CHAPTER VI
CHAPTER VI: THE BIG POWERS AND ASEAN RELATIONS

ASEAN and the U.S.A.

Introduction

Security cooperation between the United States and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has increased steadily since 1978. The past administrations of President Reagan, President Bush and the current Clinton administration view ASEAN as the cornerstone of its policy towards Southeast Asia and has on many occasions reaffirmed its support for the progress and stability of its allies and friends in ASEAN. Mr. John H. Holdridge in his testimony to the Senate Sub-Committee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs confirmed the U.S. defence commitments to Thailand and the Philippines and affirmed that the U.S. will meet its treaty obligations in the event of aggression by enemies of ASEAN. Mr. Holdridge said that it was under the Reagan Administration that all the ASEAN nations receive some form of bilateral military assistance.¹

For its part, ASEAN (although as a group it has no formal collective security arrangement with the U.S.) has tacitly acknowledged the need for the US to play a

security role in Southeast Asia. ASEAN's acceptance of a U.S. security role in Southeast Asia is also reflected in the growing security co-operation between its member states and the United States.

U.S. Security Interests in Southeast Asia

The United States interest in Southeast Asia can be traced to the basic national interests of the United States: survival of the nation, a healthy U.S. economy, a stable world that allows democratic institutions and free trade and healthy alliances. From these interests, those that are especially pertinent to Southeast Asia include the following:

(i) Ensuring access to foreign markets, energy and mineral resources, the oceans, and space;

(ii) Encouraging and supporting aid, trade, and investment policies that promote economic development and social and political progress;

(iii) Combatting threats to democratic institutions from aggression, coercion, insurgencies and subversion;
(iv) Maintaining stable regional military balances to deter those powers that might seek regional dominance; and

(v) Establishing a more balanced partnership with allies and a greater sharing of global leadership.\(^2\)

In terms of access to oceans, Southeast Asia is of strategic significance to the U.S. in that it serves as a connecting medium between the Pacific and Indian oceans. Southeast Asia, particularly, the ASEAN group of states, is located astride the key straits of Malacca, Singapore, Sunda and Lombok. These straits are vital to the efficient operation of the U.S. Seventh Fleet. Their closure (singularly or jointly) will add two to four steaming days and could delay U.S. response to critical developments in the Asia-Pacific region. The straits are also the petroleum lifeline of U.S. allies (Japan, South Korea) in East Asia. Therefore, any potential capacity to choke off these straits is of concern to the United States.

Another factor related to the U.S. interest in the security of the sea lanes, is the concern over the former

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U.S. bases in the Philippines, which are viewed as a keystone of the U.S. defence structure for the Asia-Pacific region. The former U.S. bases in the Philippines provide the platform from which U.S. forces can operate in the event of emergencies in East Asia, the Indian Ocean and Southwest Asia. Although the bases can be replaced, which in a matter of fact have to be replaced anyway in view of its "termination" by the Philippines, it would be at great cost and reduced efficiency. It has been estimated that because of the distance of the alternative sites (Guam, Palau and Marianas), the response time will be increased by two to three steaming days.

Politically, the U.S. perceives the ASEAN states as sharing a pro-Western political and philosophical orientation and a strictly anti-communist in their domestic politics. Consequently, support of ASEAN would enhance the U.S. foreign policy objective of promoting democratic regimes which in turn would reinforce the economic and military power of the Western alliance in Southeast Asia. In the U.S. view, the political orientation of the ASEAN states is a major obstacle to the growth of Russian influence in the Southeast Asian region and therefore of its own interests. Furthermore, the U.S. has a treaty
obligation to Thailand, and support for ASEAN also facilitates the discharge of this commitment.

The commitment of the ASEAN states to the free market economy and their collective economic size and dynamism reinforces this perception. ASEAN is now the fifth largest trading partner of the U.S. It has been argued that the U.S. should maintain its current level of military presence in the region because of its trade ties with ASEAN. In 1992, the U.S. ran a US$12 billion trade deficit with ASEAN, a 50 per cent increase over 1991.3

ASEAN perception of the United States

Although ASEAN is not allied to the United States, two of its members (Thailand and the Philippines) have security treaties with the United States and three others (Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei) are linked to other U.S. allies (Britain and Australia). ASEAN defence activities could contribute to the maintenance of Sea Lanes of Communications (SLOCs) freedom in Southeast Asia and the Eastern Indian Ocean.

In general, the U.S. naval and air presence in Southeast Asia is welcomed by ASEAN. Not only does it

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counter the Russian build-up in the region but it also
insures the Japanese rearmament will proceed slowly. A
U.S. presence could also insure against any future Chinese
designs for the region. If Japan were to add its ships to
those of the Seventh Fleet in Southeast Asia, however, some
ASEAN officials fear the exacerbation of a Russian-Western
naval arms race in its vicinity.

In fact, most ASEAN armed services currently
engage in various kinds of cooperation with their U.S.
counterparts. Singaporé and Thailand provide access for
U.S. ships and planes to ports and air bases in their
countries. The Seventh Fleet conducts passing exercises
with ASEAN states' ships. The United States Pacific
Command (USPACOM) organises annual maritime and logistics
conferences attended by defence officials from ASEAN.
Combined naval amphibious and air exercises between
individual ASEAN states and the Seventh Fleet were
initiated in the early 1980s.

The ASEAN states are less concerned, however,
about the Russian presence in Southeast Asia than the
Americans. They foresee no direct threat to themselves
from the Russian. However, the Russian presence is seen as
the demonstration of the Russian role as an Asian power. Russian forces are seen as carrying out the strategy to surround China and to deploy sufficient capability to protect Russian SLOCs to Vladivostok.

The United States have encourage the ASEAN states to develop greater security cooperation, particularly the ability to monitor and control their coastal seas. Some ASEAN military analysts have suggested a division of labour emphasizing each member's strengths. Thus, Singapore could stress air surveillance, the Malaysian navy could concentrate on mine countermeasures to keep the Straits of Malacca open, and Thailand could build up its armour and group forces along the Indochina border. While such a degree of specialisation may seem cost-effective, it is politically unacceptable. No ASEAN state is yet prepared to rely on its neighbours for important components of its own defence.

ASEAN could take a number of steps toward defence cooperation without entering a formal pact, however. Presently, all the states (except for the Philippines and Malaysia because of the Sabah dispute) are willing to exercise with each other. Singapore's E-2C AEW aircraft
could be tied into ground radar systems in Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia, thus providing each nation with a significant regional surveillance capability.

The ASEAN states are not responsible for their respective 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs). Joint patrol of these zones could be highly cost-effective, especially considering their overlapping jurisdictions, the presence of hundreds of offshore drilling sites, and the fact that the ASEAN maritime region encompasses some of the most vital SLOCs in the world.

If regional strategy is one of urgent economic growth and development, the U.S. role in this regard can be viewed as vital and crucial. The U.S. should respond to this strategy by viewing it as part and parcel of its own global strategy. It seems that ASEAN truly wanted an increasing American presence in this part of the world. Being the biggest economic power and the biggest market, it is one of the countries that can help the industrialisation and growth of the region as a whole.

At the Third ASEAN summit meeting in Manila, the heads of government observed that the greater part of the increase of export to the United States is manufactured
products. The involvement of the United States with the region in the future in the economic sector will therefore be over such issues as its role of market access and the need for continued flow of investment and development assistance.

It has been said that the Southeast Asian regional concept or perception or strategy is not much understood or appreciated in the United States. A strategy that relies solely on economic development without the insurance of a military umbrella is rather unwise. The argument that the only sure and guaranteed insurance for Southeast Asia region is the elimination of major power military rivalry and the promotion of economic development is not quite convincing to the United States.

U.S. Military Strategy in Southeast Asia

Historically, U.S. national security strategy has been based on the concepts of forward defence and alliance solidarity. The objective of this strategy is to deter war. However, if deterrence fails, the objective is to terminate armed conflict as quickly as possible on terms favourable to the United States and its allies. In peacetime, the strategy works toward development of
solidarity with allies. Consistent with that intent, the United States has maintained forward-deployed forces at sea and on territory of Asian allies in times of peace.

Thus, U.S. military presence in the region has a dual purpose. Firstly, the preservation of the status quo in the light of the Russian military power in Southeast Asia. The U.S. seeks to maintain its bases (apart from the bases in the Philippines), transit and other facilities in the region and to deny/delay the development of similar facilities by the Russian. Secondly, the reassurance to U.S. friends and allies in Southeast Asia against external threats that are too big for them to handle. The U.S. has no land forces deployed in the region and no contingency plans to rapidly redeploy ground troops from other theatres to Southeast Asia. The military presence is almost entirely maritime in nature and is effected through the basing system, and port calls, transit and manoueuvres of the Pacific Fleet in the region.

American military installations in Southeast Asia used to be located only in the Philippines, notably the Subic Bay naval base, Clark Air Base and the San Miguel Communications Station. These facilities are supported by American military installations in Guam, Midway and
Australia. In addition, both Singapore and Thailand have accorded the United States access to key naval and air bases. The U.S. has used the Singapore's Tengah and Thai's Don Muang airfields for military reconnaissance flights. Both Singapore and Thailand have also agreed to regular port visits of U.S. conventional and nuclear vessels under the American "neither confirm nor deny" policy.

As far as Southeast Asia is concerned, the most visible component is the Pacific Fleet which has responsibility for both the Indian and Pacific oceans. As Southeast Asia connects these two oceans, vessels of the Seventh Fleet transit this region, making frequent port calls both to obtain logistics support. In the process, they also conduct passing exercises with forces of the countries in the region. The Seventh Fleet also conducts manoeuvres of its own and combined exercises with Australia and New Zealand in the region.

U.S.-ASEAN security cooperation

Southeast Asia is a relatively peaceful region. Except for the Cambodian conflict, no major external threat to peace and security in the region is foreseen. To an extent, this mutes the significance of the differences in
threat perception between some ASEAN states and the U.S. and facilitates co-operation by emphasising the common issue. Lasting peace in Cambodia is yet to be seen. It appears that conflicts in other regions has made Southeast Asia as the least important region and is the lower rung of the U.S. strategic order of priority. According to an American political scientist, Professor Clark D. Neher of the University of Northern Illinois, the low likelihood of a crisis erupting in the region meant that the U.S. attentions would be focussed elsewhere. Professor Neher commented that "The big issue is that there are no crises and that relations are smooth ... with no internal or security threats to the sovereignty (of the individual countries), compared with the threat to security in the 1960s. Economics are in command and security ties are not that important."\(^4\) Nevertheless, the U.S. maintain that Southeast Asia would be the region to watch after the Cold War because of the region tremendous economic growth. The U.S. is unlikely to make any new formal commitments in Southeast Asia.

The restoration of peace in Cambodia and the gradual decrease of the Russian military power in the region will, however, ensure continued U.S. attention to the region subject to budgetary constraints and other

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competing areas of attention. The U.S. is also likely to forge closer alliance with the members of the Manila Pact, the ANZUS Treaty and the Five Power Defence Arrangement with a view to integrating the ASEAN states into the U.S. strategy for the Asia-Pacific region.

The main security concerns of the ASEAN states are likely to continue to be of a domestic nature and here the preference of the ASEAN states is to deal with these threats on their own with the minimum of external assistance. The U.S. also does not want to be involved in domestic conflicts in Southeast Asia. The articulated response of the ASEAN states to internal security problems is the development of national resilience. In this context, the domestic political and socio-economic dimensions of national security are likely to assume even greater significance and may override potential or long-term geopolitical security concerns. Economic relations with the U.S., Japan and China will assume greater importance. Trade with the socialist bloc is also likely to be emphasised if beneficial and if suitable trading arrangements can be worked out. It is pertinent to observe that nearly all the ASEAN states are experiencing good economic performance. It is therefore in the economic dimension of national security that the U.S. can be of
assistance to the ASEAN states. It is a good opportunity for the U.S. to translate its commitment to the stability and prosperity of ASEAN into actual deed and not betray the member states' confidence and trust in the United States and the market place.

Security cooperation between the U.S. and ASEAN has increased since 1978 and now encompasses all the ASEAN states. In view of the differences in threat perceptions within ASEAN and because of ASEAN's aversion to a multilateral security pact, security cooperation between the U.S. and ASEAN will primarily be undertaken on a bilateral basis. However, U.S.-ASEAN cooperation would be enhanced through the ASEAN-PMC dialogue. The U.S. is likely to encourage greater security cooperation among the ASEAN states especially in the control of the sea lanes in Southeast Asia and in logistics support extending to exchange of equipment and parts especially for sophisticated systems like the F16. In encouraging greater cooperation among the ASEAN states to control the sea lanes, the U.S. will seek to preserve and promote its rights and facilities in the region. The U.S. is also more likely to encourage multilateral exercises among the ASEAN states.
Because of the greater similarity in threat perception and approach to peace and security in the region between the U.S., Thailand and Singapore, it is likely that a higher level of cooperation will characterise their security relations. Insofar as Thailand is concerned, she is a staunch anti-communist member of ASEAN. The United States maintains an official security relationship with Thailand through the Manila Pact of 1954 and the 1962 Rusk-Thanat Accord. Although no U.S. forces are permanently based in Thailand, the U.S.-Thai military relationship remain strong through numerous combined exercises such as COBRA GOLD. Recognising Thailand's frontline status adjacent to Cambodia, the United States authorized delivery of twelve F-16A/Bs to Thailand in 1988 for US$318 million.\(^5\)

The U.S. is also likely to make increasing use of naval and air facilities in Thailand and Singapore. However, the resources made available for security co-operation are unlikely to increase significantly. Even in the event of a major aggression, it is likely that U.S. support will be restricted to preventing/containing great power intervention and providing the necessary logistics backing to the state concerned. The U.S. will look to the other ASEAN states to support their fellow member whose security has been endangered.

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\(^5\)Bruce Senft, Ibid., p. 99.
Although the security consensus among U.S. and Malaysia and Indonesia is at times more problematical, cooperation has increased and is becoming more important and acceptable especially for Malaysia. Although Malaysia is not confronted with any immediate external threat, its geopolitical position and the premise of the development of its defence capability require that it can rely upon the assistance of a friendly external power if the situation so warrants. Britain and Australia are viewed, especially in military circles, as increasingly incapable or unwilling to play this role and the U.S. is increasingly being viewed as the logical, though unreliable, choice.

In August 1989, Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Sri Dr. Mahathir Mohammad responded to Singapore's offer to support U.S. forces in Southeast Asia by saying he was opposed to "actual basing of American troops... [or] squadrons of American planes ... or the American Navy converting part of Singapore into a naval base ... the way they are stationed in the Philippines." On the other hand, the prime minister openly backed continued presence of U.S. forces in the region and he had no objection to Singapore providing repair and service facilities to U.S. forces.

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6Ibid., p. 100.
Withdrawal of U.S. bases in the Philippines

One great significance in U.S.-ASEAN security relations is the withdrawal of U.S. bases in the Philippines. Despite the importance of the bases to the Philippine economy, the Philippines is of the view that the bases are unnecessarily as they could subject the Philippines to a nuclear threat. Rather than enhance Filipino security, the bases are perceived to undermine it and as really serving American global interests. The fact that the U.S. has to pay, increasing compensation of the use of the bases is reflective of the low level of shared perceptions.

Removal of permanently based U.S. forces in the Philippines could contribute to flare-ups in the continuing disputes among claimants countries over the Spratly Islands. Reduced U.S. military presence in the South China Sea could also cause the Japanese to consider extending their SLOC protection role beyond the current range of 1,000 nautical miles. With removal of the U.S. forces from the Philippines, other nations in the area would have to pick up some of the responsibilities for security or host U.S. functions to maintain regional security.
In terms of global effect, the removal of U.S. forces from the Philippines could cause subtle changes in the balance of power among the world superpowers in the region, notably the United States, Russia and China. Although the Russian Federation have their own political and economic problems, they retain a formidable modern Pacific force. At the same time, decreased U.S. military presence might allow the Chinese navy greater relative power in the South China Sea, complementing China’s increasing role in Southeast Asia economies.

Should the U.S. seek to relocate the bases in the other ASEAN states, it is unlikely to be successful. Although the ASEAN states value the bases, they do not want to host them. Thus, the issue could become controversial but this is unlikely because the U.S. itself, given the cost involved, its strategic requirements and the memories of the 1970s, would not want to relocate in Thailand. Singapore, on the other hand, is too small to provide the full complement of facilities and Indonesia and Malaysia, given their current position, would not agree to U.S. bases on their soil. Although the ASEAN states may be averse to hosting the bases they are not averse to providing facilities which may still be necessary even if the bases were relocated in the Pacific islands.
The relocation of the Philippines bases to the Pacific islands could be unsettling to ASEAN in at least three ways. The first is political and psychological. A pullout could be construed as downgrading the importance of the region to the United States. Second, as a consequence of this, the PRC could become a more dominant force in the region. Third, foreign investment in the ASEAN countries could reduce with adverse consequences for their economies. Notwithstanding these possible consequences the dynamics underlying the present level of U.S.-ASEAN security cooperation would not be altered significantly. U.S. interests in containing the PRC or Russian threat, keeping the sea lanes open and protecting its investments in the region would remain unaltered.

Similarly, ASEAN's interest in counter-balancing the Russian military power would also remain unaltered. Furthermore, relocation would take some time and even then, because of the distance of the possible alternative sites from the main sea route, it is probable that the U.S. could seek facilities in the ASEAN states, possibly in Thailand and Singapore. This could in fact increase U.S. presence in mainland Southeast Asia. Other issues which could impinge upon U.S.-ASEAN security co-operation are U.S. efforts to increase Japan's share of the cost of preserving
peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region and a vigorous pursuit by ASEAN of its Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (NWFZ) proposal in any meaningful manner. Although all related parties are sensitive of the various concerns arising from these issues, American budgetary constraints may impel the U.S. to seek a greater burden sharing especially with Japan. Similarly, the earnestness of the forces favouring an early realisation of ZOPPAN may push for the adoption by ASEAN of the NWFZ concept but this is rather unlikely in the near future.

Conclusion

The basis for any form of security co-operation between sovereign states is shared perception of threat and mutuality of interests. Should these conditions be absent or should they be only marginally present, then security co-operation between the actors concerned cannot be deep-rooted and enduring. Consequently, any investigation of the future directions in U.S.-ASEAN security co-operation should clearly focus on the examination of the convergence/divergence of their respective security interests and threat perceptions.
ASEAN and the People's Republic of China

ASEAN states, like other countries, welcomes China's modernisation programme in the hope that China would become more responsible in its policies and actions in the future. For this reason, ASEAN is stepping up efforts to develop normal economic and other relations with China even as China itself is anxious to promote relations with ASEAN or with other countries in Asia-Pacific as a whole.

As far as Malaysia is concerned, she would continue to remain cautious and sensitive in dealing with China. This is due to the fact that China is the closest major power in the region of Southeast Asia. Apart from China's claim to a big chunk of the South China Sea, there are various factors influencing the Malaysian position.

Despite China's claim of close and cordial relations and non-interference, China's relations with the former communist parties in the ASEAN region will not be forgotten. Apart from this, China's policy vis-a-vis the overseas Chinese continues to be a sensitive issue to Malaysia. It is known that China has embarked on an intensive programme to attract overseas Chinese all over
the world to help the motherland in its development and modernisation programme. Many have responded to this emotional call, mainly overseas Chinese from Hong Kong and Taiwan. To multi-racial Malaysia which is embarking on a serious and long-term nation building programme, China's overture is viewed as a development that would definitely have adverse implications to the country. Hence, until today people-to-people movement between the two countries continues to be managed and controlled.

China is widely recognised to become an economic giant in the next century. It is seen that Malaysia hopes to benefit from this trend, not only to exploit the trading opportunities that would be available, but to encourage China's emergence as a responsible and moderate power in this region. Indeed ASEAN and other countries in the region should act individually or collectively with this objective in mind. ASEAN would like to ensure that China would not develop its military and naval power beyond its normal and rational requirement to the extent of becoming a threat to the region. It would be an important achievement if ASEAN can deter China from having to utilise its military power in the Southeast Asia region.

The future role of Hong Kong as part of China and an important entry and exit point of the country is a
matter ASEAN strategists need to consider collectively. Hong Kong is likely to play its present role in the world economy, but the fact remains that it would be part of Communist China, with all its political and security implications. In the same manner it would be a matter of time before Taiwan would find the necessary formula to enable it to coexist normally with China. The implications of such a development would have to be studied closely as well.

Recent changes in the strategic environment affecting the region necessitate a fresh look at the China factor which will also afford an opportunity to narrow the gap, between the China seen by superpower eyes from across the Pacific and the China seen by regional eyes on her southern periphery. The trend towards continued improvement in the political, economic and social relations between China and the ASEAN countries; the demise or near-demise of the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT) and Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) which would not have been possible without Chinese acquiescence and cooperation; China's likely continued pre-occupation with domestic political and economic priorities; and continued external political and diplomatic constraints upon military adventures abroad, suggest that the threat potential from
China need not be as great as it is sometimes portrayed to be.

Apart from the above developments, there are also other challenges resulting from the end of the Cold War. One theory that has surfaced recently, is the so-called vacuum theory. It has been argued that with the gradual decrease of the U.S. forces, and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, there will be new powers which will fill the vacuum. It would appear from the international media, that China is likely to be the new future threat to regional security. This fear persists despite the assurance of the former U.S. Secretary of State Mr. James A. Baker that the United States intends to continue in its role as balancer and honest broker in the region.

Malaysian Defence Minister, Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak, had commented that "China is currently and has every reason to continue to be, a benign power."7 To a large extent, China has been successful in turning her dogmatic economy to a vibrant, and one of the fastest economies of the world.

Beijing needs to take more concrete steps to assure the Southeast Asian countries that it poses no threat to their security. Recent PRC announcements of Chinese willingness to use force over the disputed Spratly Islands have been unsettling to the PRC's neighbours in Southeast Asia. Nevertheless, the Chinese Government has shown a keen interest in and attached great importance to peace, security and development in this region and is ready to actively participate in efforts for regional peace and stability and in cooperation to promote security. The Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen had said that "China will continue to play its part and participate in bilateral and regional security dialogues to maintaining peace and stability in the region." Presently, China is engaged in various dialogues, whether bilaterally or multilaterally. This is a good reflection of China's desire to be engaged in the continuous process of achieving peace and mutual prosperity in the region.

China is now engaged in reform, opening-up and modernization drive, which requires a long-term and stable environment in its surroundings and the world at large. It also requires closer friendship and cooperation with

\[8\text{"China comes out in full support of EAEC concept," New Straits Times, July 25, 1993.}\]
countries in the Asia-Pacific region and the rest of the world. On the other hand, stability and prosperity of Asia and the world also call for a more open and prosperous China. To ASEAN, a stable and economically developing China is an important factor for peace and stability in this region. According to Ji Guoxing, Southeast Asian countries are China's close neighbours, and China will pursue a good-neighbour policy, which is China's long-term strategy.\footnote{Ji Guoxing, "The Spratlys Disputes and Prospects for Settlement," \textit{ISIS Issue Paper} (Kuala Lumpur: ISIS, 1992), p. 29.} It is hoped that China will live up to the expectation of becoming a good neighbour.
ASEAN and Russia

Russia is aware that there is a new situation emerging in the Asia Pacific region. For Russia, the situation is complicated by the fact that the period of its radical internal transformation coincided with the reform of the whole system of relations in the region. On the other hand, this creates additional difficulties for Russia and, on the other, enables herself to join together with all members of the Asian and Pacific community in confronting with new challenges in the region.

According to Russia, ASEAN proved to be a viable and authoritative subregional union. The achievements of its constituent States in the economic sphere and their efforts to strengthen peace and security in the Southeast Asia and the Asian and Pacific region as a whole are generally recognised. The steps taken recently by ASEAN, particularly in the political and economic spheres, show that the ASEAN grouping had reached a qualitatively new level of its development.

Russian view ASEAN as one of its foreign policy allies. Russian Vice-President Alexander Rutskoi had said that "... what we need is not adversaries but partners and
friends.\textsuperscript{10} Russia hope to see more of convergence of the approaches to regional affairs with ASEAN.

Russia is aware of the need to depart from the outdated schemes, the advisability of peaceful solution of problems on the basis of a widest possible consensus, the readiness for a dialogue gradually win more and more supporters in the public and political circles of the region.

There are three levels in the eyes of Russia, which should be considered. Firstly, the regional aspects of the strategic nuclear balance between Russia and the U.S. should be solved. Secondly, global issues related to the role of such powers as the U.S., Russia, Japan and China, in the world balance of forces should be examined. Thirdly, regional problems of security of the Asia Pacific Region, i.e. the problem of troops reduction and prevention of the arms race in the region should be considered within the framework of those issues.\textsuperscript{11}

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\textsuperscript{10}The Star, March 3, 1993.
Russia is aware that countries of the region interpret their security interests very differently and have their own vision of the sources of external threat. As a result, at this stage it is important to find a common denominator to the issues of regional security so as to start that complex work today.

The movement to a secure world in Southeast Asia, as what Russia see it, should begin in two major directions which are firstly, the promotion of the multilateral negotiation process in the region and secondly, settlement of regional conflicts.

Russia is in favour for the establishment of a collective security system in the Asia-Pacific region in which all regional States could participate, as a long-term goal. Such a system of security would be based not only on a multipolar balance of military forces and the obligation to come to the aid of a victim of aggression but first and foremost, on development of broad multilateral cooperation.

In the field of conventional arms trade, Russia is aware of the concern expressed by some states. The Russian Federation is a major arms producer and exporter. The present serious economic situation in Russia and the necessity to mobilise considerable resources for conversion
make Russia look for new buyers of Russian arms. Countries of the Asian and Pacific region have also displayed their interest in the matter.

Southeast Asia is aware that Russia would continue to develop military and technological cooperation, with the countries of Asia and the Pacific under existing international arrangements. Russia believe that the arms trade should not upset the military, political and strategic stability both in relations between countries and in the region as a whole.

In another development, Russia has proposed an open exchange of military information among Asia-Pacific nations to enhance regional security and to prevent crisis situations. Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev was of the opinion that formal ground rules should be established for arms sales in the Asia-Pacific region to prevent such sales from destabilising the region.\(^\text{12}\)

Summing up all the above, it is important to note that the ultimate goal of a security mechanism in the region should be establishment of an international order which would be based on a common understanding.

ASEAN and Japan

Japan's potential to contribute to regional and indeed global security is becoming more widely shared in the region. Amongst scholars and analysts much thought is being given to conceptualising Japan's non-military security role in the international system. In other words, Japan can contribute to security only through non-military means and measures, and this role is possible to play when security is defined as encompassing issues beyond the military.

It would be in the region's interest for Japan to be encouraged to play a larger role where the form of the contribution is for Japan to decide. Another positive trend is that the Japanese people are interested in an international role for Japan and beginning to discuss the nature of that role.

Japan in many ways is now at the cross-road, having to make domestically very difficult decisions about how to respond to expectations from abroad that it accept
the kind of responsibilities of international political and economic leadership that are appropriate to its status as the world's second largest economy.

In her relations with ASEAN, Japan's policy cooperation with ASEAN has been very close. It is crucially important, not just for the health of the region but the global economy. The total ASEAN's trade with Japan has doubled in 30 years where in 1959 it was 11.1 per cent and increasing to 20.6 per cent in 1989. As for Japan, her investment in the region in 1986 was 60.5 per cent reaching to 66.4 per cent in 1990.\textsuperscript{13}

As regard to regional security, Japan has been working closely with ASEAN countries toward the common goal of regional stability. Former Japanese Prime Minister, Mr. Kiichi Miyazawa cited the annual conference of foreign ministers from ASEAN and its trading partners as a highly significant forum for political and security dialogue. Japan had assured the Southeast Asian countries that she "will never again become a military power ... and would always think and act together with other countries."\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{13}Lee Poh Ping, "Stability key to a prosperous region," New Straits Times, April 10, 1993, p. 10.

\textsuperscript{14}The Japan Times, January 25-31, 1993, p. 3.
In his visit to Thailand, Mr. Miyazawa had said that Japan will play a security role with the belief that the presence of the United States in the region will continue to play an important role in the future as a "stabilising force."\(^{15}\)

This represents a genuine departure in foreign policy thinking especially the departure of the "Fukuda Doctrine." The events in 1977 had led Japan to become uneasy with her dependent status in international politics, and intended as a specific result, to establish especially close relations with all states in Southeast Asia.

The true meaning of the Fukuda Doctrine in 1976 was simply that Tokyo acknowledged its special relationship with Southeast Asia. What this meant was that Japan had intended to enhance and intensify her already then existing special relationship with Southeast Asia, and that the vehicle had been a large-scale programme of bilateral and "regional" loans.\(^{16}\)

In the foreseeable future, Japan will continue to contribute to security, stability and economic development through a multiplicity of bilateral, regional and international activities. Japan has an interest and role

\(^{15}\)Ibid.

\(^{16}\)Bernard K. Gorden, "Japan, the United States and South East Asia," in *Foreign Relations*, April 1978, p. 584.
in cooperating with the United Nations to achieve peace in trouble areas. Japan's role in Cambodia is, of course, the main expression of the objective.

Apart from actions, Japan also has the opportunity to offer new ideas in this era of profound international change. For instance, Japan can offer creative inputs on the dialogue between developed and developing countries and the establishment of market-based economies.

Another contribution by Japan to the enhancement of security in the region can come from certain unilateral actions. Japan can, for example, contribute to the economic development of the Asia-Pacific region by restructuring its economy, further opening up its market and expanding domestic demand so that the countries of the region can increase their exports to Japan.

It is interesting to note that Japan is trying to play a larger political role in the region commensurate with its economic strength. Presently, Japan is actively involved in the ASEAN-Post Ministerial Conference (PMC) with ASEAN dialogue partners, the ministerial meetings for Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC) and other multilateral fora for cooperation which will strengthen the level of cooperation and confidence not only with ASEAN, but amongst other Asia-Pacific countries.