

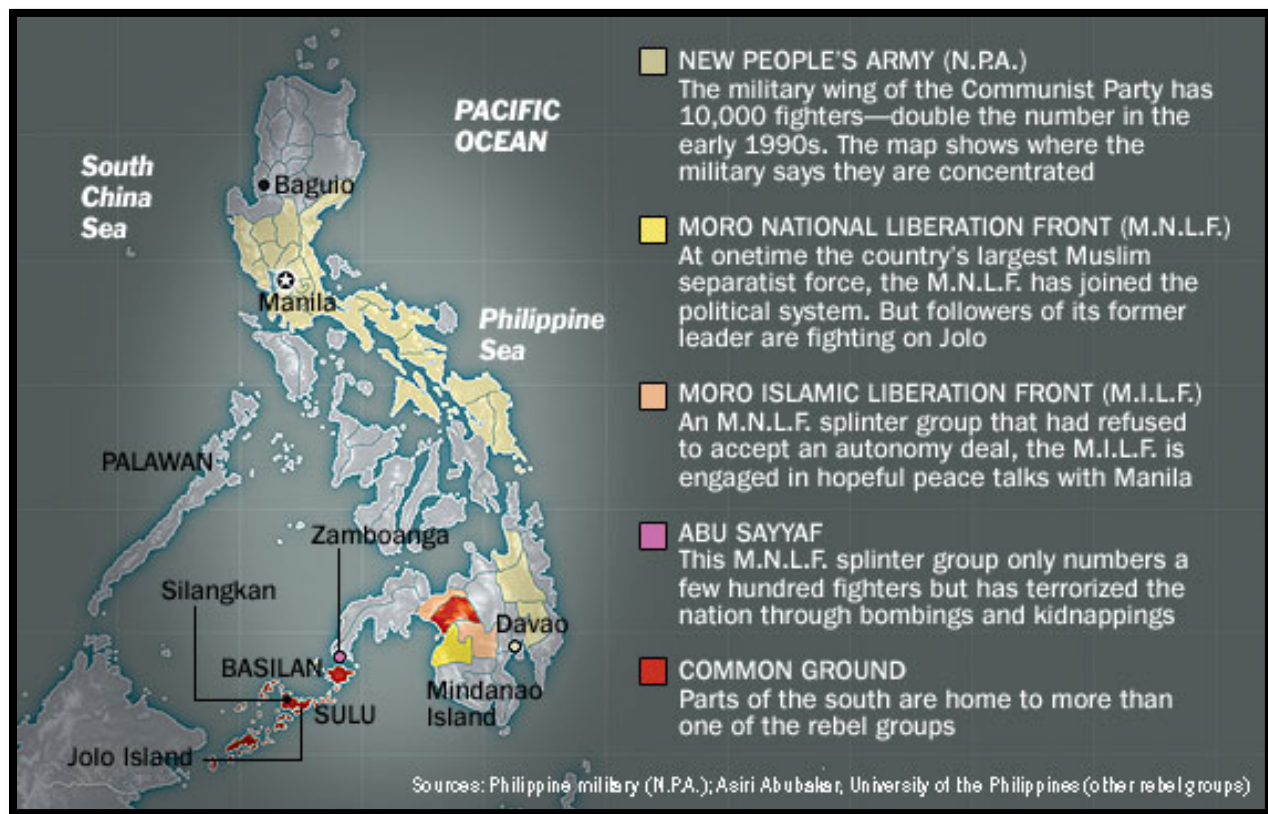


PHILIPPINES: THREAT REPORT

Threats from Insurgents and Terrorists Remains a Risk

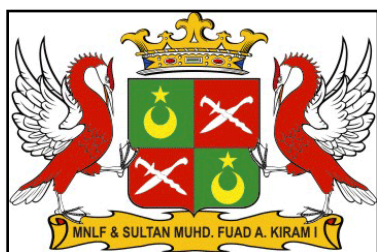
As of 2014 the Philippines have encountered a barrage of natural and manmade disasters that have cost the country enormously. This month flooding severely affected the province of Capiz on the Island of Panay as well as other areas of the region. Residents were still recovering from last November's Typhoon Yolanda that mercilessly trampled the islands of Samar, Leyte, Cebu and Panay leaving over four million displaced and six thousand reported dead, with hundreds reported missing. On October 15th, a registered 7.2 magnitude earthquake shattered Bohol and Cebu, killing over 200, injuring thousands, and decommissioning key infrastructures.

The degradation of basic amenities and services has placed an immense amount of stress on the government. Forcing the reallocation of assets and funds to provide food and agricultural security, as well as health services. Yet the recent natural disasters come in the wake of attacks throughout 2013 led by local insurgents and terrorists.



According to the US State Department *Country Reports on Terrorism*, “The Philippines maintained its strong counterterrorism cooperation with the United States”, constricting the ability of terrorist groups, including Abu-Sayyaf Group (ASG) and Jemaah Islamiya (JI). The governments counterterrorism efforts have forced many terrorist groups to decrease significantly in numbers over the years, resorting to organized crime and drug related activity to survive. However, two insurgent groups with Islamic roots, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), have admitted or been linked to numerous attacks over the last 4 decades. Their base of operations are in the Bangsamoro region of Mindanao, the Sulu Archipelago, Palawan, Basilan, and other neighboring islands, with limited presence in the northern region.

The Moro National Liberation Front



The MNLF has found itself sidelined and disgraced in 2014. After an armed conflict on September 9th, 2013, with the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in Zamboanga City was met with bitter defeat after three weeks of fighting that began many of the MNLFs officials fled further south, while others dispersed to the north. The MNLF’s founding chairman Nur Misuari has been in hiding since the incident. The attack was seen as retaliation to a recent planned peace deal between the MILF and Filipino Government. Essentially sidelining the MNLF and its 1996 agreement for an Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), which Misuari was governor.

The Southern Provinces were especially hard hit after Typhoon Yolanda. Since then little has been heard from the MNLF or its leader Misuari. As of January MILF and AFP representatives have offered an open invitation to the MNLF in an attempt to include the group in the finalization of peace-talks.

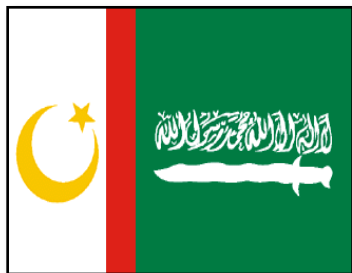
Of additional concern, is the possible use of a more focused attack involving smaller forces. These concerns are compounded further if the MLNF begins utilizing more Improvised Explosive Devices (IED). Although IEDs are not their typical method of operation, its application in future attacks can be used to minimize the loss of MNLF life and assets.

List of MNLF Major Attacks

Date	Location	Attack Brief
November 2001	Sulu	By the end of his term as governor of the ARMM, Misuari launched an attack after he was stripped in a mutiny of his title and removed from his position in the peace process. 113 people were killed, 100 of which were MNLF combatants. Misuari was charged with rebellion, and then thrown in jail.
February 2007	Panamao	Before Misuari’s release, a clash between government forces

		and MNLF rebels led to the capture of Marine Maj. Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino and 18 others. The hostages were released soon after.
August 2009	Mantangule	After Misuari's release, 30 to 40 rebels occupying Mantangule Island in Palawan took 7 people hostage.
November 2009	Panamao	The group attacked an Army post in Panamao, Basilan. The incident left 2 dead and 4 injured.
September 2011	Sulu	150 MNLF members attacked a military post, 11 rebels were killed.
February 2013	Sulu	Clashes between the terrorist Abu Sayyaf Group and MNLF over 2 hostages. The fighting continued after the release of the hostages killing 20 and displacing around 2,000 people in Sulu.
September 2013	Zamboanga City	Elements of the Moro National Liberation Front, led by Nur Misuari, laid siege on Zamboanga City. The resulting death and destruction displaced thousands of innocent civilians.

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front



The Moro Islamic Liberation Front is a splinter group of the MNLF that did not agree with the acceptance of the Philippine government's offer of semi-autonomy in 1977. Similar to its original philosophy MILF demanded a fully independent Muslim state in the southern Philippines. Over the four decade long insurgency MILF has killed thousands of people, through the usage of terrorist bombings and armed assaults. The group also engages in kidnapping and other crime-related activity.

Over the years MILF has grown in numbers, gathering factionalized members from MNLF and other groups into its organization. However, numerous talks between the Philippine Government and MILF have proven to be very positive. This has led to final talks over a peace agreement anticipated to end the years long insurgency and bloodshed.

List of MILF Major Attacks

Date	Location	Attack Brief
March 2003	Davao Airport	MILF rebels planted a bomb inside of a rucksack in the Davao airport terminal. Killing 21 and wounding 2.
May 2003	Maguindano	MILF rebels bombed Koronadal City, Maguindano. 9 were killed.
January 2005	Maguindano	MILF rebels attack government troops in Maguindano. 23 were

		reported killed
July 2007	Basilan	MILF militants killed 14 marines and wounded 9. The attack violated their peace treaty with the Philippine government.

The Communist People's Party/New People's Army (CPP/NPA)

The government's progress in pacifying tensions with the MILF and the retracting MNLF may help bring stability to Southern Philippines. However, groups like the Communist People's Party/New People's Army (CPP/NPA) still finds heated contention with the government; refusing to accept any simple peace agreement.

This group's presence spans across the Southern Philippines and back to Manila. The NPA is most active in rural Luzon, Visayas, and parts of Mindanao. Its headquarters are in Luzon, Philippines. As of 2008 AFP officials had stated that there were only around 4,900 NPA rebel members, down significantly from 26,000 in 1980's. The NPA mainly targets Philippine security forces, politicians, and government workers to name a few.

List of Major NPA Attacks

Date	Location	Attack Brief
April 1989	Quezon	NPA rebels repeatedly shot a vehicle carrying U.S. Colonel James N. Rowe. One shot struck Colonel Rowe in the head and killed him instantly.
May 2001	Quezon	The NPA claimed responsibility for the assassination of two congressmen.
October 2008:	Quezon	NPA rebels raid a prison Freeing 7 rebel prisoners they deemed to be "political prisoners"
October 2011	Surigao del Norte,	NPA conducts attacks against three large-scale mining corporations, burning 10 dump trucks, 8 backhoes, 2 barges and a guest house. This attack was allegedly due to the corporation's "failure to pay revolutionary taxes"
May 2013	Allacapan, Cagayan	NPA ambush a truck transporting a special police unit, by first detonating a landmine and then opening fire. The attack killed 7 and wounded 8.

