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Trends. Globalization and Security: Somalia, Indonesia, and the Import of Mobility

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Indonesian immigrants are being forced to return to Aceh, on the northern tip of Sumatra, from Malaysia. Some of these immigrants seized a truck and crashed through the gates of a United Nations compound to demand asylum and impede the return home. Attempting to reach Yemen, Somali refugees drowned off the Yemeni coast as their boat sank. Over 4,000 Somalis have reached Yemen from January to March 1998.

These are just two of a seemingly escalating mobility among the unfortunate, the dispossessed, the terrified, and even the resolute and the well-off. Those seeking a better life differ in many ways--from those taking their advanced degrees to countries that will better reward them to those shivering with malaria and seeking only respite from horror. What they have in common is the potential for significant impact on the security of nation-states.

These threats differ in frequency among different subsets of the mobile, but a partial list include the following: (1) The medical threat from unusual diseases, a dearth of immunizations for common ones, and a previous inadequate history of nutrition, sanitation, and medical care. (2) The political implosion of countries left behind leading to regional destabilization, war, and political conflict. (3) The overtaxing of recipient countries for the basic necessities of life. (4) The ineluctable subversion of altruistic values within recipient countries and the fueling of latent xenophobia and malignant nationalism. (5) The political explosions within recipient countries as demographic changes lead to fundamental questions about the nature of one's society. (6) The threat from adversaries of unleashing hordes of the mobile as blackmail to achieve political objectives. (7) Environmental disaster at home perpetrated by the desperately mobile in attempts to survive.

As surely as military conflict has long been the primary security concern of nation-states, the sequelae of the mobile is becoming evermore threatening today. This threat does not necessarily lead to a paean for xenophobia but for analysis to develop suitable primary prevention and secondary and tertiary intervention programs. (See *Escapees say Malaysia ignored asylum requests*. (April 1, 1998). *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com>; Ferrada-Noli, M., & Sundbom, E. (1996). Cultural bias in suicidal behavior among refugees with post-traumatic stress disorder. *Nordic Journal of Psychiatry*, 50, 185-191; Papademetriou, D.G. (Winter 1997-1998). Migration. *Foreign Policy*, 109, 15-31; Sinnerbrink, I., Silove, D., Field, A., Steel, Z., & Manicavasagar, V. (1997). Compounding of preimmigration and postimmigration stress in asylum seekers. *Journal of Psychology*, 131, 463-470; *Somali refugee boat sinks off Yemen's coast*. (April 1, 1998). *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com>.) (Keywords: Immigration, Instability, Intervention, Mobility, Security.)