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# U.S.–East Asia Relations: **A Strategy for Multilateral Engagement**

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Asia Society Task Force Report

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A New Beginning and Beyond the APEC Summit

Asia Society Task Force Report  
November 2011



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# Task Force on Multilateral Engagement in U.S.-East Asia Relations

## Co-Chairs

**Han Sung-Joo**, Professor Emeritus, Korea University

**J. Stapleton Roy**, Director, Kissinger Institute on China and the United States, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

## Project Directors

**Simon Tay**, Chairman, Singapore Institute of International Affairs; Associate Professor, International Law, National University of Singapore

**Michael G. Kulma**, Executive Director, Global Leadership Initiatives, Asia Society

## Members

**Dewi Fortuna Anwar**, Deputy for Political Affairs, Office of the Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia

**Nayan Chanda**, Director of Publications, Yale Center for the Study of Globalization; Editor, YaleGlobal Online

**Elizabeth Economy**, C. V. Starr Senior Fellow and Director for Asia Studies, Council on Foreign Relations

**Akiko Fukushima**, Research Fellow, Joint Research Institute for International Peace and Culture, Aoyama Gakuin University

**Michael J. Green**, Senior Advisor and Japan Chair, Center for Strategic and International Studies; Associate Professor, International Relations, Georgetown University.

**Lee Shin-wha**, Professor of Political Science and International Relations and Director, Global Leadership Development Center, Korea University

**Jamie F. Metzl**, Executive Vice President, Asia Society

**Anthony Milner**, Basham Professor of Asian History, Australian National University; Board Member, Asia Society AustralAsia Centre

**Joshua Cooper Ramo**, Vice Chairman, Kissinger Associates

**Stephen Roach**, Faculty, Yale University; Non-Executive Chairman, Morgan Stanley Asia

**Rodolfo Severino**, Head, ASEAN Studies Centre, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies

**Shen Dingli**, Executive Dean, Institute of International Studies, Fudan University

**Susan Shirk**, Ho Miu Lam Endowed Chair in China and Pacific Relations and Director, Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation, University of California, San Diego

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## Foreword

**The United States' unique set of bilateral alliances** in Asia adds significantly to its presence in the region. At the same time, the United States has been a regular participant in a number of multilateral activities in the region. However, U.S. participation in the multilateral sphere has been far from complete, and there is a common, if unjustified, perception that for a time at the beginning of this century, the United States lessened its focus on the region. During the same period, Asian countries continued along a path toward greater regional multilateral interaction, sometimes to the exclusion of the United States

Under the Barack Obama administration, the United States has given greater attention to Asia in its foreign policy. Evidence of this focus includes senior-level bilateral trips to the region, engagement and increased commitment to regional multilateral efforts, and policy statements. In addition, the United States has committed to attend, for the first time, the East Asia Summit at the end of 2011. The Obama administration also has been using its platform as host of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meetings for 2011 to encourage U.S. ties with the region and to support the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations. A successful APEC summit in November will open new avenues for multilateral and bilateral engagement between the United States and Asian countries. However, U.S. engagement with Asia has not yet been entrenched. There are many challenges to be overcome, and arguably, President Obama has not lived up to his claim that he is the first “Pacific” president. It is less clear what the United States can and will do after the APEC summit as the 2012 presidential election campaign begins. The United States' capacity and will to engage Asia, amid its present economic issues, should not be taken for granted.

It is in this context that the Task Force was convened to review the phenomenon of East Asian regionalism and to make policy-relevant suggestions for the Obama administration to renew and deepen engagement between the United States and Asia on a multilateral basis beyond the APEC summit. Regular discussions (electronic and otherwise) took place in an effort to track East Asian regionalism and its implications for the United States and its strategic interests in recent years, determine areas of highest priority for deepening U.S.–Asian engagements on a multilateral basis, and develop a series of recommendations for the Obama administration.

We wish to thank the Task Force members, especially co-chairs J. Stapleton Roy and Han Sung-joo, for their leadership and insight. We also owe an enormous debt of gratitude to many team members from the Asia Society and the Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA), who put in countless hours to bring this project to fruition. In particular, special thanks to Sandhya Kumar from the Asia Society and William Hatch from SIIA.

**Simon Tay**  
Chairman  
Singapore Institute of International Affairs

**Michael G. Kulma**  
Executive Director  
Global Leadership Initiatives  
Asia Society

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## Executive Summary

**As the Barack Obama administration** strengthens the American presence in East Asia, it finds a region transformed since the 1997 Asian financial crisis. Since that time, East Asians have taken a growing and layered approach to regionalism, ranging from free trade and economic agreements among neighboring countries to ministerial meetings and summitry in the ASEAN+3 (Association of Southeast Asian Nations + 3) and East Asian Summit processes. Despite these variations, the phenomenon of East Asian regionalism is marked by one notable feature: it has thrived on an intra-Asian basis but largely has excluded the United States.

East Asian regionalism began to emerge during the financial crisis of 1997–1998, when many in the region felt that the United States did little or nothing to assist them. This distance between the United States and Asia grew during the years of the George W. Bush presidency, when it was perceived that minimal attention was given to the region beyond “hot spots” such as the Korean Peninsula and the global war on terrorism. While President Bush did engage with China and India as emerging giants that were seen as most economically important to the United States, many East Asian nations felt that the administration ignored their aspirations, and they responded by independently developing and furthering their own agendas. The low level of U.S. engagement with East Asia, though, was inconsistent with the continued and considerable importance of the United States in the region to security, economic investment, trade, and wider influence. Moreover, U.S. strategic interests would support a heightened presence across the Pacific, given the region’s conflicting realities as a hub of economic activity while at risk of insecurity and instability without a ready guarantor within the region.

In an effort to renew and deepen engagement between the United States and East Asia on a multilateral basis, the Task Force makes the following recommendations to the Obama administration:

### General Recommendations

1. **Recognize and prepare for change in the U.S.–Asia relationship.** The status quo cannot be sustained in light of the challenges facing the United States and the rising sense of Asian unity.
2. **U.S. engagement with Asia can and should continue to be deepened.** There is no room for complacency. A successful Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in November will open new avenues.
3. **Asian regionalism is growing, but it should be supplemented by efforts to engage more deeply with the United States and to avoid Asian triumphalism.** Nascent Asia-only regional processes (such as ASEAN+3) should be encouraged.

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4. **U.S.–China ties are most important for the region, but others in Asia also have a stake.** Other Asian countries can play indirect but not insignificant roles in promoting U.S.–China ties.
  5. **ASEAN can serve as a foundation.** ASEAN’s efforts to build a regional society based on norms and values rather than power relations should be supported by the United States.
  6. **Recognize that integration on different economic and security issues will continue at different speeds in the region.** For instance, some Asian countries seek closer links with China, while others are wary. This may signal a need for more network diplomacy.
  7. **A new U.S. diplomacy with ASEAN is needed.** Building on the new U.S.–ASEAN Summit, the United States should use ASEAN as a hub to reach out to like-minded countries.
  8. **ASEAN must be more dynamic to offer regional leadership.** ASEAN governments must be encouraged to pursue joint programs and establish common positions on key issues.

### **Institution and Issue-Specific Recommendations**

9. **The expanded East Asia Summit can be pivotal, but patience is needed.** If the East Asia Summit can set meaningful agendas that all members can share and identify with, the United States certainly should make it a priority to attend, but, as a new participant, the United States also should measure its expectations.
10. **ASEAN Regional Forum/ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting Plus 8 (ADMM+8).** The ASEAN Regional Forum should be encouraged, with its broad membership allowing inclusive dialogue. At the same time, the new ADMM+8 is a smaller group that can be utilized for concrete cooperative efforts.
11. **Both sides should work toward an ASEAN–U.S. Summit that can be substantial and sustained.** While the summits of 2009 and 2010 broke new ground, the Obama administration faces many pressing issues, both domestically and internationally, and ASEAN has its own concerns. The initial interest from the first summits needs to be deepened.
12. **There is a need to revive APEC and push ahead with the Trans-Pacific Partnership.** APEC must be revitalized as an important institution. While it is not formally within APEC, the Trans-Pacific Partnership can help energize the group.



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13. **Investment, currency, and economic cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region are vital global issues.** With the crisis in Europe, many are looking at Asia to drive global growth. There must be awareness of how global issues affect the region and vice versa.
  14. **The concerns of the Mekong River Delta and subregion are relevant to non-riparian countries.** An agenda should be developed to engage with the Mekong countries for mutual benefit. Other ASEAN and Asian countries should be involved, where appropriate.
  15. **The United States and Asia should work together to understand and lead efforts to address climate change as a global issue.** All nations, developing and developed alike, have a responsibility to address climate change, and wider cooperation would be valuable.
  16. **On the issues facing Myanmar, the United States and Asia should work toward a dialogue involving the relevant parties in preparation for 2014, as Myanmar wishes to chair ASEAN.** Following the transition of power to the new civilian government in Myanmar, efforts to engage the country should be consistent and concerted.

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# Introduction

**The Task Force on Multilateral Engagement** in U.S.–East Asia Relations was convened by the Asia Society to review the phenomenon of East Asian regionalism and to make policy-relevant suggestions for the Barack Obama administration to renew and deepen engagement between the United States and Asia on a multilateral basis.

The Task Force considered, in particular, the following questions:

1. How has East Asian regionalism developed in recent years, and what are the implications for the United States and its strategic interests?
2. What are the areas of highest priority for deepening U.S.–East Asian engagements on a multilateral basis and on global issues, including the financial and economic crisis, climate change, and security?
3. Which policies and processes will be optimal for deepening exchange, engagement, and partnership between the United States and East Asia?
4. Given that ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) is currently a hub for East Asian regionalism, in what ways should the United States engage with ASEAN and its member countries?

## Building on bilateralism

American engagement in Asia long has been underpinned by its bilateral relationships with key partners, including Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, and Singapore. Under these relationships, nations dealt directly with the United States according to a “hub-and-spoke” model. In 2010, bilateralism reemerged in the U.S. security presence on the Korean Peninsula and in the South China Sea.

Meanwhile, Asian regional architecture has emerged and contributed to a fluid “multiplex” of security and relations in the Asia-Pacific, with regional and China-initiated proposals. There is now a question of whether the bilateral hub-and-spoke system can and should be supplemented with more multilateral engagement and cooperation. Such engagement may be better suited to the complex problems that now face the region, including financial and economic turbulence, suspicion about the benefits of globalization, as well as terrorism and stability.

## The rise of Asia and interdependence with the United States

The much-anticipated rise of Asia on the global stage has been born out before a wide-eyed world over the past decade. Throughout this evolution, the United States has enjoyed a deep and strong relationship with many Asian countries, and, since the end of World War II, it has been the foremost military power in the region. The geopolitical stability that this

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has provided has meant that, even as Asian economies grew and nations developed, so did the interdependence across the Pacific between the United States and Asia.

The financial crisis that began in the United States at the end of 2008 and its aftermath have demonstrated that interdependence continues. Recovering from the economic slowdown, total trade between the United States and ASEAN hit US\$178 billion in 2010, with U.S. exports to ASEAN up 31% over 2009 and U.S. imports from ASEAN up 17%. If ASEAN is considered as a single economic entity, it ranks as the United States' fourth-largest export market and the fifth-largest supplier of imports.<sup>1</sup> Yet the crisis has changed the nature of this interdependence.

Nearly three years after the collapse of Lehman Brothers, many Asian countries continue to experience strong growth, led by China, India, and Indonesia. There are calls to increase Asian consumption and for Asia, in this sense, to be a more independent region, relying less on the United States. If the U.S. economy continues to remain in the doldrums for several years, this will affect its ability and interest in engaging Asia, and vice versa.

### **A new beginning and building beyond the APEC Summit**

In the face of this reality, the Obama administration has recognized the need for a more multilateral approach in its conduct of foreign policy. Moreover, by seeking such multilateral cooperation, the United States has reached beyond the existing circle of developed countries and Europe. Asia deserves and requires equal attention in seeking multilateral cooperation.

The George W. Bush administration may be credited with placing priority on the Asian giants of China and India and, perhaps to a lesser extent, old allies such as Japan and South Korea. It also gave time and focus to hot spots that demanded attention, such as the Korean Peninsula.

However, the Bush administration did not fully understand or engage with the phenomenon of East Asian regionalism and the issues on the East Asian agenda. Moreover, other Asian nations, especially those in ASEAN, struggled to gain sufficient and sustained attention from the United States. This is despite the fact that so much of East Asian regionalism has centered on ASEAN as a hub and convener.

Significantly, U.S. attention has shifted back to Asia since the beginning of 2009, and the Obama administration has placed additional emphasis on engaging with ASEAN as well. The decision of U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to make Asia her first overseas destination and her declaration that the United States was "back in Asia" were important first steps. Significantly, Clinton made two trips to Asia, visiting not only long-standing allies Japan and South Korea and the rising giant China, but also Indonesia and the ASEAN Secretariat, where she signed the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. At the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), she also launched the Mekong Initiative.

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<sup>1</sup> Yinug, Falan, "U.S.–ASEAN 2010 Goods Trade: A Closer Look," Asia Pacific Bulletin no. 110, East-West Center, May 12, 2011, <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/publications/us-asean-2010-goods-trade-closer-look> (accessed October 18, 2011).

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In 2010, President Obama's 10-day tour of Asia's four largest democracies showed a continued commitment to engage Asia, even if difficult Tea Party politics at home might derail the practicalities of increased regional engagement. For Americans, President Obama brought home deliverables on jobs in India and helped lay the groundwork for trade agreements with South Korea. For some Asians, there is a feeling of relief that U.S.–Asia relations will continue.

Every effort should be made to engage the United States economically in a positive, win–win way. Since the end of 2009, the United States has participated in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations. This has energized the group and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC). Additionally, the long awaited Korea–U.S. Free Trade Agreement finally was concluded in December 2010. To enrich and sustain its engagement, however, the Obama administration not only needs to show that it is able to engage on economic issues, but also that such engagement is good for the U.S. economy and American workers. Although some business groups are keen to open new markets for U.S. exports, there is also a lack of enthusiasm in many domestic circles for new free trade deals because of the uncertain impact on U.S. jobs and the complex rules that come with each agreement.

Under U.S. leadership, new forums also are emerging. Building on the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting, a formal dialogue between the defense ministers of eight key countries—China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia, New Zealand, Russia, and the United States—will run parallel to the ARF. The United States has joined the East Asia Summit (EAS), an important annual initiative that brings together India and China, with ASEAN as host. Such a leaders' meeting for substantive engagement on regional security is an important step forward. While there is already APEC for economic issues, as well as the U.S.–ASEAN Summit that was inaugurated in 2009, more needs to be done on the security front.

But the capacity and will of the United States to remain engaged in Asia should not be taken as a given. One can have the strongest intention to engage, as President Obama indeed appears to have, but still be unable to deliver. In spite of forceful rhetoric and increased participation in the region, President Obama has yet to fully live up to his claim that he is the first “Pacific” president. Many opportunities for deeper engagement remain.

Domestic issues and partisanship in the United States may dampen the will to engage more deeply with Asia. In the aftermath of the global financial crisis, most countries successfully have avoided introducing a spate of beggar-thy-neighbor policies, including the United States. But although the United States made progress by signing the Korea–U.S. Free Trade Agreement, there has been a struggle to ratify the bill in the U.S. Congress. Progress on the TPP has been incremental and may not last beyond the APEC summit. Outside of these two initiatives, the United States has yet to develop any new free trade agreements or join wholeheartedly in the region's economic arrangements.

The underlying theme of the Obama administration has been strong rhetoric toward engaging with Asia and projecting its presence at political and security dialogues. However, questions remain as to whether the United States will engage in the region across the fullest

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range of issues, beyond the APEC summit.

Going forward, several questions remain for the U.S. administration. First, how can the objectives and roles of the “new” institutions (the expanded East Asia Summit and the U.S.–ASEAN Summit) best be squared with those of existing institutions? Second, what are the important issues that should be considered? Third, what principles should guide the continued development of the institutional framework?

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# Background

## The growth of Asian regionalism

As the Obama administration strengthens the American presence in East Asia, it finds a region transformed since the 1997 Asian financial crisis. Since that time, East Asians have expressed a growing and layered approach to regionalism, ranging from free trade and economic agreements among neighboring countries to ministerial meetings and summitry in the ASEAN+3 and East Asian Summit processes. Despite these variations, the phenomenon of East Asian regionalism is marked by one notable feature: it has thrived on an intra-Asian basis but largely has excluded the United States.

East Asian regionalism began to emerge during the regional financial crisis of 1997–1998, when many in the region felt that the United States did little or nothing to assist them. This distance between the United States and Asia grew during the years of the Bush presidency, when it was perceived that minimal attention was given to the region beyond “hot spots” such as the Korean Peninsula and the global war on terrorism. While President Bush did engage China and India as emerging giants that were seen as most economically important to the United States, many East Asian nations felt that the administration ignored their aspirations, and they responded by independently developing and furthering their own agendas. The low level of U.S. engagement with East Asia, though, was inconsistent with the continued and considerable importance of the United States in the region to security, economic investment, trade, and wider influence. Moreover, U.S. strategic interests would support a heightened presence across the Pacific, given the region’s conflicting realities as a hub of economic activity while at risk of insecurity and instability without a ready guarantor within the region.

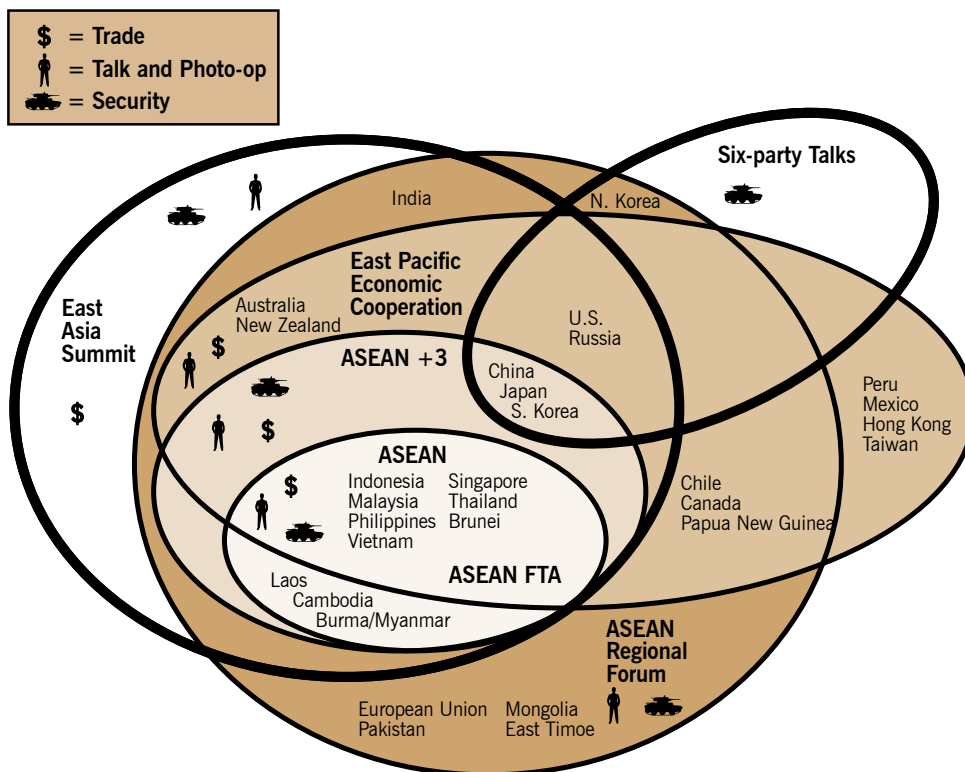
In light of the global precedence for regional community building, along the lines of the European Union, this wave of growing integration in Asia is understandable, and much of it does not presently harm American interests. However, it is apparent that since 1997, trans-Pacific processes such as APEC have lost steam compared to intra-Asian efforts. Unless these processes are understood and managed for the future, this suggests a shift in balance that may not favor U.S.–Asian ties.

ASEAN has played a central role in Asia’s regional processes. It has brought historical rivals together while providing forums for discussion of a host of issues. ASEAN’s role is significant. The rising powers in the region have differences among them, and they diverge in their views of the United States. In this context, ASEAN is an accepted hub and convener because of its political openness to different partners and because it is neither a competitor nor a threat to these rising powers.

However, it should not be assumed that ASEAN’s centrality in East Asian regionalism is vouchsafed for the future, given the nature of the association, the challenges faced as a group to ensure cooperation, and the national interests of its member states. Unless there is greater trust and stability among East Asian nations, no leadership can emerge that will

be acceptable to all Asians and yet will remain neutral or even positive for the U.S. role and interests.

**Figure 1.1. East Asian Regional Arrangements**



Source: Adapted from Nanto (2006).<sup>2</sup>

### Evaluating regional processes in East Asia

To a casual observer, the existing regional architecture may seem to have developed haphazardly into a confusing “alphabet soup” of acronyms. However, these structures have formed organically over time with regional government cooperation in response to evolving needs and challenges. Through structures such as APEC, ARF, EAS, and ASEAN+3, all countries with a stake in regional peace, stability, and economic prosperity are engaged. Through these forums, the relevant issues facing the region (e.g., strategic, political, security-related, economic, financial, and functional cooperation) are being addressed. However, it may be

<sup>2</sup> Nanto, Dick K., “East Asian Regional Architecture: New Economic and Security Arrangements and U.S. Policy,” Report no. RL33653, Congressional Research Service, 2006 (updated 2008), <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33653.pdf> (accessed October 18, 2011).

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accurate to say that no single institution has a mandate to comprehensively address both economic and strategic challenges.

The regional institutions that have developed can be categorized into three broad groups: community building (e.g., ASEAN+3), economic cooperation (e.g., APEC), and security (e.g., ASEAN Regional Forum).

Several ASEAN leaders, including former Thailand prime minister Abhisit Vejjajiva and leading policy experts, have observed that although the Asia-Pacific region should not become complacent with the current arrangement, the best and most realistic framework for regional stability and institutional efficacy is not to “tidy everything up” into a single overarching regional forum, but instead to build on and develop the institutions that already are functioning and effective.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Taiwan's role in regional councils is complex. Taiwan is represented in APEC, but not at the head of state or head of government level. Taiwan is not a part of the ASEAN Regional Forum or the East Asia Summit, or any grouping such as the ASEAN+3. However, the status of Taiwan is a sensitive issue that cannot be resolved given the current state of cross-strait relations.



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# Community Building

## ASEAN+3

ASEAN+3 met for the first time in 1997 as an unexpected result of a Japanese proposal to create a regular summit process between ASEAN and Tokyo, with an agenda that included security. ASEAN was wary of possible negative responses from other Asian nations and subsequently broadened the proposed summit to include China and South Korea.

To some, ASEAN+3 has been characterized and/or criticized as an institution that is dominated by China, and many have argued for a wider grouping of countries to act as a counterbalance (e.g., ASEAN+6, which includes India, or the ASEAN+8/East Asia Summit grouping, which includes the United States). ASEAN+3 has taken more concrete action than most of the other institutions. Heavy Chinese engagement bolstered Japan's and South Korea's willingness to look into the ASEAN+6. Starting in 2012, the ASEAN+3 meetings will include not only the finance ministers of each country, but also a number of central bank governors, as the group seeks to complement the role of the G-20 in managing the world's financial and economic problems.

The summit was established formally in 1999 after the financial crisis shook Asian confidence in global institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The ASEAN+3 members now meet regularly after each ASEAN summit to discuss finances, economics, and security. Practical outcomes have included (1) the Chiang Mai Initiative, a multilateral currency swap arrangement that draws from a foreign exchange reserves pool worth US\$120 billion (the initiative began as a series of bilateral swap arrangements in 2000); (2) the Asian Bond Markets Initiative, established in 2003, which aims to facilitate regional access to the market through a wider variety of issuers and to enhance market infrastructure in order to foster bond markets in Asia; and (3) the Credit Guarantee Investment Facility, a US\$700 million trust fund established in 2010 under the Asian Development Bank, marking a big step in the developing Asian bond market.

In 2011, an independent regional surveillance unit, the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic and Research Office (AMRO), was established in Singapore to support information exchange and analysis, ensuring that the Chiang Mai Initiative is fully effective. Regional surveillance also is handled by the Asian Development Bank and the ASEAN Secretariat, but AMRO will take over the surveillance role for the use of Chang Mai Initiative funds. The inaugural director of AMRO is a Chinese national, but the Japanese government is keen to have a Japanese national direct the unit in the future.

Numerous free trade agreements also have been established between members: the India–ASEAN agreement went into effect in 2010, with hopes for US\$70 billion in trade by 2012, and the China–ASEAN Free Trade Area, which comprises the largest free trade area in terms of population in the world, is set to reach US\$500 billion in trade by 2015.

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## U.S.–ASEAN Summit

Over the years, dialogue between the United States and ASEAN has expanded to cover a wide range of areas of cooperation, spanning the political, security, economic, trade, social, cultural, and development realms. The inaugural U.S.–ASEAN Summit was held in Singapore in 2009 on the sidelines of the wider APEC meeting. The event marked the first time a sitting U.S. president met with all 10 member states of ASEAN, further signaling American commitment to multilateral relations in the region. The resulting joint statement included affirmations of cooperation in rebuilding the global financial landscape, strengthening efforts toward the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and urging the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to return to the Six-Party Talks.

This was followed by a second summit hosted by the United States in New York in September 2010. During the proceedings, the United States reaffirmed its commitment to the region, with President Obama stressing in his opening comments how integral ASEAN was to both economic and security interests.<sup>4</sup> Attending leaders explored the status of U.S.–ASEAN relations as well as spheres for greater collaboration.

In line with Secretary Clinton’s remarks in Hanoi at the 2010 ASEAN Regional Forum, President Benigno Aquino III of the Philippines stressed the role of the United States in preserving regional security and the importance of mutual adherence to the Declaration on the Code of Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea. He went a step further to propose that a formal protocol be established to address outstanding claim disputes.

In spite of these concerted, positive steps toward partnership, limitations remain that both sides must understand, even if they cannot be discussed openly. For instance, the agenda identified at the first summit has not progressed significantly. In part, this is attributable to the fact that although President Obama wants to engage with ASEAN, the American body politic is preoccupied. The United States believes that although ASEAN has its flaws, it is important and must continue to grow. U.S. engagement with ASEAN is vital, and it may be the best option that the United States and Asia have to deal with issues ranging from Myanmar’s reclusive behavior to Thailand’s political instability.

On the other hand, the ASEAN member countries have yet to agree on what they hope the United States will bring to the region. One need is security, and the long-standing role played by the United States has reemerged as a necessity. This is especially significant given concerns over China’s escalating military prowess and its ongoing territorial disputes with different countries, such as recent tensions over the South China Sea.

The Obama administration faces many pressing domestic issues and other urgent international concerns, including Afghanistan. For ASEAN, the primary objective is to build its own ASEAN Community by 2015, and some member countries face internal challenges.

Beyond the most recent summit, both the United States and ASEAN must grow their underlying relationship in order to deepen and generate substance. They will have the op-

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<sup>4</sup> Bower, Ernest Z., “2nd U.S.–ASEAN Leaders Meeting: Elevating the Partnership to a Strategic Level,” Center for Strategic International Studies, September 28, 2010, <http://csis.org/publication/2nd-us-asean-leaders-meeting-elevating-partnership-strategic-level> (accessed October 18, 2011).

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portunity to do so at the third ASEAN–U.S. Leaders’ Meeting in November 2011, which will be held on the sidelines of the East Asia Summit in Bali.

### **East Asia Summit**

The East Asia Summit, inaugurated in 2005, is a forum for dialogue on broad strategic, political, and economic issues of common interest and concern, with the aim of promoting peace, stability, and economic prosperity in East Asia. The EAS extends the geographic definition of East Asia in all directions with the inclusion of Australia, New Zealand, India, and, with their 2010 accession, the United States and Russia.

Prior to the United States’ decision to join, there was concern that the EAS would work to diminish U.S. influence in Asia and replace APEC as the main multilateral forum on economic liberalization and integration.<sup>5</sup> With Secretary Clinton’s attendance at the Hanoi summit in October 2010, a new paradigm for U.S. involvement, within both EAS and the region as a whole, was laid out.

In her remarks, Secretary Clinton listed five principles that would shape U.S. engagement with the EAS: (1) ensuring commitment to the institution through regular presidential engagement and seeking areas for cooperation; (2) supporting a continued, central role for ASEAN as “a fulcrum for the region’s emerging regional architecture”<sup>6</sup>; (3) urging a dynamic agenda to address issues ranging from maritime security and nuclear proliferation to the promotion of civil society; (4) aligning discussions in the EAS forum with those unfolding in other institutional dialogues; and (5) working closely through existing bilateral partnerships. The meeting also gave occasion for the United States to reassert its obligation to defend Japan with respect to the Senkaku/Diaoyutai territorial dispute in the East China Sea.

Still, a main mission of the U.S. involvement in the EAS, as well as the ASEAN Regional Forum, is to demonstrate the ongoing U.S. commitment to working with, and not against, China. The United States should not send the message that East Asia is the next venue for competition between the United States and China, but rather a place where the two countries can come together and find common ground to ensure the stability and security of the region. To that end, the emerging consensus is that the United States will attend the next East Asia Summit in November 2011 in Bali—not to lead the summit, but to participate and facilitate as an outside presence.

With the United States having highlighted the need for a resurgent role for ASEAN, it is pivotal that the association work to identify new emerging trends and to consolidate common views and strategies in the region.

The United States has made it a priority to attend the East Asia Summit and to engage responsibly in East Asia while being mindful of China’s interests. Still, U.S. participation

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<sup>5</sup> Nanto, n.p.

<sup>6</sup> Clinton, Hillary Rodham, “Intervention at the East Asia Summit,” Remarks at the East Asia Summit, Hanoi, Vietnam, October 30, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/10/150196.htm> (accessed October 18, 2011).

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at the EAS already has been imperiled by Myanmar's bid to chair ASEAN in 2014, and therefore host the ASEAN forums. ASEAN has agreed, in principle, to consider Myanmar as the 2014 chair, because of its firm commitment to the regional dialogue, but the United States is concerned about Myanmar's detention of political prisoners and treatment of certain ethnic groups. If Myanmar does not change its policies quickly, to an extent that the United States and its allies are satisfied, the United States may not attend the 2014 EAS, setting back the positive steps made toward greater legitimacy and recognition for ASEAN forums.

### **Interaction among each other**

One characteristic of East Asian regional institutions is that their memberships overlap. This is especially true when the community-building organizations are viewed alongside APEC, which leaves out some countries in the Mekong River Basin and includes North and South American nations, and the ARF, which includes the European Union.

This begs the question of whether the diversity and balance of the region would be better served by having a single institution or by allowing a web or network of different groupings. This has led to some calls that the "alphabet soup" of regional institutions be "tidied," in a sense. Leaders have proposed overarching institutions to fill this apparent need—an "East Asian Community" or "Asia-Pacific Community." Others recall that cooperation in East Asia is nascent and propose to continue with network diplomacy, with a web of relations.

Such an Asia-Pacific network could (1) soften questions about who is "in" or "out" of the region; (2) better balance competition for influence and leadership among different powers; (3) complement and be complemented by bilateral strategic and security arrangements that already exist and allow for creative ad hoc arrangements to respond to specific needs; (4) better reflect and draw from the diversity in Asia and the Pacific; and (5) be sufficiently coordinated by governments and leaders at the national level to meet their own particular emphases and needs.

The first meeting between the leaders of Asia's three regional powers—China, Japan, and South Korea—took place only 10 years ago, at the sidelines of an ASEAN-led summit. Since then, amid growing nationalism and historical animosity that sometimes has led to riots, protests, and diplomatic reproaches, ASEAN has continued to bring the three parties to the table, as well as others such as India. The needs in Asia and the Asia-Pacific region will continue to evolve, and groupings and meetings also will need to grow and develop. But there is a strong case against, not for, a noninclusive forum among the major powers to direct events in all fields. Instead, the region may be better served by a network of multiple and even overlapping groups that can recognize and manage the diversity and differences in the region. In this, ASEAN-led processes should lead the way alongside a network of other groupings and relationships.

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## Interaction with other institutions

East Asia should do its part in global governance, given its emerging presence. One of the objectives of an integrated East Asia is to contribute to the global system so that it is not accused of “free-riding”—that is, benefiting from and using the global system for national or regional interests only.

Conversely, the established powers, mainly in the West (i.e., the United States and the European Union), also should be willing to share the responsibility for global governance and allow the “new forces”—mainly the emerging markets in East Asia—to learn and prepare themselves to assume more of that role.

China, for instance, needs to understand that its relations with states such as Iran, Sudan, and Myanmar will be viewed in light of its international obligations and its new role. However, other powers may need to allow China some leeway as it engages with the international community and takes on a position of increasing prominence. Although the People’s Republic of China did not participate in the creation of the present global order and international institutions after World War II, it has demonstrated some willingness to work within the system. However, China expects that its willingness to engage means that it will see its fair share of responsibility and leadership opportunities. Specifically, China is quite keen on increasing its participation within key international organizations. The recent appointment of Chinese economist Zhu Min as a new deputy director of the International Monetary Fund by Chief Christine Lagarde was an important step toward giving China the representation and influence in international institutions that the country feels it is due. That said, China still is finding its appropriate place within the international system, and if it feels that its upward mobility is limited by the traditional Western powers, it could react quite negatively. This could have severe consequences for the existing system.

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# Economic Cooperation

## APEC

APEC was established in 1989 to facilitate economic growth, cooperation, trade, and investment in the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>7</sup> Other Asian and Latin American countries along the Pacific Rim have joined the organization since its creation. The APEC agenda also has broadened to include human security issues.

Between 1993 and 1997, APEC saw a surge in activity, led in great part by the United States. A key outcome was the 1994 Bogor Declaration, in which member states agreed “to complete the achievement of our goal of free and open trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific no later than the year 2020 . . . with the industrialized economies achieving the goal . . . no later than 2010 and developing economies no later than 2020.”<sup>8</sup> While there was consensus on the ultimate aim and broad guidelines for a gradual decrease in economic barriers, the declaration does not impose any specific prescription on member countries.

Unfortunately, the 2010 deadline has come and gone. Trade statistics show that between 1994 and 2009, APEC’s trade with the world rose at an average of 7.1% per year, with US\$5.6 trillion in exports and \$5.8 trillion in imports.<sup>9</sup> Tariffs still stand, but they dropped from 8.2% in 1996 to 5.4% in 2008, which is significantly lower than the global average of 10.4%.<sup>10</sup> Nonetheless, tariff decreases have not been universal across sectors, with protections still in place for various manufacturing (clothing and textiles) and agricultural goods, financial, transportation and telecommunications sectors.<sup>11</sup>

This gap in achieving the Bogor goals may be attributable, in part, to the slowdown in APEC’s activity as an institution. Between 1998 and 2008, very little progress was made on any of the major initiatives for the region.<sup>12</sup> Four reasons for this widening fissure have been proposed: (1) the Asian financial crisis of 1997–1998; (2) negligible liberalization in the World Trade Organization (WTO) after the Uruguay Round; (3) the creation of a Western regional economic bloc as a result of the North American Free Trade Agreement; and (4) two bubbles in the U.S. economy, first in the dot-com crash and then the most recent financial crisis.<sup>13</sup> In addition, national priorities shifted in the United States in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, with military intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In response to the new inward focus of many Asian economies, the United States

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<sup>7</sup> APEC originally included Australia, Brunei, Canada, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and the United States

<sup>8</sup> “Bogor Declaration: 2nd APEC Economic Leaders’ Declaration of Common Resolve,” Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, Economic Leaders’ Meeting, Bogor, Indonesia, November 15, 1994, <http://www.asianlii.org/apec/other/agrmt/2aeldocr429/> (accessed October 18, 2011).

<sup>9</sup> Bogor Declaration, 86.

<sup>10</sup> Bogor Declaration, 86.

<sup>11</sup> Bogor Declaration, 88.

<sup>12</sup> Bergsten, C. Fred, “Pacific Asia and the Asia Pacific: The Choices for APEC,” Policy Brief no. 09-16, Peterson Institute for International Economics, July 2009, <http://www.iie.com/publications/interstitial.cfm?ResearchID=1263> (accessed October 18, 2011).

<sup>13</sup> Bergsten, 2.

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attempted to establish free trade agreements independently, and subsequently it began pushing for a Free Trade Area of the Asia Pacific (FTAAP) to realize the objectives in the Bogor Declaration.<sup>14</sup> At the most recent APEC summit in November 2010, member states pledged to take concrete steps toward the realization of the FTAAP by building on ongoing regional undertakings such as ASEAN+3, ASEAN+6, and the TPP. The leaders' declaration at the end of the 2010 summit also promised other efforts to integrate APEC economies, such as continuing sector-specific initiatives and addressing nontariff barriers to trade among APEC countries. However, the declaration also noted the "non-binding nature and voluntarism of APEC."

The United States is hosting the current round of APEC meetings, culminating with the Economic Leaders' Meeting in Honolulu on November 12–13, 2011. The last time the United States hosted APEC was in 1993. According to Trade Representative Ron Kirk, the United States is working as APEC host in order to "strengthen regional economic integration and expand trade, promote green growth, and advance regulatory cooperation and convergence."<sup>15</sup> Russia will host the 2012 meetings, with the main summit planned for Russky Island, off the coast of Vladivostok.

### **Trans-Pacific Partnership**

A building block for achieving the FTAAP within APEC has been the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement, which originally consisted of Brunei, Chile, New Zealand, and Singapore and went into effect in 2006.<sup>16</sup> Late in the Bush administration, the United States proposed expanding the TPP to fortify economic and strategic linkages with Asian countries and others across the Pacific. In March 2010, the United States, Australia, Peru, and Vietnam began talks to join the TPP. Malaysia joined the negotiations in October 2010. Japan has been involved in talks as an observer but has postponed its possible entry until much later in 2011. The current aim is to wrap up negotiations between the nine countries (not including Japan) by 2011 and bring the new members into the TPP. This would be an impressive achievement if it is realized by the end of 2011, when it will be President Obama's turn to play host to the leaders. Several countries involved in the TPP see the eventual aim as an APEC-wide agreement, and the United States has been active in encouraging countries such as South Korea and Thailand to join the TPP negotiations.

The TPP was created on the premise that lowering tariff barriers and promoting free trade would increase prosperity among its members. "All . . . [the] TPP countries share an ambition to create a 21st century trade agreement that can serve as a platform for economic integration in the Asia-Pacific," said Ambassador Demetrios Marantis. "We are excited by the prospects of building this 21st-century, regional agreement and welcome other APEC members that share the TPP members' vision and goals for a high-standard agreement."

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<sup>14</sup> Bergsten, 2.

<sup>15</sup> Kirk, Ron, "Expanding Trade to the Asia-Pacific Region, Supporting American Jobs," *White House Blog*, May 18, 2011, <http://fpc.state.gov/163904.htm> (accessed October 18, 2011).

<sup>16</sup> Fergusson, Ian F., and Bruce Vaughn, "The Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement," Report no. R40502, Congressional Research Service, June 25, 2010, <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/145583.pdf> (accessed October 18, 2011).

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Reactions to the TPP have been mixed in the United States. In September 2010, a U.S. official voiced America's continued enthusiasm for the deal.<sup>17</sup> The TPP quietly has gained momentum over recent years, fueled by the belief that it can serve as a free trade zone incorporating large parts of both sides of the Pacific. Other reports, however, show that the United States may be resisting the deal in favor of negotiating independently with countries with which it does not already have free trade agreements.<sup>18</sup> While the diplomatic benefits of demonstrating the United States' continued commitment to the region would be great, from a trade perspective, U.S. trade with the current TPP nations constitutes a very small part of net trade with Asia and the world. Furthermore, out of the seven negotiators, the United States already has bilateral free trade agreements with four of them. For the ones that it does not, all pose political concerns. In the case of New Zealand, previous bilateral trade fell through when the country prohibited nuclear-powered ships from entering its harbor and refused to join the Iraq War mission. Both Vietnam and Brunei have been criticized for their human rights records by observers in the United States.<sup>19</sup> Nonetheless, the venture may mean that the TPP countries would have greater means to mold the region's economic architecture to the standards of the TPP and existing U.S. free trade agreements.<sup>20</sup>

TPP negotiators had completed draft texts for most areas as of the Singapore Round in March–April 2011. However, there are still disagreements over key areas such as labor, intellectual property rights, e-commerce, and environmental issues. Currently, the countries aim to conclude negotiations by the time the APEC leaders meet in Honolulu in November 2011; the final round of TPP talks is scheduled to occur in parallel with the summit.<sup>21</sup>

### Interaction among each other

Although the TPP's goal is to become a Free Trade Area for the Asia-Pacific and expand to include all eligible Asian countries, it technically is not a part of APEC. Coordinating the relationship between the TPP and other established regional cooperation mechanisms will become an important topic for future regional cooperation. While not mutually exclusive with other regional trade agreements, the current focus on the TPP may diminish the importance of other existing or proposed initiatives. For instance, if Japan joins the TPP, less attention might be paid by Japan and other Asian states in the TPP to the ASEAN+3 mechanism (ASEAN, China, Japan, and South Korea).

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<sup>17</sup> "U.S. Seeking Engagement in Asia," Voice of America, August 12, 2010, <http://www.voanews.com/policy/editorials/US-Seeking-Engagement-In-Asia-100536549.html> (accessed October 18, 2011).

<sup>18</sup> "No Movement by U.S. on Aspect of Trade Talks," Radio New Zealand, September 6, 2010, <http://www.radionz.co.nz/news/business/56059/no-movement-by-us-on-aspect-of-trade-talks> (accessed October 28, 2011)

<sup>19</sup> James, Sallie, "Is the Trans-Pacific Partnership Worth the Fuss?" Free Trade Bulletin no. 40, Center for Trade Policy Studies, Cato Institute, March 15, 2010, [http://www.cato.org/pub\\_display.php?pub\\_id=11443](http://www.cato.org/pub_display.php?pub_id=11443) (accessed October 18, 2011).

<sup>20</sup> James, 6.

<sup>21</sup> Elms, Deborah, "Trans-Pacific Partnership Update," *East Asia Forum*, April 16, 2011, <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2011/04/16/trans-pacific-partnership-update/> (accessed October 18, 2011).



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Judging by the signals coming out of the APEC meetings, several APEC members are keen on joining the TPP. However, most express the wish that the TPP will be compatible and complementary with other mechanisms such as ASEAN+3 and APEC, rather than potentially undermining, marginalizing, or replacing them.

### **Interaction with other institutions**

APEC has helped establish a climate of openness, similar to the WTO and other global frameworks for multilateral economic cooperation. However, some question whether APEC, the TPP, and regionalism contradict the WTO and broader global multilateralism. A trade expert once likened regional arrangements to street gangs: not nice, but if you live in the neighborhood, you had better join up.

Progress in APEC and the TPP may reflect dissatisfaction with the progress of the multilateral system. Open regionalism can provide momentum to the best option of multilateralism. Leaders at the APEC meetings consistently have reaffirmed their commitments to achieve the WTO goals.

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# Security

## ASEAN Regional Forum

The ASEAN Regional Forum, set up by ASEAN in 1994, is an important venue for discussing security issues in the region. Although the size of the forum (27 members) limits its effectiveness, it is useful precisely because of its inclusiveness.<sup>22</sup>

The ARF is an annual meeting of foreign ministers and secretaries of state under ASEAN chairmanship. It is based on consensus decision making and minimal institutionalization. According to some evaluations, the ARF has introduced norms of dialogue and behavior among the participants and regularized exchanges among officials in between meetings. There has been an increase in joint exercises, and dialogues have involved armed forces of the different states, with attention centered on humanitarian assistance. This has grown from and added to the experiences of different countries as they have volunteered their assistance to disaster relief efforts in recent years, such as the tsunamis that hit Indonesia and Thailand in 2010 and the massive earthquakes in China and Indonesia.

Although the ARF's limits are evidenced by its failure to address ongoing concerns on the Korean Peninsula and in Myanmar, the ARF has helped facilitate exchanges and dialogue. In July 2010, Secretary Clinton singled out for comment Chinese declarations over disputed islets in the South China Sea. This was welcomed by many Southeast Asian states that also have claims and fear Chinese projections of power in the disputed area. This U.S. concern regarding the area continued at the 2011 ARF, with the South China Sea being a major topic of discussion. The 2011 ARF also saw landmark contact between South Korean and North Korean officials, which seems to have sparked a new era of dialogue with North Korea on the country's nuclear program.

## ASEAN+8 Defense Ministers' Meeting

The ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus 8 (ADMM+8), inaugurated in 2010, is a ministerial-level meeting among defense officials involving the ASEAN+6 countries as well as the United States and Russia. The new forum has the potential to bridge dialogue gaps and to foster practical cooperation, but it is unlikely to move beyond the ARF in addressing traditional threats such as major power rivalries, bilateral conflicts, and regional tensions such as territorial disputes and the Korean Peninsula.

The meeting is an adjunct to the annual ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting and will bring in the "plus" countries every three years. At its first meeting in October 2010, the ADMM+8 targeted the nontraditional security agenda, which is less politically sensitive than traditional state-on-state security concerns. It could be developed as a key institution in the Asia-Pacific region for promoting practical cooperation among the militaries of the

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<sup>22</sup> The ASEAN Regional Forum includes the 10 ASEAN countries, ASEAN's dialogue partners (Australia, Canada, China, European Union, India, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, Russia, and the United States), as well as Bangladesh, East Timor, Mongolia, North Korea, Pakistan, and Papua New Guinea.

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participating states, including exchanges of personnel and meetings of the chiefs of defense forces, intelligence chiefs, and heads of military academies, in addition to the annual meeting of defense ministers.<sup>23</sup> Even if it does not initially resolve tensions, there is hope that, over time, interactions will produce more candid exchanges and enhanced opportunities for defense cooperation.

### **Interaction among each other**

While the ARF continues, the ADMM+8 is a recent addition to the slate of regional meetings that should receive due attention. The ARF's broad membership can be a source of strength as it maintains an inclusive process and dialogue, especially when smaller and more focused negotiations such as the Six-Party talks on the Korean Peninsula may struggle and face obstacles. The ARF's own agenda, including moves toward preventive diplomacy, must be encouraged in order to develop the norms and practices of peaceful cooperation in Asia. The smaller ADMM+8 should be utilized in moving ahead with concrete cooperative efforts. Key undertakings should include military-led efforts to enhance military transparency and joint cooperation on disaster relief and humanitarian assistance.

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<sup>23</sup> Desker, Barry, "A Step Closer to Security Community," *Straits Times*, October 20, 2010.

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# Issues of Concern and the Potential for U.S. Engagement

## North Korea

Since the Korean War, the acrimonious relations between North Korea and the United States have seen little relief, especially in light of solidifying suspicions of the former's ongoing development of a nuclear weapons program. When North Korea was found guilty of bombing a South Korean airline in 1987, that not only further estranged relations between the two countries, but also moved North Korea onto the United States' list of "terrorism-supporting countries" for the next two decades.<sup>24</sup> In 1993, relations between North Korea and the United States also worsened after Pyongyang refused to allow International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors access to two suspected nuclear waste sites, raising fears about North Korea's nuclear ambitions.

The United States had limited engagement with North Korea during the Bill Clinton administration. Starting in 2003, the United States participated in the Six-Party Talks on North Korea's nuclear program alongside South Korea, Japan, Russia, and China. However, no consensus was reached during this period.<sup>25</sup> The United States eventually switched to a more placatory policy under the Bush administration. In 2008, North Korea was removed from both the Trading with the Enemy Act list and the terrorism-supporting countries list in exchange for some checks on its nuclear program.<sup>26</sup> But in April 2009, North Korea walked out of the Six-Party Talks after the United Nations Security Council condemned a purported satellite launch.

Strategic collaboration between the United States and its partners is critical to solving issues with North Korea. But many argue that a permanent solution is not possible if only nuclear issues are addressed through the Six-Party Talks.<sup>27</sup> For example, many believe that North Korea should be engaged through economic development and trade with prospective partners such as China, Japan, and South Korea.<sup>28</sup> Along these lines, many have suggested that the Six-Party Talks may portend a wider multilateral forum, such as the Northeast Asia Security Dialogue, which was proposed by South Korea in 1994.<sup>29</sup> The Six-Party Talks presently have a model for such dialogue in the Northeast Asia Peace and Security Mechanism Working Group, which is chaired by Russia.<sup>30</sup> The

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<sup>24</sup> Nicksch, Larry, "North Korea: Terrorism List Removal?" Report no. RL30613, Congressional Research Service, July 10, 2008, <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/108312.pdf> (accessed October 18, 2011).

<sup>25</sup> Anderson, David A., and Robert F. Ogden II, "U.S. Foreign Policy Toward North Korea: A Way Ahead," *Strategic Studies Quarterly*, vol. 2, no. 3 (2008): 72–109.

<sup>26</sup> Nicksch, 1.

<sup>27</sup> Anderson and Ogden, 108.

<sup>28</sup> Anderson and Ogden, 108, 112.

<sup>29</sup> Kim Sung-han, "Northeast Asian Regionalism in Korea," Council on Foreign Relations, December 2009, <http://www.cfr.org/content/publications/attachments/NEAsiaSecurityKim.pdf> (accessed October 21, 2011)

<sup>30</sup> Cossa, Ralph A., "Northeast Asia Regionalism: A (Possible) Means to an End for Washington," *Issues & Insights* vol. 10, no. 10 (2010), [http://csis.org/files/publication/issuesinsights\\_v10n10.pdf](http://csis.org/files/publication/issuesinsights_v10n10.pdf) (accessed October 18, 2011).

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possibility of Five-Party Talks (without North Korea) also has been suggested, but this is opposed by Beijing.

In 2010, the world witnessed two separate and fatal instances of alleged North Korean aggression, first the sinking of the South Korean vessel *Cheonan* and then the attacks on Yeonpyeong Island. Both events served as reminders of the urgency of addressing concerns on the Korean Peninsula. During his trip to Asia in January 2011, former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated that the resumption of Six-Party Talks still was possible if North Korea complied with its international commitments.<sup>31</sup> In May 2011, Robert King, the U.S. special envoy for human rights in North Korea, suggested resuming food aid to North Korea to deal with a devastating food shortage, but this move later was blocked by Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives.

In early June 2011, the North Koreans revealed that South Korea had tried to convince them to attend a series of diplomatic summits in Beijing,<sup>32</sup> and they said that they were cutting all ties and communications with the South Korean government. North Korea also test-fired a short-range missile, which was the first such missile launch in 19 months.<sup>33</sup>

But July 2011 saw promising informal contact between South Korean and North Korean officials on the sidelines of the ASEAN Regional Forum. The constructive and cordial exchange later led to bilateral talks between the United States and North Korea at the end of July. Since then, North Korea has signaled that it wants a resumption of the Six-Party Talks—for example, during Kim Jong-Il's visit to Russia and China in August 2011.<sup>34</sup> Doubts still are being expressed regarding Pyongyang's intentions, but it is possible that present exchanges represent a new start in relations with North Korea. The ASEAN Secretariat has hailed the outcome of the 2011 ARF as demonstrating the role that ASEAN can play in promoting regional stability and security, by hosting all six parties to the Six-Party Talks at an annual dialogue.<sup>35</sup>

## Myanmar

The Obama administration has taken far more proactive efforts to engage Myanmar than previous administrations. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Kurt Campbell made two trips to Myanmar in 2009 to initiate dialogue on critical issues, including the country's elections.<sup>36</sup> While these efforts mark a step forward in

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<sup>31</sup> Herman, Steve, "U.S. Defense Secretary Says Talks with North Korea Possible," Voice of America, January 14, 2011, <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/asia/US-Defense-Secretary-Says-Talks-with-North-Korea-Possible-113577899.html> (accessed October 18, 2011).

<sup>32</sup> Laurence, Jeremy, "South Korea Political Row Opens over Approach to North Talks," Reuters, June 3, 2011.

<sup>33</sup> "N. Korea Test-Fired Short-Range Missile Last Week: Yonhap," Reuters, June 7, 2011. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/06/08/us-korea-north-missile-idUSTRE7570CU20110608> (accessed October 21, 2011)

<sup>34</sup> Dougherty, Jill, "U.S. Labels North Korea Talks 'Constructive and Businesslike,'" CNN, July 19, 2011, [http://articles.cnn.com/2011-07-29/world/north.korea.talks\\_1\\_nuclear-issues-south-korean-warship-pyongyang?\\_s=PM:WORLD](http://articles.cnn.com/2011-07-29/world/north.korea.talks_1_nuclear-issues-south-korean-warship-pyongyang?_s=PM:WORLD) (accessed October 18, 2011).

<sup>35</sup> ASEAN Secretariat, "Chair's Statement of the 18th ASEAN Regional Forum," July 23, 2011, [http://www.asean.org/Statement\\_18th\\_ASEAN\\_Summit.pdf](http://www.asean.org/Statement_18th_ASEAN_Summit.pdf) (accessed October 18, 2011).

<sup>36</sup> Kurlantzick, Joshua, "Elections and Opportunity in Myanmar," Expert Brief, Council on Foreign Relations, August 3, 2010, <http://www.cfr.org/burmamyanmar/elections-opportunity-myanmar/p22761> (accessed October 18, 2011).

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U.S.–Myanmar relations, they also sent a positive signal to ASEAN members that the United States was keen on improving its relations with the entire Southeast Asian region.<sup>37</sup> However, U.S. efforts to engage Myanmar’s junta have been diluted because of the regime’s physical isolation, the United States’ distance from Myanmar, and the growing influence of Asian neighbors, such as China.

Moreover, Myanmar is suffering internally from widespread ethnic and civil unrest. There may lie the possibility for policy collaboration with China, which already has facilitated meetings between U.S. officials and the junta. China is threatened more seriously by the potential outbreak of chaos within its neighbor’s borders and would gain from taking a more active approach. To date, most U.S. policy measures have entailed economic sanctions, but if China continues to cooperate by augmenting humanitarian aid to minority ethnic areas, this may coax these groups away from conflict and border instability. There also needs to be greater scrutiny of Myanmar’s nuclear program, requiring that China and the United States incrementally demand greater transparency, as this also would play into China’s interests for a safe and secure border.<sup>38</sup> While China can provide an avenue for constructive collaboration in quelling tensions in Myanmar, many also blame China for the continuing reign of the military in Myanmar.

On July 22, 2010, Secretary of State Clinton concurred with leaders at the ARF in Hanoi in calling for fair elections to be conducted in Myanmar. The United States also renewed its ban on imports from Myanmar in order to induce the government to take greater accountability for human rights, democracy, and possible links to North Korea.

While the United States recognizes that sanctions alone may not resolve its deadlock with Myanmar, ASEAN’s policy of “constructive engagement” has shown equally weak results in effecting change. The United States hopes that this realization may induce a more collaborative set of policies to tackle the Burmese military regime. The creation of the ASEAN Charter in 2007 proved a means to deal with issues of human rights and democracy, and the organization has become more outspoken against violations in Myanmar, but this still has not bloomed into a desire to pursue sanctions.

In November 2010, Myanmar held its first national elections in 20 years, which saw the military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party defeat more than 37 parties vying for some 1,100 seats. Secretary Clinton issued a statement that clearly conveyed the United States’ disappointment in the electoral process, which was neither inclusive nor free, and which prevented election observers and international press from covering the event.<sup>39</sup> Within a week of the election, prodemocracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi was released after having been imprisoned for 15 of the past 21 years. In December 2010, Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Joseph Yun traveled to Myanmar, visiting with government officials, members of ethnic minority groups, civil society groups, and prode-

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<sup>37</sup> Kurlantzick, n.p.

<sup>38</sup> Kurlantzick, n.p.

<sup>39</sup> Clinton, Hillary Rodham, “Burma’s Elections,” News release, U.S. Department of State, November 7, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/11/150517.htm> (accessed October 18, 2011).

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mocracy movements. The trip signaled continuing efforts by the United States to keep channels of dialogue open, particularly to advance human rights and democracy.

Despite its shortcomings, Myanmar has been dedicated to the strengthening of ASEAN and the ASEAN Community project. The Burmese Defense Minister was in attendance at the 10th Asian Security Summit (also called the Shangri-La Dialogue) in Singapore, and the Minister of Finance has called for concrete actions to move toward the goal of realizing the ASEAN Community by 2015, in part through an increased role for customs departments and improved commodity flow integration.

In June 2011, Senator John McCain traveled to Myanmar to visit with Aung San Suu Kyi and to urge government officials to release the 2,000 or so political prisoners currently held within the country. He also received assurances that Myanmar would not pursue nuclear weapons, or even civilian nuclear power options.

Myanmar's chairmanship of ASEAN in 2014 is a particularly contentious issue that threatens to derail the progress that the group has made. While ASEAN has publicly defended Myanmar since it became a member while privately urging reform, Myanmar's chairmanship of the organization threatens ASEAN's international legitimacy in the eyes of the United States and its European allies. Myanmar's chairmanship could cause the United States to skip the East Asia Summit, thus threatening the ASEAN dialogue with its Western trading partners. Therefore, it is imperative that concerns regarding Myanmar's chairmanship be resolved, as positive developments in South East Asia must not be put at risk. Indeed, the prospect of Myanmar assuming the ASEAN chair should trigger efforts to address valid concerns and obstacles to an effective chairmanship.

### **South China Sea/maritime disputes**

Maritime disputes throughout Asia continue to exacerbate bilateral and regional tensions. The People's Republic of China, the Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia, Vietnam, and Brunei have overlapping sovereignty claims to the Spratly Islands, which are thought to possess substantial natural resources (chiefly oil, natural gas, and seafood). The PRC, Taiwan, and Japan also have conflicting claims to the Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands, ostensibly over resources as well, but domestic politics complicate the issue.

The United States' role in the South China Sea dispute resurfaced in July 2010, when Secretary Clinton outlined the American perspective at the ASEAN Regional Forum in Hanoi. She said that the United States, like every nation, has a national interest in freedom of navigation, open access to Asia's maritime commons, and respect for international law in the South China Sea. The United States, she said supports a collaborative diplomatic process by all claimants for resolving the various territorial disputes without coercion. She opposed the use or threat of force by any claimant. While the United States does not take sides on the competing territorial disputes, she said, it believed that claimants should pursue their territorial claims and accompanying rights to maritime space in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. She supported the 2002 ASEAN–China declaration on the conduct of parties in the South China Sea and encour-

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aged the parties to reach agreement on a full code of conduct. She said that the United States was prepared to facilitate initiatives and confidence-building measures consistent with the declaration.<sup>40</sup>

China's foreign minister, Yang Jiechi, fervently opposed U.S. involvement in the dispute and was upset by Clinton's support for a "collaborative process" to resolve the disputes, as China prefers to resolve territorial disputes bilaterally. A Chinese foreign ministry spokesman said that Clinton's attempt at "internationalization" of the issue was not appreciated, and he affirmed that although China would resolve the outstanding claims with those concerned, it retained "indisputable sovereignty" over the islands.

The interest of the United States and other nonclaimant states in this dispute centers on two main concerns. First, China treats the nine-dashed line as a legally bound claim to the entire sea region. (The nine-dashed line is a U-shaped demarcation of nine dashes, drawn on Chinese maps since 1947, that indicates Chinese territory as encompassing the Pratas Islands, Paracel Islands, Macclesfield Bank, and Spratly Islands.<sup>41</sup>) If this were permitted, then movement along these waters could become nonexistent, thereby hampering sea-based transportation for the entire Southeast Asian region. Second, after the 1992 ratification of the ASEAN Declaration on the South China Sea, Beijing delineated its territory around the Paracel Islands and then proposed that it may do the same for the Spratly Islands. If permitted, this would mean that any vessel sailing in or out of the South China Sea would need China's permission.<sup>42</sup>

The South China Sea is the second-busiest shipping lane in the world, notably for resources such as crude oil, natural gas, and iron ore, much of which travels to Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan. There are established oil reserves in the region of 7 billion barrels, which are critical for U.S. business interests in the oil industry, with many drilling projects under way in this region. If tensions escalate, it would seriously damage private interests and profits for U.S. businesses.<sup>43</sup>

The year 2011 saw renewed tensions over the waters near the Spratly Islands. In July, Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, started his official visit to China with a warning that incidents in the disputed waters of the South China Sea could escalate into conflict.<sup>44</sup> In May and June, two incidents occurred between Vietnamese survey vessels and Chinese ships. In June, the Philippines also accused China of intimidating rival claimants in the South China Sea, citing several incidents in the preceding months.<sup>45</sup>

In June 2011, China's defense minister, Liang Guanglie, told delegates at the Shangri-La

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<sup>40</sup> Clinton, Hillary Rodham, "Remarks at Press Availability," ASEAN Regional Forum, Hanoi, Vietnam, July 23, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/07/145095.htm> (accessed October 18, 2011). <sup>41</sup> Li Jinming, and Li Dexia, "The Dotted Line on the Chinese Map of the South China Sea: A Note," *Ocean Development and International Law*, vol. 34 (2003): 287–295.

<sup>42</sup> Rowan, Joshua P., "The U.S.–Japan Security Alliance, ASEAN, and the South China Sea Dispute." *Asian Survey*, vol. 45, no. 3 (2005): 414–436.

<sup>43</sup> Rowan, 430.

<sup>44</sup> Wines, Michael, "Bumps Remain as Military Leaders of U.S. and China Meet," *New York Times*, July 11, 2011.

<sup>45</sup> Richardson, Michael, "Beijing Turns Up Heat in S. China Sea," *Institute of Southeast Asian Studies*, June 6, 2011, <http://web1.iseas.edu.sg/?p=3819> (accessed October 18, 2011).



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Dialogue that his country remains committed to the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, signed between China and ASEAN countries. The declaration calls on parties to resolve territorial and jurisdictional disputes peacefully. However, the agreement is not politically binding. Both Vietnam and the Philippines have requested that a legally binding code of conduct be signed under the auspices of ASEAN, but there is a lack of consensus over what such an agreement actually would entail.<sup>46</sup>

At the ASEAN Regional Forum in July 2011, the ASEAN foreign ministers, along with China, reached an agreement on Guidelines for the Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties. The document has been hailed by many as an important confidence-building measure that will lead, it is hoped, to progress on the peaceful resolution of the dispute.

Others, however, were unimpressed. Philippine authorities said that they still intend to take the dispute before the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea, which decides cases based on the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. China has opposed this move; Beijing seems to prefer to address the dispute through bilateral discussions rather than multilateral legal instruments.

Given China's resistance to involving United Nations instruments, the most viable path forward may be to continue engaging claimant states and interested parties in a non-confrontational process of dialogue. In this respect, the ARF has proved a valuable forum, as has Track II diplomacy in the form of workshops bringing together representatives from the claimant states. Workshops held on the South China Sea have tried to move beyond the fixation on sovereignty, instead encouraging avenues of functional cooperation, such as on marine research and managing sea lanes.

## **Economic recovery**

In broader terms, the financial crisis has magnified problems in the economic landscape, both domestically and globally, that need to be resolved through collaborative efforts between the United States and Asia, especially given the important role that each country and region plays in the other's economy. Asia makes up more than one-quarter of U.S. trade and about one-sixth of U.S. outbound foreign direct investment, while about 13% of Asian trade is with the United States.<sup>47</sup> In the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, despite dips in annual growth rates, Asia was described as leading the global recovery, with economies such as China expected to return to double-digit growth within a year.

This may explain President Obama's most recent trip to Asia (India, South Korea, Japan, and Indonesia), which was a bid not only to advance an American presence in the region, but also to solicit trade deals to aid the U.S. economic recovery. However, the

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<sup>46</sup> Le Mière, Christian, "Navigating Maritime Disputes in Southeast Asia," *Shangri-La Voices*, International Institute for Strategic Studies, June 5, 2011. <http://shangrilavoices.wordpress.com/2011/06/05/navigating-maritime-disputes-in-southeast-asia/> (accessed October 21, 2011)

<sup>47</sup> Noland, Marcus, "United States Economic Policy Toward Asia," Working Paper no. 103, East-West Center, June 2009, <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/publications/united-states-economic-policy-toward-asia> (accessed October 18, 2011).

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trip highlighted how American absence has weakened its bargaining power. At the G-20 Summit, President Obama found little support for raising pressure on China's tightened currency policy, which has suppressed the value of the yuan and made its exports far more competitive. President Obama's trip concluded with his attendance at the APEC summit in Japan, where, despite a U.S. push for the creation of the FTAAP, which could allow U.S. exports to double over the next five years, specific steps were lacking for dismantling trade barriers.

In South Korea, the Obama administration still is trying to close a free trade deal that would boost U.S. exports in the automotive market. The Korea–U.S. Free Trade Agreement originally was signed in 2007, but ratification stalled during the Bush administration over concerns regarding trade in automobiles and U.S. beef exports.

However, there have been positive developments as well. In December 2010, the Obama administration signed an updated version of the agreement with South Korea to address the automobile issue, and both sides agreed to put aside the beef issue for a time. U.S. carmakers support the deal, and the Obama administration hopes to get the agreement ratified in Congress by the end of 2011. If approved, the agreement would be the United States' most commercially significant free trade agreement in more than 16 years. The U.S. International Trade Commission estimates that the reduction of Korean tariffs and tariff rate quotas on goods alone would add \$10 billion to \$12 billion to annual U.S. gross domestic product and around \$10 billion to annual merchandise exports to Korea.<sup>48</sup> The United States also has been an active participant in TPP negotiations under the Obama administration, with officials strongly supporting the agreement and encouraging other countries to join the TPP.

### **Mekong River Delta**

ASEAN has elevated security concerns in the South China Sea to a multilateral level in order to draw China into agreeing to a code of conduct. On more complex territorial claims, Beijing officials are trying to deal bilaterally with individual claimants, while some in ASEAN want to discuss these matters collectively. A similar challenge is posed by the Mekong River, where China controls the headwaters, affecting the states lower down the river—Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam. Development of the subregion holds the potential to improve some of the poorest areas along the Mekong River as well as to better protect the river's ecology. ASEAN's ties with China have put the Mekong subregion on the agenda, rather than leaving each of these states to deal individually with China. While collective responses remain essential, group unity in ASEAN sometimes has proven difficult, as Chinese influence over some of the affected states has grown.

In 2009, Secretary Clinton announced the U.S. Lower Mekong Initiative, which would establish cooperation regarding the environment, health, education, and developing infrastructure for the communities affected along the Lower Mekong River. Through

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<sup>48</sup> "Korea–U.S. Free Trade Agreement," Office of the United States Trade Representative, <http://www.ustr.gov/trade-agreements/free-trade-agreements/korus-fta> (accessed October 18, 2011).

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cross-border partnerships that are ecologically sustainable, the United States plans to help build water management systems in order to withstand the effects of climate change and to ensure safe drinking water. This initiative will lend human and financial resources to better develop educational facilities and access to information in rural areas. Finally, the program will provide assistance to battle health epidemics such as dengue fever and influenza that plague the region, making these populations even more vulnerable.

Further American involvement could help ensure equitable agreements between the Lower Mekong nations and China that are both in accordance with international norms and serve the long-term interests of all parties involved. This should not be a question of ASEAN needing American influence to counterbalance China. In some cases, American interests might coincide with China's—for example, in seeking to ensure that freedom of navigation and safety of shipping are maintained in the South China Sea (as well as in the Straits of Malacca). Another approach would be to create a community of states with common purpose and values and to engage each other for mutual benefit according to those values.

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## Recommendations

In light of growing regionalism in East Asia, this report concludes the United States should renew and deepen engagement with the region on a multilateral basis. The Task Force thus makes the following recommendations to the Obama administration:

### General Recommendations

- 1. Recognize and prepare for change in the U.S.–Asia relationship.** The status quo of recent decades—the predominance of the United States and the prevalence of Asian disunity—cannot be sustained. The United States faces more challenges and limits as it goes forward in the aftermath of the financial crisis. Issues in the Middle East and elsewhere command American attention and involvement and stretch the country’s capacity. Among Asians, there is an increasing sense that their development as a region must be more sustainable, balanced, and complete. In this light, a new engagement with the United States and a rebalancing of the U.S.–Asia relationship after the crisis is needed.
- 2. U.S. engagement with Asia can and should continue to be deepened.** The Obama administration’s engagement with Asia has been positive, and progress has been made on strategic and economic issues. But there is no room for complacency. The last half of 2011 will be important, as the United States will participate in two high-level summits. President Obama will attend the East Asia Summit in Bali, and the United States will host APEC in Hawaii. This may be the last chance to show that APEC is worth the effort. These forums will open up new avenues for multi-lateral engagement, which should continue to be balanced with bilateral relations.
- 3. Asian regionalism is growing, but it should be supplemented by efforts to engage more deeply with the United States and to avoid Asian triumphalism.** Asia’s nascent Asia-only regional processes (such as ASEAN+3) should be recognized by the United States, and they should be encouraged to develop Asian perspectives and, where possible, consensus, even as U.S.–Asian partnerships are fostered. While Asian meetings may proliferate and overlap, the United States should be comfortable allowing Asians to set the pace and agenda for these meetings. The Obama administration would be well advised not to overly rationalize the region’s indigenous and overlapping institutions for the present and in the near term. Further ahead, any discussion of regional architecture should begin with an exploration of goals. It is only by defining what we seek to achieve that we can have a meaningful dialogue about the structure and steps that can get us there.
- 4. U.S.–China ties are most important for the region, but others in Asia also have a stake.** Asians do not want to have to favor one country over another. Efforts to

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build a strategic dialogue between China and the United States should focus on bilateral issues. But increasingly, the context should be the region as a whole. Good ties between China and the United States likely will have positive effects for other countries in Asia, enabling them to enjoy positive trade and economic relationships with both powers. Therefore, other Asian countries have a stake in the bilateral U.S.–China relationship and can play indirect but not insignificant roles in promoting ties. This is an important area for Asia’s regional dialogues and forums.

5. **ASEAN can serve as a foundation.** ASEAN’s role in building a more integrated regional society based on shared norms and values should be fully recognized and supported. Asia currently faces tensions between two competing trends: Asia as a community of norms and values, and Asia as a region shaped by power relations, given the presence of the United States and China. Although ASEAN is not considered an emerging power, the group of ten medium and smaller-sized countries has promoted modes of cooperation through its own example of developing a community. In the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation and other efforts and practices in regional diplomacy, ASEAN’s role in engaging the emerging powers of Asia deserves recognition and support. Deeper ASEAN engagement with the United States can reinforce ASEAN’s role in promoting values and building norms. This may be a more productive focus for U.S.–ASEAN relations, rather than simply seeking to use U.S.–ASEAN ties as a means of balancing rising regional actors such as China.
6. **Recognize that integration on different economic and security issues will continue at different speeds in the region.** Each side has a different tenor that should be noted. With economic ties, many in Asia seek to become closer to China, though there is some wariness over issues such as cheap goods. On security ties, however, there are questions about China and its future intentions. Many recognize the need for a future place to integrate. With the East Asian Summit, some are leaning toward one place to integrate, while others are talking about network diplomacy. Integration on different issues will continue at separate speeds, and this may signal a need for more network diplomacy.
7. **A new U.S. diplomacy with ASEAN is needed.** There is a need and an opportunity for the United States to engage with ASEAN more closely as a hub for a wider Asia. Building on the newly established U.S.–ASEAN Summit and the appointment of Ambassador David Carden as the first U.S. resident representative to ASEAN in March 2011, the United States should continue to deepen its understanding of ASEAN and seek out like-minded countries in the grouping. This should not be limited to its allies—the Philippines and Thailand—but also should include ties with Indonesia, Singapore, Vietnam, and Malaysia and cross-border projects such as the Greater Mekong Subregion. In this context, challenges in relations with Myanmar have to be addressed.

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- 8. ASEAN must be more dynamic to offer regional leadership.** ASEAN is already the host and hub for many leading regional dialogues and forums, and it is moving toward its own ASEAN Community by 2015. This is important not only for ASEAN itself; ASEAN integration also is critical for its wider regional role. ASEAN's governments must cooperate to identify issues and achieve joint programs and common positions on key issues. Here, relationships are a necessary first step. Further ahead, the grouping's members must coordinate on wider regional and global issues.

### Institution and Issue-Specific Recommendations

- 9. The Expanded East Asia Summit can be pivotal, but patience is needed.** The EAS can be pivotal for U.S. engagement with Asia as a whole. It must be expected that ASEAN, playing the leading role, will identify emerging trends and consolidate common concerns in the region in order to facilitate a meaningful strategic dialogue and exchange of views among leaders. This will be critical to engage and sustain the full interest of EAS leaders in both existing and new member countries. If the EAS can set meaningful agendas that all members share and can identify with, the United States certainly should make it a priority to attend—without fail. Otherwise, there is no guarantee that, given the busy schedules of leaders, including the U.S. president, leaders will commit to attend on an annual basis. For the first years of the expanded EAS, the United States as a new participant should measure its expectations, accepting and supporting ASEAN in the modalities and existing agenda for discussions and work. It is important to note that the EAS and other structures need not be overrationalized, and that the regional architecture can continue to develop organically.
- 10. ASEAN Regional Forum/ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting Plus 8.** While the ARF continues, the recently created ADMM+8 regional meeting should receive more attention. The ARF is a security-focused meeting, but it is a gathering of foreign ministers and secretaries of state. The ADMM+8 is intended to bring defense ministers together in a formal setting, based on the success of informal discussions between defense officials at the annual Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore. The similar but different membership of the forums is also significant. The broad membership of the ARF can be a strength, as it maintains an inclusive process, and the ARF's agenda, such as moves toward preventive diplomacy and peaceful cooperation in Asia, must be encouraged. But the smaller grouping of the ADMM+8 should be utilized to move ahead with concrete cooperative efforts. Key undertakings should include efforts to enhance military transparency and joint cooperation for disaster relief and humanitarian assistance.

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- 11. Both sides should work toward an ASEAN–U.S. Summit that can be substantial and sustained.** While the summits of 2009 and 2010 broke new ground, the current mood of the meeting is not sustainable in the future. The Obama administration faces many pressing issues, both domestically and internationally. For ASEAN, the group aims to integrate as a community by 2015, and some member countries face internal challenges. The United States should engage with ASEAN member countries not only on direct bilateral issues and hot spots but also on priorities facing East Asia across borders and in global governance. ASEAN should respond to and develop the agenda suggested by the United States to create conditions for economic cooperation. The United States remains an economic power, and ASEAN collectively is one of its largest trading partners. Agreements to enhance trade and investment, whether bilaterally or as group, should be actively pursued.
- 12. There is a need to revive APEC and push ahead with the Trans-Pacific Partnership.** Capitalizing on the opportunity of the U.S. summit in 2011, APEC must be revitalized as an important institution for U.S.–Asia partnerships and take initiatives in the Asia-Pacific region that can influence and assist with global agendas. Some believe that it may be time to explore whether an annual APEC leaders’ summit truly is needed, or whether it can be focused at the ministerial level. But this is a question for the medium to longer term, and it will depend, in part, on developments in other dialogues and institutions linking the United States and Asia. While it is not formally within APEC, the TPP can help energize the group. The TPP currently is being negotiated to include not only Brunei, Chile, Singapore, and New Zealand, but also Australia, Peru, Malaysia, Vietnam, and the United States. This expansion can give new energy to free trade initiatives for the Asia-Pacific region as a whole. The interest of other APEC members, such as Japan, is to be encouraged, and at an appropriate juncture, their participation should be welcome. While some Asian nations, such as China, South Korea, and India, are not in the TPP, they already are linked through a web of economic agreements across Asia. Meanwhile, global initiatives such as the Doha Round should not be allowed to fall by the wayside.
- 13. Investment, currency, and economic cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region are vital global issues.** With the crisis in Europe, many are looking to the Asia-Pacific to drive global growth. Many economic issues facing the United States and Asia are influenced by global factors and, in turn, have global impacts. Accordingly, the appropriate global institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization, and the G-20, should be involved, and new and specific U.S.–Asia institutions may not be needed. For investment, Asia should remain open to U.S. investment, and conversely, the United States should be more open and receptive to Asian investments in the United States, provided these do not pose security concerns. There are also opportunities for dialogue and cooperation on finance

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and currency issues. China, the United States, and others should engage economically in a spirit of reciprocity and move in the direction of floating currencies. The United States and China should be aware that their currency policies can have a considerable and sometimes adverse effect on others in Asia in the trans-Pacific production chain.

- 14. The concerns of the Mekong River Delta and subregion are relevant to nonriparian countries.** Following the U.S.–ASEAN Summit, an agenda should be developed to engage with Mekong countries for mutual benefit. This can and should encompass a broad range of initiatives, such as cooperation on economic, environmental, and social issues. Moreover, other ASEAN and Asian countries should be involved appropriately. The participation of Japan, China, and India should be welcomed in building up the region. As interest and commitments develop, coordination of initiatives and efforts will be needed.
- 15. The United States and Asia should work together to understand and lead efforts to address climate change as a global issue.** Recognizing that all nations, developing and developed alike, have a responsibility to address climate change, a U.S.–Asia partnership on the issue would be vital. The United States, China, and India have been and will be key actors, given their economic size and larger contributions to greenhouse gases. But cooperation on this issue can be widened to include Japan and then others in Asia. Japan has expertise in energy efficiency, and other Asian nations, most notably China and India, are becoming leaders in clean technology, while others, such as Indonesia, have been critical players in the development of the regime for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+).
- 16. On the issues facing Myanmar, the United States and Asia should work toward a dialogue involving the relevant parties in preparation for 2014, as Myanmar wishes to chair ASEAN.** In the aftermath of the 2010 elections in Myanmar, there is an opportunity for countries to reconsider their policies on engaging with Myanmar. The appointment of a special envoy by the United States is a notable step. The United States, China, ASEAN, and others such as Japan should work together to address issues in Myanmar. Coordination also should be encouraged with ASEAN in relevant ASEAN-hosted forums, including the ARF. Given their differences, the Asian countries and the United States may not have the same policies. But the effort to engage Myanmar in order to encourage further positive change following the elections should be consistent and concerted.



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## Biographies of Task Force Members

### Co-Chair

**Han Sung-Joo** is Professor Emeritus at Korea University. Professor Han previously served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs (1993-94), UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Cyprus (1996-97), a member of the UN Inquiry Commission on the 1994 Rwanda Genocide (1999), Chairman of the East Asia Vision Group (2000-2001), Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the United States (2003-2005), and Acting President of Korea University (2002, 2006-2007). Professor Han is a graduate of Seoul National University (1962) and received a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of California, Berkeley (1970). Previously, he taught at the City University of New York (1970-78) and was a visiting Professor at Columbia University (1986-87) and Stanford University (1992, 1995). He was also a Distinguished Fellow at the Rockefeller Brothers Fund (1986-87). His English publications include *Korean Diplomacy in an Era of Globalization* (1995), *Korea in a Changing World* (1995), and *Changing Values in Asia* (1999).

### Co-Chair

**J. Stapleton Roy** is Director of the Kissinger Institute on China and the United States at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C. He retired from the Foreign Service in January 2001 after a career spanning 45 years with the U.S. Department of State. A fluent Chinese speaker, Ambassador Roy spent much of his Foreign Service career in East Asia, while also specializing in Soviet affairs. He rose to become a three-time ambassador, serving as the top U.S. envoy in Singapore (1984–86), the People's Republic of China (1991–95), and Indonesia (1996–99). In 1996, he was promoted to the rank of Career Ambassador, the highest rank in the Foreign Service. Ambassador Roy's final post with the State Department was as Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Research. Following his retirement from the State Department in January 2001, Ambassador Roy joined Kissinger Associates, Inc., a strategic consulting firm. He joined the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in September 2008 to head the newly created Kissinger Institute, but he continues as a Senior Advisor to Kissinger Associates. In 2001, he received Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson Award for Distinguished Public Service.

### Members

**Dewi Fortuna Anwar** straddles the worlds of academia, political activism, and government. She is based at the Research Center for Politics in the Indonesian Institute of Sciences, where she is a Research Professor; she was the Deputy Chairman for Social Sciences and Humanities there from 2001 to 2010. She has written widely on Indonesia's foreign policy, Indonesia's democratization, as well as ASEAN and regional political and security issues. Dewi is the Chair of the Institute for Democracy and Human Rights at the Habibie Center, a private think tank based in Jakarta. Currently, she also serves as Deputy Secretary for

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Political Affairs to the Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia. Earlier, Dewi served as Assistant Minister/State Secretary for Foreign Affairs during the B. J. Habibie administration (1998–99). She was a Visiting Researcher in the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, in early 2010 and a Visiting Professor in the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, in 2007. She holds a doctorate from Monash University and master's and bachelor's degrees from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

**Nayan Chanda** is Director of Publications at the Yale Center for the Study of Globalization and editor of YaleGlobal Online (<http://www.yaleglobal.yale.edu>). Before coming to Yale in 2001, he spent nearly 30 years with the Hong Kong–based *Far Eastern Economic Review* as a reporter, diplomatic correspondent, and editor. In 1989–90, Chanda was a Senior Fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, D.C. From 1990 to 1992, he was the editor of the *Asian Wall Street Journal Weekly*, published from New York. He is the author of *Bound Together: How Traders, Preachers, Adventurers and Warriors Shaped Globalization* (Yale University Press, 2007); Chinese, French, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, and Turkish translations of the book have been published. Chanda also is the author of *Brother Enemy: The War After the War* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1986), which was translated into French, Japanese, and Khmer. Chanda has coedited and contributed chapters to more than a dozen books. He is a regular columnist for the *Times of India*, *BusinessWorld*, and the *Straits Times*. Chanda was the winner of the 2005 Shorenstein Award for Journalism, presented not only for a distinguished body of work, but also for the particular way it has helped an American audience understand the complexities of Asia. The biennial award is presented jointly by the Walter H. Shorenstein Forum for Asia Pacific Studies at Stanford University and the Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics, and Public Policy at Harvard University. Chanda is a Fellow of Yale Saybrook College and a member of the editorial boards of *GlobalAsia*, *New Global Studies*, and the *Sage Encyclopedia of Global Studies*. He is also a Nonresident Senior Fellow of the Brookings Institution and a member of the Advisory Council for Brookings Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies. Chanda holds a first class master's degree in history from Jadavpur University, Kolkata, and is the winner of the Jadavpur University Gold Medal.

**Elizabeth Economy** is the C. V. Starr Senior Fellow and Director for Asia Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations. The author of the award-winning book *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future* (Cornell University Press, 2004; 2nd ed., 2010), Dr. Economy has published articles in foreign policy and scholarly journals, including *Foreign Affairs*, *Harvard Business Review*, and *Foreign Policy*, as well as op-eds in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *International Herald Tribune*. Dr. Economy is a frequent guest on nationally broadcast television and radio programs, has testified before Congress on numerous occasions, and regularly consults with U.S. government agencies and companies. She serves on the board of the China–U.S. Center for Sustainable Development and

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is a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council on the Future of China. She writes about topics involving China on the Council on Foreign Relations's Asia Program blog, *Asia Unbound*. Dr. Economy received her doctorate from the University of Michigan, her master's degree from Stanford University, and her undergraduate degree from Swarthmore College. In 2008, she received an honorary doctor of laws degree from Vermont Law School.

**Akiko Fukushima** is a Research Fellow of the Joint Research Institute for International Peace and Culture at Aoyama Gakuin University. She holds a doctorate from Osaka University and a master's degree from the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University. She has served as Adjunct Professor in the Law School at Keio University, Director of Policy Studies at the National Institute for Research Advancement, Senior Fellow at the Japan Foundation, and Visiting Professor at the University of British Columbia, Canada. Dr. Fukushima also has served as a member of numerous committees. Her publications include *Japanese Foreign Policy: The Emerging Logic of Multilateralism* (Macmillan, 1999) and *A Lexicon of Asia Pacific Security Dialogue* (2003) by Keizai Hyoronsha, *Human Security* (Chikura Shobo, 2011). She also has contributed chapters to *The Uses of Institutions* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), *Security Politics in the Asia-Pacific* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), *Asia's New Multilateralism* (Columbia University Press, 2009), and *Public Diplomacy and Soft Power in East Asia* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

**Michael J. Green** is a Senior Advisor and holds the Japan Chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, as well as serving as Associate Professor of International Relations at Georgetown University. He was Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and Senior Director for Asian Affairs for the National Security Council from January 2004 to December 2005; from 2001 to 2004, he was Director of Asian Affairs for the National Security Council, with responsibility for Japan, Korea, and Australia/New Zealand. His current research and writing is focused on Asian regional architecture, Japanese politics, U.S. foreign policy history, the Korean Peninsula, Tibet, Burma, and U.S.–India relations. Dr. Green speaks fluent Japanese and spent more than five years in Japan working as a staff member of the National Diet, as a journalist for Japanese and American newspapers, and as a consultant for U.S. business. He also has been on the faculty of the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University; a fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations; a staff member at the Institute for Defense Analyses; and a senior advisor to the Office of Asia-Pacific Affairs in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. He graduated from Kenyon College with highest honors in history in 1983 and received his master's degree from Johns Hopkins University in 1987 and his doctorate in 1994. He also did graduate work at Tokyo University as a Fulbright Fellow and at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as a Research Associate of the MIT-Japan Program. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the International Institute

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for Strategic Studies, and the Aspen Strategy Group. He is also Vice Chair of the congressionally mandated Japan–U.S. Friendship Commission and serves on the advisory boards of the Center for a New American Security, the Australian American Leadership Dialogue, and the editorial board of the *Washington Quarterly*.

**Lee Shin-wha** is a Professor of Political Science and International Relations and Director of the Global Leadership Development Center, Korea University. She received her doctorate from the University of Maryland, College Park, and held a postdoctoral fellowship at Harvard University. Previously, she served as a Research Fellow at the World Bank; Special Advisor to Kofi Annan’s Rwandan Independent Inquiry at the United Nations; Chair’s Advisor to the East Asian Vision Group; Korean delegate to the 2004 Korea–China–Japan Future Leaders’ Forum; Visiting Scholar in the East Asian Studies Program, Princeton University; and Visiting Professor at Columbia University. She received the Nakasone Yasuhiro Award of Excellence in 2008 and is an international board member of the Academic Council on the United Nations System and the Asia-Pacific Center for Responsibility to Protect, University of Queensland. She has published numerous articles and books, including *Promoting Human Security in East Asia* (2004), *South Korean Strategic Thoughts Toward Asia* (2008), and “The United Nations and Responsibility to Protect” (in Korean, 2010), covering the fields of nontraditional security, international organization, and East Asian multilateral security and foreign policy.

**Jamie F. Metzl** is Executive Vice President of the Asia Society. He is responsible for overseeing the institution’s strategic direction and overall program activities across its network of 11 centers in Asia and the United States. Previously, Metzl served as Deputy Staff Director and Senior Counselor of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senior Coordinator for International Public Information at the U.S. Department of State, Director for Multilateral and Humanitarian Affairs for the National Security Council, and Human Rights Officer for the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia. Metzl ran unsuccessfully for the U.S. House of Representatives from Missouri’s Fifth Congressional District in Kansas City in 2004. He appears regularly on national and international media, including CNN, BBC, Bloomberg, and CBS. The author of a book on human rights in Southeast Asia and the novel *The Depths of the Sea*, his syndicated columns and writings on Asian affairs, genetics, virtual reality, and other topics have appeared in publications around the world. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, a founder and co-chair of the board of the bipartisan national security organization Partnership for a Secure America, and a member of the board of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. He holds a doctorate in Asian history from Oxford University, a juris doctorate from Harvard Law School, and is a magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Brown University. Metzl has completed nine ironman triathlons, 25 marathons, and one ultramarathon.

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**Anthony Milner** is the Basham Professor of Asian History at Australian National University and a board member of the Asia Society's AustralAsia Centre. He is co-chair of the Australian Committee of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific and co-organizer of both the ASEAN–Australia–NZ Dialogue and the Track II Asialink Conversations. His Australian government committee memberships include the Foreign Affairs Council (1998–) and the founding boards of the Australia Malaysia Institute and the Australia Thailand Institute. A graduate of Cornell University, he has held visiting appointments at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton University; National University of Singapore; Tokyo University of Foreign Studies; National University of Malaysia; Humboldt University; and Kyoto University. He is a specialist on Southeast Asia and the coeditor of *Australia in Asia* (3 vols., Oxford University Press). His most recent book is *The Malays* (2011).

**Joshua Cooper Ramo** is Vice Chairman at Kissinger Associates, a strategic advisory firm. His clients include some of the largest corporations and investors in the world. Prior to entering the advisory business, Ramo was an award-winning journalist and Senior Editor and Foreign Editor of TIME Magazine. Ramo, a Mandarin speaker, divides his time between Beijing and New York City. The World Economic Forum has called him “one of China’s leading foreign-born scholars.” His papers on China’s development, including “The Beijing Consensus” and “Brand China,” have been widely distributed in China and abroad. In 2008, Ramo served as China Analyst for NBC during the Summer Olympics in Beijing. Trained as an economist, Ramo holds degrees from the University of Chicago and New York University. He has been a Crown Fellow of the Aspen Institute, a term member of the Council on Foreign Relations, a member of the Asia21 Leaders Program, a member of the World Economic Forum’s Young Global Leaders and Global Leaders for Tomorrow, an advisory board member of the Leaders Project and co-founder of the U.S.–China Young Leaders Forum. He has spent two sabbaticals working at AIDS hospices in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. He is a member of the Board of Directors of Starbucks and FedEx. An avid flyer, Ramo wrote a book, *No Visible Horizons*, about his experiences as a competitive aerobatic pilot. His most recent book is the New York Times best-seller *The Age of the Unthinkable: Why the New World Disorder Constantly Surprises Us and What We Can Do About It*, which has been published in nearly 20 languages.

**Stephen S. Roach** is a member of the faculty of Yale University and Non-Executive Chairman of Morgan Stanley Asia. For more than 30 years, he has been a thought leader on Wall Street, where, for the bulk of his career, he served as Morgan Stanley’s Chief Economist, heading up a highly regarded team of economists around the world. Mr. Roach’s current teaching and research program focuses on the impacts of Asia on the broader global economy. At Yale, he introduced new courses for undergraduate and graduate students on “The Next China” and “The Lessons of Japan.” His writing and research also address globalization, trade policy, the postcrisis policy architecture, and the capital market implications of global imbalances. His views have been disseminated widely in the

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international media and presented frequently in expert testimony before the U.S. Congress. Prior to joining Morgan Stanley in 1982, Mr. Roach worked in senior capacities at Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York and the Federal Reserve Board in Washington, D.C. He holds a doctorate in economics from New York University and was a Research Fellow at the Brookings Institution. Mr. Roach is currently recovering from chronic jet lag syndrome after having logged 1.2 million air miles during his recent three-year stint as Hong Kong-based Chairman of Morgan Stanley Asia. He is the author of *The Next Asia* (Wiley, 2009).

**Rodolfo C. Severino** is the head of the ASEAN Studies Centre at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore and a frequent speaker at international conferences in Asia and Europe. Having been Secretary-General of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations from 1998 to 2002, he has completed a book, entitled *Southeast Asia in Search of an ASEAN Community* and published by ISEAS, on issues facing ASEAN, including the economic, security and other challenges confronting the region. He has produced a book on ASEAN in ISEAS' Southeast Asia Background Series and one on the ASEAN Regional Forum. His views on ASEAN and Southeast Asia have also been published in *ASEAN Today and Tomorrow*, a compilation of his speeches and other statements. Severino is currently working on a book on the Philippine national territory. He has co-edited two books: *Whither the Philippines in the 21st Century?* and *Southeast Asia in a New Era*, which is intended for pre-university students. He writes articles for journals and for the press. Before assuming the position of ASEAN Secretary-General, Severino was Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines, the culmination of 32 years in the Philippine Foreign Service. He twice served as ASEAN Senior Official for the Philippines and is one of the Philippines' Experts and Eminent Persons for the ASEAN Regional Forum. Severino has a Bachelor of Arts degree in the humanities from the Ateneo de Manila and a Master of Arts degree in international relations from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies. He is a member of the Advisory Board of The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs, the journal of the Fletcher School of Tufts University.

**Shen Dingli** is a Professor of International Relations at Fudan University, Shanghai. He is the Executive Dean of Fudan University's Institute of International Studies and Director of the Center for American Studies. He cofounded and directs China's first non-government-based Program on Arms Control and Regional Studies at Fudan University. Dr. Shen has taught courses on international security, China-U.S. relations, and China's foreign policy in China, the United States, and the Semester at Sea. His research and publications cover China-U.S. security relations, regional security and international strategy, arms control and nonproliferation, foreign and defense policy of China and the United States. He is Vice President of the Chinese Association of South Asian Studies, Vice President of the Shanghai Association of International Studies, and Vice President of Shanghai Institute of International Strategic Studies. He received his doctorate in physics from Fudan University

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in 1989 and did postdoctoral work in arms control at Princeton University from 1989 to 1991. He was an Eisenhower Fellow in 1996, and in 2002, he advised United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan on the strategic planning of his second term. Dr. Shen serves on the Global Council of the Asia Society and was appointed by Shanghai Municipality as Shanghai's Conference Ambassador. He has coedited 18 books, with more than 1,600 articles and papers published worldwide.

**Susan Shirk** is Director of the University of California's Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation and the Ho Miu Lam Professor of China and Pacific Relations in the School of International Relations and Pacific Studies, University of California, San Diego. Shirk first traveled to China in 1971 and has been doing research there ever since. From 1997 to 2000, she served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of East Asia and Pacific Affairs, with responsibility for China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Mongolia. She founded in 1993 and continues to lead the Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue, an unofficial Track II forum for discussions of security issues among defense and foreign ministry officials and academics from the United States, Japan, China, Russia, and the Koreans. Shirk's publications include *China: Fragile Superpower*; *How China Opened Its Door: The Political Success of the PRC's Foreign Trade and Investment Reforms*; *The Political Logic of Economic Reform in China*; and *Competitive Comrades: Career Incentives and Student Strategies in China*. Her edited book, *Changing Media, Changing China*, was published by Oxford University Press in December 2010.

**Simon Tay** (Project Co-Director) is concurrently Chairman of the Singapore Institute of International Affairs, the country's oldest think tank, and Associate Professor of International Law at the National University of Singapore. He is also a Senior Consultant at WongPartnership, a leading Asian law firm with offices in Singapore, China, and the Middle East. He serves on Toyota Corporation's Global Advisory Board and as a board member for two major Singaporean corporations, Hyflux Ltd. and the Far East Group. His book *Asia Alone: The Dangerous Post-Crisis Divide from America* (Wiley, 2009) was well reviewed by *The Economist*, *Financial Times*, and regional media, and his commentaries are featured regularly in newspapers in Singapore, Hong Kong, Indonesia, and Thailand. He has served in public positions in Singapore, including stints as Chairman of the National Environment Agency, an independent Member of Parliament, and coordinator of the Singapore Volunteers Overseas, the country's equivalent of the Peace Corps. He received a National Day Award in 2006 and continues to serve Singapore as an Expert and Eminent Person in the ASEAN Regional Forum and on the country's Climate Change Network. He has taught as a Visiting Professor at Yale University, the Fletcher School, and Harvard Law School. He is a prize-winning author of stories and poems. In 2010, his novel *City of Small Blessings* was awarded the Singapore Literature Prize. He graduated in law from the National University of Singapore, where he was president of the student union for three terms, and from Harvard, where he won the Laylin Prize for the best thesis in international law.

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**Michael G. Kulma** (Project Co-Director) is Executive Director of Global Leadership Initiatives at the Asia Society headquarters in New York. In this capacity, he directs the Asia Society's four major leadership initiatives: Asia 21 Young Leaders, the Diversity Leadership Forum, the Williamsburg Conference, and Women Leaders of New Asia. He began his career at the Asia Society in 2000 working on policy issues related to Northeast Asia, with a specific concentration on China. Prior to that, he lectured at a number of colleges in the New York City area, focusing on East Asian politics, foreign policy, and international relations. Michael contributes regularly to print and broadcast media on Asia-focused issues. He was a term member of the Council on Foreign Relations and is a member of the National Committee on United States–China Relations. Michael received a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Chicago, a master's degree in public and international affairs from the University of Pittsburgh, and a doctorate in political science from the City University of New York.



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