

75th SGRA Forum/45th Sustainable Shared Growth Seminar

## East Asia Citizens Dialogue

### Exploring the Possibility of Local-to-Local Across Border Schemes

Host : 75th SGRA Forum Executive Committee

Co-Host : Sekiguchi Global Research Association/Atsumi International Foundation; College of Global Communication/J.F. Oberlin University; Faculty of Management and Development Studies/University of the Philippines Open University

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**April 12, 2025 (Sat) 2-5 PM (Japanese Time)**

Venue: J.F. Oberlin University Shinjuku Campus South Building 3F JS302 room and Online(Zoom Webinar)

Language: Japanese - English (Simultaneous Translation)

Free

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Registration is required to participate.

(Please refer to the last page "Notice regarding participation")

#### **Purpose**

Geographically speaking, East Asia is composed of both Northeast Asia (Japan, China, and South Korea) and Southeast Asia (ASEAN member states), and shares the ASEAN+3 (Japan, China, and South Korea) vision of "East Asian Integration," which can be said to be the manifestation of the principle of "harmony in diversity." East Asia has made great strides toward this vision, but there is no denying that recent events involving China have derailed the region's progress toward this vision.

The Local-to-Local-Across Border Schemes (LLABS) was formally termed as part of a collaboration of Dr. Ferdinand Maquito with the Faculty of Management and Development Studies of the University of the Philippines Open University as part of its Community of Nations, Nation of Communities (CNNC) course. It was inspired, in part, by Dr. Maquito's research on the role of Local Government Units (LGUs) in the ASEAN+3 Vision. Through the CNNC course, the concept and implementation has grown in coverage to include local communities and other forms of LGUs.

In this forum, in cooperation with the College of Global Communication at J.F. Oberlin University and SGRA, we will discuss the LLABS concept, which has been considered mainly in the Philippines, with researchers from Northeast Asia, and explore the feasibility of its realization.

The event will be held in a hybrid format of on-site and online, and co-hosted with University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU).

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## Program

Overall Moderator: Brenda Tenegra (Accenture)

### 14 : 00 Opening Greetings

Dr. Li Enmin (Dean, College of Global Communication/J.F. Oberlin University)

### 14 : 10 Keynote Speech

#### “Overview and Significance of LLABS”

Dr. Ferdinand C. Maquito (Faculty of Management and Development Studies [FMDS],  
University of the Philippines Open University [UPOU], Lecturer)

At the background of LLABS are two dynamic forces that are sweeping across East Asia: regional integration, such as the ASEAN+3 initiative, and local decentralization, wherein political and fiscal authority are being devolved to local government units. Such developments raised the question as to whether these two forces could be treated as substitutes or complements. The possibility of regional integration failing to move ahead with its agenda is a very real one, given, for example, the on-going conflict in the West Philippine Sea or South China Sea. In such cases, it proposed that a LLABS could offer a way forward in cases where there is a stalemate. In other cases, LLABS could provide an additional mechanism for both forces to move forward. Either case presents the possibility of regional integration and local decentralization to be complementary by leveraging LLABS. A case study is presented wherein a LLABS is being pursued by UPOU involving two local communities. One is Fujino in Sagamihara City, Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan. The other is the municipality of Maahas, Los Baños, in the Laguna Province, Philippines. The latter local community is home to UPOU, from which the LLABS initiative is being pursued.

### 14 : 30 Discussion

#### Discussion 1 “ASEAN+3 and Japan: The Possibility of LLABS”

##### “Community Collaboration: Lessons from the Growth Triangle, Chinatown, and ‘Curry Immigrants’”

Dr. Sato Koichi (Professor, College of Arts & Sciences /J.F. Oberlin University)

The Local and Regional Community Partnerships across Borders (LLABS) initiative is a dream come true, but also difficult. As for the ASEAN growth triangle initiative, the conditions for success include a vertical division of labor between developed regions such as the NIEs and developing regions, the presence of good ports, proximity, a high level of infrastructure development and financial resources, and the absence of security issues. In addition, it is necessary to be able to ride the global trend of SCM (supply chain management). To date, of the three triangles, only the southern triangle can be said to have been a clear success. As for small community collaboration within Japan, there are both success stories and failure stories, such as Chinatown and curry immigrants.

Issues include whether foreign workers can overcome language, religion, and cultural barriers to integrate into Japanese society, how much effort Japan is making to accept them, and whether there are sufficient educational opportunities for immigrant children. It is necessary to reach an agreement and aim for mutual understanding and common benefit. Japan's Chinatowns are also shrewd in promoting Chinese culture and becoming successful tourist spots.

#### Discussion 2 “ASEAN+3 and China: The Possibility of LLABS”

##### “Cross-Border Development Cooperation and Local Government International Cooperation Framework in China and Northeast Asia”

Dr. Li Kotetsu (Head, Institute for Northeast Asian Future)

Regionalism in Northeast Asia began to rise around the 1990s, coinciding with the collapse of the Cold War and the revitalization of cross-border regional development. Various cross-border regional development projects were launched, and movements to form sub-regional economic zones emerged, which became a major driving force

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behind the economic growth of the region.

- (1) The Concept of the International Economic Zone around the Japan Sea (1980s-1990s).
- (2) The Tumen River Area Development Plan and Project (TRADP) (since 1991).
- (3) The Concept of the Yellow Sea and Bohai Sea Economic Zone (since the 1990s).
- (4) The Economic Zone Concept for the Four Regions on Both Sides of the Taiwan Strait: China's Guangdong and Fujian Provinces, and Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau (since the 1990s).
- (5) The Mekong River Basin Economic Zone Concept (GMS) (since 1991, including China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and five Southeast Asian countries).

Amid these developments, the "Northeast Asia Regional Municipalities Union" (an international organization) was established in 1996, and various frameworks for international exchanges between local governments were also created. This study explores how China's local governments (municipalities) have supported regional economic growth and China's rapid economic growth through the activation of cross-border platforms for economic and cultural exchanges between local governments.

### Discussion 3 "ASEAN+3 and South Korea: The Possibility of LLABS"

#### "Efforts of South Korean Local Governments in Forming International Regimes: A Case Study of the Korea-Japan-China Local Government Exchange Conference"

Dr. Nam Ki-jeong (Seoul University Japan Studies Center Head)

The Korea-Japan-China Local Government Exchange Conference (hereinafter referred to as "Japan-China-Korea" in consideration of the fact that the report is in Japanese) is a framework for cooperation between local governments of Korea, Japan, and China, aimed at promoting practical exchanges. It is jointly organized by three institutions: the Korea Metropolitan and Provincial Mayors' Association, the Japan International Municipal Association, and the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. The first conference was held in Seoul in 1999, and since then, the conference has been held annually in a rotating manner, with the 25th conference scheduled to take place in Gwangju, Korea, in 2024. Although the conference was postponed once in 2020 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, this was a "postponement" for non-political reasons, and it has never been interrupted. The 2025 conference is set to be held in Yancheng, Jiangsu Province, China. This report examines the efforts of the Korea Metropolitan and Provincial Mayors' Association toward the Japan-China-Korea Local Government Exchange Conference, as a case study, to explore the characteristics and significance of international regimes led by local governments in Northeast Asia. Specifically, there are two points of focus. The first is to explore the correlation with ASEAN+3. The Japan-China-Korea Local Government Exchange Conference began in 1999, two years after the establishment of ASEAN+3, at a time when Korea started to significantly focus on cooperation with ASEAN. Under the Kim Dae-jung administration, there was a move toward closer relations with ASEAN. It was during this period that Korean local governments began to engage in local diplomacy, with particular attention to the ASEAN model. This likely served as a driving force for the continuity of the conference.

The second point of exploration is a comparison with the Japan-China-Korea Summit. Since the first Japan-China-Korea Summit in 2008, the ninth summit is scheduled for 2024. However, there have been three interruptions in the summit: in 2013 and 2014, 2016 and 2017, and from 2020 to 2023. These interruptions were largely influenced by political circumstances. In contrast, the Japan-China-Korea Local Government Exchange Conference continued during these periods, and examining the efforts behind this continuity will provide valuable insights for peaceful coexistence in the region.

### Discussion 4 "ASEAN+3 and Taiwan: The Possibility of LLABS"

#### "Strong 'Non-Governmental' Ties Between Taiwan and Southeast Asia Beyond Political Constraints"

Dr. Lim Chuan-Tiong (Researcher, Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia, The University of Tokyo)

Taiwan does not have formal diplomatic relations with the 10 ASEAN countries, nor is it part of "ASEAN+3," but the relationship between them is quite delicate and close. After World War II, Taiwan established diplomatic relations with eight Southeast Asian countries, but following the reversal of international status between China and Taiwan in the 1970s, Taiwan gradually severed diplomatic ties with these countries. However, Taiwan eventually achieved economic development as part of the "Asian NIEs" (Newly Industrializing Economies) along

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with South Korea, Hong Kong, and Singapore, and its economic expansion into Southeast Asia became increasingly prominent.

In 2016, under the administration of President Tsai Ing-wen of the Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan introduced the "New Southbound Policy" to reduce its economic dependence on China. As a result, Taiwan's ties with Southeast Asia have deepened further, strengthening cross-border human and economic connections. In the future, cooperation in areas such as digital economy, healthcare, education, and labor migration will continue to be emphasized. On the other hand, the Singaporean military has conducted military training in Taiwan under the "Shining Star Project," and Taiwan has exercised de facto control over the largest naturally-formed landmass in the Spratly Islands, Taiping Island.

Overall, Taiwan's relationship with ASEAN faces challenges, such as China's pressure and the lack of free trade agreements (FTAs), but beyond political constraints, it has deepened substantial interdependence, and cross-border exchanges are expected to continue expanding in the future.

## 14 : 30 Coffee Break (10 min)

## 15 : 40 Citizen's Opinion

### A Philippine Citizen's Opinion

... Dr. Joane Serrano (University of the Philippines Open University, Professor)

### An Indonesian Citizen's Opinion

... Dr. Jakfar Idrus (Kokushikan University, Full Time Lecturer)

### A Thai Citizen's Opinion

... Mr. Motoki Luxmiwattana (Waseda University Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies)

## 16 : 10 Free Discussion

16 : 45 **Summary Remarks** Dr. Hitoshi Hirakawa (Nagoya University, Professor Emeritus)

16 : 55 **Closing Remarks** Ms. Junko Imanishi (Atsumi International Foundation, Managing Director)

17 : 00 **Closing**

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## Speakers



### Brenda Resurecion Tenegra

She 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 erito 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.



### Ferdinand C. Maquito

After graduating from the University of the Philippines Diliman School of Engineering, he worked as a mechanical engineer at a national shipyard. After earning a master's degree in industrial economics from the Communication Research Center (now part of the University of Asia and the Pacific), he received a scholarship from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology to enter the doctoral program in economics at the University of Tokyo and obtain his doctorate. After serving as a part-time professor at Temple University Japan Campus, he became an assistant professor in the Department of Public Relations and Development at the University of the Philippines Los Baños. He is currently a senior

lecturer in the Department of Management Development at the University of the Philippines Open University. He is a scholarship recipient of the Atsumi International Foundation. He specializes in the research and advocacy of sustainable shared growth.



### **Sato Koichi**

Born in 1960. Graduated from the Faculty of Law, Tokyo Metropolitan University in 1983. After working in the private sector, he became an associate professor at the School of International Studies, J. F. Oberlin University in 1997. He became a professor there in 2003. He received his PhD (academic) from the Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies, Waseda University in 2009. He is currently a professor at the School of Liberal Arts, J. F. Oberlin University. His specialties include Southeast Asian studies (Malaysia and Singapore), international politics (ASEAN as a regional organization), and maritime security. Representative publications: "China as a Maritime Power and Japan, the United States, and ASEAN," "The Chinese Threat Theory and ASEAN Countries," and "ASEAN Regime" (all published by Keiso Shobo), "Lion City: Winds of the Malacca Strait" (Mekong), and "Imperial Diplomacy and Asia" (Heibonsha Shinsho).



### **Li Kotetsu**

Born in Yanbian, China in 1959. After graduating from the Central University for Nationalities in Beijing in 1985, he taught at a university in Beijing after completing graduate school. He came to Japan in 1991 and left Rikkyo University's Graduate School of Economics after completing his doctoral studies. In 2001, he worked at the Tokyo Foundation, Nagoya University's Institute for International Economic Trends, and the National Institute for Research Advancement (NIRA) under the Cabinet Office, before teaching at Hokuriku University in November 2006. On October 1, 2020, he founded the Institute for Northeast Asia Futures (INAF), a general incorporated association, with other volunteers and serves as its director. He is conducting research and exchange activities in the Northeast Asia region, making use of his multilingual skills in Japan, China, Korea, North Korea, Russia, and Mongolia. He is a researcher at SGRA and the leader of the "Conceptual Asia" team. In 1999, he received a scholarship from the Atsumi International Foundation.



### **Nam Ki-jeong**

Born in 1964. Professor and Director of the Japan Studies Institute at Seoul National University. After graduating from the Department of Diplomacy at Seoul National University, he obtained a Ph.D. in International Relations from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Tokyo.

He has served as an Associate Professor and Professor at the Faculty of Law at Tohoku University, as well as an Associate Professor in the Department of International Studies at Kookmin University (South Korea), and currently holds his current position. He has served as president of the Contemporary Japan Studies Association and the Korean Association for the History of Politics and Diplomacy (both based in South Korea), among other positions. His research focuses on analyzing Japan's politics and diplomacy, particularly the development of the Japan-U.S. alliance, in the context of Northeast Asian international politics. He also has an interest in peace movements within Japanese civil society.



### **LIM John Chuan-Tiong**

Ph.D. in Law from the University of Tokyo. Specializing in International Politics, primarily focusing on East Asian international relations, Japan-China-Taiwan relations, Taiwan studies, and Okinawa studies. He has served as an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Law and Letters at the University of the Ryukyus, an Associate Researcher at the Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, a Fulbright Visiting Scholar at Harvard University, an Associate Professor at the Department of History at National Taiwan University, a Professor at the Institute of International Studies at Wuhan University, Executive Director of the Japan Studies Center at Wuhan University, a Visiting Professor at the Chinese



University of Hong Kong, a Special Researcher at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Oriental Culture at the University of Tokyo, and Editor-in-Chief of Hong Kong's "Ming Pao" (Editorial Section). His publications include *"The Identity Politics of 'Borderland East Asia': Okinawa, Taiwan, and Hong Kong"* (Akashi Shoten, 2005), *"The Rise and Fall of China-Japan Power and the Reconstruction of East Asian Order"* (Wu-Nan Book Inc., Taiwan, 2020), and *"Fundamental Concepts for Understanding the Crossroads of the World: An Introduction to Comparative Politics and International Politics"* (co-authored, Iwanami Shoten, 2024).



### **Joane V. Serrano**

Former Dean of the College of Management and Development, University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU). She assumed the position of UPOU Chancellor last March 1, 2025. She holds a PhD in Development Management and a PhD in Development Communication from the University of the Philippines. Her research interests are broad, including sustainability, socio-cultural perspectives on the environment, development and environmental communication, health promotion, gender and indigenous knowledge, and open and distance e-learning (ODEL). In recent years, she has been researching the protection of stakeholder interests and social responsibility surrounding digital technologies and services with a focus on sustainability, as well as mechanisms for Satoyama development. She has been a long-time collaborator of the KKK Seminar and is actively involved in research and implementation of a community currency and other initiatives.



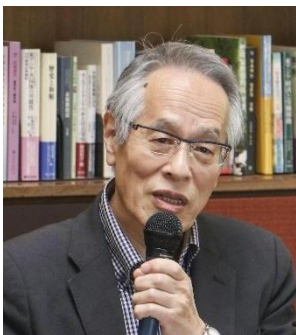
### **Jakfar Idrus**

2014 Atsumi Scholarship recipient. Originally from Indonesia. Graduated from the Department of Japanese Language, Faculty of Letters, Gadjah Mada University. Obtained a PhD from the Graduate School of Political Science, Kokushikan University. Currently an associate professor at the School of 21st Century Asia, Kokushikan University. Using an Asian regional studies approach, he is researching the formation of nation-states in Southeast Asia, with a focus on Indonesia, and the issues surrounding them, as well as the politics and culture of Southeast Asian countries.



### **Motoki Luxmiwattana**

Doctoral course student at Waseda University Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies. Specializes in Thai politics, social movements, and political ideology. His current research topic is the ideological characteristics of Thai conservatism in recent years. After earning a bachelor's degree in international relations from the Faculty of Political Science at Chulalongkorn University in Thailand, he came to Japan on a scholarship from the Japanese government's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. He researched populism and the conservative movement in Thailand in the 21st century and received a master's degree from the Graduate School of Law and Political Science at the University of Tokyo. 2024 Atsumi Scholarship recipient.



### **Hirakawa Hitoshi**

Emeritus Professor at Nagoya University and Visiting Professor at Kokushikan University. Director of the Atsumi International Exchange Foundation. Ph.D. in Economics from Kyoto University. After serving at institutions such as Tokyo University of the Economics, he held the position of Professor at the Graduate School of Economics at Nagoya University and Director of the Center for International Economic Dynamics. Major publications include *The Political Economy of the Belt and Road Initiative*, co-edited with Hitoshi Hirakawa, Koichi Ishikawa, and others (Bunshindo, 2019), *"Globalization and the Retreat of Democratization: Focusing on Emerging Asian Countries"*, in *Democracy and Economic Development in Asia*, edited by Hiroshi Yamamoto (Bunshindo, 2019), and *"COVID-19 Pandemic and Emerging and Developing Economies"*, *International Economics*, Issue 72, 2022, etc.

## Notice regarding participation

### ■ Registration is required to participate.

Please apply using the QR code or URL.

**Registration URL:** <https://x.gd/n7jkt>



**Registration**

### ■ J.F. Oberlin University Shinjuku Campus

3-23-1 Hyakunincho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo

Map : <https://maps.app.goo.gl/LCeqQzJoV3MrR8rt9>

- 8 minutes walk from Shin-Okubo Station (JR Yamanote Line)
- 6 minutes walk from the north exit of Okubo Station (JR Chuo/Sobu Line)

### ■ Inquiry SGRA Office : [sgra@aisf.or.jp](mailto:sgra@aisf.or.jp)