

civil conflict. The authors focus on contemporary China and India, where sons are strongly preferred to daughters. As in other Asian countries, public access to ultrasound technology and amniocentesis has facilitated sex-selective abortion, resulting in highly skewed sex ratios. Separating the security-related effects of skewed sex ratios from those of the youth bulge and other demographic and social phenomena may prove difficult, but this provocative thesis, although speculative, should nonetheless stimulate further research.

Demography is Not Destiny

For those involved in foreign policy, demographic changes can be viewed most constructively as challenges and vulnerabilities to the state and its institutions—or, in some instances, as options and opportunities. For example, when jobs are scarce, a large and growing youth bulge can lead to increased discontent, crime, and political unrest. S, sed di mch.

those risks, underscore the need for donors and developing-country governments to increase financial and political support for policies and programs that lead to positive demographic changes: those that expand girls' educational opportunities, give couples the ability to choose the timing and frequency of childbirth, and increase women's participation in government and in the workplace.

Notes

1. For discussion of the database, see Gleditsch, Wallensteen, Eriksson, Sollenberg, & Strand (2002) and Wallensteen & Sollenberg (2001). To access the database, visit http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/UCDP/UCDP_toplevel.htm.

2. See also Urdal (2001), Goldstone (1991), and Moller (1967/68).

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namely, voluntary family planning services and girls' education—that promote positive demographic and social change.

Globally, the demographic transition is incomplete. One-third of all countries in the world remain in the early stages, with four or more children per woman. When the northern states of India are included, this population—the most conflict-affected in the world—comprises about 1.5 billion people (UNPD, 2003). Unfortunately, the demographic stresses endured by these countries are likely to receive less and less attention as the news media focuses instead on the industrial world's demographic issues: population aging, population decline, and immigration. The significant risks of delaying progress through the demographic transition, and the decades it can take to dissipate

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