Introduction

Security which, to states, means freedom from all forms of internal and external violations, is always taken very seriously by the members of the international community. This is because security affects not only the satisfaction of a nation's needs, but also the fundamental issue of the latter's survival as a viable entity. To ensure their survival, states have evolved various strategies of which the most common ones include unilateral or collective military build-up, organisation of various forms of alliance systems, acceptance, especially by some small states, of the military protection of stronger powers, as well as various forms of diplomatic trade-offs and manoeuvres. Even though the strategies adopted by one state or a group of states differ from one another, they are usually tailored towards a common goal, which is to deter potential enemies. It is in this sense that deterrence is basic to virtually all defence plans. In deciding on the best survival strategy for any given state or group of states, consideration must be given to the peculiar circumstances of the state or group of states concerned.

The advancement in this study of a common survival strategy for the small states is dictated by some basic peculiarities which tend to put them in a distinctive strategic group vis-a-vis the big powers. It is therefore necessary to have a conceptual framework of what constitutes the basic characteristics of the small states in order to give our discussion a proper focus. Small states should be seen here not necessarily in terms of their limitations in territorial size or population, but particularly, in the area of economic and military power as well as technological and industrial capacity. In this regard, the small states are those states which, irrespective of territorial size or population, are weak economically, militarily, technologically and in industrial capacity. This basic
weakness tends to condemn them to various degrees of external dependency in their strategic deployment, thereby complicating the credibility of their deterrence strategy.

It is in an attempt to overcome the strategic disability imposed on the small states by the peculiar circumstances of their existence that one is tempted to float the idea of a ‘grave-yard strategy’ as a more credible strategic option for their survival. The grave-yard strategy is based on the total mobilisation of the people for national defence. It seeks to instil in the people the patriotic feeling of “I will die for my country”. Simply put therefore, it is a strategy by which a people choose to defend their country to the last citizen. And as we shall try to show in this study it is a more credible strategy for the survival of the weak under-developed nations than the relatively unattainable deterrent strategy based on military build-up.

Patterns of Threat to Small States

Even though the threats to the security of states are not always identical, the peculiar circumstances of their existence make it possible to identify certain common threat patterns affecting the small states. Threats to state security may be of two types—internal and external.

Though internal threats are usually not as rigorous and as potent as external ones, they at times have the effect of gradually eroding the very basis of a nation’s existence or its ability to deal with the more potent external threats. Among the numerous ways a nation’s security could be violated from within are through subversive penetration, sabotage of its socio-political and economic institutions, hostile espionage, civil insurrection and revolutionary insurgency. Since these threats are too familiar to warrant elaborate explanation, one will merely make some remarks about the strategic milieu in which they usually thrive so as to provide an understanding of the extent to which the small states are vulnerable to them.

In terms of causality, these internal security threats have a lot in common. They thrive in societies that have not been effectively mobilised towards a definite goal. This is because most of these societies are susceptible to external infiltration or manipulation through local recruits who readily lend extra-territorial legality. Such local recruits are available in societies where there is social discontent and a considerable number of alienated citizenry; where nationalistic and patriotic
feelings have not germinated, and economic security still eludes the
generality of the people.

It is obvious that the small states are relatively vulnerable to these
threats because most of the conditions fostering the presence of these
threats are quite prevalent in a number of these states. In Africa, for
instance, the manner in which the continent was partitioned during
the period of colonisation, and the divide-and-rule policies of the
colonial rulers led to the emergence of states that are merely conglom-
erates of diverse nationalities and ethnic groups. Because the post-
independence battle to weld the various national and ethnic groups into
well-integrated nations is yet to be won, patriotism and national con-
sciousness have remained scarce commodities in most parts of Africa. This
partly explains the relatively high level of social unrest and political insta-
bility in Africa as in some other parts of the Third World.

Apart from the relative lack of national cohesion as far as a
number of the small states are concerned, there is also the basic problem
of sheer scarcity of resources to meet the needs of the common man.
This has tended to throw a great proportion of the population of these
states to the class of alienated citizenry. The net result is to
render a number of these states relatively vulnerable to social unrest and
revolutionary outbursts.

This problem of alienation is often aggravated in many of the small
states by the selfish and uninspiring manner in which public policy is
conducted to satisfy elitist tastes instead of being geared to administer
the needs of the generality of the people. The failure of the leadership in
most of these states to effectively mobilise the people towards productive
ends allows for the presence in these states of men and women ready to be
mobilised for negative purposes.

The security situation of these small states is also weakened by their
relative technological and industrial backwardness leading to their over-
dependence on external manpower, especially in the strategic sectors
of the affected states. Most of these foreigners come in as technical
experts to service various types of projects. Due to the relative shortage
of finance capital and high level of technical man-power, virtually all the
major projects of these small states fall under one form of external patronage or the other. The ensuing concentration of "foreign exports" in especially the sensitive and strategic sectors of the economies of a
number of these small states is such as to give these foreigners the power
to turn on and off, at will, the key to the progress and survival of these states.

What is important to note about these internal threats for the purpose of this study is that their solution does not quite lie on the adoption of the conventional approach of arms build-up and the strengthening of the coercive apparatus of state. In fact, adopting the conventional coercive techniques could even aggravate the security problems of the affected states as has been the case in many African and Latin American countries. To be effective, any strategy designed to deal with these threats must seek to win the people’s loyalty and commitment to the state, as well as reduce the possibility of external subversive penetration. This then provides one aspect of the general backdrop of the proposed grave-yard strategy.

On the external front, the problem is much more complicated. We may approach the problem in terms of a simple interactional model. In a broad sense, the small states, like all the actors within the international system, could be said to interact externally at three different power levels, namely, the big powers including the two super-powers, transnational organisations and individual state levels. In their external interactions, states in general, are usually guided by their national interest. Given the fact that national interests are not always identical, the possibility of conflictual relationship in an interactional process between sovereign states is always present. Since threat emanates from the conflict in such an interactional process, it is logical to expect threat to the small states at the three levels of their external interactions mentioned above.

However, the point to emphasise for the benefit of our discussion here is not the possibility of threats as such, but the varying levels of their potency at the three different interactional levels. For instance, due to considerable capability gap between the small states and the big powers, the level of potency of the threat that the small states should expect at the first level of interaction will be very high, in fact, too high for them to equate with the conventional response of arms build-up. It is obvious that given their industrial and technological backwardness, adopting a conventional deterrence against the threat from a big power will be the most futile exercise any small state would want to indulge in. Seeking the protection of another big power which is a possible alternative has its own unpalatable consequences which tend to neutralise the possible gains from the strategy. It follows therefore,
that to deal with possible threat from the big powers, the small states need a different type of survival strategy.

The threat the small states could expect at the second level of interaction i.e. with transnational organisations or corporations, is equally potent. This is because many of these organisations, especially the multi-national corporations, often serve as instruments of big-power coercive policies against the small states. The ITT played this role for the United States against Allende's Chile. The stranglehold which some of these transnational corporations have over the economies of many of these small states, provides them with what amounts to a trump card with which they can play decisively whenever and for whatever purpose they would like. The threats that the multi-national corporations pose for the small states border on the systematic erosion of the security fabrics of the targeted state from within, through local agents who serve as fronts. This is where the external and internal sources of the threats to security get enmeshed.¹

As for the third and final level of interaction, it could be said that ordinarily the threat emanating from the interaction between and among the small states ought not to have been very potent given their relatively low industrial and technological base. But this is not so because these small states do not compete or manage the conflict between them at their own technological level. They compete with, and fight one another with borrowed technology. It is, therefore, because of the patronage of the sophisticated technology of the big powers that the conflict between the small states gain a lot of potency. It is also because of this patronage that the conflicts between them often become externally directed and, in most cases, difficult to manage.

Since in their present circumstances, conventional deterrence strategy based on arms build-up tends to foster the small states' external dependency, it cannot be regarded as serving the best interest of the latter. However, before we look into the suggested alternative approach, it will be necessary to undertake a brief analysis of the conventional approach to deterrence.

Conventional Approach to Deterrence

Deterrence is perhaps one of the most popular strategic concepts in terms of practical application. Even though the concept is more generally
discussed in strategic literature within the context of nuclear deterrence, virtually all modern defence plans both in the nuclear and non-nuclear environments are predicted on deterrence.

The concept of deterrence emphasises the notion of security through armed strength. It seeks to discourage people from waging wars by magnifying the cost and consequences of such wars from the potential aggressor. The belief is that by confronting the potential aggressor with an overwhelming destructive capacity, a nation is likely to remove the war option from the former.

For its deterrence policy to be credible, the country must have the necessary resources, including the industrial and technological capacity, to build up enough capability to equate that of the potential enemy. Where the country lacks the industrial and technological capacity to do so, like the case of the small states, it will have to rely on external sources to build up the necessary capability or surrender to the protection of a big power if it lacks the financial resources or cannot borrow the necessary funds needed to procure such capability. It is this basic problem of building up the necessary capability to counter enemy threats that makes deterrence a very costly venture for the small states.

Being arms consumers rather than producers, resources spent by the small states on arms build-up are resources denied to their domestic economies, and used for the stimulating the economies of other countries. Thus the more arms they build up, the more these small states deny themselves of developmental resources with all the attendant impoverishment and possible social unrest. For instance, Africa’s arms import in 1968 was $2 billion, representing 7.1 per cent of the continent’s military expenditure. By 1977, the figure rose to $2.8 billion which represented 48.3 per cent of Africa’s military expenditure. What this means is that by 1977 Africa was spending $2.8 billion which is 48.3 per cent of its military expenditure to stimulate the economies of other countries. It also means by 1977 African states were losing $2.8 billion which could have been invested to strengthen domestic production base.

Acceptance of big-power protection as a way of avoiding huge build-up, as we have noted earlier, has its own disadvantages for the small states, among which possible loss of freedom of diplomatic manoeuvre and strategic deployment, possible blackmail by the protecting power, and possible loss of international respect are the main. First, as long
as a small state remains protected, it could only pursue those interests that are in consonance with those of the protecting power. Foreign policy assertiveness is, therefore, a price a protected nation must pay to ensure continuous protection. And hence there is always the possibility of blackmail from the protecting power.

The experience of Central African Republic in the hands of the French vividly depicts the untenable situation in which a protected state could find itself. In January 1966, Jean-Bedel Bokassa, with the full support of the French, came to power in Central African Republic through a military coup against his cousin David Dacko. When the French were no longer satisfied with his rule, the French legions simply flew in from their base in Chad and replaced him again with his cousin from whom he seized power in 1966. The offence Bokassa committed was that he slighted the French, his erstwhile protectors; first, by striking Rene Jouriac, the head of Giscard d’Estang’s private presidential secret service with his imperial cane when the latter suggested that Bokassa should abdicate; and later, by slamming the telephone on the French President when the latter telephoned to protest against the treatment of Jouriac.

Due to their privileged position as the protector of most of the francophone countries in Africa, the French have assumed the right to enthrone, prop up, or dethrone the regimes of these states. They have deployed troops to prop up such favoured regimes as Leon Mba’s regime in Gabon in 1964; Houphey Boigny in Ivory Coast, on a number of occasions to withstand civil unrest; Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire during the Shaba uprising in 1977 and 1978; and lately, Etienne Eyadema of Togo, to withstand an attempted coup in September 1986. On the other hand, they have aided Hissene Habre to overthrow Goukouni Weddeye’s regime in Chad.

It is obvious from the cases mentioned here that surrender to big power protection is not as comfortable as its advocates would tend to make us believe. An additional point is that it reduces the international prestige of the protected state the very moment it is realised that the state is incapable to taking an independent action without first looking back to ascertain the views of its protector. It could also bring about domestic unpopularity for the regime and could thus complicate the problem of internal security.
From the above discussion, it becomes abundantly clear that the security realities of the small states cannot make them a net beneficiary from a policy of deterrence that is based on arms build-up. Since deterrence is based ultimately on a strong psychological factor of convincing the potential aggressor that the cost of its action will outweigh the gain, it is necessary to find a more comfortable way of doing the convincing than through arms build-up or alliance with a big power. In what follows we concentrate on what alternative strategy could be adopted by the small states in the most economical and most effective way.

The Grave-Yard Strategy—Deterrence Strategy

Through Mass Mobilisation

The grave-yard strategy involves the mobilisation of the entire populace for national defence. Since it is a strategy which commits a country to resist aggression to the last citizen, the grave-yard strategy satisfies the essential principles of an effective deterrence policy. This is because apart from maximising the cost of aggression, the strategy seeks to deny the potential aggressor any possible gain by presenting the latter with the most likely option of perishing in the process of its aggression or inheriting a grave-yard. The point is that the incentive for aggression will be diminished considerably the very moment it is understood that there is nothing worthwhile to gain.

The grave-yard strategy is meant solely to serve a defensive purpose. Hence the focus of any national defence efforts that is committed to the strategy must be different from the classical deterrence strategy which involves defensive/defensive capability build-up, and in which a retaliatory capability is usually emphasised. Of course, the very inclusion of an offensive capability suggests the possibility of first use and hence the classical deterrence strategy cannot but breed suspicion and tension. By abstaining from an offensive capability build-up, the grave-yard strategy provides no room for suspicion as to what the real intentions of its exponents are.

It follows therefore that should a country decide to adopt the grave-yard strategy, its defence efforts must assume a completely defensive posture. The salient features of such a strategy, would be the development of the country’s capability in the following areas of activities:

— civil defence techniques;
The Grave-Yard Strategy

- intelligence gathering;
- air defence programmes;
- protection of the nation's strategic targets and other sensitive installations;
- strategies for maximum utilisation of the nation's resources to resist the enemy;
- resource denial techniques to prevent the enemy from benefiting from the nation's resources;
- techniques for sabotaging and frustrating enemy efforts; and
- enlightenment campaign on the need for the populace to stand together as one in defence of the nation.

The over-riding objective of the defence efforts of a country committed to the grave-yard strategy should be to develop a resistance package that will make the country completely inhospitable to any invading forces.

From the above, it is obvious that the grave-yard strategy is different from the strategy of passive resistance which is limited to non-cooperation with the enemy but excludes any form of violence. Rather than making the country a "sitting duck" target for the enemy which the strategy of passive resistance tends to encourage, the grave-yard strategy is committed to creating an untenable situation for the aggressor and making the latter as uncomfortable as possible in order to convince it of the futility of its action.

The crucial question, as far as the grave-yard strategy is concerned is, how to attain the high level of motivation and mobilisation necessary for every citizen to be prepared to lay down his life for the nation. One must admit that this is not an easy task. Before delving into the problem of developing a package of mobilisation techniques, it should be emphasised that the objective conditions prevailing in a number of the small states do not permit easy mobilisation of the populace for national defence. This is because before the entire citizenry will agree to make the ultimate sacrifice for their country, the authority must be committed to meeting the needs and aspirations of the generality of the people in order that the people identify themselves with the sorrows and joys of the country. What, however one finds in most of these countries is the general commitment to elitist tastes and pursuit, and a basic pre-occupation by the ruling elite in primitive
accumulation of wealth at the expense of the masses. Alienation and dichotomy between individual and common interests are the natural consequences.

To effectively mobilise the people for national defence certain objective conditions must be met.

First, the existing exploitative systems in these states which have led to widespread alienation and social strife must be changed to a new socio-political and economic order that is based on the tenets of equality and social justice, and which will give every citizen a true sense of belonging and relevance. This point touches the basic issue of what the public is being mobilised to defend. In other words, what does the nation to be defended stand for? Unless the nation exists for the promotion of the general well-being of the people, it will be difficult to get the latter committed to its defence.

It follows, therefore, that a major priority concern for a nation intent on the general mobilisation of its people for national defence must be to tailor public policy towards promoting the general well-being of all its people and not for a few privileged individuals. This stresses the need for national developmental efforts to be directed, first and foremost, to meeting the basic human needs. Moreover resource constraint also makes the pursuit of basic needs imperative for the small states, at least, to ensure that the little development that is possible reaches the grass-roots.

Another area where attention must be focused for the effective mobilisation of the people for national defence is in the provision of the necessary opportunities for every citizen to develop his talent and realise his full potentials. This will ensure that energies and talents that would have otherwise been hidden are released for national development. The nation’s human resource development programme should be backed up with the maximum utilisation of the people’s creativeness. When this is done, a true sense of belonging and relevance will be cultivated among the people who will now accept the challenge of taking the destiny of their nation into their own hands.

The role of the political leadership is very crucial in any general mobilisation. The leadership must, first and foremost, have a clarity of vision as far as the aspirations of the people are concerned and must be prepared to identify with them. The bane of the small states is that most of them have been saddled for a greater part of their history with
uninspiring and irresponsible leadership without the necessary credentials for mass mobilisation. For these leaders to serve as agents of the general mobilisation of their people for national defence, they must abandon their self-serving policies and destroy the artificial walls they have created between themselves and the masses and share in the latter's aspirations. Once the objective conditions are created and there is a committed and dedicated leadership to pilot the affairs of the state to meet the aspirations of the people, the proposed grave-yard strategy will fall into place. At this point, it might be necessary to indicate what type of defence structure the grave-yard strategy entails.

As we are already aware, the strategy seeks to mobilise the entire citizenry for national defence. This obviously suggests the need for compulsory military training for all citizens including a well laid-out programme of military call-up in any emergency. However, the focus of the military training, as has been noted earlier, will be to develop and master the necessary resistance techniques to make the country untenable for any hostile forces. The package of resistance techniques to be developed should include a role for every able-bodied citizen. In this sense, no emergency involving the country will be regarded as the exclusive affairs of the military and other security agents, but that of the entire populace. This also means that the military will fit into different kinds of the nation's productive efforts in peace-time.

Though the concept of grave-yard strategy is yet to be fully developed, the basis are not unknown and empirically a number of countries have survived to an extent on the basis of the type of general mobilisation that has been proposed here. For instance, Yugoslavia's survival as an independent non-aligned nation today is due to the general mobilisation which her leaders perfected to deal with the Nazi occupation of the country during the Second World War. After the war when Europe was being divided into ideological camps, the people's resolve to stand on their own was understood and respected.

The country has maintained her war-time posture of resisting aggression to the last citizen. In fact, it has added some credibility to this strategy of general mobilisation by entrenching it in the constitution. Under the 1974 Constitution, it is a treasonable offence for anyone to sign an act of capitulation, accept or recognise the occupation of the country, or prevent any Yugoslav citizen "from fighting against the enemy". The fact that the country has remained at peace, and that
after Marshall Tito’s death no hostile tendencies have developed along its borders, means the country’s unique defence measure has had its deterrent effect.

Also the Vietnamese ability to overawe the Americans was brought about by the readiness of the people to defend their country to the last man. At a point in the course of the war, it dawned on the Americans that to achieve total victory in Vietnam, they must be prepared to kill every Viet-Cong, a feat that public opinion at home and abroad dissuaded even the most daring American leader from doing. Of course what would have been the benefit to be derived by raising the country to the ground. Obviously, it became a situation in which the game was no longer worth a candle.

Another country that is perhaps approaching the type of general mobilisation that is being proposed here is Libya. That Gaddafi’s regime in Libya has survived till today inspite of American overt and covert hostility against it, is due essentially to the inability of the United States to effect a subversive penetration in Libya or get local recruits to subvert the country. However, because Libya’s general mobilisation of the people for their nation’s defence is tainted with an offensive capability build-up, as well as a messianic posture of the country’s leadership, it has generated a lot of suspicion and hostility from certain quarters including some of her neighbours.

Conclusion
On the whole, the grave-yard strategy is a purely defensive strategy of national survival. It does not seek any conquest beyond denying the occupation of the country to hostile forces. It is a strategy which concentrates the attention and efforts of government on ministering the needs of the entire citizenry. The security accruing from it does not depend on massive military build-up but on the solid foundation of mass mobilisation and the people’s willingness to lay down their lives for their country. Hence it is a security strategy that does not depend too much on the vagaries of the world armament market or the uncertainties inherent in the behaviour of allies.

The beneficial security spin-offs of the grave-yard strategy are quite obvious. First and foremost the strategy has the implication of imposing certain obligations on the ruling elite which will help to improve
the general well-being of the people. A people whose basic needs are satisfied is not too prone to mischief.

Second, the strategy de-emphasises arms build-up and emphasises the human element in national defence. The significance of the human element lies in the fact that even the most sophisticated weapons still need human beings to operate them. Even where a nation possesses the most modern military hardwares, these will only be as good as the people that operate them. If the will to operate them efficiently is lacking in the people, the nation will be doomed inspite of the sophisticated hardwares.

Third, the cultivation of patriotism and national consciousness which the strategy entails gives the people a stake in the survival of the nation. A mobilised citizenry cannot be easily subverted. If it is recalled that one of the most potent threats facing the small states is that subversive penetration, it follows that the grave-yard strategy has the salutory effect of plugging one vital source of threat to the small states apart from inhibiting aggression from potential adversaries.

Even though a lot of work still needs to be done in the area of developing a time-tested package of techniques of mass mobilisation, it is hoped that as more attention is given to the strategy by statesmen and defence planners, this problem will be overcome. Once this is done, the grave-yard could be the right answer to the general desire to build human frontiers of peace to replace the existing frontiers of tension, conflict and war.

Notes
1. A detailed treatment of these threats is given in T.A. Imobighe, Nigeria’s Defence and National Security Linkages: A Framework of Analysis (Kuru: NIPSS), 1984, chapter III.
3. An analysis of deterrence in both the nuclear and non-nuclear environments has been done by the present author in one of the chapters in a forthcoming publication titled, *The Search for Peace and Harmony: A Study of Modern Strategy*.


An international Seminar on “The Security of Small States” was held in Dhaka during 6-8 January 1987. Sponsored and organised by the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS) the seminar was attended by about 160 participants from 15 countries of Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe and North America. The participants were from academic and research institutions and governmental and non-governmental bodies.

2. The seminar was inaugurated by the President of Bangladesh Janab Hussain Muhammad Ershad. The President in his inaugural address emphasized the multi-dimensional implications of the theme of the seminar and on the relative connotations of the key terms ‘security’ and ‘small states’. He suggested that there was an imperative need for re-orientation of the conceptual basis of security in terms of an environment of peace and cooperation conducive to a better life for peoples. In this connection he added that South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was conceptually based on the principle of collective self-reliance and aimed at harnessing their resources and capabilities of member states to achieve their shared development objectives.

3. The inaugural session was also addressed by Foreign Ministers of Bangladesh and Bhutan Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury and Lyonpo Dawa Tsering respectively as special guests. Professor Muhammad Shamsul Huq, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the BIISS presided over the inaugural session which was also addressed by Brig. M Abdul Hafiz, Director General of the Institute. Mr. Justice Mostafa Kamal, member of the Board of Governors offered the vote of thanks.

4. In all 20 papers covering various aspects of the theme were discussed in six working sessions of the seminar. Presentation of papers was followed by stimulating discussion by designated discussants and general participants in an atmosphere of academic freedom and objectivity. The working sessions were followed by a concluding session in which the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh Mr. Humayun Rasheed
Choudhury attended as the chief guest. The concluding session was presided over by Professor Muhammad Shamsul Huq.

5. The seminar was welcomed by the participants and distinguished guests who hoped that the awareness and interest generated by the deliberations would contribute to a better comprehension of the problems and prospects of security of small states. The participants further hoped that the momentum generated by this seminar would be sustained through creation of more such opportunities for deliberations, research and exchange of views in various other parts of the world.

6. The seminar discussed at some length the concept of smallness of states. It was felt that while quantitative indicators like population, size, GNP/GDP and resource endowments may severally or collectively provide useful guides, the syndrome of smallness of state was also the outcome of a host of non-quantifiable factors. These latter included the whole gamut of issues bearing on different states of nation-building and development.

In such a wide perspective, small states included the overwhelming majority of the developing countries of the Third World. The participants also agreed that the term was relative and its applicability and implications may depend on the complex interplay of both quantifiable and non-quantifiable groups of factors. A state's perception in this respect was considered as important.

7. Turning to the concept of security itself participants agreed that the conventional doctrines and theories of security with their essential thrusts on global power politics had limited relevance to the situation of small states, and for that matter, developing states. The concept of security should be extended beyond this traditional framework because of the qualitative difference in the security of developing and developed states, and the general insecurity of developing countries in a conflictual international order. Security and/or lack of it in the context of small states should be viewed in its territorial, political, economic, socio-cultural, ideological and technological aspects with their domestic, regional and international implications.

8. The seminar recognised that the existing international system was currently so structured that each state felt free to act according to what it perceived to be its own national interests without proper regard to those of others. The consequent disarray in inter-state relations combined with the prevalent hierarchical power-structure was a variable
source of threats to the security of most of the Third World nations, particularly the small ones.

9. The participants agreed that many of the problems of security of small states had their origin in the traumatic process of decolonisation and in the circumstances in which these societies had to pursue their nation-building efforts. Ethnic, linguistic, religious, sectarian and other divergences are among the domestic issues that in some cases with cross-border ramifications, generated threats to the security and stability of these states. Threats from such sources do not merely jeopardize national cohesion and territorial integrity but also induce harmful exogenous involvement straining thereby inter-state relations particularly in the regional and sub-regional context.

10. The participants felt that the extent of deleterious impact of domestic sources of insecurity was conditioned (and in turn was influenced) by the nature and character of polity which was the outcome of such factors as the state of social, political and economic institutions, level and nature of participation, and type and intensity of intra-group conflicts. It was agreed that in the context of management of the internal dimensions of security, accommodation, conciliation and power-sharing geared to attain and sustain national consensus on basic national issues of paramount importance.

11. The seminar devoted considerable attention to the socio-economic aspects of security, with focus on the problems of mass poverty, resource shortage, dependencies, distorted development and geo-economic situation. The participants underscored the impact of these factors as manifested particularly in social and economic inequities leading to unrest and instability. It was agreed that convergence between resource use and the needs and aspirations of peoples was vital, and realistic measures for effective participation in the economic and political decision-making process at various levels may help redress social and economic imbalances and strengthen the sense of national identity.

The participants also emphasized the need for reducing external dependence through conscious initiation of self-generating production, trade and investment methods. The nature of economic development was essentially conditioned by the nature of polity, level of its commitment and the decision-making process.

12. The seminar deliberated at length on the regional context of the security of small states. It was agreed that regional co-operation, mutual
understanding and confidence were effective catalysts to reducing vulnerabilities and insecurities of states irrespective of size. It was further agreed that besides helping overcome size and resource constraints and promoting thereby continued development such cooperation had immense potential in promoting mutual trust, confidence and understanding in the regional context. These latter were of crucial importance in removing emotional and psychological barriers which appeared to be a major cause of strained inter-state relations. The participants agreed that regional cooperation was expected to contribute to peace, progress and development and thereby to stability and security of the participant member-states.

13. The seminar recognised that the global environment would continue to condition the extent of success of national and regional efforts for strengthening the basis of security. It was also agreed that in the existing international system the security of small states would be placed in proper perspective if it was viewed within the larger framework of international peace and security. Action at national, regional and international level that would tend to reduce tension and possibility of conflicts was recognised as vital factors contributing to the security of small states.

14. The seminar recognised that the over-whelming majority of small states was trapped in a zero-sum and even negative-sum game between unequals in the international economic interaction, the outcome of which was bound to be detrimental to their interests. The participants stressed on the need for assigning a higher priority on multilateralism in international economic relations as a promoting factor of the security of small states. In this connection it was mentioned that under the existing international economic order the countries in the south are perpetually at a disadvantage and there is a need to replace it by a new international economic order based on sovereign equality of nations. In this connection, liberalisation of trade, greater flow of Official Development Assistance (ODA), particularly concessional aid, increasing technical cooperation, greater balance of payments support including stabilisation of export earnings were recognised as vital measures for development and security.

15. Efforts on the politico-strategic front, the seminar agreed, should include such measures as global disarmament and diversion of resources thus released to socio-economic development activities and
strict adherence to the principles of the UN Charter, particularly relating to non-interference in internal affairs of other states, and recognition of the principles of equity and justice in international relations. In addition, the following measures were considered to be desirable in promoting security interests: (i) strengthening of the mechanism of the international legal system and (ii) establishment of a UN Commission on identification of potential conflict areas and preventive measures. The participants also agreed that small states should be increasingly committed to distance themselves selectively from the influence of big and superpowers not merely in relation to global power politics but also in terms of the associated social, cultural, economic and technological influences detrimental to their national interests and value systems. At the same time all possible efforts should be made at various levels to promote international cooperation for peace, security and development.

16. The seminar recognised that security interests of small states can be best protected if there was a clear consensus on vital issues at national, sub-regional, regional and global levels. Dialogue, consultations, participation and mutual accommodation rather than confrontation and coercion in any form were recognised as key catalytic factors in achieving these goals.
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Yew, Lee Kuan, 213, 216
CONTRIBUTORS

Mr. Abdur Rob Khan
Deputy Director looking after the Strategic Studies desk at the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS), Dhaka.

Mr. Mohammad Humayun Kabir
Assistant Director, Strategic Studies desk at the BIISS, Dhaka.

Air Commodore Jasjit Singh
Deputy Director, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi.

Prof. Anirudha Gupta
Dean, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Dr. Syed Anwar Hussain
Professor at the Department of History, University of Dhaka.

Dr. Atiur Rahman
Research Fellow, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, Dhaka.

Mr. Golam Mostafa
Assistant Director at the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies, Dhaka.

Lt. Gen A.I. Akram (Retd)
President, Institute of Regional Studies, Islamabad.

Ms. Amena A. Mohsin
Lecturer in International Relations, University of Dhaka.

Mr. David W. Hegarty
Senior Research Fellow at the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, Canberra.

Dr. Kook-Chin Kim
Professor at the Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Seoul.

Prof. M.S. Rajan
Professor Emeritus, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.
Dr. S.I. Khan
Assistant Professor, International Relations, University of Dhaka.

Dr. Ataur Rahman
Professor of Political Science and Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Dhaka.

Mr. R.P. Barston
Director of Graduate Studies, Department of Politics, University of Manchester, UK.

Mr. Waliur Rahman
Ambassador of Bangladesh in Rome.

Dr. Bhabani Sen Gupta
Research Professor, Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi.

Dr. Estrella D. Solidum
Professor, Department of Political Science, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City.

Mr. Guo Jing'an
Head of South Asian Affairs Institute of International Studies, Beijing.

Dr. Zillur R. Khan
Professor of Political Science and Coordinator of Asian Studies, University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh, U.S.A.

Dr. T.A. Imobighe
Senior Research Fellow at the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Bukuru, Nigeria.

EDITORS

Brig. M. Abdul Hafiz
Director General of the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS), Dhaka.

Mr. Abdur Rob Khan
Deputy Director at the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS), Dhaka.