

John Bolton Subverts The UN Charter

by Mike Billington

Yet another crime against international law was committed by the Bush Administration on Sept. 15 at the United Nations, when John Bolton, the U.S. Ambassador to the UN, succeeded in coercing enough members of the Security Council, by one means or another, to pass a motion placing the nation of Myanmar on the Security Council agenda. Bolton acknowledged in his press conference announcing his victory that “the Charter of the UN makes it clear that the jurisdictional threshold for the Security Council to take action is that it must deal with threats to international peace and security, or breaches of international peace and security, or acts of aggression.” The idea that Myanmar is a “threat to international peace and security” is so patently absurd, that the nine nations which voted with Bolton (the vote was 10-4, with one abstention) should be considered accomplices to the crime.

Not only is Myanmar a poor nation with no capacity to threaten any of its neighbors; the fact is that all of its neighbors have recently strengthened their relations with Myanmar, both economically and strategically. This move by Bolton and the Bush/Cheney Administration is not aimed at Myanmar *per se*, but at the United Nations Charter itself. The notion of national sovereignty, based on the principles developed in the Peace of Westphalia of 1648, embedded in the Constitution of the United States, and inscribed in the Charter of the United Nations, is the target of Bolton’s manipulations. The powers of the Security Council, established by the UN Charter, were carefully delineated to defend the principle of the sovereign nation-state, and it is this concept which is targeted for destruction by the financial institutions which control the current regime in Washington, through the process of “globalization” and unilateral “regime change.”

Bolton’s Myanmar gambit is but a subsumed piece of that broader attack on the world’s *actual* peace and security. Although Russia and China, both permanent members of the Security Council with veto power, voted “no” on the Bolton motion, there is no veto in procedural votes. Thus, Bolton won his maneuver, knowing that no motion for sanctions against Myanmar could ever be implemented, because of opposition from veto-wielding Russia and China in any substantive vote.

China, in particular, was outraged by the fraud. China’s permanent representative to the United Nations, Wang Guangya, demanded an “objective evaluation of the relations between Myanmar’s internal situation and international peace and security,” noting that “neither Myanmar’s neighbors nor

the member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) consider Myanmar’s situation a threat to peace and security in the region.”

Regime Change

It is no secret that the reason for the Bolton’s strong-arm tactics is the fact that Myanmar is on the neo-conservative target list for regime change, a list whose purpose is to maintain the division of the world into “us and them.” Although Myanmar wasn’t included in Bush’s “Axis of Evil” (Iraq, Iran, and North Korea), Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice did include Myanmar in her “outposts of tyranny.”

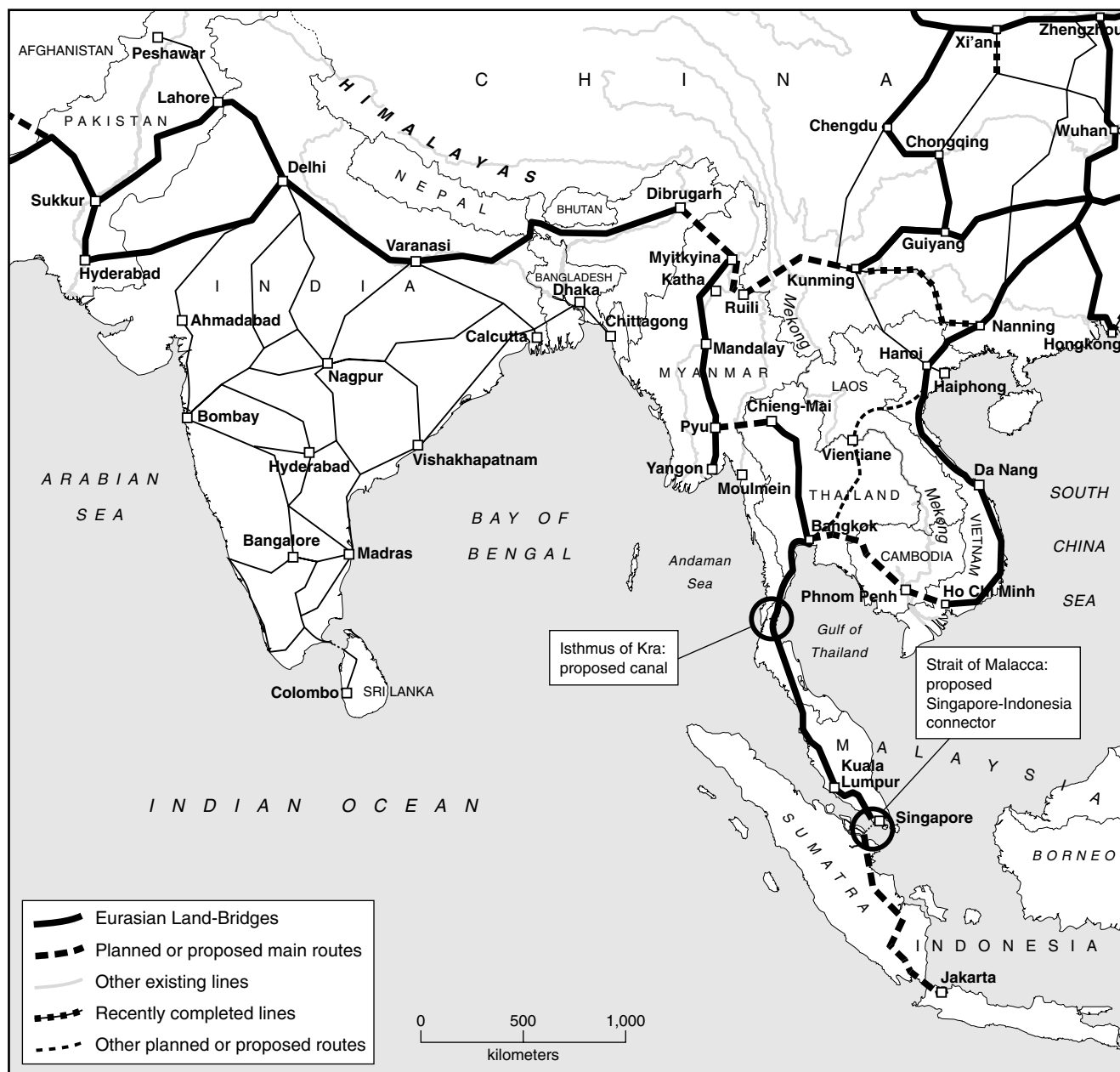
The reasons used by Bolton for subverting the UN Charter in the Myanmar case expose the ironies of the imperial outlook of the Bush-Cheney Administration. Bolton argues that Myanmar (which he insists on calling by its previous name “Burma,” as an insult to the Myanmar government) constitutes a “threat to international peace and security, because of the flows of refugees, illicit narcotics, HIV/AIDS, and the human rights situation inside Burma.” The refugee problem affects primarily Myanmar’s eastern neighbor Thailand, which has not only established close relations with Myanmar, but is grateful for the fact that the Myanmar government has nearly eliminated the rebellions among the many ethnic tribes on the border. Even more important, the pacification of the ethnic rebellions has allowed the massive reduction in the drug trafficking which sustained those insurgencies—with much more than a “wink and a nod” from the rebels’ sponsors in London and New York. Compare Myanmar’s largely successful drug control to that of Afghanistan, a nation occupied by the United States, which now produces 95% of the world’s opium, mostly by the druglords placed in power under U.S. aegis.

As to the internal political problems, Myanmar’s policy to implement a seven-point road map toward civilian rule has been in place for several years, and is acknowledged by its neighbors in China, India, Bangladesh, and Thailand, but has been totally rejected by the U.S., which holds up the convenient banner of the human rights of dissident Aung San Suu Kyi. For Myanmar, it is not Aung San Suu Kyi who represents a threat, but her Anglo-American controllers, who would like to reimpose imperial power with Suu Kyi as their puppet.

The imperial target is geostrategic, as Myanmar is the strategic hub between South Asia, East Asia, and Southeast Asia. What worries Washington is the growing collaboration between Myanmar and the three powers of the Eurasian continent. China is by far the closest ally of Myanmar, with extensive trade and transportation links along the old Burma Road, and extensive investment throughout the country. But Russia, and especially India, are also becoming more engaged in developing the huge potential in Myanmar.

On the very day that Bolton was playing the thug at the UN, Myanmar Oil and Gas was signing contracts for exploration and development of the Mottama offshore field with Russia’s Itera Oil and Gas and India’s Sun Group. India is building

Infrastructure in Myanmar and Its Neighbors



a road from Myanmar's northwest border to the old capital of Yangon, which will essentially complete road transport from Vietnam's coast through India to Europe, with rail development to follow. India also signed a counterinsurgency agreement with Myanmar, to clean up the border region of drug traffickers and the insurgent organization they support.

Thailand is also deeply committed to the development of roads, hydroelectric and oil and gas projects, and security cooperation with Myanmar. The recent military coup in Thailand is not likely to disrupt their relationship, as Thai Army

Chief Boonyaratglin visited Myanmar recently, and Myanmar's number two leader Maung Aye announced immediately after the Bangkok coup that he will visit Thailand soon.

Russia, China, India, and Southeast Asia, of course, represent nearly half the world's population. The era in which Bolton's demand that Myanmar, or any nation, must accept the demands of the "world community," when that means is the dictates of the small and shrinking number of supporters of the criminal Bush-Cheney cabal, is rapidly coming to an end. *Contact the author at mobeir@aol.com*