

# Border Burdens: China's Response to the Myanmar Refugee Crisis

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**A**s trucks filled with the remnants of the Kokang army rumbled towards the Chinese border, soldiers plucked insignia from their uniforms. At their feet were green caps with the insignia of China's People's Armed Police border guards, ready to be put on at the check point that would place them out of reach of the Myanmar government soldiers that had just routed them. As they arrived at the invisible red line separating Myanmar from China, Chinese soldiers of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and border guard units of the People's Armed Police (PAP) disarmed them, removed their uniforms and provided blue work suits, then took them to well guarded camps on Chinese territory. At the same time that Chinese security forces were disarming these foreign soldiers, civilian officials from Yunnan province swung into action, setting up camps, housing and feeding many of the 37,000 civilian refugees that also fled to China for safety. With considerable professionalism, China averted one of the largest refugee and security crises to occur on its borders since 1979, when over a quarter-million refugees fled Vietnam to southwest China.

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**China Security, Vol. 5 No. 3, 2009**  
**2009 World Security Institute**

China's response to the Kokang refugee crisis benefited from extensive planning and preparation, including stockpiles of pre-positioned relief supplies and a matrix of national, provincial and local-level plans to address hypothetical security and humanitarian crises. As the Myanmar border crisis unfolded, it became increasingly evident that a relatively small skirmish in a remote border area resulted in significant damage to Chinese interests, measured in economic losses to ethnic Chinese and Chinese citizens, as well as the security risks and cost of managing tens of thousands of refugees and armed soldiers crossing onto Chinese territory. Despite successfully defusing the crisis that spilled into Yunnan province, the events further stimulated an already vigorous debate about China's foreign policy and whether Deng Xiaoping's axiom of "hiding one's capabilities" is still appropriate for a rising power with growing international economic and security interests.<sup>1</sup> The Kokang crisis was more consequential than a theoretical discussion about Chinese foreign policy and interests abroad and in its border region. It became a substantial didactic test reflecting China's resolve to protect its territorial integrity and regional security interests, and indicated how China might respond to contingencies elsewhere, including on its troubled border with North Korea. Most importantly, however, the Kokang crisis has influenced an active debate about the future direction of Chinese foreign policy.

### THE FOREIGN POLICY DILEMMA

A corollary of China's rapid economic development, military modernization and integration in the global economy is a proliferation of Chinese national interests beyond its immediate borders. Where China once was isolated economically and politically, Chinese citizens and corporations make increasingly large international footprints, encouraged by national policies such as "go abroad." On its southwestern border, historic ethnic Chinese migration and more recent promotion of border trade as a diplomatic tool contributed to large numbers of ethnic Chinese and citizens of the People's Republic of China settling in northern Myanmar. The outbreak of violence in Myanmar's Kokang region, where ethnic Chinese have lived in relative peace and autonomy from Naipidaw for the past 20 years, highlighted what little influence China wields only a few kilometers beyond its borders. As overseas Chinese businesses were looted and the ethnic Chinese Kokang army was routed by Myanmar's army, some commentators in China were left wondering why China did not do more to protect its interests. Angry bloggers argued that a "big country" such as China should not satisfy itself with solemn representations by a foreign ministry spokesperson. Some called for a reassessment of the fundamental maxim of China's foreign policy—noninterference in the internal affairs of other nations—while others declared that "keeping a low profile" kept China at a disadvantage. At the extreme, one group advocated Chinese compatriots to take up arms against Myanmar and join a "Chinese-Kokang Alliance."<sup>2</sup>

Despite apparent frustration in some circles with China's current approach to protecting its interests abroad, a retooling of China's foreign policy is underway in Beijing. In July, President Hu Jintao gave a seminal speech to a conclave of Chinese

diplomats that has been characterized as a new concept for Chinese foreign policy, albeit one in keeping with Deng Xiaoping Theory. Calling on Chinese diplomats to carry out a foreign policy that is “politically more influential, economically more competitive, image more pleasing, and morally more appealing,” analysts of Chinese foreign policy are busy studying what this new formulation will mean for the expansion of Chinese influence abroad.<sup>3</sup> However, in the case of the crisis that unfolded on the Yunnan border, it was apparent that China was not prepared to intervene and involve itself in what it considered to be the internal affairs of a sovereign neighboring state, even if the events outside its borders threatened overseas Chinese and created a security threat on Chinese territory. Responding to calls that China intervene in Kokang, a former Chinese ambassador to Myanmar briefed journalists, reminding them that the Kokong conflict was Myanmar’s internal affair and that China would not send troops.<sup>4</sup>

### THE EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEM IN ACTION

The unrest that spilled out of Myanmar into China was effectively contained by civilian and military authorities, who have conducted extensive planning and preparation for exactly these types of situations. There is no question that the magnitude of the crisis that unfolded in Myanmar posed a serious security threat to China and Chinese interests. In addition to 37,000 refugees and several hundred Kokang soldiers who sought refuge in the border area in Yunnan, Chinese official sources announced that at least one Chinese citizen had been killed in Myanmar, along with another on Chinese soil due to errant fire.<sup>5</sup> Soon after fighting broke out on Aug. 8 in Kokang, authorities in China mobilized to deal with the influx of refugees, and eventually soldiers, who began to cross the border. PLA soldiers moved towards the border to re-enforce the PAP border security units, which are under a civilian chain of command, while Chinese civilian officials followed a relatively new playbook for responding to crises made up of a framework of national, provincial and local-level planning tools.

Chinese emergency planning was jumpstarted by the government’s chaotic response to the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in late 2002 and spring 2003. Realizing that the Beijing Olympics were approaching, the central government set deadlines and led efforts to establish a system of plans and responses to natural disasters and “sudden incidents,” such as civil unrest or industrial accidents. Natural disasters alone are estimated to affect an average of 200 million people in China annually.<sup>6</sup> The establishment of the sudden incident and disaster response system was tested by four high-profile crises in the first half of 2008: snow and ice storms in southern China in January; protests on the Tibetan plateau in March; the outbreak of hand, foot and mouth disease in Anhui in April; and the May 12 Sichuan earthquake. All of these crisis events seriously challenged China’s emergency response capabilities. The central point for this emergency planning and response system established by the State Council is the “National Emergency Con-

tingency Plan for Public Events,” which was formally issued on Jan. 8, 2006.<sup>7</sup> The “Sudden Incident Law” was enacted in late 2007.<sup>8</sup> In May 2004, the State Council also instructed each of the 31 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities to formulate their own emergency response plans. Taken together, the whole system of emergency plans is divided into multiple levels, including the national plan, 25 specialized emergency plans, 80 cabinet-department emergency plans and local emergency plans.<sup>9</sup> This system provides general guidelines for dealing with different types of emergencies, which are categorized into natural disasters, major industrial accidents, public health emergencies and social safety incidents. All emergencies are assigned one of four classification levels, with Level I designated as the most severe, dealing with especially significant incidents. Less severe crises are designated as: Level II, significant incidents; Level III, relatively significant incidents; and the least severe, Level IV, which covers general incidents.

Among the 25 specialized emergency plans there is the “National Emergency Plan on Sudden Incidents Involving Foreigners,” issued in 2005 as part of the Olympic Games planning process, which deals with incidents affecting foreign interests in China, including refugee crises. The national plan was soon followed by provincial, municipal and county-level plans tailored to local conditions. Yunnan province’s corresponding provincial plan is not publicly available, but a summary was released in April 2008 and several counties in the border region have widely disseminated their plans since 2006.<sup>10</sup> According to clear criteria established in the national plan, the Kokang crisis was classified as a “Level 1” incident,<sup>11</sup> requiring the establishment of an on-site incident response headquarters and “unified leadership” provided by the State Council. Minister of Public Security Meng Jianzhu was detailed to oversee the handling of the crisis and sent to Yunnan. Five priorities were established, including securing the border and transportation routes, resourcing to address evolving challenges, addressing the needs of refugees, mobilizing grassroots organizations, controlling information flow and preventing the spread of rumors.<sup>12</sup>

The sudden influx of large numbers of refugees placed great pressure on local governments at the main border crossings. While many refugees stayed with family relations in China or found other accommodations, the Yunnan government opened seven refugee camps and supplied humanitarian aid to an estimated 13,000 refugees, setting up more than 1,000 tents and providing 10 million yuan (about US\$1.46 million) worth of food, drinking water and medical aid.<sup>13</sup> Government tents, marked with the words “Civil Affairs Disaster Relief” on their UN-blue fabric were visible evidence of the government’s investment in planning for major humanitarian crises, including the pre-positioning of disaster relief materials in provincial capitals and disaster-prone areas. Inside the camps, which were set up in construction sites and unoccupied buildings, evidence pointed to effective cooperation between civilian agencies such as the Civil Affairs Bureau, responsible for provision of relief supplies and interagency coordination, and other organizations including the PAP, which provided security in the camps. Yunnan public health workers from

the Center for Disease Control and doctors from the Second Affiliated Hospital of Kunming Medical College placed medical workers in the refugee camps to provide medical care and prevent disease outbreaks.<sup>14</sup> Refugees reportedly were pleased with the arrangements, indicating that the food allowance of 8 RMB (USD \$1.33) per day was adequate and their needs were met. For those refugees who fled in vehicles across the border, guarded parking lots were established.<sup>15</sup> By early September, refugees were reportedly beginning to return to Myanmar, indicating that conditions in Kokang were improving and that China had successfully addressed a significant and potentially disruptive security challenge.<sup>16</sup>

### IMPLICATIONS FOR A NORTH KOREA CONTINGENCY

China's preparations and response to the refugee crisis in Yunnan have clear implications for how it might address contingencies on another problematic border: North Korea. Yunnan's relatively successful handling of the crisis should validate existing national and local contingency plans while providing valuable lessons that can be shared with local authorities in Jilin and Liaoning provinces, which together share a 1,300 km border with North Korea. The successful incident response in Yunnan should give confidence to officials and planners that they have a feasible, tested framework for addressing refugee crises or other humanitarian disasters in their border regions. The lessons learned from the Myanmar incident are applicable to potential North Korean scenarios in some respects, while it is unique in others.

Like the Kokang district and Yunnan, there are historic ethnic, cultural and economic links between North Korea and the Chinese provinces that border it. This is particularly true for Jilin Province's Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture where 800,000 Chinese-Koreans reside and the Korean language is widely spoken. With a 522 kilometer land border defined by the narrow and shallow Tumen River, Yanbian is a preferred destination for North Koreans seeking to either cross the border illegally or conduct legitimate business. The city of Dandong in Liaoning province is another major border crossing where extensive trade is conducted; however, the Yalu River in this section is wider, deeper and well-patrolled, making illegal crossings difficult when the river is not frozen over. When North Korea was struck by famine in the mid-1990s, as many as 300,000 North Koreans sought refuge in China, primarily in Yanbian Prefecture.<sup>17</sup> Should another catastrophe befall North Korea, whether a natural disaster or political crisis, Yanbian Prefecture will likely be a critical zone in Chinese mobilization efforts to ensure security and prevent a humanitarian crisis from spreading into China.

Like the Myanmar refugee crisis, it is possible that armed security forces from North Korea will attempt to cross into China. While the defeated Kokang army did not challenge Chinese security forces, it is uncertain how North Korean soldiers might react in different circumstances. Sporadic incidents of organized armed robbery currently occur in the border area, raising fears that armed North Koreans fleeing into China might refuse to voluntarily disarm and resort to banditry on Chinese territo-

ry. Regardless of the intentions of North Koreans crossing the border, however, local authorities have undoubtedly made extensive preparations to address both security and humanitarian requirements in the event of a contingency. Like the Yunnan section of the Myanmar border, the PLA “took over the defense of the China-DPRK border” in 2003, in contrast with the rest of China’s land borders, where PAP border guards have primary responsibility for border security.<sup>18</sup> Extensive infrastructure investments in Jilin and Liaoning provinces underpin economic growth and border trade, as well as increase border security and the mobility of border forces. In addition to security investments, local governments have similarly invested in planning to address potential future humanitarian crises involving large numbers of refugees. The central and local governments have stockpiled relief materials, including tents, food and medical supplies. Like Yunnan province, Jilin and Liaoning provinces have a matrix of detailed contingency plans, along with well-defined reporting chains and responsibilities assigned to local government offices and agencies.

The Yunnan crisis additionally provides insights into how China might manage the international community in the event of a crisis on the border with North Korea. Controlling access to affected areas and managing the flow of information are considered vitally important tasks for the government when mounting an incident response. The Chinese government learned valuable lessons following the riots that occurred in Tibet in 2008 and Xinjiang in 2009 and have developed what appears to be a new strategy for information management. Unlike the Tibet riots, domestic and foreign media were permitted to visit riot-torn areas in Xinjiang, just as media were permitted to visit border towns in Yunnan where refugees were held. Not to be confused with a “new openness,” media access remained tightly controlled by authorities; internet reporting was censored, propaganda officials made clear to Chinese media what topics were off limits, while press conferences provided statistical data and the official interpretation of events. Some on-the-ground reporting was permitted, creating a steady flow of “accurate” reporting that generates less resentment towards the government and their perspective among the media than an outright blackout. This recent evolution of Chinese strategy from attempts to prevent all negative reporting to more subtle techniques of information management, or Western-style “spin,” has thus far been relatively successful and will likely be practiced in future crises.

In addition to the media, international aid agencies, NGOs and assorted advocates consider themselves stakeholders in any humanitarian crisis. While the Yunnan refugee crisis did not spark an outpouring of donations for relief work, there was unrequited interest on the part of international aid agencies to actively participate. Much as they have been blocked from visiting the China-North Korea border in the past, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was denied access to the refugee camps in Yunnan and expressed frustration publicly in early September.<sup>19</sup> It is safe to conclude that there would be relatively greater international interest in a

refugee crisis should it unfold on the China-North Korea border. US human rights and humanitarian organizations, along with a wide array of South Korean groups, such as evangelical Christians, consider themselves significant stakeholders in such a situation, directly contravening Chinese principles espousing non-interference in what they would describe as an internal affair. Chinese government officials are extremely reluctant to engage international civil society, particularly during sensitive periods, and are unlikely to allow any meaningful access or direct role for international groups. Successful management of contingencies, such as the Yunnan refugee response, will bolster arguments that China is capable of managing a refugee crisis on the North Korean border without international participation other than donations of funds and relief goods. However, while the similarities between the Kokang crisis and possible contingencies on the North Korea border are reassuring, there are a number of factors which will make a North Korean incident potentially much more challenging for China to contain.

One glaring difference is the potential volume of refugees that could seek to cross into China in the event of sudden changes in North Korea. In the case of the Kokang refugee crisis, over 20 percent of the district's population fled to China due to fighting that was geographically contained. The four North Korean provinces bordering China contain over 7 million inhabitants, an unknown number of whom would elect to cross into China if security conditions in the DPRK deteriorate. The potential ramifications of a small percentage of North Koreans fleeing, particularly from a heavily populated province such as North Hamgyon, with 2.3 million inhabitants, could quickly overwhelm Chinese resources on its own side of the border.

Should North Korea collapse in dramatic fashion, a refugee crisis will be one of several challenges that China will face. Of course, China is expected to do what it can to prevent such a collapse. Should it occur, however, immediate Chinese priorities would include securing fissile materials from the DPRK's nuclear program and restoring law and order, which would contribute to efforts that prevent refugees and "chaos" from crossing the border. China's broad security interests in North Korea are considerably deeper than Myanmar, which will be a significant factor in how China responds to a crisis that rapidly unfolds there. While Myanmar has its own strategic importance to China as a source of energy and a land-bridge to the Indian Ocean, it has not historically served as an invasion route into China's core, nor does it act as a buffer between China and regional rivals. North Korea holds historic and contemporary strategic implications for China, each of which would contribute to Beijing's strategic calculations. Additionally, contemporary Korean claims of kinship to ancient kingdoms that once ruled over what is now Chinese territory raises concerns in Beijing that a realignment of power on the peninsula could lead to concerted attempts to redraw national boundaries—a direct threat to Chinese territorial integrity and core national interests.<sup>20</sup> Should North Korea collapse, however unlikely that scenario may be, China would be very concerned about US or South Korean security forces moving northward, even if their stated mission is described as humanitar-

ian in nature. It is certain that China would not tolerate US or South Korean troops approaching the Chinese border and such a development might trigger Chinese intervention. The United States and China have reportedly held discreet talks on this issue and provided assurances to one another that neither would intervene in the event of turmoil in North Korea.<sup>21</sup> If true, such an understanding significantly reduces the possibility of miscalculation and the prospect that a sudden crisis in North Korea could expand into a regional conflict.

Both US and Chinese understandings about how to respond to turmoil in North Korea would have to take into account developments beyond their control. If North Korean troops were to provocatively advance towards China during a crisis, China would be forced to make a decision whether or not to send its own troops across the border in order to maintain a strategic buffer and prevent both refugees and any armed forces from approaching Chinese territory. Patriotic Chinese bloggers have called for China to adopt a more assertive approach to neighboring countries that challenge its interests and create security threats on Chinese soil. Some bloggers have called for Chinese troops to intervene to protect Chinese interests and establish refugee camps on the opposite side of “troubled borders,” whether in Myanmar or North Korea, in order to interdict refugees before they can reach China.<sup>22</sup> While these presumably fringe citizen voices are assumed to have little or no direct influence on Chinese foreign policy-making, they do reflect widely-held, though more moderate beliefs amongst average citizens, elites and intellectuals that China’s rising affluence and influence should be supported by an assertive and more decisive foreign policy that effectively protects Chinese domestic and international interests. It is precisely in China’s border regions where Beijing is most likely to initially project its power, because threats are closest to home and close proximity enables a cautious or controlled effort that can be supported by China’s limited logistics capacity.

### MILESTONES IN FOREIGN POLICY

China’s response to the security and refugee crisis that emerged on the Myanmar-Yunnan border in August 2009 demonstrated China’s growing capacity to respond to security and humanitarian crises in its border region. China has made extensive investments in planning and committed resources to mitigate a similar security and refugee crisis, should one occur on the border with North Korea. Undoubtedly, China has gained valuable experience from managing the Yunnan crisis, which will be applied to future contingency planning exercises and responses. Unlike in the United States and Europe, Chinese organizations are less experienced internationally and have not actively collaborated with Western agencies, which have extensive experience managing large-scale humanitarian crises globally. China has therefore benefited little from global experiences, either directly or indirectly through collaboration. Events such as the Yunnan incident are consequently all the more valuable for Chinese planners and policy-makers when deciding on important directions about strategy, investments and resourcing for future contingencies.

Furthermore, events such as the Kokang refugee crisis are important milestones in Chinese foreign policy and an indicator that the future of China's low profile diplomacy will be likely challenged by other crises in China's border regions that threaten Chinese interests. Efforts to secure China's borders through investments in economic development, including infrastructure in the border region funded through government programs, such as "Develop the West," and its border development component, the "Prosperous Border Rich People Program," along with promotion of cross-border trade that enriches populations on both sides, have been generally quite successful. However, this strategy has met with limited success along the Myanmar and North Korea frontiers, necessitating hedging strategies.<sup>23</sup> Maintaining large troop presences in these vulnerable border areas, stockpiling relief supplies and preparing for contingencies are one measure China already takes.

Still, the most significant development, one that will affect the United States and the rest of the world, is an adjustment in China's foreign policy that reflects its growing strength and the need to protect its expanding global interests. Prospective new Chinese foreign policy strategies are not necessarily something for the rest of the world to fear or specifically hedge against, and it is likely that any visible shifts will be incremental, rather than dramatic rejections of policy principles that have served China well for many decades. A more assertive China that is willing to wield its power abroad in a constructive fashion could be very beneficial to US and neighboring countries' interests, as well as contribute to maintaining world peace, assuming that China is respectful of existing norms. China's contributions to anti-piracy patrols off the coast of Africa are a good example, as are China's growing contributions to UN peacekeeping operations. Other opportunities exist for China to apply its growing capacity to address a wide range of global security challenges, while still adhering to its foreign policy principles. China's potential contributions could range from participating in joint civil-military humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions, to demining former conflict zones and supporting post-conflict reconstruction efforts in vital countries, such as Afghanistan and Iraq.

Ideally, China can also be encouraged to work more closely with international actors and actively collaborate, rather than simply work in parallel, thereby building mutual trust and confidence, particularly in areas where China and the international community share genuine interests, such as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions. Chinese scholars are already arguing that such global deployments are in keeping with current prescriptions to "bide time and hide one's strength." However, China will have to continue to carefully balance its efforts to be "politically more influential" and still keep a low profile so as not to alarm the United States and neighbors about its growing might. In this light, the quick resolution of a refugee crisis in a remote region on China's border could have significant implications for not only the next crisis to erupt somewhere else on China's periphery, but on the evolution of China's foreign policy and how it interacts with the rest of the world. 🌐

NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Deng Xiaoping's famous 24 character axiom is, "Observe calmly; secure our position; cope with affairs calmly; hide our capacities and bide our time; be good at maintaining a low profile; and never claim leadership." [冷静观察, 站稳脚跟, 沉着应付, 韬光养晦, 善于守拙, 绝不当头.]

<sup>2</sup> Blogs and Web sites, such as <<http://huaguo.org>>, which attempted to recruit Chinese to take up arms and re-claim Kokong appeared the first week of September and were removed shortly thereafter. An English-language blog posted a widely circulated letter calling for volunteers with military experience to join the "Global Chinese-Kokang United Alliance." Accessed by the author on September 10, 2009 at <[http://www.danwei.org/internet/a\\_call\\_for\\_chinese\\_to\\_take\\_up.php](http://www.danwei.org/internet/a_call_for_chinese_to_take_up.php)>.

<sup>3</sup> 王廷连 [Wang Tinglian], "总书记“四个更有力”为中国外交指明了方向" [President Hu's speech of "striving for more political influence, more economic competitiveness, a more friendly image, moral appeal, and building a well-off society is the direction for China's diplomacy"], 中国共产党新闻网 [CCP News Online], July 21, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> "缅甸果敢闹战事 中国不出兵" [China Will Not Dispatch Troops to Myanmar], 东方早报 [Oriental Post], Aug. 29, 2009.

<sup>5</sup> "Myanmar Conflict Subsiding," *Global Times*, Aug. 31, 2009.

<sup>6</sup> "Disaster Emergency Management in China," (Total Disaster Risk Management, Asian Disaster Reduction Center, 2005), 72.

<sup>7</sup> "授权发布:国家突发公共事件总体应急预案" [Authorized Release: Overall Emergency Plan for National Sudden Public Incidents], 新华网 [Xinhua] Jan. 8, 2006.

<sup>8</sup> "中华人民共和国突发事件应对法," [The Law of the People's Republic of China on Emergency Response], 新华网 [Xinhua], Aug. 30, 2007.

<sup>9</sup> 地方应急预案; James Bellacqua, "Crisis Response in Action: Examining the Implementation of China's Emergency Response Plans," CNA, October 10, 2008. See also: "突发公共事件应急预案编制与管理" [The Planning and Management of Emergency Preplanning for Sudden Public Incidents], 广东省人民政府应急管理办公室 [Emergency Management Office, the People's Government of Guangdong Province], Nov. 27, 2007.

<sup>10</sup> See, "省处置涉外突发事件应急预案简本" [Brief Edition of Emergency Preplan of Provincial Response to Sudden Foreign Affairs]; "国家涉外突发事件应急预案" [National Emergency Plan for Sudden Foreign Incidents]; and Lancang Lahu Autonomous County's plan released on July 31, 2006. The Lancang county plan specifically addresses refugee crises caused by fighting in neighboring countries. Ironically, the national plan was released on August 8, 2005, three years to the day before the opening ceremony of the Olympics, and four years from the outbreak of fighting in Kokong.

<sup>11</sup> Any incident involving 500 or more foreigners or refugees entering China qualifies as Level 1.

<sup>12</sup> "中央派孟建柱赴中缅边境一线指导维稳," 人民网, Aug. 30, 2009.

<sup>13</sup> "Kokang in Conflict," *Beijing Review*, Sept. 10, 2009.

<sup>14</sup> "南伞难民点帐篷开始拆卸 仍有边防官兵巡逻(图)" [Refugees Tents removed in Nansan, Border Patrol Still On], 华商网-新文化报, Sept. 2, 2009. <<http://news.sohu.com/20090902/n266379448.shtml>>.

<sup>15</sup> Interview, Sept. 9, 2009. See also, "缅甸炮弹落入中国致一死多伤" [Myanmar Bomb Fell in China, One Dead More Injured], 南方都市报 [Nanfang City News], Aug. 30, 2009. (Note: While

a ration of 8 RMB per day may seem low, it is comparable to the PLA's daily ration which was increased from 11 to 15 RMB in July 2009.)

<sup>16</sup> "Over 7,800 Myanmar border inhabitants return to Kokang after fightings [sic] end," *Xinhua*, Sept. 3, 2009.

<sup>17</sup> Rhoda Margesson, Emma Chanlett-Avery and Andorra Bruno, "North Korean Refugees in China and Human Rights Issues: International Response and U.S. Policy Options," *Congressional Research Service*, Sept. 26, 2007.

<sup>18</sup> 2006 Defense White Paper published by the Ministry of National Defense. Accessed at <http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/book/194476.htm>

<sup>19</sup> "China: UNHCR calls for access to Myanmar refugees," *UNHCR Briefing Notes*, September 4, 2009.

<sup>20</sup> Carla Freeman and Drew Thompson, "The Real Bridge to Nowhere: China's Foiled North Korea Strategy," *USIP*, April 2009.

<sup>21</sup> "US, China Agreed Not to Send Troops to NK," *The Korea Times*, Aug. 15, 2009.

<sup>22</sup> 到朝鲜边患，难民营应该建在境外 [Guard from Burma to North Korea's troubled frontier, Refugee camps should be built beyond our borders], blog posted Sept. 1, 2009 at <<http://str.chinaiiss.com/content/2009-9-1/1132754.shtml>>. See also: Yan Hua, "缅甸！中国不能再沦丧" [Myanmar! China Can No Longer be Destitute], blog posted Aug. 29, 2009 at <http://blog.dwnews.com/?p=56852&cp=2>

<sup>23</sup> See: Carla Freeman and Drew Thompson, "The Real Bridge to Nowhere."