

AFC7 Roundtable Discussion

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“ASEAN Centrality in a Turbulent East Asia”

Organizer: Atsumi International Foundation Sekiguchi Global Research Association (SGRA)

August 10th (Saturday) 2024, 9 : 00 - 12 : 30

Language: English

Venue: Chulalongkorn University [501-27&29] room

Abstract/Overview

Traditionally speaking, “East Asia” refers to the countries of China, Japan, and South Korea, which at the same time could be said to form the economic core of Asia. Hence, Southeast Asian countries, which constitute ASEAN, would be considered to be at the periphery of this traditional and economic definition of “East Asia”. Geographically speaking, however, ASEAN member states could be considered to be members of “East Asia”. Moreover, if we were to adopt a scheme of one-country-one-vote instead of one-dollar-one-vote, we could actually see that the center of such a scheme would be somewhere in the South China/West Philippine Sea, right in the heart of ASEAN. It is this latter definition of “East Asia” that we adopt, as it also leads us naturally to the concept of the centrality of ASEAN. Geopolitically speaking, ASEAN’s centrality has also been associated with its convening power, that is, the ability to draw the stronger nations of East Asia and neighboring countries to the negotiation table. At the very root of ASEAN’s centrality are its core values of non-interference and consensus-based decision-making. These values, and thus ASEAN’s centrality, are currently under siege given the turbulence in East Asia, such as the more belligerent approach of China, and the US-China trade friction that threatens to usher in another Cold War. We bring to bear the different perspectives of different countries/regions to this issue in the hope of promoting harmony amidst diversity.

Inquiry : AFC Secretariat afc2024@aisf.or.jp

Program

9 : 00 **Overview by Chair**

Dr. Ferdinand C. Maquito UPLB

9 : 10 **Speech 1**

Dr. Ferdinand C. Maquito UPLB

“ASEAN Centrality from a Southeast Asian Perspective”

ASEAN has played a major role in the development of Asian regionalism. Because ASEAN is a collection of small countries, there is always a risk of being buried among the major powers. In order to overcome this, ASEAN created the principle of "ASEAN centrality" and paved the way for the development of balanced regionalism in East Asia through "conference diplomacy" that transcends regional limits. This centrality has geopolitical and economic significance. ASEAN centrality could introduce a tolerance for the adoption of industrial policies of the RCEP members. This could be viewed as a source of strategic complementarity of ASEAN to the Flying Geese dynamics that have contributed very well to the region's integration.

9 : 35 **Speech 2**

Dr. Hitoshi Hirakawa Professor Emeritus, Nagoya University

“ASEAN Centrality from a Northeast Asian Perspective

- A View from Japan”

It was not until the 1990s that 'East Asia' came into common usage as a regional concept that included Northeast and Southeast Asia. If this usage is viewed from the historical perspective of Japan's modern history and beyond, the role of the Southeast Asian region in 'East Asia' may be divided into three periods. The first period was when Japan advocated the 'Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere' and Southeast Asia was a resource supply area. The second period was from the 1980s to the 1990s, when Southeast Asia became a destination for Japanese and South Korean manufacturing companies. The third period is the period after this century, when ASEAN itself began to advocate ASEAN-centricity in the midst of a major structural transformation as a result of China's enormous economic and political power. This report will examine the significance of ASEAN in the development and cooperation of 'East Asia', while confirming ASEAN's role within this broader 'East Asia'.

10 : 00 **Discussion**

Speaker 1. Dr. Jakfar Idrus Kokushikan University

Speaker 2. Dr. Khin Maung Htwe Myanmar Hotelier Association Central

Speaker 3. Dr. Mandar V Kulkarni GITAM School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Speaker 4. Mr. Luxmiwattana Motoki Waseda University

11 : 00 **Panel Discussion**

Moderator : Dr. Ferdinand C. Maquito and All Speakers and Discussants

11 : 50 **Closing Remark**

Dr. Brenda Resurecion Tenegra SGRA/AISF

Speakers

Speaker 2.

Hitoshi Hirakawa (Professor Emeritus, Nagoya University)



DR. HITOSHI HIRAKAWA received a PhD. in economics from Kyoto University. He is Professor Emeritus at Nagoya University and a visiting professor at Kokushikan University, Chairman of the Institute of Northeast Asian Future (INAF) and a member of the board of directors at Atsumi International Foundation, Tokyo. He is the author and editor of books and academic papers, including Innovative ICT industrial architecture in East Asia, Tokyo: Springer Japan, 2017 (coedited with Ferdinand C. Maquito et al.); Transformation of the world economy and institutionalization of East Asian region, in Evolving diversity and interdependence of capitalisms (edited by R. Boyer, H. Uemura et al.), Tokyo: Springer Japan, 2018; Political economy of China's One Belt and One Road initiative, Tokyo: Bunshindo, 2019 (coedited with K. Ishikawa et al.) (in Japanese); and 'How the world economy has changed with former US President Trump and COVID-19: With focus on US-China relations', Kokusai Keizai (International Economics), 2022 (in Japanese).

Coordinator / Moderator/Speaker1:

Ferdinand C. Maquito (UPLB)



In his "previous life", DR. FERDINAND C. MAQUITO (nickname: Max) was a mechanical engineer at a state-owned shipyard, after finishing his BS at the Engineering Department of the University of the Philippines, Diliman. A scholarship enabled him to shift specialization and earn his MS in Industrial Economics from the Center of Research of Communication (now within the University of Asia and the Pacific), right after which he was able to get into the Japanese Ministry of Education scholarship to join the PhD in Economics program of the University of Tokyo. A scholarship from the Atsumi International Foundation enabled him to finish his doctorate in Economics. He was an Adjunct Professor in Temple University Japan campus before coming back to the Philippines, and frequently came home for his research and advocacy. He joined CPAf in 2017, where he is now an Assistant Professor, so as to devote more fully his remaining productive years to his research and advocacy on sustainable shared growth, which was nurtured by staying long in Japan, and working with the Sekiguchi Global Research Association of the Atsumi International Foundation.

Discussant 1.

Jakfar Idrus (Kokushikan University)



DR. JAKFAR IDRUS was born in Jebara (Indonesia). He graduated from the Japanese Department, Faculty of Cultural Science, Gadjah Mada University, Indonesia. He holds a Master's Degree in Political Science from the Graduate School of Political Science, Kokushikan University. He completed his doctoral degree from the Graduate School of Political Science, Kokushikan University in 2019. Currently, he lectures at the School of 21 Asia, Kokushikan University in Tokyo.

Discussant 2.

Khin Maung Htwe (Myanmar Hotelier Association Central)



He completed a PhD from the Department of Applied Physics, Faculty of Science and Engineering, Waseda University, Japan. He also finished as a Research Student at the Graduate School of Ophthalmology, Juntendo University, Japan. In 1997, he worked as an Assistant Professor at the Department of Applied Physics, Faculty of Science and Engineering, Waseda University and as an SGRA member. In Myanmar, he worked as President of Ocean Resources Production Co., Ltd, Founder of Hotel AKIMOMI (Pyin Oo Lwin, 2015) and Japanese Izakaya AKIMOMI (Mandalay, 2022), and Vice-Chairman of Myanmar Hotelier Association (2017 to now).

Discussant 3.

Dr. Mandar V Kulkarni



He is a member of the faculty of Economics at GITAM School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Hyderabad, India. Before joining GITAM Deemed University, he was a postdoctoral researcher at IIIT-Bangalore. At IIIT-Bangalore, Dr. Mandar worked in collaboration with Lund University, Sweden on a comparative study of innovation systems in Bangalore and Beijing. He is a member of the Japan Society for International Development (JASID) and Regional Studies Association (UK). He was a recipient of a Travel Grant from the Regional Studies Association, UK in 2016. Dr. Mandar did his MA and PhD from Nagoya University, Japan (Graduate School of International Development) in 2013. His research focused on economic effects of information and communications technology (ICT) in the Indian context. Dr. Mandar has collaborated with Japanese scholars on a number of research projects. His research interests lie in the broad areas of international economic development, innovation studies, regional studies, and industrial and technological development. He keenly follows India's collaborative role in Southeast Asian economies and their developmental trajectories.

Discussant 4.

Mr. Luxmiwattana Motoki



Motoki Luxmiwattana is a PhD student at the Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies, Waseda University, Japan. His research interests revolve around Thai politics and comparative politics, particularly with regards to electoral politics, social movements, and political ideologies. His current research project focuses on the ideological characteristics of Thai conservatism in recent history.

He completed his bachelor's degree from the Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand, majoring in International Relations. Under the Japanese government's MEXT scholarship, he completed his master's degree from the Graduate Schools of Law and Politics, University of Tokyo, Japan, researching populism and Thai conservative movement in the 21st Century. He is currently receiving a scholarship from Atsumi International Foundation.

Closing Remarks

Dr. Brenda Resurecion Tenegra



Brenda Resurecion Tenegra is an independent academic researcher and currently engaged as a consultant and Associate Manager of a global consulting firm in the Philippines. She was a recipient of the Atsumi International Scholarship (2005). She graduated from Ochanomizu University in Tokyo and was awarded a PhD in Sociology in 2006. Her dissertation title was “Multi-tiered politics of remittance: the case of Filipina domestic workers in the global elites' households of Tokyo (Sōkin no fukusōteki seiji: Tōkyō no gurōbaru erīto setai ni hataraku Firipinjin kaji rōdō-sha no jirei kara)”. Her research interests include gender and migration, gender and development, and economic and social remittances.