Review, “The International Support Apparatus for the NPA,” *Executive Intelligence Review* 14, no. 48, (December 1987), 53, <https://larouchepub.com/eiw/public/1987/eirv14n48-19871204/index.html>.

<sup>261</sup> Executive Intelligence Review, “The NPA’s Infiltration of Europe,” *Executive Intelligence Review* 16, no. 12 (March 1989), 44, <https://larouchepub.com/eiw/public/1989/eirv16n12-19890317/index.html>.

<sup>262</sup> Executive Intelligence Review, 44.

<sup>263</sup> Roselle Valerio, “Building Solidarity Abroad for the National Democratic Movement,” *NDFP* (blog), May 4, 2014, <https://www.ndfp.org/building-solidarity-abroad-for-the-national-democratic-movement/>.

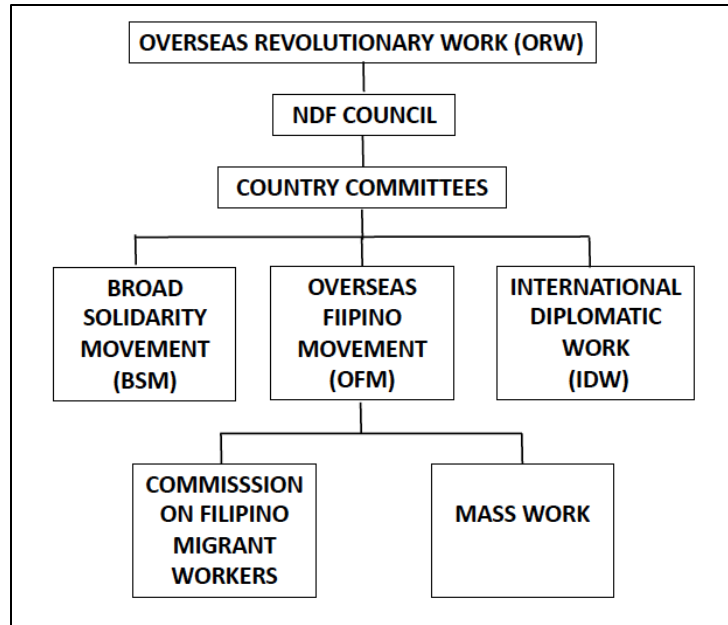


Figure 6. NDF Support Network Overseas<sup>264</sup>

ISW has three specific lines of work: the broad solidarity movement (BSM), the overseas Filipino movement, and international diplomatic work.<sup>265</sup> The activities are managed and organized by the NDF’s Council at the regional level and then coordinated with the country committees. BSM involves the activities that establish links with foreign governments, international NGOs and other organizations to gain political and material support.<sup>266</sup> To handle such activities, a Philippine People’s Committee was set up to oversee BSM development and link it with other political or terrorist organizations.<sup>267</sup>

The overseas Filipino movement involves the efforts intended to “arouse, organize, and mobilize Filipino compatriots abroad” by encouraging them to advocate for their rights

<sup>264</sup> Source: Executive Intelligence Review, “Financing a Revolution: The NPA’s European Backers,” *Executive Intelligence Review* 15, no. 50 (December 1988), <https://larouchepub.com/eiw/public/1988/eirv15n50-19881216/index.html>.

<sup>265</sup> Executive Intelligence Review, “The NPA’s Infiltration of Europe,” 44.

<sup>266</sup> Armed Forces of the Philippines, “CPP-NPA-NDF ISW.”

<sup>267</sup> Executive Intelligence Review, “The NPA’s Infiltration of Europe,” 45.

and support the revolutionary movement.<sup>268</sup> The Commission of Filipino Migrant Workers was first established in 1979 and become operational in 1981 with various coordinating centers in Europe working closely with seamen and the Filipino community.<sup>269</sup> Mass work is a different activity, designed to gain the support of Filipino migrants to assist the movement in attaining its objectives.

International diplomatic work gains recognition for the communist movement by acquiring friends with influence in high places.<sup>270</sup> Through the ISW, the NDF's trade union organization, the Kilusang Mayo Uno, or the May One movement, gained international recognition from the European Union's trade union organizations, which also provided it with indirect support.<sup>271</sup> At present, most organizations affiliated with the NDF have established either international branches or partner organizations. Another major accomplishment of the ISW is the indirect support it receives from human rights groups such as Amnesty International and the International Commission on Jurists.<sup>272</sup> Some of these international human rights organizations have been persistent vocal critics of the government's COIN and anti-drug campaigns. Through diplomatic work, the NDF "has achieved a situation in which leading European governments all but turn a blind eye to the channeling of funds to the NPA."<sup>273</sup>

By taking advantage of the Labor Export Policy, the NDF's international office enlisted NDF cadres in Manila to assist with expanding its European operations and organizing Filipino migrant workers.<sup>274</sup> The injection of expert cadres enhanced the NDF's European organization. According to Quinsaas,

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<sup>268</sup> Communist Party of the Philippines, *Constitution and Program* (Communist Part of the Philippines, June 2018), 95, <http://www.bannedthought.net/Philippines/CPP/2016/CPP-ConstitutionAndProgram-2016-English.pdf>.

<sup>269</sup> Executive Intelligence Review, "The NPA's Infiltration of Europe," 46.

<sup>270</sup> Communist Party of the Philippines, *Constitution and Program*, 95. See also Executive Intelligence Review, "The NPA's Infiltration of Europe," 48.

<sup>271</sup> Executive Intelligence Review, "The NPA's Infiltration of Europe," 48.

<sup>272</sup> Executive Intelligence Review, 48.

<sup>273</sup> Executive Intelligence Review, 48.

<sup>274</sup> Quinsaas, "Diaspora Activism," 1024.

These political entrepreneurs, who later received refugee status, were experienced activist from middle class upbringing possessing long history of organizing groups and communities. They brought with them knowledge and skills related to the repertoires of contention that were familiar and resonated with the Filipino population in the Netherlands.<sup>275</sup>

The success of the NDF's international office provides a blueprint for the establishment of similar organizations in countries hosting large concentrations of Filipino diaspora. As the primary international organization of the movement, it has a wide range of experience in terms of ideas, tactics, participants, and models of organization that can spill over to other organizations affiliated with the CPP or influence another social movement.<sup>276</sup>

### **C. ROLES OF THE FILIPINO DIASPORA IN THE CPP STRATEGY**

The participation and mobilization of the Filipino diaspora during major political crises in the Philippines shows its potential game-changing influence on the government. The fall and departure of Marcos in the political scene in 1986 marked “the high point of political activism among Filipino diaspora” and showed “their potency as a force for political change when given channels for expression and unique circumstances.”<sup>277</sup> The case of Flor Contemplacion, a Filipina domestic worker executed in Singapore in 1995, outraged and rallied Filipinos around the world, forcing the Philippine government to pass laws protecting OFWs. These events depicted the power of the Filipino diaspora; once politicized, it can be organized and marshalled for political and socio-cultural causes. The enactment of the Absentee Voting Act of 2003, which encouraged Filipinos overseas to vote, pulled the once non-politicized diaspora closer to Philippine political affairs. Such potential in the Filipino diaspora has not gone unnoticed in the Philippine communist movement.

Relying on experiences in establishing an international office in the Netherlands, the NDF has conducted ISW activities in countries with large populations of Filipino

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<sup>275</sup> Quinsaat, 1024.

<sup>276</sup> Quinsaat, 1017. See also Colin J. Beck, *Radicals, Revolutionaries, and Terrorists* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2016), 59.

<sup>277</sup> Camroux, “Nationalizing Transnationalism?,” 19.

diaspora. Using diaspora support and connections, ISW activities aim to exploit the linkages between the Philippines and the diaspora's host countries to gain leverage for the insurgency. Five possible ISW linkages can be exploited: economic (foreign direct investments, credit, trade agreements, and foreign assistance like USAID and IMF); geopolitical (includes bilateral or multilateral agreements, regional organizations, and military ties); social (degree of people's movement and association across borders like tourism and migration); communication (denseness and flow of information exchanged between countries, such as through the internet and mass media communication); and transnational civil society (networks or ties with international party organizations and NGOs).<sup>278</sup>

The above linkages correlate with the government's fifth strategy according to the diamond model: establish links with international actors. A state's level of connection with other states also defines the degree of leverages it holds or vice versa. If a state is dependent on another state's economy, the other state has economic leverage or power in terms of economy over the dependent state. By understanding these linkages, an insurgency can devise actions that undermine the home country's relationship by either directly disrupting it or influencing the host country's policy. These actions are the insurgent's fourth strategy: to disrupt an opponent's link to international actors to ensure dominance in the external environment. An insurgency that explores and influences its diaspora's ties with host governments, civil society, and international organizations can use the link as leverage to "create external pressure on homeland government."<sup>279</sup> As ISW efforts undermine the strong linkages of the Philippines with other countries, particularly the United States, it makes COIN difficult and costly for the Philippine government by highlighting government abuses, increasing the likelihood of international actor assistance, domesticating ideas, and reshaping the balance of power.<sup>280</sup>

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<sup>278</sup> Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, "International Linkage and Democratization," *Journal of Democracy* 16, no. 3 (2005): 22–23, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2005.0048>. See also Sharon Madriaga Quinsaat, "Linkages and Strategies in Filipino Diaspora Mobilization for Regime Change," *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 24, no. 2 (June 2019): 224, <https://doi.org/10.17813/1086-671X-24-2-221>.

<sup>279</sup> Quinsaat, "Linkages and Strategies," 225.

<sup>280</sup> Levitsky and Way, "International Linkage and Democratization," 23–25.

The strong communication linkages ensure the insurgents' propaganda efforts against the Philippine government are publicized internationally through Filipino migrant media networks, even when there is insufficient evidence. Propaganda can influence social movements among the Filipino diaspora, which later might conduct mass demonstrations or lobby its host country for withdrawal of military support and aid to the Philippines. One notable example was the alleged abuses committed by the Philippine military against indigenous peoples, which were used by BAYAN activists in San Francisco, California, as an issue to urge the U.S. government to stop providing military assistance to the Philippines.<sup>281</sup> ISW's connection and network with international lobbying groups or civil society mean a likely response as part of the solidarity against the noted violations in the Philippines. This is similar to the "boomerang effect," whereby a non-state actor experiencing repression in one's home country seeks the help of international allies to intervene or pressure the government to make necessary changes.<sup>282</sup> As in the War on Drugs campaign in the Philippines, NDF-affiliated groups called for an international investigation due to alleged massive human rights violations; the International Criminal Court immediately acted without even consulting concerned government institutions.<sup>283</sup> Also, a member of the Filipino diaspora has worked with BAYAN, a leftist organization in the Philippines, as a healthcare activist; the Filipino–American direct participation could spark diplomatic tensions if something happened while aiding the insurgents.<sup>284</sup> The term *domestication* means the adoption of international contention and ideas at the national level, or "transforming international norms into domestic demand."<sup>285</sup> Similarly, the

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<sup>281</sup> BAYAN USA Northern CA, Facebook, accessed August 17, 2019, <https://www.facebook.com/bayanusanorthernCA/videos/482649129159943/>.

<sup>282</sup> Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism*, 145.

<sup>283</sup> Nick Cumming-Bruce, "Rights Experts Urge U.N. Inquiry into 'Staggering' Killings in Philippines," *New York Times*, June 7, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/07/world/asia/philippines-killings-un.html>.

<sup>284</sup> There is a case of a Filipino-American activist being abducted and later released by an unknown assailant. During the investigation, a video revealed the said activist was undergoing training with NPA guerillas. See "Melissa Roxas Case Update," Wikileaks Public Library of U.S. Diplomacy, August 13, 2009, [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09MANILA1716\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09MANILA1716_a.html).

<sup>285</sup> Edwards, *Social Movements and Protest*, 156; Levitsky and Way, "International Linkage and Democratization," 24.

freedom of expression and individual human rights adopted in the West are frequently espoused by leftist organizations in the Philippines as a means of guaranteeing themselves protection from government persecution. Reshaping the balance of power occurs when linkages provide protection or prestige to an organization. Even with the declaration of the CPP-NPA as a “foreign terrorist organization” by the U.S. government in 2002, Jose Maria Sison, the CPP-NPA-NDF leader exiled in the Netherlands, has not been arrested or deported back to the Philippines.<sup>286</sup> This is due to the effort of the GUE/NGL from the European Parliament, which actively campaigned for the CPP and Sison “not to be put on the terrorist list of the European Union.”<sup>287</sup>

#### **D. EXECUTIVE ORDER 70, THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT’S COUNTERINSURGENCY STRATEGY**

On December 4, 2018, President Duterte signed Executive Order 70 (EO 70), entitled “Institutionalizing the Whole-of-Nation Approach in Attaining Inclusive and Sustainable Peace, Creating a National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict, and Directing the Adoption of a National Peace Framework.”<sup>288</sup> EO 70 lays out the government’s strategy to end the communist insurgency. Again, McCormick’s diamond model helps to assess the current strategy of the Philippine government.

EO 70 underscores the institutionalization of the whole-of-nation approach, whereby the government seeks to involve all sectors in the pursuit of lasting peace in the country. It directs all departments, bureaus, offices, and agencies of the government to provide the necessary support for the task force. It also encourages the private sector, non-government organizations, and other stakeholders to participate in all peace-building

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<sup>286</sup> “Aging Rebels’ Days in Netherlands May Be Numbered,” *Washington Post*, October 5, 2002, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2002/10/05/aging-rebels-days-in-netherlands-may-be-numbered/f38bb347-1904-480f-8e29-1ada8ba9eb71/>.

<sup>287</sup> GUE/NGL stands for the Confederal Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left. The group represents the left wing of the Member of the European Parliament (MEP). See “The Group,” Confederal Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left, accessed November 16, 2019, <https://www.guengl.eu/the-group/>. See also “Letter to Satur Ocampo (Bayan Muna),” Europe Solidaire Sans Frontières,” accessed September 2, 2019, <https://www.europe-solidaire.org/spip.php?article42>.

<sup>288</sup> Executive Order No. 70, s. 2018, *Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines*, <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/2018/12/04/executive-order-no-70-s-2018/>.



programs, plans, and activities from the regional down to the barangay level.<sup>289</sup> The task force is headed by the president and comprises different department secretaries as members. By involving everyone in the activity, with the president as head of the task force, EO 70 aims to elicit the population’s participation. This is similar to the objective of the diamond model’s first strategy: gain population support.

The National Peace Framework includes principles, policies, plans, and programs that prioritize and synchronize the delivery of basic services and social development packages in conflict-affected and vulnerable areas to address the root causes of insurgency.<sup>290</sup> It has been envisioned to respond to local needs; as such, mechanisms for localized peace engagement can be implemented while being supervised and orchestrated at the national level.<sup>291</sup> In the diamond model, alleviating the sources of popular unrest through the broad-based policy of social and political reform involves the activities in Strategy 2—disrupting the opponent’s bid for population support—which aligns with the programs of the National Peace Framework.

To support EO 70, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) formulated the AFP Development and Support Plan, “Kapayapaan,” with the mission to “conduct *development support operations* to sustain the peace, ensure security and help maintain public order to foster the foundation for inclusive economic and human development of the Filipino People.”<sup>292</sup> This objective mandated that the AFP conduct sustained operations against terrorist organization and peace spoilers in the country, contribute to the promotion of peace, actively support law enforcement, and participate in nation building.<sup>293</sup> All these activities contribute to the intent of EO 70, which also corresponds with the diamond model’s third strategy: direct action against the opponent.

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<sup>289</sup> Executive Order No. 70.

<sup>290</sup> Executive Order No. 70.

<sup>291</sup> Executive Order No. 70.

<sup>292</sup> Armed Forces of the Philippines, “AFP Development Support and Security Plan ‘Kapayapaan’” (presentation, Armed Forces of the Philippines, 2017).

<sup>293</sup> Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Employing McCormick's diamond model to assess EO 70 reveals that Philippine COIN employs the first three strategies of the model, suggesting the priority of effort is more the internal than external environment. A notable indicator of this is the exclusion of the secretary of foreign affairs and secretary of labor and employment in the membership of the Task Force, whose department's policies can influence millions of migrant Filipinos. This oversight, which set aside the direct involvement of these two government agencies in the campaign, indicates the planners' lack of appreciation or understanding of the external dimension of the Philippine communist insurgency. Another reason could be the absence of a viable strategy to disrupt the insurgents' international link.

## **E. CONCLUSIONS**

The Philippine diaspora has been recently recognized as the newest diasporic community in the world. It constitutes 10 million migrant Filipinos worldwide, who courageously seek opportunities abroad, hoping to give their families a better future. Since their main reason to migrate is to improve their social mobility, they are categorized as a labor diaspora. Unlike other diasporas, it is not dispersed because of ethnic violence or conflict; hence, it is not politicized.

The Philippine government publicly recognizes Filipino migrants as modern-day heroes. The country's economy greatly benefits from the remittances they send back to their families. Aside from the recognition, the government has enacted policies and programs giving them some legal protections and assistance. But some policies, such as the Dual Citizenship Act and Absentee Voting Act, encourage Filipino migrants to be involved in Philippine politics, leading them to become more politicized and potentially vulnerable to political entrepreneurs.

The National Democratic Front's ISW considers Filipino diaspora to be an integral part of the Philippine revolution. The ISW is the initial contact for NDF cadres while setting up or establishing a partnership with an organization abroad. The social capital it has fostered through various contacts, networks, and associations is important for mobilizing resources to exploit potential political opportunities in the host country that supports the NDF's agenda and the formation of a social movement. Once an organization is formed, it

is mobilized to disrupt the linkages between the host country and the Philippines with the objective of diminishing Manila's international legitimacy. ISW efforts often influence the Filipino diaspora to provide political and moral support to the movement.

Interestingly, NDF efforts to mobilize Filipino migrants could be attributed to the minimal effort by the Philippine government to counter it. Executive Order 70, the government's current strategy, seeks to counter the ISW efforts through international engagements. However, planners may have considered ISW a part of the security issues. Hence, the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police have been given the lead role in this program. But any NDF organization, whether in the Philippines or abroad, supported by a diaspora or international organization, is already transforming into a transnational organization. This means there could be a dedicated department set up to spearhead counter-ISW operations in the international environment. The Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Labor and Employment in tandem could be considered for these tasks as both agencies' policies and programs could influence and affect the millions of migrant Filipinos. And doing so aligns with the functions and essence of both departments to reach out to all Filipinos abroad.

ISW efforts are two-pronged. They seek to subvert Philippine ties with different external actors by delegitimizing the government and, at the same time, connecting and promote the NDF in the international community. These efforts help improve the NDF's status abroad and provide leverage to undermine counterinsurgency activities by means of propaganda and misinformation. NDF propaganda often portrays the Philippine government as human rights violators, hoping that the international community will condemn it and, at the same time, force the U.S. government to stop providing military aid to the Philippines. This action aims to bolster the NDF's images as a human rights advocate and true champion of the Filipino people. ISW activities provide the NDF's structures abroad, which ensure continuous political protest as either separate from or complementary to the armed campaign in the Philippines. It aims to influence other countries to support the movement and intervene on its behalf.

## V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The thesis underscores the significance of external support to an insurgency: it prolongs the conflict, incurs more casualties, and creates difficulty for negotiated resolution. After the Cold War, aside from the traditional state-sponsored assistance, various non-state actors emerged to become sources of outside support to insurgencies. Prominent among these non-state actors were diasporas, immigrant communities settled in other countries.<sup>294</sup> The existence of the Filipino diaspora provides an opportunity to examine the diaspora's role in the ongoing insurgency situation in the Philippines. This chapter answers the three research questions presented in Chapter I.

### A. CONCLUSIONS

First, the role of the Filipino diaspora in the ongoing insurgency is to provide a wide range of support to the armed struggle waged by the Communist Party of the Philippines, which includes moral, political, technical, financial, and military support. The Filipino diaspora could provide moral support by participating in activities, such as demonstrations and cultural meetings, designed to create public awareness for both host and home countries by endorsing the movement while discrediting the Philippine government. Through diaspora networks, it could assist political entrepreneurs allied with the communist movement, such as BAYAN, the prominent leftist organization in the Philippines, to establish connections with civil society and political entities critical of the Philippine government. These associations might help provide political assistance through exerting diplomatic and political pressure to the COIN forces. Technical support can be in the form of ideas and technical innovations that improve the communist movement's operations. These innovations may include the use of mass media as well as social and communication networks, which broadcast the movement's propaganda. Financial support includes the funds that sponsor the NDF's international office and its allied organizations' activities abroad, mostly sourced from international non-government organizations. The

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<sup>294</sup> Byman et al., *Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements*, 41.

Filipino diaspora's military support is limited to sending funds for the procurement of weapons; however, some have participated directly in the armed struggle in the Philippines.

The participation and support of the Filipino diaspora are altering the security environment because the diaspora possesses a transnational personage; it is transforming the conflict from the domestic to the international level. Transnational organizations and actors can have relatively safe spaces while carrying out insurgent activities abroad, such as mass action and resource mobilization. State power is limited to the territory it controls and rules, which imposes constraints on any COIN efforts; thus, its effectiveness is reduced when dealing with transnational actors that operate beyond the border. Due to information asymmetry and the international dimension of insurgency, government forces, for the most part, are unable to counter the insurgents' international propaganda and maneuvering. Diaspora support of the insurgency makes COIN difficult and costly.

Second, as J. Bowyer Bell points out, "revolutionary movements are usually transnational by necessity, not by design."<sup>295</sup> The Philippine communist movement recently realized the importance of the Filipino diaspora as an integral part of the revolutionary movement. The Filipino diaspora's participation and mobilization during major political crises in the Philippines confirmed its game-changing potential in affecting political change, something that did not go unnoticed by the NDF. The NDF believes the diaspora's networks and ties can be manipulated to subvert and disrupt the Philippine connections with international actors.

It was ten years after the establishment of the CPP that the NDF international office in Utrecht started organizing Filipino migrant communities in Europe. Due to the low numbers of Filipino migrant communities and weak diplomatic ties between the Philippines and countries in Europe, particularly the Netherlands, ISW activities in the early 1980s made little impact on the Philippine government. This initial experience led to the shift of ISW efforts to countries hosting large populations of Filipinos and where the Philippine government had established strong connections, such as the United States of

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<sup>295</sup> J. Bowyer Bell, "Contemporary Revolutionary Organizations," *International Organization* 25, no. 3 (1971): 518, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S002081830002628X>.

America. The move ensures that international endeavors will minimize Manila's influence in the external environment.

Finally, McCormick's diamond model highlights how leveraging the ISW is the CPP-NPA-NDF's strategy to gain legitimacy in the international environment. Efforts include disrupting the Philippine government's link with external actors while promoting itself in the international community through broad alliances and ties with international organizations such as Amnesty International and the International Commission on Jurists. By operating in a liberal democratic country, such as the United States, NDF cadres can freely conduct ISW activities within the limits of the law. Rhetoric about the armed struggle and communist ideology is reframed into the ideals embraced by Western countries, such as human rights and democratization. Such actions camouflage and assist the NDF in engaging people with similar concerns and luring them unwittingly to support the movement. This is consistent with ISW's goal to dominate the external environment in favor of the insurgency while reducing the government's international support. A recent comment from a U.S. senator about human rights abuses in the Philippines provides an example of a foreign lawmaker being deceived to believe the "false narratives spread by those who want to bring the [Philippine] government down."<sup>296</sup>

## **B. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The impact of the Filipino diaspora's support to the Philippine insurgency movement does not guarantee that the CPP-NPA-NDF will succeed. The reason the diaspora migrated for economic reasons, so unlike other diasporas, historically it is not been politicized. But with ISW's agitation and propaganda efforts, members of the diaspora have been aroused, organized, and mobilized to help the Philippine insurgency movement. The desire of Filipino migrants to return home could be an opportunity for the government to engage and persuade them to participate in the conduct of peacemaking activities.

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<sup>296</sup> "Palace Slams 'Grandstanding' U.S. Senator Sanders for Comments on Human Rights Abuses in PH," CNN, November 18, 2019, [https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2019/11/18/Bernie-Sanders-Andanar-activist-arrest.html?fbclid=IwAR0giWBbR7cI\\_SzzLUDiGoa50rgn3V7drVeKA0pfOvq0Z5IJcoCcobCeExA](https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2019/11/18/Bernie-Sanders-Andanar-activist-arrest.html?fbclid=IwAR0giWBbR7cI_SzzLUDiGoa50rgn3V7drVeKA0pfOvq0Z5IJcoCcobCeExA).

If the goal is to neutralize the diaspora's support of the insurgency, then a government strategy that attracts diaspora support and, at the same time, disrupts the insurgency from attracting diaspora could be implemented. One recommendation is to conduct strategic communications to improve EO 70.<sup>297</sup> EO 70's whole-of-nation approach provides mechanisms that integrate the different forms of strategic communications. With the task force organization set up from the local to national level, along with some international components, messages could be synchronized for specific target audiences. Public affairs, psychological operations, and public diplomacy could assist EO 70 in credibly articulating policies and programs that can persuade target audiences, especially the Filipino diaspora, to support the objectives of ending the communist armed conflict.

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<sup>297</sup> Executive Order No. 70.

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