Victor Asal  
Political Science

Sponsor: U.S. Army Research Office  
Amount: $148,724

Natural Resources and Armed Conflict

Overall Project: Team members will use the dataset created for this project to conduct analyses that strengthen our collective understanding of how resources influence armed conflict.

Victor Asal's primary duty will be to assist in the research leading to publishing a paper on this topic:

Does the presence of “lootable” resources increase the likelihood or duration of ethnic or regional rebellion? Proposal team members argue in a working paper (Asal, Piazza, and Walsh, 2011) that resources alone are unlikely to lead to rebellion. Instead, ethnic groups that have been subjected to systematic discrimination and have access to lootable resources are more likely to engage in violence. Existing data are not sufficiently detailed to allow us to determine precisely which resources contribute to conflict or if such resources contribute to conflict only if they are located in areas where members of the ethnic minority reside in large numbers. We will address these issues with statistical analysis of conflict onset and duration by ethnic groups around the world using discrimination, control of different types of resources, and their interaction as key independent variables.