



# FROM 'BOOTS' TO 'BROGUES'

THE RISE OF DEFENCE DIPLOMACY IN  
SOUTHEAST ASIA

RSIS Monograph No. 21

Bhubhindar Singh & See Seng Tan



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**THE RISE OF DEFENCE DIPLOMACY IN  
SOUTHEAST ASIA**

Edited by

**Bhubhinder Singh & See Seng Tan**

**S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Preface

- 1 Introduction: Defence Diplomacy and Southeast Asia** 1  
*Bhubhindar Singh & See Seng Tan*
- 2 Carving Out a Crucial Role for ASEAN Defence Establishments in the Evolving Regional Architecture** 18  
*Termsak Chalermpananupap*
- 3 From Talkshop to Workshop: ASEAN's Quest for Practical Security Cooperation through the ADMM and ADMM-Plus Processes** 28  
*See Seng Tan*
- 4 The Five Power Defence Arrangements and the Regional Security Architecture** 42  
*Ralf Emmers*
- 5 The Shangri-La Dialogue: Thriving, but Not Surviving?** 54  
*Brendan Taylor*
- 6 The Relevance of the Network of ASEAN Defence and Security Institutions (NADI) to the ADMM** 63  
*Tan Seng Chye*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>7</b>	<b>Defence Diplomacy in Southeast Asia: Trends, Prospects and Challenges</b>	<b>71</b>
	<i>Evan A. Laksmana</i>	
<b>8</b>	<b>China's Defence Diplomacy in Southeast Asia</b>	<b>90</b>
	<i>Ian Storey</i>	
<b>9</b>	<b>U.S. Defence Diplomacy Towards Southeast Asia</b>	<b>104</b>
	<i>Richard A. Bitzinger</i>	
	<b>Contributors</b>	<b>116</b>

THE RSIS/IDSS MONOGRAPH SERIES

Monograph No.	Title
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6	<b>The OSCE and Co-operative Security in Europe</b> Lessons for Asia
7	<b>Betwixt and Between</b> Southeast Asian Strategic Relations with the U.S. and China
8	<b>Fading Away?</b> The Political Role of the Army in Indonesian Transition to Democracy, 1998–2001
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14	<b>Population Movements and the Threat of HIV/AIDS Virus at the Bangladesh-India Border</b>
15	<b>Collaboration under Anarchy</b> Functional Regionalism and the Security of East Asia
16	<b>Pandemic Preparedness in Asia</b>
17	<b>The 2008 Mumbai Terrorist Attacks</b> Strategic Fallout
18	<b>Islamic Education in Malaysia</b>
19	<b>Practising Strategic Foresight in Government</b> The Cases of Finland, Singapore and the European Union
20	<b>A Decade of Combating Radical Ideology</b> Learning from the Singapore Experience (2001–2011)
21	<b>From 'Boots' to 'Brogues'</b> The Rise of Defence Diplomacy in Southeast Asia



## PREFACE

On 30 November 2010, the Multilateralism and Regionalism Programme of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) organised a one-day workshop on “Defence Diplomacy in Southeast Asia” at the Traders Hotel, Singapore. This event brought together experts from the region and outside, from both the policy and academic communities, to discuss various aspects of defence diplomacy in Southeast Asia and the wider Asia Pacific from an institutional, individual country-based and great power perspectives. This monograph is a collection of the papers that were presented at the workshop.

The main point that emerged from the workshop was that defence diplomacy efforts assume a core role in shaping the regional and international security architecture. The relevance of these efforts, at both the bilateral and multilateral levels, to regional security and stability is expected to augment in due course. All states (and militaries) in the region will have to invest in this endeavour. The presentation and discussions led to a very lively workshop on a very timely topic. This monograph is the first important step taken to facilitate debate on defence diplomacy in general and its application to Southeast Asia as well as the wider Asia Pacific.

We gratefully acknowledge the unstinting support of the Ministry of Defence of Singapore for this project, as well as the superb editorial assistance furnished by our colleague, Joann Saw, in the preparation of this monograph.

**The Editors**  
*Singapore, 2011*



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## INTRODUCTION

### DEFENCE DIPLOMACY AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

Bhubhindar Singh & See Seng Tan

Though the use of the phrase *defence diplomacy* was regarded as an oxymoron for a long time, this is no longer the case. Defence diplomacy has become an important tool of states' foreign and security policy. This is a result of three important developments. First, the understanding of the nature of security challenges among states has evolved. No longer are states preoccupied in addressing the traditional (military) challenges, but also non-traditional ones (food, climate, environment, economics and a range of other examples). On top of the widened composition of national and international security agendas, states also have to incorporate the transnational and trans-boundary effects wrought by the intensification of globalisation processes into their security calculations. Following from the first point, states have increasingly accepted the need to engage in multilateral diplomacy and institution building in order to better defend and promote their national interests. This is evidenced by the flourishing of multilateral institutions at both the regional and international levels focusing on a range of issues in international affairs. Third, the role of the military has evolved in the post-Cold War period. Due to the impact of the new security challenges, militaries of today have had to diversify their primary mission from the traditional focus of war fighting to incorporating a range of new and diverse roles, such as peacekeeping, disaster relief and greater engagement, in defence diplomacy efforts.

As Bitzinger's chapter in this monograph points out, there is no universal definition of defence diplomacy. However, there are specific features that shape the contemporary understanding of defence diplomacy relevant to the chapters in this monograph. First, it involves the cooperative activities undertaken by militaries and the related infrastruc-

ture during peacetime. Second, defence diplomacy involves cooperation between militaries over a range of issues that include traditional duties of the military, such as counter-balancing efforts against rivals, and new roles that are outside of the traditional duties, such as peacekeeping, peace enforcement, promoting good governance, responding to natural and humanitarian disasters, protecting human rights and, at least in the Western context, supporting liberal democracy. Third, in contrast to the past efforts, defence diplomacy of today involves military-to-military cooperation between not only allies and partners but even potential rivals.<sup>1</sup> The significant consequence for defence diplomacy is that the military and its related infrastructure becomes a more engaged institution in the practice of diplomacy and foreign policymaking alongside other institutions that traditionally dominated the foreign policymaking process.

Cottey and Forster provided a clear list of activities that fall under defence diplomacy.<sup>2</sup> These activities include the following:

1. Bilateral and multilateral contacts between senior military and civilian defence officials
2. Appointment of defence attachés to foreign countries
3. Bilateral defence cooperation agreements
4. Training of foreign military and civilian defence personnel
5. Provision of expertise and advice on the democratic control of armed forces, defence management and military technical areas
6. Contacts and exchanges between military personnel and units and ship visits
7. Placement of military or civilian personnel in partner countries' defence ministries or armed forces
8. Deployment of training teams
9. Provision of military equipment and other material aid
10. Bilateral or multilateral military exercises for training purposes

While some of the activities outlined above have been part of the

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1 Cottey and Forster refer to military-to-military cooperation between potential rivals as "strategic engagement". One example relevant to today's discussions is the strategic cooperation between the United States and China. See, Cottey, A., & Foster, A. *Reshaping defence diplomacy: New roles for military cooperation and assistance*. Adelphi Paper 365, London: Oxford University Press for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2004, pp. 6–7.

2 See Table 1 in Cottey and Foster, *Reshaping defence diplomacy*, p. 7.

traditional agenda of all militaries, others are new functions in response to the changing strategic environment of the post-Cold War period. Nevertheless, all these activities point towards strengthened cooperation between militaries as part of the practice of diplomacy.

## EVOLUTION OF DEFENCE DIPLOMACY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Southeast Asia serves as a useful litmus test for defence diplomacy. The region plays host to a growing number of peacetime cooperative efforts in the region at both the bilateral and multilateral levels in the area of defence and military issues. This has certainly been a major step forward in a region long averse to the explicit conduct of regional defence cooperation, chiefly out of a Cold War-related concern that any effort in security regionalism in Southeast Asia might be misconstrued by external powers and potential aggressors as directed against them. As defence diplomacy evolved from its implicit and ad hoc state of the Cold War period to the explicit and institutionalised enterprise that it is today, three interrelated trends are evident.

First, while much of defence and security cooperation in the region has been and, in most respects, remains bilateral, in recent years there has been a gradual shift towards multilateral initiatives.<sup>3</sup> Second, with the increase in intra-ASEAN cooperation, there has been a regionalisation of defence relations.<sup>4</sup> Third, such regionalisation has not come at the expense of the “open regionalism” in which Southeast Asian states have long engaged with extra-regional powers (as discussed in the chapters by Bitzinger on the United States and Storey on China), whether in terms of extant alliance ties, strategic partnerships or, at the ASEAN level, institutional relations with the regional organisation’s dialogue partners.

### From SEATO to ASEAN: The regionalisation of defence

The U.S.-led Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) was dissolved in 1977 due to a host of reasons, not least disagreements between America and various treaty members. For Southeast Asian leaders, SEATO

3 Tan, S. S., & Acharya, A. (Eds.). *Asia-Pacific security cooperation: National interests and regional order*. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2004.

4 Simon, S. W. “The regionalization of defence in Southeast Asia.” *The Pacific Review*, Vol. 5 No. 2 (1992), pp. 112–124.

quickly became a model of what indigenous regionalism should not be like.<sup>5</sup> As Carlos Romulo, foreign minister of the Philippines, explained regarding the *raison d'être* behind ASEAN, "We did not phase out SEATO in order to set up another one".<sup>6</sup> Even then, potential rivals persisted in seeing ASEAN as a defence alliance. During the Cold War years, Vietnam did not find ASEAN's prescriptions for regional order, such as those stipulated in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, acceptable because, in Hanoi's view, the Association was essentially an American-sponsored organisation. As an observer has noted, fairly or otherwise, about the formation of ASEAN, "ASEAN was the product of Asian initiative. But it was hardly an Asian creation. Behind the Asian initiative was the American 'support' and 'discreet guidance.' Washington almost acted like a mid-wife in the birth of ASEAN".<sup>7</sup> The perception of external influence encouraged the view that ASEAN could become another SEATO which extra-regional players, chiefly the United States, could use to exert and expand their sway in Southeast Asia. Indeed, Vietnam justified its overture to ASEAN in 1977 as possible only because "[the] policy of setting up such military blocs as ASEAN in Southeast Asia has failed and passed forever".<sup>8</sup>

Crucially, residual misgivings over defence regionalism did not preclude public acknowledgements by ASEAN members about the perceived need for regional defence cooperation. On the eve of ASEAN's first Bali Summit in 1976, which famously mandated the Association as primarily a socioeconomic institution which could, future conditions permitting, extend cooperation to the defence and security sectors, then Singapore's

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- 5 Dreisbach, K. "Between SEATO and ASEAN: The United States and the regional organization of Southeast Asia." In M. Frey, R. W. Pruessen & T. Y. Tan (Eds.), *The transformation of Southeast Asia: International perspectives on decolonization*. Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2004, pp. 241–256.
  - 6 *The Straits Times*, 22 December 1975, cited in Acharya, A. *A survey of military cooperation among the ASEAN states: Bilateralism or alliance?* Occasional Paper No. 14, Toronto, ON: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, York University, 1990, p. 3.
  - 7 Mahapatra, C. *American role in the origin and growth of ASEAN*. New Delhi: ABC Publishing House, 1990, pp. 6–7.
  - 8 Prime Minister Pham Van Dong of Vietnam, cited in *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 13 January 1978, cited in S. S. Tan, "International regimes: A study of regional cooperation in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations." Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Manitoba, October 1992, p. 65.

Prime Minister, Lee Kuan Yew, let on that “intelligence coordination and sharing” were already occurring among the ASEAN states. Further, bilateral border security agreements between Malaysia and Thailand and Malaysia and Indonesia—designed to cope with a broad range of security threats and illegal activities, although communist insurgency was the principal target—evolved into a set of fairly institutionalised arrangements.<sup>9</sup> The arrangements also included bilateral military exercises, such as the *Kekar Malindo* series between Malaysia and Indonesia, and the *Thamal* air and sea exercises between Malaysia and Thailand.

Bilateral tensions would subsequently strain some of these arrangements, however. Likewise, while the Vietnamese attack on Cambodia in late 1978 and subsequent occupation evoked numerous discussions on defence cooperation as well as the occasional speculation on collective security, divergent security perspectives among the member states over the Sino-Vietnamese rivalry would render any vision of an ASEAN defence framework elusive. Against the emerging Soviet-Vietnamese partnership and looming Soviet naval presence in the region in the early 1980s, Lee Kuan Yew made the following observation on the prospect for intramural military exercises among ASEAN-6<sup>10</sup>:

At a later stage the exercises may become trilateral and later quadrilateral. It's a matter which will have to evolve naturally. We feel the next stage—the trilateral exercises—is simple. The ideal would be multilateral exercises encompassing all the [ASEAN] members. But at least quadrilateral, so that there is no misunderstanding as to the perception of the threats.<sup>11</sup>

Not all of his fellow ASEAN leaders agreed, however. Concerns would vary, not least the worry that such comments could end up provoking the Vietnamese and other potential adversaries. Siddhi Savetsila, Thailand's Foreign Minister at the time, responded: “We in ASEAN don't want to

9 Acharya, A. “Regional military-security cooperation in the Third World: A conceptual analysis of the relevance and limitations of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)” *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 29 No. 1 (February 1992), pp. 7–21.

10 Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

11 Cited in Richardson, M. “ASEAN extends its military ties.” *Pacific Defence Reporter*, (November 1982), p. 55, cited in Acharya, *A survey of military cooperation among the ASEAN states*, p. 7.

be seen as a military pact ... and even though regional security relates to all of us, we have never agreed to have multilateral military exercises".<sup>12</sup> Importantly, though bilateral tensions and divergent security perspectives clearly complicated defence and security cooperation among ASEAN states, they did not diminish much less extinguish it. As former Malaysian Premier Mahathir Mohamad once admitted about his government's complex relationship with Singapore: "Never have we even once failed to cooperate in matters relating to the threat of subversion against our society. The security apparatuses of our two societies continue to cooperate against any subversive and criminal elements that could affect our stability even when political leaders were openly squabbling".<sup>13</sup>

By 1989, however, the gradual proliferation of defence ties in all its facets among the ASEAN-6 led Indonesia's armed forces commander to describe intra-ASEAN defence relations as resembling "a defence spider web".<sup>14</sup> The following (non-exhaustive) list of bilateral military exercises highlights the growing links between ASEAN militaries to the present (see Table 1).<sup>15</sup>

With the formal inclusion of security cooperation in the institutional agenda of ASEAN at its fourth summit in 1992 in Singapore, defence diplomacy finally emerged from the closet of tabooed subjects in which member nations had hitherto engaged on the quiet. For the most part, the defence bilateralism that had been initiated as far back as the 1970s has continued to the present, with some facets phasing out and newer ones being added. In a key sense, what bilateralism offered was an informal and ad hoc framework through which the ASEAN-6 could form, maintain and enhance defence and security ties with one another that would otherwise have been disallowed if they had stayed wedded in rigid conformity to the Association's institutional remit. As Ghazalie Shafie, former foreign minister of Malaysia once noted, "The limitation of regional cooperation within a formal framework should not prevent countries of the region

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12 *Bangkok Post*, 11 September 1982, cited in Acharya, *A survey of military cooperation among the ASEAN states*, p. 7.

13 *New Straits Times*, 8 December 1981, cited in Acharya, *A survey of military cooperation among the ASEAN states*, p. 15.

14 General Try Sutrisno, cited in Acharya, *A survey of military cooperation among the ASEAN states*, p. 1.

15 The list was compiled using various sources.



TABLE 1  
**Intra-ASEAN bilateral military exercises**

Exercise	Type	Participating states	Start	Frequency
Air Thamal	Air	Malaysia and Thailand	1981	Annual
Anoa-Singa	Land	Philippines and Singapore	1993	Annual
Darsasa Malindo	Air/land/naval	Indonesia and Malaysia	1982	Intermittent
Eagle	Air/naval	Indonesia and Singapore	1974	Annual
Elang Indopura	Air	Indonesia and Singapore	1980	Annual
Elang Thainesia	Air	Indonesia and Thailand	1980	Annual
Elang Malindo	Air	Indonesia and Malaysia	1975	Biennial
Englek	Naval	Indonesia and Singapore	1974	Biennial
Hornbill (and others)	Naval	Brunei and Malaysia	1981	Intermittent
Kekar Malindo	Land	Indonesia and Malaysia	1977	Annual
Kripura Malindo	Land	Indonesia and Malaysia	1981	Intermittent
Kocha Singa	Land	Singapore and Thailand	1997	Annual
Maju Bersama	Land	Brunei and Singapore	1994	Annual
Malapura	Naval	Malaysia and Singapore	1984	Annual
Malindo Jaya	Naval	Indonesia and Malaysia	1973	Annual
Pelican	Naval	Brunei and Singapore	1979	Annual
Philindo/ Corpatphilindo	Naval	Indonesia and Philippines	1972	Intermittent
Safkar Indopura	Land	Indonesia and Singapore	1988	Annual
Sea Garuda	Naval	Indonesia and Thailand	1975	Intermittent
Semangat Bersatu	Land	Malaysia and Singapore	1989	Intermittent
Sing-Siam	Air	Singapore and Thailand	1981	Intermittent
Tatar Malindo	Land	Indonesia and Malaysia	1981	Intermittent
Termite/ Flaming Arrow/ Juggernaut	Land	Brunei and Singapore	1985	Annual
Thai-Sing	Naval	Singapore and Thailand	1983	Annual
Thalay	Naval	Malaysia and Thailand	1980	Intermittent

from trying to forge the closest possible links on a bilateral basis with one another".<sup>16</sup> Arguably, it is that same proliferation of bilateral links that has been an integral part of the gradual regionalisation of defence in Southeast Asia.

### **From bilateralism to multilateralism: Towards a “defence community”?**

In many respects, the establishment of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) in 2006, a key element of the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) vision put forth in the ASEAN Concord II (Bali Concord II) of 2003, is an extraordinary achievement for Southeast Asia. The preceding section discussed the rise of defence and security bilateralism in the light of considerable historical political and institutional constraints against the development of multilateral structures and processes. But the regional aspiration for some sort of multilateral defence arrangement was there, however. In 1989, a former foreign minister of Malaysia broached the possibility of an ASEAN “defence community” that could “take the ASEAN states to new heights of political and military cooperation”, while his Indonesian counterpart made a similar appeal for an ASEAN “military arrangement”.<sup>17</sup> The end of the Cold War and enlargement of the Association in the mid- to late-1990s to include Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam (CLMV) likely afforded it the opportunity to establish some form of defence multilateralism. But as Chalermphanupap notes in his chapter, any potential movement in that direction was likely held back by the political ideologies of some CLMV states, which reject the notion of military alliances with external powers.

Aside from the historical preference for bilateralism, important multilateral developments took place in the first half of the 2000s that arguably paved the way towards the realisation of the ADMM. As Chalermphanupap's essay recounts, military-to-military cooperation on a multilateral level was facilitated through a number of modalities such as the ASEAN Chiefs of Army Multilateral Meeting (since 2000), the ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Informal Meeting (since 2001),

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16 Shafie, M. G. *Malaysia: International Relations*. Kuala Lumpur: Creative Enterprises, 1982, pp. 161–162.

17 Omar, A. H., and Kusumaatmatdja, M. respectively, cited in Acharya, *A survey of military cooperation among the ASEAN states*, pp. 1–2.

the ASEAN Navy Interaction (since 2001), the ASEAN Air Force Chiefs Conference (since 2004), the ASEAN Military Intelligence Meeting and the ASEAN Armies Rifles Meeting. In an important sense, the ADMM serves as an overarching framework under which these disparate activities can now be gathered.

The impressive number of ASEAN defence-related meetings, conferences and activities taking place on a multilateral basis reflects a surprisingly high degree of institutionalisation. In 2011 alone, the following events have been scheduled:

1. ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) (17–21 May)
2. ADMM Retreat Meeting (18–22 October)
3. ASEAN Defence Senior Officials' Meeting Working Group (ADSOM WG)/ADSOM-Plus WG (22–24 February)
4. ADSOM/ADSOM-Plus Conference (26–30 April)
5. ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Informal Meeting (ACDFIM) (31 March)
6. ASEAN Military Operation Meeting (AMOM) (29 March)
7. ASEAN Military Intelligence Meeting (AMIM) (29 March)
8. Expert Working Group (20–24 September)
9. Second Workshop on the Use of ASEAN Military Assets and Capacities in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) (28–29 March)<sup>18</sup>

Complementing these is a series of activities conducted at the second-track level under the auspices of the Network of ASEAN Defence and Security Institutions (NADI), the officially sanctioned network of research centres and think tanks that supports the ADMM in much the same way the ASEAN Institutes of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS) supports ASEAN (see the chapter by Tan Seng Chye). From the period of April 2011 to March 2012, the following NADI-related events have been scheduled:

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18 Adapted from the Calendar of Events from the official website of Indonesian Foreign Affairs Ministry dedicated to Indonesia's hosting of the 2011 ADMM meeting, accessed on 20 June 2011 at [www.admm-indonesia.org/event](http://www.admm-indonesia.org/event). Defence-related meetings and activities conducted under ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) auspices have not been included here.

1. Fourth NADI Annual Meeting (19–21 April 2011)
2. NADI Workshop on HADR (28–30 June 2011)
3. NADI Retreat Meeting (November 2011)
4. NADI Workshop on Maritime Security in East Asia (early 2012)
5. NADI Workshop on Aviation Security (January–February 2012)
6. NADI Workshop on Security and Development (early 2012)
7. NADI Workshop on Future Directions/Trajectory of ASEAN's Cooperation with Dialogue Partners particularly in ADMM+8 and EAS (early 2012)

Whether this flurry of activity at both the intergovernmental as well as second-track dimensions signals the existence of a “defence community” is debatable. Moreover, it remains unclear if and how all of them relate together as a synergistic coherent whole. In 1991, a noted scholar of ASEAN regionalism concluded that the concept of defence community—by which he meant a defence alliance or pact and/or a sort of regional industrial complex emphasising joint arms production and procurement—was inappropriate for ASEAN.<sup>19</sup> Two decades later, the case could be made that ASEAN has become more than just a diplomatic community in the sense that there is today a robust defence “face”, as it were, to the multilateral diplomacy and institutionalism that characterises the Southeast Asian region, even as the Association continues its challenging pursuit of realising the APSC vision.

### **From “neutrality” to “open regionalism”: The extra-regional dimension**

A third element of defence diplomacy in Southeast Asia is its commitment to engaging the outside region. The creation of the ADMM+8—comprising the 10 ASEAN countries and China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia, New Zealand, Russia and the United States—in 2010 is a salient mark of the importance which the ASEAN countries assign to engaging the external powers, an expression, if you will, of the open and inclusive regionalism which ASEAN has long espoused. As Prime

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19 Acharya, A. “The Association of Southeast Asian Nations: Security community or defence community?” *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 64 No. 2 (Summer 1991), pp. 159–178.

Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore remarked in his keynote address at the 2006 edition of the Shangri-La Dialogue concerning the regional institutional architecture, “the most robust and stable configuration for regional cooperation is an open and inclusive one”<sup>20</sup>—a view shared by his fellow ASEAN leaders.

The hitherto unrealised vision of Southeast Asia as a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN)—signed by the ASEAN states as a declaration in 1971 and upgraded to a treaty as part of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) of 1976—underscored the regional aspiration, especially prominent during the Cold War period and the early years of postcolonial independence from Western powers, to be free from extra-regional interference.<sup>21</sup> Needless to say, practical realities implied otherwise, not least the continued reliance by Southeast Asian countries on their military alliances with external powers—Thailand and the Philippines with the United States; Malaysia and Singapore with Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom as part of the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA). In this respect, the formation of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1994 could be understood as a formal acknowledgement by the ASEAN states, but most critically Indonesia, of the need for vigorous engagement rather than rejection of great powers that have economic, political and strategic interests in Southeast Asia and the Asia Pacific region.

In this regard, the defence establishments of ASEAN member nations did not lag far behind their colleagues from the diplomatic establishments in kick-starting regularised inter-military dialogue and subsequently, cooperation. As Chalermphanupap has enumerated, the following defence-oriented activities and modalities took place under the ARF rubric:

20 Keynote Address by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at the Fifth International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Asia Security Summit (Shangri-La Dialogue), 2 June 2006, Shangri-La Hotel, Singapore, accessed on 20 June 2011 at [www.iiss.org/conferences/the-shangri-la-dialogue/shangri-la-dialogue-archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2006/2006-plenary-session-speeches/keynote-remarks-he-lee-hsien-loong/](http://www.iiss.org/conferences/the-shangri-la-dialogue/shangri-la-dialogue-archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2006/2006-plenary-session-speeches/keynote-remarks-he-lee-hsien-loong/).

21 Hanggi, H. *ASEAN and the ZOPFAN concept*. Pacific Strategic Papers, Singapore: ISEAS, 1991.

1. ARF's Heads of Defence Universities/Colleges/Institutions Meeting (HDUCIM) in 1997
2. ARF Foreign Ministers invited defence officials to join the luncheon of the Inter-Sessional Group Meeting (ISG) on Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) in 2001
3. The first formal ARF Defence Officials Dialogue (DOD) was convened in Bandar Seri Begawan in 2002; the DOD has since then been held regularly on the sidelines of every ISG on CBMs, ARF SOM and the ARF Ministerial Meeting
4. The ARF Security Policy Conference (ASPC), originally proposed by China and supported by ASEAN, has been an annual affair since 2004 and is conducted at the level of vice-minister of defence or defence senior official level

Other than ARF-based activities, some ASEAN states also participate in the following multilateral military exercises involving the United States:

1. Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT): bilateral maritime exercises held between the United States and various Asian states
2. Cobra Gold: a Thai-U.S. bilateral army exercise that has since grown to include Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore from ASEAN as well as other Asian countries
3. Cope Tiger: a trilateral air exercise involving Singapore, Thailand and the United States
4. Southeast Asia Cooperation Against Terrorism (SEACAT): maritime counterterrorism exercise held between the United States and various ASEAN members
5. Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC): the world's largest international maritime exercise involving the United States and a big number of Asia Pacific countries including some ASEAN members

Ironically, despite the perceived wisdom that ASEAN states favour security multilateralism over America's longstanding preference for bilateralism, the participation by ASEAN militaries in some of the aforementioned exercises with the U.S. military, it has been reported, is in fact quite the opposite: the ASEAN states tend to favour bilateral rather than multilateral military exercises and exchanges with their U.S.

counterpart because of the perceptibly higher level of knowledge and technology transfers they stand to receive from bilateral engagements with the United States.<sup>22</sup>

Equally significant is the fact that regional anxieties over explicit defence regionalism were not sufficient to preclude the continuation of the Anglo-Malayan Defence Agreement (AMDA), established in 1957 for the defence of independent Malaya, in the guise of a reformatted pact known as the FPDA in 1971, comprising the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Malaysia (which Emmers' chapter discusses). Arguably, the FPDA constitutes a form of "potential deterrence" in the absence of a clear and present adversary.<sup>23</sup> Its roots in the Indonesian Confrontation imply, however, that Indonesia, despite its place as regional leader of ASEAN, has been the implicit security concern of the alliance. Likely, it is also in that context that Malaysia-Singapore defence collaboration, conducted under FPDA auspices, has played a significant role in smoothing an oft-difficult relationship between those two countries.

Finally, as Taylor's chapter shows, the Shangri-La Dialogue, an annual gathering of defence ministers, practitioners and intellectuals convened in Singapore by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), constitutes another important expression of multilateral defence diplomacy.

## ARCHITECTURE OF THIS MONOGRAPH

The contributors to this monograph touch on the diverse range of arrangements and meetings that have emerged in the practice of defence diplomacy in Southeast Asia and their activities; the means to strengthen defence diplomacy efforts in Southeast Asia; how the myriad of institutions fit together; how they contribute to regional security architecture; and the role of great powers in contributing to defence diplomacy in Southeast Asia. The chapters are summarised as follows:

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22 Simon, S. W. "Theater security cooperation in the U.S. Pacific Command: An assessment and projection." *NBR Analysis*, Vol. 14 No. 2 (August 2003).

23 Khoo, H. S. "The Five Power Defence Arrangements: If it ain't broke ..." *Pointer: Journal of the Singapore Armed Forces*, Vol. 26 No. 4 (October–December 2001), accessed on 14 June 2011 at [www.mindef.gov.sg/safti/pointer/back/journals/2000/Vol26\\_4/7.htm](http://www.mindef.gov.sg/safti/pointer/back/journals/2000/Vol26_4/7.htm).

1. Termsak Chalermpanupap provides a comprehensive overview of ASEAN's defence diplomacy establishments. He discusses the origins of the ADMM and the ADMM-Plus and explains in detail the functions of these meetings. Moreover, this chapter also raises critical questions related to the success of these meetings.
2. See Seng Tan analyses the contribution of the ADMM and ADMM-Plus to the defence diplomacy efforts in the Asia Pacific. The chapter argues that the ADMM and ADMM-Plus should not be regarded as overarching arrangements that address broad agendas. Instead, these arrangements will be most effective with a narrow and functional agenda, namely as pointed out in the chapter, developing the abilities of ASEAN militaries to respond to transnational threats that are non-military in nature.
3. Military alliances are also examples of defence diplomacy. In this regard, Ralf Emmers discusses the role of the FPDA in the evolving structure of defence diplomacy. His chapter focuses on the Malaysian and Singaporean perspectives. The conclusion of the chapter points to the continued relevance of the FPDA in the Southeast Asian security architecture.
4. Beyond the official intergovernmental level, defence diplomacy is alive and well in the form of semi-official as well as non-official (or Track 2) networks. Brendan Taylor analyses the future of the annual IISS Asia Security Summit—popularly known as the Shangri-La Dialogue (SLD), a “Track 1.5”, so-called, gathering of defence practitioners and intellectuals—in the light of the formation of the ADMM-Plus in 2010. He points out the problems related to defence diplomacy resulting from the institutional competition between the SLD and the ADMM-Plus. However, Taylor concludes that the SLD remains important for defence diplomacy and foresees that the potential competition between the SLD and ADMM-Plus (and other arrangements) can be managed.
5. Tan Seng Chye's chapter focuses on NADI, a second-track process dedicated to providing policy ideas to the ADMM for its consideration. It provides a detailed account of the purpose and objectives of NADI, tracing its evolution since its formation in 2007, and its contribution to defence diplomacy efforts in South-east Asia.



6. Evan Laksmana's chapter highlights key issues and major patterns in relation to both bilateral and multilateral defence diplomacy in Southeast Asia, focusing on the ARF and ASEAN-related events, on one hand, and Indonesia's bilateral defence diplomacy on the other.
7. Ian Storey focuses on China's contribution to defence diplomacy efforts in Southeast Asia. Defence diplomacy efforts between China and ASEAN remain limited compared to other great powers, such as the United States, even though this aspect of the relationship is expanding. In discussing both the progress and barriers to present and future cooperation, Storey focuses on five areas of the relationship, namely, annual defence and security consultations, combined training and exercises, arms sales and military assistance, defence technology cooperation, and port calls.
8. Richard Bitzinger provides an American perspective to defence diplomacy in Southeast Asia. His chapter touches on the objectives behind the United States defence diplomacy towards Southeast Asia and examines the various means in which the U.S. military has used to expand peacetime cooperative relations with regional militaries.

By all accounts, defence diplomacy plays a core role in shaping the regional and international security architecture. A number of political and strategic ramifications for Southeast Asia and the wider Asia Pacific arise from this.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

1. There is significant development in the use of defence diplomacy by the region. Though defence issues have always been sensitive, states are gradually showing confidence in regional dialogue and cooperation through the various institutions and meetings. This confidence of dialogue—and, increasingly, practical collaboration—is not only among the Southeast Asian states but also extends to include key dialogue partners of ASEAN as an expression of the open regionalism that characterises defence relations in the region.

2. States are aware that emerging security challenges are increasingly transnational or trans-boundary, and non-military in nature. It is, therefore, important for the countries to draw upon each other's resources, expertise and perspectives, and to work together, in order to deal with these challenges more effectively. Related to this is the acknowledgement that increasingly greater demands would be placed on the use of the military assets and capabilities of regional countries in response to challenges in the areas of disaster management, maritime safety and security, pandemics and environmental concerns.
3. States recognise that non-traditional security challenges have the potential to complicate traditional regional strategic challenges, such as territorial disputes. At the same time, the reluctance of Southeast Asian (and, for that matter, Asia Pacific) countries to rely on regional mechanisms, not least ASEAN and broader ASEAN-based regional arrangements, to manage much less resolve their disputes and other (as Laksmana puts it in his chapter) "off limits' concerns" implies defence cooperation is more probable in areas consensually deemed non-sensitive by the countries involved, namely, non-traditional challenges. As such, states should pursue narrow functional enterprises aimed primarily at developing the abilities of ASEAN militaries to respond comprehensively and systematically to complex challenges posed by transnational threats of a non-military nature.
4. The complexity of defence diplomacy in the region, with its varied bilateral and multilateral modalities, does not necessarily guarantee they would complement each other. How multilateral initiatives can complement traditional bilateral alliances with the major power without weakening each other—what one analyst has called "convergent security"<sup>24</sup>—is a growing concern. At the same time, the preservation of ASEAN centrality will increasingly become difficult but a coordinated policy among the ASEAN members has to be pursued.

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24 Tow, W. T. *Asia-Pacific security relations: Seeking convergent security*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

5. For defence diplomacy to be an effective tool of foreign policy, states have to pursue such engagement at various levels, be it Track 1 (leaders, ministers and chiefs of defence forces), Track 2 (defence colleges, defence ministry-related think tanks/research institutions) and increasingly, Track 3 (civil society and non-governmental organisations).<sup>25</sup>

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25 Tan, S. S. "NGOs in conflict management in Southeast Asia." *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 12 No. 1 (2005), pp. 41–55.

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## CARVING OUT A CRUCIAL ROLE FOR ASEAN DEFENCE ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE EVOLVING REGIONAL ARCHITECTURE

Termsak Chalermphanupap

This chapter traces recent developments of the Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN) defence establishments<sup>1</sup> that led to the launching of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM)-Plus inaugural meeting in Hanoi on 12 October 2010. The Vietnamese Defence Minister, in his Chairman's Statement, hailed the ADMM-Plus as "a significant milestone in ASEAN's history" and a "key component of a robust, effective, open, and inclusive regional security architecture"<sup>2</sup>.

### FROM ADMM TO ADMM-PLUS

The ADMM is the newest Sectoral Ministerial Body for the 43-year-old ASEAN. Its inaugural meeting was convened in Kuala Lumpur on 9 May 2006. Its second meeting was convened in Singapore on 14 November 2006; its third in Pattaya from 26–27 February 2009; and its fourth in Hanoi on 11 May 2010. The ASEAN Defence Ministers also met in a "retreat" to exchange views informally: in Bali on 24 March 2007, in Bangkok on 3 November 2009 and in Hanoi on 11 October 2010 prior to the first meeting of the ADMM-Plus.

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- 1 In this chapter, the ASEAN establishments refer chiefly to the ASEAN Defence Ministers, their ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM), senior defence officials and their ASEAN Defence Senior Officials Meeting (ADSOM).
  - 2 Chairman's Statement of the First ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus: "ADMM-Plus: Strategic Cooperation for Peace, Stability, and Development in the Region", Hanoi, 12 October 2010, accessed on 2 March 2011 at [www.aseansec.org/25352.htm](http://www.aseansec.org/25352.htm)

\*This chapter expresses personal opinions and not of the ASEAN Secretariat.

Before an ADMM or an ADMM retreat, ASEAN defence senior officials would meet to prepare the provisional agenda and the groundwork for the defence ministers. ADSOM, which consists chiefly of the deputy defence ministers or the defence permanent secretaries of the ASEAN member states, is assisted by the ADSOM Working Group.<sup>3</sup>

In the past, ASEAN member states, particularly their foreign ministers and senior foreign affairs officials, were quite averse to venturing into any defence cooperation in ASEAN. They were careful not to give rise to any misunderstanding that ASEAN was becoming a military bloc. After all, neither ASEAN nor its member states ever had or will ever have any common external enemy. Some of the member states also have their own external security arrangements with different military powers: the Philippines and Thailand used to belong to the now defunct SEATO, and they are now considered by the United States as its non-NATO allies; Malaysia and Singapore are members of the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA), together with Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom; and Brunei Darussalam has some security arrangement with the United Kingdom after gaining independence in 1984. On the other hand, Laos and Vietnam, as well as Myanmar, because of their political ideologies, have openly rejected joining any military alliance with any external powers.

Nevertheless, prior to the arrival of the ADMM in 2006, Southeast Asian armed forces did have their military-to-military cooperation activities through the following means: the ASEAN Chiefs of Army Multilateral Meeting (ACAMM) since 2000; the ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Informal Meeting (ACDFIM) since 2001; the ASEAN Navy Interaction (ANI) since 2001; the ASEAN Air Force Chiefs Conference (AACC) since 2004; the ASEAN Military Intelligence Meeting; and the ASEAN Armies Rifles Meeting. In addition, Vietnam plans to host the first ASEAN Chiefs of Military Medical Meeting in 2011.

Gradually, representatives of the ASEAN defence establishments began to take part in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), which was initiated by ASEAN in 1994. First was the ARF's Heads of Defence Uni-

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3 Vietnam's chairman of the ADSOM Working Group was Senior Colonel Vu Tien Trong, Head of the Institute for Defence International Relations; Vietnam's chairman of ADSOM was Deputy Defence Minister Lieutenant General Nguyen Chi Vinh.

versities/Colleges/Institutions Meeting (HDUCIM) in 1997. The ARF Ministers then agreed in 2001 to involve defence officials in a luncheon as part of the Inter-Sessional Group Meeting on Confidence Building Measures (ISG on CBMs). Next, the first formal Defence Officials Dialogue (DOD) was convened in Bandar Seri Begawan on 30 July 2002. Since 2002, the DOD has been held regularly on the sidelines of every ISG on CBMs, ARF SOM and the ARF Ministerial Meeting. Another important venue for ASEAN defence officials within the ARF context was in the ARF Security Policy Conference (ASPC), which was originally proposed by China and supported by ASEAN, and has been convened annually since 2004. Participation in the ASPC is at the level of vice-minister of defence or defence senior official level, which is higher than the participation at the DOD. However, there is no direct link between the DOD and the ASPC. This is an anomaly which has yet to be addressed.

A new breakthrough for a more significant role of the ASEAN defence establishments came at the Tenth ASEAN Summit in Vientiane on 29 November 2004. The ASEAN Leaders adopted the ASEAN Security Community Plan of Action, in which Section III 1 (c) provided for the convening of the annual ADMM. The stated objectives of the ADMM are the following:

1. To promote regional peace and stability through dialogue and cooperation in defence and security
2. To give guidance to existing senior defence and military officials dialogue and cooperation in the field of defence and security within ASEAN and between ASEAN and dialogue partners
3. To promote mutual trust and confidence through greater understanding of defence and security challenges as well as enhancement of transparency and openness
4. To contribute to the establishment of an ASEAN Security Community as stipulated in the Bali Concord II and to promote the implementation of the Vientiane Action Programme (VAP) on the ASEAN Security Community<sup>4</sup>

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4 Concept Paper for the Establishment of an ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting, accessed on 2 March 2011 at [www.asean.org](http://www.asean.org). The VAP has been superseded by the 2009 Roadmap for an ASEAN Community 2009–2015, which includes three Blueprints for each of the three Community pillars. The ASEAN Security Community of the VAP has been renamed the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC).

The chairmanship of the ADMM has been synchronised with the Single ASEAN Chairmanship,<sup>5</sup> starting with Thailand in 2009; hence, Vietnam succeeded Thailand in chairing the ADMM in 2010. The inclusion of the ADMM under the ASEAN Single Chairmanship signifies the growing importance of this newest Sectoral Ministerial Body in the ASEAN organisation.

## NO TIES TO THE EXPANDED EAS

The ADMM-Plus is not related to the expanded East Asia Summit (EAS). The involvement of the same eight dialogue partners<sup>6</sup> in both the ADMM-Plus and the expanded EAS is just coincidental.

The ADMM-Plus was initiated to pursue the ADMM's objective of engaging ASEAN's dialogue partners in dialogue and cooperation. Three criteria for qualifying as a "Plus" country are: (i) being a Dialogue Partner of ASEAN; (ii) having "significant interactions and relations with ASEAN defence establishments"; and (iii) capable of working with the ADMM "to build capacity so as to enhance regional security in a substantive manner".<sup>7</sup> The decision to invite the eight dialogue partners to the first meeting of ADMM-Plus in Hanoi was made at the Fourth ADMM in Hanoi on 11 May 2010.

On the other hand, the decision to expand the EAS to include Russia and the United States was first made at the 43rd ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting in Hanoi, 19–20 July 2010. The recommendation of the AMM was subsequently endorsed by ASEAN Leaders during the 17th ASEAN Summit in Hanoi on 27 October 2010, and it received consensus support at the Fifth EAS in Hanoi on 30 October 2010.

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5 Under Article 31 of the ASEAN Charter, the ASEAN bodies that will come under the Single Chairmanship are: the ASEAN Summit and related summits; the ASEAN Coordinating Council; the three ASEAN Community Council; the Committee of Permanent Representatives; and where appropriate, the relevant ASEAN Sectoral Ministerial Bodies and senior officials meetings; they now include: the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting (AMM), the ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting (AEM); the ASEAN Finance Ministers Meeting (AFMM), the ADMM, their senior officials meetings and their subsidiaries; and the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR).

6 The dialogue partners are Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, Russia and the United States. Canada and the European Union are the other two dialogue partners not involved in either the ADMM-Plus or the expanded EAS.

7 As agreed at the Third ADMM in Pattaya in 2009.

It should be pointed out that the European Union has expressed keen interest to join the EAS for quite some time now. It fulfils two conditions: the European Union is a dialogue partner, and it has developed strong relationships and cooperation with ASEAN and its member states. However, the European Union had not acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in Southeast Asia, which is one of the three criteria for joining the EAS. During the 43rd AMM, the TAC was amended by the Third Protocol to open the 1976 Treaty to accession by regional organisations whose members are only sovereign states. Last year, ASEAN member states, acting in their capacity as Southeast Asian High Contracting Parties, announced their consent to the European Union's accession to the TAC once the TAC is ready for accession by regional organisations. In other words, the expanded EAS could in the near future include the European Union. However, the European Union is for the time being not considered as a potential participant in the ADMM-Plus. It is more an economic bloc with no clear mandate for defence cooperation with external partners.

Also during the 43rd AMM, Canada, together with Turkey, acceded to the TAC. Canada thus apparently has fulfilled all the three requirements to qualify to request ASEAN's consideration in joining the expanded EAS. Whether or not Canada will make its move next year remains to be seen.

The ADMM-Plus is not related to the expanded EAS for one clear reason: the existing priority of the EAS does not lie in any defence or security cooperation. The expanded EAS will, according to the EAS Chairman's Statement of 30 October 2010, continue to focus on the following five priority areas: finance, education, energy, disaster relief management and mitigation, and avian influenza prevention.<sup>8</sup>

## WHY THE ADMM-PLUS?

Why did the ASEAN Defence Ministers initiate the ADMM-Plus so soon? Obviously, the Ministers have quickly gained confidence in regional dialogue and cooperation through the ADMM. They felt they could contribute more by expanding their dialogue and cooperation to include key dialogue part-

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8 For full text, see ASEAN Secretariat's website, and the website of Vietnam's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at [www.asean2010.vn](http://www.asean2010.vn).



ners. As early as 2007, the ASEAN defence establishments were then quite keen to start the ADMM-Plus “at a pace comfortable to all”. This idea was included as one of the activities of the ADMM’s 3-year work programme (2007–2010), under the measure to build upon existing and future defence and military interaction and cooperation.

More specifically, in the discussion paper entitled “Potential, Prospects and Direction of Practical Cooperation within the Framework of the ADMM-Plus”, the following reasons were stated:

1. These eight dialogue partners have had “significant defence interactions and relations with ASEAN” and they “will be able to work with the ADMM to contribute significantly to enhance peace and security in the region ...”
2. “The emerging security challenges are increasingly transnational and non-traditional. It is, therefore, important for the countries to draw upon each other’s resources, expertise, and perspectives, and to work together, in order to deal with these challenges more effectively.”
3. “The ADMM-Plus provides a good platform for ASEAN and its key security partners to have an open and constructive dialogue on a wide range of defence and security issues. This will build confidence and deepen mutual trust and understanding.”
4. “The ADMM-Plus also provides a useful platform for the defence establishments of ASEAN and those of its key security partners to enhance practical cooperation, thereby strengthening the region’s capacity and effectiveness in addressing common security challenges.”
5. “The defence establishments of the ADMM-Plus countries have shared a long-standing tradition of bilateral cooperation.”
6. They “cooperate together at the multilateral level”.
7. There is a “good foundation” of “comfort and trust established through existing cooperation to enhance cooperation within the ADMM-Plus”.

## **HIGHLIGHTS AT THE ADMM “RETREAT” AND THE FIRST ADMM-PLUS MEETING**

Prior to the first meeting of the ADMM-Plus, ASEAN Defence Ministers and the Secretary-General of ASEAN met at an ADMM “retreat” at Melia Hanoi Hotel on 11 October 2010. The following were the highlights:

1. Eight ASEAN Defence Ministers attended; Brunei Darussalam was represented by a Deputy Minister of Defence, and Myanmar by the country's Ambassador to Vietnam.<sup>9</sup>
2. The Secretary-General of ASEAN briefed the ADMM "retreat" on recent developments in ASEAN.
3. Discussion and adoption of the paper on "ADMM-Plus: Modalities and Procedures".
4. Discussion and adoption of the paper "Potential, Prospects, and Direction of Practical Cooperation within the Framework of the ADMM-Plus".
5. Review and consideration of the draft of the Hanoi Joint Declaration on the First ADMM-Plus.
6. Confirmation on Indonesia as the next ADMM Chair and host country of the Fifth ADMM in 2011.
7. Confirmation on Brunei Darussalam as the host of the Second ADMM-Plus Meeting in 2013, in line with the frequency of convening the ADMM-Plus once every three years.

Vietnam's Minister of National Defence General Phung Quang Thanh hosted a welcome dinner for all delegations participating in the first meeting of the ADMM-Plus in the evening of 11 October 2010 at Melia Hanoi Hotel. The ADMM-Plus was convened on the next day at the National Convention Centre. The highlights at the first meeting of the ADMM-Plus were as follows:

1. Among the eight dialogue partners, only Japan and Russia were not represented by their respective defence ministers.<sup>10</sup>
2. Soon after their arrivals in Hanoi, several defence ministers each had

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9 Brunei Darussalam's Deputy Defence Minister was Dato Paduka Haji Mustappa bin Haji Sirat who represented the Defence Minister (His Majesty the Sultan); Ambassador U Khin Maung Soe led his embassy staff to both the ADMM retreat and the ADMM-Plus; no one from Myanmar's capital attended, partly because of the upcoming general elections in the country on 7 November 2010.

10 Japanese Defence Minister Toshimi Kitazawa did attend the welcome dinner but he had to return to Tokyo without attending the ADMM-Plus. He was represented by Mr. Jun Azumi, the Parliamentary Senior Vice-Minister of Defence. The Russian representative was General Nikolai Makarov, Chief of the General Staff, First Deputy Minister of Defence.

a busy schedule of bilateral meetings with fellow defence ministers.<sup>11</sup> This became a clear additional benefit for the defence ministers arising from their participation in the ADMM-Plus.

3. Before the opening ceremony of the ADMM-Plus, all the heads of delegation were invited to review the guard of honour and military parade in front of the National Convention Centre.
4. Vietnam's Prime Minister H.E. Nguyen Tan Dung stated in his welcome remarks at the ADMM-Plus that "... ASEAN Leaders put a high expectation in the ADMM-Plus for its contribution to strengthening dialogue and cooperation on defence and security issues between ASEAN and extra-regional partners, thus facilitating the creation of ASEAN Political-Security Community and promoting regional peace and stability ..."
5. Vietnam's Defence Minister General Phung Quang Thanh, as Chairman of the ADMM-Plus, stated in his opening remarks that "... As for ASEAN, the ADMM-Plus embodies a milestone in the Association's development. It represents a goal and a driving force, an opportunity and yet a challenge. The establishment of ADMM-Plus marks the maturity of ASEAN in defence and security cooperation, both internally and externally ..."
6. Vietnam followed the seating arrangement used in the ARF in which all participating countries (ASEAN member states and non-ASEAN countries) sit in alphabetical order, starting with Australia from the immediate left of the Vietnamese Chairman of the ADMM-Plus, ending with the United States and the Secretary-General of ASEAN.
7. In the Hanoi Declaration on the First ADMM-Plus, the signatures started with Brunei Darussalam and followed by other ASEAN member states in alphabetical order, with Australia coming after Vietnam in another alphabetical order of the eight dialogue partners.
8. The provisional agenda of the ADMM-Plus was adopted without any amendment.

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11 Three bilateral meetings that attracted a great deal of media attention were between the U.S. Secretary of Defence, Robert Gates and Chinese National Defence Minister General, Liang Guanglie; General Liang and Japanese Defence Minister Toshimi Kitazawa; and finally Minister Kitazawa and Secretary Gates.

9. The Secretary-General of ASEAN also briefed the ADMM-Plus on recent developments in ASEAN.
10. The Vietnamese Chairman then briefed the ADMM-Plus on recent developments in ASEAN defence and security cooperation.
11. Exchange of views on defence and security issues followed (without the political fireworks that the international media had expected, chiefly because bilateral meetings among the key defence ministers were held beforehand).
12. Most of the speakers expressed support for ASEAN's centrality and crucial role in driving the ADMM-Plus.
13. Territorial disputes in the South China Sea were mentioned by several defence ministers, who all called for peaceful resolution of these disputes. Nobody questioned such line of thinking, except that the Vietnamese Defence Minister called the area "East Sea".
14. All endorsed the proposed five areas of practical cooperation and the establishment of Experts Working Groups (EWGs) in each of them. Each EWG will be co-chaired by an ASEAN member state and a dialogue partner and these co-chairmanships could be rotated, based on consensus and voluntary basis.
15. During the ADMM-Plus discussion, the following EWG co-chairmanships emerged:
  - Vietnam and China volunteered to co-chair the EWG for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief;
  - Malaysia and Australia wanted to co-chair the EWG on Maritime Security;
  - The Philippines and New Zealand were interested in co-chairing the EWG on Peacekeeping Operations;
  - Brunei Darussalam and the United States were exploring the possibility of co-chairing the EWG on Military Medicine;
  - No indication of interest from countries to co-chair the EWG on Counter-Terrorism.
16. The eight dialogue partners agreed with their ASEAN counterparts to also establish the ADSOM-Plus, and the ADMM-Plus Working Group, and both of them shall be chaired by the ADSOM Chair, to coordinate the implementation of decisions of the ADMM-Plus.
17. The EWGs would submit their progress reports to the ADMM-

Plus through the ADSOM-Plus and the ADSOM-Plus Working Group.

18. Vietnam offered to host the first meeting of the ADMM-Plus Working Group before the end of 2010. Subsequently, Vietnam announced that the ADMM-Plus Working Group meeting will be held in Dalat from 5–7 December 2010. The Dalat meeting will, among other things, discuss a roadmap and procedure for the establishment of the EWGs.
19. Indonesia plans to host a meeting of the ADSOM-Plus Working Group in the first quarter of 2011 and a meeting of the ADSOM-Plus in April 2011.
20. Last but not least, the Hanoi Joint Declaration on the First ADMM-Plus was adopted for signing.<sup>12</sup>

### KEY ISSUES ARISING FROM THE ADMM-PLUS

The establishment of the ADMM-Plus will give rise to a few questions. The following are three obvious ones that require ASEAN's attention:

1. How is the ADMM-Plus going to affect or complement the ARF since four of the five practical cooperation areas of the ADMM-Plus, except military medicine, have long been discussed and acted upon in the ARF?
2. How can the momentum be sustained as well as the attention of the eight dialogue partners be captured when the ADMM-Plus is only held once in every three years?<sup>13</sup>
3. How should the ASEAN Foreign Ministers "ensure consistency and coherence in the conduct of ASEAN's external relations" in accordance with the ASEAN Charter's Article 41, Paragraph 6?

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12 The draft of the Declaration had been circulated to the eight dialogue partners in advance and Vietnam had undertaken close consultations with their military attachés in Hanoi. Vietnam's Defence Minister and Deputy Defence Minister also visited several Dialogue Partner countries to solicit their support.

13 The Defence Minister of South Korea proposed convening the ADMM-Plus once every two years, but there was no consensus support. However, it should be noted that "retreats" and "special or emergency meetings" of the ADMM-Plus may be held when necessary, according to the agreed Modalities and Procedures of the ADMM-Plus.

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## FROM TALKSHOP TO WORKSHOP

### ASEAN'S QUEST FOR PRACTICAL SECURITY COOPERATION THROUGH THE ADMM AND ADMM-PLUS PROCESSES

See Seng Tan

In May 2006, the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) was launched in Kuala Lumpur. Four years later in May 2010, the "ADMM+8"—comprising the ASEAN members and eight of their dialogue partners (Australia, China, Japan, India, New Zealand, Russia, South Korea and the United States)—was launched in Hanoi. These developments mark an intriguing departure of sorts from the way Asia Pacific states had hitherto regarded and engaged in regional inter-state defence and security cooperation. The ADMM has been described in one instance as "an important milestone for ASEAN".<sup>1</sup> The ADMM+8—whose membership mirrors that of the East Asia Summit (EAS), but which conceivably could expand to include more countries should there be agreement to do so—has been referred to as "an acronym to watch" and a process that "is likely to take shape as one of the more substantial pieces of Asia's multi-lateral security architecture".<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the ADMM+8 inaugural at Hanoi has also been described as "a historic meeting that will establish the basic modalities for a new regional security architecture designed to build confidence, practical cooperation among defence leaders and militaries, and promote peace and prosperity in the dynamic Asia-Pacific region".<sup>3</sup>

That said, for many the jury on the ADMM and ADMM+8 is still out,

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- 1 Thayer, C. A. "Meeting in Hanoi." *Background briefing: ASEAN Defence Ministers*, 11 May 2010, available at [www.scribd.com/doc/31003399/Thayer-ASEAN-Defence-Ministers-Meeting-May-2010](http://www.scribd.com/doc/31003399/Thayer-ASEAN-Defence-Ministers-Meeting-May-2010).
  - 2 Huiskens, R. cited in Capie, D., & Taylor, B. "Two cheers for ADMM+." *PacNet*, No. 51, 20 October 2010.
  - 3 Bower, E. "Inaugural ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting +8 in Hanoi: The 1,000 year old city hosts warriors bent on peace." *Southeast Asia from the Corner of 18th & K Streets*, CSIS Washington, Vol. 1 No. 32 (13 October 2010), pp. 1–4.

with the sluggish pace of security regionalism and the general lack of local support for regional institutions in the Asia Pacific offering little assurance of key advances in defence cooperation.<sup>4</sup> The indigent state of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), chiefly its failure to fulfil its expressed aim to implement preventive diplomacy, and the traditional emphasis on process over outcomes—indeed, over progress as critics have argued<sup>5</sup>—in ASEAN-led Asia Pacific regionalisms have significantly lowered expectations over what the ADMM and ADMM-Plus processes can realistically achieve. Other niggling questions remain, not least the relationship of the ADMM+8 to the ARF, on one hand, and the IISS's Shangri-La Dialogue, an annual non-official dialogue involving defence ministers (and defence practitioners and intellectuals) from Asia Pacific and European nations, on the other. Would they end up as essentially competitive processes, and hence potentially inimical to Asia Pacific stability and security, or (as ASEAN leaders are wont to claim) complementary arrangements that strengthen rather than weaken regional security?

This chapter briefly traces the evolution of ASEAN-led security regionalism in the Asia Pacific, and the incremental incorporation of defence practitioners and military professionals in the region's emerging "defence track". Multilateral defence diplomacy—the not-so-improbable image of soldiers shedding their combat boots for leather brogues, as it were—in the Asia Pacific has a history, if only a brief one; for instance, ASEAN and ARF defence officials have been holding regular dialogues among themselves since the mid-1990s. In a sense, the ADMM and ADMM-Plus processes could be regarded as an evolutionary culmination, if only indirectly so, of more established exercises in defence diplomacy. Regular participation in the ARF Defence Officials Dialogue (ARF-DOD) and ARF Security Policy Conference (ASPC) have arguably

4 A recent CSIS Washington survey of Asia Pacific elites suggests a lack of regional confidence in the region's security and economic institutions as providers of regional security and stability. Instead, regional leaders and pundits are more apt to rely on national/self-help approaches and/or global structures such as the UN and WTO. See, Gill, B., Green, M., Tsuji, K., & Watts, W. *Strategic views on Asian regionalism: Survey results and analysis*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, February 2009.

5 Jones, D. M., & Smith, M. L. R. "Making process, not progress: ASEAN and the evolving East Asian regional order." *International Security*, Vol. 32 No. 1 (Summer 2007), pp. 148–184.

provided non-ASEAN, Asia Pacific defence practitioners an introduction into the world of ASEAN-led multilateral diplomacy. On the other hand, the highly successful Shangri-La Dialogue,<sup>6</sup> despite being a non-official dialogue, has challenged a longstanding rationalisation by ASEAN leaders that the Asia Pacific simply is not ready to host a regular defence ministerial. (It bears reminding at this juncture that in 2002, ASEAN did not support the proposal by then Japan Defence Agency director, General Nakatani Gen, to convert the Shangri-La Dialogue into a formal "Asian Defence Ministerial Meeting",<sup>7</sup> presumably out of concern that such a move would threaten not only the ARF's default position as the only multilateral security forum servicing the entire Asia Pacific, but ASEAN's centrality in Asia Pacific regionalism.)<sup>8</sup>

Understandably, the long-awaited establishment of a defence ministerial has raised expectations about attendant ramifications and possibilities for Asia Pacific security. It is argued here that the ADMM and ADMM-Plus should not be mistaken as grand arrangements designed to undertake broad remits and comprehensive agendas. If anything comes close to such an overarching arrangement, it is the recently expanded EAS, whose new membership, with the inclusion of Russia and the United States, now mirrors that of the ADMM+8. But even here, there are good reasons to suggest that the reconfigured EAS will likely not constitute the "top-level management" tasked with oversight responsibility for the entire regional architecture, contrary to what advocates for the defeated Asia-Pacific Community vision previously proposed by former Australian premier Kevin Rudd may wish to think or claim. Instead, this chapter argues that the ADMM and ADMM+8, as envisaged by their extant mandate and design, are better understood as narrow functional enterprises aimed primarily at developing the abilities of ASEAN militaries to respond comprehensively and systematically to complex challenges posed by transnational threats of a non-military nature, not least disaster

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6 Capie, D., & Taylor, B. "The Shangri-La Dialogue and the institutionalization of defence diplomacy in Asia." *The Pacific Review*, Vol. 23 No. 3 (2010), pp. 359–376.

7 Hook, G. D., Gilson, J., Hughes, C. W., & Dobson, H. *Japan's international relations: Politics, economics, and security*. Second edition, London and New York: Routledge, 2001, p. 263.

8 Dobell, G. "Rudd in Asia: one last kick in the guts." *The Interpreter*, 30 June 2010, accessed in March 2011 at [www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2010/06/30/APC-One-last-kick-in-the-guts-to-Rudd.aspx](http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2010/06/30/APC-One-last-kick-in-the-guts-to-Rudd.aspx).



management, maritime concerns, pandemics and the like. This is not to imply that they could not deepen into something more, but whatever institutional growth that might accrue in the future, if at all, would likely arise in an incremental rather than transformational manner.

## EARLY SECURITY REGIONALISM

For a region given at best to evolutionary creep in security cooperation, the establishment of an ASEAN-led defence ministerial meeting is quite an accomplishment. From its inception in August 1967, ASEAN has assiduously avoided any allusion to itself as a defence organisation in order to preclude allegations that it is a Western-sanctioned military alliance aimed, at least indirectly, at preserving the West's neo-colonialist domination of Southeast Asia. For sure, arrangements such as America's Southeast Asian alliances (with Thailand and the Philippines) and the Anglo-Malayan Defence Agreement (AMDA)—replaced in 1971 by the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA)—are better candidates for such accusations than ASEAN. Clearly, the concern that such perceptions could and would jeopardise ASEAN's intent at promoting itself as a legitimate expression in indigenous economic regionalism contributed to the Association's public insistence that its *raison d'être* was not security-oriented. In this respect, ASEAN leaders apparently felt this reasoning to be sufficiently justified, so long as a clear distinction—clear enough at least to ASEAN, if not to the outside world—existed between defence bilateralisms (alliances) and regional multilateralism (ASEAN). Needless to say, it took some hard convincing; for example, during the Cold War, Vietnam, the “tiger squatting on [ASEAN's] doorstep”,<sup>9</sup> found the Association's prescriptions for regional order, such as the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, unacceptable for what, in Hanoi's jaundiced view, was essentially an American-sponsored organisation. As the Vietnamese premier Pham Van Dong noted in an overture in 1977, “The policy of setting up such military blocs as ASEAN in Southeast Asia has failed and passed forever. The relationship of friendship and cooperation among countries

9 Former Thai foreign minister Thanat Khoman, cited in Tilman, R. O. *Southeast Asia and the enemy beyond: ASEAN perceptions of external threats*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1987, p. 1.

of this region must be established on a new basis, in a new spirit"<sup>10</sup>

The termination of the Cold War furnished an opening for ASEAN to be less circumspect in acknowledging the primacy of security in its institutional remit. At the Fourth ASEAN Summit in Singapore in 1992, the decision was undertaken to upgrade the status of regional security cooperation from an informal and loose enterprise to a sanctioned feature of the Association's official agenda.<sup>11</sup> That said, even during the Cold War, defence and security ties, principally bilateral, among the "ASEAN-6" (Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Singapore) were already sufficiently thick to merit being described by a top Indonesian general as forming a "defence spider web".<sup>12</sup> Aided by a serendipitous confluence of factors—the end of Cold War bipolarity, a relatively stable yet uncertain regional environment, a perceived need to engage a rising China, a new post-Cold War administration in Washington given to "assertive multilateralism",<sup>13</sup> the diplomatic advantage accorded ASEAN as *primus inter pares* in the Asia Pacific, the relaxation by Indonesia of its non-alignment stance that paved the way for ASEAN's embrace of an engagement strategy—the opportunity was given ASEAN to establish a region-wide multilateral security arrangement that would ensure America's continued engagement in the Asia Pacific and encourage China's commitment to "good international behaviour".<sup>14</sup> Even then, the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum, the Asia Pacific's first security-oriented arrangement, did not automatically lead to defence-oriented multilateralism at the ministerial level for the reasons adumbrated above.

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10 *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 13 January 1978, cited in Tan, S. S. "International regimes: A study of regional cooperation in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)." Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Manitoba, 1992.

11 "Singapore Declaration of 1992." Singapore, 28 January 1992, accessed in March 2011 at [www.aseansec.org/5120.htm](http://www.aseansec.org/5120.htm).

12 Acharya, A. *A survey of military cooperation among the ASEAN states: Bilateralism or alliance?* Occasional Paper No. 14, Toronto, ON: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, York University, 1990, p. 1.

13 The Clinton administration, as assessed by Patrick, S. "America's retreat from multilateral engagement." *Current History*, No. 99 (2000), p. 437.

14 Emmers, R. "The influence of the balance of power factor within the ASEAN Regional Forum." *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Vol. 23 No. 2 (2001), pp. 275–291.

## A REGIONALISM MUGGED BY REALITY?

Nonetheless, the formation and operation of the ARF had important implications for the development of the embryonic regional defence track. It bears reminding the Asia Pacific was an institutionally lean region at the end of the Cold War. No region-wide organisation existed until the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum was formed in 1989. Memorably, the absence of a stout regionalism invited the contention, popular among Western analysts, that a great power conflict in the region was likely<sup>15</sup>—a claim others have disputed.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, there were significant roadblocks in the way of efforts to realise the idea of multilateral security cooperation in the Asia Pacific, not least the long-standing American preference for security bilateralism as well as Chinese suspicions regarding any form of multilateral institution that could be used to constrain or impede China's rise.

Since its inception, the ARF has arguably contributed to regional security and stability through institutionalising and normalising ties among the great powers and regional actors within an ASEAN-led framework.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, it has been beset by criticisms that it is merely a “talk shop” with a lacklustre record in regional cooperation. Regional watchers regularly cite the Forum's inability to advance beyond confidence-building activities to implementing preventive diplomacy.<sup>18</sup> For that matter, the reluctance of the ARF to get involved in regional flashpoints such as those brewing in the Korean peninsula, the South China Sea and the Taiwan straits—the very kinds of inter-state security problems allowed for by the Forum's narrow inter-state definition of

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- 15 Friedberg, A. L. “Ripe for rivalry: Prospects for peace in a multipolar Asia.” *International Security*, Vol. 18 No. 3 (1993/94), pp. 5–33; Buzan, B., & Segal, G. “Rethinking East Asian security.” *Survival*, Vol. 36 No. 2 (Summer 1994), pp. 3–21.
- 16 Bitzinger, R., & Desker, B. “Why East Asian war is unlikely.” *Survival*, Vol. 50 No. 6 (2008), pp. 105–128.
- 17 Khong, Y. F. “Coping with strategic uncertainty: The role of institutions and soft balancing in Southeast Asia's post-Cold War strategy.” In P. J. Katzenstein, J. J. Suh, & A. Carlson (Eds.), *Rethinking security in East Asia: Identity, power*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004, pp. 172–208.
- 18 Yuzawa, T. “The evolution of preventive diplomacy in the ASEAN Regional Forum: Problems and prospects.” *Asian Survey*, Vol. 46 No. 5 (September/October 2006), pp. 785–804.

preventive diplomacy<sup>19</sup>—has raised serious objections concerning the relevance of the ARF to regional security, hence prompting recent initiatives on alternative regional architectures (such as the Rudd proposal for an “Asia-Pacific Community”<sup>20</sup>). Importantly, it was not only non-ASEAN stakeholders among those disappointed over the ARF’s moribund state; some elements within ASEAN’s national defence establishments have also indicated concern over the Forum’s lack of progress.<sup>21</sup>

For our purposes, notwithstanding its weaknesses, the ARF has served and continues to serve as a key platform for an emerging regional defence track by facilitating the ARF-DOD and ASPC processes, and to a lesser extent, the ARF Heads of Defence/Universities/Colleges/Institutions Meeting (HDUCIM). The increasing involvement of the ARF in practical security cooperation in non-military areas (counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, maritime security, non-proliferation and disarmament, etc.) has allowed defence elements of ARF member countries to, at least in limited and intermittent fashion, engage and collaborate with one another, and familiarise themselves with each other’s operational doctrines through table top exercises (TTXs) and field training exercises (FTXs).<sup>22</sup> At the sub-regional dimension, arrangements such as the ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Informal Meeting (ACDFIM) helped regularise interactions at the senior levels of Southeast Asian defence establishments.<sup>23</sup> That said, whether at the regional or sub-regional dimensions, it was the foreign policy establishments that led the way

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19 Emmers, R., & Tan, S. S. “The ASEAN Regional Forum and preventive diplomacy: Built to fail?” *Asian Security*, Vol. 7 No. 1 (2011), pp. 44–60.

20 Woolcott, R. “Towards an Asia-Pacific Community.” *The Asialink Essays*, No. 9 (November 2009).

21 Author’s interview with various ASEAN defence officials, September–December 2009.

22 Haacke, J. “The ASEAN Regional Forum: From dialogue to practical security cooperation?” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 22 No. 3 (2009), pp. 427–449. Also see “Final Summary Report of ASEAN Regional Forum Defence Officials’ Dialogue.” Danang, Vietnam, 18 May 2010, accessed in March 2011 at [www.aseanregionalforum.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=ZcWbnckD9g%3D&tabid=66&mid=1106](http://www.aseanregionalforum.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=ZcWbnckD9g%3D&tabid=66&mid=1106).

23 Thayer, C. A. “Background briefing: 7th ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Force Informal Meeting.” 7 April 2010, accessed in March 2011 at [www.scribd.com/doc/29566086/Thayer-ASEAN-Chiefs-of-Defence-Force-Meeting](http://www.scribd.com/doc/29566086/Thayer-ASEAN-Chiefs-of-Defence-Force-Meeting).

and set the agenda in regional security cooperation. Historically, the principal actors in Asia Pacific security regionalism have primarily been from the diplomatic rather than defence circles, and this has certainly been the case for ASEAN and the ARF.

Arguably, it is these factors—general failure of the ARF to advance security cooperation, on one hand, and emergence of a regional defence track without its own defence-oriented leadership on the other—that, along with a growing demand for dedicated military assets in practical security cooperation, could have conceivably contributed to the perceived need for the ADMM and ADMM-Plus processes. But why, apart from the ubiquitous yet vague allusions to enhancing regional dialogue and contributing to regional security common to all Asia Pacific security regionalisms, the limited aim in regional capacity building for a defence ministerial? Crucially, the failure of the ARF has clarified, at least for ASEAN leaders, the inaptness of grand regional security designs to the Asia Pacific. This view is not necessarily shared by other regional stakeholders; for example, Rudd’s Asia-Pacific Community vision and Hatoyama Yukio’s East Asian Community idea are illustrative of the continued aspiration for grand institutional designs—or what neoliberal institutionalists call “big multilateralism”<sup>24</sup>—as the panacea for the region’s problems. To the extent ASEAN leaders might at all have toyed with the desire that the ARF—“probably the most important organisation in ASEAN’s institutional repertoire for dealing with strategic uncertainty”, according to one reading<sup>25</sup>—would furnish a key part of the answer for Asia Pacific security, subsequent developments would likely have clarified for them the yawning gulf between vision and reality.

## BOLSTERING THE DEFENCE TRACK

A slew of developments in the first decade of this century contributed to the ongoing evolution of defence cooperation. Between 2003 and 2006, ASEAN leaders concluded a series of declaratory milestones, notably, inking the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II (the Bali Concord II) of

24 Kahler, M. “Multilateralism with small and large numbers.” *International Organization*, Vol. 46 No. 3 (1992), pp. 681–708.

25 Khong, “Coping with strategic uncertainty,” p. 198.

2003, which called for the establishment of the ASEAN Security Community (ASC) by the year 2020, the Vientiane Action Programme of 2004, which identified key challenges to be overcome in order to form the ASC; and the ADMM in 2006, the first step in the formation of the ASC. At the ASEAN Summit 2007 in Cebu, it was agreed that the formation of the ASC be brought forward to 2015, five years earlier than originally planned. Subsequently, ASEAN leaders revised the initial idea for a security community to that of an ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) instead during their 2007 Summit in Singapore. Arguably, the revision arose as a consequence of the leaders' heightened appreciation over challenging political hurdles that (still) stand in the way of the emergence of a full-fledged security community in Southeast Asia, not least the obdurate military regime in Myanmar.<sup>26</sup>

As a key component of the APSC, the ADMM's remit, as laid out at the inaugural ministerial in Kuala Lumpur in May 2006, is four-fold:

1. To promote regional peace and stability through dialogue and defence and security cooperation
2. To provide strategic-level guidance for defence and security cooperation within ASEAN and, with the consequent formation of the ADMM-Plus, between ASEAN and its dialogue partners
3. To promote mutual trust and confidence through enhancing transparency and openness
4. To contribute to the establishment of the APSC and promote the implementation of the APSC's Vientiane Action Programme (VAP)<sup>27</sup>

At the second ADMM in Singapore in November 2007, ASEAN defence ministers approved the concept paper on the ADMM-Plus, which provides for the ADMM's engagements and interactions between ASEAN and its dialogue partners. Importantly, the concept paper acknowledged that "ASEAN's future was increasingly intertwined with the developments of the larger Asia Pacific region, and that the region would benefit from the expertise, perspectives and

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26 Roberts, C. *ASEAN's Myanmar crisis: Challenges to the pursuit of a security community*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2009.

27 "Concept Paper for the Establishment of an ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting." 9 May 2006, accessed in November 2010 at [www.aseansec.org/19892.htm](http://www.aseansec.org/19892.htm).

resources of extra-regional countries”.<sup>28</sup> Two years later, a second concept paper, this time on the principles of membership on the ADMM-Plus, argued that the ADMM “needs to be plugged into the external environment”, and reiterated the need for the active engagement of “friends and dialogue partners” in ways that would allow ASEAN to draw on “the varied perspectives and resources of a wide range of non-ASEAN countries” in addressing the security challenges facing Southeast Asia.<sup>29</sup> Launched at the Hanoi meeting in May 2010, the ADMM+8 is an expression of the ADMM-Plus formula. Specifically, the area of non-traditional security considerations—humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), military medicine, counter-terrorism, maritime cooperation and peacekeeping—have been identified at the Hanoi gathering as matters on which ADMM+8 member countries are to collaborate. Non-traditional concerns have been selected presumably because they are viewed as less sensitive than traditional or hard security concerns.<sup>30</sup>

What should not be missed here is the publicly articulated rationale behind the ADMM and ADMM+8: Southeast Asia’s active engagement with the defence establishments of the world’s major and middle powers among the “Plus Eight” is aimed at tapping their technical know-how and resources to accomplish complex tasks in maritime security or HADR—in short, drawing on external assistance for (as the euphemism goes) building regional capacity. What the ADMM and ADMM+8 provide, as such, are frameworks for institutionalising and possibly enhancing the existing forms of assistance from dialogue partner countries to the ASEAN members. Crucially, this type of capacity-building assistance is by no means new. For example, since 2000, the Japanese Coast Guard has been providing direct assistance to the ASEAN states in support of anti-piracy operations in a variety of ways, while the United States has been a major benefactor in facilitating counter-terrorism and anti-piracy activities conducted

28 “ADMM-Plus Concept Paper,” 14 November 2007, accessed in November 2010 at [www.aseansec.org/21216.pdf](http://www.aseansec.org/21216.pdf).

29 “Concept Paper on ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus): Principles for Membership,” 26 February 2009 accessed in November 2010 at [www.aseansec.org/18471-e.pdf](http://www.aseansec.org/18471-e.pdf).

30 Capie & Taylor, “Two cheers for ADMM+”

by several ASEAN states.<sup>31</sup> Further, as a consequence of Southeast Asia being in the Pacific Ring of Fire, the proneness of its landscape to natural disasters has accentuated the role of regional militaries in disaster management (and the imperative to ensure they are empowered and equipped to do so). As Singapore's Defence Minister, Teo Chee Hean, has acknowledged:

Armed forces too have a crucial role to play in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. They have the resources and manpower to fulfil an important quick response role in the crucial first stages of disaster relief and rescue operations. Armed forces can transport aid to where it is needed most in the affected locality and help in its distribution. It is not the value or quantity of the relief supplies. The question is whether they can be delivered in a prompt and effective manner to the last mile, down to the actual victims who need it, when they need it. Armed forces in turn can pave the way for civilian agencies and international organisations to follow up in the subsequent phases of disaster management. There is one key objective in such operations—bringing relief speedily and effectively to the victims.<sup>32</sup>

The Three-Year Work Programme of the ADMM and the Two-Year Activity Work Plan (2010–2011) adopted by the ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Informal Meeting (ACDFIM) are equally important to the ongoing process of developing standard operating procedures, referred to in this context by the acronym SASOP (Standard Operating Procedures for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations)—which includes things such as a template for the roles and terms of reference for both provider countries and recipient countries—that would enhance interoperability among ADMM+8 militaries in disaster

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31 Ho, J. H. "Southeast Asian SLOC security." In S. Wu & K. Zou (Eds.), *Maritime security in the South China Sea: Regional implications and international cooperation*. Surrey: Ashgate, 2009, pp. 157–176.

32 See "Plenary Speech by Minister for Defence Teo Chee Hean at the Shangri-La Dialogue 2008."



management.<sup>33</sup> Indeed, it could even be argued through facilitating reportage—voluntary, at best—of their military assets for disaster management, ADMM+8 countries would actually be contributing to a limited version of a regional arms register. In this respect, ASEAN leaders are seeking to establish a regular submission process via the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) and the ASEAN SASOP. Moreover, while these forms of capacity augmentation are mostly concerned with the defence-related assets of Southeast Asian governments, there is growing awareness among regional stakeholders that building local, societal-level capacities is equally necessary to ensure more effective and rapid responses to disasters, while reducing reliance on their national governments.<sup>34</sup> As evidenced by the serious constraints in early warning and post-crisis rescue efforts vis-à-vis Indonesia's "twin disasters" in November 2010, the earthquakes and tsunami at the Mentawai Islands and volcanic eruptions at Mount Merapi, this is a poignant concern for peripheral regions that are difficult to reach.

It is clear the ADMM and ADMM-Plus processes, as currently conceived, are oriented towards enabling Southeast Asian states to collectively provide, for their own populations and those of neighbouring nations, a fair measure of respite from humanitarian challenges. Significantly, it is the defence establishments of Southeast Asia that have taken the lead in this regard. By no means devoid of sovereignty considerations—memorably, Indonesia's proposal of a regional peacekeeping element in 2003 drew lukewarm responses from several ASEAN members<sup>35</sup>—the emphasis on regional capacity building and assistance vis-à-vis non-traditional concerns has

33 Author's interview with Singapore defence officials, 14 September 2009; also see: "ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) Three (3)-Year Work Program." 14 November 2007 accessed in December 2010 at [www.aseansec.org/21214.pdf](http://www.aseansec.org/21214.pdf); "7th ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Informal Meeting (ACDFIM)." 26 March 2010, Ministry of Defence, Brunei Darussalam, accessed in December 2010 at [www.mindef.gov.bn/MOD\\_Brunei2/index.php/news-mainmenu2-92/670-7th-asean-chiefs-of-Defence-forces-informal-meeting-acdfim](http://www.mindef.gov.bn/MOD_Brunei2/index.php/news-mainmenu2-92/670-7th-asean-chiefs-of-Defence-forces-informal-meeting-acdfim).

34 Kontjoro, I. A., & Jamil, S. "Strengthening RI's disaster preparedness." *The Jakarta Post*, 4 November 2010.

35 Bando, B. "Undesirable consequences of an ASEAN peacekeeping force." *The Jakarta Post*, 2 March 2004.

proved sufficiently salient to warrant a collective buy-in from regional stakeholders. Needless to say, frameworks and work programmes, no matter how impressive, are irrelevant apart from the concerted and sustained efforts by regional countries and their defence establishments at fulfilling their commitments. What should not be missed here is the specific and narrowly defined functional imperative behind the ADMM and ADMM-Plus, oriented towards *ad hoc* and immediate concerns. No grand vision of regional purpose and design need apply here, but a modest collective enterprise at—and this might surprise the paleo-realists among us—providing for the survival of the region's peoples and societies.<sup>36</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Against the historical circumspection over formal ASEAN-based defence arrangements—as opposed to broadly defined security regionalism—the ADMM and ADMM+8 constitute unique formulations. At the same time, they are by no means *ex nihilo* creations, but build upon extant efforts at defence diplomacy conducted in various formats, be it under the ASEAN and ARF intergovernmental rubrics, the non-official Shangri-La Dialogue and/or the increasingly complex series of multinational military exercises, which together led a former chief of the U.S. Pacific Command to hypothesise about security architectures in the Asia Pacific evolving “from wheels” (the San Francisco “hub-and-spokes” alliance system) “to webs.”<sup>37</sup>

That the ADMM and ADMM-Plus are, as argued here, principally functional enterprises aimed specifically at regional capacity building suggests that concerns some hold over the continued relevance of other regional arrangements—the ARF in particular, but also the Shangri-La Dialogue to a considerably lesser extent—to Asia Pacific security, are perhaps somewhat premature. Both remain important to the region. On the other hand, should the regional defence track evolve into an overarching organisation with a more robust political remit and com-

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36 Tan, S. S. “Providers not protectors: Institutionalizing responsible sovereignty in Southeast Asia.” *Asian Security*, Vol. 7 No. 2 (November 2011), forthcoming.

37 Blair, D. C., & Hanley, J. T. Jr. “From wheels to webs: Reconstructing Asia-Pacific security arrangements.” *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 24 No. 1 (Winter 2001), pp. 7–17.

prehensive security agenda, the ARF may have cause for concern. As two ASEAN-based security arrangements, it would be up to ASEAN and its institutional partners to determine how best to deploy them and in ways that complement rather than compete with one another. That said, little in the history of Asia Pacific security regionalism to date—one defined by *ad hoc* institution building, concentric circles and variable geometries, and overlapping remits, agendas and interests—suggests that the architectural streamlining and neat division of labour among these arrangements wished for by some are likely to occur anytime soon. If anything, the logics of path dependency and the stickiness of institutions would seem to argue otherwise.

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## THE FIVE POWER DEFENCE ARRANGEMENTS AND THE REGIONAL SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

Ralf Emmers

The Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) has been part of the Southeast Asian security architecture since 1971. Superceding the Anglo-Malayan Defence Agreement (AMDA) originally formed in 1957, the FPDA has involved Malaysia and Singapore as well as Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. In contrast to the AMDA and its commitment to the external defence of Malaysia and Singapore, the FPDA has been defined by a provision for consultation in the event of an external aggression against the two Southeast Asian states. The FPDA operates as a loose and subgroup structure focusing on a specific set of security issues of direct concern to its participants. As highlighted by the plural noun “arrangements”, its activities can involve two or more of its five members, thus incorporating a flexible and in-built “FPDA minus x” formula.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter studies the ongoing relevance of the FPDA to the Southeast Asian security architecture and examines how this defence coalition may be affecting ongoing security cooperation in the region. In other words, it seeks to determine how, if at all, the FPDA has continued to fit in the evolving Southeast Asian security architecture. Examined from the Singaporean and Malaysian points of view, this chapter investigates whether the FPDA complements or is being gradually supplanted by other regional security instruments in Southeast Asia.

The other mechanisms covered in this chapter include the activities undertaken by Malaysia and Singapore with the United States bilaterally,

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1 See Khoo, H. S. “The Five Power Defence Arrangements: If it ain’t broke ...” *Pointer: Quarterly Journal of the Singapore Armed Forces*, Vol. 26 No. 4 (October–December 2000), pp. 107–114, Internet edition.

minilaterally with Indonesia through the Malacca Straits Patrols (MSP), and multilaterally through the emerging ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and ADMM+ processes. The overall argument of this chapter is that for Malaysia and Singapore, the FPDA continues to complement these bilateral, minilateral and multilateral security instruments, yet each in very different ways. In that sense, the FPDA plays a clear, although limited, role in the Southeast Asian security architecture.

## INSTITUTIONAL EVOLUTION OF THE FPDA

The structure and activities of the FPDA remained limited in the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>2</sup> The Joint Consultative Council (JCC) was initially established to act as a senior consultative group, bringing together senior officials from the Ministries of Defence of Malaysia and Singapore as well as the High Commissioners of Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.<sup>3</sup> In the event of an external threat to the security of Malaysia and Singapore, the Council would “provide a convenient forum for initial consultation between the Five Powers.”<sup>4</sup> The FPDA was organised around a regular series of combined but limited exercises. Its central operational structure was the Integrated Air Defence System (IADS), located at the Royal Malaysian Air Force Base Butterworth in Malaysia, and put under an Australian commander and the supervision of an Air Defence Council. Still, the FPDA remained under-institutionalised during most of the Cold War period.

The role of the FPDA has been deepened and strengthened since the end of the Cold War and the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001.<sup>5</sup> In response to these strategic transformations, the FPDA has gradually deepened and broadened its institutional structures and activities.<sup>6</sup> In

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- 2 Ang, W. H. “Five Power Defence Arrangements: A Singapore perspective.” *Pointer: Quarterly Journal of the Singapore Armed Forces*, Vol. 24 No. 2 (April–June 2008), pp. 49–59.
  - 3 Rolfe, J. “Anachronistic past or positive future: New Zealand and the Five Power Defence Arrangements.” Working Paper, Centre for Strategic Studies (CSS), Victoria University of Wellington, 1995, p. 7.
  - 4 Five Power Ministerial Meeting on Defence: Five Power Consultative Arrangements After 1971, FPM (L) (P) 2/71, in Ministry of Defence file 1/2/4: *Treaties and Agreements: Five Power Arrangements*.
  - 5 See Tan, A. T. H. “The Five Power Defence Arrangements: The continuing relevance.” *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 29 No. 2 (2008), pp. 292–295.
  - 6 Tan, “The Five Power Defence Arrangements: The continuing relevance.” p. 294.

1988, it was already decided that the FPDA Defence Ministers' Meeting would be held every three years while the FPDA Chiefs' Conference would meet more regularly. The latter have coincided since 2001 with the annual International Institute for Strategic Studies' (IISS) Asia Security Conference, also known as the Shangri-La Dialogue, held annually in Singapore. By 1994, the Joint Consultative Council and the Air Defence Council were transformed into the FPDA Consultative Council, which brings together senior diplomats and defence ministry officials from the five powers. The FPDA Activities Coordinating Council was formed the following year while the IADS was upgraded into the Integrated Area Defence System, integrating air, naval and land forces, with its headquarters in Butterworth in the late 1990s. Since 1997, Singapore and Malaysia have also alternatively hosted the FPDA Professional Forum, which has become "the main format in which members of the arrangements come together to discuss new ideas, concepts and the way ahead, including the future shape of the operational element of the FPDA and the role of HQ IADS".<sup>7</sup>

These institutional transformations have been matched by more sophisticated and encompassing military exercises. Tan writes that from "a basic single-service air defence focus, FPDA exercises evolved throughout the 1990s and early 2000s to include complex combined exercises involving major platforms".<sup>8</sup> When meeting in Singapore in 2004, the five defence ministers announced that the FPDA would broaden its military exercises to address terrorism, maritime security and a series of other non-traditional threats.<sup>9</sup> Hence, in the light of these post-Cold War developments and focus on new security challenges, Thayer is right to define the FPDA as "the 'quiet achiever' in contributing to regional security".<sup>10</sup> That having been said, how, if at all, does the FPDA fit in the wider regional security architecture?

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7 Bristow, D. "The Five Power Defence Arrangements: Southeast Asia's unknown regional security organization." *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Vol. 27 No. 1 (April 2005), p. 6.

8 Tan, "The Five Power Defence Arrangements: The continuing relevance." p. 294.

9 "Second FPDA Defence Ministers' Informal Meeting." *Ministry of Defence News Release*, Singapore, 7 June 2004, accessed on 1 February 2010 at [www.mindef.gov.sg/im indef/news\\_and\\_events/nr/2004/jun/07jun04\\_nr.html](http://www.mindef.gov.sg/im indef/news_and_events/nr/2004/jun/07jun04_nr.html).

10 Thayer, C. A. "The Five Power Defence Arrangements: The quiet achiever." *Security Challenges*, Vol. 3 No. 1 (February 2007), p. 79.

## COMPLEMENTING BILATERAL TIES

Let us examine how the FPDA activities have overlapped with the special ties maintained by Singapore and, to a lesser extent, Malaysia with the United States. Singapore has historically considered a continued U.S. involvement in the region as pivotal to its own security. Despite its often anti-Western rhetoric, Malaysia has also perceived the presence of the United States as necessary to preserve regional stability.<sup>11</sup>

These strategic calculations have often been translated into concrete policies. For instance, in response to the United States withdrawal from its bases in the Philippines, Singapore offered an agreement to Washington in November 1990, allowing its Navy and Air Force to use its military facilities more extensively. By offering the United States compensating facilities, Singapore sought to mitigate the strategic consequences of the American departure from Subic Bay Naval Base and Clark Air Base. While initially critical of the memorandum, Malaysia was prepared following the American withdrawal from the Philippines to provide access to the United States Navy, thereby enhancing its military ties with Washington. A U.S. Navy logistics facility was also transferred in 1992 from Subic Bay to Singapore. In January 1998, the city-state declared that U.S. aircraft carriers would have access to the Changi Naval Base after its completion in the year 2000. In more recent years, Singapore has further developed strong military relations with the U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM), including thorough war games, map planning and manoeuvre exercises like Cobra Gold. Established in 1982, the Thai-U.S. Joint Military exercise (Cobra Gold) now also involves Singapore, Indonesia, Japan and South Korea. While not part of this multilateral mechanism, Malaysia trains with the U.S. Air Force in Exercise Cope Taufan.<sup>12</sup>

In terms of non-traditional security issues, Singapore and Malaysia have closely collaborated with the United States on the war on terror since the 9/11 attacks. In Singapore, the arrest of JI militants in December 2001 and the discovery of bomb plots fuelled the city-state's own

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11 See Mak, J. N. "Malaysian defence and security cooperation: Coming out of the closet." In S. S. Tan & A. Acharya (Eds.), *Asia Pacific Security Cooperation: National Interests and Regional Order*. New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2004, pp. 127–153.

12 Long, J. "The 2010 US Quadrennial Defence Review: Implications for Southeast Asia." RSIS Commentaries No. 19, 17 February 2010.

sense of vulnerability. Since 9/11 and the Bali Bombings in October 2002, Singapore has promulgated the doctrine of “homeland security” and introduced a series of other domestic measures. Similar arrests in Malaysia highlighted the threat of radical Islamist terrorism to the country. In response, Welsh explains that from 2001 onwards, “Malaysia began to exercise a more vigorous enforcement role in addressing terrorist issues, which mirrored stronger regional enforcement, particularly in Singapore”.<sup>13</sup> Internationally, both Singapore and Malaysia have cooperated closely and shared intelligence with Washington. Singapore was even the first Asian country to sign the Declaration of Principles for the Container Security Initiative (CSI) with the United States in September 2002 and joined the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) core group in March 2004. While Malaysia has been a close partner of the United States since 2001, Kuala Lumpur has had to balance the demands of its Muslim majority while ensuring its engagement in the international anti-terrorism campaign. Moreover, unlike Singapore, Malaysia did not support the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003.

The functions of the FPDA and of the U.S. security ties with Malaysia and Singapore are somewhat comparable; namely, to enhance their external defence in the changing regional strategic context. In light of the shift in provisions from the AMDA to the FPDA, the arrangements only guarantee consultations in the event of an external aggression. Likewise, as Malaysia and Singapore are not formal allies of the United States, an American military response to an external attack against the two Southeast Asian nations is not guaranteed. The special ties with Washington have, however, acted as a credible diplomatic and psychological deterrent. Moreover, the FPDA and U.S. ties have, over the years, focused on similar traditional and non-traditional threats, most recently terrorism and maritime piracy. Hence, while they clearly overlap, it could be argued that the FPDA and its military exercises have simply been eclipsed by the American presence in the region. The latter have, to a large extent, overshadowed the former in terms of strength, impact and military involvement. One possible conclusion, therefore, may be that the FPDA has been supplanted by existing bilateral ties with Washington.

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13 Welsh, B. “Tears and fears: Tun Mahathir’s last hurrah.” In D. Singh & K. W. Chin (Eds.), *Southeast Asian Affairs 2004*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2004, p. 143.



Nevertheless, while the FPDA is of a lower military intensity than the bilateral ties maintained by Malaysia and Singapore with the United States, it is asserted here that the arrangements still complement the U.S. bilateral network in two specific ways. First, and in sharp contrast to the bilateral approach, the security of Malaysia and Singapore has been defined by the FPDA as indivisible. Hence, rather than deliberately examining them as two separate strategic entities, the FPDA has worked on the premise that pursuing the security of one nation separately and possibly at the expense of the other would be counter-productive. From its inception, therefore, the FPDA was meant to act as a set of arrangements that permitted two or more parties to consult one another regarding the joint external defence of Malaysia and Singapore.<sup>14</sup> Leifer explains that the arrangements were “predicated on the indivisibility of the defence” of the two Southeast Asian nations and that they were intended to enhance regional stability by engaging them both “in a structure of defence cooperation”.<sup>15</sup> A caveat to be noted is that the FPDA would have no clear role to play in the event of aggression by one of the Southeast Asian countries towards the other. That said, it is in that context that the FPDA has, over the years, succeeded in playing a significant confidence-building role in Malaysian-Singaporean relations. When examined in that light, one can argue that the FPDA and its flexible consultative model, based on the premise of indivisible security, have not only enhanced bilateral ties between Malaysia and Singapore but also complemented the security relations that the two Southeast Asian nations maintain separately with Washington.

Furthermore, the FPDA has successfully complemented the U.S. network by providing Singapore and Malaysia with a useful avenue to maintain and deepen bilateral ties with Australia, Britain and New Zealand. This particular function of the FPDA needs to be examined in the broader post-Cold War context. The emergence of an uncertain multi-polar structure in the Asia Pacific, combined with a rapidly changing security environment, has encouraged Singapore especially to cultivate ties with external powers with the aim of deepening their benign involvement in Southeast Asian security. While the U.S. deploy-

14 Khoo, “The Five Power Defence Arrangements: If it ain’t broke ...” pp. 107–114.

15 Leifer, M. *Dictionary of the modern politics of Southeast Asia*. London: Routledge, 1995, p. 106.

ment in the region has continued to be regarded by the city-state as the best guarantor for a stable distribution of power, Singapore has actively strengthened relations with other external actors with security interests in the region. For example, Singapore and its Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) played an important role in the establishment of the ARF in 1994, eventually bringing together the United States, China, India, Japan and others into a structure for security cooperation led by ASEAN. It can be argued that the FPDA plays a similar “cultivating” role with regards to Australia in particular and, to a lesser extent, Britain and New Zealand.

Australia is particularly important to Singapore as a result of its deep interest in regional stability. During his visit to Australia in March 2007, Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew indicated that Singapore and Australia share “a common strategic view”.<sup>16</sup> Leifer writes that the city-state values its relationship with Canberra due to “the professional competence in training and advice of Australia’s armed forces and diplomatic service set within a common strategic perspective” as well as due to “Australia’s sustained strategic partnership with the USA”.<sup>17</sup> Singaporean-Australian military ties are strong. This is best illustrated by Canberra making training facilities available to the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) in Australia. The FPDA enables Singapore to further strengthen this important bilateral relationship. Likewise, the arrangements matter to Australia primarily because they do not include the United States and therefore help to demonstrate that Canberra is not simply the “Deputy Sheriff” of Washington in the region. This was especially critical during the John Howard government and its close ties with the Bush administration over the “war on terror” and its so-called second front in Southeast Asia.

## COMPLEMENTING MINI-LATERAL INSTRUMENTS

Let us now discuss how the FPDA complements rather than competes with the MSP initiative. Established in July 2004, the MSP consists of coordinated naval and air patrols involving Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore to increase maritime safety and security in the Strait of Malacca.

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16 “Singapore and Australia share common strategic view: MM.” *The Straits Times*, 29 March 2007, p. 25.

17 Leifer, M. *Singapore’s foreign policy: Coping with vulnerability*. London: Routledge, 2000, p. 129.

The MSP is composed of the Malacca Strait Sea Patrol (MSSP), the “Eyes in the Sky” (EiS) operation, which was launched in September 2005 and consists of cooperative air surveillance missions in the Strait, and the Intelligence Exchange Group (IEG), which was formed in 2006. It is worth noting that Bangkok expressed interest early on in cooperating with the littoral states in Malacca Strait surveillance. Thailand eventually became the fourth state to join the MSP in September 2008.

The military exercises undertaken by the FPDA since the early 2000s, with their maritime and non-traditional security dimension, clearly overlap with the objectives of the MSP. The latter was established in response to a peak in the number of piracy attacks in the Malacca Strait in the late 1990s and early 2000s, and the fear of maritime terrorism in a post-9/11 environment. Nonetheless, rather than being overtaken by this more recent initiative, the FPDA complements the MSP in two particular ways.

The first concerns the level and intensity of military collaboration. Within the MSP context, the establishment of effective bilateral and tri-lateral cooperation has been complicated by lingering mistrust among the littoral states and significant gaps in naval capabilities. In particular, the Indonesian Navy (TNI-AL) is poorly equipped to address sea piracy while its air force has not been able to contribute much to the “Eyes in the Sky” combined maritime air patrols. In contrast, the complexity and scope of the FPDA exercises have been significantly expanded over the years to address a series of new challenges. The combined exercises have enabled the five powers to enhance professionalism, personal relationships, capacity building as well as interoperability, especially in the areas of maritime security.<sup>18</sup> The exercises are designed to enhance the capability of the five powers to plan and execute complex multinational operations. Having developed their own defence capabilities, Singapore and Malaysia have continued therefore to regard the FPDA as an instrument “to promote professionalism, rapport and to deepen knowledge of one another’s strengths, capabilities and organisations”.<sup>19</sup> Consequently,

18 Boswood, K. “Engaging our interests: The Five Power Defence Arrangements and its contribution to regional security.” *Defence Magazine*, Issue 9 (August 2007), p. 36.

19 Jamaluddin, J. M. “FPDA expanding its role beyond security concerns.” *Asian Defence Journal*, Issue 5 (July & August 2006), p. 7.

rather than being gradually supplanted by the MSP, the FPDA provides through its combined annual exercises a form of military collaboration still lacking in this newly-established minilateral instrument.

Beyond its purely defence dimension, the FPDA complements the MSP at a more diplomatic level as well. The MSP is meant to accommodate the divergent positions adopted by Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore to tackle non-traditional maritime threats. The city-state has often linked sea piracy to the threat of terrorism and called for the assistance of the user states in guaranteeing maritime security in the Malacca Strait. In contrast, Malaysia and Indonesia have preferred to examine the issue in terms of law enforcement due to concerns over the respect for sovereignty and the prevention of external interference by the great powers.<sup>20</sup> In 2004, then Defence Minister Najib Tun Razak declared that “there will be no foreign presence in the Strait of Malacca or anywhere in Malaysian waters except during exercises.”<sup>21</sup> Significantly, therefore, the FPDA constitutes the only cooperative instrument active in enhancing maritime security in the Strait that involves both Malaysia and external powers.<sup>22</sup> The arrangements offer a unique platform for naval exercises diplomatically acceptable to Kuala Lumpur despite its concerns over sovereignty and external interference in the Strait of Malacca.

## COMPLEMENTING MULTILATERAL INSTRUMENTS

Finally, let us discuss how the FPDA may complement the ADMM and ADMM+. The ADMM was inaugurated in Kuala Lumpur on 9 May 2006, as an emerging expression of defence regionalism in Southeast Asia. It seeks to enhance dialogue as well as practical cooperation between the ASEAN militaries and defence establishments, especially in the area of

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20 Mak, J. N. “Securitizing piracy in Southeast Asia: Malaysia, the international maritime bureau and Singapore.” In M. Caballero-Anthony, R. Emmers & A. Acharya (Eds.), *Non-traditional security in Asia: Dilemmas in securitization*. London: Ashgate, 2006, pp. 66–92.

21 “FPDA understands our position on foreign forces in Straits.” *The Star* (Malaysia), 8 June 2004.

22 Established in Tokyo in 2004, the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) brings together Japan, China, South Korea, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and all the ASEAN countries with the notable exception of Indonesia and Malaysia.

humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.<sup>23</sup> The ADMM needs to be examined in the wider context of ASEAN and its security community project. The Association was not formed as a direct response to an external adversary and has never evolved into a formal or tacit alliance. It has traditionally rejected any form of military cooperation and concentrated instead on confidence building, dialogue and conflict avoidance rather than dispute resolution. In the absence of joint military capabilities and a common external threat perception, the member states have sought to enhance their domestic socio-economic security and to generally improve the climate of relations in Southeast Asia. In response to a series of transnational threats, the Southeast Asian leaders announced at an ASEAN Summit in Bali in October 2003 the formation of an ASEAN Security Community (ASC) by 2020. The latter stresses the willingness of the member states to “rely exclusively on peaceful processes in the settlement of intra-regional differences”<sup>24</sup>

The ADMM, and its focus on non-traditional security issues, should be examined in that light. The following are its specific objectives:

1. To promote regional peace and stability through dialogue and cooperation in defence and security
2. To give guidance to existing senior defence and military officials dialogue and cooperation in the field of defence and security within ASEAN and between ASEAN and dialogue partners
3. To promote mutual trust and confidence through greater understanding of defence and security challenges as well as enhancement of transparency and openness
4. To contribute to the establishment of an ASEAN Security Community (ASC) as stipulated in the Bali Concord II and to promote the implementation of the Vientiane Action Programme on ASC<sup>25</sup>

As in the case of the MSP, the FPDA naturally complements the

23 See The Joint Declaration of ASEAN Defence Ministers on Strengthening ASEAN Defence Establishments to Meet the Challenges of Non-Traditional Security Threats. The Third ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting was held in Pattaya, Thailand, from 25 to 27 February 2009.

24 Declaration of ASEAN Concord II (Bali Concord II), Bali, 7 October 2003.

25 Joint Press Release of the Inaugural ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 9 May 2006.

ADMM by offering to Malaysia and Singapore a defence component still lacking in this latest process. Indeed, the ADMM does not cover the issue of combined military exercises. Furthermore, it is argued here that it is precisely in the overlapping area of military preparedness and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief that the FPDA can be most relevant to the ADMM in terms of information sharing. The FPDA is well ahead of ASEAN in this particular area. Following the tsunami disaster of 26 December 2004, the FPDA defence ministers already decided to further broaden the scope of the arrangements by including humanitarian assistance and disaster relief as well as incorporating non-military agencies into future exercises.<sup>26</sup> At the 2006 FPDA meeting, Singapore's Defence Minister Teo Chee Hean declared that the ministers had agreed to explore how the five powers could cooperate "in developing capacity for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief so that in future should member countries participate in such missions, capacity building and interoperability can be developed and will enhance effectiveness."<sup>27</sup> At the Shangri-La Dialogue that preceded the meeting, then Malaysian Defence Minister Najib Tun Razak had even called for the creation of a joint coordinating centre for relief operations. It is yet to be seen whether such a centre will be established, however.

With its inaugural meeting held in Hanoi in October 2010, the ADMM+ (Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Russia, South Korea and the United States) is the very latest arrangement that overlaps with the FPDA structures. The ADMM+ is aimed at facilitating and enhancing regional defence cooperation between and among the militaries of its member countries in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts, maritime security, and the like. Yet, it still faces a series of challenges that it will need to address in the short to medium term.<sup>28</sup> ASEAN's centrality and the adoption of its cooperative modalities will presumably be resisted by some members. Moreover, agreeing on an ADMM+ work programme that focuses on non-traditional security

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26 Tan, "The Five Power Defence Arrangements: The continuing relevance." p. 295.

27 Quoted in Abdullah, T. Y. T. "FPDA remains relevant with broadened role to reflect new security threats." *Asian Defence Journal*, Issue 5 (July & August 2006), p. 6.

28 Capie, D., & Taylor, B. "Two cheers for ADMM+." *PacNet*, No. 51, 20 October 2010.

challenges but also includes some pressing conventional issues will be problematic. Hence, it is simply too soon at this early stage to speculate on whether the ADMM+ may eventually overshadow or complement the FPDA activities.

## CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed the ongoing role of the FPDA in the Southeast Asian security architecture. It has argued that the arrangements have continued to complement and overlap with, rather than substitute or be replaced by, other bilateral, minilateral and multilateral mechanisms. In particular, this chapter has distinguished and justified its relevance from the U.S. bilateral relations, the MSP initiative and the ADMM.

Rather than speculating on the future role of the FPDA in an ever more complex security architecture and debating where it fits among the alphabet soup of emerging regional groupings, it might be best to highlight again its greatest strength and accomplishment; namely, its flexibility as well as its consultative and complementary attributes. Bristow rightly argues that “largely because of its flexible and consultative nature, the FPDA has also proved remarkably capable at adapting to the changing security environment in the region, thereby retaining its relevance.”<sup>29</sup> The arrangements should continue to play an important role in Southeast Asian security as long as they preserve their inner flexibility, consultative nature and ability to complement other instruments in tackling regional security concerns.

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29 Bristow, “The Five Power Defence Arrangements.” p. 11.

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## THE SHANGRI-LA DIALOGUE

### THRIVING, BUT NOT SURVIVING?

Brendan Taylor

Within a relatively short period of time, the Shangri-La Dialogue (SLD) has emerged as one of Asia's most important and influential security dialogue processes. U.S. Secretary of Defence Robert Gates is on record asserting that the SLD "has no peer in Asia".<sup>1</sup> In a similar vein, former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd during his 2009 address to the gathering described the SLD as the "preeminent defence and security dialogue in the Asia-Pacific region".<sup>2</sup> Notwithstanding this meteoric rise, however, the longer-term viability of the SLD is quietly being called into question following the establishment of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM+), which gathered for the first time in Hanoi, Vietnam in October 2010. Whereas the SLD has for almost a decade served as a de facto meeting of Asian defence ministers, the fact that a mechanism has now been established to formally bring those Ministers together arguably calls into question the SLD's *raison d'être*. Hence, somewhat ironically given that the pioneering efforts of the SLD could be said to have created the regional comfort levels required for a formal Asian Defence Ministers' meeting to emerge, a case can be made that the now flourishing SLD might come to be seen as increasingly redundant as the ADMM+ process gathers further momentum.

This chapter contests that line of reasoning. It begins by accounting for the impressive rise that has resulted in the SLD becoming an

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- 1 Cited in Minnick, W. "Shangri-La Dialogue ends extraordinary meeting." *Defence News*, 3 June 2008.
  - 2 Rudd, K. "Keynote Address." Eighth Shangri-La Dialogue, Singapore, 29 May 2009.



important fixture on Asia's institutional landscape. While acknowledging the significance of the establishment of the ADMM+, this chapter then offers a series of justifications for why this nascent process will likely not supplant the SLD, at least for the foreseeable future. That said, the third section of the chapter points to the potential for institutional competition to emerge between the SLD and the ADMM+, observing why the advent of such might be detrimental from a broader architectural and regional security perspective. The chapter concludes by offering suggestions for how any such institutional competition between the incumbent SLD and the emergent ADMM+ might best be managed or avoided altogether.

### RISE OF THE SLD

When the SLD was initiated in 2002, its underlying function was to provide an opportunity for regional defence ministers to meet coincidentally in the relaxed setting of an academic conference. The United States, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Australia had all previously explored the prospects for bringing together Asia's defence ministers, but their efforts failed to deliver much in the way of tangible outcomes. Interestingly, at the inaugural SLD a Japanese proposal for an "Asia-Pacific Defence Ministerial Meeting" was also advanced.<sup>3</sup> Against this backdrop, the fact that the SLD succeeded where these earlier attempts had essentially foundered goes some way towards vindicating the heady accolades afforded to it by the likes of Gates and Rudd.

One of the primary reasons accounting for the apparent success of the SLD is the strong American backing that it has received. Among the first to sign up for the inaugural SLD was a U.S. Congressional delegation comprising three Republicans (Senators Chuck Hagel and Fred Thompson and Representative Jim Kolbe) and three Democrats (Senator Jack Reed and Representatives Vic Snyder and Ellen Tauscher).<sup>4</sup> The U.S. delegation to the 2002 SLD was ultimately headed by Deputy Secretary of Defence Paul Wolfowitz. The presence of a high-profile U.S. delegation, in turn, subsequently added credibility and status to this fledgling exercise in defence diplomacy, thus making it much easier in many cases

3 See Dibb, P. "Confidence comes from cooperation." *The Australian*, 5 June 2002.

4 Thompson, F. "Senator Thompson to represent U.S. at Asian conference on security issues." *News Release*, 29 May 2002.

to secure governmental participation from throughout the region. High-level U.S. representation has remained a feature of each SLD during the period since, with Defence Secretary Gates and his predecessor Donald Rumsfeld—someone not particularly renowned for his affection towards Asian multilateralism—being regular attendees.

By far, the greatest utility that policymakers seem to have derived from the SLD since its establishment comes from the bilateral meetings that are held on its sidelines. Indeed, while the annual dialogue runs for three days in total, the organisers—the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)—allots an entire day expressly for this purpose. These bilateral interactions typically last for approximately half an hour and national delegations will usually arrange 15–20 over the course of the conference. By way of example, at the 2010 SLD, Australian Defence Minister Senator John Faulkner attended a meeting of the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) as well as held bilateral meetings with Defence Ministers from Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, South Korea and Vietnam; Singapore's Foreign Affairs Minister; Sri Lanka's Minister for External Affairs; India's National Security Advisor; and officials from the Philippines. Faulkner was also accompanied by Australia's Secretary of Defence and the Chief of its Defence Force, who were able to meet with regional counterparts.<sup>5</sup> Holding such a large number of meetings at one location and over a compressed timeframe obviously generates efficiencies. Moreover, the fact that the IISS ensures that a high level of privacy is given to these meetings further increases their appeal to policymakers.

The significant funding—both private and governmental—that the SLD attracts has obviously also been an important factor contributing to its impressive rise. Primary governmental sponsors of the SLD include Australia and Japan. Singapore contributes substantially too, both in monetary terms and, perhaps more importantly, in covering the considerable costs associated with the security of the conference. Private companies, most notably defence contractors, also contribute

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5 "Australia's defence minister completes round of bilaterals in Singapore." *BBC Monitoring Asia-Pacific*, 7 June 2010.

financially to the running of the SLD.<sup>6</sup> The flexibility afforded by the operating modalities of the SLD constitutes a further key strength. Unlike most Track 1 regional meetings, where senior officials work to draft a chairman's statement or finalise some sort of "achievement" before the meeting occurs, the SLD does not seek to produce any kind of agreed communiqué. This thin institutionalisation seems to be an attractive feature.

A further useful function of the SLD that can be seen to have contributed towards its success is the extent to which it serves as a useful barometer for the state of Sino-U.S. relations, while also providing a useful mechanism through which these regional heavyweights are able to signal to one another. U.S. Defence Secretary Rumsfeld, for instance, used the 2005 SLD as a platform to raise questions over the underlying motivations for Chinese military modernisation.<sup>7</sup> Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the People's Liberation Army, Lieutenant-General Zhang Qinsheng, similarly used his speech to the 2007 SLD to downplay American suggestions of an impending China threat and, on a more positive note, to announce the establishment of a hotline between the Chinese and American militaries.<sup>8</sup> The 2010 SLD was a significantly testier affair, with Chinese and American representatives trading blows over a range of issues—most prominently U.S. arms sales to Taiwan and China's reaction to the sinking of the South Korean Navy Corvette, the *Cheonan*—reflecting broader tensions in their strategic relationship.<sup>9</sup>

A final factor contributing to the rise of the SLD is the perceived level of prestige associated with attendance at the event. One regional correspondent has described the SLD as having a Hollywood-like quality, referring to the presence of the "Spielbergs and Clooneys of military

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6 For further reading on SLD funding arrangements, see Capie, D., & Taylor, B. "The Shangri-La Dialogue and the institutionalization of defence diplomacy in Asia." *The Pacific Review*, Vol. 23 No. 3 (July 2010), pp. 368–369.

7 See Goh, S. N. "Why Beijing lies low at regional security forums." *The Straits Times*, 8 June 2006.

8 Goh, S. N. "PLA embarks on a slow journey to transparency." *The Straits Times*, 7 June 2007.

9 Wines, M. "Strains in U.S.-China military ties: A bad omen?" *International Herald Tribune*, 10 June 2010.

power”.<sup>10</sup> This aura of prestige is partly a product of some of the aforementioned factors, such as the level of funding available to run the event coupled with the presence of high-level governmental policymakers. The SLD venue—the salubrious Shangri-La Hotel—only adds to the glamour of the gathering, making it in the view of many participants a place to be seen and to interact with arguably the “who’s who” of Asian security politics.

### DEMISE OF THE SLD?

The success of the SLD notwithstanding, questions over its longer-term viability are not difficult to comprehend. The new ADMM+ essentially replicates some of the most important features of the SLD. With ASEAN’s imprimatur, it formally brings together Asia’s defence ministers, which is something that the SLD still only does in an informal way. Bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the ADMM+ were a prominent feature of its inaugural gathering. Of particular note were sideline meetings between China and the United States, and between China and Japan at a time of frosty relations in both of those important bilateral relationships. Added to this, ADMM+ mirrors the membership of the expanded East Asia Summit (EAS), which an increasing number of commentators regard as an optimal architectural formula for Asian security politics.<sup>11</sup>

As Capie and I have written elsewhere, however, while one cannot deny the significance of ASEAN’s achievement in formally bringing Asia’s defence ministers together, ADMM+ arguably suffers from a number of significant shortcomings that will likely limit its capacity to challenge the existence of the SLD in the foreseeable future.<sup>12</sup> First, the fact that defence ministers are only due to meet once every three years will certainly challenge the capacity of ADMM+ to maintain institutional momentum. To be sure, a supporting structure of senior officials meetings will remain in place and ASEAN defence ministers will continue to meet on an annual basis in the smaller ASEAN Defence Ministers’ meeting (ADMM). For

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10 Ampikaipakan, U. “Uncle Sam’s security role in Asia.” *The New Straits Times*, 4 June 2008.

11 See, for example, Kesavapany, K. “Different paths for Asean’s growth.” *The Straits Times*, 8 May 2010.

12 Capie, D., & Taylor, B. “Two cheers for ADMM+.” *PacNet*, No. 51, Pacific Forum CSIS, Honolulu, Hawaii, 20 October 2010.

defence ministers of the “plus-8” countries (with the possible exception of China), this feature is likely to diminish the prospects of their not attending the SLD on the grounds that they are already meeting regularly in an alternative forum.

Second, ASEAN’s centrality in ADMM+ and the adoption of ASEAN modalities is likely to appeal to some participants more than others. China, for example, continues to publicly express its support for ASEAN’s consensual-style approach to decision-making, which emphasises that any institutional progress ought to occur at a pace that is comfortable to all members. Other participants, such as the United States and Australia, have tended to assess regional multilateral processes less as confidence-building mechanisms and more in terms of the concrete outcomes that they are able to deliver. Over time, therefore, it is not inconceivable that Washington and Canberra could become increasingly frustrated with the incrementalism that is likely to remain a feature of ADMM+.

Third, the apparent focus of ADMM+ on so-called non-traditional security challenges is also likely to receive a mixed reception. For China, once again, a focus on non-traditional security issues is likely to be favoured given that these do not tend to raise the same level of sensitivity that more traditional security challenges are apt to generate. Consistent with this, cooperation between China and ASEAN members in the non-traditional security sphere has deepened in recent years, as reflected by the fact that China and Vietnam will co-chair one of the first ADMM+ “expert working groups” on enhancing the region’s capacity to provide humanitarian assistance and respond to natural disasters.<sup>13</sup> Yet because many if not most of Asia’s multilateral institutions have already seized upon non-traditional security issues as an area ripe for cooperation, it is going to be difficult for ADMM+ to make a distinct contribution in this increasingly crowded field. While the SLD also covers non-traditional security issues, the fact that it is one of the few regional mechanisms that broaches more traditional security challenges—such as burgeoning military modernisation, alliances, great power politics and military

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13 For further reading on deepening China-ASEAN non-traditional security cooperation see Arase, D. “Non-traditional security in China-ASEAN cooperation: The institutionalization of regional security cooperation and the evolution of East Asian regionalism.” *Asian Survey*, Vol. 50 No. 4 (July/August 2010), pp. 808–833.

transparency—on a regular basis gives it a comparative advantage over many other processes.

In considering the potential longevity of the SLD, it is also important to keep in mind that institutions endure more often than they collapse in the Asian context. This is partly attributable to the phenomenon known as “institutional stickiness”, which Allan Gyngell describes in layman’s terms as “the tendency of organisations to resist doing themselves out of a job”.<sup>14</sup> The incentives for retaining the SLD in the case of the IISS are magnified because it sits alongside a growing number of other IISS defence dialogues, which contribute substantially towards further enhancing that organisation’s global profile. These include the “Manama Dialogue”, which is held annually in Bahrain and which involves governmental delegations from over 20 countries from the Gulf region and beyond. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, for example, attended this gathering in 2010. These considerations, coupled with the fact that the SLD continues to enjoy strong great power backing (particularly from the United States, but also from Japan), suggest that its demise is far from imminent.

## DANGERS OF DUPLICATION

Some commentators would argue that the ongoing potential for institutional overlap between the SLD and the ADMM+ is unproblematic. Asia’s security architecture will inevitably embody a degree of messiness, according to this perspective, given the inherent diversity—historical, economic, political, religious and cultural—of the constituent countries of this region. Moreover, advocates of this view would argue that there can be no such thing as “too much talk” on any security issue of pressing concern and therefore that the coexistence of the SLD and the ADMM+ is a major plus for the region.<sup>15</sup>

As Tow and I have argued elsewhere, however, institutional duplication is potentially dangerous in that what appears to be growing cooperation can actually be a reflection of increased competition—particularly

14 Gyngell, A. “Design faults: The Asia Pacific’s regional architecture.” Policy Brief, Lowy Institute for International Policy, July 2007, p. 10.

15 See, for example, Milner, A. *Region, security and the return of history*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2003.

between the great powers—and a further facilitator thereof.<sup>16</sup> In recent years, for instance, the region has increasingly witnessed great powers seeking to make their presence felt through those (often overlapping) institutions in which they feel most comfortable and with which they have the most influence—China in the ASEAN+3 and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO); Russia in the SCO; the United States in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) process and through its own ad hoc mechanisms such as the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD) and the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI); and Japan through the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and potentially the EAS as it strives to check China’s growing influence in the ASEAN+3 process.

This dynamic represents one of the great ironies of the remarkable growth in regional multilateralism that has taken place since the beginning of the 1990s: that this dramatic burgeoning in multilateral institutions and activities has raised as many problems as it has potentially addressed in terms of forging an Asian architectural consensus. Defence diplomacy is by no means immune from this dilemma. Based on the preceding analysis, for instance, it is not inconceivable that a bifurcation could occur between the region’s two preeminent processes in this area wherein some countries (namely the United States and Australia) increasingly back the SLD whereas others (namely China and some ASEAN members) give stronger support to the ADMM+. Such an outcome would be potentially problematic in that it would likely render the prospects for region-wide cooperation in any genuine sense much more difficult in the defence sector.

What can be done to enhance the chances for a “peaceful coexistence” between the SLD and the ADMM+ through eliminating the prospects for detrimental institutional competition between them or, failing that, to ensure that benefits can still be derived should such competition emerge? This chapter offers two modest policy recommendations with those objectives in mind.

First, a concept paper might usefully be developed proposing options for a division of labour between ADMM+ and the SLD. This may initially seem a somewhat unorthodox proposal given that concept papers have

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16 Tow, W. T., & Taylor, B. “What is Asian security architecture?” *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 36 No. 1 (January 2010), pp. 115–116.

traditionally been drafted with reference to individual multilateral processes.<sup>17</sup> Yet functional differentiation is becoming increasingly important in Asia's more crowded institutional landscape, particularly if there is to be any prospect of fashioning a coherent regional "architecture" from the plethora of existing processes.<sup>18</sup> It is quite conceivable that such an endeavour could be initiated and undertaken at the Track 1 level, the Track 2 level, or a combination thereof. Either way, given its respective standing and likely affinity with the ADMM+ and the SLD respectively, Singapore seems particularly well placed to lead such an initiative.

Second, efforts could be made to initiate and to institutionalise creative "minilateral" interactions on the sidelines of both the ADMM+ and the SLD. One of the prevailing trends in regional security dialogue is a move towards conducting bilateral and, increasingly, "minilateral" conversations under multilateral auspices. Indeed, the SLD was used by Washington, Tokyo and Seoul precisely for this purpose, when they held a trilateral dialogue on the sidelines of the 2009 SLD with a view to better coordinating their responses to the North Korean nuclear crisis. While one would expect most participants to continue utilising ADMM+ and SLD meetings as a vehicle for meeting bilaterally, it would therefore also seem propitious to consider using these venues to establish, for example, minilateral processes such as a China-Japan-U.S. trilateral dialogue, a China-India-Japan trilateral dialogue, or a "middle powers" dialogue that would involve both Australia and Singapore. Likewise, should the Six Party Talks remain moribund or fail to deliver an effective solution to the protracted North Korea nuclear problem, there may also be opportunities to design an alternative minilateral grouping which could be convened regularly on the sidelines of both ADMM+ and the SLD.

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17 See, for example, Association of Southeast Asian Nations, "Concept Paper for the Establishment of an ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting", accessed on 12 November 2010 at [www.aseansec.org/18511.htm](http://www.aseansec.org/18511.htm).

18 For further reading see Tow and Taylor, "What is Asian security architecture?" pp. 95–116.



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## THE RELEVANCE OF THE NETWORK OF ASEAN DEFENCE AND SECURITY INSTITUTIONS (NADI) TO THE ADMM

Tan Seng Chye

**T**he ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) was established in May 2006 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. It was a significant and historic development in defence cooperation in ASEAN as, in the past, defence cooperation was a sensitive issue for the members to discuss.

At the initiative of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), an inaugural meeting of the Track 2 Network of ASEAN Defence and Security Institutions (NADI) was held in Marina Mandarin Singapore from 22 to 23 August 2007 to discuss the relevance of this initiative to support the ADMM track. Representatives of the ASEAN think tanks and Defence Ministry research institutions attended the meeting. They agreed that NADI could serve as a forum to build confidence and familiarity among the ASEAN think tanks and Defence Ministry research institutions, to discuss traditional and non-traditional security issues facing the region, and to consider the new role the military can play to deal with the non-traditional security issues. NADI could recommend fresh ideas and proposals for enhancing defence and security cooperation to the ASEAN Defence Senior Officials Meeting (ADSOM) for consideration as inputs for the ADMM track. NADI can be the forum to discuss defence and security issues that are considered too sensitive for the ADMM track to discuss. The participants of NADI should do so in their personal capacities so that they could think of ideas beyond the official positions of their respective countries.

NADI has then assessed that while there is peace and stability in the East Asia region, there are still many challenges facing the regional countries in particular ASEAN, in the traditional and non-traditional security sectors. In this new environment, civil-military cooperation would be

an increasingly important factor, as the new challenges facing ASEAN society would require a “whole of society” approach to handle the new emerging problems. Many of the security issues are transnational and trans-boundary in nature. It would require a cooperative response from the ASEAN countries as well as a new framework eventually that could provide for countries from outside the ASEAN region, to cooperate with ASEAN and to contribute constructively to ensure peace and security in the region, in accordance with the principles of non-interference and non-intervention, equality and mutual benefit.

The inaugural NADI meeting also discussed a whole range of issues including the ASEAN regional security outlook and prospects for cooperation in a number of areas like maritime security, infectious diseases and pandemics, impact of climatic changes, energy security and environmental issues. NADI believes that Track 2 processes could play a significant role in interacting with the Track 3 groups such as civil society groups and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) from within and without the region, to enhance cooperation especially in dealing with non-traditional and transnational issues.

The inaugural NADI meeting concluded that NADI has a significant role to play in fostering familiarity and comfort among ASEAN think tanks and defence research institutions as well as exploring new ideas for cooperation among the militaries of the ASEAN countries especially in the non-traditional security sector. NADI would be a relevant and useful forum in the ongoing process of creating an ASEAN Security Community. As RSIS initiated the idea of NADI, the representatives of NADI agreed that RSIS would serve as the Secretariat of NADI. NADI would meet in plenary once a year and NADI countries could undertake to host workshops or seminars to discuss various issues. The Chairmanship of NADI will coincide with the Chairmanship of ADMM. Subsequently ADMM endorsed NADI as a relevant Track 2 forum that could support and provide fresh ideas and recommendations to the ADMM track.

## **NADI'S ROLE AND INPUTS FOR ADMM TRACK**

The second NADI meeting was hosted by the Strategic Research Institute (SRI), National Defence Studies Institute, Royal Thai Armed Forces, Thailand, from 2 to 5 November 2008 in Bangsaen, Thailand. The second meeting discussed further the areas for cooperation and considered

approaches to deal with the emerging security challenges and role of NADI. NADI agreed that it could contribute to the ADMM track by thinking ahead of the curve and anticipate possible security challenges and generate relevant and timely suggestions for cooperation. The NADI participants should participate in their personal capacities so as to allow them to think innovatively about defence and security issues beyond their governments' positions in order to contribute new ideas and recommendations that would be useful and relevant to the ADMM track.

NADI also concluded that non-traditional security challenges are emerging as an area requiring greater attention. In this regard, NADI discussed the roles that the ASEAN militaries could play in dealing with the non-traditional security challenges. Some areas of concern were maritime security, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, infectious diseases and pandemics, earthquakes and environmental issues. The holding of workshops, seminars and tabletop exercises could facilitate closer cooperation.

NADI discussed at each meeting the regional political and security outlook. It suggested that the production of an annual ASEAN Defence and Security Outlook by the ASEAN Defence Track would be useful. NADI has suggested ideas in terms of scope, contents and inputs for this publication for consideration of the ADMM track.

NADI recommended that it was useful to develop specific civil and military points of contacts in the ASEAN member countries to expedite communications and responses in times of disaster or crisis. A register of ASEAN contact points including personnel and contact details could be compiled and updated regularly. In this way, ASEAN civil and military authorities could work out clear procedures for cooperation and coordination to facilitate responses in times of crisis.

NADI also recommended that the ASEAN governments considered the establishment of an ASEAN Crisis Monitoring and Coordination Centre to facilitate more effective monitoring and coordination of ASEAN countries' efforts in managing non-traditional issues. In order to facilitate confidence building and networking, NADI also recommended an annual retreat of top defence officials from permanent secretaries to senior policy officials of ASEAN Defence Ministries to facilitate networking and to improve working relationships.

NADI recommended that workshops, seminars and tabletop exer-

cises could be held to build confidence and trust as well as enhance cooperation not only between the states and governments but also between defence establishments and civil society organisations.

NADI also agreed that there should be a core NADI institution from each ASEAN country and that a national committee could be established to bring together the relevant agencies and other think tanks and even civil society organisations, which have a strong interest in defence and security matters. The core NADI institution could consider including representatives from their national committee to participate in workshops and seminars.

The third NADI meeting was organised by the Institute for Military Strategy (IMS), Ministry of National Defence, Vietnam, supported by the Institute of Defence International Relations (IDIR) of the same Ministry, in Ho Chi Minh City from 19 to 22 April 2010. The third NADI meeting focused on (i) an exchange of views on the emerging trends in the political and security situation in the East Asia region in view of the changing global strategic landscape, (ii) an exchange of views on the inauguration of the ADMM-Plus in October 2010, and (iii) an exchange of views on the Declaration of the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) and the prospect for a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC).

Director General of IMS briefed the NADI meeting on the security situation in the region, in particular, the non-traditional security challenges like terrorism, transnational organised crimes, epidemics, natural disasters and so on. He emphasised the importance of dealing with these non-traditional security issues and the need to engage the cooperation of non-ASEAN countries, as these issues are transnational in nature. Vietnam's Deputy Defence Minister spoke about the progress in ASEAN defence cooperation and the proposed establishment of ADMM-Plus, which could help ASEAN to build capacity and mobilise resources through engagement of external partners through the ADMM-Plus process in order to deal more effectively with non-traditional security issues. NADI supported the inauguration of ADMM-Plus in October 2010.

In the discussion on the DOC and the possibility of a COC, the NADI participants were of the view that the territorial disputes in the South China Sea involved China and the ASEAN claimant states and that this was not an ASEAN-China problem. However, ASEAN and China could try to work towards a COC.

## LAUNCH OF THE NADI WEBSITE

On the occasion of the Workshop on Maritime Security organised by RSIS at Marina Mandarin Singapore from 27 to 29 July 2009, RSIS took the opportunity to launch the NADI website. Mr. Eddie Teo, Chairman of the Board of Governors, RSIS, was Guest of Honour to launch the NADI website on 28 July 2009. The NADI website ([www.rsis.edu.sg/nadi](http://www.rsis.edu.sg/nadi)) highlights the work of NADI, upcoming events and important ASEAN meetings like ADMM and ADMM-Plus, in particular those relating to defence and security developments in the region as well as academic papers, commentaries and working papers relating to defence and security. RSIS requested the NADI core member institutions to provide their websites so that they could be linked to the NADI website at RSIS, to highlight their relevant academic papers, commentaries and working papers relating to defence and security.

## NADI WORKSHOPS

The second NADI meeting agreed to three workshops: Maritime Security; Peacekeeping Operations (PKO); and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR). It was left to the NADI members to volunteer to host the workshops.

RSIS hosted the NADI Workshop on Maritime Security from 27 to 29 July 2009 at Marina Mandarin Singapore. The Centre for Defence and International Security Studies (CDISS), National Defence University of Malaysia (NDUM) hosted the Workshop on Peacekeeping Operations with the theme of “Cooperation in Peacekeeping: A Way Forward for ASEAN” at Royale Chulan Hotel, Kuala Lumpur from 19 to 21 October 2010. The Strategic Research Institute (SRI), National Defence Studies Institute, Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, Bangkok, has offered to host the Workshop on HADR sometime in mid-2011.

### Workshop on Maritime Security

All the NADI members who attended the NADI Workshop gave briefings on various topics relating to maritime security, which were followed by substantive discussions. The briefings included the following, namely, (i) Briefing on Good Order at Sea by RSIS, (ii) CDISS, Malaysia made a presentation on Regional Maritime Disputes—Reduc-

ing Tension in Affected Areas, (iii) Briefing on Maritime Security Task Force (MSTF)'s Role in Ensuring Maritime Security by Ministry of Defence, Singapore, (iv) Briefing on Maritime Security Challenges in the South China Sea by RSIS and Defence Cooperation on Maritime Security by IDIR, Vietnam, (v) Briefing on Maritime Security Challenges, Defence Cooperation and Enhancing ASEAN Militaries' Role by Indonesian Armed Forces Strategic Studies Center, (vi) Briefing on Maritime Security Challenges by Policy and Planning Department, General Department of Policy and Foreign Affairs, Ministry of National Defence, Cambodia, (vii) Briefing on Maritime Security Challenges and the Role of the Royal Thai Armed Forces by SRI, and (viii) Briefing on ReCAAP's Role in Information Sharing and Cooperation among Regional Countries in Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia by a ReCAAP representative.

The briefings were followed by exchanges of views on possible areas of cooperation among ASEAN militaries in maritime security and the role of ASEAN militaries in enhancing maritime security.

NADI has been forward looking to discussing security challenges facing the region and have suggested new ideas. For instance, when RSIS hosted the Workshop on Maritime Security in July 2009, it had not only highlighted the cooperation among the ASEAN countries concerned, in particular the littoral states of the Strait of Malacca in ensuring the safety of the Strait as well as the contributions of user states towards improving technical facilities for safety of navigation in the Malacca strait. The Workshop also highlighted the role of ReCAAP in information sharing on piracy and maritime security. There was a briefing by the Comprehensive Maritime Awareness Group Commander, MSTF, Ministry of Defence, Singapore, on MSTF's role in ensuring maritime security. The MSTF, which is supported by the Changi Command and Control Centre—comprising the Information Fusion Centre (IFC), the Multinational Operations and Exercises Centre (MOEC) and the Singapore Maritime Security Centre (SMSC)—would take the lead to achieve the full effects of this new concept of operations to deal with maritime security threats. The Workshop participants' visit to the Changi Command and Control Centre in fact highlighted the ADMM-Plus kind of real time cooperation for maritime security in the region and beyond.

## Workshop on Peacekeeping Operations

The Workshop on Peacekeeping Operations was based on the theme “Cooperation in Peacekeeping: A Way Forward for ASEAN”.

In his opening speech, the Vice Chancellor of the National Defence University of Malaysia said that the ASEAN countries had individually played significant roles in their contributions towards world peace by their peacekeeping operations. He suggested that ASEAN could consider establishing a combined peacekeeping organisation. Subsequently, in the summary of exchange of views and discussions by NADI participants, it was suggested that the idea of having a coordinating unit within ASEAN with regards to PKO could be a step to start the process on integrating an ASEAN PKO. However, as there has been no decision by ASEAN on this idea, it will remain as a topic for future discussion.

There were a number of briefings and presentations which included the following: (i) Re-visiting ASEAN Peacekeeping Agenda by Dr. Mely Caballero-Anthony, RSIS, (ii) TNI Peacekeeping Operations: Present and Future Challenges by Dr. Yani Antariksa, TNI Centre for Strategic Studies, Indonesia, (iii) Malaysian Peacekeeping Operations in Somalia by Lt. Col. Kamal Idris Johari, National Defence University of Malaysia, (iv) UN Peacekeeping Operations by MG Nguyen Dinh Chien, IMS, Vietnam, and (v) Singapore’s Small State Perspectives of Peacekeeping Operations by Mr. Collin Koh, RSIS. These briefings/presentations were followed by exchanges of views. The NADI Workshop concluded that while some ASEAN countries have been involved in peacekeeping for a number of years, some other ASEAN countries are new to it. There was therefore a need to exchange information and share experiences with ASEAN members that were just embarking on PKO. In this regard, the Workshop suggested the following three ideas: (i) to set up an expert group to identify an ASEAN direction based on common regional interest and to identify areas of cooperation; (ii) to set up an information-clearing centre; and (iii) to establish a network among current peacekeeping training centres.<sup>1</sup>

1 The NADI participants also visited the Malaysian Peacekeeping Training Centre in Port Dickson and were briefed on its activities.

## NADI'S FUTURE DIRECTIONS

According to the author, NADI should remain active in its discussions and provide useful and forward looking ideas and recommendations to the ADMM track. The ADMM-Plus, which is an integral part of ADMM, was launched in October 2010. ADMM plays a central role in driving the ADMM-Plus process in ASEAN's engagement with its dialogue partners in cooperation that can help ASEAN to deal with the non-traditional issues for mutual benefits. An ADSOM-Plus has been established recently. However, NADI should remain in its present form as it is, as an ASEAN think tank group supporting ADMM. NADI can provide the ASEAN perspective on defence and security cooperation within ASEAN and ASEAN's cooperation with its dialogue partners. In this new environment, NADI can expand its consideration of issues relating to ADMM-Plus cooperation and provide inputs of relevant new ideas and recommendations for ADMM to manage its cooperation in the ADMM-Plus process so that it will be ASEAN-focused.

In this regard, NADI could consider meeting twice annually before the ADMM as well as for NADI members to host workshops or seminars on relevant new topics so that NADI could provide relevant policy inputs and recommendations that would be useful for the ADMM and ADMM-Plus process.



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# DEFENCE DIPLOMACY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

## TRENDS, PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES

Evan A. Laksmana

This chapter seeks to describe and assess key trends in defence diplomacy in Southeast Asia. Specifically, it seeks to highlight key issues and trends in multilateral defence diplomacy under the auspices of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) since 1994. In addition, to complement the discussion, this chapter will also use the case of Indonesia's bilateral defence diplomacy to highlight how bilateral defence relations among and between Southeast Asian states remain a crucial part of regional security architecture. By highlighting key trends in multilateral and bilateral defence diplomacy in Southeast Asia (at least from Jakarta's point of view), this chapter seeks to achieve two main goals: first, to make sense of the flurry of defence and security-related informal and formal meetings in Southeast Asia in recent years; and second, to infer key policy lessons for future regional architecture building in the region.

On the multilateral front, between 2000 and 2009, ASEAN and the ARF held, on average, 15 formal and informal meetings annually involving defence and security officials. This is in addition to the various multilateral security cooperation activities organised by the United States, Japan, China, or those under the "ASEAN-Plus 1" umbrella. Most recently, the advent of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and ADMM-Plus 8 has been seen as a crucial milestone of regional security building. Meanwhile, bilaterally, defence relations among Southeast Asian states have also gradually improved as the number of office exchanges, joint exercises and patrols and others has increased.

These developments are significant when we consider the fact that for the first four decades of ASEAN's existence, security issues are still considered "off limits" among regional countries and the prospect of

open armed conflict was a possibility. Also, officials often explain away this lack of security and defence meetings by arguing that ASEAN is neither a military alliance nor a security organisation. A related puzzle deals with momentum: why has defence diplomacy risen in the past decade, and not before? This is puzzling because in the past decade, fault lines of major conflict in Southeast Asia as a region have been less visible than previous periods. Indeed, the region has been more stable and peaceful than during the Cold War when ideological rivalries and regional tensions run high. If anything, therefore, defence diplomacy as a confidence building measure should have been more active during the Cold War when the prospect of inter-state conflict and war was near and as regional armaments grew rapidly between the 1960s and 1980s.

Furthermore, as we shall see below, defence diplomacy within the Southeast Asian context has many layers—ranging from formal ones, such as the ADMM, to informal ones, such as the ASEAN Chief of Defence Forces Informal Meeting (ACDFIM) and Shangri-La Dialogue—and is initiated by both ASEAN as well as extra-regional powers such as China, Japan and the United States. This chapter, however, will only focus on ASEAN-centred defence diplomacy to avoid analytical confusion—extra-regional initiated defence cooperation are not only difficult to measure, but they do not always reflect the goals and interest of Southeast Asian states, nor have they changed the basic regional security architecture. Furthermore, given the early stages of research regarding the subject, this chapter takes a narrow view of dividing defence diplomacy in Southeast Asia into two categories: (i) bilateral (among two Southeast Asian states), and (ii) multilateral defence diplomacy (through the ARF and ASEAN-related events).<sup>1</sup>

This chapter argues that defence diplomacy in Southeast Asia cannot be assessed entirely in the multilateral arena alone. Instead, multilateral defence diplomacy in Southeast Asia has to be seen in conjunction with developments in the bilateral defence relations between key Southeast Asian states. Furthermore, bilateral and multilateral defence diplomacy in Southeast Asia—at least seen from Jakarta—are two sides of the same coin serving two different goals. Bilateral defence diplomacy appears

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1 There are other defence diplomacy activities in Southeast Asia outside the two—such as the trilateral joint security cooperation between Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia over the Malacca Strait.

focused on key states—major powers or neighbours—that have been the traditional concerns of the respective countries, while multilateral defence diplomacy focuses more on “soft balancing” the major powers, while “enmeshing” them into regional norms and order.

In terms of security issues meanwhile, as we shall see below, this chapter argues that the increasing importance of non-traditional security issues, such as terrorism, illegal fishing and climate change, are complicating, and in some cases exacerbating, traditional regional strategic challenges such as border disputes. This is also reflected in the dominant discourse of non-traditional security in ASEAN-related documents. This coincides with the critical “shock therapy” of the 1997 Asian financial crisis that drove the point home for Southeast Asian states: the time has come to start tackling security issues more seriously. The 2003 ASEAN Community project (Political Security, Economic and Socio-Cultural) provided further impetus for this growing awareness in the region.

## THE RISE OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN DEFENCE DIPLOMACY: THE VIEW FROM JAKARTA

Since the 1990s, militaries and their defence ministries have taken on a growing range of peacetime cooperative tasks. Defence diplomacy—the peacetime cooperative use of armed forces and related infrastructure as a tool of foreign and security policy—is among the primary activities in this regard.<sup>2</sup> Defence diplomacy is also a process that may involve state officials (politicians, security personnel and intelligence services) as well as non-governmental organisations, think tanks and civil society. This view of defence diplomacy is broader than “military diplomacy” that focuses only on “the use of the military to advance diplomacy and its engagement in various security arrangements”.<sup>3</sup> As such, defence diplomacy, when aimed at improving relations through informal and formal channels using government and non-government resources, provides

2 Cottey, A., & Forster, A. *Reshaping defence diplomacy: New roles for military cooperation and assistance*. Adelphi Paper No. 365, London: Routledge for IISS, 2004, p. 6.

3 Military diplomacy here is defined by Sachar, B. S. “Military diplomacy through arms transfers: A case study of China.” *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 28 No. 2 (2004), p. 290.

a low-cost, low-risk “continuation of dialogue by other means”<sup>4</sup> There are a number of defence diplomacy activities that a government could undertake in this regard (see Table 1).

TABLE 1  
**Defence diplomacy activities**

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Bilateral and multilateral contacts between senior military and civilian defence officials
Appointment of defence attachés to foreign countries
Bilateral defence cooperation agreements
Training of foreign military and civilian defence personnel
Provision of expertise and advice on the democratic control of armed forces, defence management, and military technical areas
Contacts and exchanges between military personnel and units, and ship visits
Placement of military or civilian personnel in partner countries' defence ministries or militaries
Deployment of training teams
Provision of military equipment and other material aid
Bilateral or multilateral military exercises for training purposes

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Source: Cottey, A., & Forster, A. *Reshaping defence diplomacy: New roles for military cooperation and assistance*. Adelphi Paper No. 365, London: Routledge for IISS, 2004.

These numerous defence diplomacy activities have been dubbed as “the new defence diplomacy” that not only strengthens cooperation, but also allow major powers such as China, the United States and the United Kingdom to “shape and influence” domestic developments of lesser powers (e.g. support for democracy, human rights) and to help them handle their own security challenges.<sup>5</sup> Specifically, this “new defence diplomacy” comes with three main roles: (i) strategic engagement as a means of reducing the likelihood of conflict between former and potential enemies, (ii) promoting democratic civil-military relations, and (iii) supporting other states in developing peacekeeping capabilities.

For the purposes of our discussion however, the last two roles are less

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4 See Mulloy, G. “Japan’s defence diplomacy and ‘Cold Peace’ in Asia.” *Asia Journal of Global Studies*, Vol. 1 No. 1 (2007), p. 3.

5 Mulloy, “Japan’s defence diplomacy”, p. 8; see also Hills, A. “Defence diplomacy and security sector reform.” *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 21 No. 1 (2000), pp. 46–67.

relevant. This is especially true when we consider that bilateral and multi-lateral defence diplomacy among “equally weak” regional countries such as those in Southeast Asia having a different origin, rationale and trajectory. In this regard, the first role of defence diplomacy as an instrument of conflict prevention is more germane to our discussion. Defence diplomacy as a conflict prevention mechanism works in a number of ways (see Table 2).

TABLE 2  
**Defence diplomacy as conflict prevention**

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Military cooperation can act as a symbol of willingness to pursue broader cooperation, mutual trust and commitment to work to overcome or manage differences
Military cooperation can be a means of introducing transparency into defence relations, especially with regards to states’ intentions and capabilities
Defence diplomacy can be a means of building or reinforcing perceptions of common interests
Military cooperation might also change over time the mindsets of partner states’ militaries
Military cooperation can support specific, concrete defence reforms in the partnering state
Defence assistance may be used as an incentive to encourage cooperation in other areas

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Source: Cottey, A., & Forster, A. *Reshaping defence diplomacy: New roles for military cooperation and assistance*. Adelphi Paper No. 365, London: Routledge for IISS, 2004.

Despite these potentials of defence diplomacy, scholars have generally hesitated to give enough credit to any Southeast Asian security initiatives. Not only because the region itself is very diverse and the role of ASEAN as the sole regional institution seems rather limited, but also because there is no major power in the region and that extra-regional powers such as China, the United States, Japan, India and others have all shaped the region more than its own members. This is perhaps why most scholars previously seem to consider Southeast Asian security policies as more reactive than proactive; responding to major power policies more than initiating actions.<sup>6</sup> Recently, however, Goh argued that key

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6 Simon, S. W. “Southeast Asia’s defence needs: Change or continuity?” In A. J. Tellis & M. Wills (Eds.), *Strategic Asia 2005–6: Military modernization in an era of uncertainty*. Seattle, WA: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2005, p. 271.

Southeast Asian states do have strategic preferences and have actively sought to influence the shaping of a new regional order.<sup>7</sup> In this respect, untangling the web of defence and security cooperation in Southeast Asia becomes an analytical imperative before we can argue whether regional defence diplomacy is significant and why we should explain it.

Overall, there are four major patterns of security cooperation in Southeast Asia.<sup>8</sup> The first pattern comprises multilateral defence cooperation between external powers and individual Southeast Asian states designed to address specific security concerns. The second pattern involves American-led defence and security cooperation with treaty allies, strategic partners and others in the region. The third pattern centres on Chinese-led multilateral efforts to bind ASEAN to a structure of East Asian regional security cooperation with a major focus on non-traditional security issues. The final pattern involves ASEAN-centred multilateral efforts to promote security cooperation both among its members and dialogue partners and among ARF members. For the purposes of this chapter, however, we will only focus on bilateral defence diplomacy between two Southeast Asian states—specifically between Indonesia and another country—and multilateral defence diplomacy under ASEAN and the ARF.

## MULTILATERAL DEFENCE DIPLOMACY

As recent as five years ago, one prominent scholar of Southeast Asian security affairs proclaimed that “in fact, there are no multilateral defence arrangements among Southeast Asian states”<sup>9</sup> While this may be true when one defines “multilateral defence arrangements” by NATO-like standards—e.g. joint operational command, joint institutional links—the reality is more complex. First, ASEAN was never conceived as a multilateral defence venue or as a replacement of traditional bilateral security arrangements. Second, while defence-related topics have not been discussed until recently, multilateral cooperation in transnational and non-traditional security issues has been progressing.

7 Goh, E. “Great powers and hierarchical order in Southeast Asia.” *International Security*, Vol. 32 No. 3 (Winter 2007/8), p. 119.

8 See Thayer, C. A. *Southeast Asia: Patterns of security cooperation*. Canberra: Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 2010.

9 Simon, “Southeast Asia’s defence needs”, p. 299.

Since its formation, ASEAN has established a dense network of structures at the ministerial-level downward to deal with transnational issues, including the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC), the ASEAN Chiefs of National Police (ASEANAPOL), the ASEAN Senior Officials on Drugs Matters and the ASEAN Finance Ministers Meeting.<sup>10</sup> ASEANAPOL was the longest-standing (established in 1981) multilateralism security mechanism dealing with transnational threats. Additionally, the ASEAN Ministers of Home Affairs/Interior first met as a body in December 1997 and adopted the ASEAN Declaration on Transnational Crime. But it was not until the 2006 ADMM that defence ministers began to handle those threats as well.

More importantly, the creation of the ARF in 1994 started a new “web of multilateral security interactions” between ASEAN and its partners. The ARF itself to date is best conceptualised as a mechanism for consultation between Southeast Asian states, their neighbours and other significant states in order to identify and address common security interests. In terms of regional security, three significant results are noteworthy here.<sup>11</sup> First, the ARF is predicated on the norms of behaviour stemming from the “ASEAN Way”. Consequently, the ARF has become an important vehicle in the spread of regional norms and identity sharing. Second, the ARF is the only regional institution in the world that includes the United States, Europe, China and others. This has contributed to the further consolidation of Southeast Asian states and has provided ASEAN and its neighbours with diplomatic tools to manage change peacefully. Third, while the ARF is ASEAN-driven, other member states have been allowed to make significant contributions.

Put it differently, the ARF is ASEAN’s way of pushing strategic engagement and confidence building measures (CBMs) within Southeast Asia and with its partners. To push its CBM agenda forward, the ARF has had crowded programmes of inter-sessional meetings on CBMs, Search and Rescue Co-ordination, Peacekeeping Operations, and Disaster Relief. These have developed into practical and co-operative measures, which have included, among others: (i) annual defence policy statements and the increased publication of Defence White Papers that serve to reinforce

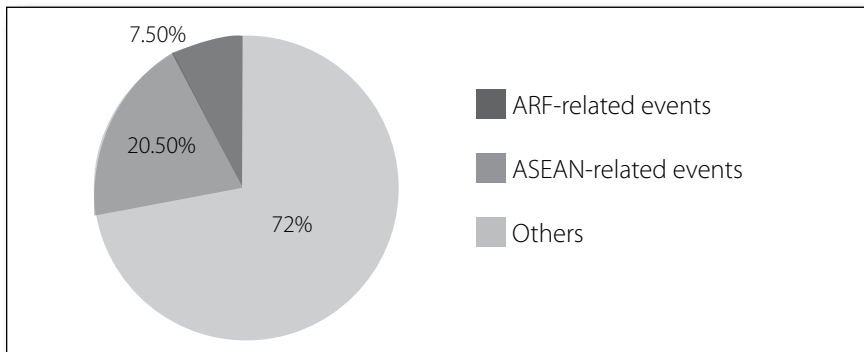
10 Thayer, *Southeast Asia: Patterns of security cooperation*, p. 22.

11 Bellamy, A. J. “Security.” In M. Beeson (Ed.), *Contemporary Southeast Asia*. Second Edition, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

transparency and openness in a region where such abstractions are not the general culture or tradition; (ii) military exchanges, including staff college training; and (iii) the growing involvement and participation of defence officials in the work and activities of the ARF.<sup>12</sup> Through its annual ministerial meetings, the Senior Officials Meetings (SOMs), inter-sessional activities, and the numerous Track 1 and Track 2 meetings, the ARF has created a series of networks that form “social capital”, a stock of trust, and ease and comfort.

Indeed, as time passes, the ARF has dominated the multilateral security activities of ASEAN member states more than the group’s own activities. This includes the ARF ministerial meeting, ARF Senior Officials’ Meeting (ARF SOM), ARF Inter-Sessional Group on Confidence Building Measures (ARF-ISG-CBMs), ARF Security Policy Conference (ASPC), and the ARF Defence Officials’ Dialogue (ARF DOD). Out of 177 events since 1994 until 2009, ARF-related events consist of the majority (72 per cent) of Southeast Asia’s multilateral defence diplomatic events (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1  
Southeast Asia’s multilateral defence diplomacy venues



Source: Indonesian Foreign Ministry, ASEAN Secretariat.

Among the most significant ARF-related defence diplomacy is the defence officials’ dialogues that has regularly been held after the endorse-

12 See Caballero-Anthony, M. “Partnership for peace in Asia: ASEAN, the ARF, and the United Nations.” *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Vol. 24 No. 3 (2002), p. 536.



ment of a concept paper on ARF Defence Dialogue in 2002.<sup>13</sup> This gathering appears to provide an opportunity for defence officials to exchange views on regional security and defence outlook and to discuss issues of mutual concern. It is also worth mentioning that the Beijing-initiated ARF Security Policy Conference (held simultaneously as the ARF SOM), involving senior defence and security officials, also has significant implications for regional security building. The concern is of course that the idea and support came from Beijing.

That said, the ARF appears just like ASEAN before it seems to have been making more headway with non-traditional security issues. In 2002, the ARF established an Inter-Sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism (CT) and Transnational Crime, which developed a multi-faceted and far-reaching work plan that spawned numerous practical CT proposals.<sup>14</sup> In 2005, following the 2004 Tsunami, the ARF reinstated the Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief. The ARF also approved the ARF Statement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response, adopted the ARF General Guidelines on Disaster Relief Cooperation and is currently drafting the ARF Disaster Relief Standard Operating Procedures. In 2009, the ARF approved two new working groups—the Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security, and the Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament.<sup>15</sup>

Meanwhile, the second largest multilateral venue for Southeast Asian defence diplomacy is ASEAN-related events. On average, between 2000 and 2009, ASEAN, formally and informally, organised 15 meetings a year to address traditional and non-traditional security challenges (see Figure 2).<sup>16</sup> This includes the ADMM and ACDFIM. Indonesian defence officials have also been involved in the annual ASEAN Special Senior Officials' Meeting (ASEAN Special SOM), ASEAN Chiefs of Army Multilateral

13 Capie, D., & Taylor, B. "The Shangri-La Dialogue and the institutionalization of defence diplomacy in Asia." *The Pacific Review*, Vol. 23 No. 3 (2010), p. 372.

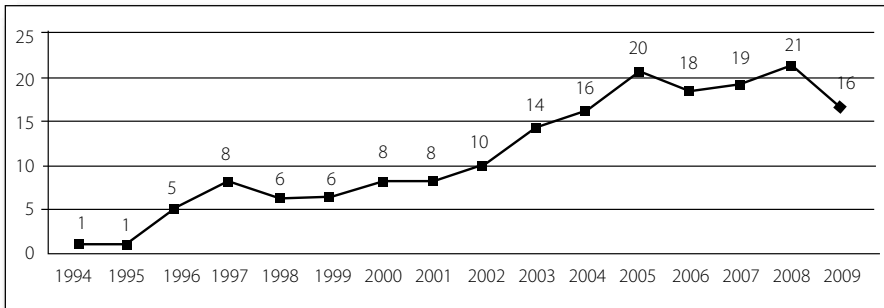
14 Thayer, *Southeast Asia: Patterns of security cooperation*, p. 28.

15 See Indonesian Foreign Ministry Website, "2nd ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security held in Auckland", accessed on 20 September 2010 at [www.deplu.go.id/Pages/Embassies.aspx?IDP=1497&l=en](http://www.deplu.go.id/Pages/Embassies.aspx?IDP=1497&l=en).

16 It should be noted, however, that given the spotty recordings of some of the informal meetings, at least in the early to mid-2000s, the dataset is yet to be fully completed. Figures cited in this chapter represent around 95 per cent of all the events noted by the media or ASEAN countries.

Meeting, ASEAN Navy Interaction, ASEAN Air Force Chiefs Conference, ASEAN Military Intelligence Meeting, and ASEAN Armies Rifles Meet.<sup>17</sup>

FIGURE 2  
Southeast Asian multilateral defence diplomacy



Source: Indonesian Foreign Ministry, ASEAN Secretariat.

This flurry of regional multilateral security seems to have been spawned by the 1996 Asian financial crisis that threw Southeast Asia's chemistry out of balance.<sup>18</sup> As such, Southeast Asian countries have appeared to be more willing to engage in formal and informal multilateral meetings to discuss the region's current and future strategic challenges, from disaster relief to terrorism. Indeed, the first security dialogue at the ASEAN-level began in 1996 at the annual ASEAN Special SOM, which brought together ASEAN defence officials and their foreign affairs counterparts.<sup>19</sup> In 2000, the ASEAN Chiefs of Army began meeting informally, followed by other service chiefs and heads of intelligence. Senior intelligence officials from Malaysia, the Philippines, Brunei, Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia met multilaterally for the first time in May 2000 in Bangkok to exchange information on regional security and regularise the meetings as an annual event.<sup>20</sup>

17 The Rifles Meet was apparently the earliest ASEAN-wide defence related activities (established in 1991).

18 Vatikiotis, M. "Indonesia's revived role in world affairs." *New Straits Times*, 2 November 2004.

19 Thayer, *Southeast Asia: Patterns of security cooperation*, p. 24.

20 Karniol, R. "Meeting sets up wider exchange of intelligence." *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 24 May 2000.

After the goal of creating an ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) came about in 2003, ACDFIM came into the fray—though it remains not yet under the official ASEAN structure. The APSC also led to the ASEAN Security Community Plan of Action that called for increased cooperation in the following areas: political development (peaceful settlement of intra-regional differences, promotion of human rights); shaping and sharing norms (code of conduct in the South China Sea); conflict prevention (greater transparency through CBMs, more military-to-military interaction, regional arms register); and post-conflict peace-building (humanitarian crisis centre, educational exchanges).<sup>21</sup>

Out of all these activities, the ADMM (and recently, ADMM+8) has been seen as the most significant development. Originating in the 2003 Indonesian proposal for an ASEAN Security Community, the 38th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in July 2005 eventually agreed to convene the ADMM for the first time in 2006 at Kuala Lumpur. While it is perhaps too early to fully assess the full extent of its impact, the ADMM is supposed to provide a much needed platform for open and constructive dialogue on strategic issues at the ministerial level as well as a platform to promote practical cooperation among the ASEAN armed forces.<sup>22</sup> The ADMM is supposed to strengthen defence and security cooperation on three levels: (i) promoting practical cooperation at the operational level among ASEAN militaries through a rolling two-year work plan drawn up by the ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces, (ii) ASEAN's engagement with non-ASEAN countries in non-traditional and trans-boundary issues, and (iii) reinforce ASEAN's centrality in Southeast Asia's security architecture.<sup>23</sup>

Nevertheless, ASEAN-related events, though largely informal in nature, have been considered a step forward in improving regional confidence-building measures. Indeed, according to Indonesia's former Minister of Defence, ASEAN's multilateralism and regional community building have allowed the creation of a "strategic space" needed to boost domestic economic and political development while accommodating the

21 For more details, see *ASEAN Secretariat Website*, "ASEAN Security Community Plan of Action", accessed on 27 September 2010 at [www.aseansec.org/16826.htm](http://www.aseansec.org/16826.htm).

22 Cited from Capie & Taylor, "The Shangri-La Dialogue", p. 372.

23 Thayer, *Southeast Asia: Patterns of security cooperation*, p. 25.

interests of extra-regional powers.<sup>24</sup> This implies the need for Indonesia to sustain their multilateral engagement of extra-regional powerhouses like China, and recently, Russia and the United States. Also, at the same time, it reflects the realisation on the part of policymakers that, given the region's changing strategic environment, there is a need to engage regional neighbours in difficult security issues—in a gradual, manageable way; hence, the informal nature of many of the ASEAN or ARF security and defence-related meetings.

## BILATERAL DEFENCE DIPLOMACY

Scholars of Southeast Asian international relations have generally agreed that multilateral defence or military interactions were “regarded with suspicion”, while bilateral ones focusing on specific, functional problems are the most effective form of regional security cooperation.<sup>25</sup> One scholar dubbed this as ASEAN's “spider web defence bilateralism” which consists of intelligence sharing, joint exercises and training activities, and others.<sup>26</sup> Bilateral military exercises, for example, take place between Indonesia and Thailand, the Philippines and Malaysia, Malaysia and Brunei, Singapore and Brunei, and Thailand and Brunei.

For Indonesia meanwhile, there are three types of bilateral defence diplomacy: (i) defence diplomacy for confidence-building measures, (ii) defence diplomacy for defence capabilities enhancement, and (iii) defence diplomacy for defence industrial development.<sup>27</sup> The term “defence diplomacy” itself implies that the leading agency in the events or activities were the military (TNI) or Ministry of Defence (MoD)—suggesting once again

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24 Sudarsono, J. “Indonesia, the region, and the world.” Summary of presentation to the U.S. Department of Defence Capstone Exercise, Jakarta, 11 August 2010.

25 Capie & Taylor, “The Shangri-La Dialogue”, p. 360; Simon, S. “Southeast Asian international relations: Is there institutional traction?” In N. Ganesan & R. Amer (Eds.), *International relations in Southeast Asia: Between bilateralism and multilateralism*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2010, p. 55.

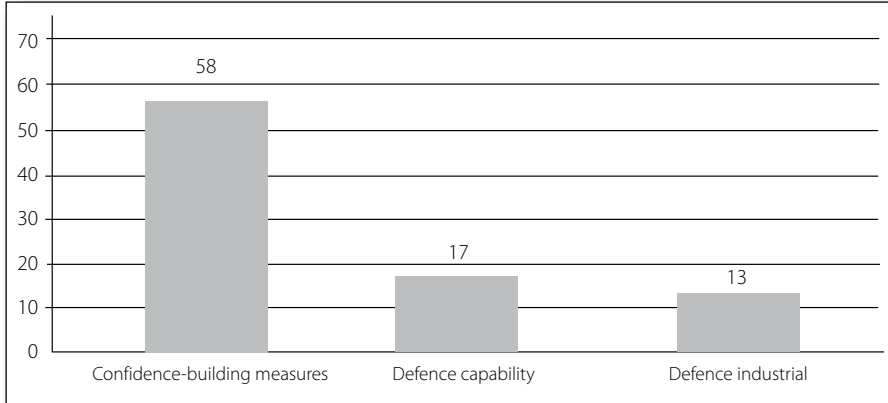
26 See Acharya, A. “Regional institutions and Asian security order: Norms, power, and prospects for peaceful change.” In M. Alagappa (Ed.), *Asian security order: Instrumental and normative features*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003, p. 221.

27 Adapted from Syawfi, I. *Aktifitas diplomasi pertahanan Indonesia dalam pemenuhan tujuan-tujuan pertahanan Indonesia (2003–2008)*. Master's thesis, University of Indonesia, 2009.

the crucial role of the military (who dominates MoD positions as well) in shaping Indonesia's foreign policy and global clout. CBMs usually include state visits, dialogues and consultations, information sharing, strategic partnerships, officer exchanges, and joint-military exercises. Meanwhile, defence diplomacy for defence capabilities generally includes military assistance, weapons procurements, acquisitions line of credit, and so forth. Defence diplomacy for defence industrial development generally includes transfer of technology, research and development (R&D) cooperation, investment in joint ventures, and so forth.

Between 2003 and 2008, Indonesia has conducted 88 defence diplomacy activities (see Figure 3), the majority of which were designed for CBMs.<sup>28</sup> In total, Indonesia also engaged 32 countries in its defence diplomacy; the top 10 being the country's most crucial security partners and potential rivals. When we consider the fact that over the past decade following Suharto's downfall, the Indonesian government has yet to be

FIGURE 3  
Indonesia's bilateral defence diplomacy (2003–2008)



Source: Syawfi, I. *Aktifitas diplomasi pertahanan Indonesia dalam pemenuhan tujuan-tujuan pertahanan Indonesia, 2003–2008*. University of Indonesia, 2009.

able to fulfil the defence requirements asked by TNI, it is only natural

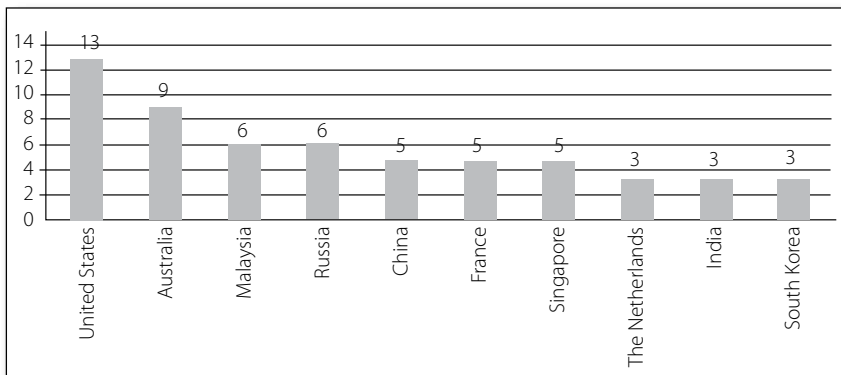
28 Indonesia's bilateral defence diplomacy figures are adapted from Syawfi, *Aktifitas diplomasi pertahanan Indonesia*.

that defence diplomacy becomes the “first line of defence”. Specifically, defence diplomacy is more oriented towards building a more amicable working relationship with partners and rivals so as to prevent major conflicts from erupting in the future—at least in theory.

The composition of the countries that Indonesia has been engaged with (see Figure 4) also suggests the growing need for the country to reduce its security dependence and diversify its strategic partners. The United States, Australia and China represent the big major powers that Indonesia is most concerned with. The United States and China had both in the past threatened the country’s domestic stability and territorial integrity, while Australia had the unfortunate label as the country that led the UN peacekeeping force in East Timor in 1999. These countries however, along with Russia, France, South Korea and the Netherlands, are also Indonesia’s biggest source—in the past and perhaps in the future—of main weapons systems and platforms. Apart from the various bilateral defence diplomacy activities with these powers, Indonesia has also signed strategic partnership agreements with nearly all of them.

Meanwhile, Singapore and Malaysia represents the country’s closest neighbour and potential rival—partly because Indonesia often had acrimonious relations with the two over various issues and partly because of historical reasons during the infamous “Confrontation” of the 1960s that

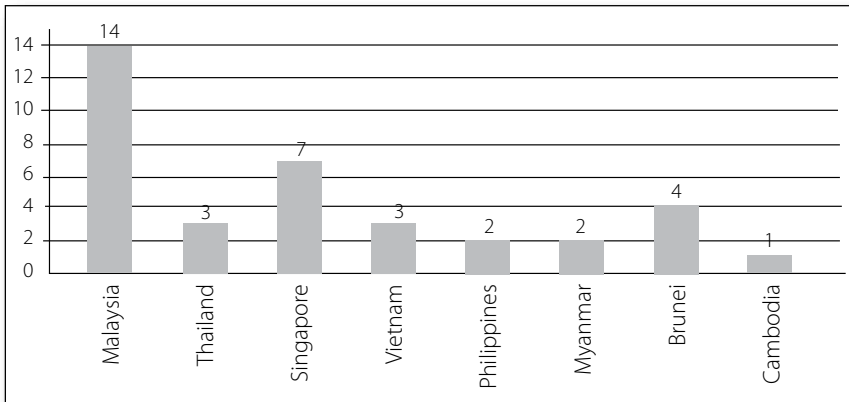
FIGURE 4  
RI’s top 10 targets for defence diplomacy (2003–2008)



Source: Syawfi, I. *Aktifitas diplomasi pertahanan Indonesia dalam pemenuhan tujuan-tujuan pertahanan Indonesia, 2003–2008*. University of Indonesia, 2009.

saw Indonesia rallying against the destruction of the two countries.<sup>29</sup> This also highlights the role of Indonesia's defence diplomacy in safeguarding the country's territorial integrity while simultaneously ensuring regional security in Southeast Asia. Aside from Singapore and Malaysia, Indonesia conducted bilateral defence diplomacy with nearly all Southeast Asian countries (see Figure 5).

FIGURE 5  
Bilateral amity events, RI–Southeast Asia (2003–2008)



Source: Syawfi, I. *Aktifitas diplomasi pertahanan Indonesia dalam pemenuhan tujuan-tujuan pertahanan Indonesia, 2003–2008*. University of Indonesia, 2009.

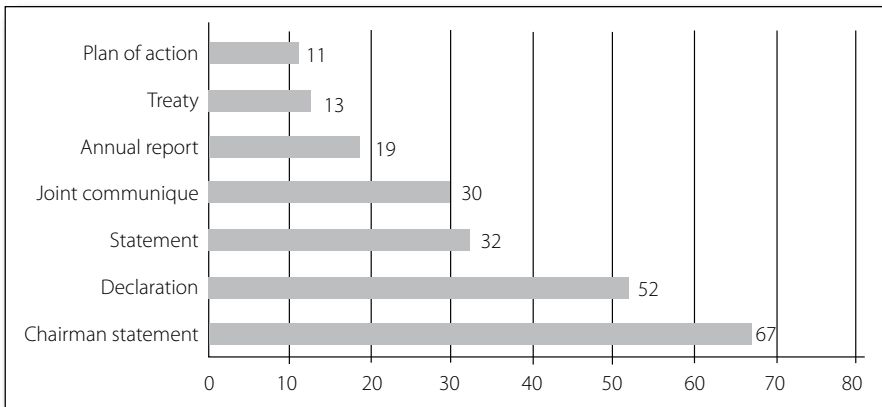
The above analysis and data suggest that Indonesia's bilateral defence diplomacy is: (i) mainly focused in increasing regional stability through confidence-building measures, and (ii) targeted at a select few of the most important regional neighbours (Singapore, Brunei and Malaysia) and the biggest powerhouses (the United States, China, India, Australia and Russia) seen to be crucial in safeguarding the country's territorial and national integrity, and potential suppliers of domestic weapons systems.

29 For details on Indonesia's "Confrontation" with Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei, see Mackie, J. A. C. *Konfrontasi: The Indonesia-Malaysia dispute, 1963–1966*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1974; Jones, M. *Conflict and confrontation in Southeast Asia: Britain, the United States, Indonesia and the creation of Malaysia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

## THE FOCUS OF DEFENCE DIPLOMACY

A good indicator of the kinds of topics and issues that ASEAN and its related institutions wish to address through multilateral defence diplomacy lies in the focus or orientation of the produced documents. In total, a recent study by the University of Indonesia shows that from 1967 to 2009, ASEAN and its related institutions produced over 270 documents; mainly in the forms of Declarations, Joint Communiqués, Chairman Statements, Statements, Plans of Action, Annual Reports, and others (see Figure 6).<sup>30</sup>

FIGURE 6  
Majority types of ASEAN documents (1967–2009)



Source: Widjajanto, A., Prasetyono, E., & Syawfi, I. *Penguatan komunitas keamanan ASEAN untuk menopang integrasi nasional Indonesia*. Jakarta: University of Indonesia, 2009.

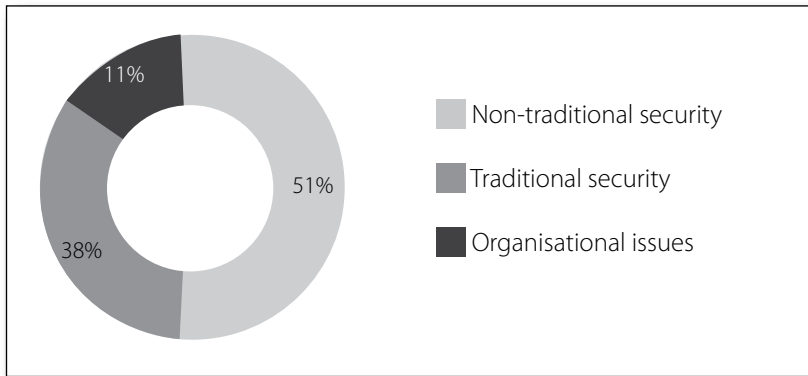
Furthermore, the same study notes that a majority of the documents produced consist mainly of non-traditional security issues (51 per cent) with 136 documents, while not neglecting traditional and organisational matters (see Figure 7). Also, from those documents produced that dealt with non-traditional security issues, ASEAN appears to be focusing primarily on issues of development, conflict

30 See Widjajanto, A., Prasetyono, E., & Syawfi, I. *Penguatan komunitas keamanan ASEAN untuk menopang integrasi nasional Indonesia*. Jakarta: University of Indonesia, 2009.



resolution and human security affairs. It should be noted though that non-traditional security issues would only take shape more explicitly in the regional discourse by the 1990s.

FIGURE 7  
Focus of ASEAN documents (security issues), 1967–2009



Source: Widjajanto, A., Prasetyono, E., & Syawfi, I. *Penguatan komunitas keamanan ASEAN untuk menopang integrasi nasional Indonesia*. Jakarta: University of Indonesia, 2009.

It is also interesting to note that the focus on non-traditional security issues coincides with the expansion of ASEAN and its related institutions such as the ARF, ASEAN-Plus 1, ASEAN-Plus 3, and others. This could indicate the realisation among policymakers in Southeast Asian countries that engaging extra-regional powers such as China, Russia, India, Japan, and others would be extremely difficult had ASEAN immediately focused on traditional security issues through formal multilateralism. Indeed, when it comes to engaging China, a recent study noted that ASEAN's cooperation with Beijing in non-traditional security issues creates political partnership and a sub-regional security complex, and when viewed in tandem with the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area, may be part of the most advanced and comprehensive working model of regionalism in East Asia.<sup>31</sup>

31 See Arase, D. "Non-traditional security in China-ASEAN cooperation: The institutionalization of regional security cooperation and the evolution of East Asian regionalism." *Asian Survey*, Vol. 50 No. 4 (2010), pp. 808–833.

## CONCLUSION

Our preceding analysis highlights several key trends regarding ASEAN's multilateral defence diplomacy. First, while ASEAN was not originally conceived as a purely defence and security institution, the advent of the ARF has expanded the group's security cooperation and relation. This could be interpreted as a logical consequence of moving beyond ASEAN's borders and engaging extra-regional powers such as China, Japan, India, and others in an effort to build deeper relations. In fact, the ARF has taken up the majority of ASEAN's multilateral defence diplomacy.

Second, due to the arrival of the ARF and the expansion of ASEAN's security relations beyond its borders, our previous analysis has shown that this has brought non-traditional security issues into more prominence in regional discourse of security cooperation. Although upon closer look, this discourse mainly reflects non-legally binding declarations and statements. Furthermore, when we consider the fact that ASEAN's multilateral defence diplomacy also consists of informal meetings (primarily involving military officers), it is not farfetched to argue that the trend in Southeast Asian multilateral defence diplomacy seems to be heading or geared towards a norms-based community. This could be seen in a "half full half empty" lens—it could be a good thing for the region as it might shape a common identity, or it could be a bad thing as it means nothing more than a "talk shop".

Meanwhile, regarding bilateral defence diplomacy, the case of Indonesia's relations suggests several patterns as well. First, the focus of bilateral defence diplomacy in recent years remains focused on confidence-building measures—though defence industrial development is increasingly following suit. Second, bilateral defence diplomacy is still discriminate in that it focuses on a select key states—primarily, the closest neighbouring countries and extra-regional powerhouses such as China, the United States, India, Japan and South Korea. Third, while multilateral defence diplomacy is increasing in frequency in Southeast Asia, the significance of the previously established web of bilateral defence relations will not likely diminish any time soon; especially for countries preoccupied with internal threat and which possess an acrimonious history with its neighbours.

Finally, in terms of the issues of focus in Southeast Asia's defence diplomacy, it appears that on the multilateral front—that expanded

beyond the region with the arrival of the ARF—non-traditional security issues are more prominent in the past decade or so, while on the bilateral front, traditional issues of defence cooperation is still a mainstay. This could suggest that Southeast Asian countries tend to leave “less significant” non-traditional security issues to multilateralism—which is also more convenient in terms of engaging extra-regional powerhouses—while critical traditional security issues are handled or addressed through bilateral defence relations. Furthermore, as multilateral defence diplomacy seems more manifested in regional non-binding discourses, while bilateral defence diplomacy is more “concrete”, new initiatives such as the ADMM and ADMM-Plus need to be further developed and institutionalised.

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## CHINA'S DEFENCE DIPLOMACY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Ian Storey

Compared to the extensive political and economic ties between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the 11 states of Southeast Asia, bilateral defence linkages are not nearly as well developed.<sup>1</sup> Several factors account for this situation. Since the end of the Cold War, China has been very cautious about pursuing closer defence cooperation with regional states, partly because it does not wish to appear to be siding with one country against another, and partly because familiarity allows foreign militaries to understand the limitations of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Southeast Asian countries have also exhibited caution. Close defence ties are invariably predicated on high levels of trust, and despite more than two decades of "engagement" with the PRC, Southeast Asian countries, to varying degrees, still harbour concerns about China's rising power. Foremost among these concerns are the rapid modernisation of the PLA and Beijing's cyclical assertiveness in the South China Sea.<sup>2</sup> Practical issues have also stood in the way of closer military-to-military ties, including lack of interoperability, language barriers and the absence of framework agreements.

Since the mid-2000s, however, this picture has begun to change as defence cooperation between China and Southeast Asian countries have stepped up a gear. More extensive defence ties have been facilitated by agreements between China and all 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to broaden and deepen bilateral rela-

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- 1 In this chapter, Southeast Asia is defined as the 10 members of ASEAN (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) and East Timor.
  - 2 Schofield, C., & Storey, I. *The South China Sea dispute: Increasing stakes and rising tensions*. Washington, D.C.: The Jamestown Foundation, November 2009.

tions. In addition, China has been much more proactive in its regional defence diplomacy for four main reasons. First, dialogue between defence officials from the PRC and Southeast Asian countries has not only provided Beijing with an additional platform to push its “peaceful development” thesis in an attempt to assuage regional security concerns, but also to gain a better understanding of the security perspectives of neighbouring countries. Second, PLA participation in combined training and exercises provides it with insights into the doctrine, tactics and capabilities of foreign military forces. Third, while Chinese arms sales to the region generate revenue, more importantly they enhance Beijing’s political influence in buyer countries. Fourth, military assistance programmes have been utilised to offset Southeast Asian countries’ existing defence relations with other external powers, specifically the United States. The purpose of this chapter is to explore China’s defence diplomacy in Southeast Asia over the past decade, identifying both progress and barriers to future cooperation.

### CHINA’S DEFENCE DIPLOMACY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

While China’s participation in ASEAN-led security forums such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) is an important aspect of the country’s defence diplomacy, when it comes to defence cooperation, the “heavy lifting” occurs at the bilateral level. Indeed, it has always been thus with the PRC. During the Cold War, China provided military aid to several countries in Southeast Asia, as well as regional communist parties, in pursuit of geopolitical and ideological goals. This included China’s massive support to North Vietnam during the First and Second Indochinese Wars (1946–1954, 1964–1975), military aid to Cambodia’s Khmer Rouge during the 1970s and 1980s, and the sale of military equipment at “friendship prices” to Thailand in the 1980s.<sup>3</sup> In the 1990s, China established close military ties with Myanmar and Cambodia, but otherwise its defence diplomacy in Southeast Asia was limited to high-level military exchanges and occasional port calls. Since the early 2000s, however, China has not only expanded defence cooperation to all 10 ASEAN members, but broadened it beyond arms sales to include

3 See Storey, I. *Southeast Asia and the rise of China: The search for security*. London: Routledge, 2011.

a range of activities including regular dialogue, educational exchanges, combined exercises and discussions on defence industry collaboration.

Agreement to pursue closer defence relations was reached in a series of joint statements signed by each ASEAN member and the PRC between 1999 and 2000. The purpose of these agreements was to strengthen bilateral cooperation across a wide range of areas, including military-to-military relations. Subsequent Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and other agreements between China and Southeast Asian countries have sought to operationalise the commitments made in these joint statements. The following sections examine defence cooperation between China and Southeast Asian states in five key areas: annual defence and security consultations; combined training and exercises; arms sales and military assistance; defence technology cooperation; and port calls.

## ANNUAL DEFENCE AND SECURITY CONSULTATIONS

China and the countries of Southeast Asia exchanged high-level civilian and military defence delegations on a regular basis throughout the 1990s. But while these exchanges provided useful opportunities to discuss regional security issues and future defence cooperation, military-to-military relations were essentially conducted on an ad hoc basis. An important development in China's regional defence diplomacy since 2000 has been the establishment of annual defence and security consultations between the PRC and five ASEAN countries. These forums have provided an essential mechanism to exchange views on the regional security environment and advance cooperation in five main areas: arms sales and defence industry collaboration; observance of each other's exercises; educational exchanges; port calls; and planning for combined training and exercises.

The first Southeast Asian country China initiated defence and security consultations was Thailand, a reflection of the close relationship between the two countries forged since the mid-1980s. The talks, held on an annual basis since 2001, have facilitated the development of Sino-Thai defence links, including a series of combined exercises (elaborated later in the article). Vietnam became the second Southeast Asian country to establish annual defence talks with China in April 2005, followed by

the Philippines in May 2005.<sup>4</sup> Indonesia and China began their yearly defence consultations in May 2006, followed by Singapore and China in January 2008.<sup>5</sup> To date, however, China has not instituted a regular defence dialogue with Malaysia, Brunei, Myanmar, Cambodia and East Timor, a curious situation as Beijing enjoys close political and economic times with each of these countries except for Brunei.

## ARMS SALES AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE

China's domestic arms industry has undergone rapid expansion over the past two decades, and commercial gain has become a more prominent factor in foreign arms sales. Overall, however, China's defence sales to Southeast Asia continue to be motivated primarily by political interests.

The PRC is not a major player in the global defence industry. According to the Congressional Research Service, during 2000–2003, China's overseas defence sales totalled US\$3.164 billion, or a mere 2.1 per cent of all arms transfer agreements worldwide, rising to US\$9.383 billion in 2004–2007 or 4.5 per cent, making it the fifth in global arms sales.<sup>6</sup> China's position was, however, dwarfed by the two biggest players, the United States and Russia: in 2004–2007, for instance, the United States accounted for 33 per cent of arms transfers (US\$68.89 billion) and Russia 19.7 per cent (US\$40.94 billion).<sup>7</sup> Unlike the United States and Russia, PRC arms exports have been limited to a narrow range of equipment, primarily tanks and self-propelled guns, artillery pieces, armoured personnel carriers, patrol boats, combat aircraft, and surface-to-air and anti-ship missiles.<sup>8</sup>

4 "Participation in security consultations (2005–2006)." Appendix III, China's National Defence in 2006, available at [www.china.org.cn/english/features/book/194421.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/book/194421.htm); "RP, China hold first defence talks, agree on cooperation." *The Philippine Star*, 24 May 2005.

5 "Indonesia to explore defence industry cooperation with China." *Tempo*, 12 May 2006; Permanent Secretary (Defence) signs agreement on defence exchanges and security cooperation in China at Inaugural Defence Policy Dialogue, MINDEF Press Release, 7 January 2008.

6 Grimmet, R. F. "Conventional arms transfers to developing nations, 2000–2007." *CRS report for Congress*, Washington, D.C., 23 October 2008, pp. 25 & 28.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

China's arms sales to Southeast Asia in the 2000s were very limited. SIPRI estimates that in 2000–2009, Chinese defence sales to Southeast Asia totalled only US\$316 million, of which 60 per cent went to Myanmar.<sup>9</sup> During the same period, Russia's arms sales to Southeast Asia totalled US\$3.298 billion and America's US\$3.196 billion.<sup>10</sup>

Why have PRC arms sales to the region been so limited? A major factor is the quality of Chinese manufactured equipment. For hardware such as military vehicles, artillery and small arms, Chinese manufactured equipment is serviceable, especially for the less developed countries of Southeast Asia. For more advanced, high-technology weapons, however, China is unable to compete with the defence industries of the United States, Europe and Russia. The latter in particular has established itself as a major supplier of armaments to developing countries in Asia. Two of Russia's biggest customers in Asia are India and China, but Moscow has also signed major arms transfer agreements with Vietnam, Indonesia, Myanmar, Cambodia and Malaysia. Many Chinese-manufactured weapons systems are based on Soviet-era designs and hence are not cutting edge. Moreover, military equipment manufactured in the PRC has a poor reputation for quality, durability and after sales service such as the provision of spare parts, ordinance and upgrades.

An additional factor is that for some countries, arms purchases from China posit a strategic vulnerability, particularly for Southeast Asian states which are engaged in territorial disputes with the PRC in the South China Sea, namely Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines and Brunei. None of these countries have strong defence relationships with the PRC, and in virtually all cases their defence acquisitions programmes have been partly driven by the territorial dispute. So long as the dispute remains unresolved—and the possibility of conflict cannot be ruled out—major Chinese weapons sales to these four countries remain a distant prospect.

Notwithstanding quality issues and political sensitivities, the PRC has made limited inroads into the Southeast Asian defence market. Thailand bought rocket propelled grenade launchers from China in 2001 and in 2002 placed a US\$98 million order for two Thai-designed Offshore Patrol

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9 SIPRI Arms Transfer Database, available at [armstrade.sipri.org/arms\\_trade/values.php](http://armstrade.sipri.org/arms_trade/values.php).

10 Ibid.



Vessels (OPVs), which were delivered three years later.<sup>11</sup> China sold YJ-82/C-802 anti-ship missiles to Indonesia in 2005 (US\$11 million) and to Thailand in 2007 (US\$48 million). In 2004, Malaysia ordered 18 FN-6 MANPAD shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles, which were delivered five years later.<sup>12</sup> However, China has failed to achieve follow-on orders with any of these countries.

Financial gain does not seem to have been a motivating factor, suggesting that China has used arms sales to Southeast Asia as an instrument of foreign policy in pursuit of three interlinked goals: first, to assist friendly governments consolidate power; second, to increase Chinese influence in the region; and third, to drive a wedge between regional states and traditional defence partners. China has become a favoured vendor of defence equipment by countries facing arms embargoes or with very limited financial resources; these countries are willing to trade quality for lower cost. China has transferred defence equipment to ASEAN states at significant discounts or at cost, often using military aid grants. China has also accepted barter trade, though this mode of transaction is becoming increasingly less common. In general, armaments and equipment supplied by the PRC have been those of low technology, based on older designs and small or light weapons. The exception has been missile technology, an area in which China has established an international reputation.

In the 1990s, China provided military aid to bolster the governments of Myanmar and Cambodia. SIPRI estimates the total value of Chinese defence equipment delivered to Myanmar between 1989 and 2008 at US\$1.757 billion, although a definitive figure is difficult to arrive at because of the opaque nature of Sino-Myanmar defence links.<sup>13</sup> Military aid from the PRC enabled the junta to maintain internal security and deter the perceived danger of foreign aggression.<sup>14</sup> Since 2000, however,

11 "China unveils new patrol vessel for Thailand." *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 24 December 2003.

12 "Malaysia to buy Chinese missiles for technology transfer." *Channelnewsasia.com*, 20 July 2004.

13 SIPRI Arms Transfer Database, available at [armstrade.sipri.org/arms\\_trade/values.php](http://armstrade.sipri.org/arms_trade/values.php).

14 See Selth, A. "Even paranoids have enemies: Cyclone Nargis and Myanmar's fears of invasion." *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Vol. 30 No. 3 (December 2008), pp. 379–402.

transfers of Chinese military equipment to Myanmar have slowed considerably: US\$164 million in 2000–2008, compared with US\$1.594 billion in 1989–1999.<sup>15</sup> This reflects the Myanmar government's desire to reduce dependence on the PRC by diversifying the sources of its defence acquisitions to include countries such as Russia and North Korea, but is also due to a reduction in purchases of foreign arms as a whole.

PRC military aid also helped Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen consolidate power after the 1997 coup. In the wake of the coup, Western countries suspended aid to Cambodia: China stepped in with a US\$10 million soft loan to Cambodia, US\$2.8 million of which was used to purchase military vehicles and small arms from the PRC, hardware that was used to equip units of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) loyal to Hun Sen.<sup>16</sup> Subsequently, China provided financial support to the RCAF for demobilisation, construction materials for military barracks, schools and hospitals, and the refurbishment of the Khmer Rouge era Kampong Chhnang airfield.<sup>17</sup> The PRC has also helped the Royal Cambodian Navy (RCN) to significantly improve its capabilities. Since 2005, the PRC has provided soft loans for the acquisition of 15 patrol boats for the RCN; the nine patrol boats delivered in 2007 were reportedly valued at US\$60 million.<sup>18</sup> The vessels will be used to protect Cambodia's maritime resources, including offshore energy fields in the Gulf of Thailand which Chinese state-owned energy companies are interested in gaining exclusive rights to.<sup>19</sup>

Defence diplomacy has also played an important role in China's overtures towards East Timor. Since the late 2000s, the PRC has become a major player in East Timor's defence sector, rivalling traditional donors such as Australia and Portugal. In 2008, Beijing agreed to finance the construction of office complexes for the Ministry of Defence and Security and the headquarters of the Falintil-Forças Defesa Timor Leste (F-FDTL),

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15 SIPRI Arms Transfer Database, available at [armstrade.sipri.org/arms\\_trade/values.php](http://armstrade.sipri.org/arms_trade/values.php).

16 Author interview with U.S. diplomats, Phnom Penh, August 2004.

17 Ibid.

18 "Chinese shipbuilding company delivers marine equipment to Cambodia." *Xinhua News Agency*, 7 November 2007.

19 "Cambodia says Asian, European countries are flocking to the country in search of oil." *Associated Press*, 16 January 2007.

estimated to cost US\$6 million.<sup>20</sup> A year earlier, Dili had signed its first major contract with a PRC defence vendor for the supply of eight jeeps mounted with machine guns. This was followed in April 2008 by the government's largest defence contract to date: a US\$25 million contract with Poly Technologies, a Chinese company with close links to the PLA, to buy two modified 175-metre *Shanghai*-class patrol boats.<sup>21</sup> Included in the contract was the provision to train 30–40 F-FDTL personnel in China and construction of a small landing dock on the country's south coast. The agreement provoked criticism in East Timor because of the lack of transparency surrounding the deal. The suitability of the vessels was also called into question due to East Timor's rough seas and tropical conditions, neither of which the boats were designed for. Corruption may have played a part in the deal. Nevertheless, the contract significantly raises China's defence profile in East Timor. The patrol boats were delivered to East Timor on 20 May 2010, the country's independence day.

China has also attempted to utilise military aid to drive a wedge between America and its two key allies in Southeast Asia, the Philippines and Thailand, though with limited success. Both countries strengthened their defence relations with Washington following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. But when differences arose between the allies, China stepped in to exploit the situation. In July 2004, Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo withdrew a small contingent of military personnel from Iraq, resulting in a sharp but temporary downturn in U.S.-Philippine relations. Arroyo's decision was followed by a flurry of high-level visits between Chinese and Philippine officials, including a trip to Beijing by President Arroyo in September 2004 during which the two sides agreed to establish annual defence talks. At the inaugural talks in 2005, the PRC offered to donate to the Philippine armed forces US\$1.2 million in heavy engineering equipment. The equipment, consisting of six bulldozers and six road graders, was delivered in January 2006.<sup>22</sup> Admittedly, the size of China's military aid to the Philippines was very small, but it represented an important step after over a decade of strained relations over conflicting territorial claims in the South China Sea. How-

20 Ibid.

21 "Alarm grows at China's influence in East Timor." *The Australian*, 16 April 2008.

22 "China hands over free equipment to Philippine military." *People's Daily*, 23 January 2006.

ever, U.S.-Philippine relations quickly recovered and Sino-Philippines ties soon soured over rising tensions in the South China Sea.

In 2006, China used a similar tactic with Thailand. Following the ouster of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra on 19 September 2006, the United States was obliged to suspend all military aid to Thailand because a democratically elected government had been replaced by non-democratic means. Accordingly, Washington withheld US\$24 million in military aid to Bangkok.<sup>23</sup> During a visit to Beijing by coup leader General Sonthi Boonyarataglin a few months later, the Chinese government extended US\$49 million in military credits to Thailand, double the amount suspended by Washington.<sup>24</sup> The grant aid was later used to purchase Chinese-made C-802 anti-ship missiles worth US\$48 million as part of a programme to phase out C-801 missiles used on Thai frigates.<sup>25</sup> U.S. military aid was restored to Thailand following elections in December 2007.

## DEFENCE TECHNOLOGY COOPERATION

In addition to arms sales, China has also demonstrated a willingness to engage with Southeast Asian countries in the area of defence technology cooperation. However, despite discussions with several countries, and even a series of MOUs, there has been no substantive follow through.

Indonesia and China have been discussing defence industry cooperation since the mid-2000s. Indonesia has courted China in a bid to develop an indigenous arms industry capable of producing military equipment to replace the armed forces' ageing inventory, compete in the global arms market and immunise the country from military sanctions of the kind imposed by the United States from 1991 to 2005. The 2005 Sino-Indonesian Strategic Partnership Declaration called on both countries to "promote the development of national defence industries in each other's

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23 McCargo, D. "Thailand: State of anxiety." In D. Singh & M. M. T. Tin (Eds.), *Southeast Asian Affairs 2007*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2008, p. 351.

24 Chongkittavorn, K. "Post-coup Thailand in the eyes of the U.S. and China." *The Nation*, 12 February 2007.

25 "Cabinet nod for B7.7 bn to buy arms, equipment." *Bangkok Post*, 26 September 2007.

country".<sup>26</sup> A few months later, during President Yudhoyono's visit to China, an MOU was reached on Research and Development in Defence Technology Cooperation between China's Commission of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defence and Indonesia's Office of the State Minister for Research and Technology.<sup>27</sup> At the time, Minister of Defence Juwono Sudarsono said the agreement would allow Indonesia to develop propulsion and guidance systems for short and medium range missiles which would be a cheaper alternative to jet fighters.<sup>28</sup> At the Second Indonesia-China Defence Security Consultation Talks in April 2007, a draft agreement on defence technology cooperation was signed which was formalised at a meeting of the two defence ministers in November.<sup>29</sup> In January 2008, China and Indonesia reportedly reached agreement for their state-owned defence industries to produce military transport vehicles and aircraft, with funding to be agreed at a later date.<sup>30</sup> Despite the various declarations, MOUs and agreements since 2005, no contractual agreements have been signed between Indonesia and China in defence production. According to Defence Minister Juwono, China has been reluctant to commit to investing in Indonesia's state owned defence industries because of technology transfer issues.<sup>31</sup>

Thailand has also expressed an interest in defence technology cooperation with China. The 2007 Sino-Thai Joint Action Plan called for defence industry cooperation and later in the year, Thai Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont discussed the possibility of joint weapons production with visiting Chinese Defence Minister General Cao Gangchuan.<sup>32</sup> Details were not forthcoming at the time, though there was some speculation that future defence industry cooperation might centre on missile production. To date, however, no agreement has been reached between the two countries.

26 "Full text of China-Indonesia Joint Declaration on Strategic Partnership." *Xinhua News Agency*, 26 April 2005.

27 "RI, China seal economic and defence deals." *Jakarta Post*, 29 July 2005.

28 "Jakarta in missile deal with Beijing." *Financial Times*, 1 August 2005.

29 "RI, China complete draft on defence cooperation agreement." *Antara*, 9 April 2007; "China, Indonesia sign agreement on defence cooperation." *Xinhua*, 7 November 2007.

30 "RI, China to conduct joint military training." *Jakarta Post*, 17 January 2008.

31 Author interview with Defence Minister Juwono Sudarsono, Jakarta, May 2009.

32 "China to consider Thai-proposed nuclear energy, road and rail links." *Thai News Agency*, 3 December 2007.

## COMBINED TRAINING AND EXERCISES

Combined training and exercises is a relatively new and significant development in China's defence diplomacy. Indeed, it was not until 2003—under the rubric of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)—that the PLA took part in its very first combined military exercise. Since 2003, however, China's armed forces have participated in several large-scale SCO military manoeuvres and exercises with its counterparts from Russia, India and Pakistan. These exercises have usually been dubbed as counter-terrorism exercises, despite the fact that they often employ heavy armour and ground troops, and thus have little bearing on actual anti-terrorism operations. Although China has increased the frequency and scope of combined exercises, such activities are a double-edged sword: while they enhance military-to-military relations and provide the PLA with important insights into the doctrine and operational capabilities of foreign militaries, they can also reveal weaknesses and shortcomings in its own armed forces.

Since the mid-2000s, combined training and exercises between the PLA and Southeast Asian militaries have been infrequent and modest in size. Several reasons account for this: first, the absence of bilateral framework and planning mechanisms; second, problems of interoperability and language barriers; and third, potential second-order effects on Southeast Asian countries' military relationships with other countries, especially the United States.

Among the ASEAN countries, Thailand's military-to-military relationship with China is the most advanced. Thailand and China forged close security cooperation in the 1980s, and military-to-military ties were reenergised under Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra between 2001 and 2006. The first major military activity between the two countries' armed forces was a landmine clearance exercise from September to November 2005.<sup>33</sup> During the 1990s, the PLA had gained extensive experience in mine clearance along the Sino-Vietnamese border following the normalisation of relations. In the early 2000s, China had sent de-mining experts to several African countries, but the 2005 training programme with Thailand was the first time the PLA had shared its expertise with

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33 "China helps Thailand train landmine clearance personnel." *Xinhua*, 8 September 2005.

another Asian country.<sup>34</sup> The PLA's training programme included both classroom instruction and assisting the Thai army with mine clearance operations along the Thai-Cambodia border.

The mine-clearance training programme was quickly followed by a combined naval exercise in the Gulf of Thailand in December 2005. Codenamed "China-Thailand Friendship 2005", the exercise was participated by two PLAN vessels, the guided missile destroyer *Shenzhen* and supply ship *Weishanhu*, and the Royal Thai Navy frigate *Chao Praya*. The exercise—which lasted a mere 3 hours and 20 minutes—simulated both the Chinese and Thai escorting UN-chartered ships on a humanitarian mission.<sup>35</sup> Similar exercises had been conducted with the Pakistani Navy in October 2003 and the Indian Navy in November 2003, but this was the first naval exercise between the PLAN and a Southeast Asian navy.

The 2007 Sino-Thai Joint Action Plan called on the two sides to conduct combined military exercises designed to meet non-traditional security threats. Since the action plan was signed, Chinese and Thai Special Forces have conducted three counter-terrorism exercises: "Strike 2007", a 13-day exercise in Guangzhou in July 2007 involving 15 personnel from each side; "Strike 2008", a 20-day exercise in Chiang Mai participated in by 24 Special Forces operatives from each side; and "Strike 2010", a 15-day anti-terrorism drill in Guilin in October 2010.<sup>36</sup>

"Strike 2010" was followed immediately by "Blue Assault 2010", a 20-day exercise in Sattahip, Thailand involving approximately 100 Marines from each side, the first time PLA Marines had participated in a combined exercise. China had first proposed the exercise in 2009, but Thailand had initially demurred because of its close military links to the United States: the Thai Marines take their doctrine from their U.S. counterpart, thus exposing the PLA to U.S. amphibious landing tactics. Eventually, the exercise went ahead, but without a beach assault.<sup>37</sup> The

34 Ibid.

35 "First Sino-Thai joint naval exercise held in Gulf of Thailand." *PLA Daily*, 14 December 2005.

36 "China, Thailand stage combined training of special troops." *Xinhua*, 16 July 2007; "Thai-Chinese special forces launch anti-terror combined training." *Xinhua*, 11 July 2008; "Sino-Thai military Special Forces launches joint anti-terrorism training." *People's Daily*, 11 October 2010.

37 "PLA Marine Units to conduct joint drills with Thai Marines in Thailand." *Xinhua*, 21 October 2010.

sensitivity surrounding “Blue Assault 2010” underscores how developing defence ties with the PRC cannot be viewed in isolation and that South-east Asian governments must consider the second order effects on extant military relationships, particularly with the United States.

Other than Thailand, the only other ASEAN country that has participated in military exercises with China is Singapore. Following the conclusion of the 2008 Sino-Singapore Agreement on Defence Exchanges and Security Cooperation, military personnel from the PLA and Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) conducted a small counter-terrorism exercise in June 2009 in Guilin. The nine-day exercise, dubbed “Cooperation 2009”, involved 60 military personnel from each country. The exercise simulated the management of incidents involving radiological, biological and chemical weapons.<sup>38</sup> A second counter-terrorism exercise was conducted over a nine-day period in November 2010 in Singapore.<sup>39</sup>

The scale of Sino-Singaporean military exercises is likely to remain small and focused on non-sensitive activities such as addressing transnational threats. China has little to offer in terms of training that Singapore does not already accrue through regular exercises with its counterparts from the United States, Australia and Britain. Moreover, the United States would oppose joint Singapore-China exercises in which the PLA was exposed to high-tech U.S. military equipment operated by the SAF.

## PORT CALLS

In the realm of defence diplomacy, naval ship visits are generally regarded as non-sensitive, routine and effective mediums for showing the flag and generating goodwill. China and Southeast Asian countries have been exchanging ship visits since the early 1990s, but the number of port calls increased in frequency during the first decade of the twenty-first century. A number of firsts also occurred. In November 2007, for instance, a PLAN vessel visited Ho Chi Minh City, the first visit by a Chinese navy vessel to Vietnam since the early 1970s; the Royal Malaysian Navy made its first port call in China in June 2002; and in August 2008, *RSN*

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38 “China, Singapore hold joint anti-terror training exercises.” *Xinhua*, 18 June 2009.

39 “China, Singapore conduct 2nd joint counter-terrorism exercise.” *Xinhua*, 25 November 2010.



*Steadfast* became the first Singapore navy frigate to visit the PRC.<sup>40</sup> Even though China has increased the number of port calls to Southeast Asia since 2000, they are still relatively infrequent when compared to other external powers. Singapore, for instance, plays host to over 100 ship visits by the U.S. Navy every year.

## CONCLUSION

Defence ties between China and Southeast Asian countries are presently underdeveloped when compared to political and economic relations; they are also relatively small when compared to military-security ties between individual ASEAN members and other external powers, especially the United States. Slowly but surely, however, China's profile in this area is rising. The PRC has accelerated its defence and security diplomacy in Southeast Asia since the 2000s for three main reasons: first, as part of a policy to broaden and deepen bilateral ties with the ASEAN states; second, to reassure member states that China does not present a strategic threat; third, to expand its influence across the region and counter that of other major powers such as America.

China faces hurdles and limitations. The ASEAN countries do not take China's professions of peaceful intentions at face value, and hedge against alternative futures. Increased dialogue on security issues, and enhanced interaction between the PLA and regional counterparts will help build trust, but trust does not come easily especially when the modernisation of China's armed forces lacks transparency and four ASEAN states contest sovereignty in the South China Sea. Those ASEAN members with close defence ties to the United States will also be hesitant about deepening their military ties with China. PRC arms sales to the region will also remain modest until quality and after sales services issues improve. Thus, for the foreseeable future, China's defence diplomacy in Southeast Asia is likely to make incremental gains but will remain focused on the need to enhance cooperation to tackle transnational threats and natural disasters.

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40 Thayer, C. A. "China's international security cooperation with Southeast Asia." *Australian Defence Force Journal*, No. 172 (2007); "RSN frigate calls at naval base in Shanghai." MINDEF Press Release, 26 August 2008.

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## U.S. DEFENCE DIPLOMACY TOWARDS SOUTHEAST ASIA

Richard A. Bitzinger

Nearly every major military power engages in some kind of “defence diplomacy”. While there is no universal definition of defence diplomacy, it is commonly accepted as activities involving a range of peacetime cooperation between militaries. Cottey and Forster define defence diplomacy as “the peacetime cooperative use of armed forces and related infrastructure (primarily defence ministries) as a tool of foreign and security policy”.<sup>1</sup> These policies may include the preservation of stability and security, both regionally and globally, the promotion of democracy, democratic values, and good governance, and the enhancement of international understanding and the subsequent reduction in political-military tensions and misperceptions. In particular, defence diplomacy entails the expansion of cooperative relationships not only with allies but also with former or potential adversaries and countries with whom past relations may have been strained.

Cottey and Forster lay out several initiatives that may be construed as defence diplomacy activities:

1. Bilateral and multilateral contacts between senior military defence officials
2. Appointment of defence attachés
3. Bilateral security cooperation agreements
4. Training of foreign military and civilian defence personnel
5. Provision of expertise and advice on the democratic control of armed forces, defence management, and military technical areas

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1 Cottey, A., & Forster, A. *Reshaping defence diplomacy: New roles for military cooperation and assistance*. Adelphi Paper No. 365, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 6.

6. Contacts and exchanges between military personnel and units, and ship visits
7. Placement of military or civilian personnel in partner countries' defence ministries and armed forces
8. Provision of military equipment and other material aid
9. Bilateral or multilateral military exercises for training purposes<sup>2</sup>

Using these criteria, it is evident that the United States government, and its military in particular, have long been engaged in defence diplomacy activities. Furthermore, these activities have expanded since the end of the Cold War. The United States has increased and intensified military cooperation with nations around the world—witness NATO's "Partnership for Peace" (PfP), created in 1994 to encourage military-to-military contacts with former Warsaw Pact countries. Not surprisingly, therefore, the U.S. defence diplomatic efforts regarding Southeast Asia have also expanded over the past two decades, as this region has grown in importance in U.S. strategic thinking. This chapter will briefly discuss the rationales behind U.S. defence diplomacy towards Southeast Asia and examine the many ways in which the U.S. military seeks to expand peacetime cooperative relations with regional militaries.

## **OBJECTIVES OF U.S. DEFENCE DIPLOMACY AND ORGANISATIONAL APPROACHES**

The U.S. government lays out very specific objectives for its defence diplomacy ("security cooperation") initiatives:

1. Build defence relationships that promote specific U.S. security interests.
2. Develop allied and partner military capabilities for self-defence and coalition operations.
3. Improve information exchange and intelligence-sharing to harmonise views on security challenges.
4. Provide U.S. forces with peacetime and contingency access and en route infrastructure.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs. *2008 Foreign military training I: Operational benefits to U.S. forces*. 31 January 2008, p. 1.

Consequently, the U.S. government also lays out “eight key categories that guide U.S. security cooperation activities and resources”:

1. Operational access and global freedom of action
2. Operational capacity and capability building
3. Interoperability with U.S. forces/support to U.S. capabilities
4. Intelligence and information-sharing
5. Assurance and regional confidence building
6. Defence/security sector reform
7. International defence technology cooperation
8. International suasion and collaboration<sup>4</sup>

U.S. defence diplomacy is under the operational purview of the U.S. Department of Defence (DoD) and the U.S. Department of State. The DoD's main organ for defence diplomacy is the Defence Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), formerly the Defence Security Assistance Agency (DSAA). The DSCA directs all Foreign Military Sales (FMS), manages Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and International Military Education and Training (IMET) and oversees the DoD's five “regional centres”, for example, the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS). The State Department, through its Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, is responsible for funding FMF and IMET programmes.

U.S. defence diplomacy is usually operated abroad through defence attaché offices (DAOs) located within the U.S. embassy. DAOs, in addition to undertaking their usual diplomatic missions (that is, advising the ambassador and reporting on military conditions within the host country), also have responsibility for managing security cooperation programmes with the host country.<sup>5</sup> These duties, in turn, are often carried out by Security Assistance Organizations (SAOs) inside the DAO. SAOs comprise military and civilian personnel stationed in foreign countries in charge of managing security assistance and other military programmes. SAOs include Joint U.S. Military Assistance Groups (JUSMAGs), Mutual Defence Assistance Offices (MDAOs) and Offices of Military Cooperation (OMCs). In embassies where SAOs are not present, such duties are carried out directly by the DAO. The responsibilities of SAOs (and DAOs

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4 Ibid.

5 Shea, T. C. “Transforming military diplomacy.” *Joint Forces Quarterly*, July 2005, pp. 51–52.

operating in an SAO capacity) include (i) managing FMS, (ii) managing training programmes, (iii) monitoring security assistance programmes, (iv) evaluating and planning host country's military capabilities and requirements, (v) promoting international defence cooperation and interoperability between forces, and (vi) carrying out other liaison functions as required.<sup>6</sup>

## TYPES OF DEFENCE DIPLOMACY

Using the criteria laid out by Cottey and Forster, one could place U.S. defence diplomatic efforts in the following categories: alliances and other security arrangements; base access arrangements and port visits; joint exercises; government-sponsored arms sales and arms financing; international military education and training; and other types of military-to-military exchange. We discuss each of the categories as follows.

### Alliance politics

Of course, a critical aspect of defence diplomacy is the creation and maintenance of military alliances. In this respect, the United States has two official treaty allies in Southeast Asia: the Philippines and Thailand. The Philippines has been an ally of the United States since the signing of a mutual defence pact in 1952. During the U.S. ownership of the islands and continuing on after independence, the United States maintained military forces in the Philippines, including the Subic Bay Naval Base (at one time one of the largest U.S. naval installations in the Pacific) and Clark Air Force Base. In 2003, President George W. Bush designated the Philippines as a Major Non-NATO Ally (MNNA). While MNNA status does not necessarily equate to a mutual defence pact, it does give the MNNA country certain benefits over non-MNNA nations, including priority when it comes to transfers of U.S. military surplus items, access to U.S. financing for purchases of military equipment, participation in cooperative research and development (R&D) projects with the U.S. Defence Department, and reciprocal training, among others.

6 Defence Institute of Security Assistance Management (DISAM), *DISAM online green book, the management of security assistance: Chapter 4, security assistance organizations overseas*, p. 4-4, available at [www.disam.dsca.mil/pubs/DR/greenbook.htm](http://www.disam.dsca.mil/pubs/DR/greenbook.htm).

Thailand became an official U.S. ally in 1954, when it joined the U.S.-brokered SEATO. The Philippines and the Republic of China (Taiwan) were other East Asian nations who were also members of SEATO. During the Cold War—and particularly during the Vietnam War (1961–1975)—Thailand permitted the stationing of U.S. military forces on its territory and the use of its bases for overt and covert military actions (such as the secret war against Laos). During the Vietnam War, for instance, approximately 80 per cent of all U.S. Air Force (USAF) strikes against North Vietnam originated from air bases in Thailand. After the fall of Saigon in April 1975, the Thai government asked Washington to remove its remaining troops from its territory; the last U.S. forces were withdrawn in June 1976. U.S. troops returned to Thailand in late 1990s, when the United States began to re-engage with Southeast Asia. In 2003, Thailand was also designated an MNNA.

Singapore, while not a formal ally, signed a Strategic Framework Agreement with Washington in 2005. Under the terms of this agreement, the United States recognised Singapore as a “Major Security Cooperation Partner”, and both countries pledged to expand defence and security cooperation, including combating terrorism and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation, intelligence gathering, collaborative defence R&D, joint military exercises, and the “provision of facilities in Singapore for United States military vessels, aircraft, personnel, equipment and material”<sup>7</sup>

### Base access and port visits

With its withdrawal from Subic Bay and Clark in 1991, the U.S. military no longer possesses any main operating bases in Southeast Asia. However, it has signed agreements with several Southeast Asian nations to permit access to local bases and to use these bases as “forward operating sites” (“austere but ‘expandable’ facilities”) and “cooperative security locations” for use as “contingency access points for staging operations”<sup>8</sup>. Literally, hundreds of naval port visits by U.S. naval vessels take place annually in Southeast Asia, as part of the U.S. Navy’s routine operations

7 Strategic Framework Agreement between the United States of America and the Republic of Singapore for a Closer Cooperation Partnership in Defence and Security, 12 July 2005.

8 U.S. Department of Defence, Office of the Secretary of Defence. *Strengthening U.S. global defence posture*. Washington, D.C., 2004, pp. 10–11.

(more than 130 port visits annually to just Singapore alone).<sup>9</sup> In addition, USAF aircraft (including fighter aircraft) have occasionally been deployed to airbases around the region. U.S. forces have been allowed to use Thai airbases to be used for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and they have even been permitted to store equipment in-country. U.S. military personnel and equipment (including fighter aircraft) also visit Thailand every year with regard to the Cobra Gold and Cope Tiger joint military exercises. In 1998, the Philippines signed a Visiting Forces Agreement with the United States to permit U.S. naval vessels access to Subic Bay port facilities. There is even speculation that Vietnam might open its Cam Ranh Bay deepwater port to U.S. warships.

The closest thing the U.S. military has to a real base in Southeast Asia is the Commander, Logistics Group, Western Pacific (COMLOG WESTPAC) facility at Sembawang, Singapore, established in 1992. This site provides logistical support to U.S. 7th Fleet. In addition, Singapore has permitted the U.S. military access to its Paya Lebar Airbase since 1990, and in 1999, it agreed to allow U.S. naval vessels to berth at the new Changi Naval Base (which is large enough to accommodate aircraft carriers).

### Joint exercises

Every year, U.S. military forces conduct literally hundreds of joint exercises around the world, ranging from a few dozen personnel to thousands of soldiers, sailors and airmen. Such activities can be as simple as simulation games or search-and-rescue (SAR) training, all the way up to massive joint military exercises. Perhaps the most-known joint exercise involving U.S. and Southeast Asian forces is Cobra Gold, held annually since 1982 and co-sponsored by U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) and the Royal Thai Supreme Command. Cobra Gold has grown to become the world's largest multinational military exercise, involving land, sea and air forces. In 2010, approximately 15,000 military personnel from six countries—the United States, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Japan and South Korea—participated in this exercise. Observers included Brunei, Chile, China, Germany, Laos, Mongolia, New Zealand, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

In addition, Thailand is the host for Cope Tiger, an annual air combat exercise held since 1995. Forces from the U.S. Air Force, the U.S. Marine

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9 My appreciation to Dr. Ian Storey for pointing this fact out to me.

Corps' air components based in Japan, the Royal Thai Air Force (RTAF), and the Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) participate in this joint exercise, which involved over 1,000 personnel in 2010.

U.S. naval cooperation with Southeast Asian maritime forces is undertaken mainly through annual bilateral exercises called Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT). CARAT was created in 1995 to consolidate several annual regional exercises into a single planning operation, overseen by PACOM. In 2010, the navies of Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand all participated in CARAT.<sup>10</sup>

U.S. Navy forces also cooperate with Southeast Asia in the annual Southeast Asia Cooperation Against Terrorism (SEACAT) maritime joint exercises. SEACAT is a weeklong at-sea exercise, held since 2002 and involving navies from Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, and is "designed to highlight the value of information sharing and multinational coordination within a scenario that gives participating navies practical maritime interception training"<sup>11</sup> In 2010, ships from the U.S. Navy, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the USNS all participated in SEACAT.<sup>12</sup>

### U.S. arms sales to Southeast Asia: Foreign Military Sales (FMS) and Foreign Military Financing (FMF)

Arms sales are an important element of defence diplomacy. The United States sells arms mainly through two mechanisms, FMS and Direct Commercial Sales (DCS). Under FMS, the customer buys military equipment directly from the U.S. government, and DoD personnel are directly involved "in managing the procurement and delivery of a foreign purchaser's programmes."<sup>13</sup> Under DCS, the foreign customer

10 U.S. Navy CARAT website, available at [www.clwp.navy.mil/CARAT2010/carat.html](http://www.clwp.navy.mil/CARAT2010/carat.html); [www.globalsecurity.org](http://www.globalsecurity.org), *Cooperation afloat readiness and training (CARAT)*, available at [www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/carat.htm](http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/carat.htm).

11 Fischer, J. S. "SEACAT exercise kicks off in Singapore." *PACOM Headlines*, 6 June 2010, available at [www.pacom.mil/web/Site\\_Pages/Media/News%20201006/20100621-SEACAT%20Exercise%20in%20Singapore.shtml](http://www.pacom.mil/web/Site_Pages/Media/News%20201006/20100621-SEACAT%20Exercise%20in%20Singapore.shtml).

12 Ibid.

13 Defence Institute of Security Assistance Management (DISAM), *DISAM online green book, the management of security assistance: Chapter 15, a comparison of foreign military sales and direct commercial sales*, p. 15-2, available at [www.disam.dcsa.mil/pubs/DR/greenbook.htm](http://www.disam.dcsa.mil/pubs/DR/greenbook.htm).



purchases its systems directly from the manufacturer. In both cases, the sale and transfer must be approved by the DSCA and reported to the U.S. Congress if the proposed sale is over a certain dollar amount. Both have their advantages and disadvantages, but FMS usually comes with all support equipment, spares, training and logistics support.<sup>14</sup> Additionally, the U.S. government and Defence Department may make available Excess Defence Articles (EDA)—that is, surplus or older (but still usable) equipment taken out of U.S. military inventories—for transfer to friendly nations.

The United States has been a major supplier of arms to Southeast Asia for many decades. During the period 2000–2009, U.S. FMS agreements to the region totalled some US\$3.88 billion, while FMS deliveries amounted to US\$4.32 billion.<sup>15</sup> This figure does not include DCS, of course; no data exists that disaggregates DCS to individual Southeast Asian nations, but between 2002 and 2009, U.S. arms deliveries to the entire Asia Pacific region totalled some US\$17.9 billion; this accounted for approximately 26 per cent of all U.S. arms exports.<sup>16</sup>

The United States' largest customers (in terms of FMS only) were Singapore (US\$2.3 billion worth of arms deliveries between 2000 and 2009), Thailand (US\$1.04 billion) and Malaysia (US\$651 million). During this period, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Malaysia acquired 20 AMRAAM air-to-air missiles and four Harpoon anti-ship cruise missiles; Thailand received 16 F-16A fighter jets (ex-U.S. military, probably taken out of U.S. Air Force stores), 50 UH-1N utility helicopters, seven AH-1F attack helicopters, and 30 M-113 armoured personnel carriers. Singapore by far was the largest recipient of U.S. military equipment, acquiring 24 F-15E and 22 F-16 fighter aircraft, 20 AH-64D anti-tank helicopters, 18 HIMARs multiple rocket launchers, 200 medium-range AMRAAM air-to-air missiles, 250 short-range AIM-9X air-to-air missiles, as well as a variety of air-to-ground munitions, including

14 Ibid.

15 U.S. Department of Defence, Defence Security Cooperation Agency, *Historical facts book: Foreign military sales, foreign military construction sales, and other security cooperation historical facts*, 30 September 2009, available at [www.dsca.osd.mil/programmes/biz-ops/factsbook/Historical\\_Facts\\_Book\\_2009.pdf](http://www.dsca.osd.mil/programmes/biz-ops/factsbook/Historical_Facts_Book_2009.pdf).

16 Grimmett, R. F. *Conventional arms transfers to developing nations, 2002–2009*. Congressional Research Service, 2010, pp. 51 & 53.

**TABLE 1**  
**Major U.S. arms sales to Southeast Asia, 2000–2009**

<b>Indonesia</b>
58 CT-7 turboprop engines (to power locally built CN-235 transport aircraft)
16 AN/APG-66 radar (for Hawk-200 fighter aircraft)
<b>Malaysia</b>
20 AIM-120C AMRAAM air-to-air missiles
4 RGM-84 Harpoon anti-ship cruise missiles
<b>The Philippines</b>
43 Bell-205/UH-1H utility helicopters (EDA, ex-U.S. military)
1 C-130B transport helicopter (EDA, ex-U.S. military)
1 Cyclone patrol craft (EDA, ex-U.S. military)
48 M-113 armoured personnel carriers (EDA, ex-U.S. military)
<b>Singapore</b>
22 F-16 Block 50/52 fighter aircraft
24 F-15E fighter aircraft
4 KC-135 air-to-air refuelling aircraft
4 G-550 airborne early warning aircraft
6 CH-47D heavy-lift helicopters
20 AH-64D attack helicopters
8 UH-60/SH-60 utility helicopters
250 AGM-120C AMRAAM air-to-air missiles
200 AIM-9X air-to-air missiles
192 AGM-114 Hellfire anti-tank missiles
60 JSOW air-to-surface missiles
50 JDAM air-launched guided munitions
84 Paveway air-launched laser-guided bombs
18 HIMARS multiple rocket launchers
<b>Thailand</b>
16 F-16A fighter aircraft (EDA, ex-U.S. military)
50 Bell-212/UH-1N utility helicopters
9 UH-60 utility helicopters
7 AH-1F attack helicopters
8 AIM-120C AMRAAM air-to-air missiles
30 M-113 armoured personnel carriers (EDA, ex-U.S. military)
1 AN/TPS-77 air search radar

Source: SIPRI Arms Transfers Database (compiled by author)

the Joint Stand-Off Weapons (JSOW) and the Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) (see Table 1 for a complete list of U.S. arms transfers to Southeast Asian nations during the 2000–2009 period).

The U.S. government also operates the FMF programme, which provides grants and loans to foreign countries to purchase U.S. weapons through FMS. Between 2000 and 2009, the U.S. FMF to Southeast Asia totalled some US\$333.1 million. The bulk of FMF went to the Philippines (US\$272.8 million), followed by Indonesia (US\$37 million). Recent new recipients of FMF include Timor-Leste (US\$7 million worth between 2000 and 2009), Cambodia (US\$4.5 million), and communist Vietnam (US\$500,000).<sup>17</sup>

### **International Military Education and Training (IMET) and other types of military training**

Another key element of U.S. defence diplomacy includes military training. Of particular note is the U.S. IMET programme, which provides funding for foreign military personnel to attend U.S. military schools (such as the U.S. Military Academy at West Point) or to receive specialised military training (such as Ranger training). During the period 2000–2009, the United States spent approximately US\$250 million on IMET for Southeast Asian soldiers and national security personnel. In just one year (FY2007), the U.S. IMET programme trained some 600 Southeast Asian personnel.

The U.S. government also operates a number of other military training programmes for foreign personnel. These include the following:

1. International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL): provides training and support to partnering countries in combating international drug trafficking, terrorist groups, and other transnational criminal groups
2. The Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI): train peacekeepers in other militaries
3. Counter-Drug Training Support: provides international counter-narcotics training

17 U.S. Department of Defence, Defence Security Cooperation Agency, *Historical facts book*, available at [www.dsca.osd.mil/programmes/biz-ops/factsbook/Historical\\_Facts\\_Book\\_2009.pdf](http://www.dsca.osd.mil/programmes/biz-ops/factsbook/Historical_Facts_Book_2009.pdf).

4. Mine Action (MA) Programmes: trains foreign military personnel in de-mining and mine-clearance
5. Disaster Response: provides training to foreign militaries in disaster response and preparedness
6. Combating Terrorism Fellowship Programme (CTFP): provides education and training to foreign military personnel to augment cooperation in the global war on terror<sup>18</sup>

### **“Soft power” defence diplomacy: The Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS)**

Finally, the U.S. Defence Department has recently become more engaged in “soft-power” approaches when it comes to military-to-military exchange and outreach. In this regard, it is important to note that the DoD now operates five so-called “Regional Centers for Security Studies”, run under the auspices of the DSCA, with the mandate to “enhance security, deepen understanding of the United States, foster bilateral and multilateral partnerships, improve defence-related decision-making, and strengthen cooperation among U.S. and regional military and civilian leaders”.<sup>19</sup>

In this regard, Southeast Asia is covered by the APCSS.<sup>20</sup> APCSS was established in 1995 and regards itself to be a “strategic communication tool”, to foster regional cooperation through education of foreign military. As its mission,

The Center supports the U.S. Pacific Command’s objective of developing professional and personal ties among national security establishments throughout the region. With a non-warfighting mission, the Center focuses on a multilateral and multi-dimensional approach to defining and addressing regional security issues and concerns. The most beneficial result is building relationships of trust and confidence among future leaders and decision-makers within the region.<sup>21</sup>

18 U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs. *2008 Foreign military training II: Description of programmes*. 31 January 2008, pp. 2–4.

19 U.S. Department of State, *2008 Foreign military training II*, p. 3.

20 The other four centres are the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, the Center for Hemispheric Defence Studies, the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, and the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies.

21 Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies website, *About APCSS*, available at [www.apcss.org/graphics/graphic\\_aboutus.htm](http://www.apcss.org/graphics/graphic_aboutus.htm).

Consequently,

APCSS provides a focal point where national officials, decision-makers and policy makers can gather to exchange ideas, explore pressing issues and achieve a greater understanding of the challenges that shape the security environment of the Asia-Pacific region. As well, the Center gives attention to the increasingly complex interrelationships of military, economic, political and diplomatic policies relevant to regional security issues through its three academic components: executive education, conferences and research and publications efforts.<sup>22</sup>

APCSS offers several different courses annually—ranging from a few days to several weeks—on various aspects of Asia Pacific security. Over 5,000 people drawn from across the Asia Pacific military and national security apparatus have participated in APCSS courses; in FY2007 alone, 166 participants from 11 Southeast Asian countries attended APCSS. Additionally, APCSS has sponsored nearly 150 conferences with over 8,000 attendees from 77 countries.<sup>23</sup>

## CONCLUSION

If, as Clausewitz put it, “war is policy by other means”, then defence diplomacy could be viewed as policy by other, non-warfighting aspects of militaries. It is clear, too, that the U.S. military possesses perhaps the largest, broadest and most extensive defence diplomacy programme in the world. It comprises nearly all manner of peacetime military cooperative activities, ranging from soft to hard power, and it has been an important component in promoting U.S. interests and influence. With regard to Southeast Asia, U.S. defence diplomatic efforts have touched nearly every nation in the region, in one way or another. Its success can be seen in the persistent emphasis that Southeast Asia puts on the importance of a continuing U.S. military presence in and engagement with the region.

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22 Ibid.

23 APCSS website, *APCSS factsheet*, available at [www.apcss.org/core/factsheet.pdf](http://www.apcss.org/core/factsheet.pdf); U.S. Department of Defence, *Historical facts book*, available at [www.dsca.osd.mil/programmes/biz-ops/factsbook/Historical\\_Facts\\_Book\\_2009.pdf](http://www.dsca.osd.mil/programmes/biz-ops/factsbook/Historical_Facts_Book_2009.pdf).

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This monograph focuses on the increasing importance of defence diplomacy efforts in understanding the regional security architecture of the Asia Pacific. A compilation of chapters from experts within and outside the region, from both the policy and academic community, it discusses defence diplomacy in Southeast Asia and the wider Asia Pacific from the institutional, individual country-based as well as great powers' perspective. The main point to emerge was that defence diplomacy has become an important tool for states' foreign and security policy to ensure regional stability.



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