## Jnternational Boundary Study

 SERIES A LIMITS IN THE SEASStraight Baselines BURMA
MTMENT OR
STATES OF
BUREAU OF
INTELIGENCE
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ISSUED BY

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LIMITS IN THE SEAS
No. 14

STRAIGHT BASELINES: BURMA

The Geographer

## STRAIGHT BASELINES: BURMA

The Government of Burma, on November 15, 1968, declared that the territorial sea of the state would henceforth extend 12 nautical miles seaward from straight baselines. The text of the decree is as follows:

## MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

## Rangoon, the 15th November, 1968

The following declaration by the Chairman of the Revolutionary Council of the Union of Burma is published for general information:

WHEREAS International Law has always recognized that the sovereignty of a State extends to a belt of sea adjacent to its coast, AND WHEREAS international practice is not uniform as regards the extent of this sea belt commonly known as the territorial sea of the State, and consequently it is necessary to make a declaration as to the extent of the territorial sea of the Union of Burma, the Chairman of the Revolutionary Council of the Union of Burma hereby declares--

1. That notwithstanding any rule of law or practice to the contrary which may have been observed in the past relating to the Union of Burma or any part thereof, the territorial sea of the Union of Burma shall extend into the sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line.
2. Except as provided for in paragraph 3, the low-water line along the coast, as marked on large-scale charts officially recognized by the Government of the Union of Burma, shall be the base line for measuring the breadth of the territorial sea of the Union of Burma.
3. That where it is necessary by reason of the geographical conditions prevailing on the Union of Burma coasts, and for the purpose of safeguarding the vital economic interest of the inhabitants of the coastal regions, to establish the system of straight base lines drawn between fixed points on the mainland, on islands or rocks, the breadth of the territorial sea shall be measured from such base lines. The fixed points between which such straight base lines shall be drawn are indicated in detail in the schedule annexed to this declaration.
4. That where a single island, rock, or a composite group thereof, is situated seawards from the main coast or straight base lines, it shall have independent territorial sea extending twelve nautical miles from the low-water line along its coasts.

By order,
TUN SHEIN,
Secretary,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## SCHEDULE

## 1. ARAKAN COAST

(a) Southern Point of OYSTER ISLAND
(b) BORONGA POINT
(c) SOUTH TERRIBLES
(d)
(e)

Western Point of HENRY ROCKS
(e)
(f)

Western Point of NERBUDDA ISLAND
(g) NORTH WEST GROUP
(h)
(i)

KORONGE ISLAND
SOUTH ROCK
(j)

BLACK ROCK
(k)

ALGUADA REEF (PATHEIN LIGHT)

> Lat $20^{\circ} 11^{\prime} 49^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$ Long $92^{\circ} 32^{\prime} 19^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$ Lat $19^{\circ} 48^{\prime} 30^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$ Long $93^{\circ} 01^{\prime} 42^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$ Lat $19^{\circ} 22^{\prime} 56^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$ Long $93^{\circ} 16^{\prime} 20^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$ Lat $18^{\circ} 51^{\prime} 48^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$ Long $93^{\circ} 26^{\prime} 15^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$ Lat $18^{\circ} 20^{\prime} 50^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$ Long $93^{\circ} 56^{\prime} 25^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$ Lat $17^{\circ} 27^{\prime} 39^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$ Long $94^{\circ} 19^{\prime} 46^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$ Lat $16^{\circ} 55^{\prime} 28^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$ Long $94^{\circ} 12^{\prime} 45^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$ Lat $16^{\circ} 31^{\prime} 20^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$ Long $94^{\circ} 14^{\prime} 21^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$ Lat $16^{\circ} 18^{\prime} 55^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$ Long $94^{\circ} 11^{\prime} 20^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$ Lat $16^{\circ} 11^{\prime} 50^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$ Long $94^{\circ} 10^{\prime} 50^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$ Lat $15^{\circ} 42^{\prime} 13^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$ Long $0^{\circ}$

## 2. GULF OF MARTABAN

(a)
(b)
ALGUADA REEF (PATHEIN LIGHT)
Western Point of LONG ISLAND

> Lat $15^{\circ} 42^{\prime} 13^{\prime \prime} N$
> Long $94^{\circ} 12^{\prime} 6^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$ Lat $14^{\circ} 24^{\prime} 15^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$
> Long $97^{\circ} 46^{\prime} 02^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$
(b)
(c)
(d)
(e)
(f)
(g)
(h)
(j)
(k)

NORTH ISLAND
Western Point of LONG ISLAND
Northern Point of SAURIM ISLAND
Western Point of H. PRINCEP ISLAND
GREAT WESTERN TORRES
North Western Point of NORTH TWIN
Western Point of SOUTH TWIN
WESTERN ROCKY ISLAND
HAYCOCK ISLAND
Western Point of MURRAY ISLAND
Lat $14^{\circ} 09^{\prime} \quad \mathrm{N}$
Long $97^{\circ} 46^{\prime} 54^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$
Lat $12^{\circ} 48^{\prime} \mathrm{N}$
Long $97^{\circ} 50^{\prime} 03^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$
Lat $12^{\circ} 30^{\prime} 30^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$
Long $97^{\circ} 47^{\prime} 42^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$
Lat $12^{\circ} 03^{\prime} 03^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$
Long $97^{\circ} 38^{\prime} \mathrm{E}$
Lat $11^{\circ} 47^{\prime} 15^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$
Long $97^{\circ} 26^{\prime} 15^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$
Lat $10^{\circ} 38^{\prime} 14^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$
Long $97^{\circ} 41^{\prime} 45^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$
Lat $10^{\circ} 28^{\prime} 12^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$
Long $97^{\circ} 40^{\prime} 45^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$
Lat $9^{\circ} 51^{\prime} 24^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$
Long $97^{\circ} 52^{\prime} 18^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$
Lat $9^{\circ} 40^{\prime} 45^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$
Long $97^{\circ} 54^{\prime} 30^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$
Lat $9^{\circ} 35^{\prime} 54^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$
Long $97^{\circ} 58^{\prime} 12^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$
Long $97^{\circ} 466^{\prime \prime} 54^{\prime \prime}$ E
Lat $12^{\circ} 48^{\prime} \mathrm{N}$
Long $97^{\circ} 50^{\prime} 03^{\prime \prime}$ E
Lat $12^{\circ} 30^{\prime} 30^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$
Long $97^{\circ} 47^{\prime} 42^{\prime \prime}$ E
Lat $12^{\circ} 03^{\prime} 03^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$
Long $97^{\circ} 38^{\prime} \mathrm{E}$
Lat $11^{\circ} 47^{\prime} 15^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$
Long $97^{\circ} 26^{\prime} 15^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$
Lat $10^{\circ} 38^{\prime} 14^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$
Long $97^{\circ} 41^{\prime} 45^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$
Lat $10^{\circ} 28^{\prime} 12^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$
Long $97^{\circ} 40^{\prime} 45^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$
Lat $9^{\circ} 51^{\prime} 24^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$
Long $97^{\circ} 52^{\prime} 18^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$
Lat $9^{\circ} 40^{\prime} 45 " \mathrm{~N}$
Long $97^{\circ} 54^{\prime} 30^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$
Lat $9^{\circ} 35^{\prime} 54^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{N}$
Long $97^{\circ} 58^{\prime} 12^{\prime \prime} \mathrm{E}$

The straight baselines replace the low-water line of the coast with the exception of a narrow band in the north. This narrow band measures approximately 30 nautical miles in length and extends from the Pakistan boundary at the Naaf River to the point a) on Oyster Island. A brief analysis of the straight baselines, taken from large-scale nautical charts, follows: ${ }^{1}$

| Point | Length <br> (nautical miles) | Comments |
| :--- | :---: | :--- |
| Akaran Coast | 36.0 | Oyster Island is a small isolated island situated <br> approximately 11.4 nautical miles from the <br> mainland. The line a-b deviates from the general <br> trend of the coast by c. $14^{\circ}$. |
| $\mathrm{b}-\mathrm{b}$ | 30.1 | Boronga point is situated at the southern end of <br> Myengun Kyun (isl.). The entire coast from b-c is <br> infringed with islands. Line b-c Deviates from oast <br> at an angle of 12. |
| $\mathrm{c}-\mathrm{d}$ | 32.1 | The line c-d deviates at an angle of $18^{\circ}$ to enclose <br> the large island of Cheduba within the internal <br> waters of Burma. <br> This segment, $8^{\circ}$ from the general trend of the <br> coast, terminates at the southern end of the <br> heavily-fringed coastline. |

[^0]| $e-f$ | 57.0 | The straight baseline averages $18-20$ miles offshore. Few islands exist in the neighborhood of the segment although many are situated close to the shore. The line is approximately $12^{\circ}$ from the general trend of the mainland. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $f-\mathrm{g}$ | 33.0 | Same general situation but approximately 12 nautical miles from the shore and at an angle of $4^{\circ}$. |
| $\mathrm{g}-\mathrm{h}$ | 24.5 | Same general situation except approaching coast; angle is $15^{\circ}$ between segment and general trend. |
| h-I | 13.5 | Same but straight baseline now within 3 nautical miles of coast and angle is $2^{\circ}$. |
| i-j | 7.1 | Shortest length of straight baseline on the Arakan coast. Straight baseline forms an angle of c. $10^{\circ}$ to the general trend of the coast. The segment averages slightly less than 2 nautical miles from the coast. |
| j-k | 29.0 | The final point of the Arakan coast is situated on a reef, which has a lighthouse thereon, near the Irrawady delta -- 13.8 nautical miles from nearest land. Angle measures c. $12^{\circ}$ to the general coasta trend. |
| Gulf of Martaban |  |  |
| a-b | 222.3 | Point a is identical with the point k of the Arakan straight baseline. The closing line $a-b$ is the longest straight baseline encountered in the world. The first segment remains within $12^{\circ}$ of the trend of the delta but the eastern two-thirds deviates at an angle of $60^{\circ}$. At one point on the straight baseline, the nearest land is 75 nautical miles away and the mouth of the Sittang is over 120 nautical miles distant. |
| Tenasserim Coast |  |  |
| a-b | 15.5 | The straight baseline segment lies slightly over 12 nautical miles from the coast at angle of $11^{\circ}$ from its general direction. A large number of islands (+20) are situated close to the segment. |
| $b-c$ | 80.8 | In the north b-c averages nearly 20 nautical miles from the mainland at an angle of $13^{\circ}$ from its general direction. The number of islands is not great until south of the Savoy River ( $13^{\circ} 31^{\prime}$ North). |
| $c-d$ | 17.9 | A very large number of islands fringe the coast for the remainder of its extent southward. For the most part, the straight baseline joins the outermost points. Three islets in this sector, however, are seaward of the straight baseline. The angle to the coast is c. $9^{\circ}$. |
| $d-e$ | 29.0 | The angle increases to $19^{\circ}$ as the straight baseline extends to include outer islands. |


| $e-f$ | 19.2 | The angle is $38^{\circ}$ to the general trend of the coast. Basepoint $f$ is situated on a large island, over 75 miles from the mainland. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $f-\mathrm{g}$ | 71.1 | The number of islands in the vicinity of the straight baseline decreases markedly although many still fringe the coast. The angle of the straight baseline is $12^{\circ}$ to the general coastal trend. |
| $\mathrm{g}-\mathrm{h}$ | 10.1 | Same but the angle is $9^{\circ}$. |
| $\mathrm{h}-\mathrm{i}$ | 38.1 | The straight baseline draws nearer to the mainland (c. 38 n.m.) and to the fringing islands (c. 9 n.m.). The angle to the general trend of the coast is $\mathrm{c} .15^{\circ}$. |
| i-j | 10.8 | Same but the angle decreases to c. $10^{\circ}$. |
| j-k | 6.8 | The shortest segment of the straight baseline terminates the limits with the southernmost |
|  |  | Burmese island. Because the line is trending towards the shore the angle increases greatly, to nearly $40^{\circ}$. |
|  | 826.4 | iles |

The twenty-one straight baseline segments total 826.4 nautical miles, forming all but approximately 30 miles of the Burmese baseline. The average segment length is nearly 40 n.m. The maximum length is 222.3 n.m. which forms a closing line for the Gulf of Martaban. At no point does the straight baseline exceed seaward of the continental shelf of Burma. None of the base points are situated on the mainland of Burma. The ratio of water to land enclosed within the baselines is estimated to exceed 50:1.

Burma has not adhered to the Geneva Convention on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone.



[^0]:    ${ }^{1}$. Unfortunately, a nautical chart for the use of this study was not available. The attached map is a reproduction of a standard country map and many of the small islets, rocks, etc. have not been represented. The descriptions, based upon large-scale nautical charts, are more accurate.

