

# REGIONAL COOPERATION: SOUTHEAST ASIAN EXPERIENCE

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## **Abstract**

This article deals with the concept of regional cooperation in Southeast Asia. The “habits of consultation”, “principles of restraint”, “methods of communication”, and the tradition of tolerance among ASEAN members have solved differences, harmonized diverging interests and managed conflicts among them. This stable environment for conflict resolution has been achieved through bilateral diplomatic channels. Despite its achievements, the community building in Southeast Asia demands perhaps greater efforts than elsewhere. In addition, the rapid pace of industrialization and urbanization has forced all ASEAN countries to confront the social issues of poverty, regional and intra-country disparities in income and environmental degradation. The collective environmental security will remain a challenge, at least for the foreseeable future, for Southeast Asian countries. The article also examines the options for Pakistan. Southeast Asia–Pakistan trade and economic relations are not promising, their cultural interaction is also not well known. In order to improve the people–to–people contact, the relationship between the civil societies of Southeast Asian countries and Pakistan needs to be strengthened.

*Keywords: Consultation, restraint, regionalism, poverty, and security*

## **Introduction**

The regional system of cooperation in South East Asia, known as Association of South East Asian Nations, (ASEAN) came into being in 1967, for the establishment of common awareness in the region through economic cooperation. It is the most successful example of regional cooperation in the developing world. Though ASEAN was not primarily an anti-communist alliance like South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), but the growing communist threat in the region was probably one of the main reasons of its establishment. Besides common threat perception, the hostility and territorial disputes between Indonesia and Malaysia, Malaysia and the Philippines, Singapore and Malaysia, and Thailand and Malaysia also played an important role in Association’s establishment. The founding fathers of ASEAN were aware that the regional economic integration will allow them to deal better with what they saw as unfair competition from industrialized countries. Probably, the idea of establishing a regional organization to pursue a common cause and to advance their mutual interests had long been in their minds. The four decades of intra-regional cooperation in South East Asia with all its weaknesses has made it a dynamic economic region and has contributed to mutual understanding, regional peace, stability and prosperity. Today, ASEAN is an

important regional force that is on good terms with regional and international giants – China, India, Japan, Australia, South Korea, Pakistan, U.S., Russia and the European Union.

This paper is based on the following assumptions: First, ASEAN's intra-regional cooperation will further expand from economic to political and security areas. Second, the upward trend in defence expenditure of, and military modernization by ASEAN member countries will continue, at least for the foreseeable future, and would not destabilize the security of the region and intra-ASEAN territorial and maritime disputes will not affect the normal conduct and development of their relations. Third, most of the Southeast Asian countries faces, and will continue to face, at least for the foreseeable future, domestic challenges, such as the need for further poverty reduction and the improvement of income distribution system. Finally, Southeast Asia will remain a "no-war community" rather than a security community. The concept of ASEAN security community was first proposed by Indonesia in the 36<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting held on June 2003 in Phnom Penh. There is a remote possibility that ASEAN members would develop a common framework of foreign and security policies.<sup>1</sup>

### **Regional Integration: Concept**

The internal and external tensions provided a great stimulus to regional integration in Southeast Asia. The main aims of ASEAN were economic and social, but the Association has achieved a greater political harmony in the region, as well.

The development of regional integration can be divided into two phases: From the late 1950s to late 1980s (Cold War period), and from the late 1980s through 1990s (Post-Cold War period). During the first phase, the regional integration gathered pace as a sub field of international relations. During this period focus was primarily on the politico-military-economic blocs. The post-Cold War period gave way to the emergence of economic and trading blocs. In this phase politics and economies are more clearly linked and the state is joined by non-state actors in this process. As against the geopolitics which creates contention and power clashes, geo-economics, which is being considered as an uniting force, calls for collective action among nations.<sup>2</sup>

Regional integration theory has its roots in neo-functionalism which explain that "integration results from the need". "Need" to bring peace and prosperity through integration. The proposition of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) that, "...the sprit of commerce sooner or later takes hold of every person, and it cannot exists side-by-side with war" is the centre piece of neo-functionalists and interdependence theories that gained prominence in the 1970s.<sup>3</sup> The main advocates of neo-functionalism are: Jean Monnet, R. Schuman, Ernest B. Haas, Leon N. Lindberg, Philippe C. Schmitter, Stuart A. Scheingold, and Joseph S. Nye.

The neo-liberal theory of International Relations states that, "...all states have mutual interests and can gain from cooperation."<sup>4</sup> Therefore, its focus is on cooperation, institutions, and gain for all members involved. States, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations are main actors of neo-liberal theory.

As against the neo-liberal school of thought, neo-realists "...put emphasis on selfishness and power seeking." According to this school "states can rely only on

themselves.”<sup>5</sup> Therefore, the fundamental goal of states in international system is to prevent others from gaining more. International system and states are the main actors of realist school of thought.

According to Vit Dockal, “regional integration can be understood as the convergent cooperation at the macro or micro level.”<sup>6</sup> Takashi Terada defines regionalism as a “concrete manifestation of regional consciousness. It needs a boundary to differentiate insiders (members) from outsiders (non-members) and regional concept that determines this geographical boundary.”<sup>7</sup> Douglas Webber and Bertrand Fort explains regional integration “...as a process of (the growing formal or informal) coordination of public policies by the governments of geographically proximate states.”<sup>8</sup>

The “convergent cooperation” among ASEAN members is based on socio-economic interdependence. Their common desire for regional peace and prosperity has been the driving force for regional integration and peaceful settlement of disputes. Like other regional organizations ASEAN play a visible role in international relations.

The neo-realists argue that ASEAN prove neo-realist thinking in international relations. They claim that ASEAN survived during the Cold War and exists today because its member states face similar external threats. During the Cold War period it was the growing Communist threat in the region and in the post-Cold War period it is China threat (economic rise and military build-up) that unites member states with political systems ranging from military authoritarianism and communist one-party rule to liberal democracies in the making. However, neo-realists fail to address the impact of institution building in Southeast Asia on regional peace and stability. Given the peace and security in Southeast Asia neo-liberal institutionalists’ argument is more powerful and acceptable than neo-realists’ point of view.<sup>9</sup>

## **Regional Integration in Southeast Asia: An Overview**

Asia is emerging as a hub of cooperation frameworks. Most of these frameworks have been established in the post-Cold War period. Table I gives the idea of major regional cooperation frameworks in Asia in economic and security areas.

Southeast Asia covers an area of 4,465,487 sq. k.m and consists of ten states — Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Indian influence was first felt in the region through the spread of Hinduism and Buddhism, followed by Chinese and Muslim influence. Muslim merchants from South Asia, in the fourteenth century, established trade centres in Malaya and up to the Southern Philippines. Then came the European colonists who have left visible marks in the economic and political field in Southeast Asia. At the end of the Second World War in 1945, one sovereign state — Thailand existed there. Rest of the Southeast Asia was under the European colonial yoke. With the process of decolonization in the post-War period, nine new states had emerged in Southeast Asia. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s entire region had remained economically weak and politically fragmented, which gave way to the belief that mutual economic development would contribute to political stability in the region.

Against this background the representatives of the governments of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand gathered in Bangkok on August

**Table I: Major Regional Cooperation Frameworks in Asia**

Name of the Framework	Members
Japan – China Republic of Korea – Trilateral Cooperation	Japan, China, Republic of Korea
Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)	Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, Cambodia.
ASEAN + 3	China, Japan, Republic of Korea and ASEAN
ASEAN Post – Ministerial Conferences (ASEAN PMC)	ASEAN, China, Japan, Republic of Korea, U.S., Canada, European Union, Australia, New-Zealand, Russia and India
Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD)	ASEAN, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Japan, China, Republic of Korea, Bahrain, Qatar, Kazakhstan, Oman, Kuwait, Mongolia, Bhutan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, UAE and Russia
Asia – Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)	ASEAN (Excluding Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia), U.S., Canada, Australia, China, Japan, Republic of Korea, New-Zealand, Russia, Chinese Taipei, (Taiwan), Mexico Chile, Peru, Papua New Guinea
ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)	ASEAN, China, Republic of Korea, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, U.S., Russia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Pakistan, European Union, India, Papua, New Guinea, Mongolia, North Korea and Timor – Leste.
Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC)	ASEAN (Excluding Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar), China, Republic of Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Russia, Canada, U.S., Mexico, Peru, Chile, Ecuador, Columbia, Australia, New Zealand, Pacific Island countries.
South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)	Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Maldives.
Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)	Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates.
Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)	Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan.
Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)	Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan.
East Asian Summit (EAS)	ASEAN, Japan, Republic of Korea, China, India, New Zealand and Australia

8, 1967 and signed the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' (ASEAN) declaration to develop their own regional system of cooperation. The primary motive for this grouping was "economic growth, social progress, and cultural development in the region through joint endeavours in the spirit of equality and partnership."

The first summit meeting of ASEAN was held at Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia on February 24, 1976 and two major documents were signed: Declaration of ASEAN Concord; and ASEAN's core Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in Southeast Asia. TAC laid down the principles of "...mutual respect for the independence and sovereignty of all nations, non-interference in the internal affairs of each other; settlement of disputes by peaceful means; and effective cooperation among the member countries."

Brunei Darussalam became member of ASEAN in 1984. In the post-Cold War period, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, and Cambodia became members of the Association in 1995, 1997, 1997 and 1999, respectively.

Since its inception, the member countries have acceded to the following major documents of ASEAN:

1. Zone of Peace and Neutrality Declaration .....1971
2. Declaration of ASEAN Concord, Bali .....1976
3. Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia .....1976
4. ASEAN Declaration on the South China Sea.....1992
5. The ASEAN Regional Forum: A Concept Paper.....1995
6. Treaty of Southeast Asia Nuclear Free Zone .....1995
7. ASEAN Vision 2020.....1997
8. Joint Statement on East Asia Cooperation.....1999
9. Rules of Procedure of the High Council of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia .....2001
10. Declaration of ASEAN Concord II .....2003
11. Vietnam Action Plan (2004-2010) (replaced the Hanoi Action Plan).....2004
12. ASEAN Eminent Persons Group (EPG).....2005

Of all the documents signed since 1967, probably the most important and comprehensive document is ASEAN Concord II, also known as Bali Concord II. It was the growing subversive activities of radical Islamic groups in Indonesia, Bali bombing on 12 October, 2002, and the Marriott Hotel bombing in Jakarta on 5 August, 2003, which persuaded the Indonesian leadership to obtain the agreement of fellow ASEAN members in 2003 Summit meeting to further strengthen and enlarge the role of ASEAN, especially in security matters. As a result of Indonesian persuasion, ASEAN leaders signed the Declaration on 7 October, 2003 in Bali. It proclaims that ASEAN community shall be established by 2020 comprising three pillars: Political and Security Community (PSC), Economic Community (EC), and Socio-Cultural Community (SCC).<sup>10</sup>

Currently the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) which was formed by ASEAN in 2005 is preparing the final draft of ASEAN Charter to propose "bold and visionary" principles for the Association. "The Charter would not only give ASEAN much-needed legal personality but also make it a more responsive, dynamic and integrated regional organization"<sup>11</sup> The Charter could form the basis for transforming the grouping into a rule-based organization where it would be possible to use majority voting, or subject member states to dispute settlement processes and penalize them when they do not meet their obligations.<sup>12</sup>

ASEAN carries out its work through the following ministerial bodies and technical working groups:

<b>Name of the Committee</b>	<b>Year of Establishment</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Functions</b>
ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM)	1967	Annually	Central Institution to oversee ASEAN's Community building, external relations, strategic policy and development cooperation.
ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM)	2006	Annually	To promote regional peace and stability through dialogue and cooperation in defence and security.
ASEAN Law Ministers Meeting (ALAWMM)	1986	Once every 36 months	Strengthening cooperation on judicial assistance in civil and commercial matters.
ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC)	1997	Once in two years	Regional coordination to combat terrorism money laundering and drug trafficking
ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)	1994	Annually	Conflict avoidance forum
ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM)	1975	Annually	Resolving issues or disputers relating to economic agreements.
ASEAN Free Trade Area (AETA) Council	1992	Annually	To oversee the progress made in the implementation of the Common Effective Preferential Tariff (CEPT)
ASEAN Investment Area (AIA) Council	1998	Annually	Promotes Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)
ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF)	1979	Annually	Cooperation on food, agriculture and forestry sectors.
ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM)	1980	Annually	Regional energy security and sustainability remains top priority
ASEAN Finance Ministers Meeting (AFMM)	1997	Annually	Enhance financial cooperation
ASEAN Mekong Basin Development Cooperation (AMBDC)	1996	Annually	Development and prosperity of the Mekong riparian states and to strengthen high way, rail and energy networks.
ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Minerals (AMMin)	2005	Once in three years	Development of mineral sector
ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Science and Technology (AMMST)	1980	Annually	Promotion of Technology transfer, sharing information of best practices and development of regional technical skills.
ASEAN Telecommunication on IT Ministers Meeting (TELMIN)	2001	Annually	To prepare for an effective policy and regulatory framework in embracing new technologies.
ASEAN Transport Ministers Meeting (ATM)	1996	Annually	To intensify air transport, to facilitate door-to-door delivery of goods within ASEAN, to enhance maritime transport in ASEAN.

ASEAN Tourism Ministers Meeting (A-ATM)	1998	Annually	To promote ASEAN as a single tourist destination.
ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Culture and Arts (AMCA)	2003	Meets once in two years	To enhance cultural cooperation within ASEAN and with Dialogue Partners
ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM)	2004	Meets as necessary	To strengthen prevent, monitoring and mitigation measures to address disasters in the region.
ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting (ASED)	2006	Annually	To promote regional identity through education.
ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment (AMME)	1981	Once in three years	To combat environmental degradation.
ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Haze (AMMH)	1997	Meets as the need arises	To cooperate trans-boundary land and forest fires pollution.
ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting (AHMM)	1980	Once in two years	Regional coordination mechanism in human health and animal health.
ASEAN Ministers responsible for information (AMRI)	1989	Once in 18 months	Cooperation in the field of information.
ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting (ALMN)	1975	Meets once in two years	To prepare ASEAN workforce for regional economic integration
ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (AMMSWD)	1979	Meets once in three years	Focuses on the raising of standard of living of the marginalized and disadvantaged groups in the region.
ASEAN Ministers Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication (AMRDPE)	1997	Meets once in two years	Focuses on rural development and poverty eradication
ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth (AMMY)	1992	Meets once in three years	To encourage the participation of regional youth in the productive workforce.

**Source:** Adapted from *ASEAN Annual Report, 2005-2006*, (Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat, 2006), 16-40.

The above ministerial bodies and technical working groups show that the Association's members are not only cooperating in economic, political and socio-cultural fields but members have taken substantial steps to cooperate in non-traditional security areas, as well, such as combating terrorism, cyber crime, money laundering, drug and human trafficking and environmental degradation, including trans-boundary land and forest fires pollution.

## Southeast Asia: Building Together

The functional approach of ASEAN for the promotion of peace and prosperity in the region is based on deepening economic cooperation. According to Hadi Soesastro, Executive Director, Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Jakarta, ASEAN "... has sought not to develop regional economic integration but, rather, regional solidarity among neighbours for creating regional peace and stability through economic cooperation."<sup>13</sup> This section of paper will deal with trade, economic, political, and security cooperation among Southeast Asia countries.

### **Trade and Economic Cooperation**

Economic and trade cooperation was one of the major areas identified for fostering regional integration in Southeast Asia. ASEAN did not achieve much in this area until its leaders signed Bali Concord in February 1976. It was the first significant step which paved the way for the Association to move forward in strengthening cooperation in trade and economic fields. The scope of economic cooperation achieved so far by the ASEAN member countries is remarkable (evidence??). Areas such as trade and industrial cooperation, and cooperation on basic commodities are included within the scope of ASEAN economic activities. In addition, in 2000, ASEAN+3 (Japan, China, South Korea) agreed to set up a bilateral currency swap scheme, known as Chiang Mai Initiative (CMI) to prevent a repeat of the 1997 financial crisis.

The remarkable economic performance of ASEAN member states has resulted not from the economic cooperation schemes among members, but mainly from Associations' trade and investment links with outside world, which have contributed to create the habit of cooperation that is the key to ASEAN success.<sup>14</sup> This "habit" is often called as an "ASEAN way."

Table II show ASEAN countries trade with industrialized states and among the members during 2005.

**Table II: ASEAN Countries Trade with Industrialized States**

(Unit: \$ U.S 1 million)

ASEAN Intra-regional Trade	252,215	23.4 percent
Extra-Regional Trade	827,193	76.6 percent

**Source:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Diplomatic Blue Book 2006*, (Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006), 49.

The trade trends suggest that intra-ASEAN trade is unlikely to grow quickly. This trade is concentrated in primary products such as, rubber, timber, vegetable oils, rice, sugar, and crude oil.

The trend in trade volume and share of the European Union (EU) and North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA) is different than the trade trends of ASEAN (see table III).

**Table III: Trade Volume of EU and NAFTA**

(Unit: \$ U.S 1 million)

Year 2005		
EU Intra-Regional Trade	4,811,270	65.7 percent
EU Extra-Regional Trade	2,510,830	34.3 percent
NAFTA Intra-Regional Trade	1,424,867	43.5 percent
NAFTA Extra-Regional Trade	1,853,887	56.5 percent

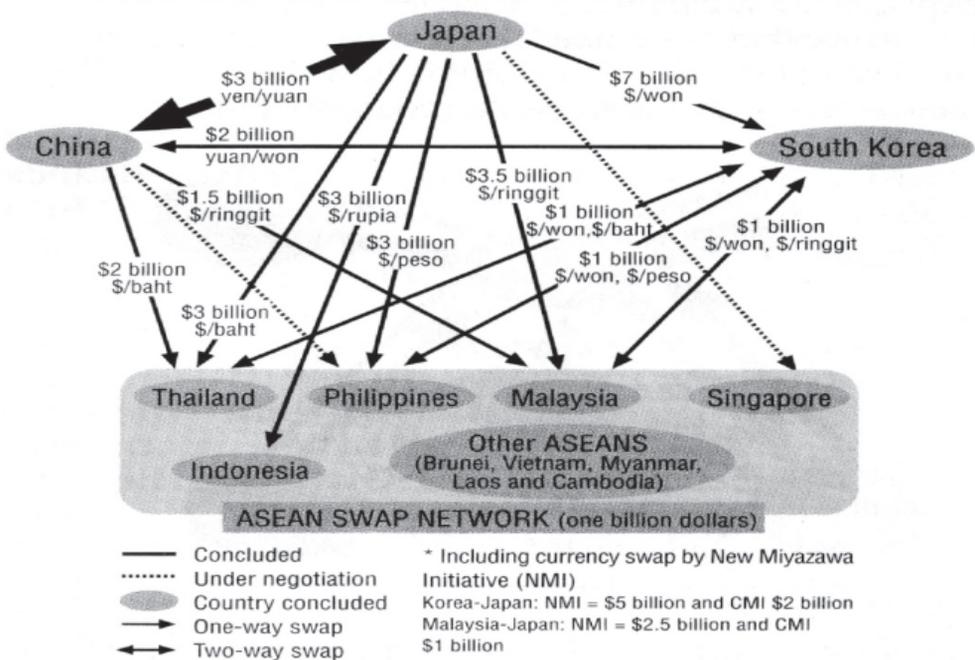
**Source:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Diplomatic Blue Book 2006*, (Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006).

The total global trade of ASEAN in 2005 was 1.226 trillion U.S dollars. The total exports of Southeast Asian countries in the same year were 646 billion US

dollars. Japan, U.S., EU, China and South Korea continued to be ASEAN's largest trading partners, together accounting for more than 53 percent of its trade in 2005.<sup>15</sup> Whereas the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to ASEAN from 2001-2005 was 118,080.2 US million dollars. No doubt the economic development has made ASEAN as one of the major actors on the world stage, but region's export - driven growth and its heavy reliance on foreign capital and technology has also made it increasingly dependent on its external economic relations. The continuity of economic development has thus, become a central concern of regional strategic thinking.<sup>16</sup>

Another milestone in this area is CMI swap agreements between ASEAN, Japan, China and South Korea. Under this initiative swap agreements are deployed in case of future liquidity problems. The CMI bilateral agreements were ended in the wake of Asian financial crisis of 1997-1998. Following figure explains the bilateral one-way and two-way swap agreements and it also shows that ASEAN Swap Network in 2003 was one billion U.S. dollars (given the current global crisis this is not very large amount and wouldn't bail out any major bank let alone an Asean state. In other words the IMF would still be lender of last resort if any state got into serious difficulty here).

**Currency Swap Agreement of Chiang Mai Initiative (CMI)**



Source: Bank of Japan, February 2003, quoted in *Look Japan*, Vol. 49, No. 570, September 2003, 9.

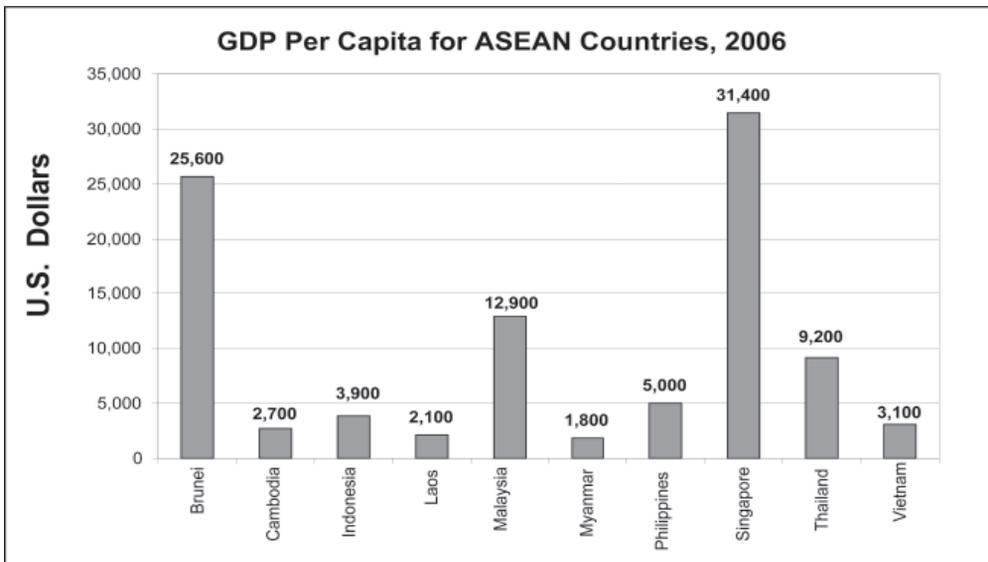
The key economic project of ASEAN is the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) which was established in 1993 and became effective on January 1, 2002. Between 1967 and the establishment of AFTA in 1993, political and security cooperation had been the main focus of the Association. AFTA is being considered as the "...Chief

element of ASEAN's geo-economic diplomacy, which was not the result of the growth of intramural trade relations, but a well-calculated strategic response to the formation of regional economic blocs elsewhere in the world, namely North America and Europe."<sup>17</sup> AFTA's goal is the complete abolition of tariffs for Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Singapore by 2010 and 2015 for Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and Myanmar.

ASEAN member countries are committed to build an Economic Community (EC) by 2020 to bring down barriers of goods, services, skilled labour and capital to create a single market in Southeast Asia.

Despite economic "miracles", economic disparities and development levels among ASEAN members are still great. Table IV tells the tale of economic disparities.

**Table IV: Economic Disparities**



Source: Adapted from [www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov), Accessed 18 July, 2007.

On the one end of the scale there are Singapore and Brunei with a per capita income of \$ U.S. 31,400 and \$ U.S. 25,600, respectively. On the other end, there are Laos and Myanmar with a per capita income of \$ U.S. 2,100 and 1,800, respectively—the United Nations least developed countries. ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) recognizes to reduce poverty and socio-economic disparities in year 2020.

The increasing degree of economic cooperation among ASEAN member countries, especially in the post-Cold War period would prove to be of immense importance to the region which may ultimately turn into a "concert of Southeast Asian nations."

### ***Political and Security Cooperation***

ASEAN member states have developed a distinctive approach to political and security cooperation which is built on the principle of sovereign equality, non-

intervention and non-interference, quiet diplomacy, mutual respect and the principles of non-involving ASEAN in mediating bilateral disputes among the membership.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, the member countries are maximizing their power and state security by increasing their military spending and force modernization programmes. Political and military leaders in the region, however, give at least two reasons for post-Cold War defence increase and force modernization: "...nearly replacing out-of-date weapons and restructuring their forces with an eye to future needs", and "...that military preparedness is a requisite for maintaining peace and stability,"<sup>19</sup> in the region. Whereas ASEAN regional security experts such as Sukhumbhand Paribatra, and Walden Bello suggest that the arms buildup is doing very little to foster regional security, if not actually undermining it.<sup>20</sup> The Southeast Asian countries' post-Cold War "military modernization has been characterized as an intra-ASEAN arms race."<sup>21</sup> Table-V illustrates defence spending of Southeast Asian countries during 2005 and 2006.

**Table V: Defence Spending**

U.S. Dollars

	2003	2004	2005	2006
Brunei	272 Million	294 Million	309 Million	343 Million
Cambodia	67.7 Million	69.6 Million	111 Million	123 Million
Indonesia	2.12 Billion	2.34 Billion	2.47 Billion	2.59 Billion
Laos	37.8 Million	NA	11.7 Million	13.4 Million
Malaysia	2.41 Billion	2.25 Billion	2.47 Billion	3.08 Billion
Myanmar	6.26 Billion	6.23 Billion	6.23 Billion	NA
Philippines	840 Million	824 Million	837 Million	909 Million
Singapore	4.7 Billion	5.04 Billion	5.57 Billion	6.40 Billion
Thailand	1.93 Billion	1.93 Billion	2.02 Billion	2.13 Billion
Vietnam	2.9 Billion	3.17 Billion	3.15 Billion	3.43 Billion

**Source:** *The Military Balance*, 2005 – 2006, 2006, 2007, (London: International Institute of Strategic Studies).

At the same time Southeast Asia confront with at least fourteen intra-ASEAN territorial and maritime disputes. The Southeast Asian countries military modernization programmes can be linked with intra-regional conflicts. Table VI give details of the regional disputes.

It is interesting to note that despite the above mentioned territorial and maritime disputes "absence of war among the member countries is a major achievement of ASEAN."<sup>22</sup> Not only has ASEAN itself free from an intramural war, but no ASEAN country has fought an outright war with a non-ASEAN state since its inception in 1967.<sup>23</sup> Non-use of force, conflict avoidance and conflict management are the basic norms of ASEAN members outlined in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation signed in 1976.

The post-Cold War global and regional changes forced ASEAN to undertake further institutional changes in this regard. The most significant was the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1994. It is often called as

**Table VI: Regional Disputes**

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<b>Territorial Disputes</b>	
1. Malaysia-Singapore:	Over the Pulau Batu Puteh / Pedra Branca Island in the Singapore Strait
2. Malaysia-Indonesia:	Over the Sipadan and Litigan Islands in Sulawesi Sea.
3. Thailand-Malaysia:	Common border dispute
4. Malaysia-Brunei:	Over Limbang
5. Malaysia-Philippines:	Over Sabah

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<b>Maritime Disputes* with Petroleum Potential</b>	
1. The Northern Andaman Sea:	Myanmar and India
2. The Eastern Gulf of Thailand:	Vietnam, Thailand and Cambodia
3. The South Western Gulf of Thailand:	Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam
4. An Area North-West and East of Natuna Islands:	Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, and China
5. Off-Shore Brunei:	Brunei, Malaysia, Possibly China, Possibly Vietnam
6. The Gulf of Tonkin:	China and Vietnam
7. The Spratly Islands	Brunei, Malaysia, Vietnam, the Philippines, China and Taiwan
8. The Arafura Sea:	Indonesia and Australia
9. Natuna Islands in South China Sea:	Indonesia and Vietnam

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\* Maritime disputes over issues such as boundary demarcation, continental shelf, exclusive economic zones, fishing rights and resource exploitation.

**Source:** Amitav Acharya, *Constructing Security Community in Southeast Asia: ASEAN and the Problems of Regional Order*, (London: Routledge, 2001), 136-137. And, W. Lawrence S. Prabhakar, "The Regional Dimension of Territorial and Maritime Disputes in Southeast Asia" in Kwa Chong and John K. S Koganceds, eds., *Maritime Security in Southeast Asia*, (London: Routledge, 2007), 34-36.

"ASEAN's model of preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution." The primary purpose of the ARF is to "...act as preventive forum rather than a forum that could respond after the event. It may be seen as ASEAN's attempt, to extend its processes of conflict avoidance to the Asia Pacific Region".<sup>24</sup>

The security of state or group of states cannot be viewed in military terms alone. Currently the ASEAN countries are facing the challenges of non-traditional security threats. Besides cooperation in political matters, the regional cooperation is also critical for dealing with non-traditional security issues, also known as human security concerns. This security paradigm has roots in the liberal institutional school of international relations.

The concept of human security or "new security challenges" emerged in the post-Cold War period. The term gained currency, especially after the UNDP *Human Development Report* 1994. Besides the concept of traditional security concerns of a state the report also put stress on "... legitimate concerns of ordinary people who sought security in their daily lives. For many of them, security symbolized protection from the threat of disease, hunger, un-employment, crime, social conflict, political repression and environmental hazards". "The non-traditional security

concerns also include, terrorism, cyber crime, money laundering, human trafficking, illegal immigration, food and water scarcity, etc. The UN Human Development Report 1994 and the establishment of the UN Commission on Human Security June 2001 are the best examples of changing attitudes towards the concept and meaning of security. In East Asia, Japan was the first country to introduce the concept of "comprehensive security" in the early 1970s, which included military and non-military threats ranging from military attack, economic wellbeing, pollution, natural disaster, crime and terrorism.

Stephen M. Waltz and his associates refuse to consider new challenges, generally known as non-traditional issues as legitimate security concerns,<sup>25</sup> for a state or group of states. In the opinion of Ann M. Florini and P.J. Simmons, "...the most, fundamental disagreement in the 're-defining security' literature is over whose security should be the object of security policy: that of the state or that of the individual'.<sup>26</sup>

Probably the most comprehensive definition of human security is offered by UN Commission on Human Security which was launched in June 2001: "...to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment. The Commission further elaborates that:

Human security complements 'state security' in four respects: First, its concern is individual and community rather than the state. Second, menaces include / more than / threats to state security. Third, the range of actors is expanded beyond the state alone. Finally, achieving human security includes-empowering people.

Of all the non-traditional security threats, the emergence of non-state actors with ideologies of extremism is posing the biggest threat to Southeast Asia, especially after September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States. The most hard-hit countries in the region are Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand. *Lashkar Jihad*, the Front to Defend Islam (FPI) and the Islamic Youth Movement are notable extremist groups in Indonesia. In the Philippines, Abu Sayyaf, the major Islamic guerrilla group claims the responsibility of most of the terrorist attacks. In Thailand the government believes that Pattani Islamic Mujahideen Movement (GMIP) is behind the terrorist attacks in the country. Terrorist attacks have also been foiled in Malaysia and Singapore.

The Regional countries are cooperating to combat and prevent these attacks. The ASEAN states and the United States signed an anti-terrorism agreement at the ARF's annual meeting held in Brunei 2001. "Under the ASEAN framework member states signed the agreement on Information Exchange and Establishment of Communication procedures on 7 May, 2002 to promote cooperation in combating transnational crime, including terrorism."<sup>27</sup>

In addition, ASEAN+3 (Japan, China and South Korea) cooperation in transnational crime has also been started. The first ministerial meeting in this regard was held in Bangkok in January 2004. To combat terrorism, money laundering and drug trafficking, the ASEAN countries have also established ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) in 1997 to "exchange information, personal training and the establishment of consistent legal systems."

The Southeast Asian countries are also facing rapid urbanization. It is estimated that "...44 percent of all Southeast Asians will be living in region's cities by the year 2010."<sup>28</sup>

Another important area where ASEAN member countries are cooperating is to combat piracy and maritime terrorism in Southeast Asian waters. According to the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) the number of piracies and armed robbery attacks on shipping throughout the world in 2004 was 325. Attacks in the Malacca and Singapore Straits continued unabated and remained at a high level of 41 incidents for the period 2003-2004.<sup>29</sup> In June 2004, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore agreed to conduct coordinated naval patrols in the Malacca Strait. In Southeast Asian waters economic reasons have motivated pirates. By contrast maritime terrorists are generally prompted by a sense of religious or racial alienation. The motivating factors common to both groups include economic disparities, growing poverty, and weak law enforcement capabilities.<sup>30</sup>

Other areas where ASEAN countries are cooperating and taking coordinated efforts are combating illicit drug trafficking, especially from Myanmar, Laos and Thailand, the influx of illegal workers, and trans-boundary haze pollution, etc. ASEAN agreement on Trans-boundary Haze Pollution is the first legally binding ASEAN regional environment accord to have entered force. The ASEAN leadership has recognized that these non-traditional security concerns could only be tackled through cooperative approach.

## Options for Pakistan

The economic, cultural and educational links between Pakistan and ASEAN countries are not promising. Pakistan - ASEAN trade is shown in table VII. Although, Pakistan is being considered as an attractive investment destination, but ASEAN's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Pakistan "apart from Singapore is almost non-existent".<sup>31</sup> We have to provide certain guidelines such as political stability, adequate infrastructure, consistency in policy, etc. to attract investment not only from Southeast Asia but from other countries as well. In addition, Pakistani business culture aims at quick return and, therefore, lacks a long-term strategy (it is not based on long-term gain). Therefore, we will have change our business culture as well. It could be a deterrent on the way to forging closer economic relationship between ASEAN and Pakistan.

Table VII: Pakistan – ASEAN Trade, 2005

U.S. \$ Thousand		
Total Trade	Exports from ASEAN	Imports by ASEAN
2,322,806	2,142,631	180,174.3

Source: <http://www.aseansec.org/stat/table24.xls>, Accessed 9 August, 2007.

Pakistan's cultural interaction with Southeast Asian countries is not well developed. Yet, the psychological distance in business perspectives between Pakistan and ASEAN countries could be removed by cultural interaction and promotion.

In education, Southeast Asia is peripheral, rather ignorant in Pakistani academic thinking. The institutions of higher learning in Pakistan are not well-suited for comprehensive study related to Pakistan's relationship with Southeast Asian countries. However, changed circumstances has induced the academic community in Pakistan to rethink issues in Pakistan - Southeast Asia relations. Further research and analysis is required on how far ASEAN countries are interested in establishing closer ties with Pakistan? Research also should be conducted on how Pakistan and ASEAN view one another on various issues? I also propose that ASEAN Chairs should be established in Pakistan, to promote research and studies on Pakistan – Southeast Asia relations and to encourage cultural exchanges and academic cooperation among scholars.

Durable and sustained relationships need people-to-people contact and mutual understanding of each other. The policy making community in Pakistan has so far paid little attention on this aspect of Pakistan - Southeast Asia relationship. Pakistan will have to promote deeper public understanding of each other. It is unfortunate that modern means of communications have not yet reduced distance among the people-to-people contacts between Pakistan and Southeast Asian countries. Therefore, more dialogue and discussions through seminars will help promote a constructive partnership. In addition, a Pakistan - ASEAN Cooperation Fund should be established to promote people-to-people exchanges, youth activities and to enhance Southeast Asian awareness in Pakistan.

Pakistan is keen to get full dialogue partnership in ASEAN. It would provide Pakistan an institutional framework to enhance trade and economic cooperation with ASEAN member states.<sup>32</sup> Pakistan cannot participate in East Asian Summit until full dialogue partnership is given in ASEAN. There are three criteria agreed by ASEAN members for a non-East Asian country to participate in East Asian Community: "must sign the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation; must be a full dialogue partner of ASEAN; and, must have substantial cooperative relations with ASEAN."

## **Conclusion**

This paper has shown that Southeast Asian countries have achieved a considerable degree of cooperation in economic, political, cultural and security areas. It further shows that ASEAN has proved effective in developing its relations with the outside world. Their experience of cooperation also suggest that Southeast Asian countries are not 'interested' in making ASEAN a regionally – integrated organization in a traditional sense. "The national sovereignty is probably the main constraint to greater institutionalization and integration".<sup>33</sup> They favour sovereignty and advocate the working of the Association through their respective governments. They have also avoided forming an intra-regional defence alliance.

Though there has been a significant increase in the development of a regional identity, ASEAN countries have yet to develop a sense of "ASEANness", a Southeast Asian parliament, common currency, a supreme court, a flag, an anthem, and diplomatic crops. ASEAN is being considered as one of the most successful regional groupings, it still lacks clear vision, especially on how to resolve their territorial and maritime disputes. Probably, the "habit of cooperation" and the tradition of tolerance, which they have developed in the last forty years, will prevail in the end.

“Southeast Asian Muslims are widely regarded as more tolerant and moderate than their Middle Eastern counterparts.”<sup>34</sup>

At the same time, the Southeast Asian countries are facing the challenges of non-traditional security issues. ASEAN remains and will continue to serve as a main vehicle for regional countries to cope with issues such as intra-ASEAN migration, huge disparities between and among member countries, spread of HIV/AIDS and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). These issues could only be tackled through cooperative approach. In addition, poverty eradication has been placed high on the social agenda of the Association. In sum, ASEAN is still disappointment in areas such as protecting human rights, public accountability and constitutional checks and balances.

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> For further discussion see, Richard Higgott, “The Theory and Practice of Region,” in Bertrand Fort and Douglas Webber (eds.), *Regional Integration in East Asia and Europe: Convergence or Divergence?* (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 32-33; Abul Kalam, *Sub regionalism in Asia: ASEAN and SAARC Experiences*, (Dhaka: The University Press, 2001), pp. 20-21; James C. Hsiung (ed.), *Twenty First Century World Order and the Asia-Pacific*, (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 346-347.

<sup>2</sup> Amitav Acharya, *Constructing Security Community in Southeast Asia: ASEAN and the Problems of Regional Order*, (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 32-33.

<sup>3</sup> Steven L. Lany, “Contemporary Mainstream Approaches: Neo-Realism and Neo-Liberalism,” in John Baylis and Steve Smith (eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 182.

<sup>4</sup> Karen A. Mingst, *Essentials of International Relations*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2004), p. 66.

<sup>5</sup> Vit Dockal, “Theoretical Framework of Regional Integration: Selected issues,” *Working Paper No.9*, IIPS, Brno, 2005. [www.iips.cz/upload/working%20papers/dockal.pdf](http://www.iips.cz/upload/working%20papers/dockal.pdf), (Accessed 18 July, 2007).

<sup>6</sup> Takashi Terada, “The Birth and Growth of ASEAN+3,” in Bertrand Fort and Douglas Webber (eds.), *Regional Integration in East Asia and Europe*, p. 218.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> Jorn Dosch, “Southeast Asia and the Asia Pacific: ASEAN,” in Michael K. Connors, et. al., (eds.), *The New Global Politics of the Asia Pacific*, (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 76-78.

<sup>9</sup> In the 12<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Annual Summit which was held in January 2007, the ASEAN leaders decided to establish the free trade zone by 2015, five years earlier than previously proposed.

<sup>10</sup> K. Kesavapany in, Rodolfo C. Severino, *Training the ASEAN Charter: An ISEAS Perspective*, (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asia Studies, 2005), p. vii.

<sup>11</sup> *The Japan Times*, 15 January, 2007.

<sup>12</sup> Hadi Soesastro, “ASEAN as a Regional Actor,” in Narongchai et. al., (eds.), *ASEAN – Japan Cooperation: A Foundation for East Asian Community*, (Tokyo: Japan Centre for International Exchange, 2003), p. 41.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

- <sup>14</sup> "ASEAN Trade Reaches \$ U.S 1.226 Trillion in 2005," available at <http://nigeria2.mof.com.gov.cn/aarticle/chinanews/200608/2006080294230.html>, (Accessed 12 July, 2007).
- <sup>15</sup> Julaporn Euarukskul, "The ASEAN Region," in Paul B. Stares (ed.), *The New Security Agenda: A Global Survey*, (Tokyo: Japan Centre for International Exchange, 1998), p. 251.
- <sup>16</sup> Greg Felker, "ASEAN Regionalism and Southeast Asia's Systematic Challenges," in James C. Hsiung (ed.), *Twenty First Century World Order*, pp. 227-228.
- <sup>17</sup> Jurgen Haacke, *ASEAN's Diplomatic and Security Culture*, (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 214.
- <sup>18</sup> Julaporan Euarukskul, "The ASEAN Region," p. 256.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>20</sup> Ron Huisken, quoted in Amitav Acharya, *Constructing Security Community in Southeast Asia*, p. 136.
- <sup>21</sup> Kishore Mehbubani, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 204.
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>23</sup> Mely Caballero – Anthory, "Regional Institutions and Regional crises in East Asia," in Bertrand Fort and Douglas Webber (eds.), *Regional Integration in East Asia and Europe*, p. 268.
- <sup>24</sup> Stephen M. Waltz, quoted in Paul B. Stares (ed.), *The New Security Agenda*, p. 16.
- <sup>25</sup> Ann M. Florini and P.J. Simmons, "North America," in *Ibid.*, p. 49.
- <sup>26</sup> Mely Caballero – Anthory, "Regional Institutions and Regional crises in East Asia," p. 272.
- <sup>27</sup> Douglas Webster, "Managing the Environment in ASEAN," in Amitav Acharya and Richard Stubbs (eds.), *New Challenges for ASEAN: Emerging Policy Issues*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1995), p. 47.
- <sup>28</sup> Joshuo Ho, "The Importance and Security of Regional Sea Lanes," in Kwa Chong Guan and John K. Skogan (eds.), *Maritime Security in Southeast Asia*, (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 25.
- <sup>29</sup> *East Asian Strategic Review 2005*, (Tokyo: The National Institute for Defence Studies, 2005), p. 20.
- <sup>30</sup> Ahmed Rashid Malik, *Pakistan's Vision East Asia: Pursuing Economic Diplomacy in the Age of Globalization in East Asia and Beyond*, IPRI paper II, (Islamabad: Islamabad Policy Research Institute, 2006), p. 92.
- <sup>31</sup> *Daily Times*, Islamabad, 7 June, 2006.
- <sup>32</sup> Hadi Soesastro, "ASEAN as a Regional Actor," p. 35.
- <sup>33</sup> Rohan Gunaratna, "Southeast Asia: The Terrorist Threat," in Charles E. Morrison (ed.), *Asia-Pacific Security Outlook 2004*, (Tokyo: Japan Centre for International Exchange, 2004), pp. 35-26.