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## **Abstract**

### **Population, Ethnicity and Violent Conflict in Asia**

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Violent conflict is the most visible threat to the achievement of sustainable development in any society. The source of conflict conventionally is the warfare between countries. In the last fifty years however cause for conflict is changed and mostly related to the process of nation building in the post-colonial states in Asia, Africa and Latin America. In the new nations, conflicts on the choice of state's ideology are perhaps the most common, and if unresolved, then resulted in the separation or partition of the respected nation. In this case, China vs. Taiwan and India vs. Pakistan are perhaps good historical examples. While ideology plays a critical role, it cannot be isolated to the influence of seemingly non-political factors of demography and ethnicity. Majority-minority group's conflict is always related to demographic composition of the population in which ethnicity, religion and economic classes are politically played out. In the aftermath of the Cold War, ethnic conflicts surprisingly flourished and often led to the disintegration of nation-states. The breakdown of Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and perhaps Indonesia are the case in point. Myron Weiner, Thomas Homer-Dixon and Milica Zarkovic Bookman are among the pioneers in studying the interconnectedness of demography, politics and conflict. Ethno-demographic composition and its influence in the politics of nation building generally have been overlooked in many theories on violent conflicts. This paper is an attempt to contribute to the discourse on the nexus of population and conflict by assessing the existing theoretical knowledge and its empirical evidence from the Asian region.

As one might expect in a region with deeper sources of political instability and fewer democratic traditions, the ways in which population issues and politics have intersected have been harsher... (Michael S. Teitelbaum and Jay Winter, 1998: 5).