Regionalism versus Globalism: A Southeast Asian Perspective

Dewi Fortuna Anwar

Regionalism has become a well established fact in Southeast Asia. From a rather unpromising beginning the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), established on August 8, 1967, has developed into a viable and cohesive regional body with a respected international reputation. This brief paper discusses the ASEAN countries’ perceptions regarding the relations between regionalism and globalism in two key areas, namely economy and security. Despite the strong commitment towards ASEAN, it can be seen that intra-ASEAN economic cooperation has taken a back seat compared to extra-regional economic relations. Until the introduction of the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA) in 1992, which will come into effect in 2003, intra-ASEAN economic cooperation had been minimal. Even the introduction of AFTA has not made ASEAN more inward-looking. Regional economic cooperation is mostly intended to make the ASEAN countries more competitive in the global market place. ASEAN is, therefore, a strong supporter of the concept of “open regionalism” promoted by APEC, regarded as a building block in the development of a more world-wide multilateralism. In contrast, in the security field greater emphasis is placed on regional mechanisms to prevent the emergence of conflicts and maintain regional peace and stability. The long term objective of ASEAN is the realization of the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) in Southeast Asia which would preclude external interferences in regional affairs. At the global level ASEAN is a firm believer in the principle of multilateralism. Towards that end ASEAN supports the strengthening and at the same time the restructuring and democratization of the United Nations.
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Regionalism in international politics is said to occupy "a middle ground and course between parochialism and globalism" or as "an important middle ground between the individual nation and a federation of the world." Regionalism is the fruit of institutionalized, or at the very least of regularized, intercourse between neighboring governments and groups for specific or general purposes. Some view regionalism as an alternative to globalism, believing that a system with fewer and geographically contiguous members can provide more security and promises greater economic opportunities for participating countries than a global system. Others, however, believe that a world-wide multilateral system, particularly on issues relating to trade, remains the best alternative for world economic growth. The latter, therefore, tend to look at the proliferation of new regional economic arrangements in the past few years with dismay since they are seen as obstacles in the development of a more open global trading system. At the same time there are those who regard regional economic arrangements as an intermediate step


3 Ibid.
between a protected domestic economy and a liberalized multilateral system. In other words economic regionalism is viewed as a building block rather than a stumbling block in the realization of the World Trading Organization (WTO), as it provides a training ground for wider trade liberalization.

Although much of the debate on regionalism versus globalism in recent years has centered on trade-related issues this topic, in fact, also impinges on the question of international peace and security. In earlier years geographical contiguity was often viewed as a source of conflict, and classical text advocated the closest relations and alliance with the state on the other side of the potential enemy. Since the end of the Second World War, however, regionalist peace doctrines began to develop. According to J. S. Nye, "the most interesting linkage that regionalists have hypothesized between regional organization and peace relates to the capacity of micro-regional economic organizations to foster integration that changes the character of relations between states and creates islands of peace in the international system." Yet a skeptic can also argue that while regionalism may create peace in parts, it also has a potential for destabilizing global peace due to the possibility of conflicts between larger regional entities.

Since its establishment on August 8, 1967, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has developed into a dynamic and respected regional organization, arguably the most successful regional grouping among the developing countries. Although observers have tended to be skeptical, and even critical, about the development of ASEAN as seen from the comment made by Peter Lyon that regionalism in Southeast Asia was "past, imperfect; present, indicative; future, indefinite," there is little doubt that some measure of regionalism has taken roots in this sub-region. In this brief paper the writer will discuss how the policy-makers and political elites in the ASEAN countries look at the questions of regionalism and globalism, particularly from the perspectives of economic and security relations. It must be stated at the

4 Ibid.
5 Peter Lyon.
outset, however, that while writings on ASEAN regional cooperation by ASEAN nationals have proliferated, Southeast Asian thinking about globalism has not been as well developed.6

**Economic Perspective**

The debates concerning the relative merit of regionalism and globalism in Southeast Asia have mostly revolved around economic issues, particularly on matters relating to international trade. These debates have become more important in recent years due to the growing global interest in economic regionalism, such as manifested in the development of the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) and the European Union. In the Asia Pacific region economic regionalism has also gathered momentum as can be seen from the proliferation of sub-regional growth areas, as well as the agreement on the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) and the revitalization of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

As far as the ASEAN countries are concerned, it can be stated at the outset that while there has been an increasing desire to intensify intra-ASEAN trade and develop a more integrated ASEAN economy in recent years, it is quite clear that these countries continue to regard their relations with the larger global economy as being much more important. There is a general perception in the region that a regional economic grouping, due to its limited market, is only a second-best solution compared to free trade and a multilateral approach in reducing trade barriers.7 While the development of an ASEAN Free Trade Area, to be effective by 2003, is a major breakthrough given ASEAN’s earlier modest economic cooperation, its main objective is really to make ASEAN more competitive in the global market rather than a desire to foster an ASEAN market as such. Nevertheless, the commitment of

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most ASEAN countries to global free trade within a rules-based multilateral system has also been equivocal, and regional arrangements are often viewed as an insurance in the event of a breakdown of the WTO.8

Although the Bangkok Declaration that established ASEAN in 1967 emphasized economic and functional cooperation as a means of bringing the member countries closer to each other as well as to promote regional economic development, in reality ASEAN’s achievements so far have mostly been in the political field. To date intra-ASEAN economic cooperation has produced few tangible results. This is, in fact, the irony of ASEAN. The founding fathers of the association studiously avoided any mention of political cooperation because it was believed to be too sensitive, since a number of the member countries had only recently been involved in confrontation against each other. As it turned out, however, the ASEAN countries found it much easier to come to agreements on various regional political issues than on economic issues.

Only a blueprint for intra-ASEAN economic cooperation was produced at the first ASEAN summit in Bali in 1976. At the time the ASEAN governments agreed to carry out economic cooperation in four major fields: cooperation in basic commodities, particularly food and energy; cooperation in the industrial sector with emphasis on the establishment of large industrial plants that could utilize materials available within the member countries themselves; cooperation to increase intra-regional trade through the establishment of Preferential Trading Arrangements (PTA), and finally to adopt “a joint approach to International Commodity Problems and other World Economic Problems.”9

Despite all these agreements, however, intra-ASEAN economic cooperation did not advance very far. The greatest success was achieved in the fourth area where the ASEAN countries were able to adopt a common position on a number of economic issues in dealing with third


parties. While the ASEAN countries were enthusiastic about cooperating to develop large-scale industries through the ASEAN Industrial Projects (AIP) scheme and the ASEAN Industrial Joint Ventures (AIJV), both of these projects faltered because of the members' basic unwillingness to open up their markets to end products. In other words, the ASEAN countries tried to carry out resource-pooling projects without the necessary support of market-sharing arrangements, with predictable results.

The introduction of the PTA notwithstanding, intra-ASEAN trade continued to form only a small part of overall ASEAN trade. In fact, as can be seen from Table 1, intra-ASEAN trade actually declined between 1984 and 1989. There are several reasons for this. One of the primary reasons was that the ASEAN economies were basically competitive, with many member countries producing the same primary commodities and manufactured products which were mostly exported to other countries, particularly to Japan, North America and the EC (See Table 2). Another reason was the fact that as the largest market Indonesia was also the least industrially developed among the original members of ASEAN. Indonesia was, therefore, adamantly opposed to an ASEAN free trade before it felt that it could compete with the other ASEAN countries. At the same time the ASEAN market was considered to be too small compared to the potential of the much larger global market. Thus, until recently intra-ASEAN economic cooperation had received much less emphasis than the need to promote common positions in international economic fora.\textsuperscript{10}

From Table 1 it is quite clear that while trade among the ASEAN countries has generally expanded, as a share of total trade intra-ASEAN trade has slightly declined during the 1984–89 period. Malaysia during this period has increased its export to ASEAN significantly, but as a percentage of total exports ASEAN’s share in Malaysia’s total export has declined from 26.6 percent to 25.5 percent of total exports it declined from 13.9 percent to 11.5 percent. On the import side the same

thing has also happened. All this took place inspite of the existence of the ASEAN PTA\textsuperscript{11}

Table 1. Share of Intra-ASEAN Trade\textsuperscript{12}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Export ($mil)</th>
<th>Export ($mil)</th>
<th>Import ($mil)</th>
<th>Import ($mil)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>21,881</td>
<td>21,986</td>
<td>13,000</td>
<td>16,467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>2,448</td>
<td>2,408</td>
<td>1,947</td>
<td>1,682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>16,563</td>
<td>25,049</td>
<td>14,047</td>
<td>22,588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>4,406</td>
<td>6,385</td>
<td>2,735</td>
<td>4,243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>5,343</td>
<td>7,754</td>
<td>6,262</td>
<td>11,165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>529</td>
<td>780</td>
<td>1,121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>7,414</td>
<td>20,028</td>
<td>10,415</td>
<td>25,296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>1,030</td>
<td>2,301</td>
<td>1,643</td>
<td>2,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IMF, Department of Transportation, 1990.

In the past few years, however, particularly since the end of the Cold War, this relative neglect of intra-ASEAN economic cooperation began to change. Economic planners in ASEAN began to introduce various economic schemes aimed at promoting a more integrated regional

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., p. 170.

There are many reasons for this turn-about. One of the most important is the fear that the members' interests in ASEAN may decline unless a new focus for regional cooperation and solidarity is found in the aftermath of the Cold War and the settlement of the Cambodian conflict. During the long drawn-out Cambodian conflict most of ASEAN's attention and energy were devoted to finding a negotiated settlement to the crisis, a policy that both kept ASEAN busy and gave the association the opportunity to maintain a high regional and international profile for more than a decade. Its pre-occupation with the Cambodian issue, to the neglect of most other aspects of regional cooperation, however, led to the criticism that ASEAN was a single-issue organization. Many, therefore, doubted its ability to survive as a viable regional body once the Cambodian conflict had been resolved. With the settlement of the Cambodian conflict through the signing of the Paris Agreement in October 1991, therefore, there was a clamor to revive interests in intra-ASEAN economic cooperation as a means of strengthening ASEAN unity through the development of functional linkages between various sectors and groups of ASEAN societies. As former Thai Prime Minister Anand Panyarachun had earlier

### Table 2. Direction of ASEAN Trade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Asia*</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Pacific**</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>56.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. America</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC-12</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IMF, Direction of Trade  
Notes: *China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea  
**North Asia, ASEAN, Japan, Australia, New Zealand

Cited in Djisman S. Simandjuntak, "Reinventing ASEAN," p. 185.
argued, “The Thai private sector, with the exception of some incorrigible optimists or idealists, have become frustrated and disenchanted with ASEAN economic cooperation.” Anand added that “in all honesty, if ASEAN capitals had not offered the traditional friendly hospitality and a fair degree of extra-curricula incentives, the ASEAN-CCI (Chamber of Commerce and Industry) meetings in the last few years or for that matter, in the future would only attract the hard-core idealists and functionaries.”

Besides the desire for increasing economic interdependence among the ASEAN members, seen as a longer-lasting guarantee for harmonious intra-regional relations, external economic pressures have also added a new urgency for the ASEAN countries to carry out closer economic cooperation with one another. The rise of giant trading blocs in Europe and North America, and the difficulties in concluding the Uruguay Round, brought about the specter of increasing world-wide trade protectionism. At the same time the ASEAN countries have to face growing competition for foreign investment from newcomers such as China, Vietnam and the former communist countries in Eastern Europe. These external pressures have made it increasingly necessary for the ASEAN countries to find new means to ensure that their region remains attractive to foreign investors, such as by carrying-out closer intra-ASEAN economic cooperation which promises a cheaper and more efficient production base for exports as well as the potential of a larger regional market.

Before the agreement on AFTA was reached in 1992 several members of ASEAN began to promote sub-regional economic cooperation, such as the Sijori Growth Triangle between Singapore, Johor (Malaysia) and Riau (Indonesia) which was formalized in 1990. Initially this triangle was seen as an alternative model for promoting intra-ASEAN economic integration given the deep-seated resistance of several members to the ideal of a regional free trade area. As one observer pointed out, “This

triangle is important for ASEAN because it illustrates an obvious point; small plans are much more likely to succeed than big ones. Pipe dreams to integrate the economy of all six members of the grouping are doomed to failure because they are too ambitious.¹⁵

Economic cooperation within the framework of the Sijori Growth Triangle is based on a very simple concept, namely to link three areas with different factor endowments and different comparative advantages to form a larger region with greater potential for economic growth. The differences in comparative advantage would serve to complement one another rather than compete with each other. Therefore, industries located within the triangle can take advantage of the efficient infrastructure and higher skilled workers of one location and the lower costs and ample supply of cheaper land and labor in the other.¹⁶

Within the Sijori Growth Triangle Singapore acts as the financial and technological hub, while the neighboring areas of Johor and Riau provide cheaper land and labor for the development of various types of industries. While Singapore is now the largest investor in Batam (Riau) other foreign investors such as the United States, Japan and Taiwan have also been attracted to relocate their industries into the area, encouraged by the infrastructure provided as well as the incentives given, particularly to companies that export 100 percent of their products. In fact, the Sijori Growth Triangle is an export processing zone and a bonded area, which means that products manufactured there are intended for exports. To enter the Indonesian market products manufactured in Batam still have to pay duties. The success of the Sijori Growth Triangle has spawned similar experiments in other parts of the ASEAN region, such as the Northern Growth Triangle which bring together the northern part of Sumatra, the western part of Malaysia and southern Thailand as well


as the BIMP-EAGA (Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines–East ASEAN Growth Area).

In 1992 ASEAN finally agreed to establish an ASEAN Free Trade Area through the CEPT (Common Effective Preferential Tariff) scheme. Initially AFTA was intended to become effective by the year 2008, but then the deadline was brought forward to 2003. The ASEAN countries commit themselves to phase out their tariffs through fast and normal tracks, so that by the year 2003 all tariffs will be reduced to a rate between zero and five percent. (Indonesia has asked that rice and sugar be excluded till 2020, the final deadline for APEC trade liberalization).

While AFTA is aimed at intensifying intra-ASEAN trade, it is not by any means an inward-looking policy. Policy-makers and analysts have cautioned that the size of the ASEAN market is not big enough to ensure the growth of an efficient and strong industrial sector. An inward-looking protective ASEAN policy is likely to breed inefficient industries, and enjoy a protected market but one incapable of competing with imported products from outside. Therefore, trade and industrial cooperation, as well as cooperation in other fields such as banking, tourism, transport and communication are not an end in themselves, but rather an instrument to strengthen the ASEAN economies so that they can compete successfully in the world market. In essence AFTA is primarily aimed at enhancing ASEAN’s attractiveness as an investment location and market. It can also be seen as a training ground for the ASEAN members in their efforts to integrate more fully into the world economy.

The ASEAN countries’ approach towards APEC also emphasizes the former’s opposition to an inward-looking and discriminatory trading bloc. From its inception APEC was designed as a loose economic grouping with the ultimate aims of achieving a world-wide trade and investment liberalizations in accordance with GATT and its successor, the WTO. That is why APEC countries espouse the concept of “open regionalism,” to prevent the world from breaking up into regional trading blocs where every one would be worse off. Open regionalism means that liberalization under regional agreements should be carried out in a non-discriminatory and unconditional MFN (most favored

nation) basis. Only through such a process will regional liberalization become the building blocks to the realization of an open and rules-based multilateral trading system.\textsuperscript{18}

As far as ASEAN is concerned APEC should not be transformed from a loose forum for advancing trade and investment in the Asia Pacific region into a more binding regional economic community. To that effect ASEAN could not fully accept the proposal put forward by the United States on Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) in early 1993. At Indonesia’s urging TIFA was softened to become the Declaration on Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Trade and Investment Framework, which is not binding. Indonesia proposed that ASEAN adopt a common position on the following points: the Framework should not be legally binding; the Framework must be GATT consistent; the Framework should not change APEC from being a “consultative forum into becoming a negotiating forum.”

ASEAN’s opposition to moves that would make APEC a more binding Asia Pacific Economic Community is based among other things on the fear that ASEAN as an entity would be totally absorbed by the larger grouping. At the same time there is a major concern in the region that if APEC becomes a trade negotiating forum it would be dominated by the larger economic powers, particularly the United States and Japan. For ASEAN a multilateral forum such as GATT/WTO promises a much fairer deal to smaller countries than a regional grouping dominated by one or two powers.\textsuperscript{19}

\textbf{Political and Security Perspective}

Southeast Asians’ discourses concerning the relative importance of regionalism as opposed to globalism from the political and security perspectives have not been as well articulated as the economic dimension. Nevertheless, from the few comments made on the issue one can


discern various underlying principles. The first is the central importance attached by Southeast Asian countries, in particular those who are already ASEAN members, to the regional organization as the primary means for maintaining peace and stability in the region. Secondly, the ASEAN countries are also strong supporters of the United Nations and want this world body to be strengthened, particularly since the end of the Cold War. The strengthening of the UN is considered necessary so that the bipolar Cold War structure can be replaced by a more equitable multipolar one instead of being dominated by a single victorious superpower, the United States. The third principle is that neither regionalism nor globalism should undermine the existing state structures. The ASEAN countries are basically opposed to the establishment of supranational institutions, be they regional or global, which would erode the sovereignty of the states, particularly on political and security issues. (The imperative of economic interdependence, however, has made the ASEAN states more willing to lose some of their control over economic issues, as can be seen from the preceding analysis.) To the members of ASEAN, support for regional cooperation as well as international organizations such as the United Nations, are aimed at enhancing their respective national and collective regional resilience, which would enhance their bargaining positions vis-à-vis the bigger powers.

The relationship between regionalism and globalism from political and security perspectives is not too different from that on the economic one. The ASEAN countries also regard that regional cooperation, which produces an island of peace and security among the participating countries, would contribute towards the development of global peace as a whole. Nevertheless, there is a crucial difference. In the economic field more emphasis is placed on the global multilateral approach, while in the political and security field the view is that bilateral and regional mechanisms must bear the first responsibility for preventing or containing potential conflicts. Given the limited resources of the United Nations, the world body should only be called to intervene on selective issues after local efforts to resolve the problems have been exhausted. In other words, regional institutions such as ASEAN and the newly
established ASEAN Regional Forum must act as early warning systems for the United Nations. This means that the world body should work closely with regional organizations in preventing conflicts and maintaining peace.

At a glance the reason for the establishment of ASEAN as a forum for carrying out wide-ranging regional cooperation among South East Asian countries is very similar to the logic behind that of the European Community. It is expected that regional cooperation would produce functional linkages among neighboring countries, many of which in the past have been at odds with one another. The resulting interdependence would make new conflicts among states participating in the regional scheme too costly, both politically and economically, so that in the long run a security community would emerge in which intra-regional wars would become totally inconceivable. Nevertheless, there are fundamental differences between ASEAN and the European Community.

From the very beginning regional cooperation in Western Europe was aimed at achieving regional integration, starting with economic integration which in turn would have a spillover effect into the political sphere, ultimately leading to the establishment of the European Union. In contrast, ASEAN was created as an additional vehicle for strengthening the member states. Therefore, while the European Community had a tight structure based on legal agreements, and supported by such supra-national institutions as the European Parliament and the European Court which clearly put certain constraints on the members' sovereignty, ASEAN was deliberately founded as a loose forum with no supra-national authority. Moreover, while the EEC was established through the signing of the Treaty of Rome, a binding legal document, ASEAN came into being through the Bangkok Declaration which sets out in general terms the participants' desire to carry out cooperation with each other. Another important difference between the two regional organizations is that while in Europe functional integration through various economic, social and technological cooperation has resulted in a cobweb of interdependence among the EU members, in ASEAN functional

linkages have hardly developed in the past 29 years. ASEAN has been more renown for its achievements on the political and diplomatic fields than on the economic and functional fronts.

Yet, despite all of these differences the dynamic of ASEAN does to a certain extent fulfil the five hypotheses of the regionalist peace doctrines, based on the European experience, which argue that regional organizations can play a significant role in promoting global peace. These hypotheses are that: (1) Regional organizations restore multipolarity in the international system. Arguments were made that a world in which there was a wide gap between the two most powerful states and all the rest had an unstable structure of power. Bipolarity was said to either erode or explode. Regional integration of the middle-level powers of Europe into a large unit capable of having an independent defense and foreign policy would, it was claimed, be an important step toward restoring the multipolarity and flexibility of the international system. (2) By merging small states, regionalism make small states more viable and reduces the danger of external intervention. (3) Regionalism removes the danger from sovereignty by giving countries larger interests beyond the nation states. (4) Functional cooperation carried out within a regional organization creates new relations among states and reduces trend towards violence. (5) Regionalism can control intra-regional conflicts.\(^\text{21}\)

The size and scope of ASEAN is clearly much more modest than that of the European Union. It would be unrealistic to expect that a grouping of newly independent states with developing economies could play such a counterbalancing role as the European Union vis-à-vis the superpower(s) within the larger international system, as posited by the restoration of multipolarity hypothesis. Nevertheless, there is little doubt that from a rather unpromising beginning ASEAN has emerged as a cohesive and viable regional entity with an ability to carry out an autonomous, if not independent, foreign policy. This has certainly added to the growing multipolarity of powers in the Asia Pacific region, alongside the United States, China, Japan and Russia. As a noted Indonesian scholar wrote: "Cooperation within the framework of ASEAN has not only served to overcome and to prevent intra-regional

\(^{21}\) Nye, Peace in Parts, pp. 10–16.
conflicts but has also strengthened the position of the group in extra-regional political and economic relations. ASEAN as a group has successfully created the basis for structuring broader relationships with other Southeast Asian countries, namely the three Indochinese countries; with the great powers that are present in the region; and with the rest of the world.  

As far as the ASEAN countries are concerned regional peace and stability does not only depend on harmonious relations among the members, but also on the policy of major extra-regional powers towards the area. In fact, the two are seen to be closely linked since in the past many intra-regional conflicts had their roots in, or had been exacerbated by, conflicts among the great powers. From the very beginning, therefore, ASEAN cooperation not only was aimed at improving and strengthening intra-regional relations but was also meant to develop a more indigenous and autonomous regional order in which the harmful influences of extra-regional powers would be eradicated or at least minimized. A cohesive and viable regional grouping clearly has a better bargaining position in dealing with outside powers than individual countries at odds with each other.

The rejection of outside influence as a major pre-occupation of the ASEAN members was clearly reflected in the Bangkok Declaration that established ASEAN in 1967, in the ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality) principle introduced in 1971, as well as in the Declaration of ASEAN Concord and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation signed in Bali in 1976. Throughout all of these major ASEAN documents runs a common theme which emphasizes that the regional members bear the primary responsibility for the security of the region so that Southeast Asian countries can become masters in their own houses. This emphasis on regional autonomy, as a corollary to national sovereignty and independence, is clearly a reaction against the region’s long history of colonial exploitation which had left Southeast Asian countries weak.

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and divided among themselves. The ultimate objectives of the ASEAN countries, both individually and collectively within ASEAN, are the development of their national and regional resilience.

National resilience is defined as "the dynamic condition of a nation which includes tenacity, sturdiness and toughness, which enables her to develop a national strength to cope with all threats and challenges coming from within as well as from without, which would directly or indirectly endanger national life and the struggle for national objectives." National resilience consists of the following elements, namely ideological strength, political strength, economic strength, cultural strength and military strength. The development of national resilience within the framework of close regional cooperation would lead to the realization of regional resilience. The national and regional resilience concepts, which were first introduced by Indonesia, were adopted as key concepts by ASEAN in 1976.

The emphasis put on national and regional resilience is clearly aimed at reducing Southeast Asian countries dependence on external powers, particularly on matters of security. As a leading member of the non-aligned movement Indonesia has been the strongest proponent of the move towards the establishment of a more autonomous regional order which would reduce the opportunities for extra-regional powers to intervene in regional affairs. This viewpoint was clearly articulated by the then Indonesian foreign minister, Adam Malik, shortly before the ASEAN declaration on ZOPFAN in 1971. According to Adam Malik there were three alternatives for Southeast Asia in response to major power challenges. These were: to align with one or a combination of powers; to obtain the concurrence of major powers to declare Southeast Asia a neutralized zone; to develop an area of indigenous stability, based on indigenous socio-political and economic strength. In Malik's view the third alternative would be the most desirable as it would be the most effective in securing long term stability and harmony in this part of the world. Malik argued that “only through developing among ourselves an area of internal cohesion and stability, based on indigenous socio-poli-

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tical and economic strength, can we ever hope to assist in the early stabilization of a new equilibrium in the region that would not be the exclusive dictate of the major powers.” He added that “the nations of Southeast Asia should consciously work towards the day when security in their own region will be the primary responsibility of the Southeast Asian nations themselves.”

Given this desire to maintain regional autonomy on security issues it is to be expected that ASEAN would not look kindly at any efforts that would undermine regional capability. While the ASEAN countries have always been firm supporters of the United Nations it was also recognized that during the Cold War this world body was very much hostage to the interests of the superpowers. Therefore, globalism in the political and security fields was considered suspect since it was clearly open to the manipulation of the superpowers. In fact, till recently the ASEAN countries strenuously avoided the multilateralization of security issues, even at the regional level. It was only after the 1992 summit that the ASEAN countries finally agreed to include discussions on security into the regional agenda. Before that security cooperation among the ASEAN countries had been carried out only within a bilateral, or at the most, a trilateral framework. Nevertheless, up to this moment ASEAN still has not established an ASEAN-wide defense cooperation.

While the ASEAN countries have mostly resisted external involvement in their regional affairs, it is also recognized that the ability of ASEAN to resolve conflicts and maintain peace in the wider Southeast Asian region was quite limited. Although ASEAN tried its utmost to help resolve the Cambodian conflict, the association did not have the authority nor the means to force the withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops from Cambodia. Recognizing its limitation, ASEAN therefore tried to mobilize international support for its peace-making efforts, particularly through the United Nations, making sure that the issue was kept alive. The settlement of the Cambodian conflict has been cited as one of the success stories of the United Nations recent peace-keeping activities. There is little doubt, however, that the positive outcome of

the UN involvement in Cambodia was mostly due to the groundwork that had been laid by ASEAN. As an official interlocutor between ASEAN and Vietnam, Indonesia hosted a series of informal meetings between the warring factions in Cambodia which paved the way for the signing of the Paris Peace Treaty in 1991, in which Indonesia and France acted as co-chairmen. This clearly shows that while the United Nations is considered to bear the ultimate responsibility for international peace and security, the ASEAN countries are also determined to ensure that they have a determining role in the affairs of their own subregion.

ASEAN's approach towards the great powers, however, has undergone a significant evolution in the past few years. During the first two decades of its existence ASEAN's pursuit of national and regional resilience had mostly been inward-looking and defensive in nature, stressing the need for Southeast Asian countries to become more self-reliant in their foreign and security policy. Towards this end ASEAN tried to exclude, or at the very least, to minimize the role of extraregional powers in the region. This principle is clearly enunciated in the ZOPFAN concept which has become the framework for ASEAN political cooperation. The Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality is not only meant for the ASEAN sub-region, but covers the whole of Southeast Asia. ASEAN's active role in trying to end the Cambodian conflict was seen as a step towards the development of ZOPFAN. Peace in Indochina would not only bring Southeast Asian countries closer together, but equally important it would remove the opportunities for external powers to intervene in regional affairs.

Despite the ideal of ZOPFAN the ASEAN countries recognize that it is not possible, or even entirely desirable, to exclude external powers entirely from Southeast Asia. ZOPFAN is not intended to mean as a total rejection of the presence, and thus the legitimate interests and roles of the great powers in the region. As one commentator noted "not only would such an attitude be wholly unrealistic, but in the increasingly interdependent world of today it would not be in the best interest of Southeast Asian countries themselves... No nation in Southeast Asia is capable, nor feels the need, of ousting the great powers from the
Therefore, the ASEAN countries rejection of outside interference does not preclude interaction and cooperation with, and to some extent even reliance on the great powers.

In the past few years, in fact, there has been a slight shift in emphasis in ASEAN's policy towards non-regional powers. Instead of mainly trying to insulate the South East Asian region from harmful external influences, ASEAN has initiated a much more pro-active policy aimed at restructuring relations among the various powers in the Asia Pacific region, in which ASEAN itself plays a major, if not a central, role. This is clearly a reflection of ASEAN's increasing maturity and self-confidence so that it is now able to deal with the great powers on more equal terms. With the end of the Cold War and the demise of the bipolar global structure, there is an opportunity as well as a felt need to restructure the relations among the major powers in the Asia Pacific region. Regionalism, and more generally multilateralism, is commanding considerable attention in the policy and intellectual communities. According to Muthiah Alagappa in the security domain this interest can be traced to a number of developments. One is the regionalization of international security brought about by the dramatic change in the dynamics of the international system. In the absence of a new overarching and overriding global-level security dynamic, domestic, bilateral and regional dynamics have become more salient and have to be addressed in their own terms. Closely linked to the first is the collapse of the bipolar post–World War II security architecture and the consequent search for a new (and still quite elusive) world order. Thirdly, the increasing salience of regional powers such as China, Japan, India, Unified Germany, Nigeria, further contributes to the regionalization of international security. Finally, interest in security regionalization has been stimulated by economic regionalism.

Encouraged by its success in promoting peace in Southeast Asia, ASEAN has taken the initiative to form a forum for multilateral security dialogue for the wider Asia Pacific region. The ASEAN Regional Forum

26 Djiwandono, op. cit., p. 66.

(ARF) first met in Singapore in 1992 as an expansion of the ASEAN Post Ministerial Meeting (ASEAN-PMC), the annual meeting between ASEAN and its dialogue partners. Currently the ARF has twenty-one members which are the ASEAN countries (Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam), the ASEAN Dialogue Partners (Australia, Canada, the United States, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, the European Union, China, Russia and India) and the ASEAN observers (PNG, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar). Cambodia and Laos will become full members of ASEAN by July 1997 and Myanmar is likely to follow suit.

The ASEAN Regional Forum is the first ever multilateral forum for security dialogue in the Asia Pacific region. As such its objectives are so far quite modest, while its structure is deliberately loose. Decision-making is to be based on consensus. The basic aims of the ARF are to promote confidence-building measures, to act as a preventive diplomacy and eventually to work towards conflict resolution. The establishment of the ARF provides the opportunity to carry out constructive engagement with non-likeminded states, such as China and Russia, which earlier had not been part of the network of ASEAN dialogue partnership. So far, ASEAN remains the core of the ASEAN Regional Forum and as such has mostly set its pace. Rather than focus on problem-solving and negotiations, the ARF stands as a consultative forum to further the benefits of constructive engagement, economic development and stability. As in ASEAN, the ARF renounces force and interference in other states' domestic affairs and calls upon states to practice self-restraint.28

The establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum is clearly an attempt to promote the principle of multilateralism in regional security issues. While acknowledging the importance of bilateral security arrangements that have underpinned peace and security in the Asia Pacific region, particularly that between the United States and Japan, it is also recognized that long-term peace and stability will have to be based on a more equitable and multipolar balances of powers. The ASEAN

countries are clearly opposed to the idea of a single superpower dominating the regional scene in place of the bipolar Cold War structure, even if the United States were to be capable of becoming a global policeman, which clearly it is not. The possibility that a concert of powers among the major states, the United States, China, Japan and Russia, determine the Asia Pacific regional order is also not acceptable. As one analyst argued, "What was possible in the beginning of the 19th century in Europe is definitely not possible at the end of the 20th century. This is mainly due to the idea of democratization among the nations. If even the maintenance of veto power of permanent members of the UN Security Council is being opposed, it can be expected that the idea that nations and states are not equal will be opposed."²⁹

The development of a cooperative security arrangement like the ARF, which ensures a certain balance of power within a multilateral setting, is considered to be the best alternative during this transition period. For the time being, ASEAN thinks that it should continue to manage the ARF, because ASEAN has relevant ideas and has been an example of such a multilateral institution.³⁰ Moreover, as a grouping of medium and small countries with limited military capability possessing extensive political and economic networks with most states in the region, ASEAN poses no threat to anyone and is, therefore, acceptable to almost everyone.

While stressing the importance of subregional and wider regional cooperation in promoting confidence-building among nations and thus preventing the outbreak of conflicts, ASEAN also believes that the United Nations should play a more activist role in maintaining international peace and security. Nevertheless, there is a concern that the UN can simply be used by its most powerful power, the United States, to further its own international agenda. To prevent this the ASEAN countries have campaigned actively for the restructuring and democratization of the United Nations. The strengthening of the UN is regarded as the best means to ensure multilateralism on a more global basis. Indonesia's

³⁰ Ibid.
President Suharto sees a very close connection between regionalism and globalism in promoting peace. At the 50th Commemorative meeting of the United Nations, President Suharto called for a further enhancement of the organization's capabilities "through more effective global and regional mechanisms for peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building as well as preventive diplomacy."  

ASEAN has, in fact, gone beyond conceptualization and tried to operationalize its link with the United Nations. At the initiative of Thailand’s foreign ministry between 1993 and 1994 three ASEAN-UN workshops on “preventive diplomacy” were organized. The first workshop took place in Bangkok, March 22–23, 1993. This workshop focused somewhat broadly and generally on ways in which ASEAN and the UN could cooperate with particular regard to the development of preventive diplomacy and multilateralism. The second workshop, held in Singapore July 6–7, 1993, covered more specific ground, including case studies in regional conflict and mechanisms that could be used for handling them. The mechanism examined with considerable interest was ASEAN’s Treaty of Amity and Cooperation as a framework for preventive diplomacy. The third workshop, again held in Bangkok, February 17–18, 1994, set out to identify in very specific terms “enabling mechanisms” to operationalize concepts and approaches to the agenda of ASEAN-UN cooperation. The discussion was structured around several key issues, including: (1) emerging threats to peace and stability in the region such as mass movement of people, arms proliferation and dispute over islands and boundaries; (2) Cambodia as a case study in peace-keeping and peace-building and (3) the idea of a peace-keeping training center for the region.  

ASEAN’s interests in strengthening the United Nations were also highlighted during the Asian-European Meeting (ASEM) in Bangkok in July 1996. The ASEAN countries again reiterated their opposition to unilateral approaches which should only be used as a last resort. It was

31 Rosemary Foot, p. 24.

argued that for the multilateral approach to be effective, the principle for intervention should clearly be defined and the authority of a UN body to implement them should be non-disputable. ASEAN scholars argued that there was much scope for cooperation between Europe and Asia both at the global and regional level. These include reform of the UN and its structure, bodies and administration; peacekeeping; non-proliferation in the global and regional context of weapons of mass destruction, as well as on the registration of conventional arms acquisition and the support for regional approaches to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty regime; strengthening of the UN collective security system through regional security processes and mechanism, such as the ARF and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).33

It is quite clear that from the perspective of the ASEAN countries there should be close cooperation between regionalism and globalism in the fields of peace and security. Regional organizations have neither the credibility nor the resources to substitute for the United Nations. The former, however, can compliment the role of the UN whose resources have been stretched very thin by the rapid proliferation of peace and security missions in the post–Cold War era. As one scholar has noted: "Neither are the interests and role of the UN served by securing a monopoly over conflict-control at the expense of regional action. Regional organizations with a more nuanced understanding of local conflicts could be allowed to handle conflicts within their neighborhood where prompt regional action might prevent unwelcome external interferences in, and hence, escalation of, such conflicts. The involvement of the UN in regional security should therefore be selective and specific."34

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34 Acharya, p. 218.
Conclusion

Instead of pitting regionalism against globalism, the perspective from Southeast Asia in fact sees very close relations between the two. In the economic field regionalism is regarded as a building block towards a more worldwide multilateralism. In the security field regional cooperation is also regarded as a stepping stone towards the development of a more global peace.

Nevertheless, there are crucial differences between these two fields of cooperation. In the economic field the first preference has always been multilateralism at the global level, while regionalism is mostly seen as a second-best solution. The stress put on regionalism is mainly regarded as a transitory measure, to provide a learning process for countries to emerge from a protective domestic economy towards a more open multilateral system. At the same time regionalism is regarded as an insurance policy in case the global trading system cannot be sustained.

In contrast, in the security field the maintenance of peace and stability is considered to be the first responsibility of regional organizations. Regional organizations must act as early-warning systems for the United Nations, and the latter should maximize the role of the former in localizing and defusing regional conflicts. Furthermore, the presence of regional organizations are regarded as ultimate guarantees for the promotion and maintenance of multipolarity in the international system which is generally considered more democratic and stable than the traditional balances of power, let alone than a unipolar system.