

problems of urban development could exacerbate tensions between urban and rural populations, if the rural population sees itself as footing more than its fair share of the bill. In countries with meagre safety nets and a large degree of polarization in incomes, political and social stability could erode or even totally collapse. It is unlikely that such events would have positive spillovers for the environment.

Population growth, rapid urbanization and local and possibly global environmental decay could prove to be a volatile mix. But how this pressure will appear in the future is highly speculative. This is so for three reasons. First, there is no scientific consensus on how environments respond to degradation; no widely accepted forecast of the environmental effects of global warming. Second, as mentioned earlier, population forecasts are prone to uncertainty. Third, assumptions on the advancement and deployment of technology can greatly change any forecast of future environmental stress. In short, there is little certainty on how some unknown future population will contribute to environmental stress. Nevertheless, to the degree that environmental stress is caused by population growth, and to the degree environmental stress contributes to violence, family planning programs may have a role in lessening the potential for violence.

## 6. Environmental Stress and Population Migration

Arguably the mass movement of population may create a national security concern. Immigration, by increasing the number of people, regardless of race or ethnicity, may be seen as contributing to environmental problems in the receiving country. As described in the analytical framework, environmental stress has the potential to generate violence. But there is also a second potential national security concern.<sup>39</sup> The movement of people is sometimes alleged to contribute to the change or instability of existing social institutions, cultural norms, etc., and some members of the receiving society consider such a development a threat to their national security. Whether such social change is really a national security issue is

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<sup>39</sup>Gil Loescher has made two important observations. First: "Refugees and migrants present political and security problems for the domestic politics of the receiving state. The host populations will be on the watch for any threat to its own interests or, more generally, to the impact of immigrants on the political and social complexion of their country." Second: "Refugees can also be sources of international conflict. Offering sanctuary and support to migrants and refugees frequently incurs military retaliation and draws asylum countries into the turmoil. In many Third World regions of conflict, fighters often mingle with refugee populations, using their camps for rest and medical treatment, and sometimes for recruitment." Gil Loescher, "Refugee Movements and International Security", *Adelphi Papers*, 268, Summer 1992, pp. 48 and 50.