

**THE POTENTIAL OF THE EAST ASIAN COMMUNITY  
TO DEEPEN EAST ASIAN REGIONALISM**

**BY  
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**CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study analyses the East Asian Community (EAC) initiative for its potential in promoting regionalism in East Asia. The main aim of the study is to examine the development of the EAC building process since the regional financial crisis of 1997, which led to a new wave of regionalism in East Asia. The study examines whether the EAC as a form of bandwagoning strategy can deepen East Asian regionalism through national interests and policies used by ASEAN and Japan, China and the United States in pushing for East Asian cooperation. The study particularly focuses upon the impediments to the process of EAC building and how competing forums, initiatives, conflicts and disputes between regional countries have distracted countries from developing an EAC.

The significance of the study is to deepen understanding of the nature of East Asian regionalism and the fate of specific initiatives relative to overall regional and international relations. My research findings indicate that the EAC does not look like becoming an organisation that significantly deepens regional cooperation. East Asian regionalism is characterised by a plethora of regional initiatives. The EAC was proposed as a political organisation to for smaller and weaker countries to bandwagon with regional great powers, thereby contributing to peace and prosperity. In this thesis I argue, however, that there are many barriers in the way of building the EAC. The obstacles seem greater than the drivers for building the EAC, and lead to the conclusion that the fate of the EAC is unlikely to be more successful than other previous regional initiatives. Although the EAC initiative has been supported by both the stronger and weaker countries in the region, the support is on the surface only and is not substantial or deep enough to achieve all that is hoped for.

Key words: Regionalism, East Asian regionalism, regional cooperation, regional integration, regional integration policy

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## GLOSSARY AND ACRONYM LIST

A-J TLCB	The Guideline for ASEAN-Japan Transport Logistics Capacity building
AADCP	ASEAN – Australia Development Cooperation Program
ABMI	Asian Bond Markets Initiative
ABMI	Asian Bond Market Initiative
ACCI	ASEAN Cooperation on Climate Change Initiative
ACCP	ASEAN Cyber Capacity Program
ACFTA	ASEAN – China Free Trade Area
ACTI	ASEAN Connectivity through Trade and Investment
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADIC	ASEAN Defence Industry Collaboration
ADMM	ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting
ADMM+	ADMM - Plus
AEC	ASEAN Economic Community
AEM	ASEAN Economic Ministers
AFC	Asian Financial Crisis
AFMM	ASEAN Finance Ministers’ Meeting
AFTA	ASEAN Free Trade Area
AHMM	ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting
AIA	ASEAN Investment Area
AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
ALAWMM	ASEAN Law Ministers’ Meeting
ALMM	ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting
AMBDC	ASEAN Mekong Basin Development Cooperation
AMCA	ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Culture and Arts
AMEM	ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting
AMF	Asian Monetary Fund
AMM	ASEAN Foreign Ministers’ Meeting
AMMAF	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Agricultural and Forestry
AMMDM	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management
AMME	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment
AMMIN	ASEAN Ministers on Minerals
AMMST	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Science and Technology
AMMSWD	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Social Welfare and Development
AMMTC	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime
AMRDPE	ASEAN Ministers Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication
AMTI	Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative
APC	Asia Pacific Community
APC	Asian and Pacific Council
APEC	Asia - Pacific Economic Cooperation
APSC	ASEAN Political-Security Community
APT	ASEAN Plus Three
ARF	Asian Regional Forum
ASC	ASEAN Security Community
ASCC	ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community



ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEAN-NDI	ASEAN Network for Drugs, Diagnostics and Vaccines Innovation
ASEAN-US PROGRESS	ASEAN – US partnership for Good Governance, Equitable and Sustainable Development and Security
ASEAN+1	ASEAN Plus One (separately with China, India, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, European Union, United States, and Canada)
ASEAN +3	ASEAN Plus Three (10 ASEAN members with China, Japan and South Korea)
ASEAN +6	ASEAN Plus Six (10 ASEAN members with China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, and India)
ASED	ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting
ASEM	Asia-Europe Meeting
ASPAC	Asia-Pacific Council
ATM	ASEAN Transport Ministers Meeting
BFA	Boao Forum for Asia
BREXIT	The process by which the United Kingdom withdraws from the European Union (EU)
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
CEPT	Common Effective Preferential Tariff
CLCS	Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf
CMIM	Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation
COC	South China Sea Code of Conduct
COP	Conference of the Parties
CPP	Cambodian People's Party
CRA	Contingent Reserve Arrangement
SRA	Silk Road Arrangement
CSIS	Center for Strategic and International Studies
DOC	Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EAC	East Asian Community
EAEC	East Asian Economic Caucus
EAF	East Asian Forum
EAFTA	East Asian Free Trade Area/Agreement
EAS	East Asia Summit
EAVG	East Asia Vision Group
EC	European Community
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement
EPA(s)	Economic Partnership Agreement(s)
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FONOPS	US Navy conducted Freedom of Navigations Operations
FTA(s)	Free Trade Agreement(s)
FTAAP	Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IAI	Second Initiative for ASEAN Integration
ICAPP	International Conference of Political Parties in the Asia-Pacific
ISG	International Support Group

JACEP	Japan – ASEAN Comprehensive Economic Partnership
KOICA	Korea International Cooperation Agency
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
M-ATM	ASEAN Tourism Ministers Meetings
NAFTA	North America Free Trade Area
NDB	New Development Bank
NEAT	Network of East Asia Think Tanks
NGOs	Non-governmental Organisations
NMD	National Missile Defence
NMI	New Miyazawa Initiative
OBOR	One Belt One Road
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PCA	Permanent Court of Arbitration
PSI	Proliferation Security Initiative
PTA	Preferential Trade Agreements
RCEP	Regional Cooperation Economic Partnership
ROK	Republic of Korea
RRMAS	ASEAN - Japan regional Road Map for Aviation Security
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organisation
SEA	Southeast Asia
SEATO	Southeast Asian Treaty Organisation
SLD	Shangri - La Dialogue
SNI	Standard National of Indonesia
SOM	Senior Officials Meeting
SPS	Sanitary and PhytoSanitary
TAC	Treaty of Amity and Cooperation
TELMIN	ASEAN Telecommunications and IT Ministers Meeting
TMD	Theater Missile Defence
TPP	Trans-Pacific Partnership
TPP11	11 remaining countries still discussing the TPP: Australia, Brunei, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam
TPSEP	Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement
TREATI	Trans-Regional EU-ASEAN Trade Initiative
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
US	United States
VAP	Vientiane Action Programme
WTO	World Trade Organisation
YSEALI	The Young Southeast Asian Leader Initiative

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*Sydney, July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017*

*Do Lien Huong*



## **DEDICATION**

The thesis is dedicated to my Mom (1955 – 2012), Dang Thi Nhung, who sacrificed her whole life for bringing me up, supporting my education and guiding my career. Unfortunately, she couldn't wait to attend my Graduation at UTS. She had suffered 17 years with blood diseases but she lived like a beautiful flower blossoming under the sunshine, full of bravery, energy and love. She is a model for overcoming difficulties in any life circumstances.



## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Interconnections across East Asian polities first started in the third century of the Common Era (CE) with the Silk Road, and have continued in one form or another since then. The most recent iteration restarted in the 1950s with a number of organisations needing to cope with the communist insurgencies in East Asia, and it continued throughout the 1980s and 1990s with organisations such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Association of Southeast Asian nations (ASEAN), and the Asian Regional Forum (ARF), whose aims were to promote regional economic cooperation and address regional security issues. Nowadays, the study of regionalism in East Asia usually focuses on the huge potential of the region, most notably including the great economies such as Japan and China.

The East Asian Community (EAC) was proposed in 2002 as part of the broader development of regionalism in East Asia. Proponents of the EAC hoped it would not only contribute to regional economic dynamism but also help the global economy as economic power began shifting towards the East Asian region. The initiative has been supported by states both powerful and weak. In the context of the rise of China in recent decades, changes in international policies, including the United States' "pivot" towards Asia and India's "Look East" policy, the EAC may be seen as a strategy by which its weak members try to gain some influence over stronger powers in the region. The thesis applies a neorealist conceptual framework – especially bandwagoning and soft-balancing – to explain the kind of International Relations strategy the EAC constitutes. I do detail a theoretical explanation with the empirical explanation of the outcomes of the EAC initiative.

The EAC looked like it would progress, because it had such wide support when it was first raised as an initiative. In examining the EAC's failure to progress, the thesis uncovers various obstacles that have prevented the EAC coming into being, and reveals the limitations of soft-balancing as strategy. Attempts by ASEAN to use soft-balancing to solve issues around the South China Sea have been derailed by China's big power politics, and by the individual state interests of ASEAN members. Both China and the USA have resisted efforts to create an EAC that excludes them, effectively neutralizing any bandwagoning or soft-balancing that could be achieved through an EAC, and indeed preventing progress towards an EAC.

Below is the overarching research question for the thesis, underpinned by several sub-questions:

1. Why has the EAC not yet been brought into existence?



- a. What actions have prospective EAC members taken to promote the EAC?
- b. How do prospective members' interests influence their actions towards the EAC?
- c. To what extent is building the EAC constrained by key players in the region?
- d. What strategies have East Asian countries used to resolve disputes? How well have these strategies worked?
- e. How can the trajectory of the EAC be understood in terms of neorealist theory about balance of power?

As groundwork for investigating why the EAC has not yet been brought into existence, I also look at whether the EAC has achieved any of the criteria identified by the literature on regionalism as defining region-ness. Key among these is how far the EAC has been institutionalized. I compare the EAC with other regional initiatives, including the ASEAN Community, and trade deals the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

## 1.1 Key findings

There are five key findings resulting from this research:

1. The EAC is just one of many regional forum initiatives, none of which are progressing significantly. The overlapping of regional forums and initiatives drive countries in different directions such that they cannot focus on the EAC.
2. The key states do not have enough interest in the EAC to drive it forward. After more than 10 years the EAC initiative is still in process, with only a couple of rules and commitments made and taken into operation, and the precise membership yet to be determined.
3. ASEAN, which is appreciated as the most formed of the regional organisations in Asia, and which Japan has proposed should be the main driver behind the EAC, is ambivalent about the EAC. If the EAC were to come into being, ASEAN may lose its centrality in the region. ASEAN was also already too busy working for the ASEAN Community, which came into existence in 2015, and so has little capacity remaining to advocate for the EAC.
4. Competition and historical issues among great powers also work against the formation of the EAC. Territorial disputes constrain relations between China and Japan, the two most important countries to be included in EAC building. The multilateral forums led by ASEAN as soft-balancing strategies of smaller countries to balance the great powers have been unable to fix these issues. Furthermore, competition among China, the US and Japan for leadership in East Asia stimulates these countries to simultaneously espouse cooperation for mutual interests and enact vigilance against each other. Moreover, the presence of the US in the region dilutes the regional cooperation because the US is against an East Asian block that may marginalise the US.
5. In terms of neorealist International Relations theory, the EAC proposal may be characterised as a bandwagoning exercise in response to the rise of China, by which weaker states attempt to be 'on the same side' as the big power, and to have some influence over the hegemon within the group. The broad Asia Pacific proposal of the EAC similarly attempted to bandwagon the US, while the narrower East Asia proposal of the EAC could be seen as an attempt to soft-balance against the US. ASEAN's choice to pursue its own Community rather than develop the EAC supports the neorealist idea that states prefer to balance over bandwagon. Within a grouping of small to medium powers, like

ASEAN, each state has more of a chance to have influence, whereas in bandwagoning with a hegemon like China they would be sidelined. With regard to ongoing territorial disputes in the South China Sea and with Japan, the soft-balancing efforts of ASEAN have failed to resolve the issues. This shows how big power politics by China, Japan and the US, hard balancing from China, and nationalism by and against Japan can trump efforts to bandwagon or soft-balance through regionalism.

I have singled out the EAC for my study because the EAC is an initiative that promotes East Asian regionalism but has not been extensively studied. Nor have there been many investigations why the EAC has thus far not been brought into existence.

When the EAC was presented to leaders in the early and mid-2000s there was near unanimous support for the idea. Moreover, regionalism internationally was a major trend until Global Financial Crisis in 2008, and it seemed a regional bloc comprising the large and growing economies of East Asia would be of great benefit to members. It is surprising that an initiative that had wide support, and which seemed to be in line with a major trend in international relations, turned out on closer inspection to be so unfeasible.

As well, studying East Asian regionalism meets the requirements of my employment in the Commission for External Relations of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam. It will provide a good background for my working effectively in policy making for Vietnamese diplomacy in the future, especially in promoting diplomatic relations with the East Asian countries. Working on policy for Vietnamese diplomacy requires knowledge about regional initiatives. In particular, ASEAN is considered as a main driving force in process of building the EAC, so I was interested to research the role of ASEAN in promoting regional cooperation in general and in building the EAC in particular. East Asia is now one of the most dynamic regions in the world, playing an important role in global strategy. As the interests of the great powers converge on East Asia, regionalism influences their policies directly.

## 1.2 Methodology

This section briefly describes the methods I used to collect the qualitative data used in my study. These included documents, interviews, observations, and questionnaires. According to Blaxter (2010), document techniques use written achieves and visual materials as an empirical material for research. In this study, the documents are of four main types: primary documents, secondary sources, interviews, and observations. My data collection focused on opinions and public statements of a range of politicians, policy makers, and diplomats who are seeking initiatives to promote their national interests within regional cooperation, resolve regional issues, and create a stable environment for the development of the countries in the region.

The primary documentary sources included officially endorsed information from the Internet as well as speeches, reports, meeting documents, media reports, government publications and documents. Examples include the Constitution of Japan, official speeches and statements by Japanese Prime Ministers (Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet 2017), the ASEAN Charter, and ASEAN's website (The Association of the Southeast Asian Nations 2017).

Secondary sources included articles on websites and in newspapers, academic journals, and periodicals such as *The Asia Pacific Review*; *Japanese Studies*; *Contemporary Southeast Asia*; *Foreign Affairs Magazine*; *Foreign Policy*; *ASEAN Economic Bulletin*; *Asia Pacific Review*; *Journal of Asian Economic Papers*; *Asian Perspective*; *Asian Survey*; *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*; *Japanese Studies*; *Journal of East Asian Studies*; *Asian Survey*; *Journal of Contemporary of China*; and *East Asia Forum*. Also included were: a) official reports published on the website of the ASEAN Secretariat<sup>1</sup> about ASEAN countries that reflect ASEAN's efforts to promote EAC information; and b) analysis of key East Asian bilateral relationships from the Center for Strategic and International Studies<sup>2</sup> (CSIS).

Blaxter (2010) has suggested observation as a way to collect data through watching or engaging in activities. There are two ways of observing activities – through participation and non-participation. According to Buttolph Johnson & Reynolds (2012), a non-participating observer watches an event from a distance and does not participate in or become a member of the observed group or community. As non-participant observer, I viewed radio podcasts, television news, and ASEAN

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<sup>2</sup> <http://csis.org/program/comparative-connections>

websites about the annual ASEAN meetings and other ASEAN-related meetings. I then noted down the information that be relevant to my research about ASEAN's contribution to the East Asian regionalism as well as how ASEAN and ASEAN-related mechanisms and meetings reinforced (or did not reinforce) the process of EAC building. This builds on years of background observations I have made because studies of the East Asian region have been my inspiration since I was undergraduate student. I started researching about the East Asian region in 2004 when I worked as intern at the Department of the Northeast Asia in the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam. Since then I have continued observing the region in my capacity as a research official in the Commission for External Relations of the Communist Party of Vietnam, and as a Masters student in politics and diplomacy in the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam.

Interviewing is simply the act of asking individuals a series of questions and recording their responses. It involves direct and personal communication in the nature of a constrained conversation with individuals in a less formal and less structured situation (Johnson & Reynolds 2011). The interaction may be face-to-face, by email or over the phone. In some cases, the interviewer may ask a predetermined set of questions; in others, the discussion may be more spontaneous or freewheeling; or both structured and instructed formats may be used. My primary data collection included 13 interviews with officials and diplomats working at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta, Indonesia, and at the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam. I used semi-structured interviews based on a prepared list of questions, but let the discussion flow naturally from that point. This form of interview is called a "focus interview" or "flexible interview" and is a suitable format for interviewing elites (Johnson & Reynolds 2011, p. 456).

Most of my interviews happened during a fieldwork trip to Jakarta. Some interviews had not been scheduled until I arrived there, but my colleague, an employee in the Vietnamese Embassy in Jakarta, helped me to schedule interviews with several officials who were working at their own country missions in ASEAN. Without my colleague's introductions it may have been very hard for me to contact them individually to secure interviews. The information and consent forms required by the University of Technology Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee and the invitation letters were insufficient. The East Asia cultural traditions depend a lot on relationships, and interviewing elites and politicians can be difficult. My aim was to conduct about 30 interviews. I sent the invitation letters to the potential interviewees

on my selected list, but not many responded. Unfortunately, some of those who responded said that the thesis topic was not one of their interests or research strengths. It may be that they evaluated the potential of the EAC pessimistically because it has not been of much concern to politicians.

However, thanks to my Vietnamese colleagues who work in the ASEAN Secretariat and in the Vietnamese's representative offices in Jakarta, I had opportunities to talk with senior ASEAN officials and Vietnamese officials working in the Vietnamese Embassy there. Instead of the 30 minutes I expected for each interview, almost all the interviewees gave me 60 minutes or even. I will always remember a phone message from a high-ranking ASEAN leader, whom I had yet to meet, who asked me not to leave Jakarta and to wait for him to return for an interview because he was in Philippines for Typhoon Haiyan Rescue at that time. I changed the flight ticket and waited one more day for his interview in his own residence in Jakarta. The enthusiasm and friendly talks with such ASEAN politicians encouraged me to continue seeking interviews that had not already been scheduled. The interview protocol was approved by the University of Technology Sydney Human Rights Ethics Committee.

I had also intended to conduct interviews by phone, email or Skype with officials in other countries that I was unable to visit in person. The interview data would have been richer if the conditions had allowed more interviews in other ASEAN countries such as Singapore and Malaysia, where research on East Asian regionalism and community building has been developed significantly. However, I found that Skype is not suitable for making interviews with politicians who are usually rushed and tend to avoid talking about sensitive political issues online.

As shown in Table 1.1, in order to ensure the anonymity of interviewees, I coded their names numerically along with their positions and offices.

**Table 1: Numerical Coding of Interviewees, Their Position and Offices**

Interviewees	Positions	Office
Interviewee 1	Senior Official	Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam
Interviewee 2	Senior Official	The Institute for South China Sea/East Sea Studies, Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam
Interviewee 3	Senior Official	ASEAN Secretariat
Interviewee 4	Senior Official	Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Interviewee 5	Senior Official	ASEAN Secretariat
Interviewee 6	Senior Official	ASEAN Secretariat
Interviewee 7	Senior Official	ASEAN Secretariat
Interviewee 8	Senior Official	ASEAN Secretariat
Interviewee 9	Senior Official	ASEAN Secretariat
Interviewee 10	Senior Official	Japanese representative office to ASEAN
Interviewee 11	Official	US representative office to ASEAN
Interviewee 12	Senior Official	Vietnam Embassy in Indonesia
Interviewee 13	Senior Official	Vietnam Embassy in Indonesia
Interviewee 14	Senior Official	ASEAN Secretariat
Interviewee 15	Senior Official	Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam
Interviewee 16	Official	Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Areas of Vietnam

### **1.3 Structure of the study**

In order to clearly delineate the prospects and limitations of regionalism in the East Asian region through the initiative of the EAC, this thesis is organised as follows:

#### ***Chapter 2: Literature Review and Analytical Framework***

In this chapter I explore the history and development of regionalism in the East Asian region at both the regional and state levels, including the perspectives of existing academic scholarship. This highlights gaps that need to be filled (the limitations and potentials of regionalism) and the different perspectives of the likely success of the EAC. The analytical framework section of this chapter examines theories of neo-realism and neo-liberalism. Definitions of regionalism, regional integration and regional community are also discussed.

#### ***Chapter 3: History of Regionalism in East Asia***

In this chapter I describe the history of East Asian regionalism. This highlights three periods of regionalism development and focuses on the third wave of regionalism with the formation of multilateral forums. The EAC building initiative is placed in this third development of regionalism. This chapter also describes the origins of the EAC initiative and the driving forces of EAC building, which include ASEAN Plus Three, the East Asia Summit, and key players such as Japan and ASEAN.

#### ***Chapter 4: Competing Regional Forums***

In this chapter I examine how both the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement and Regional Cooperation Economic Partnership (RCEP) have overtaken the EAC as the key regional organisations for East Asia. The TPP and RCEP are two economic regionalism institutions that have arisen in recent years. Almost all prospective members of EAC are members of the RCEP, while five are TPP members (Brunei, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam) and others are considering joining the TPP. I found that the need for representatives of EAC member countries to attend many regional forums at the same time slows the process of building the EAC. The TPP and RCEP negotiations have taken up human resources for regionalism and produced a negative impact on building the EAC. Moreover, the EAC building process has been overshadowed by the advanced progress and the more visible benefits of the TPP and RCEP compared to the EAC. The progress of EAC is slow and the benefits of membership still seem far away. Furthermore, the TPP and RCEP do not utilise a soft-balancing strategy, but instead use more direct tools of hegemonic



domination. This sharpens regional divisions and hinders the EAC building process. The newly elected US President Donald Trump has changed US policy direction and withdrawn the US from TPP, which has also had an effect on the potential of forming an EAC. EAC members now need time to discuss the future of the TPP without the US. Should they go ahead with it or pause and renegotiate the items that took them five years to accomplish?

### ***Chapter 5: Lack of Progress***

The EAC was proposed in 2002 in response to East Asian regionalism and was promoted for the following decade by Japan, among others. However, the EAC did not progress very far in this time. In order to answer the research question of whether the EAC can deepen East Asian regionalism, I will focus on examining how key organisations and strong EAC support countries contribute to EAC building. The key organisations are the ASEAN Plus Three (ASEAN +3) and the East Asia Summit (EAS). The key countries are Japan, China, South Korea and the ASEAN countries. Their contributions are investigated through policies and activities that contribute to EAC building. I argue that the contributions of the ASEAN Plus Three, the East Asia Summit and some key EAC support countries have limited contributions. Although the ASEAN Plus Three initially introduced some positive steps to promote EAC building, that process is now at a standstill. The ASEAN Plus Three has increased economic cooperation among countries rather than launched programs or comprehensive plans to build an EAC. Furthermore, the major countries that were expected to push for the EAC are now unlikely to continue doing so.

In this chapter I also examine the elements of forming a community. I argue that EAC is still weak because it lacks some components that constitute a community. The regional countries have not come to an agreement about which countries should be members of EAC: Will they be members of ASEAN Plus Three or ASEAN Plus Six (ASEAN +6), for example? The vision for EAC building is still not clear and the EAC building process is slow to be institutionalized. For these reasons it is hard to discern the implications of EAC's contribution to East Asian regionalism.

### ***Chapter 6: ASEAN's Role in East Asian Community building***

In this chapter I argue that while ASEAN's process of building the ASEAN Community offers a useful lesson for building the EAC, ASEAN is unlikely to strongly promote the building of the EAC. The main factor that has contributed to ASEAN Community building and could contribute to EAC building is increasing dialogue with other countries inside and outside the region. Through dialogue,

ASEAN contributes to peace and stability in the region and has generated support from external countries during its process of ASEAN Community building. Although the ASEAN Community may be considered a nucleus around which the East Asian community might be built, ASEAN is ambivalent about EAC building for three reasons. First, ASEAN is worried it might the centrality it currently has if it were to be part of a larger region. Second, disunity within ASEAN over the South China Sea inhibits regional cooperation. Third, ASEAN prioritises its own building because the ASEAN Community is in process and still has challenges. I discuss the limits of ASEAN dialogue and economic cooperation from the theoretical perspective of ‘soft balancing’.

### ***Chapter 7: Great Power Politics***

In this chapter I examine key countries that play a decisive role in the process of EAC building due to their military and or economic strength, in particular China, Japan and the United States (US). I found that regionalism via EAC has been limited in terms of bringing peace and stability in the region because there exist among the regional great powers unresolved territorial disputes, including those in the South China Sea, and territorial and historical disputes between Japan and China that have them still jockeying for leadership in the region. These ongoing territorial disputes make these key countries vigilant with each other, thus preventing processes of regional integration. Moreover, US policies and actions have not supported the development of East Asian cooperation because the US is afraid that an East Asian block will decentre US control in the region. I conclude that the regional great powers’ divisions due to their territorial and historical disputes are obstacles to the development of East Asian regionalism in general and East Asian community building in particular. Their strategic competition for influence also affects regional peace and stability, thereby limiting the development of East Asian regionalism.

### ***Chapter 8: Conclusion***

The findings of my study illustrate that the process of EAC building has been so littered with obstacles that the prospects of the EAC becoming a reality still seem distant. My research strongly suggests there are three reasons that the EAC has not deepened East Asian regionalism. First, there is a lack of progress towards building the EAC as an institution. Second, other competing regional forums distract member countries from the target of EAC building. ASEAN – the most successful organisation in Southeast Asia – has lessons to offer in building the EAC from experiences in ASEAN Community building, but ASEAN is ambivalent to EAC building. Third,

regionalism via EAC building has been limited by competition among the US, China and Japan, and unresolved territorial disputes. The nature of East Asian regionalism is China's centrality in leading the regional integration.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK: ANALYSING REGIONALISM**

In this thesis, the literature that I have reviewed for this study is divided into four parts. In the first part I investigate the definitions of regionalism in general and regionalism in East Asia in particular and I explore appropriate criteria to assess the success of regionalism. The second part examines how neorealists and neoliberalists have evaluated regionalism in East Asia. In the third part I explain the concept of ‘soft balancing’, before, in part four, identifying the application of a neorealist perspective as a gap in previous writings on East Asian regionalism, a gap this thesis will address.

## 2.1 Regionalism

### 2.1.1 *Regionalism definitions globally*

Regionalism is conventionally divided into two categories: old and new regionalism. Old regionalism, as exemplified by the development of regionalism in Europe, was inward looking; it involved state-led import substitution strategies and created supranational bureaucracies with significant power over domestic activities. New regionalism, which began in the late 1980s, focuses more on relations outside the region and encourages private sector-led market economies. Old regionalism, embodied by the European Union (EU) model, is also more centralised than new regionalism (Katzenstein 1996). New regionalism is depicted as a multidimensional process because its areas for cooperation include economic, security, cultural and environmental issues at levels ranging from the local to the supranational (Hettne 1999). According to Acharya and Johnson (2007), new regionalism reflects the declining importance of the state and formal intergovernmental cooperation. Its primary focus is consolidation of regional trade agreements (cited in Laursen 2010, p. 195).

Jacob Viner wrote about old style integration based on the concept of a customs union (Viner 2014, p.8) Customs unions reduce tariff barriers between regional political units while maintaining barriers against imports from outside the region. This amounts to a system of customs discrimination because imports of the same product are subject to diverse tariffs. Viner suggested two criteria he considered as essential for understanding of the effects of economic integration: trade creation and trade diversion. Trade diversion the switch in trade from less expensive to more expensive producers. Trade creation is the amount of new trade that emerges between countries after establishing a customs union.

Ernst Hass describes an old regionalism style of process towards what he calls political community (Haas 1961, p.367). Political actors in different national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities towards a new and larger center whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states. Ernst Hass noted that the economic, social and communications factors often identified with ongoing political community may serve as indicators for assessing progress towards integration. Hass argues integration is useful for conflict resolution and notes that there are three types of compromise needed for integration: 1) conventional diplomatic negotiation on the basis of the

minimum common denominator; 2) “splitting the difference” carries the actors further along the path of integration; 3) deliberately upgrading the common interests of parties to move closer to peaceful change. Each of these modes of accommodation is typified by appropriate institutional mechanisms.

Bela Balassa wrote a theory of economic integration (Balassa 1961, p. 1) . The author defined the economic integration as both a process and a state of affairs. As a process, economic integration covers measures designed to break down economic barriers between different national states. As a state of affairs, economic integration is the absence of various forms of economic discrimination between different national states. Balassa distinguished five stages of integration: Stage 1 Free Trade Area, where tariffs are eliminated between member countries; Stage 2 Customs Union, where member states establish a common external tariff; Stage 3 Common Market, where restrictions on factor movements are eliminated; Stage 4 Economic union, where member states undertake harmonization of national economic policies; Stage 5: Political union.

More recently, Dent (2008, p. 7) describes regionalism as “the structures, processes and arrangements that are working towards greater coherence within a specific international region in terms of economic, political, security, social cultural and other kinds of linkages”. Hettne and Soderbaum (2000) and Wallace (1994) suggest regionalism is an “endogenous process” shaped by various economic social-cultural, political and historic path-dependent factors (cited in Dent 2008, p. 11). Katzenstein (2002, p.105) defines regionalism as “political structures that both reflect and shape the strategies of governments, business corporations and a variety of non-governmental organizations and social movements” (cited in Yoshimatsu 2008, p. 7).

With respect to the economy, Bhagwati (1999) points out that regionalism is defined as “preferential trade agreements among a subset of nations” (pp. 32-33). Bowles (2000) shares a similar perspective that regionalism is the selection for economic policy of government but under framework of regional economic integration schemes. Mansfield & Milner (1997, p. 3) define regionalism as “the disproportionate concentration of economic flows or the coordination of foreign economic policies among a group of countries in a close geographical proximity to one another”.

Hurrell (1995) identified four aspects of regionalism, with regional cohesion being a combination of them:

1. Regionalisation is featured by undirected and informal development, not instigated by state policies. It has been created by natural interdependence between regional economies through the two main factors of “humanity” and “economy”. The development of regional two-way trade and strategic alliances between regional enterprises and increasing movements of people create complex social networks (Hurrell 1995, pp. 40-1).
2. Regional awareness and identity exist in “mental maps”. Culture, history, religious traditions, language or rhetoric are the building blocks of this kind of regionalism. Its aims are to prevent threats from “external cultural challenges” (Hurrell 1995, p. 41).
3. Regional inter-state cooperation aims to respond to external challenges and increase the role of a country through regional institutions and negotiation forums. In this form of regionalism, cooperation between states secures welfare gains, promotes common values and solves common problems, thus protecting the role of the state and the power of the government (Hurrell 1995, p. 42).
4. State-promoted regional integration is influenced by specific government policies that are designed to reduce or remove barriers to the mutual exchange of goods, services, capital and people. Earlier stages of integration tend to concentrate on the elimination of trade barriers, including non-tariff barriers and the formation of custom unions for the regulation of markets (Hurrell 1995, p. 43).

#### *2.1.2 Buzan's definition and its application to the Asia-Pacific region*

Even though Buzan's (Buzan 1998) work is nearly 20 years old and the region has changed considerably since, it is still relevant to my research because Buzan is one of the few authors who has defined what kind of region the Asia-Pacific is. Buzan established a conception of region as well as criteria for region-ness, and simultaneously compares these criteria with the case of the Asia-Pacific region to answer questions such as: What kind of region is the Asia-Pacific? and What kind of world is it located in? Buzan defines a region as something bigger than a state, created by several states or parts of states, and smaller than the whole international system of which it is a part. A region is one kind of subsystem that is defined by close geographical proximity. However, Buzan further claims that the notion of an Asia-Pacific region is difficult to realise because the Asia-Pacific region is geographically too broad and wide. Some other researchers pointed out the competing notions of ‘Asia Pacific’ – which include states from around the Pacific Ocean, such as Australia and the US - and ‘East Asia’ – which usually includes only states on the western rim

of the Pacific, not extending to culturally European states such as Australia and New Zealand (Hundt & Kim 2011; Sutton 2007). It comprises three continents and the widest ocean on the planet. Buzan asserts that to define the notion of a region, one must first establish what makes it different from the rest of the international system. Supporting his claim that regions must be more than just “geographical systems”, he provides three additional criteria to identify features of a region: shared characteristics; patterns of interaction; and shared perceptions (Buzan 1998, pp. 69-70).

The shared characteristics that identify a region may include a common language, culture, politics or even diseases or pests (Buzan 1998, p. 70). Patterns of interaction should thus be analysed by reference to three criteria: the types of interaction patterns (political-military pattern and economic pattern); the attitude of interaction (positive, negative, friendly, cooperative or hostile or neutral terms); and the intensity of interaction (absolute attitude or relative attitude). Shared perception is verified in the way that people think the region exists and talk about it as if it is real. Buzan asserts that talking about the region is a first step towards making it become real (Buzan 1998, p. 73).

Buzan relates the above criteria to the case of the Asia-Pacific region, which is so big geographically that one has difficulty analysing its shared characteristics. In respect of political-military interaction, the Asia-Pacific region is not a security complex region because there is no centre to distinguish from other regions and it is not a pluralist security community (Buzan 1998). In respect of military and political interaction, East Asian security is complex with 10 regional states, the emergence of an assertive China, an ambivalent Japan, and the military presence of the US.

Moreover, the application of Buzan’s (1998) definition to the Asia-Pacific region is particularly relevant for understanding the EAC. Buzan considers that East Asian states rely more on the US for security than on their regional partners. Thus Buzan recognises that military-political interaction in the region is more divisive than uniting. Buzan asserts that in this region, the US signs bilateral security treaties with not only Japan but also other partners like Australia, New Zealand, Philippines, Thailand and South Korea. It does not differentiate the Asia-Pacific region from other parts of the world. Even though the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) could be considered a possible regional security regime, in Buzan’s terms it is not strong enough to differentiate itself from other parts of the international system. This is



because the ARF has expanded by calling for the participation of China, India and even the European Union.

Apropos of economic interaction, Buzan (1998) analyses two aspects of trade and foreign direct investment (FDI) in the Asia-Pacific region. He cites trade statistics compiled by Wyatt-Walter (1995, p.104), which suggest that East Asia trade significantly increased since the 1980s, and by the 1990s this trade strongly rested on the US market. Therefore, Buzan (1998) concludes that there is no “tendency” for a division in the Asia-Pacific region in the sphere of economic interaction (Buzan 1998 p. 77). We should note that the trade situation has changed quite a lot since Buzan’s analysis was written, specifically in respect of the Global Financial Crisis and the increasing importance of China’s economy. In sum, Buzan states that the case for considering the Asia-Pacific region as an international region in the 1990s was not strong because it was mostly based on trans-pacific trade. In trade interaction, Buzan found East Asia had no “institutionalization and low factor mobility” (Buzan 1998 p. 82). However, on this point East Asia is more of a region than it was in the late 1990s. For example, there is now intensive defacto intra-regional trade integration, especially in manufacturing networks (Boyer et al. 2005).

Buzan (1998) advances a second view that compares the Asia-Pacific region as an element of the new global structure. Buzan looks upon East Asia as a region and compares it with the criteria of shared characteristics, patterns of interaction and shared perception. Regarding shared characteristics, East Asia does not have much cultural coherence (Buzan 1998 p. 80). In terms of shared perception, leaders in some East Asian states think their economic boom “sits on top of a potentially nasty pattern of politico-military fear, hostility and conflict” (Buzan 1998 p. 83). Furthermore, the model of flying geese is not welcome because it brings to mind the image of Japanese hegemony in the first half of the twentieth century (Kojima 2000). The model of “Great China” also makes people imagine fears of “China hegemonism” (Buzan 1998, p. 84). By Buzan’s definition, in the last decade ASEAN has been creating a region in terms of shared patterns of political-military interaction and economic interaction. The ASEAN Community now has three pillars: the ASEAN Economic Pillar, the ASEAN Political-Security Pillar, and the ASEAN Social Cultural Pillar.

Buzan’s analysis can be drawn on to understand the EAC as a form of regional inter-state cooperation intended to increase the role of member countries through regional institutions and negotiation forums. Through the EAC, small and weak countries may balance against the rise of China, protecting the role of their states and

the power of their governments. For example, Japan ignited the EAC initiative as a way of protecting the influence of Japan in the region, as will be discussed further in Chapter 3. In addition, applying Buzan's analysis, the EAC can be identified as state-promoted regional integration through specific government policies to eliminate trade barriers including non-tariff barriers.

### *2.1.3 Application of these definitions to East Asia and EAC*

The EAC exemplifies most of the characteristics of new regionalism because it is less centralised, more multi-dimensional and it focuses on trade agreements. The characteristics of the EAC may be summarised in the following way:

1. The EAC is an open initiative that aims to strengthen relations not only among countries within the East Asian region but also with other countries and organisations outside the region. The economic relationships with the US, the EU, and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) are considered indispensable parts of East Asian economic growth (Yamada 2005).
2. The reliance of Japan, and to a lesser extent some other states in the region, on the US for security is also a specific characteristic of East Asia.
3. Cooperation among EAC countries is intended to develop further, following functional cooperation in multidimensional areas, including trade, energy, environment and humanitarian activities.
4. The EAC has been promoted by different groupings of East Asian countries, including ASEAN +3, the East Asia Summit (EAS), East Asian Vision Group (EAVG) and East Asian Study Group (EASG).
5. Economic development is pivotal and a high priority of the EAC, providing a platform to enhance multidimensional cooperation among East Asian countries (see further discussion of these points in Chapter 5).

In new regionalism, states cooperate to defend their national benefits and counter negative effects from globalisation. Dent (2008) has argued that the phenomena of regionalism and globalisation are similar; they differ only in terms of scale. Regionalism establishes forums in which countries can respond to the consequences of globalisation and thereby have a stronger voice and position in regional and global peace and security issues than they could as individual states (Best & Christiansen 2001, p. 436). The EAC initiative and its precursor, the East Asian Economic Caucus (EAEC) initiated by Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad in 1990, have common targets of coping better with globalisation and raising a unified economic common voice for East Asia. The EAC initiative was

intended to counter the expansion of the EU, the emergence of the North America Free Trade Area (NAFTA) and other regional arrangements throughout the world. The EAC encouraged East Asian leaders to form closer relations in order to balance “against the possible development of an exclusive bloc elsewhere” (Capie 2003, p. 155).

Stubbs (2002) has argued that developments in the WTO led to the need for a “strong East Asian voice” (Stubbs 2002, p. 446). The ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) was established in order to promote economic cooperation in an attempt to avoid conflicts in the region and create favourable conditions for member countries to develop their economies and promote two-way trade (Dent 2008, p. 12). The economic development among regional countries through Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) was a motivation for building the EAC, in which economic development is considered top priority.

What are the appropriate criteria to assess the success of regionalism? There is no consensus on a set of criteria to measure the success of regionalism in general, but several authors have presented possible criteria. Rozman (2012) says successful regionalism involves a sense of a shared community that includes social networks connecting across national boundaries; strategic thinking that recognizes common security interests; and regional identity capable of overriding national identities on matters of shared significance.

According to (Dent 2008, p. 7), regionalism can be said to have been achieved when it ensures:

- greater coherence in economic, political, security, social cultural cooperation
- interconnecting private or civil sector activities from bottom-up processes
- public policy initiatives such as a free-trade agreements or other state-led projects of economic cooperation and integration that originate from intergovernmental dialogues and treaties from top-down processes.

According to Hurrell (1995), regionalism will have been achieved when all countries in one region share common social and economic features, seek new forms of cooperation, and look towards a common regional targets.

This thesis will focus on Dent’s (2008) and Hurrell’s (1995) perspectives on regionalism criteria as the analytic basis for East Asian regionalism. Rozman’s perspective on regionalism is not appropriate because it focuses on social networks connecting across national boundaries, strategic thinking that recognises common security interests, and regional identity capable of overriding national identities on

matters of shared significance. Meanwhile regionalism in the East Asia region has been driven by economic cooperation. For Dent the emphasis is on greater coherence in economic, political, security, social-cultural cooperation and public policy initiatives; and for Hurrell it is on regional inter-state cooperation that aims to respond to external challenges and state-promoted regional integration through specific government policies.

The characteristics of each region are different, and the historical context also influences regionalism. Thus it is not appropriate to use the EU model as a template to measure the success of East Asian regionalism. Criteria to assess the success of the EAC as an attempt at regionalism should be based upon characteristics appropriate to East Asia. However, comparing and contrasting with European regionalism and other regionalism around the world can prove useful because it allows for:

- understanding where East Asian regionalism is placed in the whole context of the development of regionalism in the world
- finding out whether the progress of regionalism development in East Asia is faster or slower than other regionalism
- learning the steps to make progress in other regionalism
- avoiding the issues of other regionalism
- coping with as well as learning the way other regionalism resolves crisis, for example, the occurrence of Brexit in European regionalism.

Drawing from this literature I have summarised some key criteria appropriate for assessing the success of efforts to build regionalism through the EAC, which in this thesis I compared with other efforts towards regionalism, including ASEAN, the TPP and RCEP. Some of the main criteria are: preferential trade agreements (for goods and/or services); shared policy frameworks for integrating economies; interstate cooperation to solve problems; policies to increase flows of people between member states; policies to facilitate the flow of capital between member states; cooperative military interactions; and shared perception that the region is a meaningful entity amongst officials and citizens.

In addition, I examine the policies of the regional great powers (China and US), a less powerful country (Japan), and a group of small and weak countries (ASEAN). It will become apparent that the overlapping forums in the East Asian region results in a lack of focus on specific forums or organisations of member countries. In addition, the fear of losing centrality makes ASEAN unlikely to promote either East Asian regionalism in general or the EAC in particular. The competition

among all of these powers seems likely to derail the development of EA regionalism. I will argue that in addition to economic cooperation (liberalism) and identity sharing (constructivism), interests and power are important for evaluating East Asian regionalism.

In the next section I will examine some of the theoretical distinctions that underpin my argument. I suggest that the 'soft-balancing' strategy is a good conceptual framework for interpreting the rationale for creating an EAC because neorealism does not explain adequately why states would want to create the EAC. Neoliberalism, with its focus on cooperation, does not explain adequately the lack of progress towards an EAC because in this case the large powers are not cooperating very well and they are always competing for their national interests and power in the region.

## 2.2 Approaches to Regionalism in East Asia

The regional organisations on which I focus in this thesis are manifestations of liberal institutionalism, which might usually be examined through a liberal conceptual lens. However, useful understandings may also be generated by examining them through the lens of neorealism. Regionalism may be seen as a pragmatic device nations use to further their interests. Conceptually, I characterise the EAC initiative as an attempt at ‘bandwagoning’ through regionalism, an attempt that has hitherto failed. Bandwagoning and the related strategy of soft-balancing are non-military strategies using soft-power to influence the behaviour of large powers. Soft-balancing strategies use international institutions, economic craft and diplomatic arrangements in order to delay, complicate or increase the costs for emerging powerful states of using their extraordinary power over other states (Nye 2004). The potentials and limitations of the EAC initiative can be usefully understood as the potentials and limitations of balancing as strategy and of soft power, revealing its limitations. This study thus contributes to a broader understanding of the extent to which bandwagoning and soft-balancing can modify the behavior of large powers.

### 2.2.1 *Neorealism*

Neorealism as an approach to international relations “stresses the constraints of the anarchical international system and the importance of power political competition” (Hurrell 1995, p. 339). Neorealist scholars have analysed the influence of regional powers in East Asian regionalism. Beeson (2006), for example, points out that regionalism in East Asia has developed more slowly than in Western Europe due to three main historical divisions between Asian countries in response to the influence of the US.

First, US policies towards Western Europe and East Asia as regions have been very different. During the Cold War the US institutionalised a series of bilateral rather than multilateral relations across the East Asian region, which acted to prevent the region from expanding region-wide cooperation. After the Cold War, unlike the policy towards Europe, the US constrained rather than encouraged the development of regionalism in East Asia. Furthermore, the US has also inhibited China and Japan from becoming leaders in the East Asian region. In the economic field, Hook (1999) argues that East Asian regional economic cooperation was derailed by US hostility towards the initiative for the EAEC proposed by Malaysian Prime Minister in the

1990s. Japan did not push regionalism at this time because it was “unwilling to risk incurring American displeasure” (Beeson 2005, p. 979).

Second, the rise of China is an obstacle to East Asian regionalism because it results in suspicion from neighbouring countries about China’s using “regional multilateral cooperation as an important way to pursue a ‘favorable international environment’ in neighbouring areas to promote domestic construction ... especially after the 1995–1996 Taiwan Strait crisis” (Zhang 2006, p. 131).

Third, the rivalry between China and Japan remains a big obstacle to regional cooperation. Their rivalry may be “the most destabilizing factor to the peace and prosperity of East Asia” (Kang 2006, p. 1). There is no sign that that Japan would ever accept subordination to China (Friedberg 2000; Razak 2006). Several neorealist scholars have examined the influence of regional powers as an obstacle to the development of East Asian regionalism and suggest there is competition between Japan and China for the leading role, with strong China–ASEAN trade relations being countered by Japan, whose seeking to balance against China makes regional cooperation slow and ineffective (Dent 2008; Hund 2003, p. 411; Stubbs 2002; Webber 2001). However, these scholars have overlooked the use of balancing and bandwagoning strategies among regional countries that may enhance regionalism. Groups of small and weak countries may implement bandwagoning and soft-balancing through regional initiatives to react against big powers in the region.

### *2.2.2 Neoliberalism*

Neoliberalism is sometimes referred to as “neoliberal institutionalism” and is seen as a response to neorealism. Despite their agreement with neorealists about the anarchy of the international system and about states as key actors, neoliberals concerned with international relations contend that the importance and effect of this anarchy has “been exaggerated and moreover that realists/neo-realists underestimated the varieties of cooperative behaviour possible within such a decentralized system” (Evans & Newnham 1998, p. 361).

Neoliberal institutionalism argues that the level of state interdependence results in strengthening international cooperation; hence, whether the role of states in international cooperation is strengthened or not depends on ways the states solve common problems. The theory considers that the impact of externalities leads to the necessity of having collective management. Expectations of decreasing transaction costs, as well as creation of favourable conditions to development of domestic

economies, will enhance cooperation among regional states (Farrell, Hettne & Van Langenhove 2005, p. 63).

In international cooperation neoliberals hold that states focus primarily on their individual absolute gains and are indifferent to the gains of others: “Whether cooperation results in a relative gain or loss is not important to a state ... as long as it brings an absolute gain” (Powell 1991, p. 1303). Absolute gain can be valued because of comparative advantages. Every state can gain benefits from cooperation, and benefits will include not only power but also economic and cultural gains. Apart from states, neoliberalism recognises many other actors in the international system, such as international organisations, transnational enterprises and other non-state players.

Key neoliberal thinkers Keohane and Nye (1989) show that the international system is becoming increasingly interdependent because of multiple channels that connect societies, including formal and informal ties among states, the “absence of hierarchy among issues” such as energy, resources and environment, and the decreased role of military power as a consequence of interdependence. Due to this “complex interdependence” (pp. 24-25), states focus on international institution building, regime creation and absolute gains as policy strategies, all of which promote international cooperation. Institutions and regimes can advance inter-state cooperation by improving their communications, lessening suspicions and attaining mutual benefits and therefore promoting their relationships. Consequently, the role of states is decreased. While they still hold that the international system is anarchic and states are the key actors, neoliberals contend that states are more concerned with how institutional arrangements or regimes can promote cooperation. They also argue that international cooperation is more likely when there are other actors in the international arena and other varieties of cooperative behaviour resulting from this complex interdependence. In terms of regional cooperation, Hurrell (1995b) argues that neoliberalism “has been the most influential theoretical approach to the recent study of international cooperation and represents a highly plausible and generalizable theory for understanding the resurgence of regionalism” (pp. 349-350).

Neoliberalism offers two main explanations for regionalism. First, increasing interdependence, particularly economic interdependence, produces demands for inter-state cooperation, and institutions are expected to call for collective actions to deal with various problems of common concern. Second, non-state actors in international systems, such as domestic interest groups and transnational firms, contribute to regionalism by pressing governments toward regional cooperation (Ravenhill 2002, p.



173). Governmental collaboration helps reduce the transaction costs for transnational business operations.

Neoliberalism is often seen as the best way to explain regionalism as a form of liberal cooperation. However, my empirical material presented in Chapters 4 to 7 shows that sometimes this cooperation does not work and that some players still pursue non-cooperative power politics. My data, therefore, suggests some alternative approaches that could be pursued in further research.

Approaching from a neoliberal perspective that “emphasizes that changing character of the international system and the impact of economic and technology change” (Hurrell 1995, p. 339), Hund (2003) insists that East Asian cooperation seems to be “a long way off” (p. 411). He examines the ASEAN +3 process in promoting sustainable economic and political cooperation and integration in East Asia and concludes that ASEAN +3 is still in the process of promoting mutual trust and confidence building. Baldwin (2008), on the other hand, highly appreciates the role of ASEAN +3 management to the East Asian economic regionalism. Also evaluating the role of ASEAN +3, Rozman (2012) emphasises the necessity for promoting the EAC based on the development of ASEAN +3; he complains, however, that countries rarely suggest ideas for its realisation (Rozman 2012, p. 143). China is concentrating on its Sinocentric plan of regionalism while the United States and its allies are countering with the initiative of building an Asia Pacific Community, such as suggested by former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd.

Based on the neoliberal perspectives on economic cooperation, Baldwin (2008) asserts that East Asian regionalism looks like a “noodle bowl”; it is “fragile” and needs regional management to strengthen it (Baldwin 2008, p. 449). Baldwin explains that East Asian regionalism is dependent on the “extreme interdependence of nations’ competitiveness without following the World Trade Organisation’s discipline and top-down management” (Baldwin 2008, p. 465). He insists that the various agreements and institutional arrangements will be very difficult to manage smoothly in East Asia when there is no overarching organisation or government to stand between member governments. In addition, although there are several bodies established to deal with bilateral issues, these cannot address complex trade disputes relating to several parties (Baldwin 2008, p. 469). For instance, when a trade dispute between Japan and Malaysia in the auto industry influenced Malaysia–Indonesia trade relations, the bodies to resolve disputes between Japan and Malaysia and between Malaysia and Indonesia were separate. Scholars using the neoliberal framework

overlook analyses of power and interests among states in the development of regionalism.

### *2.2.3 The relationship between neorealism and East Asian regionalism*

In this study I use a neorealist framework for studying regionalism as balance of power. While the general topic area of East Asian regionalism may be fruitfully examined through neoliberalism theoretical frameworks, as I argue in Chapters 4 to 7, the neorealist framework of ‘balancing power’ best explains the empirical material I have gathered in this study.

Neorealism developed during the 1980s under the influence of Kenneth Waltz. Neorealism focuses on the structure of the international system in which states are defined in terms of power and considered as key units of the international system (Jakobsen 2013). Discussing the differences among states, Waltz points out that every state in the international system is alike in all basic functional respects, regardless of its different cultural or ideological, constitutive or historic backgrounds (paraphrased in Jackson & Sorensen 2010, pp. 44, 74). The only distinctive feature among states is the distribution of capabilities; the variation of international orders is discovered by changing power relations between the players (paraphrased in Heywood 2002; Jackson & Sorensen 2010).

From a neorealist perspective, states may cooperate with each other on occasions, but fundamentally they have conflicting interests. For John (2001), the behaviour of states changes from fear to self-help and finally to power maximisation. He asserts that because great powers fear each other they anticipate danger, and there is a little room for trust among states. Self-help doesn’t mean they are not forming alliances, which he describes as “temporary marriages of convenience” in which states becomes enemies or alliance partners very quickly (John 2001, pp. 32-3).

According to neorealists, weak states thus attempt to utilise all possibilities for cooperation to boost their relative power and defend their autonomy. To describe how smaller states achieve a balance of power, Waltz mentions the strategies of “balancing” and “bandwagoning” (Yoshimatsu 2012, p. 401). Balancing is defined as one way smaller states try to cooperate among each other to deal with larger powers (Viner 2014; Paul 2005). In a balancing strategy, small states form alliances with other states with similar concerns to counterbalance strong or rising powers or to mobilise their national resources so as to increase their own defence capabilities. Such actions have been described as Lilliputian strategy (Keohane 1969; Reiter & Gärtner 2001; Scheldrup 2014). Bandwagoning is defined as strategies of joining together

with a larger power to be ‘on the same side’, and attempt to influence the larger power from ‘within the circle’ (Viner 2014; Waltz 1979; Walt 1985). Waltz stresses that states prefer balancing rather than bandwagoning because the latter may be counterproductive when great powers pose a threat to the bandwagon while there is no government to keep them safe (paraphrased in Donnelly 2009). Paul (2004, p.6) defines balancing as “strategy or foreign policy behavior”:

Balances of power are regarded as outcomes at the systemic or sub-systemic levels, that is, as conditions of power equilibrium among key states ... Balancing against the domination of a preponderant power is viewed as necessary or beneficial, because if weaker states do not check the rise of a hegemony, they may eventually lose their sovereignty and independence. Weaker states tend to ally among themselves because the stronger states might not respect them as much as other weaker states would (Paul 2004, p.6).

Paul argues that when a single state or coalition of states gains preponderance, weaker countries have a tendency to “flock together” to form balancing coalitions. The weaker states can adopt the internal balancing strategy of building arms and other countervailing capabilities and thereby attempt to balance a rising power’s military strength. In the global system, the most logical way to obtain equilibrium of power is for smaller states to either group together to balance against a large power, or to align themselves with the powerful state. At the sub-systemic level, when the rising power of a regional state or regional coalition causes problems, that state or coalition may undertake aggressive and predatory behaviour toward neighbouring states. To counter such danger and to balance a rising neighbour who has or is about to obtain a military advantage through its own innovation, coalitions of regional states can form balances with or without the association of extra-regional great-power states and may involve the modernisation of weapons or acquisition of arms from abroad.

Paul (2004, p. 5) asserts that a single state or coalition of states will impose its will on others when they start to have greater influence; countries therefore need to balance the power of other states, or bandwagon with them, to guarantee their security and physical survival. The objects of balance of power are peace preservation and stability. The purpose of balancing and bandwagoning is to “prevent a rising power from assuming hegemony, and if and when that prevention effort succeeds, a balance of power is expected to be present” (Paul 2004, p. 5). International status is stable when “all units are surviving and no large-scale (great power) wars take place” (Paul 2004, pp. 5-6).

In the East Asian region, China's rise is perceived as potentially threatening to regional security and stability. The balance of power between this great power and weaker countries (the Southeast Asian countries and Japan) is indispensable for the preservation of peace and stability, and for preventing China from assuming too much regional hegemony.

Joseph Nye (2004) cites Adam Smith's idea that people are led by an "invisible hand" when making decisions in the marketplace. This is a kind of soft power – an intangible attraction that persuades us to go along with others' purposes without any explicit threat or exchange taking place. Hard power, on the other hand, implies "command power" (p. 15), which is the ability to change others through force or encouragement. Nye defines soft power as "the ability to get what you want through the attraction rather than coercion or payments" (Nye 2004, p. 15). Soft power implies "co-optive power", which is the ability to persuade others through the attractiveness of one's culture and values, or "the ability to manipulate the agenda of political choices in a manner that makes others fail to express some preferences because they seem to be too unrealistic" (Nye 2004, p. 7). Nye also indicates that soft power should be based on the ability to understand what others are interested in, so that a community-based policy should be "sufficiently friendly and attractive that a community wants to help them achieve shared objectives" (Nye 2004, p. 5). Powerful countries also exhibit the trend of using soft power instead of or as well as hard power, and a state should not resort to "sticks" to force another to obey its orders. Nye asserts that "seduction is always more effective than coercion, and many values like democracy, human rights, and individual opportunities are deeply seductive".

Nye (2004) concedes that a powerful country may reach the outcomes it wants in world politics through its values, level of prosperity and openness, which are respected by other countries that want to follow it. Thus Nye recommends that a powerful country "set an agenda and attract others in world politics" rather than "forcing" them to change by threatening military force or economic sanction" (Nye 2004, p. 5). Nye concedes that the common point between hard power and soft power is "the ability to achieve one's purpose by affecting the behaviour of others", but the difference between them is in "the nature of the behaviour and in the tangibility of the resources" (Nye 2004, p. 7).

The idea of soft-balancing emerges from mixing the concepts of balance of power and soft power. In hard-balancing, military force or economic sanctions are used, whereas in soft-balancing, non-military strategies and soft power are used to

balance. Likewise, bandwagoning may also involve non-military soft power strategies. Soft-balancing and bandwagoning strategies use international institutions, economic craft and diplomatic arrangements in order to delay, complicate or increase the costs for emerging powerful states of using their extraordinary power over other states.

In the East Asian context, the main idea neorealists point to is that East Asian states seek to maximise their interests through regionalism while maintaining strong adherence to sovereignty and state–society relations. Yoshimatsu (2008) suggests that “great power politics have constructed the basic framework of regional affairs in East Asia” (Yoshimatsu 2008, p. 8). During the Cold War era the US formed security alliances with Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand through bilaterally oriented foreign policy under the “hub-and-spoke” structure. The alliances remained even when the Cold War ended.

The relationship between China, US and Japan has determined both conflict and cooperation in East Asia, with small states considered to be either balancing or bandwagoning (Mols 2000, pp.20-23; Ikenberry and Mastanduno, 2003 paraphrased in Yoshimatsu 2008, p. 8). Yoshimatsu (2008, p. 8) asserts that “although smaller states have become a driving force for launching major regional institutions, they have been forced to adopt discrete strategies to secure their interests in handling regional affairs”.

East Asian states have a strong adherence to sovereignty because of their desire to maintain and strengthen national unity and collective national solidarity. This leads to negative attitudes of their governments to international cooperation, “especially institutionalization which might result in any surrender of political economy” (Yoshimatsu 2008, p. 8). Furthermore, East Asian states’ political economies play decisive roles in “creating an efficient and competitive industrial structure, establishing an intimate relationship with the society through various formal and informal networks” (cited by Yoshimatsu 2008, p. 9. See also (Weiss and Hobson 1995; Evans 1995; Moon and Prasad 1998 paraphrased in Yoshimatsu 2008, p. 9). Yoshimatsu (2008) realised that in East Asia, “while major governments have taken official actions to stimulate or support behavior by private actors, independent activities by private actors are often coordinated by governmental actions” (Yoshimatsu 2008, p. 9). This contrasts with Western countries, where processes and activities in the private sector and civil society are often independent of governmental activities.

The above account illustrates how neorealists explain the characteristics of regionalism among East Asian states. In summary, East Asian states maximise their national interests through regionalism. As (Yoshimatsu 2008, p. 9) expresses it:

The state calculates positive and negative effects of intra-regional and extra-regional forces on its interests by engaging in cost-benefit analysis. The state is capable of identifying policy preferences and political goals, and of determining their importance. While the state recognizes the need to advance various forms of collaborative economic arrangements, it seeks to draw maximum benefits from such arrangements by carefully avoiding its sovereignty being surrendered to external forces ... The main task for states in promoting projects for regional unity is to secure the convergence of national interests through the harmonization of rules and policies and the moderation of distributional conflict. (p. 9)

As I will argue in Chapters 4, 6 and 7, neither the conventional neorealist hard-balancing idea nor the neoliberal pro-cooperation explanations of regionalism fully explain the empirical data on which this thesis is based. My data indicates that states are employing strategies somewhere between these two, leading me to draw also on the neorealist concepts of bandwagoning and soft-balancing.

### 2.3 Concepts of Bandwagoning and Soft-Balancing

Bandwagoning and soft-balancing are part of the neorealist theory of balance of power. The term “soft-balancing strategy” emerged from the concept of balance of power, which is a key factor in the theory of neorealism. Soft-balancing is a recent addition to balance of power theory used to describe non-military forms of balancing evident from since the end of the Cold War, particularly during and after the 2003 Iraq War. The concept of soft-balancing has been used to refer to (non-military) strategies, and “international institutions, economic craft or diplomatic arrangement in order to delay, complicate, or increase the costs of using extraordinary power by a emerging powerful state” (Pape 2005, p. 10). The soft-balancing concept illuminates the strategies small and weak countries may employ in responding to the rising of new existing powers.

In the East Asian region, China’s sometimes aggressive behaviour has partly led to the coalition between Japan and ASEAN in promoting the EAC, which aims to bandwagon with China. This is done through political soft power, in contrast with hard-balancing, which implies military force. As McDougall (2012) puts it, this kind of power “ focuses more on the development of political alignments and the undertaking of diplomatic initiatives as a means of constraining the influence of a rising power” (McDougall 2012, p. 4).

In some evaluations of international relations, soft-balancing is considered more effective than hard-balancing. Pape (2005) suggests that hard-balancing will not be able to settle emerging issues among countries, and may result in defeat or even the loss of useful and effective alignments. For example, after the Cold War, Europe’s security was improved by inviting its former enemies to join the EU rather than “resorting to force” or “military domination”. The recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are also evidence of the ineffectiveness of using hard power alone (Arase & Akaha 2010, pp. 5-6).

Soft power is one of the main tools in a soft-balancing or bandwagoning strategy. Arase and Akaha (2010) summarised the situation of using soft power in the East Asian region. They assessed that the US’s soft power in East Asia has declined while China has developed it strongly, especially in Southeast Asia, and Japan has also pushed soft power. For example, the China–ASEAN Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement signed in 2002 has created a free trade area between China and all 10 ASEAN countries that will come into operation by 2020. China has deepened the relationship and socialised with ASEAN countries through distributing

economic assistance and active cooperation in non-traditional security areas. Japan's soft power was assessed through surveys by a Chicago Council poll in 2007 revealing that "Japan was trusted to do the right thing" by majority out of 16 countries. Japan was ranked at second position in this poll after Germany and ahead of the EU (Arase & Akaha 2010, p. 8).

Nye (2004) has indicated that "institutions can enhance a country's soft power" (Nye 2004, p. 10). For example, in the second half of the twentieth century the US advanced its values by creating a structure of international rules and institutions around the UN that were consistent with the liberal and democratic nature of the US economic system. Similarly, Japan with its initiative to form the EAC aimed to advance its values in the region, and if the EAC comes into being Japan will be attempting to assert its power vis a vis China through bandwagoning regionalism.

In this thesis, I analyse the EAC as a bandwagoing strategy initiated by Japan (a large power but arguably also weak due to post-World War II constraints on its military power) and ASEAN (a group of smaller and weaker countries) to deal with potential threats from the US as an existing great power and China as a rising great power. The data I present in Chapters 4 to 7 indicates that the EAC can be characterised as a bandwagoning strategy. I examine the policies adopted by Japan and the ASEAN countries to manage their relations with great powers through EAC building. I explore how states implement policies to promote the EAC initiative in terms of economic, social-cultural, political and security cooperation, and how these policies have impacted the promotion of the EAC initiative.



## **2.4 Chapter Conclusion**

I started my doctoral research reviewing the international relations literature about regionalism and the main theoretical schools of social constructivism, neoliberalism and neorealism. When I gathered my primary data and reviewed it, the themes of national interests, competition among great powers and attempts by smaller powers to protect their interests in the context of great power jostling kept arising. For that reason I selected neorealist perspectives on soft balancing as the conceptual framework for the analysis of my empirical data. My argument is that East Asian regionalism is not well explained by neoliberal ideas about cooperation alone, but can also be analysed by neorealist theory in terms of a soft-balancing and bandwagoning strategies used by smaller and weaker countries to deal with regional great powers. I take this approach because it best explains the empirical data.

### **CHAPTER 3: THE HISTORY OF EAST ASIAN REGIONALISM**

This chapter presents the history of East Asian Regionalism in geography, population and the potential of region. It examines the development of the regional engagement with the born of regional multilateral mechanisms including the establishment of the East Asian Community. Appendix 8 outlines this history in more detail.

### 3.1 Historical Background

The East Asia region covers approximately about 28% of the Asian continent and includes five northeast countries (China, Japan, South Korea, North Korea and Mongolia) and 10 ASEAN countries, along with a great diversity of culture. The ASEAN countries are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste and Vietnam.

According to the 2017 statistics of the World Bank, the population of the East Asia and Pacific region is more than 2.3 billion (World Bank 2017). Russia's economy, politics and cultural background have been more oriented to Europe, so despite part of it being physically located in East Asia, Russia is considered an outsider power participating in regional issues. The US, India, and Australia also actively participate in regional issues. For these reasons, the framework of this study is not limited to investigating regional countries; it examines cooperation and competition among all the great powers in the region. However, my main focus is on countries that currently have a very significant role in the region, so this includes the US, but not so much Russia, India or Australia.

The development of interconnections throughout the East Asian region has a history going back to the third century CE when the regional linkages of trade, culture and religion across the region were connected by the Silk Road. The first development of modern East Asian regionalism can be divided into three stages. The first stage was in the early 1950s when a number of organisations were created to cope with the communist insurgencies in East Asia, particularly after China and the Soviet Union formed an alliance in February 1950. Later that year, the two countries formed a de facto alliance with North Korea at the onset of the Korean War. Subsequently, South Korea established the Asian and Pacific Council (APC) with eight other member countries (Australia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, New Zealand, Republic of China [Taiwan], South Vietnam and Thailand) to focus on matters of economics and solidarity. In 1954, the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), a regional defence organisation, was formed with the aim of deterring the spread of communism in Southeast Asia. In 1967, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established in response to continuing concerns about the communist encroachment. At that time, ASEAN included Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand (Green & Gill 2009, p. 5). However, the APC was dissolved in 1975, as was SEATO in 1977. No new policies were proposed until

the end of the Cold War when Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) was established in 1989 by Australia and Japan.

The late 1980s saw the emergence of the second wave of regionalism, when economic regional growth and business integration, including the appreciation of the Japanese yen, precipitated political initiatives for regional integration. APEC became the first major worldwide economic and trade organisation founded with the aims of managing the effects of growing economic interdependence and of seeking liberalised trade and economic relations in the region. APEC also became a forum for political and security discussions with the advent of the APEC Leaders' Meeting, initially convened by US President Bill Clinton in Seattle in November 1993. Since then it has annually brought together APEC member countries' heads of state. Following the September 11 2001 terrorist attack against the US, the Shanghai APEC Summit, which was founded in 1996, placed a much stronger emphasis on counterterrorism cooperation (Green & Gill 2009, p. 6).

In 1994 the Asian Regional Forum (ARF) was established with the aim of addressing security issues and creating confidence-building measures (Green & Gill 2009, p. 7). The ARF originally comprised 20 countries, then increased to 27 countries including the ASEAN members at that time, 10 ASEAN dialogue partners (Australia, Canada, China, the European Union [EU], India, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States), one ASEAN observer (Papua New Guinea) as well as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Mongolia, Pakistan, East Timor, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. The ARF, which became a key forum for security dialogue in Asia, engaged in various bilateral alliances and dialogues.

The third wave of East Asian regionalism has flourished particularly since the Asian financial crisis of 1997, which challenged regional institutions, including ASEAN and APEC, to respond to emerging issues. Calls were made for new cooperative mechanisms with stronger capacity to deal with regional issues like the financial crisis, and coordinate between ASEAN and other powerful regional countries, particularly China, Japan and Republic of Korea. In response, institutions, diplomatic policies and other initiatives for regional cooperation were crafted with the aim of promoting regional cooperation and prosperity.

The development of regionalism continued with the formation of additional institutions:

- ASEAN + 3 (10 ASEAN members with China, Japan and South Korea) in 1997
- Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in 2001
- East Asian Vision Group (EAVG) in 1999
- East Asian Community (EAC) initiative in 2002
- East Asia Summit (EAS) in 2005
- Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement in 2005
- Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which was formally launched in 2012 at the ASEAN Summit in Cambodia.

In addition to better management of episodes such as the financial crisis, another driving factor behind recent East Asian regionalism was the prospect of forming an East Asian free trade area, which promised a huge market of 1.9 billion people and an estimated gross domestic product of US\$2 trillion (Takashi 2003, p. 252).

The EAC initiative came about as a result of this development of regionalism. The idea of building a community resembling the European Commission made sense against the background of the series of cooperative mechanisms proposed in the early decades of the twenty-first century. The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere emerged from Japanese fascism, militarism and imperialism and caused tremendous hardship and suffering for the colonized peoples of Asia during the Second World War. All initiatives towards regionalism in East Asia have explicitly drawn a line between the “forced regionalism” under Japanese rule and modern approaches. Recently, ASEAN +3 and the EAS have been considered platforms for building an East Asian Community (EAC) (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2017).

### *3.1.1 East Asian Economic Caucus (EAEC)*

The first formal organization of the East Asian community initiative was the East Asian Economic Group (later changed to the East Asian Economic Caucus, EAEC). Proposed in 1990 by Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir, it was intended to consist of ASEAN members plus China, Japan and South Korea. The EAEC introduced a significant new conceptualisation of East Asia with its aims of integrating Northeast and Southeast Asia into one regional unity (Takashi 2003). It was especially intended to manage the emergence of the East Asian economies and respond to the formation of trade blocs in Europe (the EU) and the Americas (NAFTA) (Chirathivat 2006). Unification among East Asian countries would help raise a common voice against European protectionism, challenging Europeans to

dismantle their trade barriers if they wanted access to the extensive Asian market (Takashi 2003).

Japan was initially expected to be the linchpin of the EAEC because it was the “only Asian country with the ability to help fellow Asian countries” (*Australian Financial Review*, cited in (Takashi 2003)). However, Japan refused to become the “driving force” of East Asian cooperation as per Malaysia’s expectation because of Japan’s desires to promote broader cooperation in Asia and the Pacific, in line with its US-centered foreign policy (Takashi 2003, p. 258). Despite ASEAN’s utmost efforts to provide a joint exercise towards the East Asian concept by holding a number of ministerial meetings about the necessity for a regional constitution in East Asia, the proposal failed. Reasons for its failure include the unwillingness of the US, Japan’s lack of interest, China’s self-interested concentration on its own transition to a market economy at the time, and the lack of shared interests among the potential members (Chirathivat 2005a).

Even though the EAEC failed, according to Singapore’s Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew, the EAEC was “an idea that would not go away” because East Asian regionalism was an inevitable response to the emergence of NAFTA and the EU (Stubbs 2002, p. 446).<sup>3</sup> In the early 1990s, APEC (Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation) and AFTA (ASEAN Free Trade Agreement) were created as vehicles for further regional trade liberalisation and a response to increasing regionalism in other parts of the world (Chirathivat 2005b, pp. 150-1).

The EU felt the need to not miss opportunities with the emergence of the Asian economies and thus initiated the ASEM (Asia – Europe Meeting) in 1996. This constituted another regional grouping, with the aim of furthering linkages between East Asia and the European Union.

### 3.1.2 ASEAN +3

The global financial crisis hit the Asian region in 1997 and 1998, when expanding regionalism in Europe and the Americas were external factors pushing the development of regionalism in East Asia. Demand for promoting economic cooperation was stronger than ever before. Many countries started to explore the path of regionalism because policy makers saw advantages in economic cooperation. The advantage was explained as an opening of markets and an easing of regulations within groups that would otherwise possibly treat each other unfavourably. Almost all

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<sup>3</sup> SM Lee Comments on EAEC, *Business Times*, May 15, 1992

Northeast and Southeast Asian countries have therefore been involved in one or more bilateral or sub-regional Preferential Trade Agreements (PTA). In just a few years various types of trade agreements have been proposed or are under negotiation, and some have been agreed upon and are being implemented. The spread of these agreements led one commentator to suggest “The whole East Asian region now seems busying dealing with these bilateral FTAs in one way or another” (Chirathivat 2005b, pp. 152-3).

When the Asian currency crisis developed into a financial crisis in 1997, a multilateral summit between ASEAN, Japan, China and South Korea (ASEAN +3) was initiated by ASEAN in order to encourage East Asian cooperation. ASEAN+3, which is considered as the first regional institution established with the aim of increasing cooperation and interaction as well as creating peace, stability and prosperity for East Asian region, is expected as a huge single market with having 1.9 billion people and gross domestic product accounted USD 2 billions in 2003 (Bergsten 2000; Takashi 2003, p.252).

In 2002 former Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi presented the idea of a wider East Asia Community (EAC). This initiative was pursued by successive Japanese governments. The concept of the EAC was officially launched by Japanese Prime Minister Hatoyama at the APEC summit held in Singapore in November 2009 (Hund 2003, p. 394). The regional organisation ASEAN +3, established in 1997, therefore served as a linchpin institution in the formation of the larger EAC.

In 2001, the East Asian Vision Group (EAVG), commissioned by the ASEAN +3 process, enunciated a clear need for building the EAC in its report, *Towards An East Asian Community – Region of Peace, Prosperity and Progress*. Among other things, the report stated:

We, the people of East Asia, aspire to create an East Asian Community of peace, prosperity and progress based in the full development of all peoples in the region ... The Vision Group envisions East Asia moving from a region of nations to a bona fide regional community with shared challenges, common aspirations, and a parallel destiny ... The time for building an East Asian Community is opportune (East Asian Vision Group 2001, p. 6) .

Building the EAC is the long-term goal of ASEAN +3. The Kuala Lumpur Declaration issued at the ASEAN +3 Summit in December 2005 reaffirmed the “common resolve to realize an East Asian community as a long term goal that would contribute to the maintenance of regional and global peace and security, prosperity

and progress” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2005 -a, para.5). In the ASEAN +3 Summit in 2007, the leaders issued a second Joint Statement on East Asia Cooperation on the tenth anniversary of the ASEAN +3 process, providing a new vision of and a stronger determination towards community building.

### *3.1.3 East Asia Summit*

The East Asia Summit (EAS) was expected to make a significant contribution to the achievement of the long-term goal of establishing an EAC in process of the building of the EAC. Following its inception at the 2004 ASEAN +3 meeting, the first EAS was held on 14 December 2005 in Malaysia. The EAS has been convened on an annual basis as a strategic forum and important component of the evolving regional architecture, playing a complementary and mutually reinforcing role with other regional mechanisms, including ASEAN +3, in building an East Asian Community (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2005 -a).

Throughout the five East Asia Summits held in 2005, early 2007, late 2007, 2009 and 2010 in Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, respectively, the central role of ASEAN in regional cooperation has been recognised, and ASEAN-initiated community building activities have been fuelled with greater inspiration, not only by Northeast Asian and Southeast Asian countries but also Australia, New Zealand and India, who are not usually considered geographically part of East Asia, but rather part of the wider Asia-Pacific region, and for whom, strategically, East Asia is an important region. There are views that the enlargement of the East Asia Summit membership might be extended beyond ASEAN +3, particularly through the inclusion of Russia and the US into the framework from 2011.

### *3.1.4 The Emergence of the EAC*

There are two versions of the EAC. One came from Koizumi and subsequent Japanese Prime Ministers, and is more Asia-Pacific, and more US-friendly. The Japanese EAC proposal made in 2002 by Prime Minister Koizumi calls for a broader community that includes more countries and is consistent with the East Asia Summit as its institutional base. The second came from the EAVG and ASEAN+3 process and is East Asia-focused and China-friendly. In 2005, ASEAN, the Convenor of the ASEAN+3 process, defined ASEAN+3 as the main vehicle for EAC-building. The Japanese proposal is consistent with an Asia-Pacific approach to regionalism whereas the East Asian Vision Group Report is consistent with a narrower East Asian approach. In the framework of the thesis, I discuss both versions. The tension between



the two versions will be relevant throughout in discussion about the lack of agreement about membership, and the big power politics that have unfolded.

### *EAC under the Japanese version*

When the Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi proposed the EAC initiative in 2002, he argued for an East Asian Free Trade Agreement and proposed that the integration of the East Asian region in the global economy was important for the shifting of economic power to the region. East Asia would then have a responsibility to lead sustainable and balanced growth for the world economy. An EAC would help fulfil that responsibility, create its own influential role in a global context, bring prosperity and peace within the region, and “raise a unified economic common voice for East Asia” (Kita 2010, para.9).

The Japanese government has pushed the EAC initiative as its main strategy for regionalism. One reason for this lies in relations between the US and Japan. In the decades since World War II the US–Japan alliance has been the cornerstone of Japan’s foreign policy. Japan’s role as a leader in the region is inhibited by ongoing rancor about its wartime aggression and postwar lack of contrition, as well as its constitutional limitations on armed forces. Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution stipulates:

Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes. In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized (Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet 1946 para.13)

Recently, Japan has increased power of the Japanese military but speculation in the Article 9 still prevents Japan in some ways from implementing military activities (Reych 2017). Japan is thus limited in its building of military strength, and has relied on protection from the US. While Japan has benefited from its close bond with the US, it has hardly been an independent country in terms of international relations. In the post–Cold War period, Japan’s importance to the US has declined, especially in the aftermath of 11 September 2001. For these reasons, Japan has sought a “more independent relationship with the US to enhance its national interests and influence in East Asia” (Junbo 2009 para.11). If the EAC becomes a significant

regional organisation, it will benefit Japan by enhancing Japan's role as a leader in the region, separately from the US.

A second reason Japan has promoted East Asian regionalism in the form of the EAC is to try to prevent China from assuming regional hegemony (Sohn 2010, p. 500). Since 2000 China has implemented proactive diplomatic engagement with ASEAN. A series of agreements and accords were signed between China and ASEAN in 2001 and 2002, namely, the *Framework Agreement on Economic Cooperation*, the *Declaration on Conduct in South China Sea*, the *Joint Declaration on Cooperation in the Field of Non-traditional Security Issues*, the *Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation* and a *Memorandum of Understanding on Agricultural Cooperation*. The Chinese National People's Congress approved the country's accession to the ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in June 2003. As well, Beijing's Early Harvest Program tariff reductions were applied to some Southeast Asian goods even before the signed accords came into effect. According to Sohn (2010, p.506), the Early Harvest Program is an agreement signed between China and ASEAN countries under the framework of China-ASEAN Free Trade Area (FTA) in order to reduce the tariffs of some products for example livestock, meat, fish, dairy, products, agricultural products. By signing this agreement, ASEAN countries can approach the China's market easily without waiting for officially signing a free trade agreement. China's dynamic relations with Southeast Asia, which Japan regards as its 'backyard', has compelled Japan to release new policies to compete with China in a regional leading role. An EAC, of which Japan is a founder, may help Japan recover its leading role in the East Asian region. The EAC, in addition to ASEAN +3 and the East Asia Summit (ASEAN +3 and India, Australia, and New Zealand) may help Japan compete with China's influence in the region.

The narrower, more East Asia-focussed vision of the EAC was officially announced in 2004 as a long-term goal at the 8<sup>th</sup> ASEAN +3 Summit, after it had been recommended by the East Asian Vision Group (EAVG) in 2001 and again in 2002, and the 5<sup>th</sup> ASEAN +3 Summit of 2001 and 6<sup>th</sup> ASEAN +3 Summit of 2002. In 2005, ASEAN, the convenor of ASEAN+3 process defined the ASEAN+3 as the main vehicle for East Asian Community building. The 2001 East Asian Vision Group report is the primary document for the ASEAN-based East Asian Community proposal.

In 2009, at the second China–Japan–South Korea Trilateral Summit, Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama reiterated his predecessor's call for the building of

the EAC and received positive responses from China and South Korea. These three countries expressed commitment to “the development of an EAC based on the principles of openness, transparency, inclusiveness as a long-term goal” (Junying & Shaohua 2014, para.14). In 2012, the EAVG’s proposal to establish the EAC by 2020 was agreed to at that year’s ASEAN Summit.

The EAC initiative has been welcomed by most East Asian leaders, for example, former Singaporean Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong and his successor Lee Hsien Loon, and former Thailand Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. The Chinese government responded immediately to the proposal, expressing hopes that the EAC would create a stable and peaceful environment for China’s economic development, especially with the increase of China’s exports (Terada 2006, p. 5). As one Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman declared:

China is willing to see Japan and various countries in Southeast Asia maintain good cooperative relations and it hopes Japan, being the only developed country in Asia, will play a constructive role in maintaining economic stability and promoting the healthy development of cooperation in the region. (Terada 2006, p. 6)

ASEAN members have expressed support for the EAC initiative because in Japan’s proposals for the EAC, ASEAN is positioned as the driver for the initiative. As former Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi stated in his visit to Southeast Asia in 2002, “[The EAC] should be achieved by expanding East Asian cooperation founded on the Japan–ASEAN relationship” (Sohn 2010, p. 509). ASEAN members are also interested in the EAC initiative because they should also gain benefits in both the economic and political spheres. For example, at the Japan–ASEAN Summit in December 2005, Prime Minister Koizumi announced that Japan would provide financial assistance to ASEAN to the amount of 7.5 billion yen (approximately 70 million US dollars) to help the fight against avian influenza, develop counter-terrorism measures and assist those disadvantaged by economic integration (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2005 -b).

Since the Fukuda Doctrine was announced in 1977 by Japanese Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda during a speech in Manila while on a tour of the ASEAN member states, Japan has been pursuing a more comprehensive relationship with Southeast Asian countries, and it considers ASEAN “a vehicle of policy to consolidate Japan’s cooperative initiatives in the region” (Sudo 1992 cited in Yeo 2006, p. 262). Prime Minister Fukuda pledged that Japan, a country committed to peace, would never become a military power; it would build up a relationship of mutual confidence and trust with Southeast Asian countries in wide-ranging fields

and, as an equal partner, cooperate positively with ASEAN and its member countries in their own efforts. The Fukuda Doctrine serves as the foundation of Japan's current and future diplomacy toward the rest of Asia.

Another broad regional initiative was proposed and outlined by and outlined by the Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd in June 2008 during a speech he delivered at the Asia Society Australasia entitled "It is time to build an Asia-Pacific community" (Viner 2014). The proposal called for a strong and effective regional institution to resolve regional issues including security, terrorism, natural disasters, disease, trade, energy and food security. This proposal spanned the entire Asia-Pacific region – including the United States, Japan, China, India, Indonesia and others – although Rudd said it should not diminish any other existing regional bodies. The proposal was said "dead in the water right at very beginning" (Elek 2008). No Asian heads of government have publicly supported the scheme, and there has been considerable scepticism from leading ASEAN members such as Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia (Frost 2009).

### *3.1.5 ASEAN*

ASEAN, the largest regional group in Asia, was founded in August 1967 with the aim of strengthening economic growth, social progress, and cultural development as well as to stabilise regional peace (Severino 2010, p. 15). Since its establishment, ASEAN has made three significant achievements. First, ASEAN has doubled its membership from five to 10. The original state members are Indonesia, Singapore, Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia; Brunei joined in 1984, and Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia and – most controversially of all – Burma (Myanmar) joined between 1995 and 1999.

The second major achievement was that ASEAN defined itself and its aims by adopting a Charter at the 13<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in November 2007. The charter set out the rules of membership for turning ASEAN into "a ruled-based organization with a legal personality" (Katsumata 2009, p. 11) which aimed to promote a single free trade area (the ASEAN Economic Community) by 2015. According to the charter, ASEAN's aims were to maintain regional peace and security; preserve its nuclear free status; promote a single market; commit to good governance; and maintain ASEAN as "a primary driving force" in regional relations (Beeson 2009, p. 35). The Charter is seen as a turning point, affirming the central role of ASEAN in regional cooperation.

ASEAN's third major achievement was that its initiatives have contributed to promoting external relationships between ASEAN and other countries in the region.

The Asian Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN +3 (10 ASEAN members and China, Japan, South Korea) and ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) were all created in the 1990s. At the 9th Summit in October 2003, ASEAN members agreed in the Bali Concord II to create an ASEAN Economic Community, which was intended to transform AFTA into a single market by 2020. Especially, ASEAN members at the 38<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting in 2006 agreed to accelerate the schedule to achieve an ASEAN Community by 2015. At the 12th Summit 2007, they decided to bring forward the goal of ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) and ASEAN Security Community (ASC) to 2015 from 2020 (Martin Jones & L.R Smith 2007).

ASEAN leaders set out the “ASEAN Way” as a set of regional norms of culture and identity. The features of the ASEAN Way are described as “a high level of informality, the practice of quiet diplomacy, continuing process of dialogue, a willingness to exercise self-restraint, solidarity, the practice of consensus building and the art of conflict avoidance” (Emmers 2003, p. 23). These norms were acknowledged to be a key factor in the economic development of a number of ASEAN states and, more importantly, in preventing the outbreak of wars between them (Kraft 2012, p. 63). These norms also kept ASEAN and, by extension, Southeast Asia free from the influence of the influence of great power politics. In particular, a strict interpretation of the principle of non-interference and how it was to be practised in Southeast Asia had as much to do with maintaining the security of the region by preventing its great power rivalries (Kraft 2012).

### 3.2 East Asian Regionalism Pessimism

Most of the literature addressing challenges to East Asian regionalism are pessimistic about the potential of regionalism. Studies about obstacles to East Asian regionalism include Beeson (2006), Hund (2003), Kang (2006), and Zhang (2006) on historical issues, typically the long-standing tension between Japan and China, US hegemony in the region, and the Japan and South Korea relationship. Almost of these studies share the common perspective that intergovernmental efforts at East Asian regionalism not only developed slowly, they are also fragile. Pempel (2005) describes the region of East Asia as lacking coherence. He argues that although East Asia now is a more “closely knit region” and there is no single map for East Asia nor a single conception of East Asia (Pempel 2005, p. 24). The position for Southeast Asia is still ambiguous. Acharya (2006) explained that until 1960s, concept of Southeast Asia was inseparable from South Asia. During the Cold War, the concept of “Southern Asia” combined all of nations in Southeast Asia and South Asia. For example, the Asia Africa Conference held in Bandung in 1955 was officially known as the “Conference of Southeast Asian Prime Ministers” or “Colombo Powers”. India, a co-sponsor of the Bandung Conference and two others earlier for “Asian Relations” (in 1947 and 1949) was successful in promoting Asian regionalism because these conferences were attended by South Asian, Southeast Asian and Northeast Asian states (Acharya 2006, p. 412).

Aurelia George Mulgan has examined the impacts of regional leadership rivalries towards the EAC building (Mulgan 2009). She argues that progress on the EAC idea will be difficult because of leadership rivalry between Japan and China. Japan’s initiative for the EAC could be used by China to impose a regional order under its leadership. This rivalry can be seen in their different perspectives on EAC membership, with China preferring membership to be made up of the ASEAN+3 group, and Japan favoring the ASEAN+6 group, with the participation of the US. Furthermore, she doubted the potential for the Trilateral Summit between Japan, China and South Korea in pushing the EAC, because the Trilateral Summit focus was on resolving economic crises, climate change issues, or North Korea rather than EAC building.

Cossa and colleagues questions the need for a regional mechanism, specifically whether the EAC will really promote the prosperity, stability and cohesiveness of the region (Cossa, Tay & Lee 2005). They doubt whether the EAC can deal with regional security challenges including from the proliferation of weapons

of mass destruction, competition to be the leading power, accelerated energy competition and rising environmental problems.

Melissa Curley and Nicholas Thomas explore the challenges and opportunities for community building in East Asia in the areas of politics, security, economic development and socio-cultural dimensions (Curley & Thomas 2012). On the one side, the authors appreciate that economic and political conditions encourage the countries of East Asia to look more towards each other. On the other side, they point out that the process of EAC building has still many challenges and obstacles including the relationship between China and the United States, the rivalry between Japan and China and the lack of experience in security dialogue and cooperation among the three Northeast Asia countries. There are sharp differences between the countries of Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia in the manner they define threats to security, in their strategic cultures and perspectives, and in the patterns of security direction among them. The tendency of East Asian states to prioritise sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-interference in internal affairs also threatens their ability to collaborate. They recommend that the ASEAN+3 process continue to encourage subregional security dialogue, in addition to trilateral meetings between three Northeast Asian countries. The ASEAN+3 group must collectively ensure that the EAC community-building process does not come an arena for China-US strategic competition, that ASEAN be prepared to serve as the driving force for the EAC, and do so in a manner whereby both China and Japan are able to play constructive, non-threatening, and mutually reinforcing roles that focus on common regional aspirations. They also recommend the regionalisation of markets and policy coordination by states be accompanied by substantive interactions among civil society organisations across the region. They conclude that the EAC does not yet have a structure or a clear vision.

Some scholars have studied the East Asian Community without identifying or explaining its limited impact on regionalism. Ralph A. Cossa has studied the development of attitudes of the US towards multilateral cooperation and regionalism in East Asia (Cossa & Tanaka 2007; Cossa, Tay & Lee 2005). He argues that it is difficult to discuss the attitudes of the US toward the development of an East Asian Community because the EAC has not yet been defined and it is not clear it will be successfully established. He said the US attitude would depend on who leads and drives the EAC, and it could be hard for the US to accept China as the defacto leader of the EAC. In addition, the author considers that the US would also need to see how

the EAC related to the other multilateral organisations such as ARF, APEC, the Six Party Talks and the Proliferation Security Initiative. Will the EAC reinforce these efforts to resolve global issues or dilute them? In another piece Cossa argued that the United States should end the “wait and see” attitude towards the EAC (Cossa, Tay & Lee 2005). He argues that the US should clearly articulate its attitude to the EAC in general and the East Asian Summit (EAS) in particular, and not risk overlooking Southeast Asia due to focusing instead on Iraq or North Korean issues.

Meanwhile, Cossa and colleagues have also examined the main factors driving the nascent sense of regionalism in East Asian and why some countries want to exclude the US (Cossa, Tay & Lee 2005). They see that the primary feature of East Asian regionalism is to allow the most stable and mutually beneficial relationships to emerge. Tay says that the US should accept its exclusion from the EAS because all of the EAS states will in any case protect the vital interests they share with the US.

Jose Guera Vio has examined the EAC from the perspective of the growing diplomacy of South Korea as a middle power in advancing regional cooperation (Vio 2013). The author describes South Korea’s shift to modern regionalism through Kim Dae-jung’s vision on the EAC foundations. The author highlights South Korea’s efforts towards regionalism in the context of the power competition between Japan and China, and the failure of the East Asian Free Trade Area. South Korea therefore launched the EAVGII in order to rethink the future of community building process in East Asia. The author appraised the value of the EAVGII report in giving an assessment of the achievements of the EAVG, with South Korea recommending the realization of the East Asia Economic Community by 2020 as the main pillar of the new vision. The author argues that while ASEAN pushed for its own initiative for regional free trade area, South Korea was one of the few countries making diplomatic efforts and allocating the most resources in time and financing research studies on a trade liberalization process based on the APT. This study, like the work of Cossa and Tay, discusses the EAC but without assessing the potential of the EAC to deepen East Asian regionalism.



### **3.3 Chapter Conclusion**

East Asian is a huge region with diversity in history, politics and culture. Geographically, East Asia consists of countries in Southeast Asia and countries and territories of Northeast Asia. Regionalism in East Asia region has been developing for several decades, building on centuries of pre-modern interconnections before that. The development of East Asian regionalism can be divided into three stages. The first stage started in the early 1950s with the aim to deal with communist insurgences in East Asia. The second stage in the 1980s was attached to the increase in economic growth and business integration regionally. And the third wave flourished as the result of the financial crisis in Asia in 1997. The idea of the EAC belongs to the third wave of regionalism.

The EAC was initiated by Japan in 2002 in order to promote the East Asian Free Trade agreement. The idea was officially announced in 2004 at the 8th ASEAN+3 Summit, being recognised as the long-term goal of ASEAN+3. The EAC initiative was welcomed by almost all countries in the region, including China, Singapore, Japan, and ASEAN countries with the expectation that the EAC would create a stable and peaceful environment for economic development.

In spite of the development of regionalism in East Asia, most of literature is pessimistic about the potential of regionalism in East Asia because of the unresolved tension between Japan and China, and Japan and South Korea over the territorial disputes, as well as rivalry between China and the US. In addition, the intergovernmental efforts in East Asian regionalism have developed very slowly and are characterised as fragile.

#### **CHAPTER 4: COMPETING REGIONAL FORUMS CHALLENGES THE PROCESS OF EAC BUILDING**

In this chapter, I examine how both the Tran-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP) and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) have overtaken the EAC as key regional organisations for East Asia. Both the TPP and RCEP are economic regional institutions that have arisen in recent years. Almost all prospective members of the EAC are members of the RCEP. Five prospective members of EAC are TPP members (Brunei, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam), and the EAC's other prospective members are considering joining the TPP. The EAC has comprised a goal for broad-reaching regionalism, which include trade deals. TPP and RCEP are also trade deals. Although the EAC, TPP and RCEP are not the same thing, the TPP and RCEP may be seen as regionalism initiatives, albeit narrower in scope than the EAC, and thus it is instructive for understanding the (lack of) progress of the EAC to compare and contrast it with the TPP and RCEP. My findings show that when the EAC member countries attend many regional forums within the same time periods, the process of building the EAC is slowed. The TPP and RCEP negotiations have similarly taken up human resources for regionalism with a negative impact on the building of the EAC. Moreover, the advanced progress and more visible benefits of TPP and RCEP compared to the EAC highlight the apparent slowness of the EAC building process. As well, TPP and RCEP, led by the United States and China, are not utilising a soft-balancing strategy but instead more direct tools of hegemonic domination. This sharpens regional divisions and further hinders the EAC building process. The recently elected US President Donald Trump has changed direction and withdrawn the US from the TPP, which also has an effect on the potential of forming an EAC. TPP members now need time to discuss the new TPP without the US: whether to go ahead as planned or renegotiate terms that took many years to reach agreement on. For these reasons, I conclude that competing forums have hindered the process of EAC building.

#### 4.1 The Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP)

The Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement (TPSEP) was the precursor of the TPP. It started with three countries including Chile, New Zealand, and Singapore; Brunei joined in the P4 later in 2005. Brunei, Chile, New Zealand, and Singapore (known as the P4) signed the TPSEP in 2005, which came into force in 2006, were the first members of TPP. Since 2008, countries of Australia, Canada, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, the United States and Vietnam respectively joined the TPP as members. This agreement was intended to seek support for wider liberalisation processes in APEC that were consistent with the goals of:

- encouraging free and open trade and investment
- encouraging expansion and diversification of trade among members
- eliminating barriers to trade in, and facilitating the cross-border movement of, goods and services among the members' territories
- promoting conditions of fair competition in the free trade area
- substantially increasing investment opportunities
- providing adequate and effective protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights
- creating an effective mechanism to prevent and resolve trade disputes (New Zealand Foreign Affairs and Trade 2017).

In September 2008 the US joined the TPSEP. In November 2008 in Lima, Peru, at the Summit of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC), Australia, Peru and Vietnam formally expressed their interest to join the negotiations for the TPP. Malaysia joined the negotiations in 2010 and Japan in 2013. Thus the number of countries lining up to join the TPP increased from four countries initially to 12 countries by the time the negotiations were completed in 2015.

The TPP, with the participation of the US, was valued as historic because it was an agreement of “broad membership and the highest standards that represent the effectiveness of an agreement of the 21st century” (Foreign Trade Information System 2017a). With these 12 members, the TPP would create a market of more than 800 million people, comprise 40% of global GDP and around one third of world trade (Foreign Trade Information System 2017b). In an interview in the online newspaper *Zing News*, the Vietnamese Ambassador to the US, Pham Quang Vinh, stressed that the TPP was the beginning of a new FTA generation and that it would add one more

percentage point to global GDP over the 10 years to 2025, the equivalent to about US\$220 billion per year. He explained:

The TPP is the 21<sup>st</sup> century trade agreement because it proposes very high standards on trade, techniques and intellectual property, environment and labor protection, and it eliminates tariff barriers to nearly zero percent. (Quang Vinh 2015)

The website of Asian Trade Center compared the RCEP and TPP and pointed out the differences between RCEP (as the normal free trade agreement) and TPP (as the high standards agreement). Looking at the Table 4.1, we can see that TPP has outstanding characteristics when compared with the RCEP:

**Table 2: RCEP vs TPP Comparison (Asian Trade Centre 2016)**

	<b>RCEP</b>	<b>TPP</b>
Depth of Coverage, Goods	<i>Modest?</i>  Deal not yet concluded, but early signs not promising. Example: tariff coverage could be at 80%, (20% excluded) and not all drop to 0 even at end of full implementation.	<i>Very deep</i>  All goods included, and every tariff line addressed. Most tariffs drop to 0, including sensitive items normally carved out or excluded from trade deals, but some problematic tools remain for some (TRQs, safeguards, etc).
Depth of Coverage, Services	<i>Modest?</i>  Services coverage, so far, not great – limited list of included services sectors, all others not open (positive list scheduling).	<i>Excellent</i>  Every single service sector (160+) opened for TPP member firms except those explicitly listed as closed and most exceptions not commercially meaningful.
Depth of Coverage, Investment	<i>Strong</i>  Investment, more promising as RCEP members want inbound investment (negative list scheduling). RCEP currently includes ISDS provision to help protect investors.	<i>Excellent</i>  Every investment sector also opened for TPP member firms (except for those listed as closed). Strong protection for all investors, including ISDS (although tobacco explicitly carved out of ISDS coverage).

	<b>RCEP</b>	<b>TPP</b>
E - Commerce	<i>Should be good</i>  RCEP should benefit from being negotiated second – e-commerce rules can be broad and include provisions across chapters to benefit smaller firms.	<i>Good</i>  First major agreement to cover digital trade and e-commerce. New rules for data flows, encryption, source code. But also has policy flexibilities.
Government procurement	<i>None (yet)</i>  ("Expert meetings" have taken place on the topic)	<i>Opened to TPP firms</i>  Government procurement contracts opened for TPP firms at the federal level above a threshold.
Competition	<i>Yes, unclear?</i>  Required by leaders' statement, but unclear where negotiations currently stand because RCEP countries have varying commitments on competition policy at domestic level.	<i>Strong</i>  Two chapters on competition, including one to set rules for many state-owned enterprises.
Trade Facilitation and Customs	<i>Yes, but unclear?</i>  ASEAN centrality in RCEP means likely following ASEAN rules – with a key role for single windows for customs harmonization?	<i>New customs rules</i>  TPP includes many new provisions including self-certification, advanced rulings, time deadlines for some customs clearance, etc. to move cargo through customs faster and easier.

The TPP, if it is successful, should contribute to the development of regionalism because the TPP connects the countries of the Americas and East Asia, which include the most dynamic economies in the world. In addition, the TPP is an historical agreement for the Asia-Pacific region because its goal is to create a platform for economic integration across the Asia-Pacific region and to be the basis for a future Asia - Pacific Free Trade Agreement (FTAAP) (Foreign Trade Information System 2017b). A fully ratified TPP would “enhance shared prosperity, create jobs and promote sustainable economic development for all our nations” (Foreign Trade Information System 2017b).

However, on 23 January 2017 the United States withdrew as a signatory to the TPP and any TPP negotiations to begin pursuing, wherever possible, bilateral trade negotiations. The future of the TPP at the time of writing is still unclear.

#### 4.2 The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)

The RCEP initiative was first proposed under the ASEAN Framework in November 2012. The RCEP framework that was endorsed by national leaders at the 19th ASEAN Summit in November 2011 in Bali aims at “establishing an ASEAN-led process by setting principles” (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2012). RCEP commenced its negotiations in May 2013 under the *Guiding Principles and Objectives for Negotiating the RCEP* (Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2017).

The RCEP negotiations have involved 16 countries (10 ASEAN members and six countries that ASEAN has existing free trade agreements with, namely, Australia, China, India, Japan, Korea and New Zealand) that account for almost half of the world’s population. As of May 2017, the RCEP had been through 18 rounds of negotiations and was expected to finalise agreement by the end of 2017.

The RCEP negotiations aim to achieve a modern, comprehensive, high-quality and mutually beneficial agreement that will cover trade in goods and services, investment, economic and technical cooperation, intellectual property, competition, dispute settlement and other issues. While it does not go as deeply into many issues as the TPP, its more modest aims may give it a better chance of success. RCEP is an ASEAN initiative but it has been backed and pushed by China. The Joint Statement on the RCEP negotiations held on 22 November in 2015 in Kuala Lumpur stated: “We resolve to ensure that the RCEP delivers on its potential to serve as a growth driver and a key pathway for broader economic integration in the region” (Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2015).

#### **4.3 TPP and RCEP and its impacts on EAC building process**

Prospective members of the EAC that have joined the TPP include Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei and Vietnam (see Table 4.2). Among them Brunei and Singapore belonged to the P4 at the beginning. Most prospective EAC members have also joined RCEP negotiations. RCEP could be seen as a means of advancing the ASEAN+3 version of the EAC because the EAC initiative is a general one that more specific initiatives like RCEP could fit in underneath. Examining how joining the TPP and RCEP affects to EAC building, I find that the TPP and RCEP distracts these governments from the EAC building initiative because it has taken up the human resources and time they could devote to regionalism.

##### *4.3.1 Taking up human resources and time for regionalism*

The five EAC prospective members who participated in TPP negotiations (Japan, Singapore, Vietnam, Brunei, and Malaysia) have had to spread their human resources and bureaucracies very thinly to attend all of the TPP and RCEP negotiations and for resolving domestic issues to meet the criteria for signing the TPP agreement.

The Vietnamese delegation for the TPP negotiations was made up of 45 staff, which was fewer than for other country delegations due to the limitations of the Vietnamese budget compared to wealthier countries. According to Interviewee 16, a Vietnamese senior official who attended almost all of the TPP negotiation meetings, the Japanese delegation included over 100 government officials, plus representatives from associations and corporations with an interest in the TPP. Interviewee 16 had this to say about the amount of work required to participate in the TPP process:

Each member worked at 200% workload. The Vietnamese Head of delegation had not slept over three hours per day and members of delegation had not slept over four to five hours per day during five years of negotiations. At the time when TPP negotiations came to the end, Deputy Ministers of areas that were controversial were still attending negotiations to facilitate the decision making ... Some people fainted or even had a stroke when they came back to room from the negotiations. (Interviewee 16 2016)



**Table 3: East Asian countries participating in competing forums**

Countries	EAC (ASEAN+3) (2002)	TPP (2008)	RCEP (2011)
1. Australia		x	x
2. Brunei	x	x	x
3. Cambodia	x		x
4. China	x		x
5. Canada		x	
6. Chile		x	
7. Japan	x	x	x
8 India			x
9. Indonesia	x		x
10. Laos	x		x
11. Malaysia	x	x	x
12. Mexico		x	
13. Myanmar	x		x
14. New Zealand		x	x
15. Philippines	x		x
16. Peru		x	
17. South Korea	x		x
18. Singapore	x	x	x
19. Thailand	x		x
20. Vietnam	x	x	x
21. United States		x	

Each prospective EAC member country mobilised human resources within their governments to resolve the internal affairs needed to meet the requirements of the TPP standards. For example, Malaysia needed to resolve issues relating to sex trafficking and indentured servitude (Marston 2015). Brunei needed to address human rights violations as a condition of the United States participating with them in any further TPP negotiations:

We ... insist that Brunei address these human rights violations as a condition of the United States participating with them in any further Trans-Pacific Partnership trade negotiations. (Marston 2015 , para.17)

In Vietnam various strategies, projects and plans at all levels of government and in many sectors have been shaped by requirements for the TPP. By joining the TPP negotiations, Vietnam coped with discussing “sensitive issues” such as the exports of Vietnam textile and garment products and amendments to the Labour Code (Anonymous 2012 , para.3). According to the former Vietnamese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vu Huy Hoang, after the TPP negotiations had been completed, Vietnam would continue focusing on regulating the legal system, reforming administrative procedures, and enhancing competitiveness so that Vietnam could take advantage of the opportunities and overcome the challenges presented by the TPP (Tuan 2015). In other words, Vietnam needed to prepare the necessary conditions to be confident when playing in the TPP playground.

Prospective EAC members have invested a lot of time in TPP negotiations. It took seven years to complete the TPP negotiations (2008 to 2015). According to Interviewee 16, the TPP negotiations took about three times longer than is usual for an FTA (Interviewee 16 2016). The TPP aimed to conclude negotiations at the end of 2013 but it missed that schedule and took another two years. Although many meetings were held to discuss areas bilaterally and multilaterally to deal with existing issues during 2014, negotiations did not reach a significant breakthrough and no progress was made towards concluding the negotiations (Anonymous 2017 -b). Then at the end of 2014, the United States sped up the TPP negotiations through adopting a Trade

Promotion Authority (TPA)<sup>4</sup>, quickly resolving the exiting issues and preparing to check upon every issue in order to conclude the agreement. According to the Vietnamese Ambassador to the United States, Nguyen Quang Vinh (2015), this was the last chance to conclude the TPP negotiations because of the upcoming election in Canada and the US Presidential election in 2016. Besides attending 19 rounds of negotiations, these five EAC countries also attended many other related meetings at different levels in the framework of the TPP, for example, meetings for technical groups, Trade Ministers and Heads of delegations, as well as negotiations within the participating TPP countries (Foreign Trade Information System 2017a).

According to an online Vietnamese newspaper there was a tough and very tense atmosphere as countries came to the end of the negotiations. It reported that before the TPP negotiations concluded in Atlanta in the US on 5 October 2015, Trade Ministerial meetings for the final wording took three full days. The time for a press release meeting was changed from 4.15 pm to 6 pm and then 10 pm and then it became unclear what time it would happen. A live YouTube video was prepared to air the press release on the conclusion to the TPP negotiations but it was taken down. A room was prepared for the announcement but the key negotiators and ministers failed to appear. The Japanese Trade Minister released an ultimatum that he would not stay in Atlanta another night, which therefore meant the TPP must finish that night or it would fail (Tuan, Anh & Anh 2015).

It is clear that the representatives of the prospective EAC members at these TPP meetings were under pressure, with TPP negotiations focusing their minds and taking up much of their time as they resolved their issues so that the TPP negotiations could be finalised. The TPP continued distracting and taking up the time of prospective EAC members when newly elected US President Trump decided to withdraw as a signatory to the TPP on 23 January 2017. At the time of writing, these countries need to discuss what they should do after the US withdrawal. On 10 February 2017, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe met President Trump to try to persuade him to turn back from withdrawal. ‘Secret talks’ for TPP11 (the 11

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<sup>4</sup> In order to push the conclusion of TPP negotiations, the US Congress needed to pass a bipartisan fast track Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) for the President. The US administration was granted the TPA by the US Congress in April 22 2015 (AmCham Vietnam 2017).

remaining countries still discussing the TPP are: Australia, Brunei, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam) meeting were held in Toronto, Canada, in May 2017 (Tencer 2017) although the outcome of these talks is unclear. TPP signatory countries discussed TPP 2.0 in an APEC meeting in Hanoi in May 2017 (WTO Center 2017).

Together with the four prospective EAC members participating in the TPP negotiations, almost all the prospective EAC members have joined RCEP negotiations since May 2013. RCEP negotiations have also been slow, with 16 rounds of negotiations so far and no end yet in sight. Although China has pushed the conclusion of the RCEP to the end of 2017, the RCEP may not be concluded by then due to differences between China and India over trade regulations. India is reluctant to promote RCEP because it is worried about the overflow of China's cheap products coming to India's market (PTI 2017). Japan and China also shared different viewpoints on the framework of RCEP. Meanwhile China want to push RCEP quickly as the low standard agreements that focus on reducing the tariffs within ASEAN countries and ASEAN's neighbours only, ASEAN and Japan do not want China to lead the RCEP and push the high-standard agreement (Nghiên cứu Biển Đông 2017). Japan and Australia wish to have a trade agreement with a high standard, including the areas of services and investment, and both these countries are making efforts to persuade ASEAN countries to take their sides, especially Philippines (Nghiên cứu Biển Đông 2017). Therefore, negotiations to RCEP may take its members (including EAC members) longer than the end of 2017 to conclude.

Though the TPP and RCEP economic regionalism processes were being pushed by the US and China, respectively, there have been no similar champions pushing the building of the EAC. Even Japan, which first proposed the EAC, has been reluctant to speed the formation of the EAC (see Chapter 5). As noted in Chapters 6 and 7, key EAC driving forces such as ASEAN +3 have made only modest contributions to EAC building, EAC members still disagree on which other countries should be members, and thus the process of EAC institutionalisation continues very slowly. The phrase 'East Asian Community' is still mentioned in most joint statements at ASEAN +3 Foreign Minister meetings, but no concrete actions have been suggested that would promote EAC building. For example, in the most recent ASEAN +3 Foreign Minister Meeting held on 26 July 2016 in Vientiane, Laos, the

statement of the Chairman mentioned only briefly the importance of training programs to ASEAN +3 diplomats to EAC:

They underscored the importance of strengthening cooperation among the ASEAN +3 countries in the field of education and training for diplomats, who can play an active role in facilitating the process of East Asian community building. (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2016)

This forgot to point out where it is laid in the master plan of the EAC building or review the progress of EAC building as well as their efforts to promote EAC in the near future. Meanwhile the fast development of the TPP and the RCEP has occupied the attention of prospective EAC member bureaucracies, further derailing the EAC building initiative.

#### **4.4 Benefits that are more visible from the TPP and RCEP than the EAC**

This section explores the benefits of the TPP and RCEP the regional countries can achieve those are the region distracting EAC building. Before the US withdrew from the TPP in 2017, TPP is truly an attractive free trade agreement to the regional countries.

##### *4.4.1 Benefits from the TPP*

Benefits from joining the TPP appear more visible and tangible than benefits from the EAC because the TPP is closer to being realised. The EAC's progress in making concrete arrangements has been so slow it is not possible to see what kinds of benefits would emerge. The TPP countries completed a comprehensive agreement document with 30 chapters and detailed schedules and annexes related to the goods and services trade, investment, government procurement, and the temporary entry of businesspeople (Sanchita Basu Das 2016). The State-Owned Enterprises chapter includes country-specific exceptions. The TPP has established a common set of regional trade rules for goods, textiles and apparel, and countries of origin. As well, there are rules to enhance the facilitation of trade, improve transparency in customs procedures, ensure integrity in customs administration, clarify sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) requirements, and define technical barriers to trade (Foreign Trade Information System 2017b).

If successful, the TPP should provide significant benefits for regionalism in East Asia because one of the goals of the TPP is to “create a platform for economic integration across the Asia-Pacific region” (Foreign Trade Information System 2017a). According to Asia-Pacific analyst Hunter Marston, the TPP is an opportunity for Southeast Asian countries to advance progressive reforms by making sure that the benefits of preferential trade status are contingent on domestic guarantees of freedom of association, strong environmental protections, and high labour standards. Brunei, Singapore, Malaysia, and Vietnam see there is more to gain from membership of the trade deal than from abstaining or stalling “modern social and economic reforms” (Marston 2015).

Vietnam may stand to gain significantly under the TPP framework. Jack Sheehan (2014), a partner at a firm specialising in cross-border legal services, has shown this with apparel and footwear exports. In 2012, Vietnam exported almost

US\$7 billion worth of apparel to the US, which accounted for 34% of US apparel imports, and US\$2.4 billion worth of footwear. Had the US remained in the TPP, Vietnam would have been able to export apparel to the US at zero tariff, which would have made Vietnamese exports even more competitive. Tom Malinowski, Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor in the U.S. government, has argued that joining the TPP would have forced Vietnam's government to continue fundamental political and economic reforms by granting Vietnamese labourers freedom of association and the right to form labour unions (Marston 2015). In the opening speech delivered at the International Support Group (ISG) Plenary meeting in 2015 titled "Vietnam's accession to TPP Agreement; Prospects and Solutions for Agriculture", the Vietnamese Minister of Agricultural and Rural Development, praised what were then seen as the potential benefits to the Vietnam's agriculture area:

For agriculture, TPP agreement brings about both opportunities and challenges. The TPP Agreement opens up a large export market for many key agricultural commodities of Viet Nam with 0% tariff rate. Another greater opportunity is the trans-national investments together with advanced science and technology, labor skill improvement, favorable conditions to scale up production size and promotion of sector's restructure process towards increased value addition and sustainable growth (Duc Phat 2015 p. 2)

According to Le Hong Hiep, Vietnam would stand to benefit from the agreement both economically and strategically. Economically, it is estimated that the TPP may help Vietnam expand its GDP by 11% and its exports by 28% within a decade. The TPP will also provide Vietnam with greater access to major markets, especially the US and Japanese market, and it will boost the export of products such as textiles and apparel, seafood, aquaculture, agriculture and forestry products (Hiep 2015b, p. 1). In addition, the TPP is likely to generate a large foreign direct investment inflow for Vietnam once it comes into force. Politically, the TPP may facilitate the mobilisation of support for more economic reforms as well as political and institutional reforms. The agreement will also help Vietnam strengthen its ties with the US and become less economically dependent on China (Hiep 2015a).

Japan supports the TPP as a sweeping Pacific trade pact. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told reporters shortly after the deal was made that the success of the TPP negotiation is a major outcome, not just for Japan but also for the future of the Asia-Pacific (Kajimoto 2015). Japan considers the TPP a pillar in its growth strategy that promotes the economic reforms of Japanese Government to increase market access, especially to the US market, and raise competitiveness for Japanese enterprises in the region. Simultaneously, Japan also wants to consolidate the relationship with the US through the TPP (AmCham Vietnam 2017, para.2). The Japanese Government has two evaluations of Japan's benefits from the TPP. The first conservative evaluation estimates benefits of ¥3 trillion, or 0.66% of GDP using a conventional model for evaluating benefits from trade agreements, which only counts the benefits associated with tariff reduction. Because most tariffs are already low in Japan and other TPP economies, the second evaluation was calculated differently and estimates a benefit of around ¥10 trillion or 2% of GDP (Petri 2013). According to Takuji Okubo of Japan Macro Advisors, benefits from an economic point of view are undoubted, but beyond the economics, the benefits of avoiding geopolitical pressure from China's intensifying its power means it is in Japan's interest to solidify its alliance with the US and other Asia-Pacific nations via the TPP (Sheehan 2014).

The Malaysian Government also considers the TPP to be an important initiative for Malaysia, which seeks to expand market access opportunities, enhance competitive advantage, build investor confidence and capacity through FTAs (Malaysia's Free Trade Agreements 2017). The Malaysian government anticipates the TPP will bring benefits of lower cost goods and more efficient production through competition and economies of scale. The TPP will form a market of 793 million people, with a combined GDP of US\$27.5 trillion, far surpassing the limited domestic market of 29.5 million people and a GDP of US\$300 billion in Malaysia. With the TPP, Malaysia aims to open up new market opportunities and horizons for Malaysians to take advantage of the international market place (Malaysia's Free Trade Agreements 2017).

Recognising the TPP's benefits, other Asian countries have considered participating in the TPP. Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia have had separate talks with the US officials to identify the necessary changes in their countries' domestic legal systems to meet the requirement of TPP with regard to labour, environment,



government procurement and IP. Philippines has also had meetings with Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Mexico to discuss joining the TPP (WTO Center 2016).

#### *4.4.2 Benefits from RCEP*

The RCEP involves three of the largest economies in the world: China, India and Japan. The overall benefits of the RCEP make it seem more attractive to ASEAN members than the EAC:

[Because of] its regional focus, the terms and conditions of the RCEP will presumably be more relevant to [ASEAN countries'] local market and capabilities than the broader TPP. (Mariano 2016, para.6)

The Joint Leaders' Statement on RCEP from 8 September 2016, in Vientiane, Lao PDR highlighted:

The potential of an RCEP agreement to boost business confidence, benefit consumers, reinforce the RCEP region's contribution to global growth and the deepening of regional economic integration and equitable economic development for all Participating Countries. (Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2017).

Now that President Trump has withdrawn the US from the TPP, the RCEP seems more likely to come into being. If the negotiations are successfully completed, the RCEP will be a free trade area encompassing three billion people, around 27% of global trade (WTO) and a GDP of around US\$21 trillion (IMF 2013). In 2015 the combined output of the 16 RCEP member countries amounted to US\$22.4 trillion or 30.6% of world output, total trade amounted to US\$11.9 trillion, and total FDI inflows to the member countries reached US\$329.6 billion (Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2017 , para.2).

The economic ministers of RCEP-participating countries met in Laos on 5 August 5 2016 and agreed that RCEP as a key driver of global economic growth would provide a major boost to economic growth in the region. The RCEP is seen as one of the most comprehensive economic agreements negotiated by ASEAN as a group and is expected to bring major impacts to the region. The ministers also

stressed that the private sector in the region was waiting for its early conclusion (Malaysian Ministry of International Trade and Industry 2017, para.6).

Wignaraja (2013) has written about the benefits from RCEP, asserting that RCEP can help “regionalise the sophisticated global production networks that make Asia the world’s factory, reduce the overlap among Asian FTAs, lest Asia becomes a confusing ‘noodle bowl’ of multiple trade rules” (Wignaraja 2013 ,para.5).

According to Foizee (2015), the RCEP is a better choice than the TPP for Asia because the RCEP is fully aligned with the One Belt, One Road initiative (BRI) proposed by China. The BRI is one of China’s strategies for increasing its influence through infrastructure projects that will be funded by Chinese banks and the Chinese-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. The impact of the BRI will likely be felt more immediately and concretely than the effect of the TPP, many of whose features will phase in slowly over several years (Foizee 2015).

Benefits for China from the RCEP include access to ASEAN markets and preferential access to the Japanese and Indian markets. RCEP is crucial for China at a time when protectionist responses to its exports are increasing rapidly in the US and EU. Given its uncomfortable strategic relations with Japan and India, China is aware of the near impossibility of having future bilateral FTAs with these countries. Preferential access to these markets is most likely through a multilateral agreement like the RCEP (Palit 2016).

RCEP is significant to the Philippines because it provides many opportunities for wider and potentially lucrative new markets for Philippine goods and services (Mariano 2016, para.10). Indonesia has also pushed for RCEP negotiations. The Indonesian Trade Minister, Enggartiasto Lukita, has said that in the context of escalating uncertainties caused by the demise of the TPP following Donald Trump’s election victory and Brexit, ASEAN and its partners need to accelerate the ongoing negotiations to open their markets: “We cannot afford to drag it out further at a time when the global trade outlook continues to be bleak, coupled with rising protectionism in both advanced and developing countries” (Ribka & Yulisman 2017 , para.3).

Vietnam also has expectations for when it joins the RCEP. The Deputy Director, Vietnam Ministry of Trade and Industry, Nguyen Quynh Nga, has talked about the benefits of Vietnam to join the RCEP:

If the TPP helps to open the doors to the largest markets for Vietnam's seafood and textile products for Vietnam, RCEP including ASEAN and six partner countries enhance the level of signed free trade agreements, reducing the trade barriers, increasing the tariff liberalisation, and helping Vietnam to engage deeply in regional supply chain. (WTO Center 2016, para.6)

In sum, the benefits countries could achieve from TPP and RCEP are more visible than those from the EAC, with the result that human resources and government efforts for regionalism have been diverted from the EAC into other initiatives. Before 2010 the EAC was frequently discussed at the international meetings, however, from 2010 onwards the EAC has rarely been raised. The evidence showed that the efforts for regionalism have been put into RCEP and TPP rather than the EAC.

#### **4.5 Competing forums affect regional integration**

The competing trade forums in East Asia have sharpened regional divisions, posing a challenge for EAC building. On the surface, these trade blocs are elements of soft power and would serve for balancing, but China and the US have been using the RCEP and TPP negotiations as a tool to assert their hegemonic domination. The TPP was originally pushed by the US and did not include China. The RCEP has been pushed by China and does not include the US. The EAC, which was proposed by former Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in 2002, and would likely include China, is a tool for Japan to seek a more independent relationship with the US and to try to prevent China from assuming regional hegemony, as well as to enhance Japan's national interests and its influence in East Asia.

##### *4.5.1 The TPP – A tool for US hegemonic domination*

The TPP was a tool of the Obama administration to assert US hegemonic domination. If Trump had not taken the US out of the TPP, it would have helped the US to constrain China. In the words of former US President Obama: “When more than 95 percent of our potential customers live outside our borders, we can't let countries like China write the rules of the global economy” (Obama 2015 , para.2).

Shihoko Goto, the Senior Associate for Northeast Asia with the Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars' Asia Program in Washington DC, has said the TPP would be the foundation for continued US engagement in Asia and ensure stability in a region increasingly driven by nationalism, territorial disputes, and militarism (Goto 2015). According to John Wong, an expert on China and ASEAN at the National University of Singapore, the TPP is an economic instrument of the US and part of its strategic scheme to confront China. China might eventually have been invited to join the TPP, but only after America wrote the rules of the road (Anonymous 2016). (Wen cited in Kim 2016) asserts that that the main reason behind the Obama Administration's support for the TPP agenda was the desire to use the TPP as a tool to economically contain China's rise. The TPP was superficially an economic agreement but it also contained an obvious political purpose.

The aim of balancing China via the TPP led the US to engage even with relatively weak countries like Vietnam. The US promised to assist Vietnam in TPP negotiations through providing technical assistance, discussing with Vietnam's

Ministries the steps in the next negotiations, and proposing to work together to settle disputes in bilateral trade ties (Anonymous 2012). According to Interviewee 16, a Vietnamese government official, President Obama's visit to Vietnam in 2015 gave an unprecedented importance to Vietnam in regional negotiations:

Normally it is hard for Vietnam to sit and negotiate with the US on other free trade agreements. But the US invited Vietnam to participate in TPP because Vietnam is located in the door of the region. If the US missed opening with Vietnam's market, China would take that opening. (Interviewee 16 2016)

#### *4.5.2 RCEP – a tool for China's hegemony*

The RCEP is a tool of Chinese hegemony. Given the TPP excluded China, the RCEP, in spite of being ASEAN initiative, has been seen as China's "main game in town and the United States isn't at the table" (Ratner & Kumar 2017 , para.6). China has shown its leading role in its own game by seeking ways to push the RCEP negotiation progress through the multilateral forums and bilateral meetings between China and other countries. For instance, at the 2013 East Asia Summit in Brunei, Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang said:

Many East Asian countries use chopsticks. Anyone who uses chopsticks knows it is very hard to eat with one, and that you need a pair. And if you bundle chopsticks together, they are hard to break. (Yu 2013)

At the Boao Forum for Asia (BFA) Annual conference 2016, Le Keqiang called for efforts to close the RCEP negotiations within the year 2016, affirming that RCEP is the largest regional trade agreement with the most participating members, and China is willing to provide RCEP members with high quality equipment and production lines at good prices with the aim to boost their capacity in infrastructure and industrial equipment (Huaxie 2016). Chinese Commerce Ministry spokesman Shen Danyang (cited in Tibka & Yulisman 2016) also affirmed that China, known as the factory of the world due to the mega-size of its manufacturing industry, would push for acceleration of the RCEP talks in order for them to finish soon.

China showed its determination to conclude the RCEP negotiations through affirming that it may go ahead with the RCEP without India and prepare for India's withdrawal from RCEP because India was reluctant to promote the RCEP due to the

cheap Chinese goods that have tax discounts and less competitiveness than India's domestic companies (Anonymous 2017 -a). Ratner & Kumar (2017) believe the RCEP together with other China's initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) are persuading other countries about the China-led economic order in Asia (Ratner & Kumar 2017). In other words, through the RCEP, AIIB and BRI, China aims to set the rules of global trade.

Jin Yi'nan, a former Director of Strategic Institute at the University of Defence in China, is quoted as saying:

[President Trump's withdrawal from the TPP] presented [China] a big gift that [Trump] doesn't know because TPP was proposed to constrain China in economic aspects; and for China, success [of] RCEP gaining will be one way to exclude the US from the region. (Anonymous 2017, para.7)

In brief, TPP, RCEP and EAC are actually tools with which the great powers compete for regional leading roles rather than for promoting regionalism. The results of the many forums to enhance regional cooperation have not yet become visible because the US has withdrawn from TPP. Meanwhile RCEP negotiations have not finished because of the reluctance of some RCEP members such as India, Japan and Australia to go ahead. Meanwhile, the forums are clearly being used by the great powers as means to enhance their regional leadership. Therefore, the competing forums in some aspects reflect the regional divisions rather than strengthen regional integration.

#### 4.6 Chapter Conclusion

In conclusion, emerging multilateral forums such as the TPP and RCEP have challenged the process of EAC building by attracting countries in East Asian region to participate in them. Five prospective EAC members – Brunei, Singapore, Japan, Malaysia and Vietnam – signed the TPP agreement and almost all prospective EAC members have been attending the RCEP negotiations. Participating in these forums distracts prospective EAC members from pursuing initiatives to build the EAC. The progress of EAC building has therefore been slow, and no one is proposing concrete feasible benefits from EAC membership. By contrast, the advanced progress and the geopolitical and economic benefits that can derive from the TPP and the RCEP have attracted prospective EAC members to work hard to bring these agreements to fruition.

Furthermore, attending meetings for the TPP and RCEP has taken up huge amounts of human resources over several years. It took some EAC members, including Japan, Malaysia and Vietnam, seven years to conclude their TPP negotiations. In addition to the official 19 negotiation rounds for the TPP, there were uncountable informal meetings. Meanwhile, the RCEP negotiations have not yet finished. The human resources used have included diplomatic negotiating teams and, in the case of the TPP, teams of bureaucrats working on reforms and adjustments to domestic legislation in order to meet the stipulations of the TPP agreement. My findings show that the bandwagoning/soft-balancing strategy of the EAC was limited by competition for diplomatic resources for regionalism with the TPP and RCEP soft-blocs. When the EAC member countries attend many regional forums within the same time periods, the progress of building the EAC is slowed.

In allocating their time and effort among these regional initiatives officials ranked the EAC lower than the ASEAN Community, the RCEP and the TPP. As argued in this chapter they prioritised the EAC lower than the TPP and RCEP because the benefits from the RCEP and TPP to regional countries were more visible than those from the EAC. They prioritised the EAC lower than ASEAN Community building because the ASEAN Community has been a long-term goal to consolidate ASEAN as the premier regional organization in Asia (see Chapter 6).

In theory, such liberal forums should increase regional cooperation. However,

they are being used as tools of power politics. The US has used the TPP and China the RCEP for dominating the Asia-Pacific region, while Japan promotes the EAC as a way of constraining China and also becoming more independent of the US. Rather than facilitating regional cooperation, these competing forums have provided venues for regional powers to pursue their own hegemonic national agendas. In sum, competing multilateral forums in the East Asian region are one of the factors hindering the process of EAC building.



## CHAPTER 5: LACK OF PROGRESS IN BUILDING EAC

The East Asian Community (EAC) was proposed in 2002 as an initiative for East Asian regionalism and promoted by Japan and other countries for the next decade. However, the EAC did not progress very far in this time. In order to answer the research question of whether the EAC can deepen East Asian regionalism, I will now examine how key organisations and countries that could be expected to support the EAC have contributed to EAC building. The key organisations are the ASEAN +3 and the East Asia Summit (EAS, also called ASEAN +6). In particular I will investigate the policies and activities of Japan and China that contribute to EAC building.

I argue that the contributions of the ASEAN +3, the EAS and some key EAC supporting countries have been insufficient to progress development of the EAC. Although the ASEAN +3 made some positive steps to promote EAC building initially, that process is now at a standstill. The ASEAN +3 has increased economic cooperation among countries rather than launching more comprehensive plans to build an EAC. Furthermore, the countries that could have been expected to push the EAC are now reluctant to build it. The lack of progress towards building the EAC reveals the limitations of the bandwagoning strategy in promoting the kind of deep regionalism envisaged in a 'community'.

As I clarify in Chapter 1, there were two visions of the EAC including the East Asian pro-China one and the Asia-Pacific pro-US one. Therefore, the vision for EAC building has not been made clear and prospective member countries have not come to an agreement about membership. In addition, regional countries were distracted by TPP and RCEP negotiations. The lack of institutionalisation achieved for the EAC reveals the limitations of the EAC as a soft balancing initiative. The sub-regional self-interest of ASEAN members for ASEAN to remain the main regional organisation, and their inability to agree to balance against the US with an EAC that excluded the US, or against China with an EAC that included the US meant there was not sufficient impetus to push the EAC into existence.

In this chapter, I also examine the elements that form a regional community. I argue that the EAC is still weak because it lacks some components that constitute a

community. The vision for EAC building has not been made clear and prospective member countries have not come to an agreement about which other countries should also be members. Questions about whether the EAC will be made up of the ASEAN +3 group or the EAS group have not been answered. Finally, the EAC building process lacks institutionalisation.

## **5.1 Contribution of organisations and key countries to EAC building**

In this section I examine the contribution of key organisations of ASEAN +3 and the EAS to EAC building. My findings show that ASEAN +3 took some positive steps to EAC building initially, but its activities no longer aim in that direction. Meanwhile, the EAS has some features that limit it from promoting EAC building.

### *5.1.1 ASEAN +3*

Although considered as one of the key organisations for EAC building, the ASEAN +3 has only made a modest contribution. Since ASEAN +3 began in 1997, it has deepened regional integration through increasing cooperation in many areas, including the establishment of the Track II network (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2012 -a). Track II diplomacy is understood as an unofficial channel running alongside the ASEAN +3 for researchers and scholars to discuss the EAC building process. Track II diplomacy includes the East Asian Forum (EAF), the Network of East Asia Think Tanks (NEAT), the Comprehensive Human Resources Development Program for East Asia and two East Asian studies groups – the East Asian Vision Group (EAVG) and East Asian Study Group (EASG) (Network of East Asian Think-tanks 2009).

NEAT has held meetings to discuss policies and recommendations for EAC building. For instance in 2005 the 3rd meeting of NEAT, titled “Towards an East Asia Community”, was held over in five sessions and provided policy recommendations to an ASEAN +3 meeting in Tokyo (The Council on East Asian Community 2005). The policy recommendations adopted there included: (1) Guiding Principles of Community Building in East Asia; (2) Architecture of Community Building in East Asia; (3) Functional Cooperation; and (4) Promoting Regional Identity in East Asia (The Council on East Asian Community 2005). At the ASEAN +3 summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in December 2005, the policy recommendations from NEAT were introduced, and relevant ASEAN +3 sectorial bodies were encouraged to look further into them (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2005b).

The EAVG was established in 1998. The content of the 2001 EAVG Final Report issued at the 4th ASEAN +3 meeting focused on “Towards an East Asian Community: A Region of Peace, Prosperity and Progress” (East Asian Vision Group 2001). The report was considered important for building the EAC at that stage

because it suggested specific recommendations and policies for the EAC. According to Stephen Leong (cited in Vio 2013, p. 164), the proposal of the EAVG was a “bold statement” that called for an EAC and laid down the stages and measures to build this kind of institutionalism. This could have progressed the EAC further in terms of institutionalisation and become the ideational foundation for the EAC. The report helped to illustrate when and how the goal of creating a regional community first took root among government elites and policy makers across East Asia. This contribution has led to only modest progress because the recommendations of the NEAT and EAVG reports towards building the EAC were not implemented. In comparison to the NEAT and EAVG reports on the EAC, the TPP and RCEP have made much more progress in promoting regional integration (see Chapter 4).

Table 5.1 lists the ASEAN +3 meetings from the years 2001 to 2016. These data are from the statements of ASEAN +3 meetings. I have examined how each of these meetings approached the topic of EAC building. It is apparent that that no specific plan was released, except for the plans and policies recommendations to EAC building written in the Final report on “East Asia community of Peace, Prosperity and Progress” (East Asia Study Group 2002). The ASEAN +3 meetings have often repeated the promise to work on building the EAC but no specific plans have been released. Cooperation within ASEAN +3 is biased towards promoting economic cooperation rather than other aspects of regionalism in EAC building. For example, the Second Joint Communiqué of East Asian Cooperation on the 10th anniversary of ASEAN +3 held in 2007 in Cebu, Philippines, proposed the idea of consolidating existing cooperation in areas such as politics and security, economics and finance, energy, and culture but did not set out a new direction for future cooperation in the EAC (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2007b).

**Table 4: ASEAN +3 meetings proposed specific recommendations regarding EAC building**

Source: Association of Southeast Asian Nations official website (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2017 -a)

<b>ASEAN +3 meetings</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Identify road maps/ plans on EAC building</b>	<b>Mention s EAC as long-term goal objective</b>	<b>Affirm the key role/ driving forces of ASEAN in building the EAC</b>	<b>Other contents related to EAC</b>
5 <sup>th</sup> ASEAN +3 Summit (Brunei Darussalam)	2001	No	No	No	East Asian Vision Group (EAVG) members submitted the Report “Towards an East Asia community: region of Peace, Prosperity and Progress” with specific plans and policy recommendations to EAC building.
6 <sup>th</sup> ASEAN +3 Summit (Phnom Penh, Cambodia)	2002	No	No	No	East Asia Study Group launched the Final Report submitted it to ASEAN +3 summit in Cambodia in 2002, with the content focus on assessment of the recommendations of the EAVG and assessment of the implications of EAS.
8th ASEAN + 3 Summit (Vientiane, Laos)	2004	No	Yes	No	Identify ASEAN +3 process as the main vehicle for the eventual establishment of an EAC building.
9th ASEAN +3 Summit (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)	2005	No	Yes	No	Stressed the role of ASEAN + 3 and ASEAN+1 to guide and provide momentum to East Asian community.
10th ASEAN + 3 Summit (Cebu, Philippines)	2007	No	Yes	Yes	Second Joint Statement on East Asia Cooperation and APT Cooperation Work Plan (2007–2017). The Second Joint Statement would provide strategic and practical guidance for the future development of the APT process but no specific plans for EAC building.

<b>ASEAN +3 meetings</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Identify road maps/ plans on EAC building</b>	<b>Mention s EAC as long-term goal objective</b>	<b>Affirm the key role/ driving forces of ASEAN in building the EAC</b>	<b>Other contents related to EAC</b>
11th ASEAN +3 Summit (Singapore)	2007	No	Yes	Yes	
9th ASEAN +3 Foreign Ministers Meeting (Singapore)	2008	No	Yes	Yes	Only highlighted that “recognized and supported the mutually reinforcing and complementary roles of the ASEAN +3 process and such regional fora as East Asia Summit, ARF, APEC and ASEM to promote East Asian community building” (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2005b, para.9).
10th ASEAN +3 Foreign Ministers Meeting (Phuket, Thailand)	2009	No	No	No	Only highlighted that “reaffirmed their commitment to the ASEAN +3 process and its contribution to the realization of the ASEAN Community by 2015 and the strengthening of East Asia cooperation” (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2009b, para.15).
11 <sup>th</sup> ASEAN +3 Foreign Ministers Meeting (Ha Noi, Vietnam)	2010	No	Yes	Yes	The Ministers reaffirmed their support for ASEAN centrality in the evolving regional architecture as recognised the mutually reinforcing and complementary roles of the ASEAN +3 process and such regional for a as EAS, ARF and APEC to promote the EAC building.
ASEAN +3 Commemorative Summit (Phnom Penh, Cambodia)	2012	No	No	No	Adopted EAVG II Report but the content mainly focus on ASEAN +3 cooperation (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2012 -b).
16 <sup>th</sup> ASEAN +3 Summit (Bandar Seri Begawan)	2013	No	No	No	Welcomed the involvement of NEAT in framework of ASEAN +3, and encouraged ASEAN +3 officials to look in to NEAT’s policy recommendations.

<b>ASEAN +3 meetings</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Identify road maps/ plans on EAC building</b>	<b>Mention s EAC as long-term goal objective</b>	<b>Affirm the key role/ driving forces of ASEAN in building the EAC</b>	<b>Other contents related to EAC</b>
14 <sup>th</sup> ASEAN +3 Foreign Ministers' Meeting	2013	No	No	No	<p>Launched ASEAN +3 work plan 2013–2017: “Strengthen the APT Cultural Cooperation Network (APTCNN), the EAF, NEAT and the Network of East Asian Studies (NEAS).</p> <p>Cultivated an East Asian identity through promotion of ASEAN and East Asian Studies in the region.</p>
18 <sup>th</sup> ASEAN +3 Summit	2015	No	No	No	<p>Reaffirmed ASEAN +3 cooperation as a driving force for enhanced peace, security and prosperity in the East Asian region, with the long-term goal of building EAC.</p> <p>Acknowledged the contribution of track II initiatives including initiatives of EAF; welcome the contribution of the NEAT in supporting EAC building (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2015, para.25, para.26).</p>
19 <sup>th</sup> ASEAN +3 Summit (Vientiane, Laos)	2016	No	Yes	No	<p>Stressed the importance of APT cooperation in maintaining and promoting peace, stability and development in East Asian region.</p> <p>Acknowledged the important contribution of the EAF.</p> <p>Recognised the contribution of the NEAT in realising the shared vision of building an East Asian Economic Community (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2016 para.25, para.26).</p>

### *5.1.2 East Asia Summit*

The first EAS (also called ASEAN +6) was held in December 2005 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. It consisted of 10 ASEAN members with China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, and India (ASEAN +6). The Summit considered building the EAC as a long-term goal that would contribute to maintaining peace, security, prosperity and progress both in the region and outside it (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2005a). However, the EAS cannot be considered a driving force in building the EAC. The first EAS ended rather inconclusively without any tangible achievements. The EAS was unable become the basis for community building in East Asia due to “disagreement and competition among regional countries that were triggered by China's withdrawal of support” (Kim 2010, p. 113). Tham Siew Yean, Adjunct Professor at the Institute of Malaysia and International Studies, compared the EAS, which did not significantly enhance investment and trade links in the region, with ASEAN +3, which has initiated formal cooperation processes is exploring areas of cooperation based on common interests such as financial stability and non-traditional security issues (Ishida 2012).

The EAC has since gradually fallen off the EAS's agenda. This is reflected in the EAS meetings making no real efforts made to build the EAC (see Table 5.2). Since the 8th meeting in 2013, the Chairman's Statement of the meetings has not mentioned the EAC or any commitments related to EAC (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2013). The EAS is believed not to be an effective mechanism to build the EAC because it is only a loose forum (Kim 2010). Membership of the EAS is so broad the organisation finds it difficult to achieve anything. According to Jae Cheol Kim, US participation in the EAS would lead to a reduction in institutional efficacy and make it harder to achieve a consensus. It is important to note that the participation of the US in the EAS will be an obstacle to the EAC due to US ambivalence about supporting the EAC (see Chapter 6). The involvement of several great powers in the EAS has led to internal struggles over leadership and agenda setting. In addition, since the EAS membership includes Australia, New Zealand and India, who are not interested in the EAC, building the EAC it has been further pushed to the sidelines of the EAS while it pursues other interests. So the process of moving toward an EAC



looks likely to continue in ASEAN +3, and the EAS will play only a supplementary role (Kim 2010).

By contrast, when asked about the role of the EAS to EAC in building EAC, Interviewee 8, a Japanese representative to ASEAN, suggested the EAS has a role in East Asian cooperation that is advantageous to EAC building process:

The East Asia Summit has six priority areas including environment and energy, education, finance, global health issues and pandemic diseases, natural disaster management and ASEAN connectivity. The East Asia Summit has not only discussed economical and social issues but also political issues. I think we set a lot of rooms to enhance our cooperation in political and security areas (Interviewee 8 2013).

I regard this as partly correct. It is to be expected that a Japanese diplomat will say the EAS supports East Asian cooperation because the EAS membership, including the US, is a grouping Japan supports for East Asian regionalism. The EAS may enhance regional cooperation, but it has not discussed a strategy for promoting the EAC. Table 5 hereunder shows that the EAS working agenda has rarely mentioned building the EAC.

**Table 5: East Asia Summit 's limited contributions towards EAC building**

Source: Association of Southeast Asian nations official website (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2017 -b)

<b>East Asia Summit meeting</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Identify road maps /plans on EAC building</b>	<b>Mentions EAC as long-term goal objective</b>	<b>Affirm the key role/driving forces of ASEAN in building the EAC</b>	<b>Other content related to EAC building</b>
<b>1st EAS (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)</b>	2005	No	Yes	Yes	No
<b>2nd EAS (Cebu, Philippines)</b>	2006	No	No	No	No
<b>3rd EAS (Singapore)</b>	2007	No	No	No	“Stressed that the EAS would help build an East Asian Community, play a complementary and mutually reinforcing role with other regional mechanisms, including the ASEAN dialogue process, the ASEAN +3 process, the ARF, and APEC in community building efforts” (ASSociation of Southeast Asian Nations 2007a).
<b>4th EAS (Cha-am Hua Hun, Thailand)</b>	2009				The leaders were “pleased that the EAS has rapidly developed as a strategic forum and important component of the evolving regional architecture and should play a complementary and mutually reinforcing role with other regional mechanisms, including the ASEAN dialogue process, the ASEAN +3 process, the ARF, and APEC in building an EAC” (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2009)
<b>5th EAS (Hanoi, Vietnam)</b>	2010	No	No	No	No
<b>6th EAS (Bali, Indonesia)</b>	2011	No	No	No	No

<b>East Asia Summit meeting</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Identify road maps /plans on EAC building</b>	<b>Mentions EAC as long-term goal objective</b>	<b>Affirm the key role/driving forces of ASEAN in building the EAC</b>	<b>Other content related to EAC building</b>
<b>7th EAS (Phnom Penh, Cambodia)</b>	2012	No	No	No	The Leaders “welcomed the Statement of Economic Research Institute from ASEAN and East Asia’s 5th Governing Board Meeting issued on 23rd June 2012 and its work plan to undertake research and policy recommendations to enhance community building efforts through consultation, cooperation and consensus in order to maximize the benefits of integration in East Asia and bring them closer to ordinary people” – but not elaborated what exactly Community is.
<b>8th EAS (Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam)</b>	2013	No	No	No	No
<b>9th EAS (Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar)</b>	2014	No	No	No	No
<b>10th EAS (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)</b>	2015	No	No	No	No
<b>11th EAS (Vientiane, Laos)</b>	2016	No	No	No	No

In conclusion, it is more feasible for ASEAN +3 to be a driving force in building the EAC than the EAS due to greater coherence of the EAC among the ASEAN +3 membership. Even so, the contributions of the ASEAN +3 to building the EAC have still been limited.

#### *5.1.3 Japan is not properly supporting development of the EAC*

With one of the largest economies in the region, Japan has the potential to shape the direction of the EAC. However, beyond initially suggesting the idea, Japan's actions in this direction have been limited. At the second Annual NEAT Conference in Bangkok, Thailand, on 16 August 2004, Ito Kenichi, President of the Council on EAC, described Japan's attitude toward the EAC as passive. He said this was partly caused by its reluctance to take an initiative in anything that might be associated with the memory of The Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere advocated by Japan during the Second World War (Kenichi 2004).

Issues that have prevented Japan from building the EAC include a lack of stability of government leadership for some years during the time Japan might have pushed the EAC more. Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama strongly supported and pushed the EAC building initiative, but his tenure was very short, just one year from 2009 to 2010. The next two Prime Ministers, Naoto Kan and Yoshihiko Noda, also served for only one year each. It is evident that during this period Japan had internal affairs problems and its leaders would have been focusing on domestic issues rather than building an EAC.

Moreover, the EAC is no longer Japan's only option for increasing its leading role in the region. Japan has taken advantage of the US withdrawal from the TPP early in 2017 and stepped forward to lead the TPP. Japanese Deputy Foreign Minister Keiichi Katakami called for 10 other TPP members to unite to map out the future for the TPP. Japan initiated a gathering in Hanoi to discuss the future of the TPP after President Trump pulled the US out of the agreement (Amcharm Vietnam 2017). According to the New Zealand Trade Minister, Todd McClay, Japan is now showing leadership of the TPP agreement (Rutherford 2017).

#### *5.1.4 China is moving ahead to build a community of common destiny*

Although China has expressed support for the idea of EAC building (Makato 2005), there are various indications that China does not now support the EAC and

pushing East Asian regionalism in its own way. Indeed, the phrase of “common destiny” was officially adopted by at the 17th National Party Congress (Anonymous 2007 , para.101). This concept initially described the special cross-strait relationship between mainland China and Taiwan, but later it came to describe the relationship between China and its neighbouring countries (Kai 2013). At the Conference on Diplomatic Work with Neighboring countries on 25 October 2013 in Beijing, China's President Xi Jinping said:

[W]e should comprehensively promote culture and people-to-people exchanges, deepen friendly exchanges on tourism, science and education, regional cooperation and others, and make a lot of good friends. We should introduce China to the outside world, clearly tell China's story, spread China's voice, and integrate the Chinese dream with the desire of the people of the neighbouring countries for a good life, and with the prospects for regional development, letting the awareness of community of common destiny take root in the neighboring countries. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China 2013)

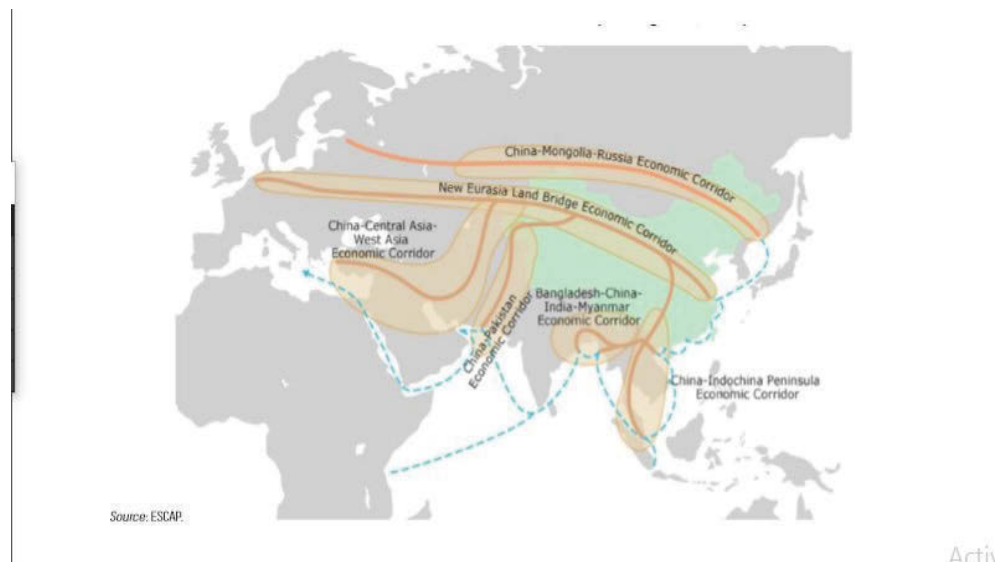
At the ceremony marking the 15th anniversary of the signing of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation<sup>5</sup> Charter and the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty on Long-term Good-Neighborliness, Friendship and Cooperation, Chinese President Xi Jinping expressed his hope of building a community of shared destiny in Asian region, saying, "[W]e should take this as an opportunity to carry forward the Shanghai spirit, consolidate unity and mutual trust and build a closer community of shared destiny" (CCTV+ 2017, para.3).

The concept of “community of common destiny” is directed at China's neighbouring countries. Jin Kai has argued that China uses this phrase because it may help relieve the worries of regional countries about a shared fate and promote images of maintaining a peaceful environment, which would be favourable for the further rise of China. In addition, it shows China's ambition to take a leadership role in the multilateral system given the US has implemented its pivot to Asia policy and (until recently) promoted multilateral trade through the TPP (Kai 2013).

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<sup>5</sup> Shanghai Cooperation Organisation was established in 2001 by China, and includes China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

China has shown leadership in regional integration through launching a series of initiatives, for example, the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP), the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), the New Development Bank (NDB); Silk Road Arrangement (SRA), and the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation (CMIM) Agreement. The most important initiative, however, is the One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative (also called the Belt and Road initiative) (see Figure 5.1). Officially announced by China at the APEC meeting in November 2014, OBOR is based on two earlier initiatives made by Chinese President Xi Jinping, including the Silk Road Economic Belt initiative (adopted during his visit to Central Asia in September 2013) and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road (adopted during his visit to Indonesia in October 2014). Xi Jinping has used multilateral and bilateral meetings to advertise OBOR and encourage countries to join it. At the Belt and Road summit on 15 May 2017, he declared: “So far, China has signed agreements related to the ‘Belt and Road’ with 68 countries and international organisations ... We have reached consensus and passed the communiqué” (Leng 2017).



**Figure 1: One Belt One Road initiative**  
(*The Australian* 2017)

In conclusion, the key organisations and countries that could have driven EAC building have focussed sufficiently as they coped with the many obstacles standing in

the way. ASEAN +3, potentially a key driving force, has made very limited contributions to EAC building since 2010. Meanwhile, the EAS is such a loose forum that it makes EAC building harder to realise. Both Japan and China have found new ways outside the EAC to promote regional integration and enhance their own roles as leaders of the East Asian region.

## 5.2 Elements of Regionalism the EAC Lacks

In this section, I examine the elements that form a regional community. The literature on regionalism indicates that regional communities are built on a foundation of coherence in economic, political, security, social and cultural cooperation. These interconnect with private and civil sector activities, and public policy initiatives through which they share common social and economic features, seek new forms of cooperation, and aim for common regional targets (Dent 2008; Hurrell 1995). My findings show that the EAC still lacks agreement on its vision for institutionalisation and the countries that should become members of it. Without such agreement the EAC can neither meet the criteria of regionalism nor progress its community building.

### 5.2.1 Lack of institutionalisation

The lack of institutionalisation achieved for the EAC reveals the limitations of the EAC as a soft-balancing initiative. The sub-regional self-interest of ASEAN members for ASEAN to remain the main regional organisation, and other inability to agree to balance against the US with EAC that excluded the US, or against China with an EAC that included the US meant there was not sufficient impetus to push the EAC into existence.

The process of building the EAC lacks the institutionalisation needed for an organisation to establish common principles, rules and norms. Institutionalisation is defined as “the action of establishing something as a convention or norm in an organisation or culture” (Stevenson 2015). ASEAN +3, supposedly the driving force for the EAC, has established very few common principles, rules and norms for the EAC.

As visible through the list of the ASEAN +3 meetings in Table 5.1, up to 2010 the EAC was a dynamic political and economic process of cooperation rather than institutional building. ASEAN +3 had successfully promoted political cooperation and economic cooperation, but institutionalisation of the EAC has been slow because the EAC building process does not have the resources for institutionalisation. No funds have yet been raised to build the EAC. In July 2008, funds were raised for the ASEAN +3 at the 9th ASEAN +3 Summit in Singapore. The initial contribution was US\$3 million with US\$900,000 from China, Japan and Korea and US\$300,000 from ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2008 -b). However, the intentions for this funding were the enhancing of ASEAN +3 Cooperation and projects that had been planned in the Second Joint Statement and in the Work Plan; the funds were not for building the EAC.



Without institutionalisation the EAC has a long way to go to becoming an effective regional organisation. In the East Asian region there exist territorial disputes, inherent historical issues, contrasting political systems, variations among countries in terms of economic development, and gaps between rich and poor countries. The prospective EAC would need to develop suitable norms and rules in order to function within the diverse context of the region.

Almost all of my interviewees said that it would be hard to set up common principles, rules and norms for the prospective EAC because the regional countries do not share the same history and culture. Interviewee 1 explained that the EAC building process is slow because of differences in culture, benefits and challenges. Different to the European Union, the East Asian region does not have cohesion because it does not share the common history like Westphalia. It is the culture of East Asian region that countries interact with each other by sentiment. (Interviewee 1 2013)

Interviewee 5 highlighted that the European Union is very formal, extensively institutionalised, and has a full identity (Interviewee 5 2013). Institutionalisation for the EAC needs to experience different stages. If we look to the EU as an example, institutionalisation began with the economy, gradually developing from a low level to a high level, then expanded to the sharing of a common governance, citizenship and currency (Interviewee 6 2013). The EU's institutionalisation now extends to a central institution, with power and mandates in many areas (Interviewee 3 2013).

Although the EAC suffers from a lack of institutionalisation, it should be pointed out that it is unlikely Asian countries would accept the institutionalisation the EU has achieved with its supra-national administrative structure because Asian countries are very protective of their sovereignty. As Interviewee 3 said:

It is unrealistic to expect the EAC would ever reach the level of institutionalisation the EU has because of the norms in the region. In the EU Commission, everything is done by mandate and there is the power to enact things. Member countries must comply. If they do not comply, some measures will be taken against the countries ... In ASEAN, we can push one country but we can't push two or more countries if they don't want to participate. Every country must be treated in the same way by ASEAN, respected for equal treatment,

a respect for sovereignty, and for independence. But that respect does not yet exist in the EAC due to its lack of institutionalisation. (Interviewee 3 2013)

The model of building of the EU is therefore not applicable to EAC and the EAC needs a style of institutionalisation suitable for East Asia. Most of the interviewees working in the ASEAN Secretariat, the key bloc of countries forming the EAC, admitted that the model of EU cannot be applied building the EAC. Interviewee 5 stressed:

Even ASEAN, the most successful organisation of the Asian region and also a main driver of the EAC, it cannot be built the same as model as the EU because of the inherent differences between the two organisations. (Interviewee 5 2013)

Interviewees said that rather than following the EU model of institutionalisation the EAC should follow the model of institutionalisation established by ASEAN. Interviewee 6, an official from ASEAN Secretariat, explained the differences in cohesion between ASEAN and the EU:

ASEAN is an ‘association’ while the EU is a ‘union’. The EU is a group of countries having the same political regime while ASEAN is a community including countries having different political regimes ... It would be unimaginable if ASEAN uses a common currency like the EU uses. ASEAN countries typically have a higher dependency on exports and one of the main tools of exports is currency. I can devalue currency to increase export. If ASEAN has common currency, they lose their “own weapon”. Especially, in the context that the Eurozone is in crisis. (Interviewee 6 2013)

The case of ASEAN shows that regionalism can be institutionalised among Asian countries with their many differences. ASEAN has been institutionalised, despite the fact that it is a convergence of “different political institutions”. For example, Vietnam is led by its Communist Party, while some other members, such as Japan, are democracies (Interviewee 6 2013). ASEAN is institutionalised by the ASEAN Way, which ensures that the ASEAN decision-making mechanism is based on the consensus that ASEAN members will work on the basis of their comfort level. “Every countries are treated in the same way in ASEAN, respected for equal treatment, respect for sovereignty, independent” (Interviewee 3 2013).

ASEAN is governed by the “fundamental principles” of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) signed between Southeast Asian states in 1976, which include:

- mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial, integrity, and national identity of all nations
- the rights of every state to lead its national existence free from external interference, subversion, or coercion
- non-interference in the internal affairs of one another
- settlement of differences or disputes by peaceful manner. (The Association of the Southeast Asian Nations 1976)

The ASEAN Charter, signed on 20 November 2007, represents a historic agreement among the member states of ASEAN as it provides a legal and institutional framework for ASEAN by codifying organic Southeast Asian diplomacy through the listing of the principles and purposes of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2008 -a). The ASEAN Charter is an agreement that enables regional institutionalism between disparate states because the principles of the ASEAN Charter stipulate how ASEAN countries act with each other. This most basic principle adjusts the relationship between member countries and helps to dispel their worries about differences when joining a regional organisation (Hung Son et al. 2010). It worth noting that the principles stipulating the relationship between countries are put at the beginning of the Charter in Article 2, which is followed by a chapter on how ASEAN is institutionalised (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2008 -a).

In addition, ASEAN enshrines the principle of respect for the different cultures, languages and religions of the peoples of the ASEAN countries, while emphasising their common values in the spirit of unity and diversity (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2008 -a, Article 2). Almost all ASEAN members are young states that won their independence after World War II thanks to liberation from colonial rule. Because their diversity and differences in historical factors, traditional culture, ethnicity, language and religion, as well as economic and social development may lead to disagreements, this principle of respect has important significance to ASEAN members (Hung Son et al. 2010).

ASEAN Article 5 on Rights and Obligations stipulates that Member States shall have equal rights and obligations under the Charter. The regulation meets ASEAN

countries' expectations because, despite their differences, they can equally participate in ASEAN's benefits. ASEAN does want to enable any one country to take a dominant role and then promote ASEAN to serve its own benefits. The principle also contributes to building confidence and helping member countries, especially the smaller states (Hung Son et al. 2010). Interviewees 1 and 4 share the view that the EAC should, learning from the ASEAN example, be institutionalised by setting up a code of conduct:

We need to write down the code of conduct, which is a pact, a kind of reflection in the region to make or to help put the region in order. If the outsiders come into the region, you have to obey, you have to follow the code of conduct, obey and regulation that able to set out. (Interviewee 1 2013)

The EAC should have mutual goals, to reach common targets and need to have common rules or code of conduct, common rule conception and rule building. (Interviewee 4 2013)

#### *5.2.2 Lack of agreement on EAC membership*

The EAC building process has also been derailed because potential members of the EAC have not agreed on the membership of the organisation or on what would be a suitable number of members. Propositions for EAC membership have oscillated between choosing members of ASEAN +3 or members of the EAS (ASEAN +6). Japan, Singapore, Indonesia and Thailand advocate that the EAC should include EAS members like Australia, New Zealand, India and even the US (Anwar 2009). On the other hand, China and Malaysia wanted to build an EAC with only the ASEAN +3 members. Other members have remained neutral because they are small countries and prefer not to take sides in this debate (Prasirtsuk 2006).

The vision for EAC building has not been made clear and prospective member countries have not come to an agreement about which other countries should also be members. As discussed in the Historical background section, there were two visions of the EAC, the East Asian pro-China one and the Asia Pacific pro-US one.

#### *5.2.2.1 Expansionist perspectives*

Former Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi called for core EAC membership to be made up of the countries of ASEAN, plus Japan, China, the Republic of Korea, Australia and New Zealand (Kim 2010). The former Foreign Minister of Japan, Katsuya

Okada, insisted that EAC membership should include "a huge amount of countries" (Xianzhi 2009). According to Soeya (2010 p. 2), Japan supports the inclusion of Australia and New Zealand in the EAC because, first, they "provide a venting channel leading to the United States as a security anchor in East Asia, an important foundation of an East Asian Community from the Japanese perspective" and second, the membership of Australia and New Zealand will sustain and, importantly, keep the EAC open to the rest of the world. Japan raised the prospect of including India as a member of the EAC, stating that ASEAN +3 should continue to be mindful of the importance of providing sufficient opportunities to other partners to participate in regional cooperation (Panda 2006). In sum, Japan and ASEAN countries such as Singapore and Indonesia have wanted EAC membership to open to India, Australia, New Zealand because an expanded membership will help them balance China's preponderance (Prasirtsuk 2006).

Indonesia's perspective on EAC membership reflects its wariness of ASEAN losing its centrality in the region. Indonesia's vision of an EAC is "more elastic and open ended, to include countries which have not been historically considered East Asian, such as Australia and New Zealand" (Anwar 2009 p. para.18). Indonesia does not desire the EAC to happen too soon, as this might undermine the importance of ASEAN, which has been a major pillar of Jakarta's foreign policy (Prasirtsuk 2006). Interviewee 4, an official working in Indonesia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, affirmed this:

Whatever architecture – security regional architecture, economic regional architecture, political regional architecture – ASEAN must be in the driving seat. All arrangement in the region must lead by ASEAN ... Members must be inclusive, in other words, we should invite all the countries in the region and that is basic principle we to take knowledge. The EAS now is implementing that principle and of course ASEAN take the lead ... Look at the mechanism of ASEAN +3, East Asia Summit and ASEAN +8, we can't negate the presence of the US in the region. We can't ignore the role of Russia. We don't want to create a forum in the region, other countries – who feel they are not invited. If so, they will be distracting factors in the forum. (Interviewee 4 2013)

Singapore also advocates for EAC membership being inclusive because, as an open trading state, it would not benefit from an exclusive framework. Not only does

Singapore have FTAs with Australia and New Zealand, but it also aims to cultivate more economic ties with fast-growing India (Prasirtsuk 2006). In December 2004, former Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew said that EAC membership should include India because cooperation with India would help “expand the market” and lead to “more specialisation and division of labour” (Tanaka 2007, p. 40).

#### *5.2.2.2 Exclusivist perspectives*

China and Malaysia support the perspective that EAC members should only be composed of the 13 ASEAN +3 members. China felt somewhat annoyed when non-East Asian countries such as Australia, New Zealand and India were invited to participate in the EAS (Tang 2006). China’s perspective is preoccupied by “strong nationalism, a sense of rivalry with the United States, an unprecedented pace and scale of military modernisation and preoccupation with territorial integrity” (Soeya 2010 p. 2). China sees the EAS as a forum for ASEAN +3 countries to engage with major powers outside East Asia. However, China has not strongly objected to the inclusion of the non-ASEAN +3 countries in the EAS because it wants to minimise the fear among its neighbouring countries that it will dominate the regional architecture. China wants to ensure that only the ASEAN +3 nations will be responsible for forming the core of the EAC (Prasirtsuk 2006).

Malaysia shares China’s perspective on EAC membership, and does not support East Asian integration with countries outside the region (Tang 2006). For former Prime Minister Mahathir, the inclusion of India, Australia and New Zealand in the first EAS destroyed this vision and he was particularly embittered by the inclusion of Australia and New Zealand, two culturally European nations that are close to Washington (Panda 2006). Malaysia, moreover, shares the same perspective as Indonesia in terms of needing to ensure the role of ASEAN in regional institutions. Malaysia outlined three requirements for aspiring states to join the EAC: 1) embracing of full dialogue partner status within ASEAN; 2) engaging in substantive relations with ASEAN; and 3) becoming a signatory to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) (Tang 2006).

#### *5.2.2.3 Neutral perspectives*

Smaller nations such as Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and Myanmar have a neutral perspective on EAC membership because they oscillate according to the benefits they might receive from the various prospective members. China and Japan have also given

support to most of these smaller nations, so it may be wise for them not to exhibit a bias towards either Japan or China.

Similarly, Thailand is neutral on the issue of EAC membership since it has good ties to all relevant parties. On the one hand, it has an FTA with both Australia and New Zealand, and it is very keen to develop economic relations with India. On the other hand, it has cultivated close ties with China, as seen through the culmination of the Sino-Thai Plan of Action for the 21st Century (Prasirtsuk 2006). Thailand fears ASEAN will be overwhelmed by both China and India and has declined to take sides (Panda 2006, p. 31).

#### *5.2.3 Lack of a country to champion EAC building*

Unlike the EU, whose building process was promoted by Germany and France, or even like ASEAN, which was led by Indonesia, the EAC lacks a leader to drive the process. As mentioned earlier, Japan has some reasons to be reluctant in taking the lead towards building the EAC despite the fact that it initiated the EAC. The competition for regional leadership between Japan and China is a barrier to the EAC building process because of the importance of these two countries in the region. With the inability and unwillingness of ASEAN to be the main driver of the EAC, and competition between Japan and China for regional leadership (see Chapter 7), the EAC is unlikely to find a leader if Japan and China do not cooperate. Interviewee 1, an official working in the Vietnam Diplomatic Academy, said:

These two great powers will not accept each other for EAC's leading role, China will not accept Japan's leading role in the region ... If countries are close together, who will be a rule builder here? (Interviewee 1 2013)

#### *5.2.4 Lack of vision*

The EAC building process has also been inhibited because regional countries have been slow to identify a vision for the EAC. Since the 4th EAS in Cha-am Hua Hin, Thailand, on 25 October 2009, Japan's vision for EAC building has been identified as based on "the principle of openness, transparency and inclusiveness and functional cooperation" (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2009a, para.21). However, this is not sufficiently clear and specific as a goal and framework for the future of the EAC. According to Kitti Prasirtsuk, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Political Science at the Thammasat University, the form and characteristics of the community remain vague

and controversial because Japan has not yet shaped the direction for EAC building and, in addition, its views of EAC building depend significantly on ASEAN's response to it. Prasirtsuk (2006) (2006) examined the case study of the Thailand to see how it responded to Japan's initiatives to promote the EAC such as the Japan–ASEAN Comprehensive Economic Partnership (JACEP), Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), and other forms of financial cooperation in East Asia. He found that Thailand supports Japan's views to the extent they are in line with Thailand's national interests (Prasirtsuk 2006). Hence, it is doubtful that Japan could meet all the national interests of ASEAN countries or expect that they will give consensus to Japan's goal and framework for EAC building. Tanaka Akihiko, Professor of International Politics at the Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia at the University of Tokyo (cited in (Cossa & Tanaka 2007) agreed that the vision for EAC building was still blurry.

In conclusion, the EAC building process has been weak. The EAC has been pushed by organisations that include ASEAN +3 and the EAS, and active governments like Japan and Malaysia, but the progress they have made towards EAC building is very modest. The recommendations and principles that have been suggested for EAC building have not been put into effect. Moreover, as discussed here, the EAC building process lacks institutionalisation to bring some kind of order to it, agreement on membership, a country to champion it, and, perhaps most importantly, a clear vision for its future. The bandwagoning impulse behind the EAC was not strong enough for prospective member states to progress towards instituting the EAC.



## **CHAPTER 6: ASEAN'S ROLE IN BUILDING THE EAST ASIAN COMMUNITY**

In Chapter 5, I showed that potential member countries of the East Asian Community have neither formed a common vision for the EAC nor reached agreement about its membership. In other words, they have not made significant efforts to institutionalise the EAC. In this chapter I will examine the role of ASEAN in EAC building. As a key player balancing against the great powers in the region, ASEAN has been nominated by Japan as the driving force for EAC building. Its involvement, therefore, has crucial implications for EA regionalism.

I will begin by examining what ASEAN can contribute to EAC building through its experiences in building its own ASEAN Community, and then investigate obstacles resulting from ASEAN's ambivalence towards EAC building. I first argue that ASEAN's process of building the ASEAN Community offers useful lessons for building the EAC. An aspect that could be useful for the EAC is the way the ASEAN Community is increasing its dialogue with other countries inside and outside the region. Through such dialogue, ASEAN contributes to peace and stability in the region and gains support from these countries for the building of the ASEAN Community. However, my second argument is that ASEAN is ambivalent to EAC building because it is concerned about both losing its regional centrality and prioritising its own community building, rather than building another community. ASEAN is recognised as a successful model of regionalism for soft-balancing, by which a group of small to medium powers can deal with larger powers, such as the US, China and Japan. The fact that ASEAN prefers a soft-balancing regional organisation over the EAC as a bandwagoning regional organisation resonates with international relations theorists who find that small to medium powers prefer not to team up with much larger powers, so that they can maximize their influence within the organisation (Paul 2005; Waltz 1979; Walt 1985).

It is problematic to always speak of ASEAN as a coherent actor, because it is not a supra-national organization like the EU. On the other hand, ASEAN members do have joint decisions and do some coordinated actions, so in some cases it is appropriate to speak of ASEAN as an actor (Doidge 2004). In cases where the distinct interests of member states are more salient than a joint ASEAN position I speak of those member

states rather than ASEAN. In cases where a collective ASEAN position is visible, I speak of ASEAN as an actor.

### **6.1 The ASEAN Community as a Model for the EAC**

In this section I examine whether ASEAN Community building offers lessons for EAC building. Some of this study's interviewees believed it was too early to say that ASEAN could provide lessons to the EAC because the ASEAN Community building process was not yet finished. For example, Interviewee 2, an official working in the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam, said:

It's too early to say that [EAC can learn the lesson from ASEAN Community] because the ASEAN has not completed its process of ASEAN Community building. (Interviewee 2 2013)

Interviewee 3, a senior official working in ASEAN Secretariat, also insisted:

ASEAN becomes ASEAN Community in January 2016 but it doesn't mean it is successful. ASEAN Community building is not an event – it is a process. So by the end of 2015, we all have done a lot of works that bring about religious cooperation and coordination among ASEAN countries. (Interviewee 3 2013)

Interviewee 4, a senior official working in the Indonesian Ministry of Indonesia, said:

ASEAN Community is not an event, it is a process. That's one thing for sure. It doesn't mean that it is sudden we are all ASEAN citizens. (Interviewee 4 2013)

In my opinion, however, the EAC can learn from the process of ASEAN Community building because the characteristics of each community are similar. ASEAN is a member unit of the proposed EAC and accounts for two thirds of probable EAC members. In addition, soon after the ASEAN Community building was started in 2002, EAC was declared the long-term goal of ASEAN +3 in 2004 (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2004). ASEAN has also successfully worked to gain the support of regional countries and the international community for its building process. At the ASEAN Insights Conference held on 11 September 2014, ASEAN Secretary-General Le Luong Minh praised ASEAN as an example for the other regional models: "ASEAN's experiences can also serve as an example to other regional and multilateral organisations" (Luong Minh 2014 p. 10).

#### *6.1.1 The ASEAN Community Pillars*

ASEAN's structure of pillars may be useful for the EAC because it breaks the process of regionalisation into concrete tasks to be undertaken. The ASEAN Community is built on three pillars – ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), ASEAN Social-Cultural Community (ASCC), and ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) – each of which has several sub-pillars. The ASEAN Economic Community has four sub-pillars: a single market and production base; a highly competitive economic region; a region of equitable economic development; and a region fully integrated into the global economy (ASEAN Secretariat 2013).

Each pillar has defined its own action plan, core elements, priority actions, and methods to measure the results it achieves. ASEAN launched blueprint measures to implement the action lines of the three pillars: 134 action lines for the AEC, 193 action lines for the APSC, and 345 action lines for the ASCC. Scorecards are used to measure the completion of the action lines. Of the three pillars, the scorecard of the AEC is considered a clearer measure of the finished work than the other two pillars. For instance, the AEC contains 17 core elements and 176 priority actions, along with goals and specific commitments to be carried out within definite timelines. In the ASCC, ASEAN has implemented evaluation of the performance system across all ASEAN member States, especially in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam. It also has initiatives to establish an ASEAN Qualification Reference Framework to harmonise the education systems of member states and to strengthen cooperation towards student mobility within the region. Quality assurance of higher education is also being undertaken (ASEAN Secretariat 2013).

Not all the pillars of ASEAN are useful and suitable for the EAC building. For example, would not be easy for ASEAN +3 countries to build the EAC based on the APSC. According to Interviewee 15, issues in the relationship between China, Japan and South Korea cannot be resolved through a regional organisation such as the EAC. These three North East Asian countries have different security relations with the US. China confronts the US, while Japan and South Korea have been supported by the US. ASEAN's history is of the littoral countries sharing a history of suffering colonial oppression and war. Meanwhile, Japan had historically invaded other countries and China has become an imperial power in the region (Interviewee 15). The analysis in Chapter 7 hopes to demonstrate, the regional great powers (China and Japan) have

competed strongly for the leading role in the region. Thus, EAC cannot apply the model of building the Political-Security pillar as ASEAN has done.

It is likely that the building of EAC could begin with ASEAN's Economic Community building as an exemplar. According to Hoang Anh Tuan (2013), the formation of the ASEAN Economic Community has helped to increase economies of scale and reduce transaction costs, thereby promoting trade and economic ties and increasing the competitiveness of ASEAN. Furthermore, as Interviewee 6, a senior official in the ASEAN Secretariat said:

The completion of ASEAN Economic Community building is easier to realise and evaluate than pillars of Cultural and Social Community and Security and Political Community. We can access through the work finished. (Interviewee 6 2013)

#### *6.1.2 Challenges to EAC building*

Experiences in building the ASEAN Community also provide useful lessons for building the EAC in terms of coping with particular challenges the EAC has faced. Shiraish (2010) points out two major challenges: how to shift the economic growth model from export-led to demand-led, for example regional and domestic market demand; and how to give specific definition to the community. According to Ro-myung Gong (2010), challenges confronted in building the EAC include the need to trust and ensure mutual interest. The historical distrust that exists in East Asia has resulted in the disturbing rise in nationalism. So what lessons can the EAC learn from ASEAN Community building to overcome these challenges?

##### *6.1.2.1 Gaining support needs increased dialogue and international integration*

There are lessons to be learned for building the EAC from how ASEAN has gained support from regional countries and the international community for its building process, particularly through effective dialogue. Through dialogue, partners support the ASEAN Community and contribute to maintaining regional peace and stability. Interviewee 15, a Vietnamese diplomat, said:

In the context that there exists the tangible controversial and territorial disputes, ASEAN's methods of dialogue, cooperation, and progressive is a good method for EAC building. (Interviewee 15 2013)

Having open dialogue with other partners is a key lesson that could be learned for building the EAC from ASEAN Community because through such dialogue ASEAN receives support from other countries for its process of community building. To support processes of ASEAN Community building, ASEAN and its dialogue partners agreed to establish strategic or long-term comprehensive partnerships through programs, specific action plans, and projects. For example, the ASEAN–Australia Development Cooperation Program (AADCP II, 2008–2015), adopted in February 2008 with a contribution of AUD 57 million, has supported ASEAN Community building in narrowing the development gap, increasing economic linkages and implementing the ASEAN Charter (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2008). ASEAN and New Zealand drafted a Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on an ASEAN–New Zealand Comprehensive Partnership for the period 2010 to 2015 in order to help build the ASEAN Community (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2010). At the 17<sup>th</sup> ASEAN–European Union Foreign Ministers Meeting (May 28, 2009), Ministers adopted the Phnompenh Agenda for the Implementing the 2009–2010 Action Plan, with the priorities of supporting ASEAN to implement the ASEAN Charter, building the community, narrowing the development gap and increasing economic and trade cooperation (Council of the European Union 2009).

The US supported ASEAN Community building. In December 2013, the US launched two five-year US support programs. The programs include the ASEAN–US partnership for Good Governance, Equitable and Sustainable Development and Security (ASEAN-US PROGRESS) and the ASEAN Connectivity through Trade and Investment (ACTI). The aim of ASEAN-US PROGRESS, which has USD \$14 million funding, is to assist ASEAN in achieving the targets outlined in the ASEAN Political-Security Community and ASEAN Social Cultural Community Blueprints under three components: (1) Good Governance and Political-Security Cooperation; (2) Human Development and Socio-Cultural Cooperation; and (3) ASEAN Secretariat and Institutional/Cross-Sectoral Capacity Building. The aim of ACTI, with the total budget of USD \$16.2 million is to assist ASEAN’s regional and national economic-related agencies to implement their commitment under the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), particular in the following areas: (1) ASEAN Single Window; (2) Trade and Investment Facilitation; (3) Small- and medium-sized enterprises development (SMEs); (4) ASEAN Modernised Power; and (5) Information and communication technology

(ICT) for Development Enhancement (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2017 - d). Interviewee 11, an official working in the U.S Mission in ASEAN who advocates ASEAN Community building, said, “We contribute to drafting statement and give influence into direction” (Interviewee 11 2013).

In the Plan of Action to implement the ASEAN–United States Strategic Partnership (2016–2020), the US adjusted the eight priority areas of cooperation to match with ASEAN priority in order to support ASEAN Community building and an integration process that includes: cooperation in political-security cooperation, economic cooperation, socio-cultural cooperation, connectivity, development cooperation, initiatives for ASEAN integration, strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and implementation mechanisms (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2015).

Japan also supported the building of the ASEAN Community and narrowing the development gap through the Second Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Program and Vientiane Action Programme (VAP) Program as well as the initiatives of sub-region development and other programs of cooperation and development such as JAEP and the ASEAN–Japan exchange Fund, or Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF). JAIF was established in 2006, based on the pledge from former Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi at the 9th ASEAN-Japan Summit held in December 2005 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In a 2013 speech delivered at the initial reception of the 40th year of ASEAN–Japan Friendship and Cooperation, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, Le Luong Minh, affirmed that “Japan’s strong commitment to support ASEAN Community is evident through its initiatives and support for many concrete and mutually beneficial activities” (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2013, para.2). Addressing 500 ASEAN guests at the same reception, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe highly praised the role of the ASEAN Community for its commitment to peace and prosperity in the Asia Pacific region and promised to assist ASEAN guests in any aspects of the community building’s efforts (ASEAN Trade Union Council 2013). As of 2016, Japan’s total contribution has been more than USD 630 million (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2017 -b). Japan has continued supporting ASEAN’s efforts to realise the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2016).

South Korea has been supporting ASEAN efforts to narrow the development gap through the implementation of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) projects. For example, between 2003 and 2007 South Korea contributed USD 5 million to support five IAI projects that were managed by Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA). At the 12th ASEAN–ROK Summit, South Korea decided to continue supporting ASEAN by contributing its second and third IAI tranches of USD 5 million for each of the periods 2008 to 2012 and 2013 to 2017, and also twice the amount of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to ASEAN by 2015 (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2017 -c).

Regarding the United Nations, at the 5th ASEAN–UN Summit held on 10 October 2013 in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, ASEAN Leaders called on the UN support to the execution of the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community (2009–2015) and contributed to the ASEAN Community’s Post-2015 Vision. In response, the UN adopted the ASEAN–UN Work Plan for 2015 to chart out priorities for ASEAN–UN cooperation in all the pillars of the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership between ASEAN and the UN. At the 8th ASEAN–UN Summit held on 7 September 2016 in Vientiane, Laos, ASEAN and the UN adopted the Plan of Action to implement the Joint Declaration on the Comprehensive Partnership between ASEAN and the UN for period of 2016 to 2020. The plan of action includes current priority areas of cooperation and takes into account the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2017). Thanks to the strengthening of these dialogues and cooperation, the stature in the international community of ASEAN has been growing. By 2013, 77 non-ASEAN Member States and organisations had accredited Ambassadors to ASEAN. ASEAN also established 42 ASEAN Committees in Third countries around global to further contribute to raise ASEAN awareness and profile (ASEAN Secretariat 2013).

It is clear that outside countries greatly influence the East Asian region, and the EAC may also need to learn how to create dialogue partners because the process of EAC building has been slow due to lack of support from regional countries as well as the US. It can be said that regionalism via ASEAN is successful because ASEAN has met one of the criteria of region-ness in increasing dialogue to promote regional integration. There are lessons to be learned for building an EAC from how ASEAN has gained support from regional countries and the international community for its



community-building process. As Interviewee 4 pointed out: “The tools to deal with trust deficit is negotiation and dialogue” (Interviewee 4 2013).

#### *6.1.2.2 Strengthening dialogue to promote regional integration*

Dialogue helps to maintain peace and stability, creating a good environment for regional integration and community building. Some of the current challenges to peace and regional stability in the East Asian region, as well as challenges to EAC building, are distrust due to disputes between: 1) China and Japan; 2) Philippines and Malaysia; 3) the six claim nations of Brunei, China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam over the South China Sea; 4) Cambodia and Thailand over the Preah Vihear Temple; 5) Japan and China over the Senkaku /Diaoyutai Islands ; and 6) Japan and South Korea over Takeshima/Dokdo Island.

ASEAN has promoted dialogue with China to try to help resolve the South China Sea dispute by holding the first formal consultation with China on the Code of Conduct (COC) at the 6th ASEAN–China Senior Officials’ Meeting in mid-September 2013 (Minh 2013), and adopting the Work Plan for the Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in 2013–2014 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China 2015). Although South China Sea Code of Conduct (COC) and DOC have not been entirely successful, they have partly contributed to restraining the tensions in the region. ASEAN continues to provide a solid basis for dialogue and cooperation to preserve and enhance peace and security in the region through its Political-Security Community.

ASEAN has also maintained and developed economic cooperation with dialogue partners, for example in ASEAN +3 (with China, Japan, South Korea) and ASEAN+1 (separately with China, India, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, European Union, United States, and Canada). As well, economic cooperation with dialogue partners helps ASEAN to enhance trade and investment relations with these partners and strengthen economic cooperation and integration in the region.

#### *6.1.2.3 Benefits from connectivity*

ASEAN’s increased connectivity among regional countries also helps maintain peace and stability in the region and supports regional countries to be more integrated.

Interviewee 3, a senior official working in ASEAN Secretariat, asserted that connectivity helps to resolve challenges in the region through integration:

The more we connected, the more we work together, the better. The more we integrate, the more we know each other, the more problems and the more challenges come out, however, our great challenge is how we can manage all the challenges. (Interviewee 3 2013)

ASEAN has strengthened mutually beneficial relations with its various dialogue partners while maintaining its central and proactive role in the regional architecture. The ASEAN Connectivity Program is an example. Connectivity is categorised into three types: structural connectivity, infrastructure connectivity, and people to people connectivity. Interviewee 4 said:

ASEAN Connectivity Program has not only implemented in economy, it is a comprehensive combination among political connectivity, economical connectivity and cultural connectivity and is way to help countries seek closer together and overcomes obstacles. Infrastructural connectivity is important because it connects with regional countries and dialogue partners and creates physical interconnection. (Interviewee 4 2013)

ASEAN Secretary-General Le Luong Minh has insisted that connectivity helps to further liberalise market access for air services into a major markets such as China, Japan, South Korea, India, and the EU (Luong Minh 2014). As a result, between 2003 and 2013 the worth of the aviation industry in ASEAN increased three-fold from USD 33 million dollars to 99 USD million dollars, with the capacity of ASEAN airlines increasing from 94 million seats to 268 million seats in the same period. The low-cost-carrier industry also boomed from 4.2% with 4 million seats to 57% with 155 million seats (Luong Minh 2014). ASEAN also enhances connectivity in land transport such as with the ASEAN Highway Network and the Singapore–Kunming Rail Link. Maritime connectivity increased in March 2013 with the Master Plan and Feasibility study on the Establishment of an ASEAN Roll-on/Roll-off (RoRo) Shipping Network and Short-Sea Shipping, and it was due to increase further with the establishment of an ASEAN Single Shipping Market (Luong Minh 2014). Increased flows of people is one criteria for region-ness, so here again there are lessons to be learned for building an EAC from the building of the ASEAN Community.

#### *6.1.2.4 Building a sense of community*

In building the EAC there are lessons to be learned about communicating with member states about community building because this was a weakness of the ASEAN process. ASEAN Secretary-General Le Luong Minh, in his speech to the 2014 ASEAN Insights Conference in London, reported the results of surveys taken in 2012 on ASEAN Community Building about citizens' acknowledgement of ASEAN:

[Of] the total respondents in the 10 ASEAN capital cities, 76 percent reported that they had almost no idea of what the ASEAN Community was; 55 percent of the business respondents indicated having a slightly better understanding and 30 percent showed a lack of basic understanding (Luong Minh 2014).

Le Luong Minh mentioned the need for concerted acting and coordinating at both national and regional levels as well as for further enhancement of the support and compliance mechanisms in ASEAN (Luong Minh 2014). ASEAN citizens' knowledge about the ASEAN Community is very low because of the diversity of cultures, languages, and religions, as well as the differing levels of development in the region. Interviewee 5 stressed the need for propaganda when building the ASEAN Community.

We need to use propaganda to tell ASEAN citizens what the ASEAN Community means ... There is also need to intensify communication efforts to the public and to business community – who should be kept well-informed and consulted on AEC initiative. (Interviewee 5 2013)

Therefore, the EAC will need to develop propaganda if it is to increase the knowledge of citizens about the existence and significance of its community, as well as generating a 'sense of community'.

In sum, there are lessons from the ASEAN Community building process that could be applied in building an EAC: increasing dialogue to earn the support from the international community; learning from the challenges that ASEAN coped with; and strengthening communication strategies to improve citizens' knowledge about the EAC and to develop a sense of community. These lessons from ASEAN are useful for the EAC building process because both organisations have similar features and memberships.

## **6.2 Obstacles to ASEAN's promotion of EAC building**

Despite the lessons ASEAN can bring to the process of building an EAC, there are several reasons why ASEAN is ambivalent about assuming the role of driver in building the EAC. ASEAN is worried about losing its position of centrality due to weaknesses caused by internal affairs issues and fear of having pressure put on it by the great powers. In particular, disunity within ASEAN over the South China Sea dispute prevents EAC building. Finally, ASEAN's priority is the building of the ASEAN Community rather than the EAC. This section examines these obstacles to ASEAN's promotion of EAC building.

### *6.2.1 ASEAN faces losing its central role in the region*

Some ASEAN countries do not want to promote EAC building because they are afraid of losing the central role ASEAN now plays in the region. Indonesia, for example, strongly supports the increasing of close cooperation and linkages between ASEAN and its three Northeast Asian neighbours to ensure regional stability. At the same time, Indonesia is reluctant to move too fast from ASEAN +3 process towards a more structured EAC because it may dilute the cohesion of ASEAN (Anwar 2009). Indonesia's position on ASEAN centrality is that other organisations such as the East Asia Summit should not create new organisations that "marginalise" or "replace ASEAN"; the integration of East Asia should be "within the control of ASEAN" (Anwar 2009 p. 10).

Katsumata (2014) argues that the leadership of ASEAN since the early 1990s can be explained in terms of three parallel developments that are associated with the Asia-Pacific framework of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). ASEAN has been able to lead community building in East Asia for three reasons: 1) it has advanced the vision of an EAC by drawing on its cooperative security norm embodied in the ARF; 2) through participation in the ARF process, the Northeast Asian powers have come to recognise the value of ASEAN's cooperative security norm, and thus share with the Southeast Asian nations their vision of an East Asian community; and 3) the sharing of a community-building vision by all the East Asian countries has constituted a structure that makes it costly for the Northeast Asian powers to challenge ASEAN.

If the EAC comes into effect, ASEAN may find it hard to accept the loss of centrality because it has been striving to build its central role in the region since the first

half of 2006, when ASEAN's Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) discussed ASEAN's approaches to East Asian cooperation (ASEAN Secretariat 2009). ASEAN Secretary-General Le Luong Minh has talked about ASEAN's efforts to maintain its centrality:

ASEAN is parlaying this position and influence by providing a trusted and stable platform and bringing both big and small countries to discuss their multi-faceted interests and cooperate on wide-range security and economic issues. Under the ambit of ASEAN mechanisms and governed by various plans of action, differences discussed and relations are strengthened through regular consultations and concrete cooperation activities. (Luong Minh 2013 p. 2)

Article 41, Paragraph 3 of the ASEAN Charter states: "ASEAN shall be the primary driving force in the regional arrangements that it initiates and maintain its centrality in regional cooperation and community building" (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2008 p. 41). ASEAN centrality is reflected through ASEAN's role as a facilitator for regional forums, ministerial meetings, regional issues, trade and economic negotiations, and, importantly, as a mediator of rivalry among dialogue partners (Kavi 2013). ASEAN values its centrality as a mediator contributing to the strengthening of cooperation between a group of small countries and regional greater powers through initiatives such as plans of action, meetings, and consultant mechanisms. A statement delivered by Malaysian Prime Minister, the Honourable Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun, at the 10<sup>th</sup> East Asia Summit held in Kuala Lumpur in 22 November 2015 highlights this central role of ASEAN:

We further reaffirmed ASEAN's central role in the East Asia Summit (EAS) and ASEAN's commitment to work in close partnership with all EAS participating countries, to ensure that the EAS would continue to be an important integral component of the regional architecture. (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2015 p. 1)

Interviewee 8, a representative of Japan's Mission to ASEAN, supports ASEAN's centrality in the regional architecture:

Dialogue partners support for ASEAN's centrality in the regional architecture such as ASEAN Plus 1, ASEAN Plus Three, ARF, EAS. After all, ASEAN will

be in driver seat in the regional architecture. Japan is ready to support ASEAN in the role of regional driving seat. (Interviewee 8 2013)

Promoting EAC building may take away ASEAN's central role in the region. Interviewee 1, an official working in the Vietnam Academy of Diplomacy, expressed his scepticism about whether ASEAN can lead EAC building, saying ASEAN will instead will be led by three great powers Japan, China and the United States. He assumes that if Japan and China lead the EAC, these two great powers would not follow the ASEAN Way. In other words, China and Japan would pursue their own geo-political and geo-strategic national interests, not ASEAN's interests. Interviewee 1 is concerned that these two countries may use the EAC as a forum to negotiate or resolve pressing issues in their relationships with other major powers rather than the interests of small countries in the region. ASEAN's unity and strength of solidarity may decline along with its prestige in the region if the great powers increase their interference in the regional architecture. These great powers might also utilise their economic and political power as well as their relationships with individual ASEAN countries to pressure ASEAN to resolve regional issues. Strategic rivalry between China and Japan may compel these two countries to nominally accept the role of ASEAN as the driver of the regional integration process in East Asia but, realistically, they would not accept direction from ASEAN (Luong 2006) (See Chapter 7 for further discussion on the role of powers politics in EAC).

Furthermore, ASEAN's role in the ASEAN +3, which is considered to be a platform of EAC, is quite limited. Since 1999, the +3 countries – China, Japan, and Korea – have had their own trilateral summit on the sidelines of the annual ASEAN +3 Summit to better tackle issues of common concern outside the ASEAN +3 (ASEAN Secretariat 2009). Kavi, a well-known journalist from Thailand, addressed an ASEAN international conference in 2013 and said he did not believe that great powers supported ASEAN's centrality role and that all major powers pay lip-service to ASEAN centrality (Kavi 2013). So why would ASEAN make efforts to build an organisation like the EAC where ASEAN may be dominated by other players?

ASEAN may lose its centrality if the EAC is established because of its own weakness and lack of ability in resolving regional issues. Interviewee 1, from the Vietnam Academy of Diplomacy, said: "ASEAN cannot become a regional driver. If it

can, it is only a taxi driver” (Interviewee 1 2013). Luong (2009) claimed that even Japan, which has supported ASEAN’s role as the “main driver” for the EAC, understands that ASEAN cannot become a regional driving force. Similarly, Interviewee 7, from the ASEAN Secretariat, asserted:

ASEAN is only a place where powers compete for influence in the region. ASEAN has partly proved its role, however, it can’t have reached the role as ‘driving seat’ for East Asia regionalism over large power such as China and Japan. (Interviewee 7 2013)

In discussing about the ability of ASEAN to be the regional driver, Khanh (2008) argued that if the mechanisms of regional cooperation, including ASEAN+1, ASEAN +3, EAS, ADMM+ and ARF, were shaped as concentric circles, from inside to outside representing smaller to bigger numbers of members, ASEAN is at the centre and thus its role has the tendency to being weakened because it has to cope with bigger challenges as more members become involved (Khanh 2008). The members expanding from ASEAN are the bigger countries. For example, ASEAN +3 includes Japan, China and South Korea and ASEAN +3 composes of ASEAN countries, Japan, China, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, and India. Thus, ASEAN’s role becomes weaker because ASEAN would be under pressure when in cooperation with more powerful countries. Although ASEAN is considered as main driver in East Asian cooperation, ASEAN has not expressed its role as driving force and central power in East Asian cooperation (Khanh 2008).

APEC is an example of where ASEAN has not been able to assert itself strongly in a regional organisation that includes numerous larger players from outside the Southeast Asian region. APEC has 21 members, of which only seven are ASEAN members. Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar were earlier blocked from joining APEC because of a moratorium on new membership that expired at the end of 2010 (ASEAN Secretariat 2009). Until 2015, ASEAN had not able to introduce Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar into APEC. ASEAN also assumed the responsibility of being the “primary driving force” of ARF when ARF was launched in 1994. However, the role of ASEAN was challenged when ARF was seen to be moving too slowly under its cautious leadership – “not enough action, mostly talks only” (ASEAN Secretariat 2009, p. 4). Hence, ASEAN knows it would not be able to drive the EAC, and resists the creation of

the EAC because it would likely become a vehicle for the domination of ASEAN by the great powers Japan and China. As Interviewee 15, a senior official working in the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam, put it:

Five years ago when ASEAN faced with difficulties, it said that EAC can be infringed ASEAN Community. Supposing EAC comes into reality, should China and Japan accepted for ASEAN to be the EAC driving forces and obey the ASEAN's commands. (Interviewee 15)

#### *6.2.2 ASEAN's unity is undermined by the South China Sea issue*

Although ASEAN has promoted a great deal of regional dialogue, it has suffered disunity while attempting to resolve regional disputes, especially the South China Sea issue. ASEAN countries' lack of a common viewpoint on resolving the South China Sea issue affects both regional cooperation and the EAC building process, and is a key factor affecting regional integration. This generates ineffectiveness and casts serious doubt on ASEAN's ability to drive the building of the EAC.

Interviewee 6, an official working in ASEAN Secretariat, said ASEAN member countries cannot discuss the South China Sea issue as "bilateral issues" or "discuss the South China Sea issue behind the back of another party" because it relates to maritime security and is the "lifeline for commercial trade of all countries in the world". He contended, "Maritime security is related to the United Nations Security Council. So we can't say who is related or who not related" (Interviewee 6 2013). However, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen declared support for resolving the South China Sea dispute bilaterally, saying that the South China Sea is not an issue for ASEAN: "Cambodia views that the Philippines complaint is to request the Permanent Court of Arbitration to settle its dispute with China and this process is not related to all ASEAN member states" (Sokheng 2016). Meanwhile Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Japan clearly oppose China's aim to occupy 80 per cent of the South China Sea area (Luong Minh 2013). Some small countries such as Laos, Myanmar and Brunei keep silent because they do not want their declaration on the decision of the Permanent Tribunal about the South China Sea to affect the benefits they receive from their relationship with China (see Chapter 7 for more about China's investment in Cambodia, Laos and Brunei).

China is the main reason for ASEAN's internal division over the South China Sea issue. China was successful in bringing ASEAN member Cambodia to its side by



providing Cambodia with substantial economic and military support. In response, Cambodia supports China's argument in the South China Sea territorial conflicts. In 2012, when Cambodia chaired the ASEAN meeting, it failed to release a joint statement on the issue at the ASEAN Ministerial meeting (Hunt 2012). While ASEAN in general, and Philippines and Vietnam in particular, attempt to bring up the South China Sea issue in international conferences, Cambodia supports China's perspective that the South China Sea issue is a bilateral issue and there is no need for regional organisations to be involved. In other words, Cambodia and China's position is that ASEAN should not be involved in resolving the South China Sea disputes. When incoming Chinese President Xi Jinping first met Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen in Beijing on 8 April 2013 at least 28 agreements were expected to be signed. In October 2016, President Xi Jinping visited Cambodia and pledged USD 237 million in aid, erased almost USD 90 million state debt, offered nearly USD 15 million in military support and signed many new agreements (Sovuthy, Paviour & Narim 2016). China has since increased infrastructure, education and health aid to Cambodia and given a commitment for non-refundable aid of about USD 600 million for Cambodia's national development in the period 2016 to 2018 (Associated Press 2016). As well, in 2016 China agreed to a memorandum of understanding to double the quantity of rice imported from Cambodia from 100,000 tonnes to 200,000 tonnes (Manet 2016). The Cambodian Council of Ministers spokesman, Phay Sipphan, verified that Cambodia's development cannot be separated from Chinese aid: "Without Chinese aid, we go nowhere" (Paviour 2016).

In the Philippines–China Arbitration case over the South China Sea issues, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen supported China's perspectives against the declaration released by the tribunal of Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) on 12 July 2016. When speaking at the 65th anniversary of the Cambodian People's Party (CPP), Hun Sen declared that the party would support neither the PCA's ruling related to the South China Sea disputes nor any declaration of ASEAN that endorsed it (Sokha 2016). At the 49th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (the plenary session) held in Vientiane, Laos in 24 July 2016 Cambodia again blocked an ASEAN statement on the South China Sea (Baliga & Sokheng 2016). The statement finally released at the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting was a "diluted statement" because it did not mention the July 12 arbitration ruling and it highlighted the concern of "some ministers" (not all the ASEAN ministers) about China's land reclamation activities and pushed for "non-

militarisation and self restraint” (Baliga 2016). Cambodia reaffirmed its independence and neutrality in the tense situation in the South China Sea (Sovuthy & Paviour 2016), with Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen saying he did not support any country (Sokheng 2016).

Some other ASEAN countries also changed their stand on the South China Sea after the PCA ruling. Philippine President Duterte did not push strongly for the inclusion of the arbitration in ASEAN’s documents at ASEAN Foreign Minister Meeting in late July 2016 and the ASEAN Summit in early September; instead he emphasised his expectation of increased economic cooperation with China (Ho Wah Foon 2016). In July 2016 the Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Perfecto Yasay Jr, declared that Philippine Government is willing to share with China the natural resources of the contested areas in the South China Sea (Philippines Department of Foreign Affairs 2016). In December 2016 he stated that the primary foreign policy priority of President Duterte had been the revitalising of bilateral ties with China (Philippines Department of Foreign Affairs 2016).

As the Chairman of ASEAN in 2017, President Duterte said in a press conference after the 30th ASEAN Summit meeting held in Manila on 29 April 2017 that pressure on China about the territorial disputes over the South China Sea was not needed because China “has reached out to help fuel growth among ASEAN economies” and the Philippines “expects to have more assistance from China” (Tuvera 2017). While Duterte refused to answer questions from the reporters about China’s building of artificial islands and installation of military facilities on these islands, he did say that fighting with China over its South China Sea claims by military means would always disadvantage other claimants, and because the Philippines and other claimants cannot prevent China from island building, there was no point discussing it at diplomatic events such as the ASEAN Summit (Tuvera 2017).

Such disunity among ASEAN countries in their approaches to the South China Sea makes the issue more difficult to resolve. As Interviewee 9, from the ASEAN Secretariat, said:

The challenge is how we resolve it. The lesson from ASEAN Community is that we should try to manage the situation before it happens or we should have a suitable Code of Conduct. (Interviewee 9 2013)

### *6.2.3 ASEAN needs to focus on its own community building*

ASEAN has been busy with a schedule for its own Community that has distracted it from the process of EAC building. For some years ASEAN's attention has been occupied by preparations for presenting itself to the global community of nations by December 2015 (Interviewee 6 2013); and plans for development of the ASEAN Community after 2015. As the Chair of ASEAN in 2015, Malaysia released the following eight priorities for ASEAN to achieve in 2015 (ASEAN China Center 2015):

1. Strengthen the development of the small and medium enterprise (SMEs) in the region.
2. Formally establish the ASEAN Community.
3. Develop the ASEAN Community's Vision.
4. Steer ASEAN closer to the peoples.
5. Expand intra-ASEAN trade and investment through cross-border investments and trade.
6. Strengthen ASEAN's Institutions.
7. Promote regional peace and security through moderation and to enhance.

The huge amount of work involved in these activities distracts ASEAN diplomats from putting energy into other regional initiatives such as the EAC. According to Secretary-General Le Luong Minh:

We admit there is still much to be done to fast-track the implementation of these ASEAN Economic Community deliverables. ASEAN is focusing on the high-impact priority areas and measures for establishing a single market and production base, like the customs single window, services and investment liberalization. (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2013)

And as Interviewee 15 said:

ASEAN has been working very hard to build ASEAN Community, so what ASEAN wants to further build the EAC for? In other words till ASEAN Community is more stable and firm, ASEAN will not think of expand ASEAN Community to East Asian Community. (Interviewee 15 2013)

Furthermore, ASEAN has no spare resources for EAC building because it is too busy with the many meetings it is leading. ASEAN holds about 1200 meetings per year

(Interviewee 6 2013). These include the ASEAN Summit, the ASEAN Coordinating Council, and the ASEAN Community Councils that are held twice per year. There are about 30 annual mechanisms for cooperation at Ministerial level, among them six for the Political and Security Community and 12 for the Economic Community. To support the pillars of the ASEAN Community, there are nearly 40 mechanisms for high-level official meetings and many others for technical officers. In diplomatic relations, ASEAN maintains annual meetings for ASEAN+1 with China, Japan, Korea and India, and the US and Russia. It holds summit meetings with the countries of ASEAN +3 (China, Japan and Korea) and the East Asia Summit (including members of ASEAN +3 and India, Australia, and New Zealand). ASEAN maintains Annual Ministerial meetings with its dialogue partners in July each year. ASEAN and the EU members have annual meetings at Foreign Ministerial Meetings twice per year (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2017 -a). Hosting a great number of meetings per year exhausts the resources ASEAN may have for supporting the building of the EAC.

The challenges that ASEAN has faced since the establishment of its Community also suggest it has no spare funds for EAC building. In December 2013, an International workshop on the post-2015 ASEAN Community was co-hosted by the United Nations and Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam. Many international scholars and Vietnamese scholars attended the workshop (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2013). They mapped out where member states' interests and donors' priorities were focused so that regional funds could be used to augment unfunded priorities. Planning and allocating ASEAN countries' financial resources properly was crucial so that limited and competing funds could be fairly spread out across the whole scope and breadth of ASEAN cooperation in the three pillars.

Another point to consider is the dismantling of tariffs. Tariffs are a challenge to the ASEAN Community. As Interviewee 13, an official working in Vietnam Embassy in Indonesia, said, "Almost all countries have trade barriers" (Interviewee 13 2013). According to Interviewee 13, a Vietnamese diplomat, Indonesia proposed the Standard National of Indonesia (SNI) to limit the amount of steel imported into Indonesia. Thus Indonesia protects its domestic market because steel made in Vietnam must have the letters SNI on steel products if they are to be imported into Indonesia. There are also some sensitive areas that countries find difficult because of commitments to implementing trade liberalisation, examples being the opening of markets such as

aviation, finance and labour. ASEAN has been dealing with eliminating tariffs, improving trade facilitation, developing the services sector, increasing intra- and extra-ASEAN Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), and stimulating economic activities in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam (Interviewee 13 2013). ASEAN has promoted the liberalisation of trade by the elimination of tariffs and non-tariff barrier of goods through the Common Effective Preferential Tariff (CEPT)/ASEAN<sup>6</sup> Free Trade Agreement (AFTA). According to Interviewee 6, an official working in ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta, “ASEAN countries need to adjust and change law to be in accordance with regulation and commitments” (Interviewee 6 2013).

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6 The Common Effective Preferential Tariff scheme, which established a phased schedule in 1992 with the goal to increase the region’s competitive advantage as a production base geared for the world market.

### 6.3 Chapter Conclusion

In sum, sharing similar features and membership, ASEAN's experiences in building the ASEAN Community offers useful lessons for building the EAC. One important lesson is to foster dialogue to earn support from the international community. ASEAN has been receiving support from Australia, the US, Japan, South Korea, as well as international organisations such as United Nations. In addition, prospective members can observe and learn from the challenges faced by ASEAN. For example, how to strengthen communication strategies to improve the citizenry's knowledge about the community so as to be able to develop a sense of community and create a feeling of belonging to a community. In addition, strengthening connectivity in order to make the region more integrated. Furthermore, building a regional community is facilitated by having an action plan and breaking the community building process into concrete tasks, clarifying the core elements, priority actions and methods to measure the results of its achievements. Most importantly, with support from the international community, ASEAN has created its own stable and peaceful environment for the community building process.

However, not all lessons from ASEAN's experiences apply to the EAC building process. ASEAN has the Political and Security Community as one of its main three pillars, but it is hard to apply this to the EAC because of unresolved issues in the relations between China, Japan and South Korea. Japan has historically invaded other countries and China has become an imperial power in the region. In addition, the security relationship between the three countries with the United States is different. China and Japan themselves have strongly competed for the leading role in the region. Therefore, the EAC's building process cannot apply the model of building the Political-Security pillar as ASEAN has done.

Having relevant community-building experience and being put forward as holding the key role in EAC building, ASEAN should have been very active in pushing EAC building. However, the evidence shows that ASEAN is ambivalent about pushing to create the EAC. ASEAN may lose its central role in the region if the EAC comes into existence, because the EAC will include the large powers China and Japan, who will not simply follow ASEAN's lead. This resonates with neorealist theory that small to medium powers prefer soft-balancing (as ASEAN is) over bandwagoning (as the EAC would be), for precisely the reasons identified in this chapter. ASEAN has displayed

weakness in resolving regional security issues such as in the South China Sea, calling into question its ability to drive regional initiatives involving the great powers. This shows the limitations of soft-balancing, and potentially bandwagoning, in attempting to curb the behaviour of great powers. China refused the soft-balancing regionalist attempts and responded with hard-balancing bilateralism. In sum, ASEAN's attention and energy have been and continue to be focused on its own Community building. For these reasons, ASEAN has yet to contribute significantly to the building of the EAC.

## **CHAPTER 7: THE IMPACT OF GREAT POWER POLITICS ON BUILDING OF THE EAST ASIAN COMMUNITY**

Chapter 6 examined the role of ASEAN as a key player in EAC building. Although ASEAN can provide lessons for EAC building through its own experiences in building the ASEAN Community, for various reasons ASEAN member countries are ambivalent about EAC building. These limitations of ASEAN as a key player prevent the process of EAC building.

Chapter 7 will examine other key countries that play decisive roles in the process of EAC building due to their military and or economic strength, in particular China, Japan and the US. I find that regionalism via the EAC has been limited in terms of bringing peace and stability in the region because: 1) among the regional great powers there exist unresolved territorial disputes, including in the South China Sea; 2) there are territorial and historical disputes between Japan and China; and 3) China and Japan are jockeying for leadership in the region. The ongoing territorial disputes make these key countries vigilant with each other, thus preventing processes of regional integration. Moreover, US policies and actions have not supported the development of East Asian cooperation because the US is afraid of an East Asia-focussed EAC that could decentralise the US in the region. In other words, if the three Northeast Asian countries and ASEAN countries were to cooperate closely, the role of the US in the region would be less prominent than if most of these countries remained relying primarily on the US. If an East Asia-focussed EAC came into existence the relationship between the US and its regional traditional allies like Japan, South Korea, Philippines or Thailand may be affected. The regional great powers' divisions, caused by their territorial and historical disputes, are therefore obstacles to the development of East Asian regionalism in general and EAC building in particular. The strategic competition for influence also affects regional peace and stability, limiting the development of East Asian regionalism. The big powers have refused the soft-balancing attempts by ASEAN to resolve South China Sea disputes, and would likely refuse bandwagoning attempts from within an EAC. In the case of these issues big power politics, hard balancing and nationalism have so far won out over regionalism.



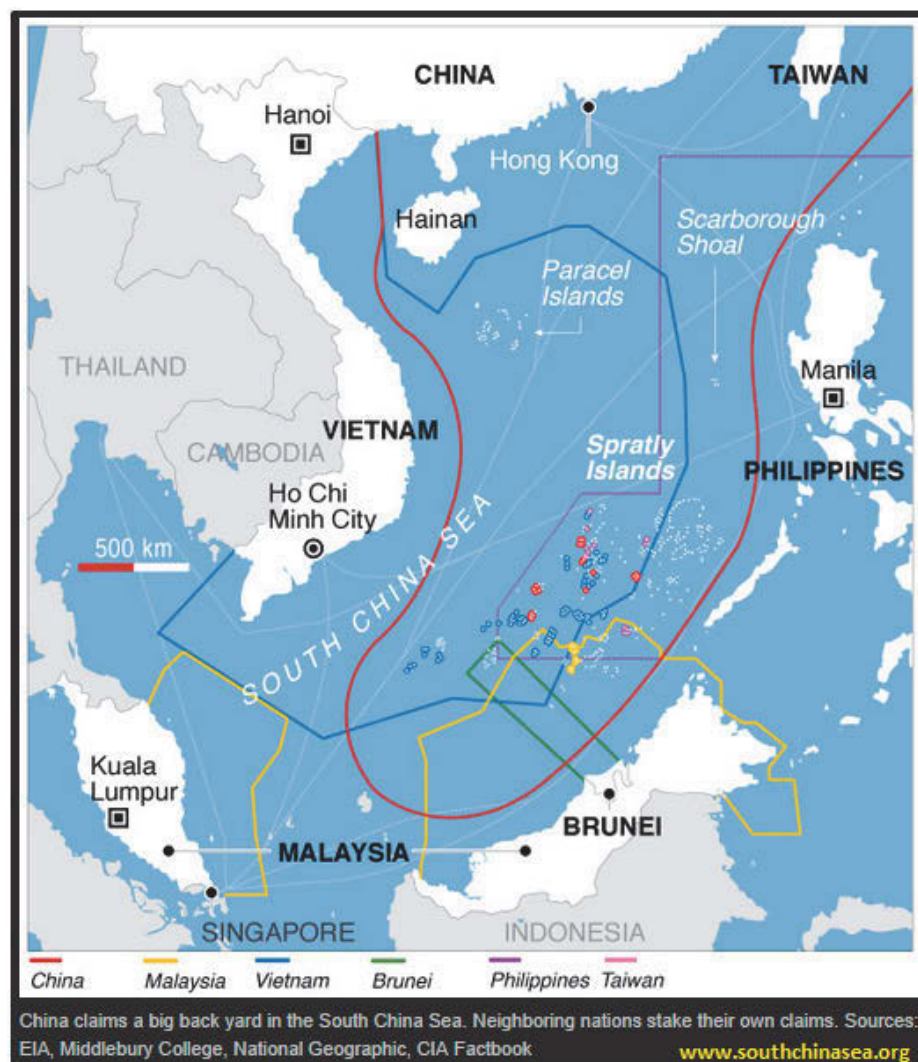
### 7.1 South China Sea territorial dispute

The South China Sea is one of the largest semi-enclosed seas in the world; it is surrounded by China (including Taiwan), Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, and the Philippines. These countries all claim maritime zones, including a 200 nautical miles exclusive zone and the continental shelf. Specifically, Vietnam claims the extended continental shelf on its eastern coast and jointly with Malaysia in the south coast, while China, Brunei and the Philippines have also submitted preliminary information concerning their extended continental shelf to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS). In addition, the Paracel and Spratly Islands are located in the middle of the Sea and will complicate the overlapping claims if they are found under international law to generate full maritime zones. Under Article 121 of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), an island is entitled to generate a full maritime zone if people can settle there and it can have an economic life of its own (Elferink 2016). However, the Paracels and Spratlys are very small in size, with no habitation of ordinary civilians and limited resources on the islands themselves. At the moment, Vietnam, China, Taiwan, Malaysia, the Philippines and Brunei have all laid sovereignty claims and have different views on the legal regime of these archipelagos (Lan Anh 2011 pp. 238-9).

The South China Sea territorial disputes started decades ago. China began small-scale military incursions in the South China Sea in 1988 and increased the frequency of its activities in 1997 by constructing a submarine base, deploying troops and even using tough measures to prevent regional countries from exploiting fisheries in the South China Sea. Yearly since 1999 China has unilaterally declared a ban on fishing activities in the South China Sea between 16 May and 1 August in the areas of north of the 12th parallel, including Huangyuan Island but excluding most of the Nansha Islands, regardless of neighbouring countries' disagreement (Yan 2012). Hence, some Vietnam fisherman were killed or wounded in 2006 and 2007 by Chinese patrol vessels and gunboats. A Vietnamese fishing boat near Paracel Islands was detained in 2009 (Truong Thuy 2010 p. 106).

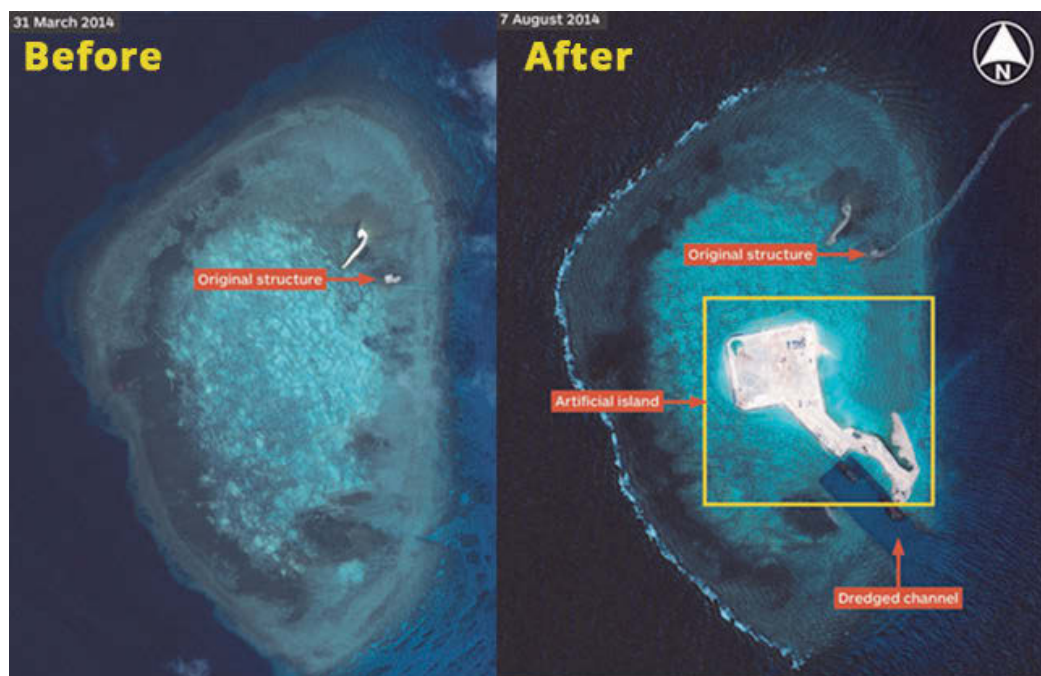
In 2009, the territorial disputes in the South China Sea became further complicated when China inflamed the situation by declaring sovereignty over the area in the so-called nine-dotted line or U-Shape line (see Figure 7.1). The nine-dotted line stretches along the coastline of a number of countries in East Sea and covers 80% of the

sea area (VOV 2013). China first released the map that included the nine-dotted line to the world in May 2009 by submitting a diplomatic note to the UN General Secretary. In July 2010, in response to this unilateral declaration by China, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton first brought up the issue of “freedom of navigation” in the South China Sea at the 43rd ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in Hanoi, Vietnam, marking the beginning of the US 'pivot to Asia' strategy and increased military tension between the US and China in the region (Zhen 2016). China has since taken assertive actions in the contested areas in the South China Sea. For example, in May 2012 China took Scarborough Shoal from the Philippines and in June 2012 it established Sansha City on Woody Island in the disputed Paracels Archipelago (Ramzy 2012).



**Figure 2: China claims a big back yard in the South China Sea (EIA 2014)**

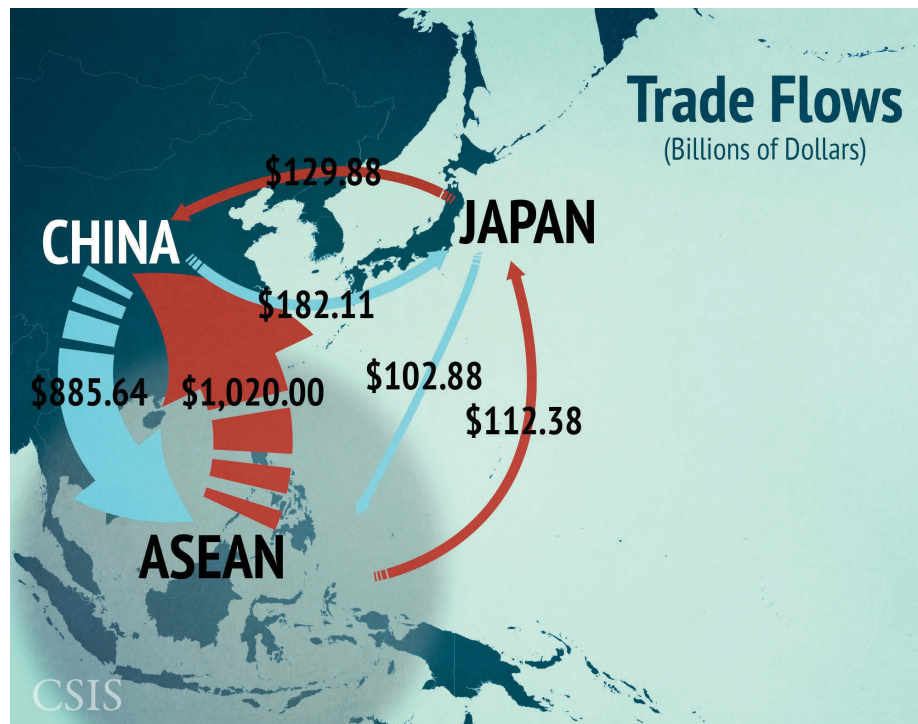
ASEAN countries have held meetings to resolve the disputes in the South China Sea. However, in July 2012 ASEAN failed to launch a joint declaration due to the different opinions on the South China Sea disputes. In January 2013 the Philippines was the only claimant to officially challenge China over the South China Sea at the Permanent Court of Arbitration at the Hague under The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) (1982). Despite this, since 2013 China has been destroying ecology and building artificial islands at all seven of the islets and reefs it occupies in the Spratly Islands. As a result, according to statistics from the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative (AMTI) (2017), China has successfully constructed more than 3,200 acres (equivalent to 1294.994 hectares) of new land; built seven large islands – Subi Reef, Mischief Reef, Johnson Reef, Hughes Reef, Gaven Reef (see Figure 7.2), Fiery Cross Reef and Cuarteron Reef – and aircraft hangars on contested areas in the South China Sea; and installed three sizable electronic surveillance facilities. Since 2014, China has increased dredging and building artificial islands on the South China Sea (Liddy & Spraggon 2015). China has built islands in the Paracel Islands and created 1,214 ha of land in the Spratly Islands, including a runway and other facilities that could be used for military purposes (Lee 2016).



**Figure 3: Gaven Reef before and after China built the artificial islands**  
(Friar 2016)

#### 7.1.1 South China Sea's importance to East Asian cooperation

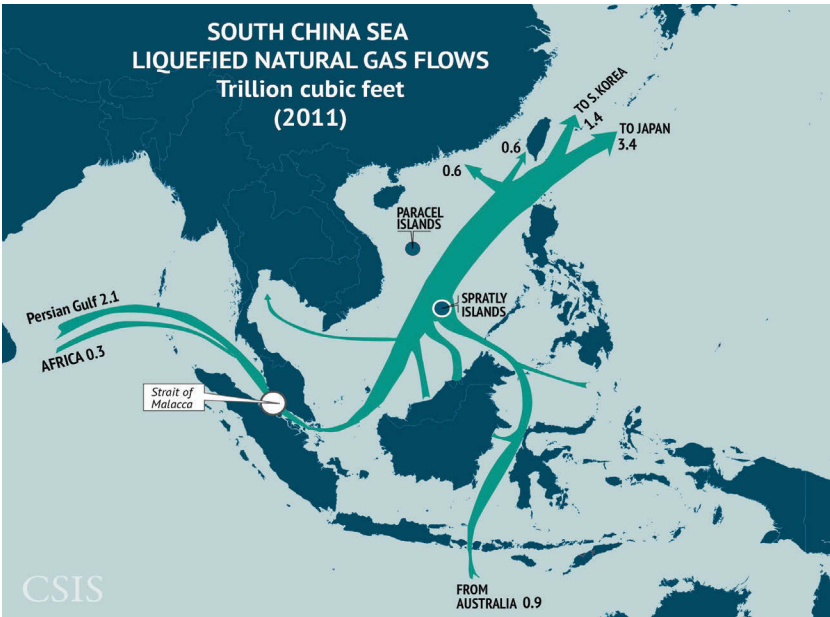
The South China Sea is very significant for East Asian regional integration due to its strategic geography and its huge economic potential. The South China Sea lies in the geopolitically important maritime connection between Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia. Khalid (2009) has highlighted the importance of the South China Sea as a critical global trade waterway and a key energy sea lane because it stretches from the west coast of Singapore in South East Asia all the way to Taiwan in the Far East (see Figure 7.3). Economically, the South China Sea is the second-most used sea lane in the world and contributes significantly to global maritime trade. According to the U.S Energy Information Administration (2017), Australia and Indonesia, which are the two largest coal exporters in the region, have transported through the sea lane large amounts of steam coal used for generating electricity and metallurgical coal used for primary steel production to markets in the world, especially to China and Japan.



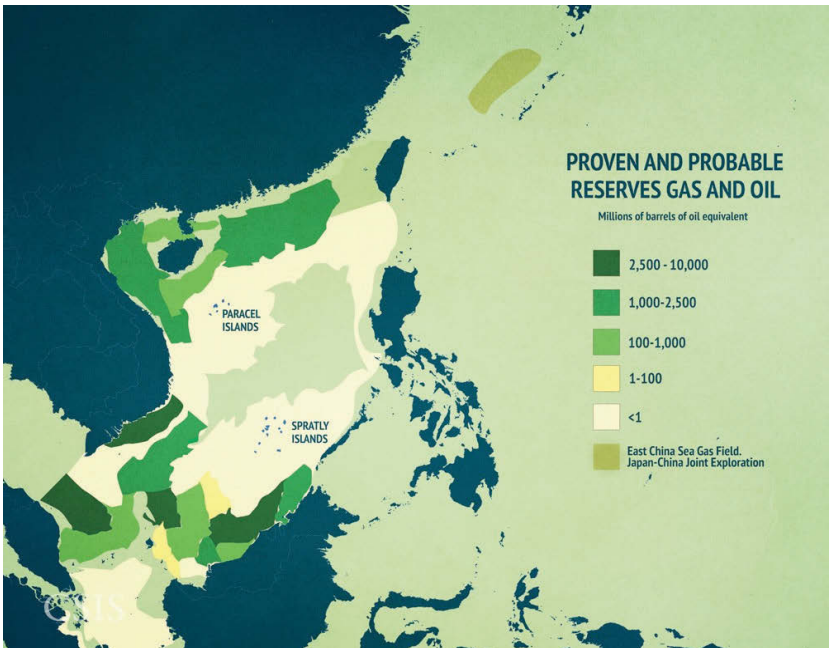
**Figure 4: Trade flows in the South China Sea**  
(CSIS 2011)

The South China Sea is not only important as a sea lane; it contains huge potential resources on its over 250 islands, many of which are submerged islets, rocks and reefs. According to the Philippines Department of Environment and Natural Resources, this body of water holds one third of the entire world's marine biodiversity,

thereby making it a very important ecosystem (Khalid 2009 p. 69). According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (2017), the South China Sea is also a key destination in term of liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports because a third of the crude oil and more than half of global LNG are transported through the South China Sea every year. In 2011, about six trillion cubic feet (tcf) of LNG went through the South China Sea (U.S Energy Information Administration 2017) (see Figures 5 and Figures 6).



**Figure 5: South China Sea liquefied natural gas flows**  
(CSIS 2011)



**Figure 6: Proven and probable reserves of gas and oil**  
(CSIS 2011)



China sees the South China Sea as its core interest because China's foreign trade is highly dependent on the shipping lanes of the South China Sea, especially trade with important ASEAN countries (Wen, Xiaochen & Yudi 2016 , para.40). Chinese officials told two senior officials of the Obama administration who visited China in March 2010 that China would not "tolerate any interference in the South China Sea" (Wong 2017 , para.13). Media representations about the issue in outlets supported by the Chinese Communist Party include statements such as "China will never waive its right to protect its core interest with military means" (Jacobs 2017 , para. 7).

Storey (2013) has asserted that instability in the South China Sea may interrupt the free passage of maritime trade of countries in the region. The South China Sea plays an indispensable role in Japan's economy because through it Japan imports natural energy such as oil and gas. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, 85–90% of Japan's oil imports and 33% of its LNG imports are transported through the South China Sea (Drifte 2016). Therefore if China were to control the South China Sea it may stop the transportation of 60% of Japan's energy supplies (Vuving 2014 -a). It might also replace the US as the sponsor and leader of the new regional order and become less favourable to Japan (Vuving 2014 -a).

Although not geographically located in East Asia, the US has great influence on peace and stability in the region. The US does not want to lose its central role in the Asia-Pacific region, which depends to varying extents on freedom and peace in the waterways of the South China Sea (Vuving 2014 -b). Since 2010 the US has repeatedly declared that it has a "strong national interest" in freedom of navigation and a "strong interest" in the peaceful and lawful settlement of disputes in the South China Sea (Vuving 2014 -b, para.18). Freedom of navigation allows the US Navy to move whenever and wherever it wants (Tonnesson 2011), and is also important for US commercial interests because it is both the trade route from the Indian Ocean and Northeast Asia and where US companies are able to extract petroleum and another mineral resources (Percival 2011). US primacy in the region exists because the main US allies in the region, Japan and South Korea, depend on the South China Sea lanes for provision of their energy. As well, if conflict among regional countries were to result in the disruption of the security of the sea lanes, the US would be expected to support the resolution of conflicts by offering assistance and mediation and possibly increasing its naval presence (Tonnesson 2011).

At the 17th Asian Regional Forum (ARF) in 2010, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton delivered a long statement on US position on the South China Sea. It included:

The US, 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. We share these interests not only with ASEAN members or ASEAN Regional Forum participants, but with other maritime nations and the broader community. (Landler 2010 , para.5)

In sum, the South China Sea has great significance to East Asian regional cooperation, peace and stability, which are key to promoting regional integration. However, recent evidence from the South China area shows that the development of regionalism in East Asia has been limited due to regional insecurity and instability caused by the ongoing disputes in this contested area.

#### *7.1.2 Ongoing disputes among great powers affects regional integration*

Even with these ongoing disputes over the South China Sea, East Asian regionalism via the EAC could still occur due to the high demand for cooperation by regional countries. Hao & Zhe (2011) argue that the territorial disputes in the South China Sea have not affected cooperation because regional countries aspire to safeguard peace and prosperity, and increase economic and security cooperation in the framework of bilateral and multilateral cooperation; China has put forward the policy of “shelving the differences and seeking joint development” (p. 17) in the past two decades in order to maintain long-term peace and stability in the South China Sea. As well, regional countries have reached agreement on peaceful exploitation in the South China Sea, such as joint exploration of resources, economic cooperation in the Ban-Beibu Gulf, non-traditional security cooperation, and cooperation in marine environmental protection (Hao & Zhe 2011).

As a key player in EAC building, with 10 out of the total of 13 prospective EAC members, ASEAN has coped with disunity in the South China Sea territorial disputes. This has limited its role in resolving the regional peace and security issues to promote regionalism. However, Interviewee 9, a senior official working in the ASEAN Secretariat, said that having territorial disputes in the South China Sea is normal and not a serious problem for regionalism:

The South China Sea is not an issue. In a family we have some disagreements and different opinions. It doesn't mean it harms our family ... the challenge is how we resolve it. The lesson from ASEAN Community is that we should try to manage the situations before it happens or we should have a suitable code of conduct. (Interviewee 9 2013)

I partially agree with this perspective that the ongoing territorial disputes in the South China Sea do not seriously affect regional cooperation. Regionalism in East Asia has still happened because the great powers have promoted cooperation even as South China Sea disputes occurred. For example, on the sideline of the G20 summit held in Hangzhou, China, in September 2016, Chinese President Xi Jinping talked with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe a year after their previous meeting in order to bring their relations back to normal as soon as possible (Takenaka 2016). In November 2016, Japan and China held the 14th Security Dialogue in Beijing, China, to improve ties between the two countries (Kyodo 2016). In February 2017, newly elected US President Donald Trump wrote to Chinese President Xi Jinping on the occasion of Lunar New Year of the Rooster as an ice breaker in the relationship between China and the US, expressing his hope of increasing bilateral cooperation with China (Blanchard & Walsh 2017). In February 2017 President Trump had his first phone conversation with President Xi Jinping. This was repeated in April 2017 and shows their determination to deepen China–US relations in this new era and reach consensus in major international and regional issues (Anonymous 2017 ; Blanchard & Walsh 2017).

The ongoing territorial disputes in the South China Sea limit the development of East Asian regionalism via the EAC in terms of bringing peace and stability to the region. Interviewee 15, an official in the Vietnam Diplomatic Academy, judged that the South China Sea territorial dispute was an important factor preventing the process of international integration (Interviewee 15 2013). Koda (2016) argues that the potential escalation of tensions and the ongoing militarisation of China and the US – Japan's key ally – pose a threat to regional stability. Mosyakov (2016) also admits that forecasts of further escalation of the situation in the South China Sea may prove accurate.

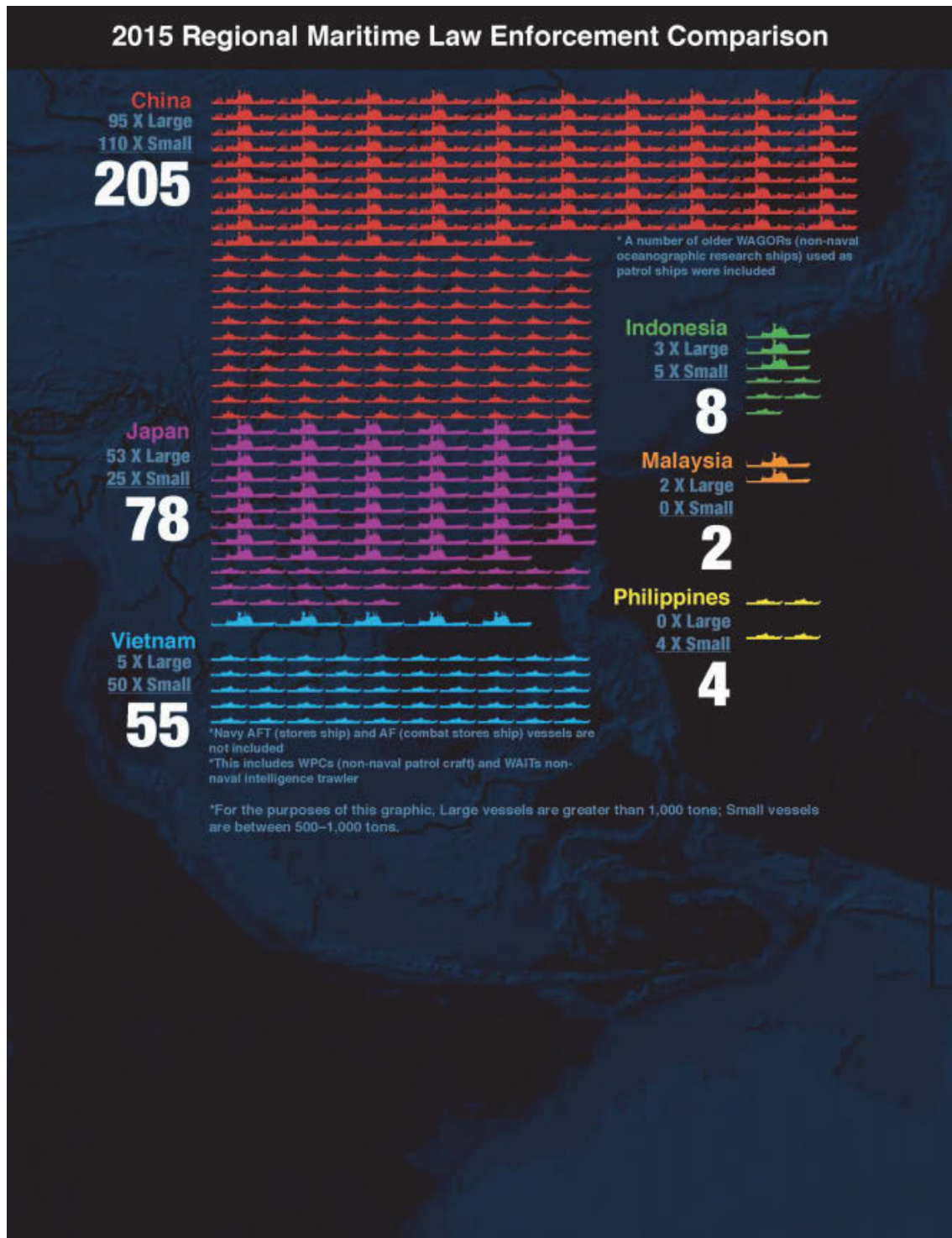
China's economic development over the last two decades has allowed it to modernise its defence forces (Layton 2017). According to Thayer (2016), regional peace and security in the South China Sea is threatened by the placement of fighter aircraft, bombers, missiles, amphibious landing ships and naval warships, which



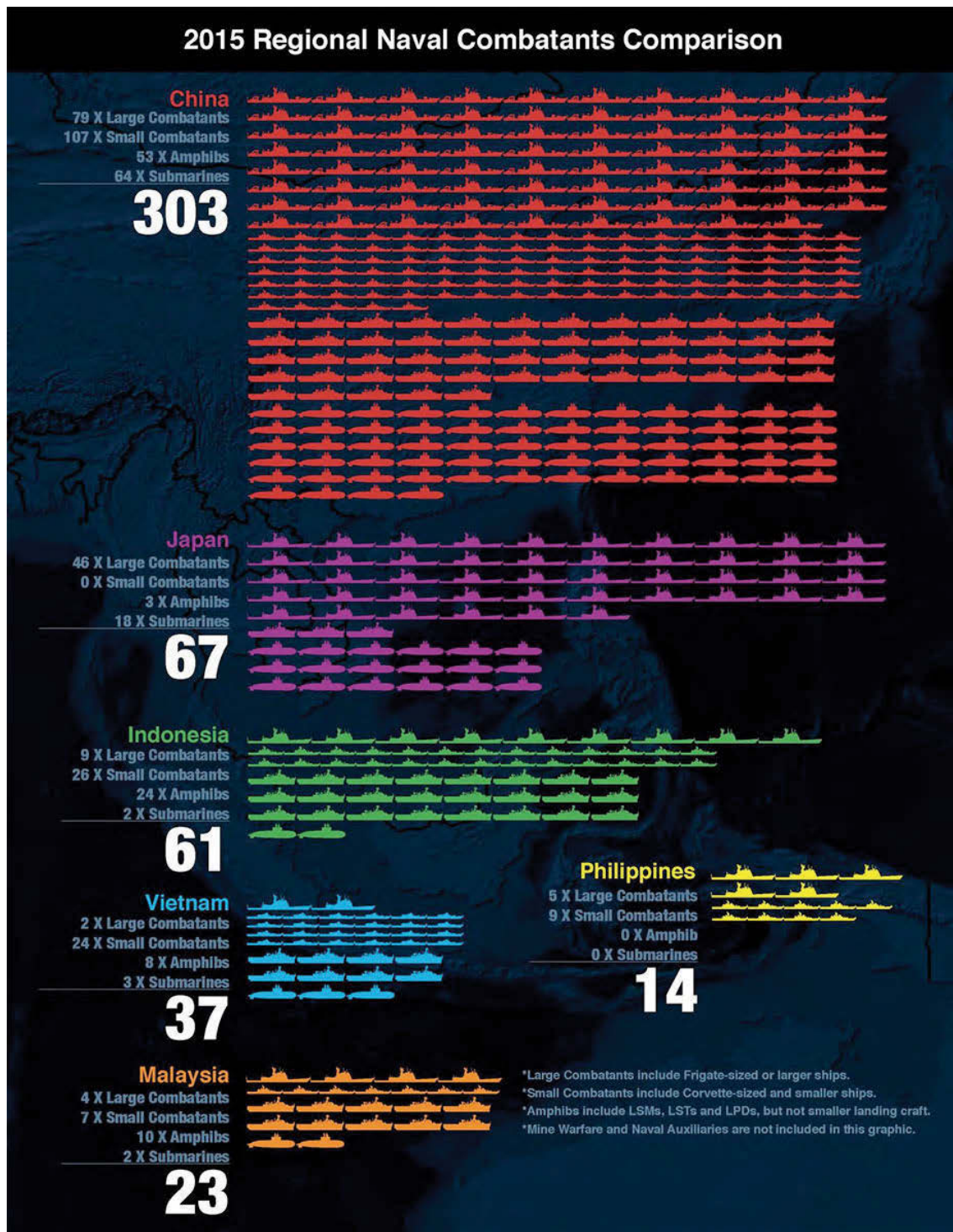
constitutes militarisation at the high end of the scale and threatens regional peace and security (see Figures 7.6, 7.7, and 7.8). Evaluating the situation in the South China Sea, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat in Boracay, the Philippines, on 21 February 2017 highlighted "recent developments and escalation of activities in the area which may further raise tensions and erode trust and confidence in the region", and reaffirmed

the importance of the need to enhance mutual trust and confidence, exercising self-restraint in the conduct of activities, and avoiding actions that may further complicate the situation, and pursuing peaceful resolution of disputes, including through full respect for legal and diplomatic processes, without resorting to the threat or use of force, in 1982 UNCLOS. The Ministers underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety, and efforts within the ASEAN-China process to complete a framework of the Code of Conduct (COC), in order to facilitate the early adoption of the COC.

(Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2017 -d, para.8)



**Figure 7: 2015 Regional Maritime Law Enforcement Comparison**  
(AMTI Leadership 2015)



**Figure 8: 2015 Regional Naval Combatants Comparison**  
 (AMTI Leadership 2015)

## Airstrip Comparison in the South China Sea

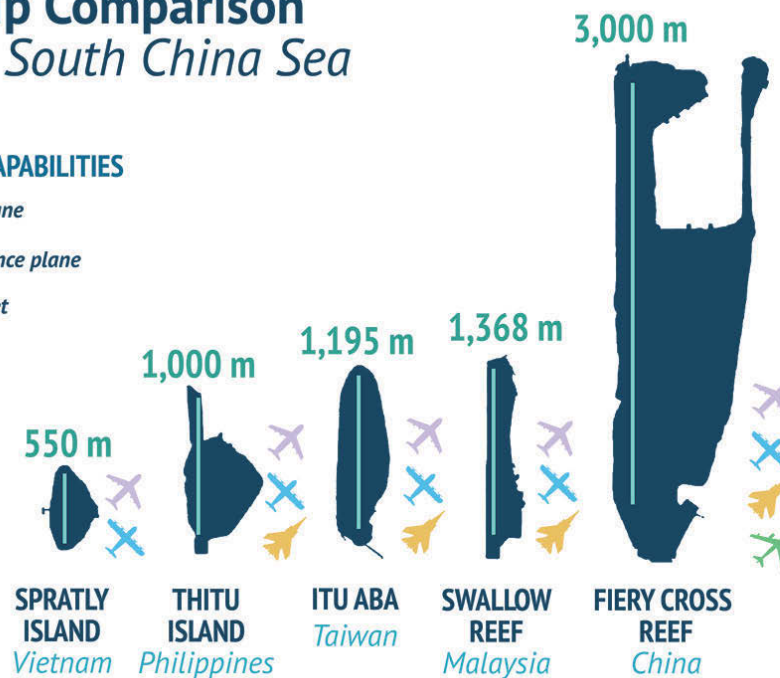
### AIRCRAFT CAPABILITIES

 Cargo plane

 Surveillance plane

 Fighter jet

 Bomber



**Figure 9: Airstrip Comparison in the South China Sea**  
(CSIS 2015)

### 7.1.3 Distrust and vigilance among the great powers

Regional integration has been limited because the disputes have made the neighbouring countries vigilant and distrustful of each other. There is evidence that regional countries have increased cooperation in order to cope with China's assertive actions in the South China Sea. For example, in 2015 Philippines and Japan held joint naval exercises there (Anonymous 2015a), and the US, Japanese, and Australian navies held joint maritime drills off the coast of Brunei (Anonymous 2015b). In the same year, US president Barack Obama invited ASEAN leaders to attend the US–ASEAN Summit in the US in 2016, at which the South China Sea issue was to be a key topic (Zing.vn 2015). Japan plans to send its largest warship to the South China Sea on a three-month tour from May 2017 (Kelly & Kubo 2017).

In addition, both the US and Japan have sought their own measures against China's occupation in the South China Sea. The US has increased its presence in the South China Sea to protect its role as global power and promote relationships with ASEAN countries as a counterbalance to China (Bader 2012). The US Navy conducted Freedom of Navigations Operations (FONOPS) in the South China in October 2015, and in October 2016 it completed its fourth FONOPS (Kowalewski

2017). Meanwhile, in 2016 Japan published a Defence White Paper that expressed deep concern over China's maritime assertiveness (Gady 2017). Japan's leaders often share the anxiety about the South China Sea issues during their meetings with other countries' leaders to garner support in the matter. For example at the 2017 Group of 7 meeting in Italy, the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs Fumio Kishida suggested that the meeting should also discuss the situation in the South China Sea.

Of more concern is the possibility that distrust and excessive vigilance among regional countries may lead to arms races between them. The US's military presence in the Asia Pacific region is large, with (Sushentosove 2013) recording approximately 325,000 US military and civilian personnel assigned to the Pacific Command. The US Pacific Fleet then had 1500 aircraft and about 100,000 personnel along with six carrier strike groups and 180 ships that accounted for 66% of the total US fleet, In 2017 the current US Secretary of Defense James Mattis remarked at the 16th Shangri-La Dialogue that

60 percent of all U.S. Navy ships, 55 percent of Army forces, about two-thirds of the fleet Marine forces are assigned to the U.S. Pacific Command area of responsibility. Soon, 60 percent of our overseas tactical aviation assets will also be assigned to this theater. (US Department of Defense 2017, para 89)

#### *7.1.4 Failed attempts to resolve South China Sea disputes*

As mentioned in Chapter 6, soft-balancing initiatives from ASEAN have had little effect in resolving security issues in the South China Sea. Regional multilateral mechanisms led by ASEAN have not been strong enough to resolve the South China Sea disputes. The Declaration on the Conduct of the Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), which was signed to provide a foundation for resolve territorial disputes is limited in how it can stop tensions, incidents and contention developing in the region (Truong Thuy 2010). Legal methods have not been effective in resolving the issues, given that regional countries are more and more dependent on China's financial aid and trade cooperation. Nor can strengthening economic cooperation among regional countries help resolve these issues.

The 45th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting in 2012 failed to issue an intended joint statement due to the inability of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers to reach consensus (Chalermphanupap 2016). At the 2016 ASEAN Foreign Ministers'



Meeting (AMM49), ASEAN countries struggled to “even issue a joint communiqué at all and then finally did adopt one that did not meet the minimum threshold of what could reasonably be expected” (Parameswaran 2016, para.2). The reason was that Cambodia blocked efforts to sanction China and even wanted not to mention about the South China Sea in ASEAN meetings. Therefore, the first paragraph in the joint statement from AMM49 merely mentioned concern “expressed by some Ministers” (Parameswaran 2016, para.6). Although Philippines underscored the increasing tensions in South China Sea, the Joint Statement of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat held on 21 February 2017 in Boracay doesn't touch on China (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2017 -c).

ASEAN countries are reluctant to decide on a statement relating to the South China Sea because each ASEAN member pursues its own national interest in relations with China and cooperate with China at various levels (see Chapter 6). China is one of the five most important trading partners for ASEAN countries. Since the ASEAN – China Free Trade Area (ACFTA) was established in 2010, the level of dependence on trade with China has surged.

Thus the attempts to use soft-balancing strategies via ASEAN to strengthen regional cooperation have been unable to solve the territorial disputes between the great powers and the confrontation in the South China Sea. There are several limitations to the soft-balancing strategies for resolving the South China Sea through the Asian Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN +3, the East Asia Summit (or ASEAN +6) and ASEAN Defense Ministerial Meeting. The ARF is more suited to talking about security problems than to actually helping to implement solutions (Cossa & Tanaka 2007). Although the ASEAN Declaration of Conduct in the South China Sea was issued in 2002, no agreement has been yet reached on implementation guidelines due to the infrequency of joint working group meetings (only four times in eight years) and disunity among the ASEAN members themselves (Emmers 2011, p. 266). The Sunnylands Declaration, which was released at the end of the US–ASEAN Summit held in February 2016, failed to name the South China Sea, and instead called for respect of each nation's sovereignty and for international law (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2016).

The fact is that the great powers are reluctant to use regional multilateral forums such as ASEAN to resolve regional security issues. The US is reluctant to give up its traditional hierarchical strategic position in the region through its bilateral security network (Emmers 2011). Meanwhile, Japan oscillates between supporting the multilateralisation of Asia-Pacific security politics and prioritising its US alliance. Moreover, China is reluctant to discuss the issue with ASEAN as a group (Emmers 2011, p. 237). Many great powers outside the region give reduced attention to ARF because the forum is held only in ASEAN countries and thus exerts little influence on the resolution of regional security issues (Simon 2008, pp. 264-92). For example, China has been “reluctant to address conflicting claims in the South China Sea at the ARF and instead has had separate talks with ASEAN and other claimants on an individual basis” (Cossa & Tanaka 2007, p. 154). The ARF may be effective for exchanging views, confidence building and cooperation to resolve non-traditional security issues, but it has had difficulty launching any initiatives to resolve conventional geopolitical conflicts. Because ASEAN is a group of small countries that do not carry much weight when judging the larger powers’ actions, it is hard to see how the ARF could resolve the conflicts between Japan and China, or Japan and South Korea, and how soft-power strategies used to balance China could dilute the tensions caused by the South China Sea issue.

According to one regional Foreign Minister, the Declaration on the Conduct of the Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), signed in 2002, was intended as an “interim measure” to resolve the South China Sea territorial problems; however, the DOC “has not been fully operationalized because the DOC not only involves Ministries of Foreign Affairs, but also involves defence, and economics” (Singaporean Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2017, para.10). In a speech at the 16th Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore 2–4 June 2017, ASEAN Secretary-General Le Luong Minh expressed his disappointment on the ineffectiveness of the implementation of the DOC even after 15 years since it was signed:

[A]fter 15 years since it was signed, the implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in South China Sea, or the DOC, is far from full and effective. The natural actions which contravene the spirit of the declaration, especially the militarisation activities, have eroded trust and confidence among parties and push them towards a conflict between powers, with great

adverse impact for regional peace, security and stability. (International Institute for Strategic Studies 2017 , para.13)

In September 2013 China and the ASEAN countries commenced formal consultations on the Code of Conduct (COC) on the South China Sea territorial dispute. However, the COC has been slow to reach final agreement. Despite positive meetings at the initial stage, the road to a COC for the troubled region is likely to be a long one (Pal 2013). According to Thayer (2013), the process is likely to be “protracted if not interminable” because China is in no hurry to conclude an arrangement on the COC (Thayer 2013, p. 82). China does not want to conclude the COC because the COC could threaten Beijing’s interests by limiting China’s activities in disputed areas such as the Paracel Islands and the Scarborough Shoal and hindering China’s strategy to increase its control through maritime patrols (Tiezzi 2014).

International law has also been resorted to in efforts to resolve disputes in the South China Sea. The Philippines submitted an application to the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague in 2013 when the Philippine government felt unable to resolve the South China Sea disputes through diplomatic negotiations. The Philippine government stated: “Over the past 17 years of such exchanges of views, all possibilities of a negotiated settlement have been explored and exhausted” (Wu & Zou 2016, p. 249).

In February 2013 the Philippines brought the South China Sea Arbitration case against China concerning the legality of China’s U-shape line under the Annex VI to a UNCLOS Tribunal (Wu & Zou 2016). However, in the first days of the Philippines submitting the document, China declared that it would not participate in the arbitration. In 2016, a White Paper was published by China to elaborate its position (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China 2016).

On 12 July 2016, the Tribunal ruled in favour of the Philippines, declaring that China has no historical rights based on the nine-dotted line map (Connor 2016). However, China rejected the Tribunal’s ruling, with Beijing declaring the ruling “null and void and no binding force” and that it wouldn’t affect its South China Sea claims (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China 2016 , para.2). The day after the Tribunal ruling was released, China flew a Cessna CE-680 civilian



aircraft between the Mischief and Subi Reefs, flouting the ruling which had decided that the Mischief Reef was part of the Philippines' continental shelf (Chan 2016).

Meanwhile, international response to the verdict was calm. The US reacted to the South China Sea verdict by calling for a peaceful resolution of the maritime disputes in accordance with international law; the US State Department called for all claimants, including China, to avoid provocative actions or statements (Gady 2016). Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida reiterated Tokyo's consistent advocacy to the "importance of the rule of law and the use of peaceful means, not the use of force or coercion, in seeking settlement of maritime disputes" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2016, para.2). The Philippines had won the legal case but Foreign Affairs Secretary Perfecto Yasay Jr called for "restraint and sobriety" immediately after the international arbitration court's ruling (Guinto 2016 , para.1). Vietnam, as one of the South China Sea claimant countries, was "careful, not jubilant" after the South China Sea ruling against China (Clark 2016, title) and its Spokesman, Le Hai Binh, only briefly mentioned that Vietnam strongly supports the peaceful resolution in accordance to the international law (Vietnam Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2016).

In conclusion, the measures used thus far have not been effective in resolving the South China Sea dispute. It is therefore hard to see how the EAC building initiative could contribute to the development of East Asian regionalism in terms of peace through soft balancing. Key players continue to distrust each other, and the region is rendered less stable by the possible consequences of the South China Sea territorial disputes.

## **7.2 Japan and China rivalry prevents process of EAC building**

The relationship between Japan and China plays an important role in EAC building. The movement towards EAC building is “primarily a game” played between these two regional powers and it will be difficult because of rivalry between them (Mulgan 2009 , para.2). At a Public Symposium titled “Building an East Asian Community” hosted by the Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA) with the support of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 17 March 2010, Professor Tommy Koh of the National University of Singapore, at that time an Ambassador-at-large for the Singaporean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said that if Japan, China and India can achieve reconciliation, there is likely to be peace in Asia for the next 100 years (Japan Institute of International Affairs 2010). Hence, the potential of the EAC building depends on whether China and Japan promote it.

The relationship between Japan and China is not smooth, however. Some of the challenges confronting EAC building include lack of mutual interests and historical distrust in East Asia (Ro-myung Gong 2010). Interviewee 9, a senior official working in the ASEAN Community, agreed that the mutual distrust and historical antagonism between Japan and China are obstacles to regional cooperation (Interviewee 9 2013). The territorial disputes between Japan and China over the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands have not yet been resolved because both China and Japan do not accept any resolution to tackle the dispute (Panda 2014).

These disputes began in the 15th century when China started claiming sovereignty (Roy-Chaudhury 2016). Japan retook the control of the islands in 1894–1895 during the first Sino-Japanese war through the Treaty of Shimonoseki (Christiansen & Levinson 2002). However, in 1945, when Japan surrendered to the Allies under the Postdam Declaration, Japan had to release control over all the island territories it had claimed, except for “Honshū, Hokkaidō, Kyūshū, Shikoku and such minor islands” (National Diet Library of Japan 1945).

These two major potential EAC countries also cope with other war-inherited issues, including the Yasukuni Shrine where Japan’s war dead, including alleged war criminals, are worshipped; government approval of school textbooks that deny Japanese responsibility for atrocities in China before and during World War II; and the 'comfort women' issue. Visits by Japanese Government officials, including Prime

Ministers, to the Yasukuni Shrine inflame relations with China. Przystup (2015) has commented that these issues touch almost every aspect of the bilateral relationship between Japan and China.

It is worth noting that both Japan and China have strongly competed for regional leadership, with neither accepting the other as leader of the region. Mulgan (2009) has claimed that Japan's attempt at leading East Asian multilateralism would be made less sharp if China's own ambitions to dominate the future of Asian regionalism were not so assertive. In competing for the leading role in the region, China and Japan have allied themselves with other regional great powers to maintain balance with each other. China has enhanced cooperation with India in order to restrain an anti-China coalition in the Asia Pacific region, and Japan has strengthened cooperation with the US, considering it a security anchor in East Asia and an important foundation of the EAC (Soeya 2010).

It is possible, therefore, that China and Japan could be interested in a bandwagoning initiative, but possibly not together. Both China and Japan have sought cooperation with ASEAN countries. China has increased cooperation with ASEAN not only to reduce South East Asian countries' fears of China's expansion in East Asian region, but also to balance the increasing presence of US and Japan there. Both Japan and China have built development banks in the region; Japan leads the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and China the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe pledged that Japan will pour US\$110 billion into Asian infrastructure development projects via the ADB and Japanese state agencies (Borroz & Marston 2015).

Both Japan and China have signed FTA agreements to link with regional countries by increasing cooperation in trade. For instance, in 2008 Japan signed the first comprehensive FTA with ASEAN. As a result, Japan repealed tariffs on 93% of imports from ASEAN, which also agreed to eliminate tariffs on 90% of imports from Japan within 10 years (Anonymous 2008). ASEAN trade with China increased from US\$35.5 billion in 2000 to US\$114.3 billion in 2005 (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2006). Comprehensive implementation of the 2010 China–ASEAN FTA reduced 90% of tariffs of the commodities traded between them (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Australia 2014).

China and Japan support ASEAN countries in building infrastructure in order to attract these countries' acceptance of them as the regional leader. China's financial institutions have loaned Laos US 6 billion towards building railways by 2020 (Parameswaran 2015 -a). China is the largest source of assistance to Cambodia's armed forces, and it agreed to boost bilateral trade to US\$5 billion by 2017 (Chanborey 2015). China offered a USD\$2 billion loan to Myanmar to help build the Myanmar–China Corridor in 2014 and signed deals worth US\$7.8 billion to help Myanmar in the areas of energy, agriculture, telecommunications, infrastructure and finance (Parameswaran 2015 -b). On the occasion of the 40th celebration of the relationship between China and Thailand, China promised to increase cooperation in railway construction, law enforcement and tourism (The State Council of the People's Republic of China 2015). In addition, China proactively takes part in regional multilateral forums such as ASEAN+1, ASEAN +3, the Asian Regional Forum (ARF), the East Asia Summit (EAS or ASEAN +6) and APEC. China shows its ambitions to become a great power not only in the region but also at global level through persuading as many as countries as possible about the benefits they can achieve from China's 'One Belt, One Road' (OBOR) initiative (Hashmi 2015).

Meanwhile, Japan has also implemented a series of transportation infrastructure projects in Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam. Examples are the building of expressways in Vietnam in 2014 with US\$320 million in official development assistance, and promising to help Cambodia expand a major highway with an investment of US\$150 million (Borroz & Marston 2015).

Japan has also increased cooperation among regional countries through a framework oriented around the Mekong River countries. For instance, Japan launched the Japan–Mekong Exchange Year in February 2009, promising US\$5.6 billion in aid over the coming three years for the five Mekong River nations (Reilly 2013). In September 2011, Japan gave Myanmar US\$10 million economic assistance to embark upon a series of dramatic political reforms, and it promised another ¥1.6 billion on the eve of historic Parliamentary by-elections in March 2012, as well as forgiving a US\$3.7 billion debt (Reilly 2013).

Although the relationship between Japan and China sometimes looks like it is improving, the main trend of the relationship between them is of rivalry and competition, which does not bode well for the building of the EAC. The Japan–China

relationship will only be normalised when these two nations can generate a friendlier atmosphere to promote more substantial bilateral cooperation. Meanwhile, Japan feels it has to maintain and enhance credible deterrence capabilities against China (Satake 2015). In this atmosphere, real peace and trust is hard to achieve.

In sum, in contrast to the expectations that both China and Japan might promote the EAC, the relationship between these two key players is an obstacle to EAC building because there are many unresolved issues between them. This complicated relationship between the two major great powers prevents the progress of the EAC building initiative.

### **7.3 The influence of the United States on the EAC building process**

The US has a significant influence on the EAC building process because it plays a key role in political trends in the region (Soeya 2010). Discussing EAC and the US at a 2008 workshop, scholars agreed that a good relationship with the US is needed for regional economic and security matters (The Global Forum of Japan 2008). The US engagement in Asia is indispensable for maintaining its influence on China, India and Japan. Scholars at this workshop explained the importance of the US to the region, pointing out that many products manufactured in the East Asia are exported to the US and therefore regional economic prosperity depends on the US. The US has also implemented soft power in the region, having established comprehensive cooperative relationships with East Asian countries. The US also provides capital and technology to East Asia, including military forces and submarine bases, and the Theater Missile Defense (TMD) and National Missile Defense (NMD) Systems (The Global Forum of Japan 2008).

In his opening remarks at the 16th Shangri-La Dialogue annual meeting in Singapore, 2–6 June 2017, Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull acknowledged the important role of the US in the Asia-Pacific region:

The peace and stability of our region has been enabled by consistent US global leadership ... The United States has stood for the values on which its great republic was founded: freedom, democracy and the rule of law. That leadership, that commitment, those values, are more important than ever. (International Institute for Strategic Studies 2017, para.13)

The US Secretary of Defense, Jim Mattis, in his remarks at the same Shangri-La Dialogue meeting, affirmed that the US would continue attributing importance to its relationship with countries in the Asia-Pacific region in three ways: first, the US would make efforts to strengthening alliances with countries such as Japan, South Korea, the Philippines and Thailand; second, it would support Southeast Asian countries in resolving regional security issues such as maritime security and the spread of terrorism in the Southeast Asia; and third, it would maintain stability in the Asia-Pacific region and strengthen the diplomatic efforts with regional countries through using its armed forces (US Department of Defense 2017). It is clear that the

role of the US must be included in any analysis of the development of regionalism in the Asia-Pacific region generally and the East Asian region particularly.

Because the US has established comprehensive cooperative relationships with East Asian countries, its importance to the EAC building initiative is undeniable. In security and political areas, the US has consolidated its traditional alliances with Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines. It also attaches importance to its relationships with all the ASEAN countries. During his May 2006 visit to Singapore, Assistant Secretary Christopher Hill noted that the US “engagement with Southeast Asia continues to broaden and deepen” (Hill 2006, para.14). After winning the 2008 US Presidential election, President Barak Obama implemented a strategy of rebalancing to Asia, making his first trips to Japan, South Korea, Malaysia and Thailand. The then US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, paid the first US official visit to Burma since 1955, and resumed the exchange of ambassadors. In 2009, Clinton went to Jakarta, Indonesia – the world’s most populous Muslim country – and praised Indonesia’s thriving democracy (Landler 2009). In July 2009, she went to ASEAN headquarters in Jakarta to sign the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, which was the first step towards closer ties with ASEAN. President Obama and the ASEAN Heads of State convened the inaugural ASEAN–US Leaders’ Meeting in Singapore in on 15 November 2009, which produced America's endorsement of the ASEAN community-building process (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2017 -a).

In September 2010, President Obama hosted the second ASEAN–US Leaders’ Meeting in New York and announced that the US would join the ASEAN +6 and work to raise US–ASEAN relations to the strategic level, which would include greater US involvement in guaranteeing freedom of passage and commercial navigation in the South China Sea (Center for Strategic and International Studies 2010). Secretary Clinton wrote in 2011 that there are six major lines of focus for the US: strengthening bilateral security alliances; deepening working relationships with emerging powers, including China; engaging with regional multilateral institutions; expanding trade and investment; forging a broad-based military presence; and advancing democracy and human rights (Clinton 2011, para.10). In 2011, the US became the first non-ASEAN country to appoint a Representative to ASEAN in Jakarta, which shows that the US regards ASEAN as an important factor in the region’s security.

The US's Asian rebalancing policy has increased pressure on the US to monitor China's actions because the US could be expected to restrain conflicts between China and Japan as well as provide guarantees of security for small countries in managing conflict hot spots (Mastanduno 2003). ASEAN was the fourth economic partner of the US, with goods trading expanding from US\$212.4 billion in 2014 to US\$212.8 billions in 2015, and US was the third largest source of FDI investment into ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2017 -b, pp. 5-6). It can be said that the US has comprehensive influence on all international relations in the East Asian region.

The US's deep involvement in the region is not a guarantee of its support for EAC building, however, because the US only supports mechanisms that further its own interests. Looking back in history, in 1954 the US supported the Southeast Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO) because SEATO served the US containment policy that aimed to deter external threats and stabilise the internal politics in Thailand, the Philippines, and the then non-Communist Indochinese states South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia (Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) 2017). President George H.W. Bush later regarded the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum as a policy tool to advance American economic interests (Emmers 2011). The US opposed the initiative of Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir to form the East Asian Economic Group (EAEG) in the 1990s because the EAEG could marginalise the US from the region (Kawai 2005). The US prefers APEC to the ARF because the ARF is less Asia-dominated or Asia-centric due to Latin American participation (Bader 2012).

The US's Asia rebalancing policy does not contribute to EAC building because the US does not project a clear voice on the issue. One reason for this is that the US may fail to maintain its strategic influence and economic chances if the East Asian countries are able to gather into one bloc without the presence of the US (The Global Forum of Japan 2008). According to President Obama, the major content that the US contributes to regional multilateral mechanisms is the setting of norms, rules and agendas (Vu Tung 2013). In other words, the US could use its advantage to impose norms and rules as well as prevent the ASEAN\_+6 from promoting EAC building because the ASEAN +6 is a loose security mechanism (Gannon, Borthwick & Yamamoto 2011). These authors believe that the US does not have any long-term



strategy or deep commitment to promote any region-building endeavours. According to Wang (2010), the US could not accept that Asia's economic growth and China's rise will alter its power in the East Asian region. It seems the Obama administration might not have been actively interested in building an exclusively East Asian regional institution, but wanted instead to participate in regional cooperation that included the US (Wang 2010). Maurice Fermont (2012) has examined how the US "Asia Pivot" might impact the process of East Asian regionalism:

The strengthening of bilateral alliances, the creations of new bilateral partnerships, and the facilitated rise of key powers are likely to reduce the incentives for East Asian states to engage in deeper regional integration. (Fermont 2012, p. 78)

Although ASEAN +6 is considered one of the driving forces of the EAC, the US participation in ASEAN +6 will not be a good sign for EAC building. According to (Fermont 2013), increasing the membership reduces institutional efficacy and makes it hard to achieve consensus; the agenda can be broader rather than deeper; and the inclusion of several powers can lead to struggles for leadership and agenda setting. Fermont poses the question: If the EAC were to face paralysis, how would the US respond?

According to Cossa and Tanaka (2007), the US attitude to EAC building is "circumspect" and "wait and see" (pp. 165-170), and it depends on who leads the EAC. The US is sceptical about the ability of ASEAN to be in the driver's seat. Meanwhile, Japan is hesitant to assume the regional leading role. But if China were to be the leader of the EAC, it might replace the influence of the US and Japan in the region. The US also has concerns about the structure of the EAC, its criteria for membership and its tasks, objectives and priorities (Cossa & Tanaka 2007). Yang & Lim (2009) have argued that the US has paid attention to the EAC in terms of how it is related to other multilateral organisations and initiatives such as ARF, APEC, the Six Party Talks and the Proliferation Security Initiative; the areas that EAC should be adopting and whether EAC will support or weaken these; and whether or not the EAC can help regional states resolve the increasing number of transnational challenges.

The US has a different perspective from the group supporting a small EAC membership. Cossa and Tanaka (2007) summarised this perspective as the US

supporting more "inclusive approaches" and expecting that the EAC should be processed by Japan and Singapore because they would not undermine the US's role in the EAC. The US showed little interest because no candidate had paid attention to this issue during the 2008 US Presidential Campaign (Ro-myung Gong 2010).

Afterwards, Hillary Clinton reaffirmed the US would continue to keep an eye open to how the East Asia Summit would develop (Hashmi 2015).

After inauguration as US President in January 2017, Donald Trump signed an executive order withdrawing the US from the TPP and declared that wherever possible bilateral trade negotiations would be pursued (Duffy 2017). In his inauguration speech, Trump told the American public:

- You will never be ignored again.
- Your voice, your hopes, and your dreams, will define our American destiny. And your courage and goodness and love will forever guide us along the way.
- Together, we will make America strong again.
- We will make America wealthy again.
- We will make America proud again.
- We will make America safe again. (Aljazeera 2017, para.68)

These sentiments prompted people to think that Trump would only focus on consolidating US benefits and forget US concerns about the Asia-Pacific region. He even rejected the Obama Asia pivot policy (Gamel 2017). However, since then it seems that the Asia-Pacific region is still a prime concern of Trump's foreign policy. Trump has had two phone conversations with Xi Jinping, marking a change towards moderation in the relationship between the US and China. He invited some Southeast Asian leaders to the US and promised to attend APEC, which will be held in Ha Noi in November 2017, and to attend the EAS, which will be held in Manila, Philippines, on 13–14 November 2017. So Trump still attaches importance to ASEAN. Trump and Xi seem to show agreement on the North Korea issue, but Trump's closeness to Xi makes Southeast Asian countries sceptical and fearful about any compromise between Trump and Xi that might resolve the South China Sea territorial disputes. This fear can deepen distrust between regional countries and detract from building East Asian regional integration.

In summary, the US is less likely to support the version of the EAC that excludes itself, while the other prospective EAC members still dispute the inclusion of the US. The US itself does not have a clear attitude about building even the Asia Pacific version of the EAC. Its pivot to the region has helped to reduce tensions in the region, creating a balance against the rise of China, but it has also undermined EAC building because the US does not have any long-term strategy or deep commitment to lead East Asian region-building endeavours. As well, the US rebalance in the region reduces the incentives for East Asian states to engage in deeper regional integration among themselves. The US participation in the ASEAN +6 alongside several strong powers may lead to struggles for leadership and agenda setting. Although it plays an important role in East Asia, and regional countries are seeking closer relationships with China, the aims of the US are to ensure its interests, not support the establishment of a regional block like the EAC that may exclude it. The US's deep participation in ASEAN +6 will colour the EAC. Here the weaknesses of soft-balancing or bandwagoning to establish an EAC are revealed.

#### 7.4 Chapter Conclusion

In conclusion, the regional great powers' divisions caused by their territorial and historical disputes are obstacles to the development of East Asian regionalism in general and EAC building in particular. Key countries like Japan and China play a decisive role in the process of EAC building; however, they cannot overcome existing divisions, although they do cooperate in some ways. There still exists rivalry caused by territorial disputes over the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands as well as inherited historical issues. Importantly, the competition for Japan and China for regional leadership also challenges the EAC building initiative. Neither country accepts the other to be regional leader. Both countries have jockeyed by using soft power to seduce other countries. The competition seems unending.

In addition, the pressing security issue in the region – territorial disputes in the South China Sea – has involved many regional key players such as China, Japan and the United States, but the disputes remain largely unresolved. ASEAN tried soft-balancing strategies with the expectation that multilateral organizations such as Asian Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN+3, the East Asian Summit (or ASEAN+6) and ASEAN Defense Ministerial meeting could help to improve the situation. However, these multilateral mechanisms failed to bring resolution to the disputes because great powers are reluctant to use regional multilateral forums such as ASEAN to resolve regional security issues. They prefer bilateral relations where their (hard and soft) power is more easily wielded. Another measure of proceeding negotiations for the Code of Conduct (COC) on the South China Sea territorial disputes has been slow to reach final agreement. International law has also been resorted to in efforts to resolve disputes in the South China Sea. All of these methods proposed to resolve the South China Sea territorial disputes sound like good regionalism, but they have not been effective.

The role of the US in the region has been described as “deep involvement”. Under President Obama's Administration since 2009, the US implemented the “rebalancing policy” in the region. The US has established comprehensive cooperative relationships with East Asian countries including traditional alliances like Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Thailand and Philippines, and deepened the relationships with ASEAN countries. In spite of that, the US's policies and actions

have not supported East Asian regional cooperation because the US is afraid that an East Asian block will decentralise the US in the region. The US has not had a long-term strategy or deep commitment to lead region-building endeavours and has not expressed a clear attitude towards EAC building. Although US participation in ASEAN+6 could be a good sign for EAC building, an increase of the membership in ASEAN+6 would reduce the institutional efficacy and make it hard to achieve objectives. It may also reduce the incentives for East Asian countries to engage in deeper regional integration.

In sum, the potential of great powers pushing the EAC building process is limited, therefore together with the ambivalence of ASEAN countries, the possibility of the EAC becoming established still seems remote. The big powers have thus resisted the efforts of smaller powers to inveigle them in soft-balancing or bandwagoning regionalist initiatives, and continue pushing their individual interests.

## CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

East Asia is a dynamic development region that accounts for nearly two-fifths of global economic growth and includes two of the world's largest economies – Japan and China (The World Bank 2017). Geographically, the region is favoured by plentiful natural resources with extensive reserves of coal, oil and natural gas (Encyclopedia Britannica 2017). It includes the South China Sea, one of the busiest sea lanes in the world, which contains 11 billion barrels of oil and 190 trillion cubic feet of gas (Global Data 2017). East Asia has very diverse religions and culture, such as Confucianism, Shinto, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism and Christianity. It has a variety of political institutions, with Western-style democracies in Japan, Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and South Korea; socialism in Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and China; Soviet-style centrism in North Korea; an absolute monarchy in Brunei; and a transitioning military dictatorship in Myanmar.

Interconnections across East Asian polities have existed since at least the third century CE through linkages of trade, culture and religion via the Silk Road. More recently, when communism developed in the region in the 1950s, organisations were created to cope with communist insurgencies, an example being the Southeast Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO). Since the late 1980s, regionalism in East Asia has been centred on economic cooperation, resulting in the formation of organisations such as Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). Since 1994, countries have engaged in regional organisations in order to not only strengthen economic cooperation but also resolve regional security issues. This diversification has given rise to the Asian Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defence Ministerial Meeting (ADMM), ASEAN-led mechanisms such as ASEAN+1, ASEAN +3, ASEAN Defence Ministerial Meeting, and the East Asia Summit (ASEAN +6). It was in this context that the idea of building an East Asian Community (EAC) was proposed.

The literature on regionalism categorises regionalism into the two groups: old regionalism and new regionalism. Old regionalism, exemplified by the European Union, is more centralised, involving state-led strategies and supranational bureaucracies with jurisdiction over domestic activities. New regionalism is more externally focussed on expanding cooperation with outside countries through a

multidimensional process that takes into account their economic, security, cultural and environmental concerns from the local level to the supranational level (Katzenstein 1996).

Based on this definition, East Asian regionalism is new regionalism. It is characterised by forums and open relationships between countries in the region and with countries outside the region. Examples are ASEAN+1 (relationships between ASEAN and individual dialogue partners); ASEAN +3 (between ASEAN and Japan, China and South Korea); and the East Asia Summit (between ASEAN and Japan, China, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, and India). As well, the ARF is a multilateral mechanism between ASEAN and its dialogue partners Australia, Canada, China, the European Union, India, Japan, South Korea, Russia, New Zealand, the United States, Papua New Guinea, Mongolia, and North Korea. East Asian regionalism also encourages private sector-led market economies and focuses on intergovernmental cooperation for the development of free trade agreements and coordination of security, cultural and environmental concerns.

The EAC initiative belongs to this new trend of East Asian regionalism. It was initially pushed by Japan, which was aiming to strengthen regional economic dynamism and help weaker countries counterbalance the stronger ones. However, for several years the EAC has remained a only proposal and there has been no movement towards its realisation. There are few published works that evaluate the prospects of EAC building and its contribution to East Asian regionalism. This is the reason why the EAC was chosen to investigate in this study.

When writing about this subject it has been challenging to find materials on the perspectives of politicians from East Asian countries regarding EAC building. Not many scholars have written about the EAC, so there is only a small pool of academic argument with which to engage. However, by the time I started studying this topic in 2011, the regional context had seen new developments in world politics: the emergence of new multilateral mechanisms in the region such as the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement, and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement; new strategies of the great powers to enhance both regional integration and their own involvement in mechanisms to reaffirm their roles as regional leaders; and territorial disputes in the South China Seas disturbing

regional engagement in various ways. I therefore wondered whether these new developments would push forward or decelerate the process of EAC building that was suspended at that time.

Research for this thesis provided an opportunity for me to examine new empirical evidence about these developments and see how they might affect EAC building in particular and East Asian regionalism more broadly. My findings are based on data derived from interviewee responses, as well as a literature review. In addition, the interviews I carried out at the ASEAN Secretariat Headquarters in Indonesia helped me to investigate why the EAC initiative has so far failed to prosper?

This study posed the following questions:

1. To what extent do prospective EAC members want to push the EAC? How do their varied interests influence EAC key players' activities towards the EAC?
2. What actions do prospective EAC members take to promote the EAC?
3. To what extent is EAC building constrained by key players in the region?
4. What power strategies do East Asian countries use to resolve disputes? Do these strategies work to resolve regional issues? Examples of strategies include soft balancing; soft power through economic interests; diplomatic arrangements; and soft blocs of ASEAN-led integration.
5. To what extent has the EAC contributed to East Asian regionalism?

This study has significance for deepening the understanding of East Asian regionalism and the fate of specific initiatives relative to the broader context of international relations. It contributes to understanding the potential of EAC building and its impact on East Asian regionalism by examining states' motivations and obstacles in the process of building the EAC.



### **8.1 EAC has not deepened East Asian regionalism and its potential is still vague**

The empirical evidence from my research strongly suggests that it is unlikely that the EAC will come into existence in the short to medium term. There are four reasons for this. First, competing regional forums that have emerged since the EAC was proposed have distracted regional countries from the target of EAC building. Some EAC members were attracted to the TPP and RCEP. TPP is a more interesting forum for some prospective EAC member countries because it aims to create a non-tariff barriers market, while the RCEP and EAC are essentially traditional tariff focused. Furthermore, participation in other forums has overtaken the time and human resources of prospective EAC members. The TPP was considered successful because it had finalised negotiations, but at the last minute newly elected US President Donald Trump withdrew from the TPP. Now that the US has withdrawn, time will be needed for prospective EAC members to renegotiate with the TPP. Meanwhile, the RCEP has not completed its negotiations either.

Second, as an initiative to promote regionalism in East Asia, the process of EAC building has faced significant obstacles and so the likelihood of the EAC coming into existence now seems slim. The key organisations that are identified as driving forces for EAC building, such as ASEAN +3 and the East Asia Summit (EAS) have made modest contributions to EAC building. Japan, the country that initially proposed the EAC, has made insufficient effort to realise its own initiative: its militaristic history and internal affairs have constrained its attempt. China has strengthened regional integration through a series of initiatives such as One Belt, One Road (OBOR) and its new policy regarding regional neighbouring countries through the building of a 'community of common destiny'. Meanwhile, other regional countries are more concerned about nation building than regional building. Besides, the goals for the future of the EAC as well as its institutional framework are still not clear, nor have the elements for creating a community such as membership and institutionalisation been worked out. Potential EAC members are divided by varying perspectives on membership, and discussion at the ASEAN +3 about the progress of institutionalisation is suspended. EAC building is therefore progressing at a slow pace.

Third, the lack of progress on building the EAC can be explained by looking at ASEAN, which is the most successful regional organisation in Southeast Asia. Although there are lessons for building the EAC from the way ASEAN built its own community, ASEAN is effectively controlled by the regional great powers Japan, China and the US and is ambivalent about EAC building. If the EAC were to be built, ASEAN may lose its centrality in the region. Moreover, ASEAN is still a weak bloc; it lacks unity and is divided by the South China Sea issues at the same time as the levels of economic, political and social development among the ASEAN countries are wide ranging. Meanwhile ASEAN needs time and resources to continue building its own community before it may be able to drive the building of the EAC.

Four, regionalism via the EAC has been limited because of divisions among the great powers, including unresolved territorial disputes in the South China Sea. Although Japan and the US are not claimants in the South China Sea territorial disputes, China's aims of occupation in this area affect their geopolitical interests. In addition, the relationship between Japan and China suffers from territorial disputes about Senkaku/Diaoyu Island; historical issues to do with Japan's military aggression in the first half of the twentieth century; and the contemporary development of nationalism in both countries. Though not geographically located in East Asia, the US has great influence in the region and it is ambivalent about the forming of any regional bloc from which it would be excluded. The US has therefore not supported East Asian regional integration, including the building of the EAC.

In brief, there are many obstacles to turning the EAC building initiative into reality. The EAC has not contributed to advancing regionalism in East Asia, contrary to the expectations of scholars of international relations. The potential benefits of EAC building do not seem bright enough to encourage prospective member countries to share social and economic futures, create new forms of cooperation, or look towards common regional targets (Hurrell 1995). Nor has the EAC contributed to creating greater coherence in economic, political, security, social and cultural cooperation, or to initiatives such as free-trade agreements and other state-led projects of economic cooperation and integration that originate from intergovernmental dialogues and treaties (Dent 2008).

## **8.2 The nature of East Asian regionalism**

Theoretically, regionalism is thought to be driven by states wanting forums where they can respond to the consequences of globalisation and more strongly voice their positions in regional and global peace and security issues than they could as individual states (Best & Christiansen 2001). The neorealist argument is that regionalism can be understood as weak states attempting to utilise all possibilities for cooperation to boost their relative power and defend their autonomy; to achieve this harmonisation, states participate in intergovernmental dialogues. How to resolve problems of collective action becomes critical when there is no central authority to enforce agreements.

Neorealist scholars have analysed the influence of regional powers and argued that regionalism in East Asia has developed very slowly in comparison with the development of regionalism in Western Europe because of historical issues (Beeson 2006); interruptions caused by the rise of China (Zhang 2006) and the rivalry between Japan and China (Kang 2006).

My findings support these neorealist arguments and add to the scholarship on regionalism by showing that the development of East Asian regionalism has been impacted by the reluctance of key regional organisations (e.g. ASEAN) to push certain regional initiatives – in this case the EAC – because they fear the loss of their own centrality. As well, East Asian regionalism is still in the very beginning stages of developing multilateral FTAs. The specific initiatives such as EAC, RCEP and TPP launched are unlikely to deepen regionalism.

While the EAC building initiative is still unfinished, issues of membership and institutionalisation are not mentioned at the ASEAN +3 meetings or EAS meetings. Japan and China's leaders have not shown any determination to realise EAC building. Meanwhile, although RCEP leaders have declared their expectation to conclude RCEP negotiations at the end of 2017, they still face disagreements from India in relation to tariff issues. Despite Japan actively taking a leading role to resume TPP negotiations, no country has ensured that the TPP will fulfill its aim of becoming the most advanced international agreement of the twenty-first century.

I have also found that despite the lack of movement on the EAC and the floundering of the TPP, regionalism in East Asia is still being strengthened even

without a formal institution such as the EAC. There is a demand for cooperation among countries, especially in economic areas, and for a peaceful environment that allows for stability and development of regional countries. In fact, ASEAN has launched many initiatives for economic, political, security, cultural and social cooperation to enhance coherence among ASEAN countries (see Appendix 4). ASEAN has expanded its relations with countries in the region and outside the region, and with other international organisations; many meetings between ASEAN members and partners are held annually (see Appendix 2). In return, ASEAN has achieved support for its development, especially for the building of the ASEAN Community. ASEAN countries have also enhanced their cooperation with the US to balance China as the latter expands its ambition to dominate the South China Sea. The US's presence in the region constrains China's assertive activities in the South China Sea, helping to ensure peace and stability in the region. This plays an important part in the development of regionalism.

East Asian regionalism has also progressed because a series of Chinese initiatives have helped to connect regional countries (see Appendix 5). China's soft power is exercised through economic bargaining, aid, loans, and direct foreign investment to bring regional countries on side, leading to more cooperation with China and less fear about its rise among them. The RCEP agreement, in spite of being an initiative of ASEAN, is led by China. With the US having withdrawn from the TPP, it seems that regional engagement in East Asia will be led by China, with Japan also increasing its role. These activities have helped promote the development of regionalism, even without the EAC.

The study has found that the development of East Asian regionalism in recent years has been strongly shaped by national interest. Participant states consider how the framework of cooperation, as reflected in initiatives and multilateral mechanisms, can meet the interests of regional countries and organisations and be part of the process of regional integration. Countries and organisations only support initiatives for regional cooperation or agree to join regional forums when they can see that these activities further their national or organisational interests.

### **8.3 Soft-balancing and bandwagoning strategies not effective strategies to strengthen regionalism**

My study examined groups of weak countries, which play very important roles in the development of regionalism. In theory, a group of weak countries will benefit from soft-balancing and bandwagoning strategies by the development of political alignments and diplomatic initiatives as a means of constraining the influence of rising powers (McDougall 2012). The small and weak countries balance the great powers through establishment of institutions. For example, Japan pushed the EAC in order to bandwagon with China, reduce its own dependence on the US and elevate its own role as a regional leader. China used the RCEP to counterbalance the TPP, which was then led by the US. ASEAN is also a group of countries that individually are smaller and weaker than the main powers in the region like the US and China. ASEAN was established to promote their interests in soft-balance with those of the regional great powers.

Neorealists argue that small states participate in regional arrangements and institutions to constrain the freedom of action of hegemonic states (Pape 2005). The presence of the hegemon is considered a necessity for the success of regionalism because the hegemon can provide collective goods, such as military protection, to encourage small states into regional cooperation. My research suggests, however, that the presence of hegemons also constitutes an obstacle to regionalism. For example, the presence of the US has been a significant obstacle to regional cooperation in building the EAC. My study adds to the literature of soft-balancing and bandwagoning strategies by arguing that regional institutions may not promote the interests of smaller or weaker countries, but instead may become tools of the great powers that are competing for the regional leading role. This deepens divisions among great powers rather than promoting regional integration.

From the neorealist perspective, in balancing strategies, small states form alliances with other states with similar concerns to counterbalance strong or rising powers or to mobilise their national resources so as to increase their own capabilities. My findings suggest that such soft blocs may be very fragile, as the TPP shows. Although former US President Obama pushed hard to finalise negotiations for the TPP, President Donald Trump has withdrawn the US from TPP. So what happens to the other countries when the leader of the TPP withdraws? How might members now

use the TPP for balancing without the US? The competing soft blocs such as TPP, RCEP and EAC may be seen as tools for hegemonic domination that sharpen regional divisions rather than promoting regional integration or enabling groups of weak countries to counter the power of regional hegemons.

The literature on regionalism proposes that while states may cooperate with each other on occasion, at root they have conflicting interests that may have negative consequences for regional cooperation (John 2001). My findings support this, indicating how conflicts of national interest have hampered the building of the EAC. There are tensions between the soft approach and the hard strategic power balances in the region. Besides regional countries looking for cooperation in soft blocs and using soft power to balance, they also attempt to use hard strategic power in an arms race. ASEAN is ambivalent about the EAC because its interest is to maintain ASEAN as the central regional organisation. ASEAN has not lent much support for soft balancing via the EAC, preferring to consolidate ASEAN itself as a bloc that may be used for soft-balancing purposes. ASEAN has become particularly sensitive since the US pivot seems likely to undermine ASEAN autonomy.

The attempt to use soft balancing and bandwagoning via the EAC also reveals some of the limitations of this strategy, particularly how the EAC has been inhibited by weak progress and a lack of shared vision. Moreover, ASEAN-led mechanisms have been unable to address strategic divisions such as those in the South China Sea. This study found that soft-balancing and bandwagoning strategies around the EAC have not enhanced regionalism as much as was expected. Indeed, EAC building has stalled over the last few years and the TPP has been in limbo since President Trump signed an executive order to withdraw from the TPP even though TPP members had finalised negotiations. As well, no one knows what the fate of RCEP will be and when its negotiations will be concluded.

### 8.3 Future research

At the time of writing the conclusion to this thesis, world politics had recently undergone some radical changes that are likely to affect the future progress of regionalism in East Asia. While cooperation and development are increasingly becoming common trends in the world generally, there still exist many destabilising factors in East Asia. Among these are strategic competition among major countries; political instability within countries; disputes over sovereignty and territory; terrorism and its spread; arms races; traditional and non-traditional security issues; and the rise of extremism and populism.

In the Asia-Pacific region, despite the backdrop of regional connectivity, nationalist tendencies and populist approaches are signs of the partiality that is now hindering the full integration process. The current anti-globalisation stance in the US and Britain's expected departure from the EU may greatly affect the development of the ASEAN economy as many ASEAN members depend on the US and the EU. Competition and conflict over strategic interests between the US, China, and Japan also undermine regional integration. Disputes over territories and the East China Sea remain serious concerns. President Trump has rejected the US pivot-to-Asia policies of former President Obama and quit the TPP, but the full impact of the current US administration's policy on the Asia-Pacific region in general and the East Asian region in particular is not clear.

We do know, however, that Southeast Asia is facing unpredictability in regard to US – China relations as President Trump talks tough about China at the same time as he advocates trade bargaining with it. It is likely that China will back down on some regional interests, even in the South China Sea, to compromise with the US for other benefits. As a great power, China continues to strengthen its position on the world chessboard by promoting its foreign policy and status in the region, attaching importance to neighbourly diplomacy and strongly promoting cohesive initiatives. Southeast Asia continues to be a priority in China's foreign policy. With the aim of establishing a dominant position in the region, China will step up its advocacy, entice ASEAN countries into its orbit, and conduct both diplomatic and naval measures for control of the South China Sea, while also enlisting the new US administration to

exert internal pressure on ASEAN's internal divisions and expand China's influence in the region.

Japan is trying to implement the Abenomics policy to generate growth in its sluggish domestic economy and push for a policy of national security and defence to make Japan a 'normal' power. Japan continues to promote its economic recovery and consolidate its political ties by taking advantage of ASEAN to balance China and elevate its position in the Southeast Asian market. In the future, Japan may continue to expand its influence in Southeast Asia through ASEAN mechanisms such as economic cooperation, trade and investment, cultural exchanges and security cooperation, especially maritime security.

All these strategic interests are likely to make the region less stable and continue to distract regional states from the target of building an EAC, and perhaps from other regional initiatives too. They also make it difficult to predict the trajectory of East Asian regionalism in the near future. Regionalism may be driven not only by organisations or multilateral mechanisms but also by initiatives launched unilaterally by regional major countries.

I will continue to focus on the development of regionalism in East Asia in ways that take into account the fluctuations within multilateral mechanisms, such as with the TPP, and emerging initiatives on regional cooperation that will contribute to regional cooperation in East Asian countries. In future research I plan to

1. study China's centrality in emerging East Asian regionalism
2. examine influence of information and communication technology 4.0 for the development of regionalism
3. observe new regional emerging forums to see how they contribute to regionalism
4. apply different theoretical lenses (such as constructivism or Marxism) to see what they reveal about the development of regionalism in East Asia
5. investigate the development of regionalism in the EU, especially in the context of the Brexit issue, and consider how that may effect East Asian regionalism
6. explore the contributions of East Asian political party organisations to regionalism, an example being the International Conference of Political Parties in the Asia-Pacific (ICAPP).



#### **8.4 Recommendations for deepening East Asian regionalism**

There are two main lessons to be learned from the EAC for deepening East Asian regionalism. First, there are too many forums established in the region. This reduces the effectiveness of any one forum because there are not enough human resources and time to invest in all of them. In addition, as nations calculate the value to be gained from forum memberships they may overlook forums they have already joined but which seem less beneficial. A country's participation in many forums simultaneously may give rise to contradictions or overlaps in terms of the time needed to implement schedules and plans of action. This limits the contributions of these multilateral mechanisms to regionalism. My findings suggest that any one country should stick to one or two forums or else risk spreading its resources too thinly.

Second, regionalism may happen if initiatives for it align with key national interests. When a country joins an organisation or an initiative led by a regional great power, its primary concern is its national interest. Regional organisations should thus also mediate the national interests of its members. For example, organisations may need to negotiate a code of conduct that is acceptable to all members so that countries will not be afraid that their national interests, independence and sovereignty will be affected by the activities of the regional organisation. ASEAN's success as a regional organisation may be attributed to its launching the ASEAN Way as a code of conduct that helps to relieve the fears of its members about the development gaps between countries and whether weaker countries will be dominated by stronger countries.

However, a code of conduct to harmonise national interests is insufficient on its own for ensuring national interests. Each country should consolidate its own internal strength through economic development and political stability. It will then be more confident to engage in the process of regional integration. Measures that protect national interests while participating in regionalism are vitally important. The author wishes to study such measures in the near future because they are essential if policymakers are to pursue regionalism successfully.

This study contributes to scholarship in the field by drawing attention to the effectiveness of regional and multilateral mechanisms that countries might participate in while efficiently using the time and human resources they have available for regional initiatives. My findings may also be useful for undergraduate students,

especially in international studies and international relations, for learning about regionalism in East Asia. Ultimately, it is my hope that this study will benefit politicians, policy makers and diplomats by helping them to deepen their knowledge of regionalism when they participate in multilateral negotiations and other foreign affairs activities.



**APPENDIX 1: SIGNIFICANT DOCUMENTS WITH RECOMMENDATIONS AND MEASURES FOR EAC BUILDING FROM TRACK II NETWORK**

Track II Network	Year	Recommendations and measures for EAC building
<b>East Asian Vision Group Report<sup>7</sup></b>  <b>“Towards an East Asian Community: Region of Peace, Prosperity and Progress”</b>	2001	<p><b>Identify aims and goals and provide recommendations to EAC building</b></p> <p><b>1. Aims of East Asian Community building</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To build a community that brings to the region peace, prosperity and progress.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Goals to EAC building</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prevent conflict and promote peace;</li> <li>- To create closer cooperation between countries in the various areas of trade, investment, finance, and development;</li> <li>- To make effort to enhance environmental protection and good governance;</li> <li>- To bolstering prosperity by enhancing cooperation in education and human resources development;</li> <li>- To promote the identity of an East Asian Community</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Vision</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- EAC will be based on cooperation and openness</li> </ul> <p><b>4. Key recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In economic cooperation: establish the East Asian Free Trade Area (EFTA); facilitate trade liberalisation; assist less developed countries; to adopt better exchange rate coordination mechanism consist with both financial stability and economic development; Strengthen of the regional monitoring and surveillance process within East Asia to supplement IMF global surveillance and Article VI consultation measures.</li> <li>- Political and Security cooperation, for example: strengthen mechanisms for resolving threats to the peace in the region; promote norms, procedures and mechanisms for good management of intra-regional relations on the basis of neighbourliness, mutual trust and solidarity.</li> <li>- Environmental cooperation: dissemination the information and education in environmental issues, or enhance more effective management of water and fisheries and combating maritime pollution...</li> <li>- Social and cultural cooperation: establish poverty management program; greater access to healthcare services...</li> <li>- Institutional Cooperation such as promotion of norms,</li> </ul>

<sup>7</sup> Created in 1999

		<p>procedures and mechanisms for good management of intra-regional relations on the basis of neighbourliness, mutual trust and solidarity</p> <p><b>5. Guiding principles:</b> Shared Identity; Economic Cooperation as the Catalyst; People Focus; Inclusiveness; International norms and Regional thinking; Progressive Institutionalisation; and Harmony with the Global System</p>
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Track II Network	Year	Recommendations and Measures for EAC building
<p><b>Final Report of the East Asia Study Group</b></p> <p><b>(East Asian Vision Group, 2001)</b></p>	<p><b>2002</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assessment the above recommendations from EAVG Report (2001), then proposed 26 concrete measures that including 17 Short-term measures and 9 medium and long-term measures; and require each East Asian country should have an action plans on each proposed measures to bring it to discuss at ASEAN +3 meeting</li> <li>- Short-term Measures (17 Short-term measures):               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form an East Asia Business Council</li> <li>• Foster an attractive investment environment for increased foreign direct investment;</li> <li>• Establish an East Asian Investment Information Network;</li> <li>• Develop resources and infrastructure jointly for growth areas and expand financial resources for development with the active participation of the private sector;</li> <li>• Provide assistance and cooperation in four priority areas: infrastructure, information technology, human resources development, and ASEAN regional economic integration;</li> <li>• Cooperate through technology transfers and joint technology development;</li> <li>• Develop information technology jointly to build telecommunications infrastructure and to provide greater access to the Internet;</li> <li>• Build a network of East Asian think-tanks;</li> <li>• Establish an East Asia Forum;</li> <li>• Implement a comprehensive human resources development program for East Asia;</li> <li>• Establish poverty alleviation programs;</li> <li>• Take concerted steps to provide access to primary healthcare for the people;</li> <li>• Strengthen mechanisms for cooperation on non-traditional security issues;</li> <li>• Work together with cultural and educational institutions to promote a strong sense of identity and an East Asian consciousness;</li> <li>• Promote networking and exchanges of experts in the conservation of the arts, artifacts, and cultural heritage of East Asian countries; and</li> <li>• Promote East Asian studies in the region.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>(East Asia Study Group, 2002)</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Medium-term and Long-term Measures and Those that Require Further Study               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form East Asian Free Trade Area</li> <li>• Promote investment by small and medium enterprises;</li> <li>• Establish an East Asia Investment Area by expanding the ASEAN Investment Area;</li> <li>• Establish a regional financing facility;</li> <li>• Pursue a more closely coordinated regional exchange rate mechanism;</li> <li>• Pursue the evolution of the ASEAN +3 Summit into an East Asia Summit;</li> <li>• Promote closer regional marine environmental cooperation for the entire region;</li> <li>• Build a framework for energy policies and strategies, and action plans; and</li> <li>• Work closely with NGOs in policy consultation and coordination to encourage civic participation and state-civil</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

		society partnerships in tackling social problems.
Track II Network	Year	Recommendations and Measures for EAC building
<b>Network of East Asian Think Tanks</b>  3 <sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference in Tokyo, Japan (August 21-23, 2005) on April 24, 2005 in Tokyo, Japan	2005	<p>Proposed design to promote Community building in East Asia, promote functional cooperation in East Asia; and promote regional identity in East Asia. Some proposal as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make narrower development gap between the developed East Asian countries and developing countries such as Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam (CLMV);</li> <li>- Expand the initiative of ASEAN Integration (IAI) to Initiative for East Asian Integration (IEAI);</li> <li>- Tighten the cooperation between three Northeast Asian countries of China, Japan and South Korea;</li> <li>- The East Asia Summit (EAS) should be utilized to have strategic dialogue among countries that play essential roles in East Asia.</li> <li>- To establish an East Asian Information Center for collecting, analysing and disseminating the information regarding East Asian cooperation process.</li> <li>- To strengthen networks of researcher and scholars; take part in the civil societies and NGOs in various types of functional cooperation; exchange in education, media and youth; translate the academic and policy-oriented research works originally written in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and other Southeast Asian languages into English; increased coverage of East Asian affairs in TV, radio, internet, newspapers and magazines; narrowing the digital divide among countries in East Asia.</li> </ul>

Track II Network	Year	Recommendations and Measures for EAC building
<b>Report of East Asian Vision Group II (EAVG II)</b>	<b>2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recommend to build upon the central role of ASEAN which remains as key driving force of the East Asian Community process;</li> <li>- Recommend an approach to build EAC to three pillars of Political-Security Pillar, Socio-cultural Pillar Economic Pillar;</li> <li>- Provide New Vision to the realisation of an East Asia Economic Community by 2020;</li> <li>- Guiding Principles: EAC building should be realised under the United Nations Charter, Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia; the principle of consensus and consultation in pursuing cooperation that is of mutual interest and moving at a pace comfortable to all countries; Mutual respect for independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity and national identity; Enhancement of mutual understanding, responsibility, trust and friendship.</li> </ul>

**Data sources: (East Asia Study Group, 2002; East Asian Vision Group, 2001); Association of Southeast Asian Nations, 2012; Network of East Asian Think-tanks, 2009)**



**APPENDIX 2: DEVELOPMENT OF EAST ASIAN REGIONALISM REFLECTED THROUGH ASEAN MEETINGS**

	<b>ASEAN MEETINGS</b>	<b>Year established</b>	<b>Senior Officials' Meeting</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
1	ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting (AMM)	1967	ASEAN Senior Official meeting (SOM); Senior Officials Meeting on Development Planning (SOMDP)	Meet annually, with other informal meetings and retreats
2	ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) Meeting	1975	ASEAN Senior Economic Officials Meeting (SEOM); High Level Task Force on ASEAN Economic Officials Meeting (SEOM)	Meet annually
3	ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting (ALMM)	1975	ASEAN Senior Labour Officials Meeting (SLOM)	Once in two years
4	ASEAN Summit	1976		Twice every year
5	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Agricultural and Forestry (AMMAF) Meeting	1979	Senior Official Meetings of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (SOM-AMAF)	Meet annually
6	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (AMMSWD) Meeting	1979	ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD)	Once in three years
7	ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM)	1980	ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Energy (SOME)	Meet annually
8	ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting (AHMM) Meeting	1980	Senior Officials Meeting on Health Development (SOMHD)	Once in two years
9	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment (AMME) Meeting	1981	ASEAN Senior Officials on Environment (ASOEN)	Once in three years
10	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Science and Technology (AMMST) Meeting	1982	Committee on Science and Technology (COST)	Meet annually with other informal meetings
11	ASEAN Law Ministers' Meeting (ALAWMM)	1986	ASEAN Senior Law Officials Meeting (ASLOM)	Meet once in three years
12	ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) Council	1992	ASEAN Senior Economic Officials Meeting (SEOM)	Meet annually

	<b>ASEAN MEETINGS</b>	<b>Year established</b>	<b>Senior Officials' Meeting</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
13	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth	1992	ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Youth (SOMY)	Once in two years
14	ASEAN +1	1993	ASEAN +1 Senior Officials Meeting (SOM)	Meet as necessary
15	ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)	1994	ASEAN Regional Forum Senior Officials' Meeting (ARF-SOM)  ARF Senior Officials Meeting (ARF SOM)	Meet annually
16	ASEAN Transport Ministers Meeting (ATM)	1996	Senior Transport Official Meeting (STOM)	Meet annually
17	ASEAN Mekong Basin Development Cooperation (AMBDC) Meeting	1996	AMBDC Steering Committee Meeting	Meet annually
18	East Asia Summit (EAS, ASEAN +6)	1997	East Asia Summit Senior Officials' Meeting	Meet annually
19	ASEAN +3	1997	The ASEAN +3 Preparatory Senior Officials' Meeting (APT Prep-SOM)	Meet annually
20	ASEAN Finance Ministers' Meeting (AFMM)	1997	ASEAN Finance and Central Bank Deputies' Meeting (AFDM); ASEAN Directors – General of Customs Meeting (Customs DG)	Meet annually
21	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) Meeting	1997	ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC)	Meet once in two years
22	ASEAN Ministers Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication (AMRDPE) Meeting	1997	ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication (SOMRDPE)	Once in two years
23	ASEAN Tourism Ministers Meetings (M-ATM)	1998	Meeting of the ASEAN National Tourism Organisations (NTOs)	Meet annually
24	ASEAN Investment Area (AIA) Council	1998	Coordinating Committee on Investment (CCI)	Meet annually
25	ASEAN Telecommunications and IT Ministers Meeting (TELMIN)	2001	ASEAN Telecommunications and IT Senior Officials Meeting (TELSOM)	Meet annually

	<b>ASEAN MEETINGS</b>	<b>Year established</b>	<b>Senior Officials' Meeting</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
26	Conference of the Parties (COP) to the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution Meeting	2003	Committee under COP to the ASEAN agreement on Tranboundary Haze Pollution	At least once in every year
27	ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Culture and Arts (AMCA) Meeting	2003	Senior Officials Meeting for Culture and Arts (SOMCA)	Once in two years
28	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM) Meeting	2004	ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM)	Meet as necessary
29	ASEAN Ministers on Minerals (AMMIN) Meeting	2005	ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting in Mineral (ASOMM)	Meet annually
30	ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting (ASED)	2006	ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Education (SOM-ED)	Annually meeting
31	ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM)	2006	ASEAN Defence Senior Official Meeting (ADSOM)	Meet annually
32	Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (RCEP)	2012	Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)'s Negotiation Round	Meet as necessary

**Data source: (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2017)**

### APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEWS IMPLEMENTED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE THESIS WRITING

<b>Interviewee 1</b> <b>(Translated by</b> <b>researcher into</b> <b>English)</b>	<p>- We should categorize the definition of community following two ways of targets or integration: (1) Targets: we set out the targets those a community needs to implement; When they reach out targets, it means they become a community; (2) Integration: a process of applying and taking participation in the common targets that suit with benefit of a country.</p> <p>- A community means it shares mutual targets; to reach common targets, we need to have common rule conception and rule building. So what are common target of the East Asian Community? Normally, the common target for developing security is the same. So which parts of target they share and which parts of target they are different. So that, they need a common rule – it may be a rule or a code of conduct.</p> <p>- European Union was started by sharing mutual benefits. In East Asian region, the mutual benefit is at lower level than in Europe. Mutual benefit is not a full motivation to make cohesion; and mutual challenges are too. For the benefit of development, the region has not experienced or in customs of rule; countries play with each other in the relationship of sentiment/ feeling or affection. East Asian region countries don't have the common history like Westphalia. Thus, the differences in culture and benefit as well as challenges make motivation for a code of conduct or a rule base become slowly.</p> <p>-In any game, we need a leading person, but it doesn't have a leading country in East Asian region. China, Japan, the US have different benefit and different ways of playing in the region. ASEAN is compared like a place for talking.</p> <p>-The result is that there is no motivation for pushing the East Asian Community initiative. The conditions for establishing a community have not been clear. Mechanisms of cooperation compete with each other to emerge uncontrollably and unexpectedly. ASEAN hold 1200 meetings per year and there are 30 different mechanisms for cooperation. And thus it becomes an unbiased trend.</p> <p>-The foreign policy includes two things including benefit and strategies to promote or get the benefit. What are the benefits countries have from building the East Asian Community? If having benefit, countries will think of strategies to promote the initiative of building East Asian Community. Perspectives on the East Asian Community are different. If ASEAN countries advocate of the initiative of East Asian Community building, ASEAN will lose its role of centrality because it will be led by three power countries of Japan, China and the United States.</p> <p>- ASEAN cannot be able to become a regional driving, if it is able – it is</p>
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	<p>like a “taxi driver”. ASEAN are available of mechanisms or rule, norms to use. So if great powers are sitting together, ASEAN will lose its role. In the fact that, great powers can play with each other in all areas – they cooperate in areas they can, the other ones they argue/fight in multilateral forums.</p> <p>- The idea of the East Asian Community was initiated by Japan since the World War II with the ideology of great East Asia. It was Japan’s ambition to become leader in the western of the Asia-Pacific region. Japan used the hard power to form the colonial system in every East Asian country. Nowadays, Japan uses the soft power to connect people to people but behind the soft power is gun.</p> <p>- Japan knows ASEAN cannot be able to become a regional driving force. It will be ASEAN’s centrality or driver seat rather than driving force. Japan has to hide itself after ASEAN because China will not accept Japan’s leading role in the region. ASEAN will become a mediator, can’t not a driving force. If countries are close together, who will be a rule builder here. It will be a great power – not ASEAN. Great powers will not play by ASEAN Way.</p> <p>- To evaluate the role of ASEAN in building EAC, ASEAN will not bear in mind to contribute to building the EAC and it has not had any benefit in building the EAC. In push and pull, ASEAN is pushed rather pulled. While “pull” is not strong enough, ASEAN is pushed because its internal cohesion still exist many issues. Assuming that the East Asian Community is established, is there any benefit ASEAN get? No benefit. ASEAN doesn’t directly have benefit from promoting TPP or RCEP. ASEAN acts like the swing of the pendulum, it needs to weigh the pros and cons to balance with other partners. Besides, ASEAN also has to keep his house first.</p>
<b>Interviewee 2</b>  <b>(Translated by researcher into English)</b>	<p>- The East Asian Community will be established based on the economic benefit because when we talk about common benefit or common identity – the only common benefit, that is sustainable, is economic cooperation among countries. Thus, to build a successful EAC, we must create an economic community.</p> <p>- “community” [little c]– is a community in general. If this country lies in this region, it will get benefit from cooperation with other regional countries because at least it will safeguard its territory and sustain peaceful environment. So it is a part of a community.</p> <p>- “Community” – is how to build a Community? It is a model or an institution. How is an institution? Who will be the members? It will be an economic institution or a comprehensive institution; who will be hold power in that institution? How is mechanism to make a decision?</p> <p>- China prefers the model of ASEAN +3 because China will be holding the central role in ASEAN +3. Japan and ASEAN says the EAC is an open community with multilateral cooperation of mechanism – not only based on one mechanism. EAS is only a loose forum – it is not a mechanism.</p>

	<p>- Measures to promote EAC: mechanisms to promote EAC are ASEAN-led mechanisms such as Asian Regional Forum, East Asia Summit. However, ASEAN's mind is preoccupied by issues of South China Sea... It is lack of ability to deal with regional issues.</p> <p>- ASEAN's lessons to contribute to EAC: Too early to say that because ASEAN has not completed its process of ASEAN Community building.</p> <p>- The lessons: The EAC needs to be built on the basis of common benefit – not common value. If European cohesion is natural and based on the value, East Asian cohesion based on benefit from development of economy because in East Asian region, there is no common value and exit differences. EAC need to be built on a very East Asian way – they are: progressive; confidence building; balance between legalization and flexibility.</p>
<p><b>Interviewee 3</b></p> <p><b>(Interview conducted in English)</b></p>	<p><b><i>1. What does ASEAN do to promote ASEAN Community?</i></b></p> <p>- ASEAN will be realised on 31st December 2015. To build ASEAN Community, we should implement in three areas of social-culture, political-security and economic areas. Each pillar, each community has a 1s. We have measures to implement the action lines. We bring about greater coordination and greater cooperation among ASEAN countries in the three areas of cooperation in the three pillars.</p> <p>- One important thing is that integration and closer coordination in ASEAN not the same European Union. The EU has a flat of completely central institution, power and mandates in many areas. European Union Commission is making decision for the EU.</p> <p>- ASEAN plays an important role of coordinative cooperation among ASEAN and other countries, with external parties and partners. ASEAN becomes ASEAN Community in 1/2016 but it doesn't mean it is successful. ASEAN Community building is not an event - it is a process. So by the end of 2015, we all have done a lot of works that bring about religious cooperation and coordination among ASEAN countries. For example: we want to narrow gap and create a better connectivity to handle the disaster and provide disaster response in the region. So we will bring about regional coordination and cooperation in the region to building the ASEAN Community in 2015.</p> <p>- We are not like European Union. In EU Commission, everything done by mandate and power to do such a thing. Countries member must comply. If they do not comply, they have some measures to taken issues. But ASEAN's success in last 46 years is because of the consensus reason; country members agree to work on the basis of comfort level that very important to all 10 countries. For example: 7 years or 10 years ago, we didn't talk about the human rights in ASEAN. So that, the establishment of the Human Rights Commission is a big issue and a big progress. We can push one country but can't push two or more countries if they don't want to</p>

	<p>participate in. Every countries are treated in the same way in ASEAN, respected for equal treatment, respect for sovereignty, independent.</p> <p>- All principles bring about greater unity and greater cooperation among ASEAN member countries.</p> <p>(2) The most important factors to promote regional cooperation? (1) Should cooperate in the broad area of cooperation; (2) The more we connected, the more we work together, the better; (3) We cannot work in the selected issue.</p> <p><b>2. How can we do to overcome the difficulties in culture?</b> (1) Problems in some ASEAN countries: the problems disputes among ASEAN countries but all ASEAN members show their realization of the importance of the remaining together and working together; (2) Countries will come to learn about the importance of peace and stability that influence in the economic growth; (3) The more we integrate, the more we know each other, the more problem come out, many kind of challenges. Great challenges are that we have to manage all the challenges; (4) ASEAN unity should also put to test. You will not know what we should come in the future.</p> <p><b>3. Perspectives on Community?</b> (1) A region with greater integration; (2) A peaceful and stable region; (3) An ASEAN common market; (4) ASEAN will be a one single market/ more proactive market. For example if you produce a car, you will have a supply chain - so that countries not compete with each other. It is that value that ASEAN can bring. Today in ASEAN all of us can travel to other countries except for Myanmar - visa free; remove visa requirement (25 billion from tourism)</p> <p>- We are working towards an ASEAN Community building with 300 measures of action lines in Blueprints. If we will have finished these 300 measures, we have done the 1st path. After 2015, we will have a new Blue Print to promote regional cooperation.</p> <p>- East Asian Community - a long way far.</p> <p><b>4. Regional architecture?</b></p> <p>- ASEAN +3 are group of countries geographically stay in the same area; meanwhile East Asia Summit includes more countries in wider region for dialogue, forum. So East Asian Community members include ASEAN +3 countries.</p> <p>- East Asia Summit: these countries have the role in the region. We welcome their contribution to prosperity of the region. We welcome the engagement of East Asian integration process for dialogue.</p> <p>- Regional architecture: there are a number of mechanisms such as ASEAN +3; ASEAN+1, Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). Some argue that now we have many mechanisms. We need one structure to govern relationship among countries in the region.</p>
<b>Interviewee 4</b> <b>(Interview</b>	<p>1. The flat form of East Asian Community; it is the ASEAN +3 or ASEAN +6?</p> <p>-The first initiative by Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad for East Asian</p>

<p><b>conducted in English)</b></p>	<p>Caucus it is very exclusive. This forum if we peruse this initiative, it will in invite other countries in the region. It is kind of suspicious-gang up because in initial concept submitted by PM Mohathir Mahamad, it didn't include intensively, some countries will excluded, it will easily raise a question. Is this forum going to against us, so initial concept of PM Mohathir Mahamad didn't play. Indonesia themselves won't peruse it, then another initiative comes up. EAS that much proper because it has at least two factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- First, the ASEAN countries are in agreement that if you are going to create regional architecture, whatever architect-security regional architecture, economic regional architecture, political regional architect, ASEAN must be in the driving seat. All the arrangement in the region must be led by ASEAN.</li> <li>- Second, factor the member of participants of the forum must be inclusive, in other words, invite all the countries in region and that is basic principle we have to take knowledge. EAS now is implementing that principle and of course ASEAN will take a lead. Look at the composition of ASEAN +3, then ASEAN +6, then ASEAN +8, we can't not negate the depression of the US in the region. We can't ignore the role of Russia. We don't want create a forum in the region, the other countries - which feel they are not invited, they will be distracting factors in the forum.</li> <li>- ASEAN+8 without including US and Russia, what happen next if those major powers are not accommodated, they state they have interest in the region because we have got South China Sea. The US have got interest for safety navigation - If they are not join, only take responsibility, the regional country will make a group to gang up against us. Or Ok I have interest in the region; I don't want to miss any issues. That the idea. The East Asia Summit can be using as regional architect that everybody in the region feel comfortable for mutual cooperation.</li> <li>- There are two factors in Japan policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ The maintain with the US;</li> <li>+ The maintain integration with every countries in ASEAN.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- For Japan, the position of ASEAN and the US is quite the same. It is quite impossible for Japan to integrate US in ASEAN agenda because ASEAN is very solidarism in discussing any issue.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Lesson from ASEAN Community</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The ASEAN Community is not an event, it is a process. That's one thing for sure. It means that leaders of ASEAN have ready decided on the 31st of December in 2015 that ASEAN Community has already established. It doesn't mean that it is sudden we are all ASEAN citizens. We have recently discussed the Indonesian passport, or Vietnamese passport, - and we all hold the ASEAN passports. It didn't not like that. It is a process. When we are start a new life that of course some facilities, some regulation, that between all the ASEAN member</li> </ul>
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	<p>countries citizen will work closely by themselves. And ASEAN Community consistently bases on three pillars. These three pillars cannot be separated, it is intertwined. Three of them are inter-link, and when which one is important, the other the same important.</p> <p><b>3. How ASEAN Community achievement counted in percentage?</b> We can check ASEAN Secretariat. Because ASEAN Secretariat from their website that in establishing economic committee, we are on the track, for Political and Security pillar we are much much move ahead than economic community. But why people almost concentrate on EC than the other two communities. It is exactly because EC link directly technical impact to people. Political and security pillars not impact directly on the people because it is for high level. Economic pillar related to export/import, dismantle...Look at the progress of the report, of course, some member achieve progress further far ahead than the other. According to ASEAN Secretariat, it is on the track; it is under national operation of its member. In other countries, they have the same debate like the one we have. In Indonesia, everyone not only scholars but also from the business people, from the Government suddenly was quite surprise-ASEAN Community approaching the corner only less than two years</p> <p>- Are we ready access 2015? Our domestic political politics debate? Some people say no Indonesian has not been ready yet. But at least, the commitment of higher leaders.. so the issues is not whether or not we are ready the issue is How we prepare national home... how should we prepare ourselves in the coming ASEAN Community in 2015. It is no point to return because the commitment by the President, Prime Minister, higher leaders. If imagine any single country of ASEAN member, suddenly, if one country didn't fulfill, meet the own commitment they said oh I am not ready I don't want to tie by the commitment then if you give the wrong signal - bad signal to international community it will undermined the (International Community look up ASEAN, ASEAN is an regional cooperation. If suddenly one country's home work? in every ASEAN they have to prepare for all person to come in.</p> <p>- If you look at the Political-Security Community. They have look at from action lines, they use scorecard. In the scorecard, for example in 2013 you have to finish this.. this..this...2014 we have to finish the certain issues. ASEAN has their own ambition, their own role, set up their own part to approach that role in the official language in action lines - one action line in political security. In the official language, in ASEAN action line, ASEAN will set up peace and reconciliation commission under the community.</p> <p>The important thing in the regional cooperation:</p> <p>- It is connectivity: political connectivity, cultural connectivity, and economical connectivity. The concept of connectivity including three kind of connectivity: structural connectivity, infrastructure connectivity, and people to</p>
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	<p>people connectivity. Example about ASEAN: cultural, language is so wide diverse. Talk about people to people connection - student exchange.... there is an intensive interaction.... comes up mutual understanding. We all culture of Vietnamese because like this way they know each other - mutual understanding, do for us the diversity or the differences is not established as block. Example about connectivity in infrastructure: how many times Japan-Ho Chi Minh flight? If we have daily flight for twice a day --- frequent flight. The role of our relationship because Vietnamese people easily going to Indonesia and Indonesian people easily going to Vietnam or to Ho Chi Minh city and physically inter-connection. Come up share of understanding - so connectivity is very important.</p> <p>- Promoting solidarity, overcoming difficulties among ASEAN members. What Indonesia's role to harmonize regional relationship?</p> <p>- Being a leader in the group, if someone challenges Indonesia, it mean they don't want to work our position keep close 10 members in very comfortably. Not in the threatening or pushing - we forward/promote very accumulatively. For example: when we feel/catch up the judge, minor communicate in Phnompenh, also the issue of South China Sea then how acting.... She made a suffer diplomacy because if there is no one to do that the ASEAN centrality is under the question. Indonesia takes initiative because... of them other ASEAN... Indonesia being much satisfies, much effort to enhance solidarity, maintains the united. Indonesian Foreign Minister flied in 36 hours then to four to five countries. Philippines - Phnompenh, Ha Noi, Singapore and Malaysia to reconcile the diversity.</p> <p>Of course, some will not be so happy-but some put on very down of position-lost communicate.</p> <p>- The characteristic that one community should be: (1) Live in same place; (2) Logical concept of Community;</p> <p>(3) Broad: political in International relations features</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Respect of sovereignty of members;</li> <li>2) Respect national internality that not interferes in domestic affairs, no one will agree that national affairs will interferes;</li> <li>3) Promote culture of dialogue;</li> <li>4) Promote closer cooperation.</li> </ol> <p>How to help to fix the difference characteristics?</p> <p>- Indonesian Minister: to get every countries in the region on board, no one dominating, no one interfering other political. Everyone will be in very constructive way.</p> <p>- In our region: we have challenges:</p> <p>(1) Trust deficit: Cambodia-Japan; Cambodia-Vietnam, Philippines-Malaysia on South China Sea; (2) Territorial claim: had many East on that: Cambodia-Thailand; 6 parties in South China Sea, Senkaku/Diaoyu Dispute,</p>
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	<p>everywhere; (3) Transformative changes: how do we manage because that positive change can be easily.... authority regime? How do we manage transformative change? Of course, the outside countries should not interfere Myanmar if they do not ask for help or assistance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regional challenges should address by three means:</li> </ul> <p>(1) How to transfer trust deficit to trust: by negotiation, by dialogue; (2) How to settle overlapping, territorial claim to mutual understanding: by the way not touching the sensitive issues which result in conflicts; (3) Go back from democratic regime/authority regime.</p> <p><b>3. Indonesia perspectives in building the EA Community</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We need to write down the code of conducts-it is a pact, a kind of regulation in the region to make or to help the region in order. If the outsiders come in to the region, you have to obey, you have to follow the code of conduct, obey the rule and regulation that be able to set out.</li> </ul>
<b>Interviewee 5 (Interview conducted in English)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Next priority for ASEAN is RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership). RCEP agenda will focus ASEAN + 6. I don't think RCEP will include US and Russia.</li> <li>- Challenges for ASEAN Economic Community: - Wide development gap: because some emerging economies like Singapore, but some other like Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam... It is results in difficulties in implementing measures because of the difference in resources: for example financial resources, human resources; the distance between local infrastructure.</li> <li>- Domestic industry: - very strong negative feeling ... afraid.....; need to balance; difficult for policy-makers --- we must balance that and we need to have a communication plan. We need to inform ASEAN citizens what exactly ASEAN mean; seven professional areas... We need to communicate that message to citizens so that they will appreciate ASEAN Economic Community.</li> <li>- ASEAN Economic Community...even it is finish 100%, it doesn't mean it is finished because there are still other important work need to do - that are not in the blueprints. Progress is still ongoing. Even if we do it 100%, no worry it is continued. TILL 2015, in spite of achievement, gap is still wide and people need to work to narrow the gap.</li> <li>- We value the percentage of finishing through the complement of measures in the blueprints. The process of economic integration will be ongoing. Even if it is finished 100%, we still need to push people to work on other factors. The process of economic cooperation will be ongoing - to me, even if 100% finish, I am not going because I know it is still continuing.</li> <li>- We have two projects including draft for post-2015 for three communities. So we continue needing a new agenda and action plans. Look at the</li> </ul>

	<p>Blue Print, ASEAN Economic development, 2015 has not achieved. We need to narrow the development gap. It is still ongoing.</p> <p>To help ASEAN Economic Community becomes true:</p> <p>(1) Countries should have a strong commitment to implement the measures from state members.</p> <p>(2) Push up the necessary to realise resource access: financial resources, human resources, and human capital resource to implement the measures - that is a communication plan.</p> <p>(3) We need to explain to citizen so that the citizen will understand and support.</p> <p>(4) Common currency: it is good but need to very cautious because common currency in ASEAN, common currency is conducted in many studies.</p> <p>(5) ASEAN's common currency discussed by Financial Ministers but don't have any agenda yet because I don't think it is good because common currency requires very deep institutional integration. We conduct many studies about common currency in ASEAN but right now... Chiang Mai Initiative - full external source and need for foreign currency exchange. In December 1997, when the financial crisis happened Asian countries were dissatisfaction with International Monetary Fund (IMF) because IMF persisted to respond to it not strongly. So we need a regional fund if another regional crisis would happen. Chiang Mai initiative is ASEAN +3. We need ASEAN +3 because they need help from ASEAN +3. All ASEAN members have very small money. Financial cooperation should stem from ASEAN +3 levels, RCEP is also included ASEAN +3.</p> <p>- Concept of community:</p> <p>(1) European Union is a very formal entity of institution, with full of identity; (2) The feature of a community should have a strong sense of "solidarity" - when there are, we ask to address the issue - " a group rather than individual country because there are a lot of shocks - we cannot handle it individually. I don't think one pillar is more important than other three pillars. We need all three pillars. It is just over the time, the priority is changed. ASEAN at the first path focused on political security, no talk on economic cooperation. But from 1993, the emerging of European Union, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Asian financial crisis (external development); in 1997 serious economic crisis. So right now, look at Blue Print, another measure is economies. Now it focused on economy.</p>
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<p><b>Interviewee 8</b>  (Interview conducted in English)</p>	<p>- Challenges in implement blueprints (especially political and security issues): it is 80% finished but not completed yet. There are two more years left, we aware that there need more work to be done to implement blueprints. The challenges is that sometimes provision of Blue Print are not considered and to be ignored. So it is affected to implementation of the blueprints; sometime implementation is at the national level and they don't give enough information of the outcomes while implementation.</p> <p>- I don't think South China Sea is an issue. In a family, we have some disagreements, different opinions. It doesn't mean that it harm our family. The challenge is how we resolve it. The lesson from ASEAN Community is that we should try to manage the situation before it happens; or we should have a suitable code of conduct.</p> <p>- The feature of one community should have: (1) visa free; (2) unity in integration.</p>
<p><b>Interviewee 9</b>  (Translated by researcher into English)</p>	<p>I think that a full economic community should meet the following demand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No trade barriers;</li> <li>- Free flow of investment and business;</li> <li>- “Feelings of ASEANers”</li> </ul> <p>ASEAN in 2015 is not the last target, other target will be set out and expected to finish in 2030 to moving towards a more attached community. Eventually, European Union has recently worked out a common policy, before that each country has implemented their own policies.</p>
<p><b>Interviewee 10</b>  (Interview conducted in English)</p>	<p><b><i>1. ASEAN achievements in ASEAN Community building:</i></b></p> <p>- ASEAN has their own goal to become ASEAN Community in three areas of economic, political and security and social and cultural areas. They have actions plans, and they have blueprints. In political-security 78% - 80% finished, economic 80%, social culture 90%. ASEAN is just a process and it is still continuing. It still remains 35%. I don't think it is completed in 2015.</p> <p>- In 2015, the process is completed. I don't think so because the action lines cannot be enough for objects of ASEAN Community - they need to achieve after 2015. I understand that ASEAN Secretariat is put forth the post 2015 vision.</p> <p>- Dialogue partners support ASEAN's centrality in the regional architecture such as ASEAN+1; ASEAN +3; ARF; EAS. After all, ASEAN will be in driver seat in regional architecture. Japan is ready to support ASEAN in the role of regional driving seat.</p>

	<p><b>2. ASEAN +3 or East Asia Summit will be a platform of East Asian Community?</b></p> <p>- ASEAN +3 is in economic cooperation; for example, we have Chiang Mai initiative... The East Asia Summit has six priority areas, namely environment and energy, education, finance, global health issues and pandemic diseases, natural disaster management and ASEAN Connectivity. So East Asia Summit not only discusses economical and social issues but also political issues. I think we set a lot of rooms to enhance our cooperation in political and security areas.</p> <p><b>3. Lesson from ASEAN Community:</b></p> <p>- You are also a member of East Asian Community building. I don't know how you would like to pursuit. For me, ASEAN building is ASEAN acts - what ASEAN doing is important. There are also blueprints that everyone shares.</p> <p><b>4. The feature of one community should have:</b></p> <p>- Share common interest.</p>
<p><b>Interviewee 11</b> <b>(Interview conducted in English)</b></p>	<p><b>1. What is the US contribution in East Asia Summit?</b></p> <p>- We contribute to drafting, statement, influence into direction. For example, the tension in East Asian region, the South China Sea territorial disputes; water issues. The US wants to take out controversial issues.</p> <p>- Prospect of EAC building: no optimism in midterm. ASEAN working nearly 50 years; slowly process ASEAN has no power to take out issues - need trust each other more. You can't have community for one day; it is a process.</p> <p>- Difficulties region cope with that is a strong regional identity... the ASEAN identity; and long way to overcome difficulties.</p>

**APPENDIX 4: DEVELOPMENT OF EAST ASIAN REGIONALISM THROUGH REGIONALISM INITIATIVES**

	<b>Organisations/Countries Proposed initiatives</b>	<b>Regionalism Initiatives</b>	<b>Meeting Dates/Times</b>
1	ASEAN leaders	Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC)	The treaty was signed in Indonesia, 24 February 1976
2	Malaysian Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad	Establishing an East Asian Economic Group (EAEC)	The Malaysia's initiative was proposed in December 1990
3	Singapore's Government and France's Government	Initiative for EU-Asia summit meeting (ASEM)	The initiative was launched in November 1994
4	Japan's Government	Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation	The initiative was mentioned at the G-7/IMF meeting in Hong Kong, China in September 1997
5	Japan's Government	Asian Monetary Fund (AMF)	The initiative was proposed at the G7-IMF meetings in Hong Kong during September 20–25, 1997
6	Japan's Government	The New Miyazawa Initiative (NMI)	The initiative was unveiled at the 2 <sup>nd</sup> ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Plus Three (ASEAN +3) forum in October 1998
7	ASEAN's Leaders	Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI)	The initiative was launched at the Forth ASEAN Summit meeting in Singapore in November 2000
8	International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)	IISS Asia Security Summit: The Shangri-La Dialogue (SLD)	The initiative was launched in 2001
9	ASEAN cooperation on sustainable Forest Management	The prevention of Trans-boundary Haze Pollution and Pan ASEAN Timber Certification Initiative	The initiative was adopted at the meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 10 June 2002.
10	ASEAN and China's Government	Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) - Initiatives on resolving maritime disputes in order to promote regional cooperation between ASEAN-China	The declaration was Signed by all members of the ASEAN and the People's Republic of China on November 4, 2002
11	The Finance Ministries and the Central Banks in ASEAN +3 (China, Japan and Korea)	Asian Bond Markets Initiative (ABMI)	The proposal was launched in 2002

	<b>Organisations/Countries Proposed initiatives</b>	<b>Regionalism Initiatives</b>	<b>Meeting Dates/Times</b>
12	Initiative to promote economic cooperation	Trans-Regional EU-ASEAN Trade Initiative (TREATI)	The initiative was launched at bilateral talks between EU-ASEAN in 2003
13	US- led global effort to stop trafficking of weapons of mass destruction (WMD)	Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI)	The initiative was launched by United States President George W. Bush at a meeting in Kraków, Poland in May 2003
14	APEC Business Advisory Council group	Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP)	The initiative was launched in 2004
15	ASEAN and China's Government	Regional Joint Action against ATS-related Crimes Initiative	The initiative was endorsed at the second International Congress of the ASEAN and China Cooperative Operation in Response to Dangerous Drugs (ACCORD) held in Beijing on 18 - 20 October 2005
16	Brunei, Chile, New Zealand, and Singapore's Governments	Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP)	The TPP began as an expansion of the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement (TPSEP or P4) signed in 2005
17	China's Guangxi Autonomous Region government	“One Axis, Two Wings” China-ASEAN regional cooperation	The initiative was introduced in 2006
18	Japan's Government and, East Asia Summit	East Asian Community	The initiative was included in the Chairman’s Press Statement for the Seventh ASEAN +3 Foreign Ministers’ Meeting Kuala Lumpur, 26 July 2006
19	ASEAN's Leaders	ASEAN Climate Change Initiative (ACCI)	The initiative was included in the ASEAN Declaration on Environmental Sustainability at the 13 <sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in 2007
20	ASEAN and Japan Transport Ministers	ASEAN- Japan regional Road Map for Aviation Security (RRMAS)	The initiative was mentioned on the Fifth ASEAN and Japan Transport Ministers Meeting’s Joint Statement in Singapore, 2 November 2007
21	ASEAN and Japan Transport Ministers	The Guideline for ASEAN-Japan Transport Logistics Capacity building (A-J TLCB)	The initiative was mentioned on the Fifth ASEAN and Japan Transport Ministers Meeting Singapore on 2 November 2007
22	ASEAN's Leaders	ASEAN City of Culture Initiative	The concept was first discussed and adopted at the Third Meeting of The ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Culture and Arts (AMCA) at Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 12 <sup>th</sup> January 2008.



	<b>Organisations/Countries Proposed initiatives</b>	<b>Regionalism Initiatives</b>	<b>Meeting Dates/Times</b>
23	Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd	Asia Pacific Community (APC)	The initiative was announced on 4 June 2008
24	Indonesia's initiative on building the community pillar	ASEAN Political-Security Community	The concept was initiated by Indonesia and adopted as part of the 'Bali Concord II' in October 2003. The APSC Blueprints was adopted by the ASEAN Leaders at the 14th ASEAN Summit in Cha-am/Hua Hin, Thailand on 1 March 2009.
25	ASEAN Subcommittee on Biotechnology	ASEAN Network for Drugs, Diagnostics and Vaccines Innovation (ASEAN-NDI)	The network was established at the 40 <sup>th</sup> meeting in Bali, Indonesia, 2009
26	ASEAN's Leaders	ASEAN Cooperation on Climate Change Initiative (ACCI)	On November 2007, ASEAN Heads of States recognized for the first time climate change threat through their ASEAN Declaration on Environmental Sustainability. An ASEAN Climate Change Initiative (ACCI) was created for that purpose in 2009.
27	Former ASEAN Secretary General Surin Pitsuwan	Cool ASEAN, Green Capitals Initiative	The eCity Forum on Climate Change in 2008 in Bangkok. The initiative was launched officially in November 2009.
28	ASEAN +3 Finance Ministers	Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateral (CMIM)	The initiative was mentioned in May 2000 at the 33rd Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Chiang Mai Initiative was signed on 28 December 2009
29	ASEAN's Leaders	ASEAN Connectivity Initiative, including Physical Connectivity (transport, information communications technology, and energy), Institutional Connectivity (trade and economic area), People to people connectivity (tourism, education, and culture).	The initiative was adopted by ASEAN leaders in Hanoi, Viet Nam, on 28 October 2010
30	ASEAN Defence Ministers	ASEAN Defence Industry Collaboration (ADIC) initiative	The initiative was signed at the Fifth ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting in Jakarta in May 2011

	<b>Organisations/Countries Proposed initiatives</b>	<b>Regionalism Initiatives</b>	<b>Meeting Dates/Times</b>
31	Indonesia's Government	ASEAN Peace Keeping Centres Network	In 2003, Indonesia proposed a Plan of Action. The 5 <sup>th</sup> ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) adopted the Concept Paper on the Establishment of ASEAN Peacekeeping Centre Network (APCN) in 2011
32	ASEAN Task Force on AIDS (ATFOA)	Good Practices and New Initiatives in HIV and AIDS in ASEAN	The initiative was launched at the 19 <sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in November 2011
33	A collaboration of the 7 exchanges from Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Singapore	ASEAN Exchanges Initiative	The ASEAN Exchanges collaboration launched the ASEAN Exchanges Initiative on 18 September 2012
34	The US's Government and ASEAN	The US-ASEAN Expanded Economic Engagement (E3) initiative	The initiative was launched at the 4 <sup>th</sup> ASEAN-US Leaders' Meeting in Phnom Penh, Cambodia in November 2012
35	Fulbright Program	Fulbright U.S. – ASEAN Visiting Scholars Program	The program was announced by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton at the US – ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in 2012
36	East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers	East Asia Summit Development Initiative	The initiative was adopted by the 7 <sup>th</sup> East Asia Summit in Phnompenh, Cambodia on 20 November 2012
37	India's Government	New Development Bank (NDB) Initiative	The initiative was launched at the 4th BRICS summit held in Delhi, India in 2012
38	ASEAN and China's Governments	Initiative on the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC)	ASEAN and China began their first formal consultations on the COC In mid-September 2013
39	US's Government	The Young Southeast Asian Leader Initiative (YSEALI)	The initiative was launched in 2013
40	China's Government	Asian Infrastructure investment Bank (AIIB)	The initiative was declared by Chinses President Xi Jinping at the Indonesian parliament in October 2013
41	China's Government	Silk Road Fund	President Xi announced that China will contribute 40 billion U.S. dollars to set up the Silk Road Fund during the Beijing APEC meetings in November 2014 -

	<b>Organisations/Countries Proposed initiatives</b>	<b>Regionalism Initiatives</b>	<b>Meeting Dates/Times</b>
42	China 's Government	Belt and Road initiative (One Belt - One Road)	In September 2013, the Silk Road Economic Belt concept was introduced by Chinese President Xi Jinping during his visit to Kazakhstan. Then, the Maritime Silk Road (MRS) in 21st century initiative proposed in Indonesia in Oct 2014
43	China's Government	Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA)	Treaty for the Establishment of a BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement was sign in Fortaleza in July 2014
44	Chinese Premier Li Keqiang	The Lancang-Mekong Cooperation framework	The initiative was launched during the 17 <sup>th</sup> China-ASEAN leaders' meeting in November 2014
45	New Zealand's Government	Flagship Initiatives on scholarship, young business leadership, disaster risk management, and agricultural diplomacy	The initiative was launched at the 22 <sup>nd</sup> ASEAN-New Zealand Dialogue held Auckland, New Zealand in February 2015
46	ASEAN Defence Ministers	ASEAN Militaries Ready Group, and Center of Military Medicine	The initiative was launched at the ASEAN Defence Meeting held in Langkawi, Malaysia on 16 March 2015
47	ASEAN's Leaders	ASEAN Economic Community (AEC)	The AEC Blueprint 2025 was adopted by the ASEAN Leaders at the 27th ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 22 November 2015
48	ASEAN's Leaders	ASEAN Krabi Initiative	The initiative was endorsed at the 6th ASEAN Science and Technology Ministerial Meeting, hosted by Thailand in October. 2016
49	ASEAN Cyber Initiative	Initiative to boost the new ASEAN Cyber Capacity Program (ACCP)	The initiative was mentioned at the ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Cyber security in Singapore in 2016

**Data Sources: (Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2012, 2014, 2015 2016 ; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China 2017; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2017; Xinhuanet 2017)**

**APPENDIX 5: SOME MAJOR INITIATIVES FROM CHINA CREATING PLATFORMS FOR REGIONALISM**

	<b>Initiatives</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Aims</b>	<b>Contribution to regionalism</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>One Axis, Two Wings</b>	2006	<p>-To push for an economic corridor that runs from Nanning, the capital of Chinese's Guangxi province, to Singapore.</p> <p>- To improve transport networks.</p>	<p>- Connect transport infrastructure: connecting the railway from Nanning with the Vietnam's North South railway; and from the South Vietnam the rail way extended into Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore.</p> <p>- Connecting the border among countries is in the process. The finished border will be connected borders from Nanning to Vietnam-Cambodia border; and from the Cambodia- Thailand border to Singapore</p> <p>- Will boost various service industries in all the countries that are involved.</p> <p>- In the context of the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area, the proposed Nanning-Singapore economic corridor could become the backbone of Sino-ASEAN cooperation</p>
<b>2</b>	<b>Belt and Road initiative</b>  <b>(One belt, One Road Initiative) launched by President Xi Jinping</b>	2013	<p>- To develop prosperity for underdeveloped parts of China, particularly in the west of the country; developing new opportunities for China to partner and co-operate with the various countries along the routes, many of which are developing countries; increased integration, connectivity and economic development along both routes.</p> <p>- One Belt: The Silk Road Economic Belt: To enhance and develop land routes; to build a logistics chain from China' east coast all the way to Rotterdam/Western Europe; to develop economic corridors connecting China with Mongolia and Russia, central Asia and Southeast Asia.</p> <p>- One Road: The 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road: To build a sea route runs from China's east coast to Europe through South China Sea and the Indian Ocean.</p>	<p>- Improving and creating new trading routes, links and business opportunities with China, passing through over 60 countries in Asia, Europe, the Middle East and Africa.</p> <p>- Over 100 nations and organisations at different levels supporting and participating.</p> <p>- China's Government has signed 50 agreements on bilateral cooperation with other nations.</p> <p>- Since 2013, 67% of loans by China Development Bank (CDB) and China Export Import Bank – (CEIB) invested to the Belt and Road initiative with sum up of 49,4 billion USD.</p> <p>- Silk Road Fund was set up in 2014 with the capital of 40 billion USD contributed by China.</p> <p>- Up to 2016, China built 39 railways to connect with EU, invested in 38 transport projects in 26 countries on the Silk Road and signed 40 projects contracts on electronic and petro piles to 19 countries.</p>

	Initiatives	Year	Aims	Contribution to regionalism
3	<b>Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)</b>	2013	- To broaden and deepen ASEAN's economic engagements with its FTA partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A mega-regional economic agreement being negotiated between the 10 ASEAN countries and Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea.</li> <li>- Has the potential to deliver significant opportunities for businesses in the East Asia region; provide a framework aimed at lowering trade barriers and securing improved market access for goods and services for businesses in the region, through enhancing economic integration and strengthening economic cooperation among the participating countries; facilitating trade and investment; and enhancing transparency in trade and investment relations between the participating countries, as well as facilitating small and medium enterprises SMEs' engagements in global and regional supply chains.</li> <li>- The negotiations started since May 2013, there have been 17 rounds (until March 2017) and expectedly to complete by 2017.</li> <li>- Negotiation includes: trade in goods, trade in services, investment, economic and technical cooperation, intellectual property, competition, dispute settlement, e-commerce, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and other issues</li> </ul>
4	<b>Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP)</b>	2014	- To take a concrete step towards greater regional economic integration.	- APEC members endorsed a roadmap for the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific
5	<b>The Lancang-Mekong Cooperation framework</b>	2014	- To promote comprehensive cooperation, building responsible community and common benefit in the region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lancang-Mekong cooperation is short for the Lancang-Mekong River cooperation mechanism, which includes China, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, Viet Nam as members.</li> <li>- Focused areas: water management, connectivity, production capability enhancement, cross border trade, agriculture and poverty reduction.</li> <li>- China committed to contribute 300 USD million for the Lancang-Mekong cooperation fund for years.</li> <li>- The cooperation mechanism has been set up based on principles of consensus, equality, cooperation and mutual consultation, voluntarily, mutual contribution and shared benefit.</li> <li>- The Lancang-Mekong Cooperation framework was proposed by Premier Li Keqiang in November 2014 during the 17<sup>th</sup> China-ASEAN leaders' meeting.</li> </ul>

	<b>Initiatives</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Aims</b>	<b>Contribution to regionalism</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Asian Infrastructure investment Bank (AIIB)</b>	2016	- To bring countries together to address the daunting infrastructure needs across Asia.	<p>- Support and participated in by 51 countries.</p> <p>- China is biggest shareholder with 29,78% of total registered capital of USD 100 billion USD.</p> <p>- Furthering interconnectivity and economic development in the region through advancements in infrastructure and other productive sectors, AIIB helps stimulate growth and improve access to basic services.</p>

**Data Sources: (China-Britian Bussiness Council, 2016; Cai, 2017; Association of Southeast Asian Nations, 2017; Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, 2017; Asian Infrustructure Investment Bank, 2017; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, 2017; Xiaosong, 2008)**



## APPENDIX 6: SOME MAJOR REGIONALISM INITIATIVES FROM JAPAN

	Initiatives	Aims of initiative	Starting time
1	Asian Monetary Fund (AMF)	- To secure a regional network funded by Asian countries to overcome current and future economic crisis.	Japanese government announced during the 1997 Asian financial crisis at the G7-IMF meetings in Hong Kong, however it was rejected by China, the US, and G7 due to the fear that it could undermine the leadership role of the International Monetary Fund and foster a split between Asia and North America.
2	The New Miyazawa Initiative (NMI)	- To overcome the Asian Currency Crisis	- Launched in October 1998. Provided a package of support measures totaling \$30 billion; of which \$15 billion will be for economic recovery in Asian countries, and another \$15 billion will be set aside for their possible short-term capital needs during the process of implementing economic reform.
3	East Asian Community	- To enhance Japan's role as a leader in the region.  - To create a regional bloc as counterpart to the European Union and regional organizations in other parts of the world.	- Proposed by Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in 2002
4	ASEAN-Japan Transport Partnership Framework	- To realize the same level of logistics in the region and settlement of logistics bottlenecks and sharing a common understanding for the importance of logistics capacity building.	- Established in 2003
5	ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCEP)	- Liberalising and facilitating trade in goods between ASEAN and Japan; promoting cooperation in the fields such as Information and Communications Technology, Intellectual Property, and SMEs.	- Came into force in 2008

**Data Sources: (Amyx 2002); Association of Southeast Asian Nations 2008; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2000; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brunei Darussalam 2017; Ministry of Land Infrastructure Transport and Touris of Japan 2017)**





**APPENDIX 7: RECENT PERSPECTIVE OF COUNTRIES LEADERS ON THE SOUTH CHINA SEA TERRITORIAL DISPUTES**

<b>Government/ Person</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Quote</b>	<b>Source</b>
Opening remarks and keynotes of Prime Minister of Australia Malcolm Turnbull at the the 16 <sup>th</sup> Asia Security Summit, Singapore, 2 - 4 June 2017	2017	“There was nowhere in this region where regional defence leaders and strategists could convene and talk frankly about latent security tensions that are now palpable on the Korean peninsula, in the East and South China seas and further afield”	( <a href="https://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-a321/opening-remarks-and-keynote-address-fc1a/keynote-address---malcolm-turnbull-4bbe">https://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-a321/opening-remarks-and-keynote-address-fc1a/keynote-address---malcolm-turnbull-4bbe</a> , para.2, date access June 10, 2017)
Remarks of the General (Retired) James Mattis, Secretary of Defense, United States at the the 16 <sup>th</sup> Asia Security Summit, Singapore, 2 - 4 June 2017	2017	“The United States remains committed to protecting the rights, freedoms and lawful uses of the sea, and the ability of countries to exercise those rights in the strategically important East and South China seas”	<a href="http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-a321/plenary-1-6b79/mattis-8315">http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-a321/plenary-1-6b79/mattis-8315</a> , para.19, Date access June 10, 2017)
		“The 2016 ruling by the Permanent Court of Arbitration on the case brought by the Philippines on the South China Sea is binding. We call on all claimants to use this as a starting point to peacefully manage their disputes in the South China Sea. Artificial-island construction and indisputable militarisation of facilities on features in international waters undermine regional stability. The scope and effect of China’s construction activities in the South China Sea differ from those of other countries in several key ways. This includes the nature of its militarisation, China’s disregard for international law, its contempt for other nations’ interests and its efforts to dismiss non-adversarial resolution of issues”	( <a href="http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-a321/plenary-1-6b79/mattis-8315">http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-a321/plenary-1-6b79/mattis-8315</a> , para.20, Date access June 10, 2017)
		“We oppose countries militarising artificial islands and enforcing excessive maritime claims unsupported by international law. We cannot and will not accept unilateral, coercive changes to the status quo. We will continue to fly, sail and operate wherever international law allows, and demonstrate resolve through operational presence in the South China Sea and beyond. Our operations throughout the region are an expression of our willingness to defend both our interests and the freedoms enshrined in international law”	( <a href="http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-a321/plenary-1-6b79/mattis-8315">http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-a321/plenary-1-6b79/mattis-8315</a> , para.20, Date access June 10, 2017)

Government/ Person	Year	Quote	Source
Remarks of the Secretary-General Le Luong Minh, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations at the 16 <sup>th</sup> Asia Security Summit, Singapore, 2 - 4 June 2017	2017	“Tension in the South China Sea stemming from the ongoing territorial disputes have had a negative impact on peace and stability of our region”	( <a href="https://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-4f77/plenary-4-e76f/minh-5407">https://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-4f77/plenary-4-e76f/minh-5407</a> , para.8, Date access June 10, 2017)
		“The importance of the South China Sea for countries in the region and beyond cannot be understated. The rights of all states to the freedom of navigation, unimpeded lawful commerce, trade and overflight in the South China Sea can only be maintained in a peaceful, friendly and harmonious environment”	( <a href="https://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-4f77/plenary-4-e76f/minh-5407">https://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-4f77/plenary-4-e76f/minh-5407</a> , para.11, Date access June 10, 2017)
		“Unilateral actions which contravene the spirit of the declaration, especially the militarisation activities, have eroded trust and confidence among parties and pose dangers of conflict between powers, with great adverse impact for regional peace, security and stability”	( <a href="https://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-4f77/plenary-4-e76f/minh-5407">https://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-4f77/plenary-4-e76f/minh-5407</a> , para.12, Date access June 10, 2017)
Remarks of Japanese Minister of Defense Tomomi Inada at the 16 <sup>th</sup> Asia Security Summit Shangrila Dialogue in Singapore	2017	“In the East and South China seas, we continue to witness unprovoked, unilateral attempts to alter the status quo based on assertions incompatible with existing traditional norms...”	( <a href="http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-a321/plenary-2-faad/inada-622b">http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-a321/plenary-2-faad/inada-622b</a> , para.14, Date access June 10, 2017)
		“Regarding the South China Sea, the final award was rendered in the arbitration between the Philippines and China in July 2016. Despite the fact that this award is binding on both parties, the construction of outposts in the South China Sea and their use for military purposes continues. I am deeply concerned about the situation. The international community has an enormous stake in ensuring the freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea”	( <a href="http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-a321/plenary-2-faad/inada-622b">http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-a321/plenary-2-faad/inada-622b</a> , para.15, Date access June 10, 2017)

Government/ Person	Year	Quote	Source
Remarks of Australian Minister of Defence Marise Payne at the 16 <sup>th</sup> Asia Security Summit Shangrila Dialogue in Singapore	2017	“It is even more important that we do so when confronted with challenging circumstances, such as those of overlapping sovereignty claims in the South China Sea. Australia calls on all countries to act in the South China Sea in ways that are consistent with international law, including the decision of the 2016 Arbitral Tribunal. Australia will continue to act in accordance with international law. Our ships, our aircraft, will operate in the South China Sea, as they have for decades, consistent with the rights of freedom of navigation and freedom of overflight. We will also continue to strongly support the right of others to exercise these rights”	( <a href="http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-a321/plenary-2-faad/payne-44ff">http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-a321/plenary-2-faad/payne-44ff</a> , para.11, Date access June 10, 2017)
Remark of the Minister for Armed Forces, France Sylvie Goulard at the 16 <sup>th</sup> Asia Security Summit Shangrila Dialogue in Singapore	2017	“Our second concern, which has also been said, is the evolution of the situation in the South China Sea, where the importance of the law and the need to respect international principles bears repeating. The consequences of a potential crisis would go well beyond the region, as the South China Sea remains a strategic crossroads. One third of the world's maritime trade passes through this zone. For France and the European Union, which as a whole is a major market power, this issue is crucial. As a maritime power committed to compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, France will ensure its respect in all maritime areas of the world”	( <a href="http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-a321/plenary-2-faad/goulard-7854">http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-a321/plenary-2-faad/goulard-7854</a> , para.8. Date access June 10, 2017)
Remarks of the Malaysian Minister of Defence Dato’ Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein at the 16th Asia Security Summit Shangrila Dialogue in Singapore	2017	“While the progress made on the framework for a South China Sea Code of Conduct between China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is heartening, it is also prudent for our optimism to be guarded. The chance of a ‘black swan’ event or unforeseen, unintended and accidental incidents at sea or in the air remain very real”	( <a href="http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-a321/plenary-3-70fc/hussein-9b9c">http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-dialogue/archive/shangri-la-dialogue-2017-a321/plenary-3-70fc/hussein-9b9c</a> , para.5, Date access June 10, 2017)

Government/ Person	Year	Quote	Source
Remarks of Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Singapore at the Joint Press Briefing on the 14th ASEAN-China Senior Officials Meeting on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Code of Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea in May 2017, Guizhou, China	2017	“On the COC, we [are] please[d] to announce that the senior officials have completed the negotiations of the draft COC framework, ahead of the mid-2017 deadline which Leaders of ASEAN Member States and China had set”	( <a href="http://asean.org/joint-press-briefing-on-the-14th-asean-china-senior-officials-meeting-on-the-implementation-of-the-declaration-on-the-conduct-of-parties-in-the-south-china-sea-som-doc/">http://asean.org/joint-press-briefing-on-the-14th-asean-china-senior-officials-meeting-on-the-implementation-of-the-declaration-on-the-conduct-of-parties-in-the-south-china-sea-som-doc/</a> , para.10, Date access June 10, 2017)
Joint Communiqué from Group of Seven (G7) Foreign Ministers meeting in April 2017 in Lucca, Italy	2017	“We emphasize the fundamental importance of building trust and security and of the peaceful management and settlement of maritime disputes in good faith and in accordance with international law, including through internationally recognized legal dispute settlement mechanisms, including arbitration. We reiterate our strong opposition to any unilateral actions which increase tensions, such as the threat or use of force, large scale land reclamation, building of outposts, as well as their use for military purposes and urge all parties to pursue demilitarization of disputed features and to comply with their obligations under international law”	( <a href="https://seasresearch.wordpress.com/2017/04/18/joint-communicue-from-g7-foreign-ministers-meeting-april-2017/">https://seasresearch.wordpress.com/2017/04/18/joint-communicue-from-g7-foreign-ministers-meeting-april-2017/</a> , para.6, Date access June 10, 2017)
		"We consider the July 12, 2016 award rendered by the Arbitral Tribunal under the UNCLOS as a useful basis for further efforts to peacefully resolve disputes in the South China Sea. We encourage dialogues based on international law towards early finalization of an effective Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) and we welcome efforts to advance in this direction. We call for the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety"	( <a href="https://seasresearch.wordpress.com/2017/04/18/joint-communicue-from-g7-foreign-ministers-meeting-april-2017/">https://seasresearch.wordpress.com/2017/04/18/joint-communicue-from-g7-foreign-ministers-meeting-april-2017/</a> , para.6, Date access June 10, 2017)
Remarks by the US Vice President at ASEAN, ASEAN Secretariat, Indonesia on April 20, 2017	2017	“We’ll continue to work closely with ASEAN to promote peace and stability in the South China Sea by upholding a rules-based order, ensuring the lawful and unimpeded flow of commerce, and encouraging the peaceful and diplomatic resolution of disputes. For 40 years, the United States has worked side by side with ASEAN to foster peace and prosperity on these seas and between our lands”	( <a href="https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/04/20/remarks-vice-president-asean">https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/04/20/remarks-vice-president-asean</a> , para.13, Date access June 10, 2017)

<b>Government/ Person</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Quote</b>	<b>Source</b>
Remarks by the US Vice President Mike Pence and Indonesian President Widodo to the Press at Merdeka Palace, Jakarta, Indonesia	2017	“We will also continue to work with Indonesia to defend the rules-based system that is the foundation for Southeast Asia’s peace and prosperity. The United States will uphold the fundamental freedoms of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea and throughout the Asia Pacific; will ensure the unimpeded flow of lawful commerce; and promote peaceful diplomatic dialogue to address issues of regional and global concern”	( <a href="https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/04/20/remarks-vice-president-and-indonesian-president-widodo-press">https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/04/20/remarks-vice-president-and-indonesian-president-widodo-press</a> , para.20, Date access June 10, 2017)
Statement from ASEAN at the 30 <sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit, Manila on 29 <sup>th</sup> April 2017	2017	“121. We underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety. We took note of the improving cooperation between ASEAN and China. We welcomed the progress to complete a framework of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) by middle of this year, in order to facilitate the early conclusion of an effective COC. We recognized the long-term benefits that would be gained from having the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability and sustainable development.”	( <a href="http://asean.org/storage/2017/04/Chairs-Statement-of-30th-ASEAN-Summit_FINAL.pdf">http://asean.org/storage/2017/04/Chairs-Statement-of-30th-ASEAN-Summit_FINAL.pdf</a> , Date access June 10, 2017)



## **APPENDIX 8: HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF EAST ASIAN REGIONALISM**

(Please note: the references for this appendix are cited throughout the main text of this thesis)

### **Motivations for East Asia in regional cooperation enhancement**

East Asia is a region of historical and political diversity, with many countries with different levels of development and interests, but lacking a multilateral cooperation mechanism across the region. However, the idea of forming regional multilateral cooperative institutions has also emerged since the 1950s and has been particularly prominent after the Cold War.

Since the early 1990s, ASEAN + 3 cooperation began to emerge in East Asia. The question is what future of this collaborative model will be, whether ASEAN +3 can replace ASEAN and APEC so that it can become the most suitable model for cooperation in East Asia. As the ASEAN + 3 countries themselves have different perspectives and approaches on this issue, the study and forecast of the future of the ASEAN +3 Framework is a complex one.

So far there are many definitions of East Asia based on different classification criteria. Geographically, East Asia consists of countries in Southeast Asia (the 10 ASEAN members are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, and East Timor) and countries and territories of Northeast Asia (China, Korea, Japan, Korea, North Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan).

The early 1960s saw the emergence of a regional cooperation initiative by the Japan Center for Economic Research and the idea of former Foreign Minister Saburo Okita on "Pacific Economic Cooperation" (PEC). According to this proposal, there will be an annual meeting between the representatives of Japan, the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand to discuss economic and cultural issues.

In 1966, several organisations were formed. According to the idea of Korean President Park Chung-hee, the Council of Asia and the Pacific (ASPAC) was established. However, because the organisation is anti-Chinese, when the United States and China reestablish friendly relations, the organisation is gradually shutting down. Also this year, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) was founded on the initiative of Japan. While Japan contributes financially the same amount as the United States, ADB's headquarters are located in Manila, not in Tokyo. The Ministerial Conference on Economic Development in Southeast Asia (MCEDSEA) was also a mechanism established by the United States and Japan in 1966. The organisation was established to disburse aid from Japan. In exchange for political support for Japan's foreign policy from its Southeast Asian neighbors. But these countries wanted to have direct contact with Japan without having to go through this organization, so in 1975 MCEDSEA ceased to exist.



In 1967 Japan proposed the establishment of the Asia-Pacific Cooperation Area, the idea of establishing the "Pacific Free Trade Area" (PAFTA) based on the assumption that the formation of the European Economic Community (EEC) would have an impact on the economies of Asia-Pacific. However, there was a review workshop and then opposed the proposal. Most important is the establishment of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN); although only five member countries, this is the only sub-regional organisation in East Asia that has vitality after the previous model of cooperation failed.

In 1968, the NGO "Pacific Basin Economic Council" (PBEC) came into being. It was originally opened to entrepreneurs in the five Pacific basin countries but later involved businessmen from other Asian countries. Also this year, the Pacific Trade and Development Conference (PAFTAD) was also established and held its first session in Tokyo.

In 1970, the Korean idea of "Asian Common Market" (ACM) emerged. In the late 1970s, Japanese Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira launched the tripartite Asia-Pacific cooperation structure (politicians, entrepreneurs, scholars).

The period of peace and quiet before the end of the Cold War created favorable political and economic conditions for regional cooperation ideas. On the basis of the PECC, the Asia-Pacific Cooperation Forum (APEC) was formed in 1989 under the initiative of Australian Prime Minister Robert Hawke, with and the US as the center. At that time, the regional cooperation was attended by government and non-government representatives from Japan, the United States, Canada, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand and six ASEAN countries. However, it is more like a forum for trade and investment liberalization than for economic integration. APEC has so far been focused on the exchange of information, research and consultancy.

The continuity and connectivity of initiatives during the post-Cold War period suggests that the idea of cooperation in East Asia is a process. However, these institutions have not been as successful as the whole of the region and East Asia alone. There are several possible reasons for the failure of regional institutional development efforts:

First, due to the impact of the Cold War, the dominance of the conflict between the Soviet Union and the Soviet Union, the proposals for multilateral institutionalisation were mainly conducted among countries with similar socio-politics. Politics is seen as a criterion for differentiating foes and the criteria for admitting members. It is the regulation of the complex and heated political and security environment that often leads to the founding of political organisations. The failure of MCEDSEA can also be attributed primarily to political reasons.

Second, because of strong interventions by the great powers, the deep schizophrenia in regional international relations, and the economic dependence on the outside of the region, the establishment of a cooperative mechanism East Asia alone was not paid

much attention. Initiatives stem mainly from the political realities and economic interests of the major powers but less on the geographic, historical and cultural basis of East Asia, such as the ideas of ASPAC, APSC, PAFTAD, etc. Sub-regional or interregional initiatives and never include East Asian countries, such as the idea of PEC, MCEDSEA, ACM.

Third, because East Asia consists of distinctly different strengths and levels of development, the perceptions of the regional nature of the organisation are also different. Initiatives often come from two major groups, small and small. Japan often concentrates its initiative on large countries such as the United States, Australia, and New Zealand with open regionalism. Meanwhile, ASEAN is another example of the opposite of closing, especially in the early days of establishment. The lack of harmonisation of interests and perceptions between the two groups has led to mixed initiatives such as the "Asian Common Market" or the "Asian Network" to infeasible outcome.

It is clear that the full domination of politics in international relations in the region with deep consequences of division and conflict, strong interference from external powers, and the difference in power The realities and interests of countries in the region have led most regional institutionalisation initiatives to fail.

### **Globalisation leads to interdependence among nations**

The interdependence of economics, trade and investment among countries in the region as a result of globalisation is taking place all over the world is a very important premise for the formation. ASEAN + 3 cooperation framework. In the years 1989 and 1990, Japan expanded its investment, trade and manufacturing network throughout the region. At the same time, the business network of the Chinese across East Asia is also approaching the regional scale. The internal and bilateral economic relations between East Asian countries have been expanded and deepened. East Asia's internal trade turnover is higher than that of East Asia with the rest of the world.

In 1990, intra-East Asian trade accounted for 29% of total East Asian trade. In 1996, this proportion increased to 37.9%. Regional economic cooperation is taking on a larger share of the national economy. By the mid-1990s, East Asian nations made more than half of their commercial activities with their regional neighbors, while the United States was no longer the most important trading and financial partner with Asia's countries, accounting for only one-third of East Asia's total trade. In this period, intra-East Asian investment also accounted for the bulk of foreign direct investment in East Asian countries. Japan is the main investor country of Korea and Taiwan. Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong are the major investment countries of China and ASEAN countries.

Regional cooperation is becoming the policy priority of most East Asian countries. Multilateral economic cooperation has become a driving force for an East Asian institution. The strong economic links in East Asia are now overwhelming ASEAN

and making a difference in geo-economics in APEC. All of this has contributed to connecting East Asian countries and laying the groundwork for multilateral relations. The East Asian system, at least in economic terms, is taking shape. From that came the requirement that governments should have institutional support and a system with their own structure and rules to ensure the stability of economic relations. This is a fundamental premise of ASEAN + 3.

### **Financial crisis led to the re-perception by nations in East Asia**

The 1997 financial crisis was seen as a direct cause for the formation of ASEAN +3. The crisis left a deeper insight into the interdependence and vulnerability of East Asian economies. The IMF's imposition of improper credit conditions when the situation is so urgent has caused resentment to this global financial institution. The fact that the United States and Western countries did not actively support as they did with Mexico increased the frustration.

Regional sentiment began to rise as Japan pledged its support and initiative to set up the Asia Monetary Fund (AMF) - a mechanism that provides much more credible credit than the IMF. At the same time, China also promised to provide US\$1 billion and claimed not to devalue the Renminbi, although this action caused China significant economic losses. These moves have contributed to arousing emotions and a sense of common ground.

In the context of the crisis, the inability of existing organisations such as ASEAN and APEC to turn their beliefs and institutional needs into another direction. The crisis has prompted the formation of a separate East Asian co-operative institution that can coordinate efforts to revive the economy, prevent future crises and continue to sustain growth. The 1997 crisis made East Asian countries more aware of a region because of its very existence.

### **The deterioration of collaborative forces in East Asia**

After the Cold War, the regional environment became more relaxed and provided more favorable conditions for the institutionalization of the area. East-West Conflict is no longer a barrier, and the political system is no longer seen as a source of conflict. Attempts to regulate foreign economic law are underway. Countries are becoming increasingly aware of the interdependence of survival and development irrespective of whether they are rich or poor.

The national interests, especially the developmental benefits, make the countries increasingly dependent on their political decisions, although they are still influenced by major countries in the world. Things that could not have happened during the Cold War period were becoming reality: APEC admitted new members not in the political system, ASEAN became an organisation with 10 members, although different in politics and in different levels of economic development.

The factors that hinder the idea of regional cooperation are now gone or if they are not as strong and drastic as before. The goal of setting up a cooperative mechanism and organisation for East Asia alone has been shaped more clearly. This is the factor contributing to the realisation of ASEAN +3. ASEAN + 3 was quickly accepted and less ostensibly opposed.

### **The situation of East Asian regional cooperation mechanisms**

Another factor contributing to the formation of the ASEAN Plus Three comes from the fact that existing regional cooperation institutions do not meet the needs of East Asian countries. Institutions that are considered regional today, such as ASEAN and APEC, are not really representative of East Asian countries.

ASEAN consists of small and medium sized countries in Southeast Asia, excluding Northeast Asian countries. In addition, ASEAN has grown to 10 members, with disparities in economic development and political inequalities that are becoming increasingly difficult to meet the security and development requirements of its members. Are strong members, tend to expand cooperation with outside, especially in the field of economics. Low intra-regional trade vis-à-vis ASEAN's external trade. It is because of the weak economic power of Asean and the tight security and political coherence, the risk of dependence on Northeast Asia has increased.

APEC is composed of 21 countries members. APEC's geographical linkage is not tight because it is larger than East Asia. APEC is an inter-regional organisation rather than a regional organization, as commented by John Ravenhill. APEC is too diversified and has no foundation for bilateral relations, so it is difficult and slow to promote economic integration. Interestingly, since the mid-1990s there has been a split between the Anglo-America group seeking to achieve a comprehensive and comprehensive economic liberalisation, while East Asian countries want APEC to focus only on facilitating trade and cooperation in the economic and technical fields.

With these issues, a "talking more than doing" situation is happening in both organisations. The shortcomings in institutional practice have shown that there has never been a fully-fledged East Asian organisation that is fully meaningful.

As a result, it is clear that there are factors that have a direct impact on the formation of cooperation mechanisms in East Asia with the ASEAN +3 key model. The intrinsic need for cooperation among nations in the region in the context of increasing interdependence, the changing international environment and the impact of the financial crisis 1997-1998 shows that the vulnerability of East Asian economies as a core factor is affecting the need for a regional cooperative mechanism to ensure the interests of each nation in particular and for the whole area in general. Besides, the fact that existing mechanisms do not meet the needs of East Asian countries has contributed to the creation of the ASEAN +3.

### **East Asia in the face of the world in the early 21st century**

In the early 1990s, the Soviet Union disintegrated, the socialist regimes in Eastern Europe and Mongolia collapsed, leading to a sudden change in the correlation of world forces. The bipolar world dominated by the United States and the Soviet Union also collapsed. The world transforms into a "super-multilateral" and transcends into a new world order with profound, unpredictable changes.

The "super-multi-superpowers" have emerged many new monitoring tendencies that have influenced and influenced the development of the international situation since the Cold War. The first is the rapid development of science and technology leading to the great development of the productive forces. Second, globalisation, regionalisation becomes an objective trend, is being promoted and increasingly attracting many participating countries, both positively and negatively. Third, peace, cooperation and development are major trends in international relations, reflecting the pressing demands of nations and people around the world. Wednesday is the trend to democratise international political life, democratise internal political life of countries. Finally, there is a fierce struggle between unipolar and multipolar, but the world is still developing in a multipolar world.

The force relationship between the powers in the new world is gradually changing. The United States has been weakened and suffering through the war on terror and the current world economic crisis, but still dominates the world in terms of synergy, continuing to maintain its distance from other powers from 10 to 15 years. Other power centers of the world such as the EU, China, Japan and Russia have also strengthened. EU consolidation remains focused on internal consolidation and has a common voice on a number of foreign affairs issues; China is booming economically and is transforming economic results into military power and political and cultural influence; Japan strives to become a "normal powerhouse" in politics and the military; Russia revived its strength through Putin's rule, benefiting from the rise in oil and gas prices, seeking to regain lost influence in the surrounding region and to exert its influence in the international arena. This change not only narrowed the gap between the "other power centers" and the United States, but it also had a profound effect on comparing international forces, accelerating multipolarity, and demanding a new order. A new world order requires United States to share its influence with the other power centers.

In this context, many East Asian countries have taken advantage of the major movements of the post-Cold War world to promote reform, open exchanges, development and economic competition as high priority. Most of the development strategies of the country. After the miraculous development of China and East Asian economies, East Asia has rapidly risen to become the most dynamic market in the world. And is the third-largest economy in the world after North America and the EU, contributing to global economic growth.

The rise of East Asian powers, especially China's economic rise, not only dramatically changed the region's appearance, but also expanded its global reach,

bringing East Asia from one region. The periphery of the international political system has become one of the world's political and economic centers. The role and position of East Asia in international politics and international security has increased significantly. East Asia is not only an important partner in most of the world's major forums, many of the world's major transnational agreements, such as the Nuclear Dissemination of Korea, Iran, the G20, and the issue. Climate change is difficult to achieve without the participation of East Asian countries like China, Japan and even Indonesia. In particular, the recent recovery of East Asian countries in comparison with other parts of the world in the face of the severe effects of the current financial crisis has led many experts to predict that the world center is moving from Atlantic Ocean to Pacific Ocean.

It is notable that in the first ten years of the 21st century, despite the great impact of the events of September 11, 2001 and the global economic crisis, East Asian countries have made great strides in overcoming and rising. The fight against terrorism has become one of the priorities of security policy, and a focal point for East Asian countries to cooperate on security. Actual cooperation in the conditions between the countries still exist many suspicions and territorial disputes. Meanwhile, through the current global economic crisis, the role of East Asia has emerged, in which the sustainability of the Chinese, ASEAN and Indian economies has contributed significantly to helping the world cope. Through these two events, East Asia demonstrated its new status and role in the world economic and political order.

In addition, the strong rise of East Asia has made major countries outside the region such as the United States, the EU, Russia and India more and more interested and respectful of relations with the region, placing East Asia to a higher position. In its diplomatic, economic and security strategies.

For the United States, East Asia has always been one of the top concerns due to the great US interests of economics, security and politics. In order to maintain the its position in the world as well as in the region, the United States has adjusted its policy to further engage with regional issues. During President Clinton's term, the United States launched a strategic initiative to build the New Asia-Pacific Community based on APEC's development. After President George W. Bush came to power, the US global strategy tended toward the Asia-Pacific region, accelerating military deployment in the region. However, after the September 11, 2001, and the launch of the Middle East Democratisation Plan, the United States considered domestic security, counterterrorism, and the prevention of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction a top priority. Regarding the global strategy, Middle East has become a priority in United States' national security strategy. With relative stability in East Asia, the United States has stepped up its restructuring and withdrawal of garrisons and reduced its presence in the region, particularly in Southeast Asia and South Korea. The role and position of East Asia in the US global strategy has declined considerably.



In recent years, the rise of China and the complex evolution of regional tensions, such as the Korean nuclear issue, the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea, have drawn back attention and attention from Noodle. In particular, China's rapid expansion of its influence, the kind of America out of the process of regional integration, even the implementation of open competition, avoid direct confrontation with the United States in Africa, Latin America poses no small challenge to US status in the region and the world. These changes have spurred the United States, especially the Obama administration, to gradually adjust its policy of placing East Asia at a higher level in its global strategy.

Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union turned to the United States and the West in the hope of rapidly reviving the economically depleting and stabilizing socio-political. Russia withdrew from Asia in consolidating and building relations with CIS countries and Europe and America. However, as the United States and the West intend to weaken and dominate Russia by expanding NATO to the East, making Russia anxious and adjusting the "East-West" strategy to combine and maintain relations..

In recent years, benefited greatly from the rising oil prices, the Russian economy has grown dramatically, the appearance of the country significantly improved. In order to establish a new international position and restore global power, Russia recognised the Asia-Pacific region as a dynamic economic region that directly affected the economic development of Siberia and the Far East of Russia could help Russia reach its strategic ambitions.

The attention of Russia has expanded from Northeast Asia to ASEAN and some other Southeast Asian countries. Russia attaches great importance to joining APEC, the ARF, becoming ASEAN's strategic partner, is striving to join ASEM and promoting arms sales to some Southeast Asian countries is the best way to re-enter the region.

India is the largest power in South Asia, so India and the East Asian countries have long had close cultural and economic ties. After the Cold War, in order to confirm its great role, its rising status in the region and in the world, India has made great changes in its foreign policy. From the traditional nonalignment policy, attaching importance to relations with the Soviet Union and today's Russia, to active and active involvement, integration, integration and diversification of external relations, in which East Asia is considered a major priority. In September 1992, Prime Minister Narasima Rao officially formulated the "East" strategy, focusing on strengthening relations with ASEAN and ASEAN countries.

Entering the 21st Century, as the pressure of globalisation and regionalisation grows, China's rise is transforming the political and economic security of the region. In September 2003, Indian policymakers continued to expand the "East" policy, bringing the scope and content of cooperation to extend to East Asia, in which Southeast Asia remained in the centre of diplomatic policy.

The EU also has many traditional links with East Asia as many countries in the region were once colonies of Britain, France, the Netherlands, Spain and Portugal. After the Cold War, the EU soon came up with a "New Strategy Toward Asia", followed by East Asia to establish ASEM and build a new partnership with ASEAN. Economic and trade relations between the two sides have developed rapidly. However, in the EU foreign policy strategy, the United States, Russia, China, Central Asia and the Middle East are the most important priorities for the EU's strategic security, political and economic interests. The EU maintains good relations with East Asia as a point of departure in the multi-polar development world and facilitates EU companies to do business in the region.

### **Political situation in Middle East region: Peace and cooperation are the dominant trends**

In the 21st century, in the face of greater pressure from globalisation and the rapid development of science and information, East Asian countries continue to see economic development as a top priority, while at the same time attaching importance to security, stabilising internal politics and adjusting the diplomatic strategy in the direction of building and maintaining a stable and stable environment conducive to domestic economic development and regional cooperation.

China thoroughly deals with political inconsistencies, social unrest, especially racial and religious breakaway violence. It enhances the ruling capacity of the Communist Party and transferred generations of leaders smoothly, maintaining a relatively stable government. It also continues to identify as its top task the taking advantage of strategic opportunities to serve the goal of "peaceful rise", focusing on maintaining a stable surrounding environment, stabilising relations with major countries, strengthening relations with neighboring countries, promoting energy diplomacy and sea strategy, and increasing its influence in East Asia.

Japan focused on reforming its political system starting in 1993 with the participation of political parties. Its aim was to promote administrative reform, institutionalisation and policy formulation. However, after the Koizumi period it fell into political turmoil, the LDP had to constantly change the prime minister and lead to the loss of power to the opposition DPJ after more than half a century of rule. On the external front, Japan maintains its goal of becoming a "normal country", promoting its role and political influence in international and regional affairs. Japan conducts foreign policy adjustment in the direction of identifying the two pillars of Japan-US alliance relations and its "return to Asia" strategy, which seeks the Japan-US alliance as the cornerstone and enhancement of the mandate. To interact with Asia to gradually bring Japan into political power, playing an important role in promoting the process of building the East Asian Community.

Since the establishment of the ASEAN Charter and the plan to build political - security, economic and cultural three communities, ASEAN continues its balanced



strategy with the richer countries (US, Japan, China, India, South Korean, Australia) through strengthening ASEAN + 1, ASEAN + 3, establishing the East Asia Summit and successfully signing bilateral FTAs with these big countries.

The adjustment of China, Japan and ASEAN in strategic direction, considering development as the highest priority, promoting cooperation in the region to consolidate the trend of peace and cooperation, and create new political relations among countries in the region.

First, East Asian countries have been in the process of improving relations for the second time since the Cold War. If, in the 10 years after the Cold War, most East Asian countries have established or normalised relations, in the last decade countries have focused on extending and upgrading the framework of relations. At the same time, the formation of new high-level meeting mechanism. Sino-Japan upgraded relations from the 1998 "friendly partnership for peace and development" to "strategic partnership for mutual benefit" in 2006; Central America from building a "Strategic 21st Century Strategic Approach" in 2006 to the "China - United States Strategic Partnership" in 2006; China and Russia since 1996 built up the "strategic cooperation partnership", in 2001 signed the Cooperation Treaty; China and South Korea upgraded their relationship from the "comprehensive cooperation partner" in 2003 to "China – South Korea Strategic Partnership" in 2008. With ASEAN, since 1996 China has become a full-fledged ASEAN partner, and in 2003 the two sides announced the establishment of a "strategic partnership for peace and prosperity". For each Southeast Asian country, China has established strategic partnerships with Indonesia in 2005, the Philippines in 2005, Thailand in 2005, Malaysia in 2004, Vietnam in 2008 and Laos in 2009.

Japan and South Korea built the framework of "mature partnership" (April 2008). The United States, Japan and the United States continued to maintain a traditional alliance, in which South Korea defined the "21st Century Strategic Allies" (April 2008). South Korea upgraded its "strategic partnership" relationship with Indonesia (2006) with China (May 2008), with Russia (September 2008), Vietnam (as a strategic partner in October 2009) and ASEAN with the "Korea-ASEAN Comprehensive Partnership" (June 2009).

Second, the process of regional cooperation continues to be promoted, and new mechanisms for dialogue and political consultation have taken shape. In line with the strengthening of bilateral relations, the requirements for multilateral policy coordination to maintain the stability and development of the whole of East Asia are increasing. Unlike North America and the EU, where the regional integration processes are coordinated by the major countries, East Asia does not have any major countries with absolute dominance. Moreover, there is competition among major powers in major countries. So, the diverse regional links, many forms of East Asia, with the main pillars of ASEAN, ASEAN + 1, ASEAN + 3 are paralleled and complementary. In addition, broader forms of linkage such as APEC, East Asia,

ASEM and Sino-Japanese-Sino economic linkages continue to be strengthened or newly added, complementing the regionalisation process with various forms of diversity, promoting East Asian integration and transregional links in the future.

Regional linkage mechanisms have created multilateral frameworks so that countries in the region can increase exchanges, increase cooperation, and accelerate the improvement of relations, especially in dealing with disputes and conflicts. China and ASEAN through the ASEAN +1 mechanism discussed the signing of the DOC, reducing tensions over the South China Sea dispute. South Korea desires to rely on regional mechanisms to exchange the North Korean nuclear issue and gain support for reconciliation between the two Koreas. The three Sino-Japanese-ROK countries through ASEAN + 3 have established a trilateral dialogue on the margins of the ASEAN +3, recently formalising the Sino-Japanese cooperation mechanism. Although political cooperation in these mechanisms is loosely coupled with many reasons, the level of cooperation is not high, but partly encourages the East Asian region to set up multilateral political cooperation frameworks in a positive direction and closer.

Third, globalisation and regionalisation have prompted East Asian countries to continue to open up, reform and integrate, creating greater economic interdependence among East Asian countries. This dependence makes national interests, the security notions of developed countries towards regional cooperation, the formation of common values, the common concern for regional peace in general.

Moreover, the recent emergence of nontraditional security issues in the context of globalization such as financial crises, climate change, energy security or food security are also motivating factors. Regional cooperation helps to increase the areas of professional cooperation, thereby promoting development cooperation in other areas. Japan-China-Korea agreed to hold the first high-level talks between the three countries in December 2008 after many delays, and ASEAN adopted the ASEAN Charter as well as accelerated the building of the ASEAN Community.

Mutual interdependence and the need to increase cooperation on common regional issues have led countries to try to reduce conflicts, to put aside disputes, differences, and disputes in relation to facilitation for development cooperation. This tendency has the effect of reducing the risk of war, reducing the pressure on national security and security, and encouraging countries to enter into peaceful conflict resolution, thereby bringing about a peaceful environment. More stable for cooperation and development among countries in the region.

The situation of cooperation and competition among large countries is complicated, multi-tiered, gathering and dividing the forces intertwined in which the rise of China is the main cause for the adjustment in relations between major countries in the region.

In the context of many profound changes in the international and regional situation, considering the relationship between the big countries in the past 10 years, East Asia's political regime since the Cold War Up to now it is still widely recognized in the region. However, the change in the power relations between major countries has changed profoundly and this trend is more and more evident.

The United States' status and superpower role continues to be maintained in East Asia as the United States remains an important supplier of capital, technology and commodity export markets to the region. Even though trade in intra-East Asian trade has increased, it still has to rely on the United States market. The United States also maintains in the region a large military force, including nuclear forces at military bases and submarines; Strengthening traditional military alliances with Japan, Korea and some ASEAN countries; Build TMD, NMD system, enough deterrence for any country in the region. East Asian countries, while promoting economic cooperation and addressing regional issues, must take into account the United States response and concern for the interests of the United States.

However, the relative strength and softness of the United States is in decline. After September 11, 2001, the Bush administration pushed its "preemptive" strategy, which in turn carried out the war on terrorism in Afghanistan and Iraq, causing heavy US hard and soft power losses. The United States war in Iraq has cost US\$648 billion; the United States budget deficit from the Clinton surplus now translates into a US\$400 billion deficit in the Bush administration, with United States debt reaching a record \$530 trillion. The cost of the war has limited America's resilience to the financial crisis. Wall Street's financial collapse has questioned the primacy of the "Washington Consensus", the unilateral policy of the Bush administration that has encountered negative reactions from many countries around the world. It is noteworthy that the United States is no longer able to impose unilateral will on all matters of the world; rather, it is necessary for the cooperation and support of other countries to resolve the problems of the region.

China has continued to rise strongly over the past decade. With an average annual growth rate of 9.9 percent a year, which is three times the world average. Total import-export growth helps China to maintain a high trade surplus, creating the world's leading foreign reserves. China has also actively improved its investment climate, which has remained the world's largest emerging-market FDI attraction. The current global security affirms the "Beijing Consensus" model, provides for developing countries, competing strongly with the United States development model.

China is also interested in and investing heavily in building soft power as part of synergy. By combining cultural influences, aid, multi-polar world policy, peaceful development, "win-win" cooperation, try to reconcile interests with regional countries to develop ties, thereby improving China's relations as well as its influence over East Asia. China also actively and actively participates in bilateral and multilateral cooperation mechanisms, especially mechanisms without United States participation.

In addition to the opportunities and favorable conditions, China is now facing a harsh international environment and a series of new or emerging problems in the process of reform and opening up. Under the impact of globalisation, China has to cope with increasing pressure; compete fiercely with developed countries that dominate economic power, science and technology, and compete with both neighboring and developing countries. In fact, after seven years of accession to the WTO, China has faced many challenges, often in the passive position because of the "rules of the game" are the countries with developed economies. On the other hand, the competition in the economy, energy and resources in the international arena is complicated. The high prices of gold, oil and food prices, the devaluation of the dollar, the stock market and the current turmoil of monetary and financial systems in many countries are factors that threaten China's steady growth.

Japan, despite economic recession is still the leading economic power in East Asia. Over the past decade, Japan continues to be the largest source of ODA, the largest source of FDI in the region. Japanese companies spread across the region, creating a tight network of employment that greatly influenced the economic development of East Asia.

In order to make the transition to "normal power", restoring East Asia's leadership position, despite the continuous change of government, after the Koizumi period, Japan's foreign policy showed determination to promote and strengthen its role in politics and the military. By building strategic and strategic bilateral and multilateral economic and strategic cooperation mechanisms with East Asian countries, Japan is stepping up competition with China for regional leadership. In the economic field, Japan uses its economic power to plan a prosperous and free flow, strengthen the development and institutionalisation of bilateral economic cooperation with Mongolia, South Korea, China and Australia in order to strengthen their resource supply, export markets and adjusting the external economic environment to serve the domestic economic development strategy; actively participate in ASEAN + 1, ASEAN + 3. At the same time, Japan strengthens ASEAN + 6, attracting East Asian countries with Economic Partnership Agreement to compete for leadership in East Asia.

In the field of politics and security, Japan introduced the concept of "value-oriented diplomacy", supporting the strengthening of relations between countries sharing common values such as freedom, democracy and the market economy. School, respect for human rights and the law. Accordingly, Japan strengthened bilateral relations with Australia, India and ASEAN countries, strengthened its security alliance with the United States and expanded its "US-Japan alliance" security cooperation framework with Australia and India.

With the downward trend of the United States' real power, the area has changed dramatically. East Asian economy is in danger of turning into "two economic powerhouses" (China and Japan).

Regarding the United States, the gap between the combined forces of China and the United States has been relentlessly cut, making the United States increasingly concerned about the challenges to its superpower status in the region and the world.

In view of the change in forces, positioning of regional powers, scholars and politicians, there is a shift of power between the United States and China and Japan in the region. The region, especially in Southeast Asia where China was one step faster than Japan in expanding relations and influence here.

In addition, China is the biggest beneficiary of internal instability in Japan and Russia's internal weakness, especially from its active participation in the United States-led international system. However, China has argued that it does not have the means to break United States' defenses in East Asia. China has not advocated breaking the old order, but to re-allocate it in line with its force. And its growing status. The transfer of power from United States to Japan is deliberate and based on the interests of the United States. Therefore, the transfer of power in East Asia over time is a transfer in peace competition.

Thus, considering the forces' correlation among regional powers, it is possible to identify the "super-multipurpose" of East Asia over the past 10 years, following the structure of power distribution as follows: United States, China, Japan, South Korea, ASEAN and the rest. In this context, the United States – China - Japan triangle continues to excel by having the greatest impact and influence on the region and the most centralised power in the region. This triangle continues to develop bias between the one side is "alliance" and one side is "competitor".

The United States–Japan relationship is growing stronger, as the United States always seeks to tighten its alliance with Japan, to encourage Japan to strengthen its defense forces, and to play a greater role in politics and regional security. This is to minimize China's influence, but also to keep Japan out of the control of the United States.

The United States–China relationship has become more prominent and tends to be more stable as the two sides still see each other as potential adversaries, depending on each other as well as the increased cooperation demands that make United States - China relations difficult to get major conflicts.

The China - Japan is weaker. China - Japan relations continue to suffer great doubts due to historical issues, territorial disputes, psychological issues, especially the competition for regional leadership that has hindered the development of bilateral relations. Due to weak defense capabilities and strength, Japan continues to rely on the United States in its bid for East Asian leadership. China - Japan competition is in the interests of the United States to prevent and divert key regional forces.

To a large extent, the change in regional forces, especially in China, has intensified, creating complicatedly cooperative and competitive relations among major countries in the region. First, the changing situation is to promote relations between developed

countries in the direction of increasing cooperation and stability. The interdependence of the economy, the need for cooperation in many fields and international issues such as the nuclear issue of North Korea, Iran, anti-terrorism, even on the issue of Taiwan independence. United States - China increased, outweighed the differences, suspicions and defensive strategies between the two countries, fostering relative stability in United States - China relations. The United States has stepped up its constructive and cooperative engagement with prevention and prevention, stepping up gradually to become a "stakeholder" in the region. Meanwhile, China adopted a strategy to avoid confrontation, trying to maintain a stable relationship with the United States. Although different, United States - China has been regulating interests through more than 60 exchange mechanisms. This has greatly reduced the possibility of a conflict between a superpower and a new emerging power challenging the established status of this superpower.

Japan and South Korea are increasingly relying more on the Chinese market to sustain their growth. Japan - China relations recovered rapidly after the Koizumi period and entered a new stage of development. Japan considers maintaining a stable friendship with China aimed at turning Japan into a political power, taking advantage of emerging market economic opportunities in China, and promoting East Asian cooperation. China - South Korea relation has been flourished. South Korea adopts closer ties with China to become a "balancer" in relations among major regional states, dealing with the North Korean nuclear issue and balancing relations between the three countries. China, on the other hand, wants to deepen its relationship with Japan and South Korea in order to diversify their alliance consolidation with United States.

Russia tightens its strategic relationship with China in order to counterbalance the US influence in the region and the world, maintaining a growing market for arms and oil in China. Southeast Asia is a region where China prioritises its peaceful development strategy, along with ASEAN's large water balance strategy, and China - ASEAN political relations continue to advance.

Countries also seek to balance and compete with China. In the face of China's rapid economic and military rise, large countries see this as both an opportunity and a challenge, in terms of competing for a balanced balance with China in the region. The United States must return to East Asia to strengthen its economic and political relations, promote bilateral military cooperation with its traditional alliances in the region. Japan has a strong opposition to the Asian sovereignty dispute and the number 1 regional economic power in the region with China. Japan pushed the "return to Asia" strategy, attracted the United States, tightened ties with South Korea and ASEAN countries, accelerated FTA negotiations with ASEAN, and persisted in the "10 + 6" 10 + 3 "in the East Asian integration process. ASEAN is increasingly in a weaker position, has to promote regionalism in terms of politics, economics and culture, strengthen internal solidarity and actively implement a large water balance

strategy to engage India, Australia, especially the United States to balance the growing influence of China and Japan.

As China is rising, United States and Japan are adjusting strategy and especially the change in force correlation has created a new picture in the relations between major countries in East Asia. The new balance between super powers emerges, but the cooperation and competition among the big countries is complicated and multi-tiered, causing the gathering and diversification of forces cooperatively and competitively.





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