INSTITUTE OF STRATEGIC & INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (ISIS) MALAYSIA

focus

30th ASIA-PACIFIC ROUNDTABLE

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SPECIAL REPORT

PEACE & SECURITY DIALOGUE

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Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia

The Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia was established on 8 April 1983 as an autonomous, not-for-profit research organisation.

ISIS Malaysia has a diverse research focus which includes economics, foreign policy, security studies, nation-building, social policy, technology, innovation and environmental studies. It also undertakes research collaboration with national and international organisations in important areas such as national development and international affairs.

ISIS Malaysia engages actively in Track Two diplomacy, and promotes the exchange of views and opinions at both the national and international levels. The Institute has also played a role in fostering closer regional integration and international cooperation through forums and networks such as the Asia-Pacific Roundtable (APR), the ASEAN Institutes of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS), the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC), the Network of East Asian Think-Tanks (NEAT), the Network of ASEAN-China Think Tanks (NACT), the ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks (AINTT), and the Silk Road Think Tank Network (SiLKS). ISIS Malaysia is a founding member of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) and manages the Council's Secretariat.

As the country's premier think tank, ISIS Malaysia has been at the forefront of some of the most significant nation-building initiatives in Malaysia's history. It was a contributor to the Vision 2020 concept and was consultant to the Knowledge-Based Economy Master Plan initiative. It also produced the first ever National Interest Analysis to be undertaken on Malaysia's participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

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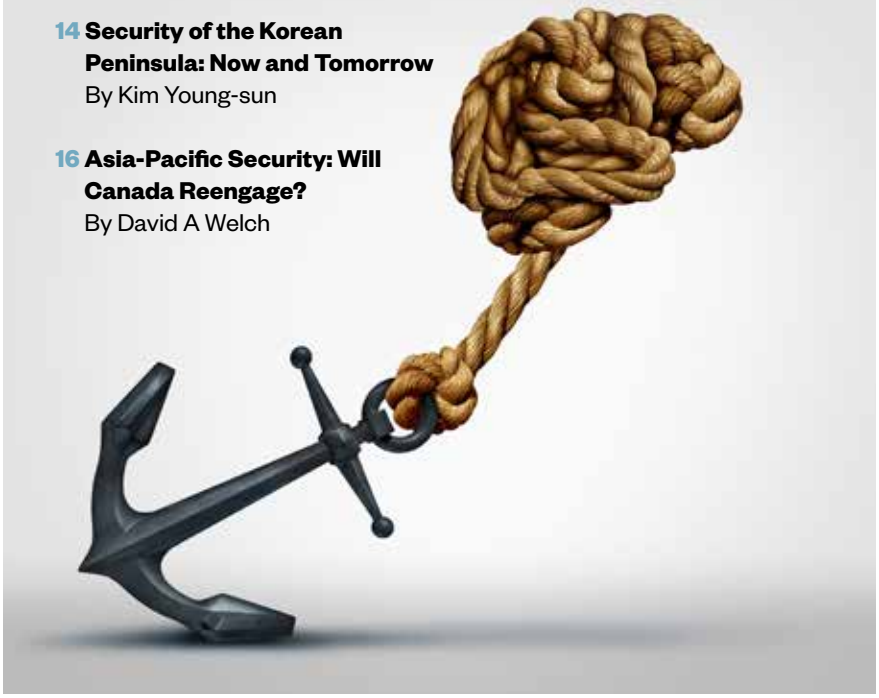

Editorial Letter

This edition of the ISIS Focus is devoted to the Asia-Pacific Roundtable (APR). The 30th anniversary of the APR is being observed by ISIS Malaysia and ASEAN-ISIS in a commemorative conference referred to as APR@30.

The APR had its humble beginnings in 1987. The first APR, of no more than 50 participants, was convened in the conference room at ISIS Malaysia's premises. The APR has since grown in terms of prestige, reputation and track record. From a modest attendance of less than 100 participants in the late 1980s, the APR has in recent years attracted over 300 participants from around the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

The APR is now recognised as one of the world's top 20 think tank annual security conferences. Throughout the decades, the APR has garnered unyielding support from successive Malaysian prime ministers and leaders from other countries and from scholars, officials, diplomats and media practitioners. The APR would also not have been made possible without the enthusiasm, commitment and assistance from partner organisations within Malaysia and from around the world.

This edition recognises not only the enduring tradition of the APR but, more importantly, the people – the role players and participants – who have raised the APR to its present stature and shaped it to its current form. Some of these people have been with the APR year in and year out without fail. At least one participant at APR@30 will be participating for the twenty-eighth time.

This issue features contributions from long-time "veterans" to "new-comers". They have sought to address specific issues that have impacted upon and continue to bear on the region's strategic and security environment. Here, we trace the landscape as it was thirty years ago and scan the horizon from Southeast Asia to Northeast Asia and from Canada to New Zealand. We also peer into the future with the upcoming US presidential elections and consider emerging security issues in cyber space. All these articles add to and complement what we hope will be a series of vibrant and substantive discussions during the APR@30, under the theme, "Cooperation and Contestation in a Changing Regional Landscape".

On behalf of the editorial team, I commend this special edition of ISIS Focus to our readers. I hope you enjoy reading its contents.

Tan Sri Rastam Mohd Isa
Chairman & Chief Executive of ISIS Malaysia

focus SPECIAL REPORT 30th Asia-Pacific Roundtable

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The Asia-Pacific Roundtable
– *time to move to the next level*

BY
MOHAMED JAWHAR HASSAN

The APR was conceived in the 1980s as a response to the unfolding strategic situation. The Cold War was receding. There was a need for rapprochement, healing wounds and building bridges. It was a time for dialogue and trust building, and Track Two forums that facilitated candid yet respectful exchanges were uniquely appropriate for this purpose. They could help trail blaze as well as supplement the more difficult government initiatives and Track One processes.

Over the years the APR has emerged as a leading forum for Track Two dialogue and discussion on regional security issues. It has earned for itself an enviable reputation and established a unique brand. Many outstanding minds and hands have helped guide it to where it is now. The most remarkable among them was Tan Sri Dr Noordin Sopiee. The APR is above all a product of his vision, creativity and zeal.

It is time now, however, to take the APR to the next level. To do this the APR can do at least two things. First, it must involve more of the top thought leaders in the security field in the APR process. It is not able to do this at present due to funding constraints for international air travel and local hospitality. The Malaysian government can play an important role in assisting here. For a very modest outlay, it can enhance its mission to promote international peace and security, at the national level by supporting ISIS Malaysia, and at the regional level by reinforcing the centrality of ASEAN through ASEAN-ISIS.

Second, the APR must progress beyond being a forum for dialogue and exchange of perspectives to become, as well, a venue for penetrative discourse on how to move forward on tackling critical impediments and challenges to greater regional peace and security. After thirty years of familiarisation and building comfort and trust levels among neighbours and major players, not only in the APR but also on several other regional platforms such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the Council for Security Cooperation in

From left to right: The Hon Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak and HRH Sultan Dr Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah

From left to right: The late Tun Hussein Dato' Onn with Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad

Former ISIS Malaysia Chairman and CEO the late Tan Sri Dr Noordin Sopiee

Mdm Fu Ying (China)

Prof Carolina G Hernandez (The Philippines)

Prof Desmond Ball (Australia)

Dr Kusuma Snitwongse (Thailand)

From left to right: Former ISIS Malaysia Chairman the late Tan Sri Zainal Abidin Sulong, the late Dr Robert A "Bob" Scalapino (USA), and HE Ambassador Alexander Nikolayevich Panov (then-USSR)

Mr Jusuf Wanandi (Indonesia)

Dr James A Boutilier (Canada)

the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) and the more recent ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus, the regional community is ready for more robust exploration of credible options for making tangible progress on some of the stubborn security problems afflicting it. These problems include the Korean Peninsula, territorial disputes, "violent extremism" and terrorism, resurgence of major power rivalry and the military build-up in the region.

This more rigorous examination of meaningful options will involve, for instance, reviewing pet assumptions about the North Korean threat and exploring credible alternatives to the fruitless Six Party Talks; challenging what have become mainstream narratives about the causes of violent extremism and the appeal and rise of the Daesh so that more appropriate and durable counter-measures can be introduced; and creating a more effective mechanism for holding accountable the perpetrators of war and conflict for the enormous human tragedies and environmental disasters they create, as a means of constraining the impulse to resort to the military option.

Moving to the next level does not entail overhauling the tried and tested APR model that has attracted such wide support and participation in the region. All that is required is preliminary working group or breakout sessions on specific topics that – critically – engage the appropriate mix of participants who are prepared to push the envelope and place the common regional good above narrow national and vested interests. These groups will report back at a plenary session. The conclusions can then be disseminated to all stakeholders, and in particular to governments and at platforms such as the ARF and ADMM Plus.

If the APR can foster this more vigorous phase of critical appraisal, solution-oriented approach and input into policymaking, it will become of greater relevance to the times. The Roundtable can then make more tangible and concrete contributions to advancing the cause of regional peace instead of remaining essentially a forum for knowledge-sharing and exchange of perspectives that has little apparent impact upon alleviating tensions and reducing hostilities in the region.

Tan Sri Mohamed Jawhar Hassan is the Non-Executive Chairman of the New Straits Times Press (Malaysia). He was previously also the Chairman and Chief Executive of ISIS Malaysia

LOOKING BACK... AND LOOKING FORWARD

The APR has had a wide and distinguished variety of attendees, participants and role players over the years. Here some of the most regular offer their recollections, highlights, opinions – and advice for the future

How has the security landscape in the Asia-Pacific evolved over the past three decades? What role has the APR had in these developments?

ONG KENG YONG The end of the Cold War and the subsequent fluidity of international relations had a significant impact on the security landscape of the Asia-Pacific. While the number of inter-state disputes has declined, and the spread of communism is no longer perceived as a serious threat, other forms of threat to the security of our people have surfaced. We are now faced with multi-faceted security challenges such as nuclear weapons proliferation, maritime security, terrorism, extremism, cybercrime, human trafficking and smuggling, climate change and natural disasters. Nonetheless, it is important to note that the situation in the Korean Peninsula and South China Sea have persisted over time with tensions going up and down. Technological progress has both facilitated and impeded these security threats. They are constantly evolving; and becoming increasingly unpredictable. Traditional military instruments of national security alone are insufficient to mitigate this expanded threat horizon. They require nations to cooperate and formulate non-traditional solutions to deal with the challenges.

By bringing together a few hundred participants every year, the APR has provided a platform for different groups of people with specific areas of expertise, influence and experience within the region to brainstorm and share ideas and perspectives to shape the regional security architecture. The APR also helps people dealing with security in the region to network and develop trust and confidence amongst them. Building relations with each other is imperative in managing the emerging transnational and borderless non-traditional security threats.

What have been the most memorable or controversial moments of the APR in your years of participating?

ROSS GARNAUT For me, it was the discussion within the APR of competing approaches to trade liberalisation within the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). The APR was influential in the development of the Western Pacific idea of Open Regionalism: regional cooperation to reduce trade barriers, without discrimination against outsiders. Open Regionalism contrasted with the Preferential Trade favoured within North America. Open Regionalism was the guiding idea of regional integration and then APEC from the mid-1980s until the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997-1998. This was the most productive period ever in trade liberalisation, expansion and economic growth within Southeast Asia. We learned how valuable Open Regionalism had been when the Asian Financial Crisis knocked international cooperation off course, leading to a twenty-first century era of preferential trade and eventually slower expansion of trade and economic activity. Here I should refer to the staunch work of the APR's Tan Sri Dr Noordin Sopiee in upholding Open Regionalism within the Eminent Persons Group established at the APEC heads of government meeting in the 1990s.

PAUL EVANS On one occasion when I was moderating a session, the North Korean participants refused to conclude a presentation, which required us to turn off the sound system and flash the overhead lights!

How do you see the regional security environment shaping over the next two to three decades?

JUSUF WANANDI The next two to three decades will be very critical to the peace and stability of East Asia. The balance of power is not yet something that could be considered as stable, due to the rise of China and the relative decline of the US presence in the region. Militarily the US is still the most powerful nation worldwide, but the Middle East still takes a much higher degree of priority. For a long time East Asia was considered to be a region of relative peace, so it was neglected to a large extent by the US until President Obama changed the tone. But his idea of a "pivot" or rebalancing to the Asia-Pacific has not been easy to implement. A rising China has become more impatient and assertive on a range of issues, especially on the East China Sea and the South China Sea disputes.

That is why having a regional security architecture in East Asia is critically important. Historically the US had the hub and spoke strategy in the form of a series of bilateral alliances, while China has only recently started to think about having an Asian security architecture with Russia and the Central Asian countries, which in the future would incorporate East Asia. The strategies of the two major powers are not inclusive of the other, and risk becoming confrontational in the future. That is why ASEAN thinks that the East Asian Summit (EAS), which includes both the US and China, could be a better alternative. Nonetheless, for the EAS to function properly, it needs a more capable and willing ASEAN as the organiser. It is not yet the case.

STEPHEN LEONG While the major powers will be here with their agendas, at the same time I see a keenness for middle powers to have their say. Australia, New Zealand, South Korea and even ASEAN can be regarded as middle powers. We have a niche to play and we should exercise those powers.

"We started with maybe about 50, then slowly we increased to nearly 300 participants. Because of the personalities who come that people want to listen to, the APR has attracted more and more from around the world"

Susan Teoh, former Director of Information Services at ISIS Malaysia

PAUL EVANS The big question is how to limit and manage great power geo-political confrontation during a major shift in the global balance of power. We need to imagine a regional security order based on deeper economic integration, self-restraint and accommodation, rather than zero sum conflict, and an action-reaction spiral that makes armed conflict more likely and more dangerous. Without more compromise by the US and China in particular, without stronger regional institutions, and without more active roles by middle powers in working across ideological divides, storm clouds will gather.

How can the APR remain relevant, if not essential, in guiding regional trends?

STEPHEN LEONG The APR will continue to be relevant, and it has achieved quite a lot over all these years. There's no stopping and we cannot go back. In fact, all we have to do is move forward and do better. In relation to regional trends, ASEAN must constantly engage China and the US, and should also involve itself more in dialogues concerning China-Japan relations. It is vital for these two countries to not deal with their problems on their own. This is where we should continually push for ASEAN centrality.

In what way can the younger generation of policy thinkers contribute to the APR?

ONG KENG YONG The younger generation of policy thinkers is more educated, privileged and well-placed compared to previous generations. They are more tech-savvy. Being exposed to a different set of challenges and experiences and coming from a generation that has not lived through open conflict between states, younger policy thinkers inject fresher and new perspectives on the issues at stake. It is also easier for them to put behind any past tensions between states and to start afresh to develop better relations, create awareness, share skills and spread knowledge with their counterparts in the region to build a resilient regional security environment.

ROSS GARNAUT I hope that young thinkers build their work on the idea that human civilisation is young and constantly changing in ways that take us by surprise. We should expect the unexpected and prepare for it by seeking understanding from first principles, rather than through inherited wisdom; except to the extent that the inherited wisdom itself is built from first principles. Central to these first principles is the idea that there is one humanity. Our species will prosper together or fail together in an increasingly integrated world civilisation. In the twenty-first century, if unmitigated climate change, or nuclear proliferation, or public health catastrophe, or the breakdown of law and order overwhelms part of humanity, it will overwhelm the whole. There will be no island of peace and prosperity in Beijing or Bangkok or Bandung or Brisbane or Bangalore.

PAUL EVANS Best advice: ask them!

Ong Keng Yong is Executive Deputy Chairman of the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Ross Garnaut is Distinguished Professor of Economics at the Australian National University

Paul Evans is Professor Institute of Asian Research and Liu Institute for Global Issues at the University of British Columbia, Canada

Jusuf Wanandi is a Senior Fellow and co-founder of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), and Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees CSIS Foundation, Jakarta, Indonesia

Stephen Leong is Director, Centre for International Studies, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, and a Visiting Fellow at ISIS Malaysia

THE GROWTH OF THE APR
From Seed To Stem To Trunk

BY
BUNN NAGARA

The venerable Asia-Pacific Roundtable (APR) has more than maintained its stature as a reputable annual Track Two strategic studies dialogue in Asia.

It has gone above and beyond simply being there in Kuala Lumpur each year. Its impact may be gauged by other events associated with it in its development.

Among the early major international conferences hosted by ISIS Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur was the Second South-South Dialogue in mid-1986. This was to pave the way for the South Commission headed by former Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere the following year.

To get there, a Steering Committee for the proposed Commission was formed. It was chaired by then Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, considered the leading champion of Third World causes.

ISIS Malaysia was its prime mover in the Second South-South Dialogue, with the cooperation of the London-based Third World Foundation. With establishment of the Steering Committee in Kuala Lumpur in hand, the proposed Commission was warmly welcomed at the Eighth Non-Aligned Movement Summit in Harare in late 1986.

The first APR, being the first international Track Two (non-governmental) dialogue Malaysia had seen, took root in January 1987. Bringing private scholars, government officials and independent researchers together regularly in a non-official setting to discuss pressing regional issues with tact and frankness quickly became second nature to ISIS Malaysia.

In time, some sister institutions in neighbouring countries thought of initiating their own conference series for the region. Instead, the APR series became a regional staple without peer, moving from an initiative of ISIS Malaysia to that of the ASEAN-ISIS network of think tanks.

ASEAN-ISIS was formed in 1988 as a network of independent think tanks in ASEAN countries conducting policy-relevant research. The APR soon became its main annual event, reaching the Second Stage of its illustrious career as a collective endeavour.

The first dozen-plus APRs were held when convenient for the invited participants. However, after the 15th APR in early June 2001, regularity was much better appreciated and subsequent APRs would be held at the same time each year. The APR series had confirmed its sound reputation by putting all prospective participants on notice that they would have to set their conference schedules to it: Stage Three of the APR's growing stature.

In 2002, the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS) in London launched its annual Track One (governmental) Shangri-La Dialogue series in Singapore in early June. All subsequent dialogues were timed to coincide with the APR to save on operating costs – Stage Four for the APR.

Through the years, the APR kept faith with its purpose of facilitating dialogue between and among officials and others, through fraternal candour in place of pomp and officialdom, in a relaxed yet businesslike setting seen nowhere else in the region.

Its unique aspects and elements add to its vivid colour and vibrant character.

As Cambodia flitted between "Kampuchea" and "Cambodia", refugees poured across the border into neighbouring countries like Thailand. The post-Khmer Rouge, post-Vietnamese occupation turmoil clearly became more than just an "internal matter" for Cambodia. Questions abounded, all providing grist to the APR mill.

A Thai participant pledged that "Thailand would soon do something [decisive]" to quell the problem. Thailand was a frontline state and everyone looked to Bangkok to make the first move. But it never came, not even after the participant himself joined the Thai Cabinet.

Vietnam then was not yet in ASEAN, but its APR presence was valued nonetheless. Its participants were reserved, if not cagey, gingerly surveying the conference landscape for what it was worth.

Some Cambodian-Canadian participants seemed revisionist in outlook, saying that perhaps the Khmer

"Among the early major international conferences hosted by ISIS Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur was the Second South-South Dialogue in mid-1986. This was to pave the way for the South Commission headed by former Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere the following year"

Rouge were not so bad after all, while implying brickbats for Vietnam for its occupation. If there was a Cold War angle to that, it gained no traction at the APR.

In some years the Myanmar representation would serve up a classic lesson in polished diplomacy. Despite the atrocities committed by its then military junta, the country's participant could weave arguments in perfect Queen's English as to why the junta was the best and only hope for the country.

Even stiffer presentations came from the North Koreans. These were scripted, edited, vetted and pre-approved affairs, without taking up time by entertaining any questions or comments. But to their credit the participants consistently engaged with their foreign counterparts, helping make the APR an inclusive experience.

One year a Singapore participant quipped that the APR process had become something of an institution, implying that something new was needed. The result was two-fold: today's APR by ASEAN-ISIS, courtesy of ISIS Malaysia and its sponsors, and the Shangri-La Dialogue – both at the pinnacle of this region's strategic thinking occasions.

Bunn Nagara is a Senior Fellow, Foreign Policy and Security Studies. He had previously been a guest of ISIS Malaysia's activities before in turn being Analyst, Senior Analyst and Visiting Fellow

Risks & Opportunities for Southeast Asia in the American Elections

The short-term prospects for American engagement with Southeast Asia are good. But the next administration will need to work hard with Congress to explain the rationale for its approach, and to reassure Southeast Asians that the White House has a political strategy to beat back populist trends back home

BY
AARON CONNELLY

If, as now appears likely, Hillary Clinton wins the Democratic nomination and Donald Trump wins the Republican nomination, polls and professional forecasts suggest that Hillary Clinton will win the general election in November by the widest margin in a generation.

Such a result should be broadly welcomed in Southeast Asia. Clinton, as secretary of state, was a co-author with President Barack Obama of the Rebalance policy, under which the United States has steadily increased the depth of its engagement with Southeast Asian countries and ASEAN in the economic, security, and people-to-people fields. Her closest advisers, including Jake Sullivan, Kurt Campbell and Michèle Flournoy, are not only supportive of the Rebalance, but played significant roles in its development. While the Rebalance under a Clinton presidency might be recast or updated to reflect changes in the regional situation since she left Foggy Bottom, the US commitment to Southeast Asia would remain.

Moreover, there is now bipartisan support for the key pillars of the Rebalance policy. Among Republican national security experts who specialise in Asia, there is a broad recognition that the increased engagement under the Rebalance policy – such as engagement with ASEAN and membership in the East Asia Summit, once rejected by the Republican administration of George W Bush – is in American interests. Clinton and her advisers could expect broad support for continued engagement with the region from conservative experts in academia, think tanks and the public sphere more generally.

Yet the same cannot be said of around 40 percent of the Republican party's supporters, who by voting for Donald Trump in the party's primaries have chosen a candidate who takes positions far outside the consensus view of Republican national security leaders on these and other issues. Should the Clinton candidacy for some unforeseen reason suddenly become unviable, the election thus also presents the possibility of the blackest of swans: a win by a candidate who has suggested he would renegotiate key security commitments by the United States to its Asian allies, in something that looks more like a protection racket than the current web of security commitments designed to uphold the liberal international order.

A win by Trump remains extremely unlikely. But given that he is the presumptive Republican nominee, Asian allies and partners will be forced to question whether populist politics in the United States could some day endanger their security in a way that was previously unthinkable. Asian states might then begin to hedge against the prospect of American abandonment, either by sharply adjusting their defence postures to balance against the rise of Chinese power, or by jumping on Beijing's bandwagon and giving up on their current strategies that hedge against the rise of China. In this case, the balance of power in the region could begin to shift rapidly in spite of enduring American commitments under a prospective Clinton Administration.

Much of the focus in these elections will be on the presidential race. But while the American system gives the president broad authority over foreign affairs, he or she is also constrained by their predecessor's commitments and by the legislative branch of government. With regard to the former, the Obama Administration has institutionalised the pivot to the region through budgets, deployments and a pattern of diplomatic interaction that would be difficult to undo, even if the next president wanted to.

But the next Congress, the majority of whose members will also face polls in November, may place constraints on the next administration that are less supportive of the Rebalance strategy. In particular, members of Congress are likely to note the populist mood that fueled the candidacies of Trump and Senator Bernie Sanders in considering whether they can support initiatives such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which has been deeply unpopular among supporters of both men. The deal has never enjoyed broad support among members of the current Congress, who may balk at approving it in a lame duck session after the election in November and before their current terms end on January 3, for fear that doing so after an election that appeared to represent a repudiation of such deals would seem undemocratic.

> **"In the longer term, ambitious and unprincipled politicians seeking higher office may seek to emulate the success of Trump's candidacy, including its crass appeals to nationalism in economics and security"**

In the longer term, ambitious and unprincipled politicians seeking higher office may seek to emulate the success of Trump's candidacy, including its crass appeals to nationalism in economics and security. This could result in the election of a group of mini-Trumps in the House and Senate who reject American leadership in security and economics in Asia and around the world. Such a group would probably remain small and never achieve leadership of either house, but it could lead to greater dysfunction in the legislative process, and greater neglect of the Asia-Pacific region just as the election of members of the Tea Party over the past six years has done in recent sessions.

The short-term prospects for American engagement with Southeast Asia are good. But if they are to remain good, the next administration will need to work hard with Congress to explain the rationale for its approach to engagement with the region, and to reassure Southeast Asians that the Administration has a political strategy to beat back populist trends back home.

Aaron L Connelly is a Research Fellow in the East Asia Program at the Lowy Institute for International Policy, Australia, where he focuses on Southeast Asia, particularly Indonesia and Myanmar, and the US role in the region

US Policy in South China Sea is Counterproductive

What has freedom of navigation to do with deployment of military assets at sea? The US should think twice. Its activities have emboldened Chinese nationalism and put leaders under great pressure not to compromise

BY
BA HAMZAH

Topping the APR agenda has always been the idea of inclusiveness in managing regional security. An important aspect of this inclusiveness is balancing the interests of the competing major powers in a fluid geopolitical milieu, managing the rise of new powers and coming to terms with the perception that the world's superpower is in decline. While US influence continues to evolve, its power to leverage globally is constrained by serious domestic issues and war weariness.

The future role of the US in the new security framework is even less clear with the identity of the incoming president unknown. He/she is expected to give greater attention to domestic issues with less focus on foreign policy matters. With a 2.4 percent cut in defence expenditure in 2015, America is likely to become militarily less assertive, and this will have a bearing on the security dynamics in the region. The expected shift in US policy will impact the security of the littoral states in the South China Sea, whose primary concern is how to manage a rising China, a neighbourhood power, and deal with a US perceived to be declining. To fit in with the new security framework these states will have to adapt and realign their strategic interests, some as proxies; and those caught in "proxy wars" often have to pay a hefty price when the stakes get higher, especially those who choose the wrong side.

It is in this context that I wish to address the US policy in the South China Sea (SCS).

The recently announced US policy that "it will fly, sail and operate wherever international law allows" is likely to face challenges from China. For while the policy is global, it was enunciated against the background of China's assertiveness in the SCS.

Thus far US military policy aimed at restraining China in the SCS has been counterproductive. Since 2010, China not only has occupied more new features, it has reclaimed more land and built more airstrips. The sudden presence of the US nuclear-powered aircraft carrier John C Stennis, two cruisers and two destroyers plus other assorted support craft in the SCS in March 2016 gives the impression that it was deployed with the missile batteries on Woody Island in mind, as if the entire strategic calculus in the SCS had changed with this deployment.

"The situation in Pyongyang requires immediate attention from China, the US, South Korea and Japan to effectively de-escalate the tension"

One analyst calls this tit-for-tat policy a dangerous new normal which is likely to pose security problems. A large part of this is caused by America's single-minded pursuit of its Navy-initiated Freedom of Navigation (FON) programme to challenge what it describes as "excessive maritime claims". They include: unrecognised historic waters claims, improperly drawn baselines, claims to territorial sea that exceed twelve nautical miles, unauthorised claims to archipelagic sea lanes, and claims to contiguous and exclusive economic zones which are inconsistent with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The US Navy FON programme has also, since 1979, categorised national policies that restrict navigation and over-flight rights as excessive maritime claims.

The FON in the SCS is also directed at challenging China's policy of prior permission for military activities in the SCS, land reclamation and the deployment of military offensive assets like air-to-surface missiles.

The US military build-up in the SCS began before former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced at the ASEAN Regional Forum meeting at Hanoi in July 2010 that the "US has national interests" to defend in the SCS, in response to China's assertiveness. Since 2010, the US has deployed more advanced naval and air assets, including guided-missile ships, to the area, partly to shore up the Philippines Navy and for purposes of power projection. The additional deployment of warships, for example, to the SCS after China built landing strips on Subi, Mischief and Fiery Cross Reefs since 2014, has not constrained China's territorial expansion in the SCS, despite some viewing China's occupation of features at sea as land grabbing.

The US military deployment is in line with President Obama's doctrine of pivoting to the East (later rebranded rebalancing), which is seen by many as a military and economic strategy to contain the rise of China.

Since the collision of the US Navy EP 3 reconnaissance plane and a PLA fighter aircraft off Hainan in April 2001, there have been a number of "incidents" involving mainly US intelligence-gathering naval vessels/reconnaissance aircraft and PLAN Vessels/fighter aircraft in and over the SCS. To prevent further incidents and possible miscalculations on both sides, the US and China signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Air and Maritime Encounters in 2014 and a Supplementary in 2015. This Code of Conduct provides for operational protocols and rules to deal with Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES) and in the air. Currently, CUES only regulates communication in "unplanned encounters" among naval vessels. It does not apply to fishing and maritime constabulary and enforcement vessels.

Although on paper, at the strategic level the relationship between the US and China is considered stable, the relationship between both navies in the SCS is quite tense. As observed earlier, reports of China's stationing of surface-to-air missiles on Woody Island in March 2016, for example, have set the stage for a more assertive US policy that is likely to see more massive displays of naval forces in the future. The decision of the US Navy to use the FON programme to challenge the right of a state – China – to deploy military assets on features that it occupies – Woody Island – is indeed mind-boggling. What has the freedom of navigation to do with deployment of military assets at sea? If China can be faulted, so can the other claimant parties that have long built airstrips on occupied features in the contested Spratlys. Like China, all the claimant parties have also stationed their marine, air and naval assets in the Spratlys.

There is an assumption that freedom of navigation in the SCS is likely to be threatened only by the presence of Chinese surface-to-air missiles on Woody Island. Thus far there is no evidence that China or any other claimant party has used its military to stop any commercial ship of any flag from exercising its right to sail freely in the SCS. True, there were occasions when China interfered with the passage of naval vessels "snooping" in the SCS and operating without permission (as required under China's domestic legislation). Since the incident involving the USNS Bowditch in March 2001, there have been more than fifteen incidents in which, according to one authority, "China has challenged or interfered with operations by US ships and aircraft".

US military activities in the SCS have reportedly emboldened Chinese nationalism and put the leaders under great pressure not to compromise their sovereignty at sea. While in theory, China will openly confront the US only when the balance of forces is in its favour, it will not think twice about using its brown water navy against any weaker aggressor in the SCS.

As the US trains its eyes on China's activities in the SCS, it seems quite unperturbed by more serious current developments in North Korea, including reports of Kim Jong-un getting his nuclear weapons readied for use. The situation in Pyongyang requires immediate attention from China, the US, South Korea and Japan to effectively de-escalate the tension. The region is unlikely to find a peaceful solution without the active participation of China. With the US and Japan challenging China's quest for regional hegemony in the SCS, it is unlikely that Beijing will play ball.

Further, if China is threatened by military activities in its backyard, it may ignore US requests to help out with managing more pressing strategic issues such as global warming, climate change, nuclear proliferation, terrorism and extremism.

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China's Rise & its Role in the Regional Order

As grand transformations take place, competition may be inevitable. But cooperation will benefit all – if suspicion and distrust can be overcome


BY ZHANG YUNLING AND ZHONG FEITENG

China has grown significantly since its reform and opening policy in 1978, becoming the second largest economy by 2010 and projected to be the largest by 2030. With this rise, China is increasingly becoming a leading regional and global power with comprehensive national strength and influence, which is causing remarkable changes in regional and international relations. China provides more and more public goods to the region and the world at large, and it is naturally true that China is expanding its influence and plays a bigger role, both regionally and internationally.

However, China is both a big power with increasing size, but will also remain a developing country with low GDP per capita for a long time ahead. China has a long way to go to be a modern and advanced country. While China needs to ensure a peaceful and cooperative rise, the outside world needs a new mindset to deal with a rising power.

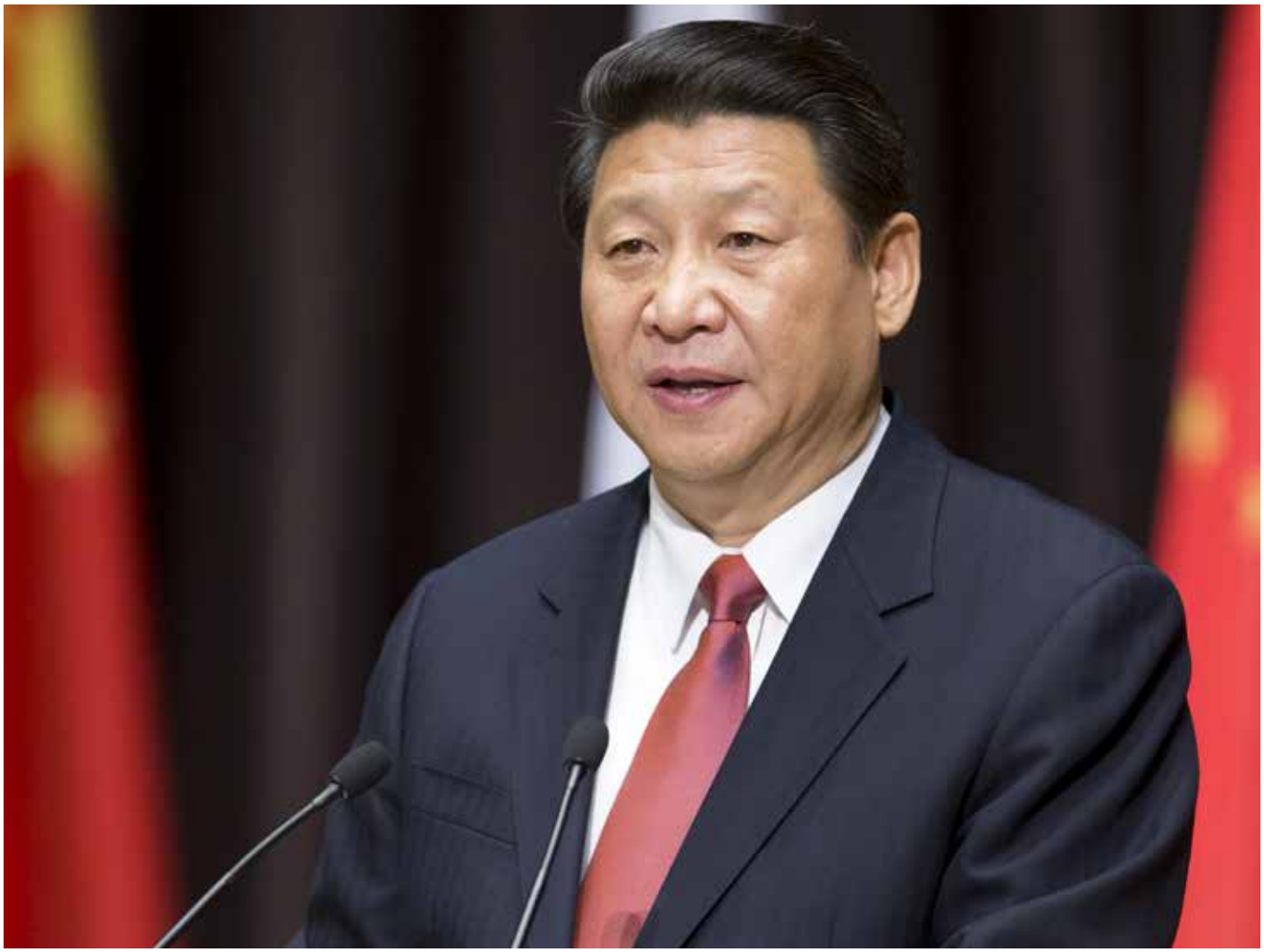
China is now undergoing grand transformations: from a government-led economic growth model to a market-based growth model; from a rural dominated society to an urbanised society; from a system of "rule of man" to the rule of law. To ensure these are stable and dynamic transitions, China needs both a functioning central leadership and consolidated support from society. President Xi Jinping has outlined the "China dream" as the impetus to mobilise political and social support to drive these ambitious agendas.

Chinese leaders have made clear commitments again and again that China does not seek hegemony. Although historical experience may be taken to illustrate that a rising power would inevitably confront an existing power, China argues that the so called "Thucydides trap" does not fit China's rise as it does not intend to challenge and replace the position and role of the existing dominant power – the United States. Peace and harmony are rooted in Chinese traditional culture and values, which make China a new and different type of power from the West. Of course, harmony is best achieved by the joint efforts of China and the outside world.

It is vital for China to ensure a peaceful and cooperative environment in the Asia-Pacific, and in the surrounding regions in particular. How to handle the relationship between China and the United States is the key. Actually, this relationship has a dual aspect. While strategic competition emerges, interdependence also intensifies, which makes them competitors on the one hand and cooperative partners on the other. Concerns arise on both sides. China realises that a stable and cooperative relationship is crucial for the current transformations and the long-term goal of modernisation. And while the United States takes strong measures to deal with the challenges posed by a rising China, it continues dialogue and cooperation at the same time. Currently, the relationship seems to be entering a "sensitive time", as China's military modernisation speeds up and disputes intensify, and the United States engages more in the disputes, especially in the East Sea and the South China Sea. Fortunately, top leaders from both sides seem well aware of both their differences and common interests and try hard to maintain practical and constructive attitudes to manage this complex relationship.

Relations between China and its neighbours are of special significance. To adequately understand these, one has to go beyond geography to consider how history, culture, geopolitics and geo-economics have shaped, and will continue to shape, these dynamics. China's rise presents

"China is now undergoing grand transformations: from a government-led economic growth model to a market-based growth model; from a rural dominated society to an urbanised society; from a system of 'rule of man' to the rule of law"



new challenges and opportunities for the neighbourhood. There is clearly a shared interest in appropriately handling mutual relations as all sides will benefit from a peaceful and friendly relationship. President Xi Jinping calls for constructing a "community of shared interests and common destiny" through a number of new initiatives, which should help to build trust, since along with China's quick rise, suspicion and distrust is also rising among neighbouring countries.

Territorial and maritime disputes over the islands and exclusive economic zones (EEZ) in the East China Sea and the South China Sea, in particular, have made relations tense between China and Japan and some ASEAN members. There has been widespread concern that these disputes may get out of control, leading to military conflict. The situation becomes much more complicated when the United States gets directly involved, either through the "pivot to Asia" or "rebalancing the Asia-Pacific". The risk emerges when their military engages too closely without early notice or warning.

Disputes among nations, including territorial disputes, can never be resolved by war, which only deepens hatred. Traditional Chinese culture reveres "peace and harmony", commends "defusing" contradictions, and pursues the goal of "reconciliation". One of the most important changes compared with the past for East Asia is that the foundations of regional cooperation are ever more enhanced by being based on multilayered structures, ranging from the bilateral to the regional level, such as ASEAN+1, ASEAN+3 (AMRO), ASEAN+6 (RCEP) and the East Asia Summit (EAS). Regional cooperation processes help build up community spirit and shared interests. The "One Belt One Road" initiative provides a new framework for China and regional partners to work together, not in a way that challenges the existing international system, but complements it. But the world very much needs new cooperative institutions to meet the new demands.

China's rise is a fact; and this trend will continue. The impacts will be extensive, and there will be different perspectives on this. No other rising big powers voluntarily stated that their rise would be peaceful, as China does today. But China hopes that the outside world will also support its peaceful rise – through cooperation.

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Security of the Korean Peninsula: NOW & TOMORROW

Most Koreans support reunification – the difficulty lies in the "how". In a time of rising tensions, caution is crucial

BY
KIM YOUNG-SUN

North Korea was back in the headlines as we felt another shake on the Korean Peninsula at the beginning of the New Year. The level of tension is no longer at the simmering level, but has been rising to a boil since North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test on 6 January and long-range missile launch on 7 February. On 2 March, the United Nations Security Council issued Resolution 2270 in order to address Pyongyang's continued defiance of its international obligations and commitments. Many nations across the world, including the United States and China, have also imposed sanctions against North Korea for its actions. However, despite the international community's pressure, the Kim Jong-un regime remains defiant and continues to carry out provocations and rhetorical threats.

The situation is highly volatile, making it difficult to foresee the immediate and long-term prospects for stability and security. Kim Jong-un's unpredictable character is at the foundation of this instability and poses questions about the sustainability of the North Korean regime. The international community must take caution in dealing with North Korea and must manage the situation in a way that will not escalate the rising tension. Leaders around the world must bear in mind that there could be substantial collateral damage if the current regime collapses in a non-peaceful way.

In the long run, there are several scenarios that could unfold on the Korean Peninsula. The two Koreas may experience a soft landing of reunification — a peaceful and negotiated settlement followed by an orderly transition period with carefully laid out timelines. But there is also the possibility of hard landings — the collapse of the current regime following internal disputes, an outright conflict between North and South Korea, or even a coup d'état. Nevertheless, it is generally agreed by many policy makers, analysts and many of the Korean people that the two Koreas are destined to reunite at some point.

In considering reunification, there are four main elements that require particular attention. First of all, it must be noted that currently, the South Korean people are divided over the issue. Although there may be some agreement that the two Koreas should reunite one day, there is much disagreement on the "how". A national discussion to reach a genuine consensus is needed to prepare the people for reunification.

Second, although the North Korean people may not be satisfied with their livelihoods, this does not necessarily indicate that they would be favourable to a South-led reunification. Finding a consensus on this issue will also be another time and energy-consuming task, but it is an imperative step towards peaceful reunification.

Third, although the two Koreas may become "physically" unified, it will be a long and tedious process for them to also become "psychologically" unified as one complete nation. It has been over seven decades since the Korean Peninsula was divided, which is the duration of a whole generation. Such a long and complete division is unprecedented in history, and cannot be compared to the experience of East and West Germany. The majority of the Korean people do not have any experience of a unified Korea. They no longer remember what it is like to live in harmony. Reunification will be difficult in all aspects, and it is no doubt that "psychological" reconciliation and integration will be one of the biggest challenges for a complete reunification.

Fourth, reunification will be extremely costly, and the strongest support from the international community will be critical in making a unified Korea actually function. All existing systems of the two Koreas are completely different, and the absence of any exchange between the two sides for the last seven decades has resulted in even larger gaps. Korean reunification would be considerably costlier than that of East and West Germany. It is generally agreed upon by various research institutes that the cost of reunification will be enormous (one research estimates up to $83 billion a year for a decade), although exact numbers vary. Hence, multilateral development banks such as the Northeast Asian Development Bank proposed by President Park Geun-hye would be necessary, as would cooperation with the international community.

How well these four elements are managed will greatly influence not only the future peace and prosperity, but also the security and stability, of the Korean Peninsula and the region. In the course of reunification, we must be prepared for new changes in the region's political and security landscape, and devise a new security architecture which will satisfy the world's key players. For the Korean Peninsula has historically always been a juncture where the interests of major powers have converged; and this remains the case today and for the future.

Ambassdor Kim Young-sun is Secretary General of the ASEAN-Korea Centre

Asia-Pacific Security: WILL CANADA REENGAGE?

Former prime minister Stephen Harper was an Atlanticist with a disdain for his country's historical liberal internationalism. Under Justin Trudeau, will Canada resume its role as a regional actor?

BY
DAVID A WELCH

To the extent that Canada has an international "brand", it is as a liberal-internationalist middle power. Canada has always been known and appreciated for its commitment to the United Nations system, its broad international engagement, and its willingness to take on helpful-fixer roles. Blessed by peaceful relations with its neighbours and isolated geographically from most of the world's conflict zones, through much of the post-war period Canada could afford to devote a good deal of its limited military resources to peacekeeping, and virtually all of its less limited diplomatic resources to building confidence and institutions. And as a multicultural, multi-diasporic polity, Canada was also intimately concerned with peace and prosperity almost anywhere in the world.

For most of the last ten years, Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper sought to undo Canada's brand. He evinced disdain for the United Nations; he engaged selectively rather than broadly; he celebrated Canada's martial history; and he disavowed peacekeeping, "human security", and anything else that had Liberal Party fingerprints on it. Harper preferred hard power to soft. He was also an Atlanticist and a monarchist by nature. Small wonder that on Harper's watch Canada became nearly invisible in the Asia-Pacific, except when it came a-calling for concessionary trade arrangements.

The election of Justin Trudeau as prime minister on October 19, 2015 seemed to augur a return to normality. The son of the famous Canadian premier Pierre Trudeau, he embraced the Liberal legacy and promised that Canada would be back. Polls showed that the public was receptive; Harper's vision of Canada's international role had never won hearts and minds. But promising to be back and actually coming back are two different things, and six months in we are still waiting to see how — or perhaps whether — Canada will reengage.

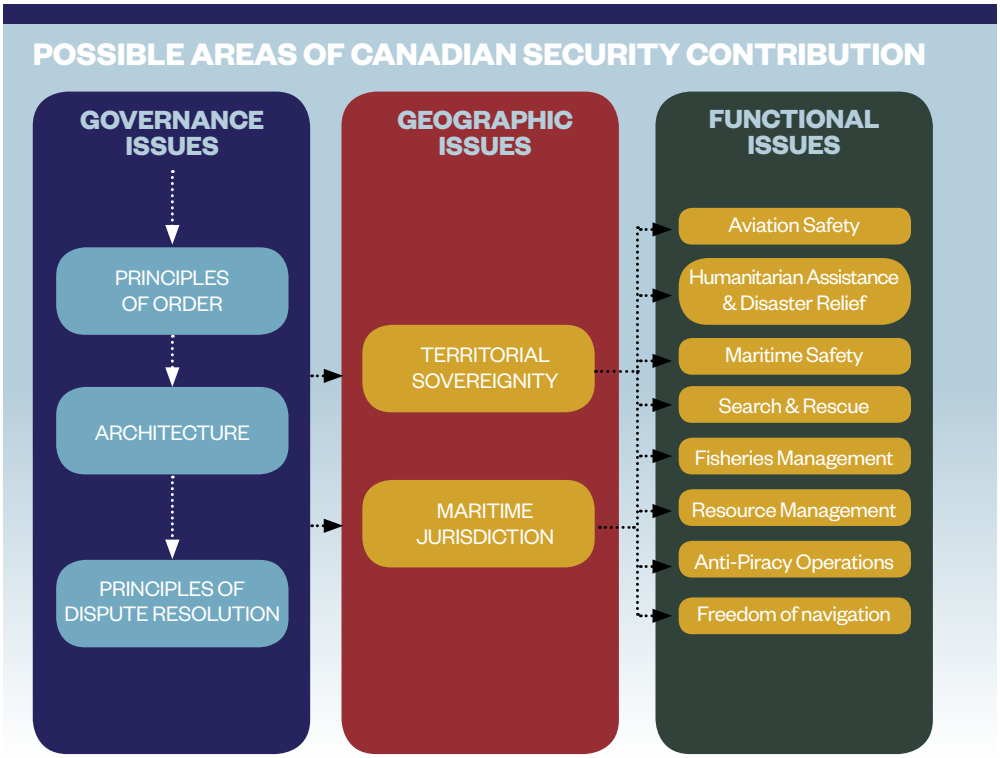
Reengagement, of course, has both a supply side and a demand side. On the demand side, Canada's disappearance from Asia-Pacific security during the Harper years has not gone unnoticed. Canada used to engage broadly, if not equally successfully on all fronts. Owing to its remoteness and lack of power-projection capacity, Canada had never played a forward role in the Asia-Pacific in a traditional military security sense, but it had been active and creative in non-traditional security roles such as human security, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), and peaceful dispute resolution. Canada made some of its most important contributions via Track 1.5 and Track Two channels, where its small hard-power footprint and relative disinterestedness were assets rather than liabilities. In the 1990s, for example, Canada played a key role in the North Pacific Cooperative Security Dialogue, the South China Sea Working Group, the Asia-Pacific Roundtable, and the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific. But as Canada's activity and visibility waned, scepticism in the region about Canada's commitment and ability to contribute waxed. While most countries in the Asia-Pacific have welcomed Canada's professed desire to reengage, there is an understandable "show us what you plan to bring to the table" subtext to the greetings.

On the supply side, Trudeau came

into office having promised relatively little by way of specifics. While the Liberal Party's 2015 election platform promised to "restore Canadian leadership in the world", it was, in fact, a domestic-politics-heavy manifesto. Its only significant foreign and security policy pledges were to renew Canada's commitment to peacekeeping, to maintain the Canadian Armed Forces (prioritising the navy), and to cancel Harper's planned purchase of the troubled fifth-generation F-35 interceptor. An early decision to withdraw Canadian CF-18s from the air campaign against Daesh in Syria and Iraq signalled what appears to be a dispositional discomfort with hard-power roles; but critics were quick to point out that Canada did not appear to have much of an alternative soft-power game plan.

Among the most significant supply-side constraints, of course, are resources, both human and financial. While Canada has a talented public service and diplomatic corps, for many years recruitment slowed to a trickle, leaving fewer hands on deck. A number of high-ranking officials in the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD) – recently renamed Global Affairs Canada – retired or left to pursue other opportunities during the Harper years, in no small part because Harper's penchant for tight central control through the Prime Minister's Office had sapped morale. As a result, relatively few people are available to effect the far-reaching changes Trudeau signalled that he would like to see. As an illustration of the difficulty, the official charged with drafting an Asia strategy for Canada in 2013, stymied by internal resistance, left abruptly and was never replaced.

Financial constraints are equally daunting. To play a credible role in Asia-Pacific security, Canada must at least periodically show the flag in the traditional way, through naval port visits and active participation in military exercises such as RIMPAC (the Rim of the Pacific Exercise). But as Trudeau was acutely aware during the campaign, almost all of the first-line ships of the Royal Canadian Navy are past their expected service life, are expensive to maintain, and are in dire need of replacement. Financial pressures have already led the Trudeau government to delay important procurement decisions in several categories. Even under best-case assumptions, Canada will not launch its Single Class Surface Combatant replacements for the Halifax and Iroquois class frigates until the mid-2020s.



Perhaps understandably, Canada has yet to articulate a clear engagement strategy for Asia-Pacific security. We see glimmers of the kinds of things Canada thinks are important in such instances as the February 2016 Joint Statement by the Foreign Minister of Japan and the Foreign Minister of Canada and the April 2016 Hiroshima G7 Foreign Ministers' Joint Communiqué, Declaration on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, and Statement on Maritime Security. Together these signal a concern for a united multilateral effort to persuade North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes, a concern for the rule of law and the peaceful settlement of disputes, and a concern about provocative unilateral action in areas where there are maritime or territorial disputes. But on issues such as these Canada can offer little more than moral support and solidarity with like-minded countries. High politics is not Canada's strong suit; on such matters, of necessity, it must play a follower rather than leader role.

Where Canada can play a proactive leadership role that is both cost-effective and beneficial to others is by providing information, expertise, and ideas for managing functional issues where cooperation can help build empathy and trust, thereby indirectly contributing to an improved security climate. These include aviation safety, HADR, maritime safety, search and rescue, fisheries management, and resource management (see above). Canada can also reengage in its traditional role of promoting dialogue and understanding to combat misperception, misjudgment, and threat inflation. Traditionally, Canada has done this in the region most effectively at the Track 1.5 and Track Two levels. If Canada wants to be taken seriously as a regional security actor, and if it wants to find its niche, it is here that it must start.

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New Zealand's Asia-Pacific

Developments in the Asia-Pacific have made the region more and more significant to New Zealand's economic and security interests. What is the extent of the country's involvement in the region and its relevant institutions?

BY
DAVID CAPIE

Over the last 30 years – the life of the Asia-Pacific Roundtable (APR) – New Zealand has fundamentally reoriented its economy from a position where the majority of its exports went to Europe, to one where the Asia-Pacific region has become of central importance in economic, political and strategic terms. Today, 75 percent of the country's trade goes to this region, and it contains eight of New Zealand's ten largest export markets.

Increasingly, it is understood as a place where New Zealand's political, economic and security interests come together and where there are tremendous opportunities as East Asia returns to its place at the centre of the global economy, but also a growing number of security concerns. As a small, outward-facing nation that depends on trade, New Zealand has a strong interest in the maintenance of stability and prosperity in the region. It is a strong supporter of international law and of multilateral institutions, but as the country's last Defence White Paper noted, the rules-based international system is increasingly under pressure. In particular there is growing concern about the ability of states to manage Asia's maritime territorial disputes.

As an instinctive multilateralist, New Zealand sees the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as an important regional partner. Indeed, a strong, united ASEAN has never been more important to Wellington. In 2015, New Zealand celebrated 40 years of Dialogue Partner status, with a commemorative leaders' summit held in Kuala Lumpur, where the relationship was formally designated as a Strategic Partnership. The ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement, which came into force in 2012, underscored the growing importance of Southeast Asia as a market for New Zealand's goods and services, but also as a source of investment and tourism.

The ASEAN-centred institutional landscape is also regarded as an important contributor to regional

peace and security. The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) has been useful, both in terms of its membership and in terms of the wide range of traditional and non-traditional security issues it addresses, although the pace at which some issues have been addressed has been a source of frustration. New Zealand greatly values its membership of the East Asia Summit (EAS) and sees opportunities for the EAS to play a larger role in tackling the region's most pressing concerns. As the only leaders-led forum to include all the region's major powers that addresses political, economic and strategic issues, there is a sense that more can be done to follow through on the commitments leaders have made at their annual meetings.

In terms of defence connections, New Zealand's closest ties remain with its traditional partners, most notably Australia. Links with the United States have grown increasingly warm since 2010, and New Zealand officials have welcomed the US rebalance to Asia as a positive factor for regional security. New Zealand maintains long-standing ties with Singapore and Malaysia through the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA). But alongside these established links, there is a keen interest in building relationships with new partners. The New Zealand Defence Force has modest but growing defence connections with Vietnam, and in 2015 it announced the conclusion

"In terms of defence connections, New Zealand's closest ties remain with its traditional partners, most notably Australia"

of a five-year plan of engagement with China's People's Liberation Army (PLA). Inclusive arrangements like the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus are also welcomed as important vehicles for encouraging constructive interactions between Asia's major powers. New Zealand chaired the ADMM Plus Experts Working Group (EWG) on Peacekeeping Operations from 2010 to 2013 and since 2013 has co-chaired the EWG on Maritime Security.

Finally, in addition to seeing an important role for intergovernmental Track One institutions in both the economic and security sphere, New Zealand has been a longstanding supporter of Track Two diplomacy. It has been a member of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) for more than 20 years, and it is in the same Track Two context that the contribution of the APR – over the last three decades – has been welcomed as a chance to listen, learn and share views on the region's changing security dynamics.

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Japan's Evolving Defence and Security Role in Asia

Policy changes in Tokyo have seen it moving towards a more active multilateral engagement in regional security cooperation. How will it do so? What policy options are available?

BY
TSUTOMU KIKUCHI

Japan has been struggling to become a more relevant, reliable and trustworthy security partner in Asia and the world. This has two dimensions.

First, the alliance with the United States continues to be the bedrock of Japan's defence and security policy. For the last few years, Japan has taken the initiative to strengthen the alliance by means of the adoption of new security regulations, reinterpretation of the Japanese constitution over collective self-defence, and the revision of the US-Japan defence cooperation guidelines.

Japan's security activism reflects, among others, its concern about the US security commitment to Japan and the region. The US security commitment is indispensable for the defence of Japan and regional stability. However, given the divided politics in Washington and the inward-looking attitude of the US public against foreign engagement, Japan needs some new policy measures to firmly engage the United States in Japanese and regional security.

Japan, for the first time in the post-war era, is seriously considering how it can make the US government and people believe that Japan is a trustworthy ally. It seeks to be assured of the US commitment to the defence of Japan. Yet it risks entrapping the United States in Japan's own strategic priorities.

Japan also recognises that strengthening the alliance will contribute to regional security public goods in Asia that have been underlined by the US security commitments. The enhanced US-Japan alliance ensures the US commitments that are indispensable for Asia's peace and prosperity.

Second, Japan has been strengthening defence and security relations with the rest of Asia, as was shown by Japan's active engagements with India, Australia and member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Japan is moving southward. Japan's active engagement is meant both to diversify – and complement – its alliance with the United States.

Why are these countries so important for Japan? It is popular to discuss the future of Asia from the perspective of a power transition. According to this perspective, the key players defining the future of Asia are the United States and China. There are many scenarios of US-China relations, ranging from continued US hegemony, China's hegemonic system, G2 (US-China condominium), to a Cold War type of confrontation.

These scenarios will not happen in the foreseeable future. Given the huge gaps in policy preferences and basic values between the United States and China, a firmly consolidated G2 providing the basic structure for Asia will be impossible.

However, given the deepening economic interdependence and the dense bilateral institutional mechanisms for policy coordination between the United States and China, a Cold War type of confrontation would be difficult to imagine.

The United States is no longer a fully-fledged regional hegemon. China is a fully-fledged rising power. Both the United States and China have a lot of vulnerabilities and constraints internally and externally. In particular, the instability in the domestic politics of both countries will prevent them from exercising their powers externally.

They need the support and cooperation of the rest of Asia to pursue their respective agendas. Indeed, there are several countries with substantial political, economic and military weight in Asia. They are not just pawns in the struggle between the United States and China. They have capabilities and a willingness to engage in the struggle over the future of Asia. This gives the rest of Asia room for manoeuvrability and strengthens their bargaining positions in their relations with the United States and China.

Furthermore, Asian economies are interconnected through dense networks of cross-border production

"Japan, for the first time in the post-war era, is seriously considering how it can make the US government and people believe that Japan is a trustworthy ally"

and distribution. Without joining these region-wide cross-border production networks, no country can obtain their economic benefits. To sustain these networks, the United States and China need the support of the other major countries, as is shown in the negotiations of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

Put simply, the future of Asia will largely depend upon how the rest of Asia responds to the emerging challenges. The policies of the rest of Asia will have a grave impact on the future of Asia. ASEAN, if united, is a critical part of the rest of Asia.

These considerations have been working behind Japan's active engagement with the rest of Asia.

Japan's approach is to strengthen the rules-based regional order. Maintaining maritime security is the pressing issue, given that Japan has a huge stake in sustaining the safety and freedom of navigation and over-flight. Indeed, Japan made safety of sea lines of communication (SLOC) one of the highest priorities in the first National Security Strategy document published in late 2013.

Different from the land, seas and oceans are subject to internationally endorsed rules and norms. However, it is regrettable that there is a country in Asia that sees the ocean like land.

To strengthen the rules-based regional order, first, Japan has been sharing the internationally endorsed rules and norms, especially those embedded in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), with the rest of Asia bilaterally and multilaterally.

Second, Japan has been taking the initiative to enhance the maritime capacity of the rest of Asia (especially those of the ASEAN countries) to deal with the challenges.

Peaceful negotiations to resolve territorial and maritime disputes are important, but difficult if not supported by substantial capability. The ASEAN countries need substantial maritime capability to engage in a peaceful consultation with others, given that one big player has been talking peacefully but taking coercive measures unilaterally.

Japan has been providing the support to enhance the maritime law enforcement capability of the ASEAN countries. Japan's Self-Defense Forces have been expanding to engage in joint military exercises with the rest of Asia. The arms export ban has been relaxed to some extent recently. This allows Japan to provide defence equipment to buyers overseas.

Japan has also been enhancing trilateral security relations with countries such as India and Australia and has been actively engaged in ASEAN-related regional institutions.

Thus, Japan's security role in Asia will be based upon more multilayered avenues. The bedrock will continue to be the alliance with the United States. But Japan is looking beyond the alliance. Bilateral, trilateral and multilateral security engagements with the rest of Asia will become more prominent in the years to come.

A new regional security architecture will emerge through the interplay of these multiple approaches. ASEAN-related regional institutions could play an important role in shaping a new regional architecture. But the current form does not fit with the evolving security dynamics. Institutional renovation is necessary, if ASEAN is to keep its centrality in regional security architecture building.

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Cybersecurity: Fostering transparency, trust & predictability among militaries in Asia

The Commander of US Cyber Command, Admiral Michael S Rogers, recently announced that a priority for 2016 includes international partnerships as nations begin working on norms of behaviour and deterrence. How then can the regional security architecture be leveraged to foster further dialogue or other measures among militaries?

BY
CAITRÍONA HEINL

At the time of writing, insufficient effort has been made to enhance regional military-to-military dialogue or other measures on cyber-related matters in order to build confidence and ensure international stability. This is the case even when there could be opportunities to identify shared interests in regional forums with possible like-minded interests like ASEAN, the ARF, East Asia Summit, or ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting/ ADMM Plus. Creating stability could be assisted with pragmatic measures that are taken by military stakeholders in conjunction with the political security community.

There are low levels of common understanding on cyber-related matters in the region, even though this is understood to be one of the most important enabling factors for dialogue and progress at regional level. Regional efforts can address this deficit, and they are important for operationalising the recommendations of international agreements. While regional government practitioners do recognise that increasing transparency is vital to create common concepts and stability (trust is another key element), they need to both identify and implement tangible actions.

Ongoing bilateral discussions and strategic dialogues on cyber might later extend to larger regional groups. Having the defence community as one of the stakeholders might further enhance this transparency and confidence building, especially since sovereignty is not necessarily perceived as a decisive factor. Trust and identifying shared interests are more powerful drivers (in which case bilateral cooperation may be easier to foster). Traditional defence cooperation efforts like dialogues or working groups can also include cyber.

Cooperation between like-minded groupings can be developed too, possibly expanding to regional level. Defence ministers and government practitioners occasionally recommend multilateral MOUs as well as international security and defence forums like the Shangri-La and Seoul Defence Dialogues. At a recent Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses conference in India, it was in fact argued that such like-minded groupings can make progress where regional and institutional mechanisms fall short. The recent MOU between Japan, India, Singapore and Malaysia on Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) is one such example. In the upcoming IISS Shangri-La Dialogue 2016, the agenda will include a session on identifying common security interests in the cyber domain. This

defence Dialogue will be a valuable opportunity to raise these issues again in side meetings.

In relation to parallel international and regional level confidence building measures (CBMs), states need to develop further CBMs and implement those already agreed, including the work of the UN Group of Governmental Experts (UN GGE) and forums like the ARF and OSCE. Military-to-military dialogues and other practical measures could complement such international political agreement. However, members of the defence community may sometimes be sceptical about the utility of such norms and CBMs. It may also be easier to establish such mechanisms with like-minded communities rather than possible adversaries, and political willingness is needed. These processes can be slow, too, and may not keep up with fast-paced developments.

While ASEAN is central in the regional architecture, coordination between the ARF and ADMM/ADMM Plus, for instance, or between the three ASEAN community pillars is not always ideal. The ASEAN post-2015 agenda does aim to both increase cooperation across the three communities and enhance information-sharing between these forums. Since cyber impacts these portfolios, it will be beneficial if these plans reduce duplications.

For instance, the ARF has both adopted a Work Plan and conducted workshops and table-top exercises on CBMs and capacity building, thus bringing a network together. National delegations that include defence force representatives, as is already the case with some delegations, might assist this process. The ADMM and ADMM Plus, as key existing defence forums on practical cooperation, could further alleviate ambiguity among the defence community itself. Even though the ADMM can be criticised for too few concrete outcomes, discussing mutual cyber challenges and identifying common interests is useful. This should support ongoing work in parallel forums like the ARF or other regional forums.

The Philippines recently proposed an ADMM Plus working group, and calls have been made in Singapore for more collaboration through platforms like ADMM Plus. Given increasing levels of regional government understanding in this field, there may be appetite to engage internationally. In fact, the defence community acknowledges that military-to-military relations might be easier to forge on account of common hierarchies, structures and shared focus on implementing action points. This is sometimes evident in other policy fields at the ADMM where there is a strong existing network of experts who meet regularly.

Moving forward, first, there is a need to know how other governments understand specific cyber terminology in order to better develop policies. Second, the region is often known for its recourse to ambiguity and this needs to be reduced by increasing low-level transparency publicly.

Third, information must be exchanged on good practice in how to attract, train and retain technical and policy experts for the defence community. Extending this to include private sector best practice would support the UN GGE 2015 recommendation that international cooperation would benefit from the participation of the private sector, academia and civil society. Private sector involvement is especially important to ensure that these discussions are properly informed (even though this can challenge defence and security services that are not traditionally accustomed to such collaboration).

Fourth, traditional military CBMs adapted to cyber can build more trust, especially if highly tailored: for example, regular exchanges of defence officials, information sharing on roles and responsibilities, joint exercises, military-to-military contact points and crisis communication procedures. Existing hotlines could be extended to include cyber (even if they have their own limitations). Good practices from other regions such as cyber defence training and exercise ranges can inform each other too, like the work of the OSCE, OAS, EU or NATO. Moreover, given that a "Plus" country is expected to work with ADMM to build capacity to enhance regional security, such cyber defence training and capacity building exercises may be suitable.

Fifth, there should be a focus on common interests like countering the serious threat of terrorist use of advanced cyber capabilities for a high-end attack. States should explore practical policy or technical means to prevent such proliferation. Where it is impractical to limit proliferation, agreeing to increase the resilience of key critical infrastructure might be useful, especially for existing or planned regional connectivity. Recent analyses by the US Office of the Director of National Intelligence cite such resilience as the first required step towards deterrence, for instance.

Sixth, regional Track 1.5/Track Two initiatives like the Network of ASEAN Defence and Security Institutions (NADI), Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) or ASEAN-ISIS could examine sensitive subjects, as could roundtables and workshops organised by academia or research institutes. This facilitates discussion, fosters debate, creates informal networks, provides more extensive open source analyses and informs those who are still developing their own understanding on new developments.

Larger international conferences also bring experts from across government together with academia, research institutes and the private sector. The Global Conference on Cyber Space (GCCS-2015), for instance, included the defence community in the London Process for the first time in 2015. Regional government-affiliated defence think tanks could even facilitate personnel exchanges, thus supporting the UN GGE 2015 report.

Lastly, the ARF could explore the necessity of military practical cooperation for cyber capacity-building or post-disaster reconstruction under its work on humanitarian and disaster relief (HADR). Although HADR is primarily a task of civilian agencies, military force response is often needed if they have unique attributes.

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The ASEAN Economic Community's Post-2015 Agenda

The global economy will continue to progress, but it may unfold in unexpected ways. Is ASEAN truly prepared for some profound changes? Perhaps it's time to put a trade policy for the 21st century on the table

BY
MARC P MEALY

As the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) embarks on the next phase of its journey to maximise the benefits of developing the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) by 2025, this year offers many opportunities and challenges for governments, businesses and the region's citizens. ASEAN's previous economic growth models produced significant results in terms of trade, investment, growth and socio-economic development. However, given the myriad ways in which the global economy has evolved in terms of global value chains, regional supply networks and cross-border data flows, past economic policy approaches are not guaranteed to generate the same successful results in the future.

ASEAN's future will fundamentally be determined by the current actions of its member states, many of which embody lessons learned from the 1997 financial crisis. Indeed some of the tough choices ASEAN faces in implementing the next generation of regional market development and economic integration-related reforms in areas like insurance, aviation and the movement of skilled labour cannot be made in a vacuum. It is this author's view that because of the intersection of economic policies at the global, regional and national levels, ASEAN's trade policies represent a strategic policy arena for the success of the region's post-2015 AEC agenda and the future of ASEAN's position in the global economy. The following recommendations are offered as an agenda going forward.

Trade policy formulation in the 21st century increasingly involves both trade and non-trade legal, regulatory and policy issues at the border and behind it. Policy makers would be well served by rejecting bureaucratic, top down, silo-based approaches in order to improve the performance of key institutions, and instead develop holistic frameworks of priority objectives, current contexts and key principles in their trade policy formulation processes. How ASEAN's members approach defining and balancing both regional and national trade policy priorities can enable trade policy initiatives to serve

as strategic drivers in four key pillar areas of the AEC: trade architecture modernisation; workforce and human capital development; fostering next generation innovation-led growth; and regional institution deepening.

Modernisation of ASEAN's regional trade architecture should be a priority goal in all ASEAN's trade policy initiatives. Trade liberalisation can lower costs of cross-border trade and benefit consumers. Trade modernisation can increase access for all size businesses using new business models to participate in global supply chains, benefiting both consumers and businesses. Simplifying the rules in multiple free trade agreements (FTAs) into a single framework (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, RCEP), adopting trade facilitation measures (the Trans-Pacific Partnership, TPP; and World Trade Organization, WTO), and investing resources in making it easier for all businesses to utilise FTAs represent the types of initiatives necessary for ASEAN to capture more valued-added benefits from trade with the United States, Japan, South Korea, China and the European Union.

Strengthening institutions to execute the post-2015 AEC agenda should be a key trade policy objective. Some of ASEAN's most critical next generation regional economic integration initiatives will require greater horizontal collaboration between government authorities. One of the best examples of progress in this area is the joint regional meeting of the Ministers of Finance and Central Bank Governors. Regional bodies of national regulatory and standard setting authorities are also key. Trade policy initiatives to promote cross-border financial integration and regional capital market development are being led by national regulators working as a regional group to put in place regionally accepted structures to facilitate cross-border activities.

Investing in workforce and human capital development is critical for the global competitiveness of ASEAN today and developing the next generation of innovation-led growth sectors. While selected professional associations have harmonised regional professional standards via Mutual Recognition Agreements, ASEAN can use trade policy (Mode 4 of Services) to codify the freer movement of skilled talent across borders. This is a key element in attracting foreign direct investment in developing sectors, which will generate increased demand for skilled labour. Trade policy which enables workforce and human capital development services providers to invest across borders can better ensure that the future supply of skilled talent meets future demand.

Trade policy initiatives which enable data and information to flow more freely across borders (the TPP) and help develop the foundation for regional regulatory frameworks for e-commerce (RCEP) offer the following opportunities. They will: differentiate ASEAN in the minds of global information and communications technology investors; support ASEAN's Strategic Action Plan for Small and Medium Enterprise Development; and enable greater financial inclusion initiatives in the AEC.

The timing of the launch of the AEC is both fortuitous and vexing. ASEAN has achieved much over the past decades. In today's current bearish global environment, ASEAN is almost universally celebrated with bullish optimism by investors and multinational corporations. Notable is the fact that ASEAN still has so much more to do, and its members face a range of varying political, economic and social structural challenges, which, if not adequately addressed, represent constraints on their future socio-economic potential. While implementing trade initiatives such as the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA), TPP and RCEP as instruments to support sustainable growth, it will be important for policy makers to take into account:

• The current phase of the global economic system characterised by a "new normal" of slower global GDP growth, a declining role for the WTO in the multilateral trading system, the end of the commodity boom, increased financial volatility, and excess production capacity;

• The changing role of Asia-Pacific economies as a growth engine for the global economy as they become both producers and consumers of goods and services in global value chains; and

• The window of opportunity ASEAN currently possesses to differentiate itself in next generation growth industries, as it both deepens economic cooperation and competition with China and India.

ASEAN ministers issue road maps each year to guide the direction of future actions the region will take in key sectors and in horizontal cross-cutting areas. Often, such road maps reflect several overarching principles which characterise ASEAN – the uniqueness of ASEAN's diversity and the "ASEAN Way" of reaching decisions; the value of economic resilience in order to promote sustainable economic progress over time and to minimise the boom and bust nature of global business cycles; and, more recently, the value of inclusive growth. The latter is increasingly important politically to secure buy-in from a wider range of stakeholders, deepen engagement with the private sector, and elevate income and development gap closing as a priority for the AEC.

All these factors will impact trade policy processes, because many of the next generation of regional integration reforms touch on issues of national sovereignty. They are likely to be part of emerging regional discourses on trade modernisation catalysed by the conclusion of the TPP agreement and the ongoing RCEP negotiations. If ASEAN's trade policy efforts can be guided by priority objectives, principles, and contexts, its policy makers, business leaders and citizens can collectively inform the post-2015 AEC agenda and continue to address four eternal questions: Where does ASEAN stand today? How did ASEAN get here? Where does ASEAN want to go? How can ASEAN get there?

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CAMBODIA AND ASEAN RELATIONS: Retrospect and Prospect

The youngest member of the Association's ten nations has gained much from joining. Now it must play its part in regional integration – as must ASEAN

BY
POU SOTHIRAK

From 1970 to 1990 Cambodia suffered from civil wars and foreign interventions which led to political isolation, severe economic damage and unthinkable social disorder. But since the Agreements on a Comprehensive Political Settlement on the Cambodia Conflict were signed on 23 October 1991 in Paris 25 years ago, the country has been able to restore its sovereignty, end all forms of internal conflicts and foreign occupation and has begun to integrate itself into the international community. Its foreign policy favours having diplomatic relations with other countries all over the world, especially the superpowers and Southeast Asian nations.

In terms of the latter, at the 26th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM) in Singapore in July 1993, Cambodia was invited as a distinguished guest. During the 27th AMM in Bangkok, Thailand in July 1994, HRH Prince Norodom Sirivudh, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Cambodia, said in his speech that Cambodia highly admired ASEAN's accomplishments, including political, economic and socio-cultural development during the previous two decades.

On 24 January 1995, HE Ung Huot, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, signed the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in Southeast Asia, paving the way for Cambodia to become a formal ASEAN observer at the 28th AMM in Bandar Seri Begawan in July 1995. Cambodia applied for ASEAN membership on 23 March 1996.

Although ASEAN had decided in early 1997 to admit Cambodia, along with Myanmar and Laos, at its annual meeting on 23 July Cambodia's membership was postponed 18 days before the scheduled admission due to internal political instability provoked by factional fighting between the armed forces loyal to the two Prime Ministers. To ease the situation and assist Cambodia in fulfilling membership criteria, the ASEAN Troika – the Foreign Ministers of Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand – was commissioned to help restore political stability and to hold free and fair elections in July 1998. Having met all the criteria, ASEAN warmly welcomed Cambodia as its tenth member on 30 April 1999 in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Cambodia was keen to join ASEAN to restore its positive image after years of turmoil, to end political isolation and to develop its national economy. Joining ASEAN would empower Cambodia to amplify its voice across the globe and increase its diplomatic recognition and legitimacy. As a member of ASEAN, Cambodia's sovereignty and territorial integrity are respected by fellow member states and safeguarded against other external threats. This is very important for a small country with limited capacity to protect itself from bigger and more powerful neighbours.

ASEAN membership has also allowed Cambodia to take full advantage of regional economic integration and reap concrete benefits from the ASEAN Free Trade Area (FTA). In addition, Cambodia is poised to gain substantially from other FTAs that ASEAN has been negotiating with external partners such as the United States, China, India, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand and the European Union – with all of these nations ultimately being open to Cambodian exports.

In the socio-cultural context, being in the ASEAN family permits Cambodia to forge unity and solidarity amongst the different peoples in Southeast Asia to create a more caring, sharing and inclusive society, built on social responsibility, regional harmony and resilience.

There are mutual obligations. ASEAN needs to do all it can to improve Cambodia's domestic political, socio-economic and external security situation. On the other hand, Cambodia needs to do more to contribute to ASEAN unity and centrality, as well as to advance the regional integration process for the benefits of all member states.

Although in the past 17 years ASEAN has helped Cambodia to a large extent, narrowing the development gap between the older and newer member states remains a big challenge. ASEAN must commit greater efforts through sub-regional cooperation and technical assistance to help the new members grow faster and become further integrated into the regional economy. However, ASEAN is still faced with serious problems in terms of finance, governance, and the inability of national governments to manage international and interdepartmental coordination, not to mention the structural insufficiency of the ASEAN Secretariat. As a result, many of the infrastructure projects identified in the ASEAN Master Plan on Connectivity and in the Initiative of ASEAN Integration (IAI) cannot be met as planned. Without effective resolutions, the overall ASEAN Community building process will be affected.

"ASEAN needs to do all it can to improve Cambodia's domestic political, socio-economic and external security situation"

Another challenge for ASEAN is the inability to offer good office and mediation to resolve the border conflict between Cambodia and Thailand over the 4.6 square km of land surrounding the Temple of Preah Vihear, where military clashes erupted in 2008 and 2011. As long as ASEAN remains unable to resolve border disputes peacefully among its members, the Association is unlikely to become a mature politico-security community.

Cambodia must prove itself to be a useful member of ASEAN, focusing on broader regional significance and long term benefits. It would be better for Cambodia to adhere to ASEAN principles, articulate a strong sense of mutual trust and shared responsibility, and promote the common interest over that of individual nations. The non-issuance of a Joint Communiqué in 2012 should not be repeated. In this way we can maintain ASEAN unity and centrality for a successful ASEAN Community beyond 2015.

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ASEAN LEADERS MUST CONNECT WITH THEIR PEOPLES

BY
KAVI CHONGKITTAVORN

The ASEAN Community (AC) has gone well past its one hundredth day. Throughout ASEAN capitals, life continues as usual without the kind of fanfare and expectation leaders promoted during the official launching of the Declaration of the AC in November 2015 at Kuala Lumpur.

If the AC is to prosper and be a reality for future generations, ASEAN leaders must return to the 2005 vision, when Malaysia first hosted an "interface" between leaders and ASEAN-based civil society organisations. Then Prime Minister Tun Abdullah Badawi reiterated that the time had come for his colleagues to listen to the voices of the people. A decade has elapsed, but these bottom-up inputs have not yet seen the light of day.

Each ASEAN member perceives differently the appropriate roles that citizens and organisations should play. Some countries allow the voices of civil society to be heard, and sometimes they are taken into consideration as part of the policymaking process.

Other countries, however, view these non-official players as nuisances aiming at undermining government efforts.

It must be noted here that the ASEAN vision 2025 is very clear in promoting not only "a politically cohesive, economically integrated, socially responsible" community but also "a truly people-oriented and people-centred" one. How can these objectives be translated into a reality when over half of ASEAN members do not heed their civil society organisations?

For the time being economic action plans have received all the attention. But as of today, at least 113 measures are still unimplemented due to the lack of political will from the top. These are behind-the-border measures that would require amendments of local laws and regulations.

"It is imperative that ASEAN leaders communicate directly with their own citizens and through their civic organisations."

The current chair, Laos, has made it clear that there will not be any people's forum as there was last year. Timor-Leste has expressed willingness to hold the event, which Laotian officials warn could jeopardise the country's chance to join ASEAN next year.

It is imperative that ASEAN leaders communicate directly with their own citizens and through their civic organisations. Otherwise, community-building in ASEAN will still be a top-down process which will not lead to the creation of a people-oriented and people-centred community.

Next year, ASEAN will celebrate its 50th anniversary. It is high time for its leaders to think outside the box and engage the common folks. In a similar vein, civil society organisations should adopt more realistic views and assessments of developmental models, and move towards efforts that would encourage mutual trust and cooperation.

That would lead to achievements and progress that really would gain ASEAN the appreciation of its citizens.

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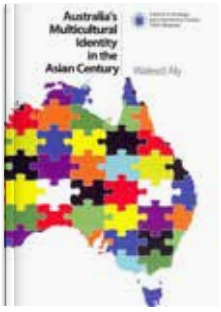

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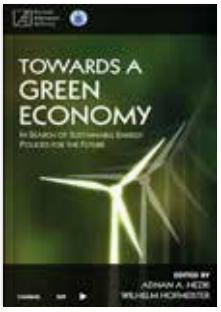

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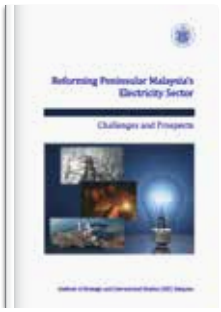

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