



Delhi Dialogue VI

Realising the ASEAN-India Vision for Partnership and Prosperity

Editors
Rumel Dahiya
Udai Bhanu Singh



INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE
STUDIES & ANALYSES

रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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*Realising the ASEAN-India Vision
for Partnership and Prosperity*

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INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE STUDIES & ANALYSES
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Rumel Dahiya and Udai Bhanu Singh (Eds)

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About Delhi Dialogue

Recognising the need for greater engagement with the ASEAN region, India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) supported the inaugural Delhi Dialogue I, on January 21-22, 2009, which was organised by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the SAEA Group Research (SAEA) with the institutional support of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), as an international conference to chart for leaders and business investors the issues and dynamics facing the Asia-Pacific Region.

Delhi Dialogue I, January 21-22, 2009

Poised as an annual track II conference focusing on Asian security cooperation and economic concerns, the Delhi Dialogue I was inaugurated by H.E. Shri Pranab Mukherjee, the then Minister for External Affairs, and H.E. Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, the then ASEAN Secretary-General. The two-day conference saw an estimated 250 participants and dealt incisively with three key topics i.e., Energy Security: The Way Forward for ASEAN and India; Global Financial Turmoil: Economic Security Concerns for India and ASEAN; and India-ASEAN Connectivity, Logistics & Security Concerns.

Delhi Dialogue II, January 21-22, 2010

Continuing along the same line, the Delhi Dialogue II, held on January 21-22, 2010 saw the focus on regional security and cooperation with the theme of examining India and Southeast Asia in the *Changing Regional Economic Dynamics of Asia: Shared Interests and Concerns*. The then External Affairs Minister of India, H.E. Shri S.M. Krishna and the then Deputy ASEAN Secretary General H.E. Mr. Pushpanathan Sundram graced the Delhi Dialogue II.

Delhi Dialogue III, March 3-4, 2011

The third in the series, the Delhi Dialogue III was hosted by India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in partnership with the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and FICCI, together with the support of ISEAS, SAEA Group Research and ERIA on March 3-4, 2011. The theme of the Delhi Dialogue III was *Beyond the First Twenty Years of India-ASEAN Engagement*. A number of ASEAN ministers and high level dignitaries participated in the Dialogue. It emerged during the discussion that both India and ASEAN should proactively engage each other in the socio-political and economic spheres. The Dialogue provided an additional avenue for policy makers, think tanks, academics and business leaders to engage in a fresh policy thinking and innovative solutions to challenges facing the region.

Delhi Dialogue IV, February 13-14, 2012

Celebrating two decades of their engagement, the Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, in partnership with Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), and supported by the Institute of South East Asian Studies (ISEAS), Singapore, and the SAEA Group Research (SAEA), Singapore, organised the Delhi Dialogue on February 13-14, 2012 in New Delhi. The theme for the Delhi Dialogue IV was *India and ASEAN: Partners for Peace, Progress and Stability* which highlighted India's increasing engagement with ASEAN and explored agenda for consolidation of the relationship in the coming years.

Delhi Dialogue V, February 19-20, 2013

The India-ASEAN Delhi Dialogue V, titled *India-ASEAN: Vision for Partnership and Prosperity* was held on February 19-20, 2013 in New Delhi. This Dialogue highlighted India's increasing engagement with ASEAN countries and explored the agenda for consolidation of their relationship in the coming years. The Dialogue also attempted to assess and incorporate issues and perspectives which had emerged from the India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit 2012 to help identify areas of greater engagement between India and ASEAN countries.



सुषमा स्वराज
Sushma Swaraj

प्राक्कथन

भारत सरकार का अत्यंत विद्यमान और मजबूत के दौरान हमारे पूर्व के राजदूतों और वृत्तगत एशिया प्रशांत क्षेत्र के साथ सम्बन्धों को मजबूत करने की और संश्लेषित रहा है। हमारे सम्बन्धों को नए आयाम देने के उद्देश्य से राज्य सभा की कार्यवाही का आभेक्षण किया गया और साथ ही एक महत्वपूर्ण, व्यावहारिक और परिणामोन्मुखी नीति को अमल में लाया गया है। अत्यंत महत्त्व की मेरे मार्च 2014 को मेरी वीडियो संबोधित 12 में अतिथिगत – भारत विचार कार्य और पूर्व एशिया प्रशांत क्षेत्र के दौरान हमारे इस नीति को बहुत ही सारगर्भित रूप में – तथा। उन्होंने कहा कि हमारी सरकार ने प्रति और प्राथमिकता के साथ "एक ही नीति" को "एक ही नीति" में बदला है।

1. अतिथिगत के साथ हमारे संबंध भारतीय विदेश नीति का एक महत्वपूर्ण क्षेत्र और हमारे एक ही नीति नीति का हिस्सा है। 1992 में एक ही नीति नीति अमल में लेकर अब तक अतिथिगत के साथ हमारी संबंध कार्यवाही ने 2012 में विचार कार्यवाही और 2012 में सम्बन्धित कार्यवाही का रूप ले लिया है। 2014 में अतिथिगत-भारत एक ही नीति क्षेत्र की अमल में हमारे प्रमुख सम्बन्धों में एक ही नीति का महत्व संश्लेषित है। एक ही नीति क्षेत्र में एक ही नीति नीति के साथ हमारे संबंध और निरंतरता का सम्बन्धित अमल में आ रहा होगा एक ही नीति अतिथिगत एक नई परिपक्वता के साथ अतिथिगत सम्बन्ध का रूप ले रहा होगा।

2. भारत और अतिथिगत की बीच सहयोग को आभेक्षण क्षेत्र है, जिसमें एक ही नीति विचार कार्य और 7 नवीं नीति की कार्यवाही है। भारत और अतिथिगत सम्बन्धित क्षेत्र विचार में एक ही नीति क्षेत्र है। दोनों के बीच सम्बन्धित, वृत्तगत, अतिथिगत, सम्बन्धित-सम्बन्धित क्षेत्रों सहित सभी क्षेत्रों में आभेक्षण और सम्बन्धों के विकास की अतिथिगत सम्बन्धित है।

3. अतिथिगत के साथ हमारे संबंधों के विचार में हमारे विचार प्रति है। वे दोनों क्षेत्रों में एक ही नीति सम्बन्धित क्षेत्रों का एक ही नीति क्षेत्र है। एक ही नीति क्षेत्र है, एक ही नीति क्षेत्र है। अतिथिगत सम्बन्धों की नीति सम्बन्धित क्षेत्रों का एक ही नीति क्षेत्र है। एक ही नीति क्षेत्र में एक ही नीति क्षेत्र, एक ही नीति क्षेत्र और एक ही नीति क्षेत्र के सम्बन्धित क्षेत्रों का सम्बन्धित क्षेत्र है। एक ही नीति क्षेत्र में एक ही नीति क्षेत्र, एक ही नीति क्षेत्र और एक ही नीति क्षेत्र के सम्बन्धित क्षेत्रों का सम्बन्धित क्षेत्र है। एक ही नीति क्षेत्र में एक ही नीति क्षेत्र, एक ही नीति क्षेत्र और एक ही नीति क्षेत्र के सम्बन्धित क्षेत्रों का सम्बन्धित क्षेत्र है।

6. अंतर्राष्ट्रीय आर्थिकवाद, समुद्रीय युद्धों जैसे अनेक क्षेत्रों में हमारे बीच आसानी सहयोग हमने एकीकृत सम्बन्धों को और अधिक गहरा करना। भारत और अफिरकान अनेक अतिरिक्त क्षेत्रों में एक दूसरे के साथ मिलकर काम कर रहे हैं। हमारा यह वास्तविकता होना चाहिए कि एक क्षेत्र में एक प्रतिष्ठित युद्ध तंत्र विकसित किया जाय । इसी प्रकार अनेक क्षेत्रों में अतिरिक्त साझेदारी (ACDP) के लिए सम्बन्धित कार्य हमारे बीच व्यापार और निवेश सम्बन्धों को आगे बढ़ाने में सहायक सिद्ध होगी।

8. जैसे-जैसे भारत और अफिरकान विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में एक दूसरे के साथ सहयोग और एकीकरण की दिशा में आगे बढ़ते हैं जैसे-जैसे इन एक दूसरे की आवाजकलाओं, प्रौद्योगिकताओं और संसाधनों को बेहतर रूप से समझ पायेंगे। इससे सीधे निर्यातकों को संसाधनों – मानवीय, वित्तीय एवं तकनीकी – में आसन्न विकास में मदद मिलेगी, विशेषकर उन क्षेत्रों में जहाँ अपनी सर्वाधिक आवश्यकता है।

7. दिल्ली कार्य भारत-अफिरकान एकीकृत साझेदारी पर विचारों को आदान-प्रदान का एक विविध 1.5 टुकड़ा होता है। 2009 में इसकी शुरुआत के समय से ही इसने सीधे निर्यातकों, निर्यातकों, निर्यातकों और व्यापार उद्योग के क्षेत्रों को एक जगह जुड़े रूप से विचारों को आदान प्रदान और भारत-अफिरकान सम्बन्धों को गहिरा की दिशा में काम करने पर संकेत करने का संकेत दिया है।

8. डी डी 21 में अतिरिक्तियों द्वारा 'भारत और अफिरकान में साझेदारी और संयोजन को एकीकरण' विषय पर बात किए गए विचार अनुसृत हैं। इसमें एकीकरण संकल्प को वास्तविक रूप देना, जहाँ पूर्व की प्रतिक्रिया क्षेत्रों में और अफिरकान की दिशा जैसे इन विषय भी शामिल हैं। मुझे विश्वास है कि यह अवसर और अनुसंधान संस्थान (IDSA) द्वारा इन सभी अवसरों का संयोजन इस विषय में यदि उद्योग वाले सभी क्षेत्रों को लिए कार्यशील सिद्ध होगा तथा इससे भारत-अफिरकान सम्बन्धों को नई सीमाओं तक ले जाने में मदद मिलेगी।

सुषमा स्वराज

सुषमा स्वराज

विदेश मंत्री एवं
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री
भारत



Minister of External Affairs &
Overseas Indian Affairs
India

सुषमा स्वराज
Sushma Swaraj

FOREWORD

The last nine months have witnessed a concerted focus by the Government of India on strengthening and deepening our relationship with our eastern neighbourhood and the wider Asia-Pacific, underpinned by high-level visits and a vigorous, pragmatic, action-oriented and result based approach to our engagements. Prime Minister Modi summed this up succinctly at Nay Pyi Taw in November 2014 at the 12th ASEAN-India Summit and East Asia Summit, by observing that our Government has moved with a great sense of priority and speed to transform India's 'Look East Policy' into an 'Act East Policy'.

2. India's relationship with ASEAN is one of the cornerstones of our foreign policy and at the core of our Act East Policy. Since the initiation of the Look East Policy in 1992, we have successfully moved from a Sectoral Dialogue Partnership with ASEAN to a Summit Partnership in 2002 and a Strategic Partnership in 2012. 2015 will witness another milestone in our robust engagement with the establishment of an ASEAN-India Free Trade Area, as the Agreements on Trade in Services and Investment come into force later this year, at a time when the ASEAN itself matures into an ASEAN Community.

3. There are today 26 institutional mechanisms of cooperation between India and ASEAN, presided over by an annual Summit and seven Ministerial level dialogues. India and ASEAN are partners in mutual prosperity and growth and there is a realization that the potential for expanding the relationship in all its dimensions, political, security, economic as well as socio-cultural, is infinite.

4. Of particular interest is the issue of enhancing connectivity between India and ASEAN, not just by land and sea, for we share both land and maritime

boundaries, but also by air. Moreover, institutional, digital and people-to-people connectivity are no less important. The free movement of people, particularly professionals, creation of regional value chains to increase economic interdependence for mutual benefit, and recognition of educational qualifications and degrees are other areas which can yield rich dividends.

5. The strategic content of our relationship is also set to deepen as both sides step up their collaboration across a range of issues, including transnational terrorism, maritime security, etc. India and ASEAN are also working closely in a variety of ASEAN centred regional fora such as the East Asia Summit, ASEAN Regional Forum, ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting + and the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum. Our common effort should be to evolve a suitable security architecture in the region. Similarly, our participation in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership negotiations would be a springboard to further enhancing our trade and investment relationship.

6. As India and ASEAN work to enhance their integration and multifarious collaboration, there would be better understanding of the requirements, priorities and potential of both sides as well as the synergies possible. These would provide invaluable inputs for policy makers to direct resources, human, financial and technical, where they are most needed.

7. The Delhi Dialogue provides a unique and useful track 1.5 forum for exchange of views on the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership. Since its inception in 2009, it has provided a platform to policy makers, academics, think tanks and business people to come together for a candid exchange of views and brainstorm on the future direction of the ASEAN-India relationship.

8. The views expressed by participants in DDVI on the theme “Realising the ASEAN-India Vision for Partnership and Prosperity” are invaluable, covering the sub-themes of ‘Translating the Vision Statement’, ‘Role of the North East’, ‘Regional Architecture’ as well as ‘The Way Forward’. I am sure that the papers in this compendium, skilfully put together by the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, will provide useful inputs for stakeholders to give further impetus to the ASEAN-India relationship, so that it may scale new frontiers.



Sushma Swaraj

Preface

India's engagement with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) has entered a new phase of strategic and economic understanding and alignment. This is a period of power transition—where new strategic and economic trends are continually shaping the Asia-Pacific or the Indo-Pacific region—which has generated its own set of uncertainties and anxieties among constituent countries. This turn of events has necessitated the process of formulating a common vision which would aid the process of acting together for common good.

The scope and depth of vision of India and ASEAN has expanded since the early days of India's Look East Policy beginning in the early 1990s. India's incremental engagement with the ASEAN system developed into a summit-level partnership and, eventually, following the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit (December 2012), into a 'strategic partnership'. This was further complemented by a strategy of simultaneously directing diplomatic efforts at other bilateral and multilateral relationships at the regional and sub-regional levels. The positive response from ASEAN has helped the process of consolidating the relationship in a manner that holds forth the promise of yielding substantial economic and strategic gains on either side.

With India-ASEAN relations being anchored in the common quest for economic growth and prosperity, and strategic stability in the region, growing convergence between the two sides is foreseen. In the context of rapid and tremendous changes taking place in the region, marked by the rise of China and the economic dynamism of the Asia-Pacific, the opportunities appear to be evenly matched by the challenges. This became evident in China's assertion of territorial claims in the South China Sea and the East China Sea impacting many countries. China has also asserted territorial claims on the unresolved India-China border in the east of the subcontinent. Another concurrent development has been the democratic transition in Myanmar which was

heralded by the installation of a 'civilian government' in March 2011. At the same time, there have been other developments such as the US 'pivot' or 'rebalancing' strategy towards Asia that will impact on the political, economic and strategic situation in the Asia-Pacific.

Many current and potential conflict zones exist in the Asia Pacific as nations have competing claims of sovereignty especially in the South China Sea, besides internal fissures in many countries which threaten regional peace. To keep abreast of the many challenges confronting the region today, and to retain its centrality, ASEAN has set for itself the target of achieving an ASEAN Community (Political, Economic, and Socio-Cultural) by 2015. In the face of fundamental changes that are being effected in the political, economic and strategic domains, the challenge before ASEAN today is to either shape the future or be shaped by it.

As the pace of change in the region gathered momentum, India's Look-East Policy, initiated in 1991, has led to the maturing of relations with our extended South Eastern neighbourhood. It has yielded good results in political and economic terms. India's economic liberalization in 1991 established the framework for enhanced India-ASEAN trade which has grown exponentially: it was expected to touch \$100 billion by 2015. The Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) between India and ASEAN (October 2003) followed by the Trade in Goods Agreement (TIG) signed in August 2009 have created an enabling environment for the development of multilateral as well as bilateral economic cooperation. With the TIG coming into force in 2010, and the free trade agreement (FTA) on services and investments subsequently, the India-ASEAN relationship is expected to grow faster hereafter, due to enabling factors such as a favourable demographic profile and expanding market for goods and services. Thus the Look East Policy, which has in its ambit a wide geographical expanse with a track record of over two decades, has proved to be mutually beneficial.

At the same time, India's Look East Policy itself is undergoing a transition—it has now become an 'Act East Policy'. The over two decades' experience of implementing the Policy has imparted valuable lessons along the way. There is growing comprehension of the greater involvement of India's North East in the Policy. As maritime security in the Indian Ocean gains prominence, greater dialogue on Indian Ocean region is called for. India's common cultural ties with Cambodia-Laos-Myanmar-Vietnam (CLMV) could profitably be

grounded in contemporary concerns, including river systems, mountain ranges, agrarian patterns and related domains.

Given this context, disseminating information about the long-standing and maturing India-ASEAN relationship becomes critical. The Delhi Dialogue has been actively working on facilitating that understanding for the past six years. Delhi Dialogue is a confluence of policy makers, corporate leaders and academia, which provides an opportunity to deliberate upon India's Look East Policy, in general, and India's relations with ASEAN and its member countries, in particular. Established as a Track 1.5 dialogue, the conference was inaugurated in January 2009 by the then Minister for External Affairs (and current President of India), Pranab Mukherjee. The Delhi Dialogue has been supported by India's Ministry of External Affairs, as well as business bodies like the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), amongst other institutions from both India and the South East Asian region. Six annual conferences have been held thus far, involving leaders from India and the ASEAN region, the diplomatic community, think tanks, business and industry institutions, and members from academia. The Sixth Delhi Dialogue, organized by India's premier think tank, IDSA, successfully concluded its deliberations in March 2014.

The past editions of the Delhi Dialogue covered diverse themes: energy security; economic cooperation (including FTA); connectivity; India-ASEAN Roadmap in the new millennium; Nalanda University; non-traditional security issues; evolving security architecture (ADMM+ and EAS Process); networks of knowledge and science; and CLMV countries and North East India. Delhi Dialogue VI (2014) attempted to carry forward the ideas set forth in the Vision Statement and the report of the ASEAN-India Eminent Persons' Group, deliberating particularly on important issues such as 'Translating the Vision Statement'; 'Role of North East India in India's Look East Policy'; and 'Regional Architecture in Asia Pacific: Role of India and ASEAN'. These informed and diverse views have been collated and put together in the form of a book, which, it is hoped, will add significantly to the understanding and furthering of the vibrant India-ASEAN relationship.

The views contained in the papers are those expressed by the participants during the Academic Session of the Dialogue and have been reproduced without any significant edition. We compliment them for their contribution.

Rumel Dahiya

PART I

Translating the Vision Statement

Chaired by Anil Wadhwa

Opening Remarks

Sanjay Singh

We are unanimous in that the Vision Statement sets out the path for the future. With that in mind, and at the risk of sounding repetitive, I would first like to set up the context to our discussion.

The context is that there is shift of the global centre of gravity to Asia, which is a result of the Asian resurgence and rapid economic growth. India's Look East Policy is a process of reaching out and participating in this dynamic. Initiated in early 1990s, it was a natural corollary to the economic reform agenda launched in 1991 in India and of Indian efforts towards globalisation. Closer relations with countries of ASEAN were at its core, given their centrality and the evolving economic and political architecture of the region. The ASEAN-India partnership subserves the basic objectives of the nations of the region—peace and stability, progress and prosperity. The Vision Statement adopted by the Heads of States at the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit held in Delhi in December 2012 to mark the 20th anniversary of their partnership declared that the partnership elevated to a strategic one, primarily because of the critical mass attained by it.

The Vision Statement derived from the comprehensive report of the Eminent Persons Group which underlined that ASEAN and India share the vision for a peaceful, prosperous and resurgent Asia contributing to global peace and security. As we already know, ASEAN and India constitute a region of 1.8 billion people with a gross domestic product (GDP) of over US\$ 3.8 trillion, which constitutes a huge economic space. India's Free Trade Agreement, which will shortly become a comprehensive one, is creating a huge market in the region and the intra-regional trade is already over \$80 billion. ASEAN and India have multifaceted cooperation in place covering political, economic,

social and cultural areas supported by the ASEAN-India Plan of Action, and over 40 associated meetings have taken place over the last two years and 26 separate dialogue initiatives have been set up. ASEAN and India are strengthening physical, digital and people-to-people connectivity, and with the finalisation of the ASEAN-India trade and transit agreement which has been launched we will have in place a very comprehensive system of trading with each other and sending goods and services across. Myanmar is India's land bridge to ASEAN. ASEAN and India also cooperate in ensuring the security of the sea lanes of communication and addressing non-traditional threats of piracy, terrorism, extremism and narcotics.

In the broader Asian region, India and ASEAN cooperate closely under the aegis of the ASEAN-centred political structures, the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN Defence Ministers Plus, and the negotiations for the creation of a region-wide free economic space known as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). In order to translate the Vision Statement, ASEAN and India would need to further strengthen relevant institutional mechanisms and broaden the network between government institutions, parliamentarians, business circles, scientists, think tanks, media, youth and other stakeholders. The linkages already exist, the trick is to make the exchanges more frequent and regular. The ASEAN-India Centre, established at the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), will be a very strong pillar for such activities in India in the future. We will also have to focus on capacity building, and especially on the next generation. We have to promote defence and military exchanges and cooperation and foster constructive dialogue and consultations on political and security issues. I would suggest that there should be both formal and informal dialogues at working levels, as well as track 1.5 dialogues in this particular area. We should foster greater security cooperation and information sharing to address traditional and non-traditional security challenges including trans-national crimes, terrorism and drug trafficking. We should also promote maritime security and freedom of navigation and safety of sea lanes of communication for unfettered movement of trade. I would suggest the setting up of a Track 1.5 initiative to discuss maritime security and freedom. We should advance regional economic cooperation and cooperate in the construction of the new regional economic architecture. We need to exchange views between ASEAN and Indian think tanks on what our vision for the RCEP should be.

ASEAN-India free trade area would encourage business relations and help achieve the trade target that we have set for ourselves and even double it within the next 10 years.

We should look at various models of infrastructure creation, creation of value chains, the public-private partnership (PPP) model, support small to medium-sized enterprise (SME) cooperation and the ASEAN-India trade and investment centre. We should strengthen cooperation in agriculture and energy sector and the use of appropriate technologies towards ensuring long-term food and energy security, with a special emphasis on rice research because this is a basic staple of consumption in both India and the ASEAN region. We also need to look at health and pharmaceutical development, and perhaps ASEAN and India could cooperate in developing vaccines against malaria which affects us all in this region. We should work together towards overcoming challenges of climate change and natural disaster. ASEAN and India have the largest combined biodiversity in the world and we should cooperate in preserving that.

Finally, we should encourage the study, dissemination and knowledge about the civilisational links and preserve, protect and restore symbols and structures representing the civilisational bond between ASEAN and India. We have created a museum, the MGC Museum in Siem Riep to preserve textile traditions in ASEAN and India, and we should perhaps replicate it. In the field of education, we should promote university exchanges, capacity building and help in the achievement of the ASEAN Community. We could also build cooperation around the Nalanda University. We have to continue the special focus on CLMV countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam) and India's North East, which provides a surface linkage between the two regions. Enhancing air, sea and land connectivity between ASEAN-India through ASEAN-India connectivity projects would be very important and we should link tourism with business hubs and places of civilisational interest.

We would need to incorporate all this into our Plan of Action and implement it. The vision of multifaceted strengthening of the relationship derives from the trend of the last two decades, which has been very encouraging, and the potential that exists, but its realisation will require political will, resources, time and effort.

Special Address

Le Luong Minh

It is now five years since the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community was first adopted. To date, less than two years before the deadline of December 2015, overall about 80 per cent of the measures due under the three ASEAN Community Blueprints have been implemented. The result of the implementation of the Blueprints over the past five years has fundamentally changed the landscape of ASEAN in each of the three pillars of the Community. With enhanced political cohesion, economic integration, social responsibility, the narrowed gap of development within and amongst Member States and the fact that ASEAN has become more connected not only physically but also institutionally and people-to-people, the standing of ASEAN in the region and in the world has been elevated to a highest ever. Politically, with peace, security and stability in our region basically ensured, ASEAN has been increasingly speaking with one voice on regional and global issues of common interest and concern. Economically, substantial gains have been achieved in eliminating tariffs, facilitating trade and investment, integrating capital and aviation markets, enhancing food security, narrowing development gaps and promoting cooperation with external partners, all this contributing to ASEAN's ability to sustain growth in the region despite the volatile external environment resulting from the recent global, especially the Eurozone crisis. Socially, with the promotion of education and youth and cultural exchanges, progress in the implementation of the Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response, greater attention to disadvantaged groups such as disabled people, elements of a caring and sharing society are emerging. With approximately 20 per cent of the measures left for implementation in the next two years, ASEAN is basically on track in Community building.

Such progress has strengthened ASEAN itself as a platform for dialogue and cooperation to preserve and enhance peace and security, a locomotive for open trade, investment and economic growth in the region while maintaining its unity in diversity and its central role in regional mechanisms.

Positive impact of such progress in the process of Community building on external relations is reflected in the number of non-ASEAN countries having acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), which is 22 as of now, two applications pending approval, and in the number of countries having appointed their envoys to ASEAN, which is 78. It also finds expression in the fact that ASEAN's relations with all major partners have moved far beyond trade, investment economic cooperation to more comprehensive partnership encompassing joint projects and programmes in all major spheres of activity.

In that context, with confidence in the prospect of a three-pillared Community established by 2015, ASEAN has already started work on a Post-2015 Vision with a view to setting a firm foundation for a stronger ASEAN Community. While concrete elements of such a vision are still to be developed, there has been broad agreement on its thrust among Member States which share the view that since Community-building is a process, a work in progress, the Post-2015 Vision should be one to enhance and consolidate the ASEAN Community through a continued but deeper and more comprehensive process of integration. The ultimate objective is to build an ASEAN that is politically cohesive, economically integrated and socially responsible, an ASEAN that is people-oriented, people-centred and rule-based, an ASEAN Community well integrated into the global community of nations. It should be a vision addressing the needs of ASEAN in the new phase of development. While integration and peace and stability will remain the preconditions for the region's economic growth, the Post-2015 Vision would lay a greater focus on improving the living conditions of the 600 million people of ASEAN. Thus, it should set concrete goals in expanding trade, investment and economic growth, poverty reduction and narrowing development gaps with a view to ensuring equitable and sustainable development for all Member States. And, both as part of and as a contributor to the realisation of that vision, ASEAN would continue to promote and strengthen its external relations, first and foremost with its immediate East Asian partners. A strong, united and prosperous

ASEAN Community will be an important factor for ensuring peace, stability and prosperity in East Asia and the Asia-Pacific. As one of the only two partners, happening to be two biggest partners population-wise, physically connected to ASEAN with many historical and cultural similarities and a great many shared interests, India has always been and in the context of ASEAN's enhanced Community building process, one of ASEAN's most important partners.

In fact, since India became a Sectoral Dialogue Partner in 1992 and subsequently a full Dialogue Partner of ASEAN in 1995, ASEAN-India relations have grown rapidly. The relations were further elevated with the convening of the inaugural ASEAN-India Summit in 2002. Another important milestone is the elevation of the relations to Strategic Partnership in 2012 at the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit to mark the 20th anniversary of the Dialogue Relations which adopted the ASEAN-India Vision Statement which serves as a roadmap for ASEAN and India to work towards an enduring partnership for peace and shared prosperity. As we continue to implement the initiatives contained in the Vision Statement, the task at hand for us is to ensure that the implementation is effective with high impact and mutually beneficial cooperation projects and activities. Let me highlight salient areas in which efforts need to be doubled:

First, in the Vision Statement, the Leaders of ASEAN and India expressed their strong commitment to realise the trade and economic potentials of the strategic partnership. With a combined market of over 1.8 billion people and a gross domestic product (GDP) of US\$ 3.8 trillion as well as relative geographical proximity, there are huge potentials waiting to be tapped in ASEAN-India trade, investment and economic cooperation. While the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods (TIG) Agreement was already signed in August 2009, the agreements on trade in services and investment having been concluded and legally scrubbed are yet to be signed. The agreements should be ratified by all parties as soon as possible. We also need to promote and devise measures to ensure the free trade agreement (FTA) benefits the business community on both sides. Deeper private sector engagement is vital to enhance our economic ties. I believe with concerted efforts we will be able to achieve the target of US\$ 100 billion for ASEAN-India trade by 2015, as well as increase tariff-free lines beyond the existing levels. Given the importance of

the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership to both ASEAN and India, the two sides, in a phased approach focusing on delivering on the core issues identified in the Guiding Principles, should work closely together to achieve the target of concluding the negotiations by 2015.

Second, ASEAN is embarking on a bold and long-term strategy to improve the region's physical, institutional and people-to-people connectivity. Enhanced ASEAN connectivity would promote ASEAN centrality in the regional architecture, facilitate the building of an ASEAN Community and serve as a foundation for enhanced connectivity beyond the region. This is in line with the commitment of the Leaders in the Vision Statement to further strengthen ASEAN-India connectivity. Expanding and improving road, rail, maritime and air linkages will be crucial to further increase ASEAN-India trade and investment. The development of the Mekong-India Economic Corridor, the early construction of the new India-Myanmar-Lao PDR-Vietnam-Cambodia Highway and the extension of the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway to Lao PDR and Cambodia would promote transport infrastructure linkages, hence contributing to the increase in two-way trade and investment. At the same time, ASEAN-India air connectivity could be strengthened by working towards greater liberalisation of air services, both cargo and passengers. In this connection, the ASEAN-India Air Services Agreement should be concluded as soon as possible. Concrete ways and means should be explored to support the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity in areas where India has strong expertise and interest. Regular exchanges between the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) and India's Inter-Ministerial Group on Connectivity would be essential to advance ASEAN Connectivity and ASEAN-India connectivity.

Third, another key area of importance to our partnership is information and communications. ASEAN-India cooperation in information and communications technology (ICT), particularly digital connectivity, through sharing of best practices in policy, regulations and technological development and capacity building programmes should be further encouraged.

Fourth, the Leaders of ASEAN and India also stressed the importance of strengthening socio-cultural cooperation and people-to-people interaction in the Vision Statement. ASEAN-India collaboration in this broad area has expanded to include human resource development, science and technology

(S&T), people-to-people contacts, health and pharmaceuticals, transport and infrastructure, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), tourism, ICT, agriculture and energy. In order to promote dynamism in this area of cooperation, ASEAN and India need to collaborate to implement concrete activities in culture, education, youth, sports, creative industries, science and technology, information and communication technology and software, human resource development as well as scholarly exchanges. There is also need to enhance contacts between parliamentarians, media personnel, academics and Track II institutions.

Fifth, ASEAN and India need to continue the momentum gained in their cooperation to support the narrowing of the development gaps in ASEAN. India has been contributing to narrowing the development gaps in ASEAN through the implementation of a number of high impact projects and programmes. India's efforts and support to the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) by implementing programmes in entrepreneurship training, English language and ICT have contributed significantly to enhance the capacity of CLMV countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam). As stressed by the Leaders of ASEAN and India in the Vision Statement, enhancing cooperation in bridging the development gaps needs to be continued and further promoted.

Sixth, ASEAN and India need to work closely to strengthen cooperation in agriculture and food security, as well as promote cooperation in tourism, space science, ICT and climate change and environment. In addition, ASEAN and India need to expand their cooperation in energy security, renewable energy and disaster management.

Seventh, people-to-people exchanges are a key component to further cultivate our partnership. There is need to continue to promote people-to-people interactions through, among others, university networking, young business leaders programmes, religious and cultural exchanges, and continue the existing exchange programmes for students, diplomats, farmers and media.

Eighth, ASEAN and India need to strengthen their consultations/cooperation by making full use of existing multilateral fora, including ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN-Europe Meeting, the East Asia Summit where India has been a strong supporter of ASEAN's central role, as well as the United Nations (UN) and other bodies within the UN system, where more than with

any other partners, ASEAN shares with India most common positions with regards to respect for most fundamental principles of international law and international relations, where India is well-known and highly respected for its promotion of the culture of non-violence, ASEAN for its consistent support for the principle of non-use of force, in order to strengthen a sound multilateral system amidst the continually changing regional and global strategic landscapes with a view to defending and advancing the common interests of ASEAN and India in promoting peace, stability and prosperity.

Finally, as the ASEAN-India partnership keeps evolving, in the meantime periodic reviews of cooperation programmes are necessary for possible adjustments to enable them to correspond to the needs of both sides in their respective new stages of development. Outcomes of Track II deliberations such as those at the Delhi Dialogues can be meaningful contributions to those reviews.

1

A Corporate Indian Vision

K.N. Vaidyanathan

As a representative of the Mahindra Group, it is a very special privilege to get invited to this event. Our association is as much emotional because the last dialogue was preceded by an ASEAN-India car rally and Mahindra's XUV500 participated in that event in which 31 XUVs went across 8000 km transiting through 8 countries out of ASEAN and ending in Delhi.

A friend of mine who recently retired from the Ministry of External Affairs once told me, "Because the world is round, every country becomes strategically important to every other country." It is a rather apt statement, especially in a globalised world. While trade goes back several centuries in this world, true globalisation happened over the last 20+ years with the boom in telecommunication and technology. There was a little bit of a bump with the 1997 Asian financial crisis, but the 2000s were especially tough on globalisation. Two big events happened in that decade. One was the upsurge in terrorism and the second was the global financial crisis. As a consequence, a lot of countries though they insisted that they continued to support globalisation, their actions seemed to suggest otherwise, not exactly "deglobalisation" but a step backwards, an attempt to ring fence, to control. It is in this context that we believe that regionalisation is an important intermediate step, and it would benefit a lot of countries get to globalisation in a two-step process as opposed to a single step and be subject to the volatility.

I would like to first discuss in brief about the Mahindra Group. We moved from no-wheels, that is, boats, to four-wheels, to making aircrafts. Moreover,

we are engaged in business-to-consumer (B2C), business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-government (B2G) interactions. We also work with government arms like the defence, but our approach has been almost aligned to the nation's priorities, and that is why internally we feel that our growth over the years has been aligned a lot to India's own strategic objective. Our group was established just prior to independence and we had the jeep manufacturing licence. Roads were not good; so you needed vehicles which could be used on challenging terrain as well. As the focus went on to agriculture, through the planning process we got into tractors. We really started diversifying only in the 90s as the world globalised and India liberalised; and we got into what were important areas like financial services, information technology (IT), and then exploring the boom in the middle class we went into areas like retail, real estate—building residential houses, affordable houses—and time-share holiday resorts. Over the last 10 years, we have also been growing globally, and our approach has been largely based on India's strategic focus, and over the last two-three, we have been increasing our footprint in the ASEAN region. We now have a presence through the auto or tractor business in seven to eight countries and, through our IT subsidiary, presence in five countries. Our aim is to target ASEAN as a region—it would be at least 5-10 per cent of the group by 2021 and that is the picture that we see.

We identify opportunity under four different buckets. The first opportunity bucket relates to “Rural Prosperity”. There is tremendous amount of experience and expertise that the Mahindra Group has had in India, and learnings from here and from other parts of the world helped us in finding solutions which are focused on the farmer. We call it “Farmer First”. We focus on what kind of technology; implements; financing and advice farmers would require on inputs like seeds, soil, fertilisers and water. In fact it is really in the financing area we believe that there is so much commonality between the Indian framework and the framework in a lot of the ASEAN countries where we still need to ensure financial inclusion happens at the convenience of the consumer, and not as mandated by law.

The second bucket that we see an opportunity in is “Mobility”. Anand Mahindra in an address said that the direction for mobility is changing because of the changed question that the consumer will ask. The consumer is no more

going to ask the question, “Which car do I buy?” The consumer will ask the question, “What is the best way for me to move from point A to point B?” Therefore, it just changes the paradigm of finding mobility solutions. It is not about one-size fits all—“I have this car, take it.” It is about finding smart solutions which would be a combination of private and public transport and a combination of different modes of transport in the process.

The third opportunity bucket is in the realm of “Business Productivity”. India has taken a great leap in technology particularly in the realm of software. In ASEAN, just like in India, the growth engine will be the small and medium enterprises, and it is this cross-fertilisation of experience and knowledge that we believe can bring value to both the societies. Specifically as enablers, I believe there are a couple of areas that we can work on. One, an important enabler of business is markets, and an important necessary evil of markets is regulation. This is where financial regulatory experience or expertise can be exported across and I call that duty FREE for financial regulatory expertise export. So, there is an opportunity for a lot of exchange between these countries to help build best practices. We don’t necessarily have to mimic the western models because the capitalism as understood in this part of the world is not free market capitalism, it is a lot more what I would call societal capitalism.

The fourth area where we see opportunity is “Urbanisation.” There has been an approach that the West has taken on urbanisation. If you would look at a country like the US, except 15-20 cities which have a lot of history, most other cities look similar. Somebody would uncharitably say they built one city and then photocopied it to build the rest. But our part of the world has tremendous amount of history. So, urbanisation is not just about building concrete jungles; it is about building cities with a soul. Unless the soul is in place, you are not going to create communities living together in a harmonious fashion.

But of course there are certain sieves to ensure that these opportunities are best addressed. The first is ‘Sustainability’. Businesses have to get lot more cognisant about responsibilities on scarce resources and this ties in with the Vision Statement, which talks about the endeavour to ensure food security and energy security. So, corporations can play a great role if they work on the principle of sustainability as one of the platforms.

The second is quality. Consumers are getting exceptionally demanding

on high quality for less cost, more value for less. Across this region is a very young, well-informed audience, they know what is 'best in class.' It is not about providing them cheap solutions, it is about providing them with effective, good value alternatives.

The third is innovation. A lot of this can get very collaborative in virtual laboratories. You could run laboratories in the realm of mobility across seven countries. The laboratories could be all virtually connected to each other to find creative solutions.

Finally, the big focus should be at the bottom of the pyramid. A large part of these societies have a large number of deprived people who do not have access to a lot of the services. We need to very consciously find what I would call social entrepreneurs, or business entrepreneurs who are modelled on delivering value to bottom of the pyramid on business principles not as just charity because that is not a self-sustaining model. You need to find those business models which will drive focus to the bottom of the pyramid but on complete business principles.

So, just as governments around the world get together on G2, G7, G10 and G20 forums I would say that maybe this forum could create a B10 or a B12 of about 10-12 business corporations from the region, mandate them to come as a team because progress happens not based on what we do with each other because that is very transactional; progress happens when we work together. That is relationship building. I believe there is a significant business opportunity if we can find the right models because there is a felt need. So, the challenge really is how do we come together to find those solutions.

2

A Corporate Perspective on India's Look East Policy

Madhu Kannan

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-India partnership document of 2012 clearly articulated a vision to strive towards a full, effective and timely implementation of the ASEAN-India dialogue across a whole spectrum of political and security, economic, social-cultural and development cooperation across all stakeholders. In this paper, I am going to focus on the economic linkages, being a member of the corporate sector, particularly the Tata Group. With an emphasis towards building broader stakeholder value, I strongly believe that the corporate sector should look at issues beyond business to those of the wider community. It wants to be part of the ASEAN-India economic dialogue as well as the ASEAN-India socio-cultural and development story because that is where the sector actually builds greater stakeholder connectivity.

ASEAN is one of the obvious trade partners for the corporate sector. In the same way trade with other major partners and blocks have increased substantially in the last 10 years we have seen a jump in our trade with ASEAN countries as well. Though today the ASEAN-India trade volume is \$76 billion, and though this may make ASEAN one of the major trading partners, this represents only 3 per cent of all of ASEAN's trade, and hence there is tremendous scope for increasing it further.

Before I go to the specifics, I just want to spend a few seconds on what the Tata Group is and what we do in the region. We have operations, and do

business, in all the 10 ASEAN countries across a wide variety of industries. We run steel plants in Singapore and Thailand, with manufacturing facilities in Myanmar and Thailand, and we also market our commercial vehicles in many parts of ASEAN. Our technology company has got delivery centres in Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines with plans in three-four other ASEAN countries too. On the energy side, we source raw material from Indonesia, and we have signed up projects to build power projects in Vietnam and Myanmar. Given the existing presence and potential, the holding company is in the process of setting up a representative office for the Tata Group focusing specifically on ASEAN, to be initially headquartered in Singapore.

As a multinational with strong Indian roots and a big believer in the potential of ASEAN, the Tata Group does have a great interest, and so do other companies, in moving forward in the implementation of the vision on the economic front focussing on advancing economic cooperation across the two geographies. The Indian Government has clearly made strides in developing relations with the ASEAN through their Look East Policy over the last couple of decades. I think it is time that the corporate sector in India looks at building its own Look East Strategy that complements what the government is actually doing from a political perspective. Corporate India needs to work more closely as a team to identify specific projects in some of the ASEAN countries and present a solution to our government by which we can actually build these relationships and opportunities.

I will focus on six or seven areas wherein the corporate sector can drive towards growth of ASEAN-India economic dialogue. In our view connectivity is the most important part of building this greater trade and investment link between ASEAN and India. The other categories that I will talk about are energy cooperation, infrastructure, manufacturing, services, skill and tourism.

Connectivity can be classified into four different buckets: roads, maritime, aviation and digital connectivity. The world is becoming more and more digital, and therefore, it is equally important to emphasise digital connectivity as the other physical connectivity. Particularly, connectivity in the supply-chain could foster people-to-people, business-to-business and government-to-government relations, and build an ecosystem for greater bilateral trade and investment.

Clearly, road connectivity would bring more vibrancy to the North Eastern States. Maritime connectivity in addition to being important from a security

perspective has also significant positive implications for logistics in easing transportation costs, and from India's perspective opens up some very interesting opportunities on the East Coast. There are few industrial parks that are being considered on the Eastern Coast which will actually benefit from looking at greater maritime connectivity with the ASEAN. As regards aviation connectivity, we as a group, are partners with two different airlines from the ASEAN region coming into India. Aviation connectivity is very important and has the ability to promote tourism, cultural exchanges and ease the accessibility for business. Finally, digital connectivity is rather significant for sharing information, ideas, technologies, innovation and design.

On the energy front, I think there are lot of opportunities on the ASEAN-India corridor. ASEAN can be a partner in helping India with some of its energy challenges given the rich raw materials present in some parts of the region. In the same way, Indian industry can play a prominent role in helping certain ASEAN countries develop their energy infrastructure. Bringing Indian expertise in developing sophisticated power plants to generate energy at globally competitive costs and in an environmental friendly manner is something India should be actively articulating, for example, the Tata Group has signed two different initiatives, one in Vietnam and the other in Myanmar. We should collectively put forward our best foot to leverage these resources and strengths on both sides to address our respective needs. Moreover, Indian companies have increasingly developed expertise in developing power projects in renewables, especially hydro; therefore, facilitating Indian companies in this space to compete and look for opportunities in those ASEAN countries that have access to hydro is a good way to look at specific initiatives.

On the infrastructure side, some of the areas where we could focus on as corporate sector are water, sanitation, roads and rail development, urban planning and power. These are areas where Indian businesses can bring the expertise in the ASEAN markets. But the challenge here from an implementation perspective is identification of these projects, creating an information network that will help corporate sector in India connect to the opportunities very early on as well as identify appropriate local partners and help execute these projects. We know that these projects exist from a macro perspective, but the important considerations are: How do we get information early? How do we get the right people to partner?. In this context, one of the aspirations in the Vision Statement is to strengthen private sector engagement

and PPP linkages. We believe that it is in the area of infrastructure where we can really focus on creating appropriate PPPs and get Indian companies to participate.

A related topic which I also want to place on record is the importance of appropriate financing solutions. That is an area where I think a combination of our government and appropriate financing agencies, if they do exist on the other side, can play an important role to facilitate Indian companies to participate in projects in infrastructure. We see this happening at a much more mature level in other geographies, and I think there is a very strong case to be made for increasing involvement and coming up with appropriate financing structure for these infrastructure projects in the region.

On the manufacturing side, given our experience, we believe there is a case to be made to bring low-cost, high-quality manufacturing from India into ASEAN. For example, we have been part of some interesting localisation projects in Thailand, and it has been a good experience.

On the services side there is potential for the more developed markets in the ASEAN, for example, Singapore or Malaysia to create services and IT hubs which can help Indian companies cater to the demands in the ASEAN market and also the global market. In fact, Indian companies are increasingly using bases in places like Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines to actually service not just the ASEAN market but also the global markets, and the global customer base. So, it is an area where we can drive greater linkages.

Concerning small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), it is very important for them to get access to high quality information and opportunities on the ASEAN side because the cost of getting information, the cost of getting data on where opportunities lie is pretty high. Therefore, if we can collectively create some sort of a business-to-business (B2B) portal which will enable manufacturers and suppliers to get a better understanding of the opportunities on the ASEAN side, and vice versa for ASEAN SMEs to understand what opportunities are on the Indian side, it will be very useful.

As regards the skills and the soft infrastructure side, by increasing people-to-people exchanges and sharing best practices and educational programmes, we believe we can help both ASEAN and India develop the skills that need to support the fast growth. The English language training programme, for example, is enabling our companies to connect better with the opportunities

in the ASEAN markets. Other ways should be explored for private sector to get involved to advance this agenda. An initiative wherein the Indian Government is supporting Myanmar is by helping set up the Myanmar Institute of Information Technology. If the private sector were to participate along with the government in programmes such as these, it could prove to be very supportive.

I will conclude by making one last point on tourism. Tourism is a great opportunity on the India-ASEAN corridor and instead of looking at it from a macro perspective, it will be useful to create destination corridors. This is a way where we can leverage historical and religious links on the ASEAN-India corridor by facilitating tourism to religious and historical sites. For tourism to work, greater aviation connectivity and hassle-free visas for tourists and businesses are very important.

3

Translating the ‘Vision Statement’: Perspective from Vietnam

Hoang Anh Tuan

When we talk about the role of India in South East Asia, and India-Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) relations, we also make some comparisons between India’s growth, its position and influence in the region with other external powers, and there is a tentative agreement among us when making such comparisons. When people talk about Japan, China and the US, everyone agrees now that they are the actual powers, and that they are exercising their influence in the Asia-Pacific region. But India doesn’t seem to have much visible presence in the region, although it has an increasing influence in the region. So, we talk of India as the potential power.

In 2014, we are seeing more determination and commitment from both India and ASEAN to strengthen our ties, to make India’s presence more visible in the region. And that is a welcome sign. When we look at the relationship, especially the Vision Statement, we see that it is built upon the recognition of the importance of India and ASEAN, as well as the ever increasing ties since they signed the partnership for peace and shared prosperity in 1992.

I would like to focus on the three reasons that have facilitated the ties between India and ASEAN over the past years. The first reason is that there is a high level of mutual trust between India and ASEAN. That is very important if you compare that to the trust that ASEAN has with the other powers outside the region. The ASEAN members don’t see India desiring to dominate South East Asia, or any individual member country in the ASEAN.

Also, ASEAN members see India as playing an active role in maintaining peace and stability within the region. From India's perspective we see that it does not see ASEAN as being used by any other power outside the region to contain or weaken India.

The second reason for the improvement of relations between India and ASEAN lies upon the strong determination of our political leaders to cement and consolidate our ties. As early as 1990s, India had formulated the Look East Policy. So, we see that the orientation of India's policy towards the region was perhaps the first among the major powers pivoting to South East Asia.

ASEAN sees the importance of India as a huge market for its products. So, the increased ties with India would be beneficial for ASEAN's economic development and ASEAN's future. From ASEAN's perspective, by forming the partnership with India we also want to diversify our relations with the other major powers. We see that the important element for the maintenance of peace and security in the region is by engaging the major powers in the region as much as possible. This is not about balance of power but about balance of interest. When the major powers have more and more influence in the region, they will have to balance among themselves, they will have to maintain peace and security for the region.

The third reason for a visible development in our relations is that our relations began at a rather low point. So, it is easier to see a dramatic improvement in our bilateral relations.

Coming to the recommendations on how to translate the ASEAN-India Vision Statement: When we look at the six-page statement, we see that it is quite comprehensive. Also, we see that we have to take into consideration our limited financial and human resources. So we can't carry out all the elements present in the Statement. And I would like to pick a few critical points. These could serve as the pioneer projects, have far-reaching effects and also be easily implemented.

My first recommendation is to strengthen the scholarly exchanges among various institutions between India and Vietnam. In 2009, the Prime Minister of India initiated the idea to set up the ASEAN-India think tanks, and in 2012, the launch of the ASEAN-India network think tanks in India was materialised. So we would like to see the utilisation of the existing network within ASEAN, and link that with various research institutions in India and

individual ASEAN members. Such linkages are possible when we have economic, political, diplomatic and defence cooperation. The strategic linkages and scholarly exchanges would serve as firm foundations for our relations to move forward.

The second recommendation is that we need to have an early conclusion of the ASEAN-India services and investment agreement. That is critical. If we look at the broader picture, there are several Free Trade Area Agreements FTAs that are in the process of conclusion like Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), the trans-Atlantic trade and investment agreement, the ASEAN economic community, etc. So, an agreement between ASEAN and India on services and investment will serve as a critical element to help us to firm the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiations.

My third recommendation is about connectivity. I think the connectivity between ASEAN and India should be modelled after ASEAN connectivity, i.e., the infrastructure connectivity, institutional connectivity and people-to-people connectivity. In terms of infrastructure connectivity, we need to focus not only on land connectivity, for example, the India-Myanmar highway corridor, but also on air and sea connectivity. For instance, it would mean direct flights between India and ASEAN's major cities, and also the role of TPP in facilitating that.

The fourth recommendation concerns human resources in five areas: language skills, training on management and leadership, training for business community on entrepreneurship, training for undergraduate level students and training for IT personnel.

My fifth recommendation is about the increasing security cooperation between India and ASEAN. The Indian Ocean is very significant for India's trade and economic development. I share the view that the safety of maritime navigation in the Indian Ocean and South China Sea is very critical, and we would like to see a visible role that India plays to bring about peace, stability in the entire South East Asian region.

4

ASEAN-India Vision Statement: Evolving Role for India in the Asia-Pacific Region

Wilfrido V. Villacorta

I examine the possibilities that are envisaged by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-India Vision Statement, in the light of opportunities accompanying the rapid developments unfolding in the Asia-Pacific region. Among these are the geopolitical issues that involve the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea, the economic significance to India of the formation of the ASEAN Community in 2015, and the strategic alternatives for India to balance the influence of emerging powers.

In the recent past, there have been news reports about highly volatile incidents in our region: North Korea fired two Scud missiles off its east coast, coinciding with the annual military exercises of South Korea and the US. China used water cannons to drive away Filipino fishermen from the disputed Scarborough Shoal. Fears of a possible armed conflict in the East China Sea increased as Chinese ships entered waters near disputed islands claimed by both Japan and China.

All these developments impact on the whole of the Asia-Pacific region and challenge the resolve of the signatory countries to realise the ASEAN-India Vision Statement adopted in December 2012. Likewise, the ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations that were elevated to Strategic Partnership in the same year will be put to the test.

I will focus on the three main elements of the Vision Statement: political

and security cooperation, economic cooperation and socio-cultural cooperation.

On political and security cooperation, it is significant that the Vision Statement is “committed to strengthening cooperation to ensure maritime security and freedom of navigation, and safety of sea lanes of communication for unfettered movement of trade in accordance with international law, including UNCLOS”.

India’s support for ASEAN initiatives is very encouraging. At the East Asia Summit in 2013, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh welcomed the establishment of the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum “for developing maritime norms that would reinforce existing international law relating to maritime security”. He lauded the ASEAN Leaders’ “collective commitment to abide by and implement the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and to work towards the adoption of a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea on the basis of consensus”.

In an interview to an Indonesian daily, the Prime Minister expressed the belief that regional forums can play a useful role in managing the rivalry among powers in the region. He found “immense value in the East Asia Summit, ASEAN Regional Forum, ADMM Plus and other cooperative mechanisms in the region”.

On the economic front, ASEAN and India have much to benefit from their economic partnership. India ranks as the world’s 10th largest economy by nominal gross domestic product (GDP) and the third largest by purchasing power parity (PPP). According to William Avery in his book, *India as the next Global Power*, India’s capital market system is one of its main competitive advantages. The country has more listed firms than China, Russia and Brazil combined.

Ambassador Chak Mun See, former High Commissioner of Singapore to India, published a comprehensive book, *India’s Strategic Interests in Southeast Asia and Singapore*. He believes that India will always regard ASEAN as an essential partner because of ASEAN’s increasing economic and strategic importance. Being the fastest growing economic region in the world, it is the eighth largest economy and has an aggregate economic size of US\$2.3 trillion and a population of more than 600 million. ASEAN is the third pillar of growth in Asia, in addition to China and India, with an average GDP growth

of around 6 per cent per annum. The Vision Statement is committed to realising the ASEAN-India free trade area (FTA) with a combined market of almost 1.8 billion people and a combined GDP of US\$3.8 trillion.

Trade between ASEAN and India has increased to US\$ 75.6 billion in 2012. India remained as ASEAN's sixth largest trading partner in that year. Foreign direct investment flow from India to ASEAN totalled US\$2.6 billion. ASEAN-India trade today is at US\$76 billion and a target of US\$100 billion by 2015 and US\$200 billion by 2022 has been set. The success of the economic cooperation between ASEAN and India will have a bearing on the influence of India as a regional power. As Avery has put it, "A muscular foreign policy will only be possible if India concurrently becomes a major economic power."

In the area of socio-cultural cooperation, the Vision Statement encourages the study, documentation and dissemination of knowledge about centuries of civilisational links between peoples of ASEAN and India. People-to-people interaction will be strengthened through exchanges in culture, education, youth, sports, creative industries, science and technology, information and communication technology and software, human resource development and scholarly exchanges. Contacts among parliamentarians, media personnel, academics and Track II institutions will be promoted. The ASEAN-India Eminent Persons Group stressed the need to further support the revival of Nalanda University, which will serve as an icon of Asian renaissance and remind different generations of Indians and Southeast Asians of the civilisational links between them.

The Economist observes that as a great power, India would have much to offer: "Although poorer and less economically dynamic than China, India has soft power in abundance. It is committed to democratic institutions, the rule of law and human rights. As a victim of jihadist violence, it is in the front rank of the fight against terrorism. It has a huge and talented diaspora. It may not want to be co-opted by the West but it shares many Western values. It is confident and culturally rich. If it had a permanent Security Council seat (which it has earned by being one of the most consistent contributors to UN peacekeeping operations), it would not instinctively excuse and defend brutal regimes. Unlike China and Russia, it has few skeletons in its cupboard. With its enormous coastline and respected navy (rated by its American counterpart, with which it often holds exercises, as up to NATO standard). India is well-placed to provide security in a critical part of the global commons."

With the demands of an imperilled world, a rising power like India should no longer be reluctant to offer itself as the alternative regional power. Being the oldest civilisation, steeped not only in material achievements but also respected because of its historic contribution to spirituality and ethical values, India has the moral ascendancy and most of all, the urgent responsibility to assume this leadership. The peoples of ASEAN have of late been traumatised by the predatory behaviour of an upstart power. They do not want to be pawns in the fierce rivalry among the recognised rival Big Powers in Asia and the Pacific. We can identify more with the values that India stands for, rather than with the raw pragmatism and excessive ambition of one who suffered at the hands of colonialists but who cannot wait for its turn to imitate the intimidating ways of their former oppressors.

Added to its provenance as an old civilisation are India's more recent credentials which have earned the trust of its neighbours in Southeast Asia: India's leadership in the post-war pacifist and non-aligned movement, and its record as the largest democracy.

Finally, I would like to end by quoting from the book, *The Discovery of India*, written by India's great visionary leader, Jawaharlal Nehru, during his four years of incarceration as a political prisoner. Seventy-one years ago, he already saw the destiny of India: "The Pacific is likely to take the place of the Atlantic in the future as the nerve centre of the world. Though not directly a Pacific state, India will also develop as the centre of economic and political activity in the Indian Ocean area, in south-east Asia and right up the Middle East. Her position gives an economic and strategic importance in a part of the world, which is going to develop rapidly in the future."

5

Translating the ASEAN-India Vision Statement into Reality: Challenges and Prospects

K.S. Nathan

Introduction

We have already been exposed to all the necessary measures and steps that need to be taken to further strengthen the India-Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) partnership. And now it is important to perhaps recall the drivers of this cooperation: Why is it occurring at this stage and why is this momentum building? So, I would like to offer my own perspective on this India-ASEAN strategic partnership and the factors that I think are very important in moving forward towards strengthening India's role in ASEAN, and in Southeast Asia. My focus is on political and security cooperation.

Firstly, the geopolitical dynamics of the region do play a very important role as these strategic dynamics are clearly driven by considerations such as the increasing pace of globalisation and also the whole concept of ASEAN centrality. All the major powers have actually bought into this concept of ASEAN centrality, as ASEAN does not threaten anyone, making it very comfortable for external powers to contribute to this regional process and to find space within which they can engage themselves very positively. So, as India is rising, it is increasingly evident that India has the space and the opportunity to contribute to regional integration and development led by ASEAN.

Over the past 20 years we clearly have seen the emergence of India as an important partner in the political, security and economic dimensions of ASEAN's development. But we also have to keep in mind that there are other major powers which are also of concern to India as India increases its engagement—and quite clearly these powers are the US and China. China's increasing role in this region is clearly providing strong incentives for India to engage itself in Southeast Asia, given the fact that Asia has always been influenced and energised by the two major civilisations—China and India. ASEAN is an embodiment of 10,000 years of civilisational history, influenced by India on one side, and China on the other, with both impacting on culture, economics and society of Southeast Asia. This process of political, economic, cultural and strategic engagement has been going on, albeit intermittently, and has intensified with the end of the Cold War and the onset of globalisation. What we are witnessing now is the re-emergence of India under new circumstances, informed by the twin forces of ever-increasing globalisation and interdependence. As one analyst observes, the sheer numbers of its growing population, the expanding middle class, the robust military establishment and the country's increasing sophistication in high-technology are shaping India's inevitable rise as a major global political, economic and military power in the 21st century.¹ India's rise would invariably impact the foreign policies of other major political units such as the US, China, Russia, Japan, and in Southeast Asia, ASEAN. As equally noted by a leading Indian scholar, "In the coming years, it will have an opportunity to shape outcomes on the most critical issues of the twenty-first century: the construction of Asian stability, the political modernisation of the greater Middle East, and the management of globalisation."²

ASEAN and India as two major political entities are empowering themselves by discovering and developing synergies and points of convergence that are strengthening their bilateral interactions for the peace, security and development of Asia as a whole. Thus, what is equally evident in this interactive process is the phenomenon of mutual empowerment: this new scenario has produced the rationale for the India-ASEAN strategic partnership. Both entities have now been freed from the clutches of Cold War politics, and have developed a new sense of confidence and self-reliance in addressing the era of post-Cold War globalisation and the attendant constraints and opportunities embodying this new era of international relations.

ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership: Moving Forward on Political and Security Cooperation

Southeast Asia is a region that conjoins the interests of all major powers, especially the US, China, India, Japan and Russia. All of them are major players and the ASEAN approach has been very inclusive. This is also the reason why this regional entity encompassing all 10 states is able to work quite harmoniously with all the major powers. ASEAN is a very inclusive region, and importantly, it is the ASEAN process that is facilitating a regional environment that ensures mutual security, development and prosperity for all actors. ASEAN's regionalism is anchored in the principle of cooperative security which desists from identifying any major power as a threat to regional security; rather, the focus is on inclusive security whereby every actor—big, medium and small—finds sufficient opportunity to make a positive contribution to building an Asian security community. The principle and practice of cooperative security by ASEAN incorporates and does not exclude the operational dynamics of the balance of power.³ Indeed, the 'ASEAN Way' has never been a zero-sum game in international politics. Rather, the regional entity has always attempted to find a *modus vivendi* in accommodating and not rejecting diverse approaches to regional security. A cooperative security regime is by definition a non-threat based approach to regional order, but is not an alternative to the balance of power. The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) demonstrates that both concepts—balance of power and cooperative security—can co-exist and contribute to dynamic stability in Asia's regional order in which endogenous and exogenous forces can cooperate. ASEAN therefore welcomes the engagement of all major powers, and this has made possible India's increased participation.

India fully supports ASEAN centrality, because as long as ASEAN is the driver, mover, facilitator and moderator there is room for everyone to engage without the external powers themselves conflicting with each other in Southeast Asia. Indeed, the essence of the concept of ASEAN centrality lies in ASEAN's dexterity in managing the involvement and engagement of all the major powers in the region in a cooperative manner, and as far as possible, to reduce conflict. It is this scenario that offers the right prospects for the growth of the ASEAN-India partnership. India's strategic role and contribution to ASEAN security and the regional balance of power is welcomed by most of the countries in

the region, many of whom “are wary of Chinese expansionism and are looking for a viable alternative. India, therefore, tends to be viewed as a countervailing force to China. The ASEAN countries mainly view India’s naval growth as a promising development”.⁴ Over the past 20 years since China occupied the Philippines-claimed Mischief Reef, Beijing has begun flexing its newfound political, economic and military power in the South China Sea (SCS), causing tension and concerns among other claimants—Vietnam, Philippines and Malaysia, all members of ASEAN.

The SCS disputes have thus far prevented ASEAN from moving forward in implementing the concept of ASEAN centrality in maintaining regional order and resolving the SCS claims via the 2002 Declaration on Conduct of the Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), and progressing towards the Code of Conduct (COC). Moreover, it has split the ASEAN consensus, whereby the non-claimant states such as Cambodia and Myanmar, through Beijing’s influence, have stalled the COC. India’s rise and power-projection capability has triggered Chinese concerns over New Delhi’s expression of interest in ensuring the security of sea lanes and the importance of resolving overlapping claims by peaceful means. China’s 9-dash U-shaped line in SCS proclaims sovereignty over 90 per cent of the SCS, thereby basically nullifying the legitimate claims of other littoral states, and also attracting greater attention from the big powers, especially from New Delhi and Washington. While India might cautiously welcome the US pivot to Asia in balance of power terms, China views the “pivot” as an effort to encircle and contain its growing influence.

Since India became a Dialogue Partner of ASEAN, it has participated in a series of consultative meetings with ASEAN under the framework of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations including summits, ministerial meetings, senior official’s meetings and meetings at the experts’ level. Other related dialogue and cooperation frameworks initiated by ASEAN, such as the ARF, the Post-Ministerial Conference (PMC) 10+1, the East Asia Summit (EAS), Mekong-Ganga Cooperation and Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), are all designed to contribute towards strengthening regional dialogue and accelerating regional integration.⁵ To intensify their engagement, the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity was signed at the third ASEAN-India Summit in Lao

PDR on November 30, 2004. A Plan of Action (2004-2010) was also developed to implement the Partnership. Subsequently, the new ASEAN-India Plan of Action for 2010-2015 was developed and adopted by the leaders at the eighth ASEAN-India Summit in October 2010 in Hanoi, Vietnam.

While these measures provide evidence of intent of deeper bilateral engagement in the 21st century, there needs to be a greater focus on cooperation in non-traditional security (NTS) where implementation of the Vision Statement is arguably less problematic and less controversial. Key areas where India-ASEAN bilateral cooperation can be enhanced, as outlined in the Vision Statement, include maritime security, terrorism, drug trafficking and cyber crime. Since India launched its Look East Policy in 1992, the level of India-ASEAN engagement on political, economic and security issues has grown, with a substantial increase in cooperation following India's accession to ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in 2003. Over the past 20 years, India has emerged as an important political, security and economic partner of ASEAN. The rising economic and military power of China and its growing assertiveness in the SCS provides added incentives for India and ASEAN to shape the balance of power for promoting mutual interests. ASEAN and India view each other's expanding international capacity for sub-regionalism and broader Asia-wide regionalism as opening up many new frontiers for closer engagement and cooperation. The Indo-Pacific region today represents the conjunction of the strategic interests of six major political entities: the US, China, India, Japan, Russia and ASEAN.

International cooperation to combat transnational terrorism especially since the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States and terrorist bombings in Bali (2002) and Jakarta (2005), has become a high priority agenda of ASEAN's engagement with external powers. ASEAN and India recognise the importance of addressing the NTS issue impacting regional and global security. Globalisation has increased the pressure on the State and regional institutions to cope more effectively with transnational ideological forces that are bent on destroying the current world order through violence and terror. Both India and ASEAN continue to face the challenge of religious militancy and extremism. The framework for joint ASEAN-India cooperation to combat terrorism was endorsed during the ASEAN leaders' Bali Summit on October 8, 2003. Since then, both parties have continued to implement the various

measures identified in the Joint Declaration: (i) Continue and improve intelligence and terrorist financing information sharing on counter-terrorism measures, including the development of more effective counter-terrorism policies and legal, regulatory and administrative counter-terrorism regimes; (ii) Enhance liaison relationships amongst their law enforcement agencies to engender practical counter-terrorism regimes; (iii) Strengthen capacity-building efforts through training and education, hold consultations between officials, analysts and field operators and organise seminars, conferences and joint operations as appropriate; (iv) Provide assistance on transportation, border and immigration control challenges, including document and identity fraud to stem the flow of terrorist-related material, money and people effectively; (v) Comply with United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1373, 1267, 1390 and other United Nations resolutions or declarations on combating international terrorism; and (vi) Explore on a mutual basis additional areas of cooperation.⁶

India and the East Asia Summit (EAS)

India's membership and role in EAS is a grudging recognition by certain countries that it is no longer possible to talk about Asian security by focusing only on China's rise and influence. More ASEAN members, especially Indonesia, Vietnam and Singapore as well as Japan now have recognised the role India can play as a counterweight to balance China. ASEAN as a whole too has come around to accept that India can play a positive role in the emerging Asian security architecture as its economic, political, diplomatic and military influence expands in the region. The EAS, in practical terms, may deliver less in comparison to more formalised cooperation under ASEAN. Yet, the EAS is reflective of the strategic concerns and unresolved issues in Asian security—and the need to create a diplomatic framework to strengthen the dialogue process and to avert tensions and untoward incidents. In this regard, India is most comfortable with an ASEAN-led EAS.

The EAS forum is, of course, an emerging regional architecture. The EAS is still a very loose organisation, and will probably remain so given the huge political, economic and cultural diversity of Asia. ASEAN has never really believed in tight institutionalism. Tight institutionalism requires very high levels of commitment and obligations, binding agreements and legal

procedures. ASEAN is essentially a consensus-based organisation that privileges consensus building through more informal channels. Here is where one has always argued that ASEAN regionalism is process regionalism. It is a process which gradually produces the product and once that product is produced it begins another process. So, if we look at ASEAN regionalism as process-oriented, we will see much better results than we would if we looked at it as product-oriented, which is a very Western notion of viewing and evaluating regionalism in the non-Western world. As such, the Western approach cannot strictly be applied to Southeast Asia because ASEAN regionalism is meant for ASEAN, and not for external powers. It is our regional confidence that has enabled ASEAN to be the central interlocutor with external powers during difficult times. The EAS is therefore a broader and constructive framework for discussion and dialogue. ASEAN together with India and other powers is engaged in this process as yet another institutional mechanism by which we try to reduce tension and promote regional security. Indeed, an ASEAN-centric regional architecture would be viable only through the practice of inclusive security that welcomes the participation of external powers in ASEAN's regional order.⁷ ASEAN's unique ability to synergise the various concentric circles of regionalism is a major attraction for India to participate actively in regional confidence-building and conflict-management processes.

ASEAN-India Cooperation in Capacity Building for Regional Security

Over the past decade, the track record of bilateral cooperation indicates that both parties are working closely to realise the 2012 Vision Statement which provides a roadmap on how they would move forward in the next decade. One key area where India's expertise could be effectively deployed is in capacity building, to combat transnational threats. India and ASEAN have been working together for nearly two decades on enhancing political and security cooperation since 1996 when India gained formal admission to the ARF. From India's perspective, the India-ASEAN strategic partnership is a logical bi-product of the Look East Policy and further strengthening of the Dialogue Partner relationship with ASEAN. As evidence of New Delhi's commitment to regional security cooperation, India has co-chaired the ARF Inter-sessional Support Group (ARF-ISG) on Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) and

Preventive Diplomacy. It has also organised various workshops and seminars for ARF members including: (a) Anti-Piracy Training by the Indian Coast Guard at Mumbai, October 18-20, 2000, (b) The third ARF Workshop on Cyber Security in New Delhi, September 6-8, 2006, (c) Advanced Maritime Security Training Course in Chennai, November 17-22, 2008, and (d) UN Peacekeeping Course in Delhi, May 18-22, 2009. All of the above efforts have stimulated the rationale for launching the India-ASEAN Strategic Partnership in 2012.

India's interest in providing anti-piracy training for ARF members is surely located in a strategic context. For a rising India, energy security is becoming more central to foreign policy and national security. New Delhi is busy looking for oil and gas supplies from Myanmar, Vietnam and Indonesia. A major foreign policy announcement in 1999 stated that India's strategic interests extend all the way from the Persian Gulf to the Straits of Malacca. The security of the Straits of Malacca and Straits of Hormuz in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) directly impacts India's national interests. Since 2001, India has deployed its navy to East Asia, from Singapore to Japan. In this regard, the Andaman & Nicobar Command (ANC)'s force projection capabilities have been enhanced, partly also to monitor and check Chinese naval power and developments in the SCS and IOR. In the event, India's pro-active engagement via the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) and other multilateral fora to strengthen maritime security as a major stakeholder together with China, Japan and the US, is understandable. As over 60,000 ships carrying 80 per cent of the oil transported to Northeast Asia pass through the Straits of Malacca annually, sea lane security is not just a matter of concern for the littorals, but would invariably demand the attention and involvement of external powers whose economic security is equally at stake.

On cyber security, India highlighted at the third ARF Workshop the economic and demographic indicators, and protection of critical information structure with particular emphasis on security breaches including the National Information Security Assurance Programme (NISAP).⁸ The Indian presentation also identified areas for possible cooperation, namely, coordination in early warning, threat and vulnerability analysis and incident tracking. Given India's rise as an information and communications technology (ICT) power

in the past two decades, the exposure gained by ASEAN participants has been valuable in designing their own national cyber security plans to cope with this new and rising threat to national security.

The workshop in Chennai specifically focused on enhancing maritime security in Asia. The training programme was aimed at disseminating important aspects of marine security to middle-level officers. It covered the themes of search and rescue, smuggling, piracy, hijacking and armed robbery, port security and ship security, confiscation and repatriation of ships, fishing rights including fishing by foreign vessels, drug trafficking and narco-terrorism.

Peacekeeping is a very important activity not just for ARF members but also for the UN's role in international security. Like ASEAN, India is committed to peacekeeping, and has contributed over 100,000 peacekeepers to 40 UN operations in the past 50 years. The Course, organised by the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK) in New Delhi was aimed at enhancing the understanding of middle-level officers in the nuances of UN peacekeeping and peace building. This multi-disciplinary training programme covered, inter alia, the following themes: Legal Framework; Rules of Engagement; Safety & Security; Code of Conduct; International Humanitarian Law; Sexual Exploitation and Abuse; Child Protection; Cross-Cultural Issues; and Inter-Operability Challenges.⁹ India's vast experience of international diplomacy and security represents a significant contribution to capacity building for regional security in this field in the ASEAN member states, especially the CLVM (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam) countries that have suffered the consequences of much internal and international conflict.

In the past decade, India has expressed greater concern over maritime security in Southeast Asia as current geopolitical trends are raising the premium on the deployment of naval power in the Indo-Pacific region. India's advocacy of a "stable and secure Asian order" places considerable emphasis on maritime security, freedom of navigation, unimpeded lawful commerce, peaceful resolution of maritime disputes and access to resources as per the norms of international law.¹⁰

The ADMM and ASEAN Security

In terms of specific areas of cooperation, the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) process is evidently working very well. India is an active

participant and it is this ADMM+ process which also keeps the region very secure and stable sense security cooperation is very important. It also means that we are able to harmonise realism with constructivism, taking into account the fact that the nation state will continue to function as a political unit as there is no visible alternative yet to replace it. The nation state also cannot be wished away under globalisation as this political animal is highly resilient in withstanding, and even modifying, global pressures impacting its survival. It is the best handle that we have despite its limitations, but ASEAN clearly has shown that we can work the nation state and we can get the nation state to foster neighbourly cooperation within ASEAN in a constructive way and also engage the external powers in ways that are mutually beneficial.

The ADMM+ (Defence Ministers of the 10 ASEAN states and eight Plus countries, namely Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation and United States), inaugurated in Hanoi on October 12, 2010, is positive evidence of this trend of intra-regional and extra-regional engagement. Looking ahead, we can expect the further intensification and institutionalisation of political, economic and security processes. The ADMM+ is suitably designed to play a key role in many areas of Non-Traditional Security (NTS) where the ‘eight plus’ including India have various expertise in the area of capacity building to deal with such issues as disaster relief, pandemics, humanitarian assistance, climate change, peacekeeping operations, piracy and counter-terrorism. The ADMM+ is yet another mechanism that complements, rather than conflicts with existing regional processes such as ARF and other bilateral and multilateral security arrangements that ASEAN countries have with external powers, primarily the US. The ADMM+ Concept and Framework pointedly indicates that threat perceptions are less important while potentials for cooperation are being steadily explored, including in defence and security matters. In June 2008, the ADMM Plus Ministers took a major step forward by launching its first Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) programme and Military Medicine (MM) Joint Exercise in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei. More than 2,000 troops from 18 member-states in the ADMM-Plus, including India, participated. Indeed, the ADMM-Plus is becoming a major building block in the security architecture of Southeast Asia and has become an important forum in which Asian powers such as India and China seek to engage the ten ASEAN nations, with their rapidly growing economies and combined population of over 600

million people.¹¹ India will be hosting the 2nd ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Humanitarian Mine Action (EWG on HADR) in New Delhi from December 4-5, 2014.

Nevertheless, India's strategic partnership with ASEAN goes beyond the ADMM+ framework. Like the US, India too believes in security bilateralism (India-ASEAN) and security multilateralism (India with ARF members). Thus, India also hosts multilateral exercises in the IOR that include a number of ADMM-Plus members. The Milan naval exercises, which started with four participating countries in 1995, have now grown to 14. India's first integrated military command at the Andaman & Nicobar Islands at Port Blair hosted 'Milan 2003' (February 11-15, 2003), a confluence of navies from Indian Ocean countries including Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Singapore. Again, from February 1-6, 2012, India organised the Milan exercises which involved 14 participating countries including Singapore, Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand. These naval exercises are aimed at promoting understanding and cooperation in the areas of common interest and safeguarding sea lanes of communication from poaching, piracy and terrorist activities, as well as engaging in joint search and rescue and humanitarian operations. These activities undoubtedly contribute towards the ARF's three-step multilateral approach to Asian regional security: confidence building, preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution, besides evidently strengthening India's strategic engagement with ASEAN.

ASEAN and India—The Way Forward

It can be argued that ASEAN-style regionalism strengthens both the Track-I and Track-II processes of regional cooperation. A unique feature of ASEAN regionalism is that it supports the principle of neutrality and non-alignment, although some of its members continue to have bilateral and multilateral alliances. There is apparently a contradiction in terms when neutrality and alignment are juxtaposed, but the "ASEAN Way" makes it possible for the regional entity to pursue constructive regionalism and engagement with external powers amidst these contradictions. Indeed, ASEAN has a proven record of doing well in the grey area as the reality for ASEAN statesmen is neither white nor black. In other words, it is possible to promote neutralism while also maintaining national and regional security via security cooperation

and security alliances with external powers. So, there is a hybrid here, and it is not really text-book international relations but it is the way of operating and managing a given reality. By learning to manage contradictions, ASEAN-style regionalism has enabled the development of an ideology of moderation that can harmonise all these differences and create the needed space and time for intra-regional and extra-regional cooperation. Indeed, the secret of ASEAN regionalism that has facilitated positive engagement with India and also with other external powers, can be stated as follows: ASEAN believes in informality and loose arrangements. It places great reliance on personal relations and has a preference for gradualism and incrementalism, decision-making by consensus, sovereign equality of member states, avoidance of confrontational diplomacy, and dialogue to manage conflict. Indeed, these principles have actually held ASEAN together over the past 47 years, and are likely to serve as a strong platform for intra-regional and extra-regional cooperation. This is the very basis by which ASEAN has developed and evolved as a regional institution and it will also be the terms of reference by which external powers including India will engage the region.

ASEAN gives face to both established powers as well as emerging powers. ASEAN and India can be viewed as emerging powers with capability to shape the regional balance as well as the global balance in the military, political, economic, diplomatic and strategic dimensions. This capability is also measured in terms of the relative rise and decline of the principal actors in the international system. The era of American dominance of the global order, i.e., the Pax Americana is clearly in decline and the ensuing power vacuum in Asia is being filled essentially by the rising powers of China and India and also by the collective power of ASEAN. Even Japan, under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has enunciated a more active foreign policy towards Asia and is strengthening its security engagement with the region. The US has welcomed Abe's decision to reorient Tokyo's collective defence posture and his desire to refurbish the 63-year US-Japan Alliance to address the new security environment in Asia.¹² As power abhors a vacuum, the Pax Americana in Asia is being replaced by a more pluralistic engagement of Asian powers that were subdued in the era of Cold War politics. The US is particularly comfortable with India playing a larger security role in the region as its own power declines in the region. Regional concerns to balance the rise of China have created the necessary impetus to forge an India-ASEAN strategic partnership.

In Asia there are five principal actors—the US, China, India, Japan and ASEAN. The India-ASEAN partnership endorses the ASEAN way of promoting regionalism and Asian integration, i.e., India recognises the regional entity as a principal actor in Asia. This elevation of the ASEAN-India strategic partnership from dialogue relations to strategic partnership level now is clearly also to serve notice that India wants to be an active player in new Asia and that India has acquired the strategic vision, capacity and resources to contribute effectively to the region's development, security and prosperity.

Nevertheless, translating the ASEAN-India Vision Statement into reality will invariably be accompanied by prospects as well as challenges given ASEAN's own political/ideological diversity and India's democratic diversity and bureaucratic complex. Implementation of the ASEAN-India Vision Statement to realise the strategic partnership in the coming decades should encompass the whole spectrum of political and security, economic, socio-cultural and development cooperation. This strategic vision can be promoted through the further strengthening of relevant institutional mechanisms that have already been established under the framework of the India-ASEAN Dialogue Partnership. India's political and security commitment to and engagement with ASEAN are bound to increase as their economic and trade relationships become deeper. The value and volume of India-ASEAN trade is still low compared to ASEAN's trade with its other major dialogue partners, especially China, Japan, the US and EU. Besides the public sector, the role of the private sector and civil society is equally important in contributing to the full maturation of this strategic partnership. A holistic as well as comprehensive and cooperative endeavour that expands networking between government institutions, parliamentarians, business circles, scientists, think tanks, media, youth, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other stakeholders collectively can better ensure the successful creation of the three-pronged ASEAN Community—ASEAN Security Community (ASC), ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC). Additionally, this new framework of cooperation would also expand the security insurance provided by ASEAN's inclusive engagement with India and all the major external powers in the Asia-Pacific region.

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PART II

Role of North East India
in India's Look-East Policy

Chaired by Shyam Saran

6

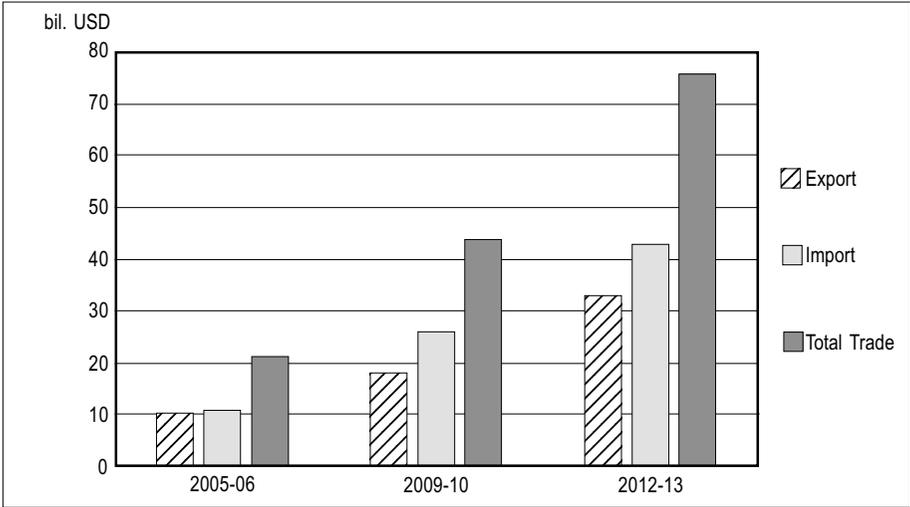
Importance of India-ASEAN Connectivity

Hidetoshi Nishimura

The Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) has in recent times developed four analysing tools to explore the economic growth arising out of India-Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) connectivity. These are the Comprehensive Asia Development Plan-II on ASEAN-India Connectivity and the Mekong India Economic Corridor. Closely related to these studies are the Myanmar Comprehensive Development Vision and ERIA GSM Model. The Mekong-India Economic Corridor was firstly proposed by ERIA in the Comprehensive Asia Development Plan, and Phase-2 of the study especially speaks about ASEAN-India connectivity. Next is the Mekong-India Economic Corridor and Myanmar Comprehensive Development Vision. In 2013, the East Asia Summit endorsed ERIA's activities pertaining to connectivity, and finally, the special econometric tools, the geographic simulation models developed by ERIA. I would now like to dwell on the importance of India's connectivity with ASEAN via its north eastern borders and through Myanmar, using the aforementioned four studies.

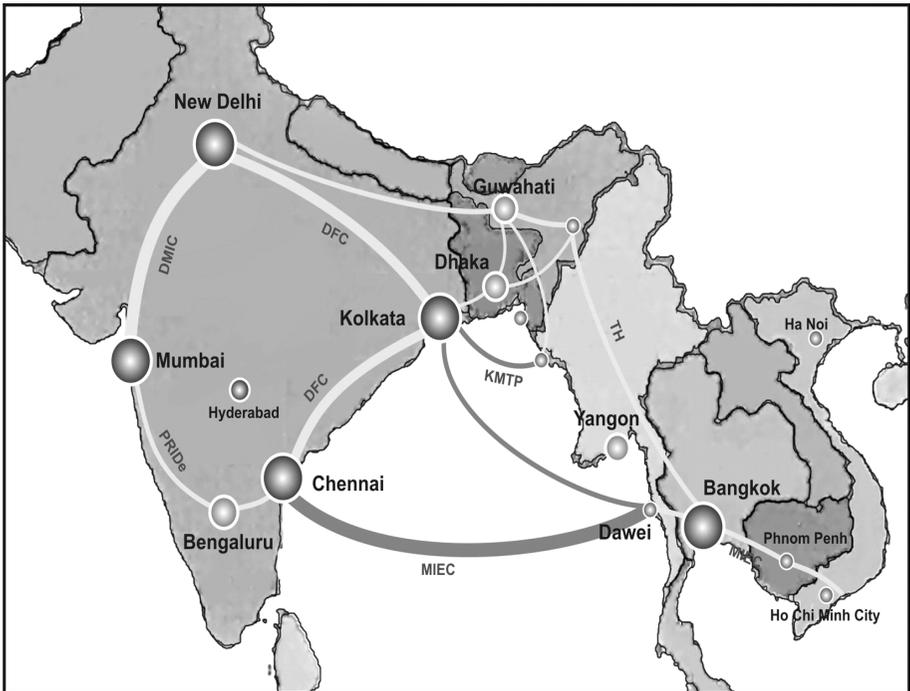
Figure 1 shows the economic potential between ASEAN and India. After the implementation of the ASEAN-India free trade agreement in goods in January 2010, though growth was amazing, the major concern was to figure out how to enhance India's export component. The ASEAN-India connectivity, the importance of connectivity within India and with ASEAN, cannot be overstated. This means, although China and India are big economic superpowers in the region and the immediate neighbours to ASEAN,

Figure 1: India-ASEAN Bilateral Trade



Source: DGCI & S.

Figure 2: The Connectivity Map—within India as well as between India and ASEAN



unfortunately the extent of their connectivity with ASEAN differs significantly. There is a long physical connectivity between India and ASEAN.

Figure 2 shows both domestic connectivity inside India and the potential transport links between India and ASEAN. The Mekong-India Economic Corridor and the trilateral highway, are two most important linkages with ASEAN. The trilateral highway is especially important in connecting the north eastern part of India with Myanmar.

But with these two important linkages, we must clarify two requirements. First, these two projects must enjoy domestic connectivity, which is very important and there is further need to develop an integrated approach towards development of additional projects—the Dawei Port, the Kaladan Multimodal Project and the Kyaukphyu Port Project. All these provide economic impetus to India's Look East Policy. The point of integrated approach is very important. What is more, these two projects will use the north eastern part of India and Myanmar as the key driver.

So, there are two important projects: first is the Mekong-India Economic Corridor, proposed by ERIA in the first Comprehensive Asia Development Plan, and second is the Tri-lateral Highway Project.

The Mekong-India Economic Corridor will provide opportunities to India, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam to build a strong economic and industrial base and world-class infrastructure by expanding the manufacturing base that will help to increase exports from India to this region and trade by reducing travel distance and removing supply side hurdles.

Let us now consider the Trilateral Highway Project. Bangkok is connected with the North Eastern states of India via Myanmar and the road infrastructure in Thailand is well developed. The remaining is a section in Myanmar and the north eastern part of India. More importantly trade and transport facilitation across two national borders between Thailand and Myanmar and Myanmar and India needs to be addressed. In order to do this, the government must create business opportunities. For such measures to be successful, all the countries must show commitment. Further, India can utilise Myanmar's strategic location in connecting ASEAN and India.

What is domestic connectivity? Clearly, domestic connectivity is most important. ERIA conducted simulation studies by using a geographical simulation model, a unique econometric measure developed by ERIA (the

original idea was Prof Krugman's, the originator of Special Economic Geography). It shows the economic impact of the golden quadrilateral project in India and the north-south and east-west highway of India and also the highway between Yangon and Mandalay in 2030. This simulation assessed the economic impact of the connectivity project when compared to the no-project scenario in 2015. That will have a huge impact. In Figure 2, the darker regions get positive economic impact from these highway projects with the development of quadrilateral and N-S E-W, economic activities along these economic corridors are vital for a higher gross domestic product (GDP). In principle, domestic connectivity enhances the benefits for Indian economy. One can remember the most successful case of connectivity, i.e., China. China joined the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 2001 and a lot of conditionalities were placed and the time given was five years, and by 2006 China completed the conditionalities. That means around 2006 China completed its domestic connectivity. The result was, in just five years China's GDP doubled. So, connectivity creates a huge impact. In India too, with domestic connectivity, the GDP could be doubled; not only physical but also institutional connectivity.

The Myanmar Comprehensive Development Vision (MCDV) was prepared by ERIA, and was endorsed in the last Brunei Summit Statement. It not only proposes Mandalay-Yangon connectivity, but also border development and enhanced connectivity with neighbouring countries. The fundamental idea of MCDV is Myanmar's connectivity. Economic corridors in Myanmar will connect not only domestically but also with ASEAN, the greater Mekong sub-region and the ASEAN-India network. The interconnected corridors which include, among others the North-South Corridor and East-West Corridor, have Mandalay at the centre.

If we extend the domestic connectivity of India and Myanmar to the rest of the region and access it through the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS), then India, Myanmar, Thailand and China are the top beneficiaries, followed by Bangladesh and Vietnam. For India, the states of the North East will get higher economic impact; West Bengal, Tamil Nadu are the other beneficiaries of the Mekong-India economic corridor. However, for India the development of golden quadrilateral and NSEW have larger positive impact. That means that connecting the domestic market is critically important and this is the

first priority. Thereafter its connectivity with ASEAN would bring real economic growth. The Myanmar Dawei port development plus border facilitation with Thailand will bring about significant positive impacts not only for Myanmar but also for North East India, Mekong region, Malay Peninsula and Bangladesh.

In conclusion, India-ASEAN connectivity will lead to regional integration among the growing economies in East Asia positively impacting the growth of all economies. The reforms in Myanmar and its economic development is vital to the growth of North East India as an important corridor in India-ASEAN connectivity. Simultaneously, again, domestic connectivity and lowering trade and transport barriers will stimulate economic activity and raise the GDP within the country.

7

India's Look East Policy: View from the North East

M.P. Bezbaruah

The perception of the Government of India about the role of the North East in the Look East Policy and the North East's expectations from the Look East Policy seem to converge, as they should. India cannot look east without looking at the North East. North East is a place where South East Asia and South Asia meet. The Vision Document of the North Eastern Council (NEC) expects the region to play "the arrow head" role in the Look East Policy by making "Look East Policy meaningful". It expects that the Look East Policy will bring back the North East to its position of "national economic eminence"—a position it enjoyed before the partition of India when the gross domestic product (GDP) of the states of the North East used to be higher than the national average. It has now sadly come down much below the national average.

Similarly, former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee had hoped that the North East will become "the bridge head to South East Asia". Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh expected the North East to be at the forefront of India's link to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) century.

In spite of such convergence in expectations, the North East Vision Document mentions that the Look East Policy has remained a mere slogan for the North East. A very large number of schemes relevant to the Look East Policy, relating to the North East are in the process of implementation. Why then is such a feeling that nothing is being done? Apparently, there is a gap

in understanding in the North East about its involvement in decision-making, monitoring and implementation of Look East Policy projects.

At the same time, the perception in Delhi also seems to be that while there are a number of demands from the North Eastern States, a cogent, integrated and coordinated articulation of the needs and expectations of the region has not evolved.

Therefore, it seems an institutional mechanism to bridge this two-way gap is needed. Such a mechanism will facilitate interaction between the North East and Government of India on a continuous basis, remove the gap in understanding and link the North East to the ASEAN through the Look East Policy.

Why does the North East look to the Look East Policy? If the Look East Policy was the result of India's search for economic space, the same is true for the North East as well. The optimism and expectations in the North East are shaped by a few socio-cultural and historical factors. Firstly, the North East sees the South East as a natural geographical extension of the North East, reminiscing of the old spice route which touched the North East. It is a region that shares 97 per cent of its borders with foreign countries—1,880 km with Bangladesh and 1,643 km with Myanmar—the two countries which play a vital role in the fulfilment of North East's future economic dreams. Secondly, it expects that the shared historical, ethnic and cultural links with South East Asia could be leveraged for greater trade and tourism. The North East ethos, it is often said, reflect the footprints of South East Asia. Thant Myint U in his delightful book, *Where China Meets India*, beautifully portrays this shared link. While travelling to the North East, he says, "half the people in the cabin looked as if they could be from Burma. But I knew that almost certainly they were not Burmese, but people from Assam or the states beyond. I doubt anyone took me for anything other than a local". Connectivity with South East Asia is seen not only as physical infrastructure but also of minds, of bridging the disconnect. Thirdly, the North East feels that greater connectivity with the South East Asian region will end its "economic imprisonment" and isolation created by the partition of India. In fact, it looks not only for integration with South East Asia but also to restore the severed links to the rest of India through projects that give access to sea ports. Myanmar and Bangladesh therefore play a very important role in the evolution of the Look East Policy

so far as the North East is concerned. The Look East Policy is in fact a way of reorienting its strategic relationship with the immediate neighbours. Equally important for the North East is the security question. It expects the immediate borders with Myanmar and Bangladesh to be borders of prosperity rather than borders of insurgency, insecurity, smuggling and drug trafficking.

In brief, as the then External Affairs Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee said, geography need not be an obstacle for the North East—it can be made an opportunity.

Before going into the specifics, two macro issues need to be mentioned. It is often felt that the North East is more aware of the cultural and historical links with South East Asia than South East Asia is. Therefore, there is a need to take up steps to enhance people-to-people contact between these two regions. Perhaps, establishment of a nodal institution in the North East solely devoted to this exchange of ideas and linking such institution to similar institutions in the ASEAN region will go a long way in promoting such contacts. Moreover, there are too many agencies involved—national, international and regional, and too many loose ends to be tied up. Even the most optimistic person would agree that synergy is lacking and such synergy can avoid duplication and bring the benefit of complementarity, save cost and improve efficiency. Such synergy again has to be two way—within the Look East Policy and within the North East and then linking it to the North East action. For example, while there is great optimism that the Kaladan Multi Modal Project linking Haldia to Sittwe and Mizoram will improve economic development of the North East, such development will take place only when backward linkages, both road and rail to other North Eastern States are in position. The practical utility of the project will depend on how soon the backward linkages are in position and how good they are.

Coming to the most important expectation of the North East—trade—a mixed picture emerges. At present there are several types of trade contacts between the North East and its neighbours. The informal commercial exchange as in Moreh, in Manipur-Myanmar border is not of much significance; products being sold in this market are mostly third-country products, and perhaps not serving the interests of the North East at all.

On the other hand, border trade which is mainly a barter trade is of great importance to the North East. In recent times, many improvements in

facilitation and in infrastructure development have taken place. More items now are included in the list of tradable goods. Still there are many issues which the North East states are demanding, such as opening some more places for exchange and expanding the list of items. The infrastructure creation process also seems to be rather slow and is often compared to what happens across the border in China. Moreover, even in such barter filtering in of third-country products causes some concern. Most of the exports also are primary goods, and value addition to such exports should receive attention at all levels. The central government is to provide the infrastructure and legal and operational framework and the states are to organise trading. A comprehensive future action plan that incorporates the concerns of the North East needs to be drawn up with a definite time frame. Apart from such organised border trade, it is widely reported in various surveys and reports that a very robust trade exchange goes on all along the border. Such exchanges are very vital for the people in the border regions and in fact also enhance people-to-people contact. However, there is no definite information on the depth and extent of such trade. This matter should also receive attention for future planning.

Development of formal trade being mostly left to the private sector perhaps has not received much attention of the government. While India's trade with the ASEAN region is growing fast, it is reported that the share of the North East is falling behind. It may not be surprising because the demand components of the ASEAN may not match the North East capabilities. Considering that North East pins so much of hope in trade development, a few things should merit attention. First, it is necessary to find out what is the nature of demands across the border and if the North East can match some of them. Yet, it is not clear about what to sell, whom to sell and how. Therefore it is necessary to make a planned, professional assessment of the comparative advantage of the North East—making an assessment of what it can sell competitively. Following from that, as the Prime Minister had mentioned in the recent ASEAN Meet that the North East should set up production mechanism for such identified products, like setting up economic zones which can provide incentives, marketing and transport support so that the North East can get over the hurdles of transport cost and the quality of goods could be competitive. The much discussed economic zone approach has been adhoc and disjointed. It seems a planned, professional, well-conceived effort is still missing. This matter should receive urgent and concrete attention.

The other great expectation—Tourism—is still languishing. For tourism, the great hope is the Asian Highway. However, there are three concerns. First, its development is very sketchy and yet far remote from the romantic silk route it is compared with. According to United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) about 11,500 km of the 14,000 km long road that goes through 32 countries is in poor shape. Second, it has remained just a road not a tourism gateway. If it has to come alive with tourism potential and as a means for integration of the North East with South East Asia, future tourism requirements like wayside facility, tourism hubs and getaway airport on the way are to be developed. Otherwise it has the danger of remaining just a road for occasional car rallies. Third and most important for the North East is the fact that the backward linkages of this road to the tourism spots of the North East have not been established nor been planned.

For tourism to happen, the airport infrastructure has to develop first. Much has been done but much more remains to be done. About 97 per cent of foreign tourist coming to India travel by air. And the nearest international airport to the North East, Kolkata gets only about four per cent of total tourist arrivals to India by air. It is reported that about one million tourists from Thailand visit the Buddhist sites of Myanmar. There is a great scope of linking the Myanmar Buddhist sites with the North East region and beyond. In addition, Manipur's place in the Second World War heritage and its links with the Azad Hind Force have not been exploited.

Therefore, in order to exploit the tremendous tourism potential of the Look East Policy, air connectivity development should be three pronged. First, Guwahati should be developed as the main hub linking Myanmar, Singapore and Thailand and having backward linkages to Nepal and Bhutan. Second, Imphal should be developed as sub-hub with linkages to Guwahati with possible links to the Buddhist circuits in Bihar and the exquisite Buddhist sites in Orissa. Third and most important, is the necessity of creating seamless integration with the North Eastern States and within the North Eastern States. This is an ideal and prime requirement but has been slow in concept and evolution. Focus of the Look East Policy on this connectivity has been subdued.

On tourism, two broad studies would be helpful. First, to survey the profile of the demand pattern of the ASEAN—what interests the tourists, what infrastructure are needed and how to attract them. Second, the tourism

potential of the Asian Highway has to be studied and plans to link the North East tourism to the Asian Highway should be formulated with the help of ASEAN. Of course for that tourism dream of the North East to materialise much needs to be done in the region itself, that is, to put its own house in order, to take care of the supply side and to put in place suitable infrastructure.

Of the many connectivity projects now underway, the North East is looking with great hope to the following projects:

- 1) India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway
- 2) Kaladan Multi-modal Project
- 3) Stilwell Road
- 4) Myanmar-India-Bangladesh Gas or Oil Pipeline
- 5) Tamanthi Hydro Electric Project
- 6) Rail link from Jiribam in Manipur to connect in Myanmar
- 7) Rail link to Chittagong Port

The North East still feels that geopolitical consideration have put its primary interest in the Stilwell road to the back burner.

One area that has not received enough attention—an area of paramount importance to the NE—is development of waterways. With proper attention and investment in *waterways development*, NE economy can be completely transformed. Two strategic interventions are required. Firstly, the concept of seamless inland water connectivity between National Waterways 1 (Ganga) and 2 (Brahmaputra) should be seriously pursued. Moreover, the navigability of the Brahmaputra from the upper reaches to the Bay of Bengal has to be sorted out and the protocol arrangements to open the old routes to the sea through Bangladesh have to be put in place. If the Look East Policy can achieve this for the North East, the resultant savings in cost, improvement in flood control and boost to tourism will be enormous. A shining example is China's river of sorrow of yester years, the Yellow River, which, through regional cooperation, has now become the river of prosperity for nine States. Another good example is Greater Mekong initiative. Could an Irrawaddy-Brahmaputra Master Plan be the catalyst for the North East's dream of coming back to economic eminence?

8

Myanmar-India Partnership towards ASEAN-India Cooperation

U Than Tun

India-ASEAN relations have upgraded from partnership to strategic partnership. This 1.5 level dialogue further provides us an opportunity to deliberate upon India's Look East Policy in general and India's relations with its eastern neighbours, ASEAN's member countries.

India became a sectoral dialogue partner of ASEAN in 1992 and upgraded to full dialogue partner in 1996. The ASEAN-India Vision Statement helps to promote ASEAN-India cooperation. The cooperation between India and ASEAN generally is progressing. India sees that it will be necessary to expand the existing relations between the people of North East India and ASEAN countries to promote its Look East Policy as well as its fast development. The cooperation activities be given priority to people-to-people connectivity and promotion of trade, socio-cultural and technical exchange programmes. In promoting the Look East Policy, India feels that greater involvement of India's North East is needed and necessary. At the same time, India and China are taking considerable interest in the immediate neighbourhood of South East Asia, in terms of strengthening trade and economy in the region.

Given its close ties with ASEAN, Indian membership in the ARF has provided it a strategic dimension. While interacting with ASEAN, India has paid particular attention to its neighbour and one of the ASEAN member countries, Myanmar. Promoting India's relations with Myanmar is strengthened by its Look East Policy as well as the first development process. India's

policymakers have realised that it is important to develop physical connectivity between North East India and South East Asia, especially after Myanmar's inclusion into ASEAN as a full member in 1997. Myanmar is the only country that shares a 1,600 km long border with India, and it acts as a transit to reach Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. Myanmar's open door policy after the political change in 2011 gave more opportunity to expand India-ASEAN strategic cooperation. For India it is a prerequisite to utilise the opportunities provided by its Look East Policy and cooperate with ASEAN. As a result India has initiated certain bilateral projects and also became party to some great projects aimed at enhancing connectivity between North East India and South East Asia. The six sister states of North East India, are undergoing a potential process for linking India and Myanmar, which will help to promote people-to-people connectivity other cooperation activities.

We have an India-Myanmar ASEAN roadmap for connectivity. With Myanmar Comprehensive Development Plan (MCDP), Myanmar is considering the possibility of building a pipeline to transport gas from Shwey gas field in Rakhine state to Mizoram, thereby promoting the North East region of India. The India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway project will surely promote border trade and people-to-people cooperation and connectivity in the region. The project is expected to enhance India-Myanmar strategic partnership in order to implement ASEAN-India cooperation by 2016. There are many more projects which are in the pipeline, such as the India-Myanmar railway link up to Thailand, and also the river multimodal transport projects linking Mizoram with Sittwe, which will become the Sittwe Deep Sea port. Moreover, a crude oil pipeline to Sittwe and the North East would be beneficial too.

In the communication sector, the ASEAN highways 1, 2, and 3 will be enhancing connectivity in the region between the North East India and ASEAN. ASEAN highway linking up to India-Myanmar border will emerge in 2018, as expected. This highway will contribute to a tripartite economic development of Myanmar Thailand and India. Also the Stilwell road, which was widely known as Ledo road during World War II, linking from Ledo in India to Kunming in China. There will also be links with Asian highways and extended up to India-Myanmar border, which will surely promote India-Myanmar border trade. The ASEAN-India strategic partnership, plan of action and cooperation are leading towards India's Look East Policy. The ASEAN

integration, particularly the establishment of ASEAN community in 2015, is an opportunity, for India, especially with its north eastern region, to cooperate and integrate with ASEAN. India-ASEAN connectivity at the same time will promote regional integration and could further enhance relations with East Asia.

In conclusion, the open door policies and the strategic location of Myanmar which is a bridge between South and South East Asia, and also acts as a hub, tremendously benefit India's Look East Policy towards realising the Indian-ASEAN vision for partnership and prosperity. But everything depends on security aspects and the political will of the people involved. The role of North East India having more opportunity with ASEAN incorporation will become an important part of look east policy in the future. Finally, it will now be timely for Myanmar to join the ASEAN Economic Community in cooperation with North East India.

9

North East as a Factor in India's Look East Policy

Rajiv Kumar

I would like to start by forwarding Mr. Than Tun's¹ view that the necessary condition for Look East Policy is the 'Look Myanmar Policy'. India needs to have a genuine North East policy, Myanmar policy and Look East Policy for ASEAN. So, I see this in three stages:

First, India needs to sign a Free Trade Agreement with itself before it starts getting into Free Trade Agreements with others. To illustrate, it has emerged that the states of the North East of India don't really see eye to eye, there is a lot of mistrust and a lack of connectivity among them. So, I think the focus on the North East and developing the North East as a region has to be much sharper before India really wants to be serious about its own Look East Policy or India-ASEAN relationship and trade.

Second, without bringing in Bangladesh, and without creating a regional entity of our states with Bangladesh, there is possibly no way forward for India's Look East Policy. So, it is a necessary condition that India must develop its transition arrangements, its border arrangements and connect this part of India, the Eastern part of India, with Bangladesh before we can think about India's Look East Policy.

Here, I want to talk a little bit about hardware, which is connectivity, marine, roads, energy, etc., and I want to focus on software, which is changing the mindset, building trust and removing mistrust. However, there are two things that need to be done. First is that India needs to develop regional projects

which involve everybody, for example, bringing together the rivers of Eastern Himalayas is a project we could all participate in, because these rivers affect all the countries in the region. The second is connectivity, which is important so that we have borders which don't divide but are open and connect the region. Very often in economics we think about what the external impetus or the drivers of change for this region could be. Luckily for us, the two, both external and internal drivers have emerged, and the external driver, like Banco's ghost, is of course the rise of China, which has created impetus for countries like India and Japan and now even the ASEAN countries to focus on the India-ASEAN relationship, much more than before. Three years ago, I proposed a project to the Japanese to start a conversation, seminar, etc., on the North Eastern side, which they were reluctant to do because of what it might do to Chinese interests and how the Chinese might look at it. Fortunately, now all those things are changing, and therefore, there is an external impetus for this cooperation.

The internal one is of course the perception of rising inequality within India between the North East and the other parts of India. This perception is creating political force of change. Consequently, our relationships with Myanmar and Bangladesh, are also changing; so the drivers of change are there, and therefore, what did not look feasible some years ago will begin to look feasible now.

On the hardware side, on connectivity, air link is an aspect that needs looking into. And here I propose a viability gap funding for the air links to the North East and to Myanmar. It will be very difficult for us to create those links because commercially they may not be viable, and the viability gap funding idea is a very straightforward one. Private airlines can then be induced to get into the act because it is only through private investors and entrepreneurs that the development of this connectivity will happen.

Therefore, there are two major points. One is that we need to focus much more on the software side, which is, as mentioned earlier, on changing the mindset, building trust and removing mistrust. A suggestion to that end, especially for the North East states, is to start a series of conversations which would bring first the seven Indian states together and then they are made partners of Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Myanmar in a sustained manner. Unless there is a conversation about this, unless there is agreement on doing

things behind the border, whatever might be done in physical hardware or physical connectivity terms will not matter. The initiative of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in South Asia Sub-regional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) has suffered that unfortunate fate, that is, despite having been there since 1997, ADB is yet to showcase a single genuinely regional project in the region. The second and final point is that the conversation about the North East and/or the Look East must shift physically to the region. I am trying this out in a project that is called "India and her Neighbours". It is about taking the conversation of the relationship between India and its neighbours to the capitals of our provinces, that is, Patna and Kathmandu, Guwahati and Dhaka, Kolkata and Dhaka, etc. Therefore, maybe it is time that the Delhi Dialogue became a Kolkata Dialogue or Guwahati Dialogue or North Eastern Dialogue, because unless you are there physically, the reality does not come home.

NOTES

1. Member, Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies (MISIS), Myanmar.

10

Role of North East India in India's Look East Policy

Charit Tingsabadh

India's Northeast plays an important role in the connectivity area, being the western end of the Tri-National Highway project that will connect India, Myanmar and Thailand. The importance of connectivity is recognised in both the Vision Statement and the Eminent Persons' Group reports.¹ A recent paper reviewed the project and concluded that the project "would be of immense benefit to the two countries in particular and the Southeast Asia in general".² Prabir De too noted the benefits of such connectivity in terms of creation of production networks between India and Southeast Asia.³ However, he also remarked that the "presence of regional infrastructure is negligible; lack of connectivity will slow down the integration process"; and called for "an integrated action plan for achieving a larger common market by 2020". In this context, land-based connectivity between India's Northeast and Association of Southeast Nations (ASEAN) through the Tri-National Highway will play a key role. The road will connect Mae Sot in Thailand with Moreh in India through Yangon, Mandalay, and Moreh. India is supporting the construction of the road from Moreh to Mandalay, and there are reports that the link is planned to be completed by 2016. A weekly bus service already operates between Moreh and Mandalay, a distance of 470 km, and takes six hours. It is an overnight bus service, and is considered comfortable.

Between Mandalay and Yangon, the commercial heartland of Myanmar, there is already a multi-lane highway. Traffic is expected to increase

considerably, with the increasing tourism activity in Myanmar, as well as with growing movement of goods and people-to-people contact.

The road condition at present has been described as satisfactory with the exception of two segments which need upgrading. On the Thailand-Myanmar side too, progress is being made. A road has been built from Mae Sot to Myawaddi, and then to Kawkareik, at the foothill of the Tanaosri range. At present this road between Myanmar and Kawkareik is passable one way on alternate days. The Thai Government is building a highway to accommodate two-way traffic, which will shorten the journey time to hours, rather than days as is the case now.

The trip from Mae Sot to Yangon, for example, takes about 9-10 hours (by car) and 12-13+ hours (by bus)—which leaves a lot to be desired. However, once these connections have been improved, through the support of both Indian and Thailand governments, it will certainly encourage much economic activities along the way. Sectors that will benefit from the improved connectivity will be tourism, as well as transport of goods, in terms of cross-border trade between each of the three countries involved.

In conclusion, it seems to be realistic to expect that by 2016, the Tri-national Highway will be in place, allowing greater traffic along the way, and adding significantly to the connectivity of India's Northeast with Southeast Asia.

NOTES

1. Refer Appendices 1 and 2 given at the end.
2. Voranong Kowitstienchai, "Logistics in International relations: A Case Study of Thailand Northeastern region on India through Trilateral Highway Project", *วารสารวิชาการมนุษยศาสตร์และสังคมศาสตร์*, 21(31), January-April 2013.
3. Prabir De, "Mekong-India Economic Corridor (MIEC): Building Block of ASEAN-India Connectivity", 2013.

11

North East India's Development and India's Look East Policy

Ranjit Barthakur

Background

- Prior to 1947 the North East formed part of geographic, political and economic continuum with British Burma, Bengal and the rest of British India.
- After 1947 East Bengal became East Pakistan, Burma became an independent country and communication, linkages were suddenly snapped. Trade, economic relations, social engagement everything came to a halt, and the region has ever since suffered from artificial seclusion.
- The North East shares 5,300 km of the International border with Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Myanmar and Nepal, but there is very little connectivity with these countries.
- Today the region is connected by a narrow corridor, which constitutes less than 0.5 per cent of the regions borders with mainland India.
- The region is deficient in infrastructure, and consequently, has lagged behind in most fronts of economic and social development.
- The situation can be salvaged provided we take up a programme for inclusive development of the region, which would involve large-scale investments in infrastructure and connectivity.

Initiatives by the Government of India

- Since the late 1990s, the Government of India has been making concerted efforts for economic development of the North East.

- Special package of incentives aimed at industrial development were announced in 1997.
- This was followed by the North East Industrial and Investment Promotion Policy in 2007.
- These policies have had limited success in attracting investments to the region.
- The Government of India has made substantial investments for improving road and rail connectivity within the region.

Infrastructure Development

- Connectivity within the region and with the rest of the world is still not adequate.
- The East West Corridor connecting the West coast of India with the North East is being built.
- Asian Highway 1 and Asian Highway 2 will pass through the North East.
- The Trans Asian Railway (TAR) network still has missing links such as the 219 km Jiribam-Moreh line.
- The region has about 2,600 km of railway lines, but only two state capitals are connected by rail.
- In terms of connectivity by air, while the number of flights has increased, the number of destinations served has actually come down from 17 in the 1970s to 11 at present.
- River connectivity which was disrupted in 1947 has not yet been restored.
- Power, another important ingredient for economic development, is still deficient in the region, despite a huge generation potential. The percapita power consumption is around 249 kWh compared to the national average of 778 kWh.

Way Forward

- Three fundamental areas that need to be focused upon for development of the North East are economic, ecological and social development.
- The primary hurdle to development in all the three aforementioned fronts is the lack of adequate infrastructure.
- It is therefore imperative that the primary developmental focus should be on infrastructure. Some key initiatives that need to be taken up are as follows:

Roads

- A ring road connecting all the north-eastern states with and the East West corridor and the Asian Highway network needs to be put in place. Such a highway would be around 4,000 km long and would cost around ₹ 40,000 crore to construct.
- A trans-Himalayan Highway connecting Arunachal Pradesh with mainland India through Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal would have great strategic value.
- Road connectivity with Bangladesh should be developed at multiple points Karimganj-Dhaka, Tura-Jamalpur-Dhaka, Agartala-Dhaka, Sabroom Chitagong. Similarly the Stillwell road connecting Myanmar and China should be redeveloped.

Railways

- The Railway Connectivity projects already underway should be speeded up, if required with military help. The Imphal-Moreh Railway Line also needs to be put in place expeditiously to ensure seamless connectivity with the trans-Asian railway.
- Rail connectivity with Bangladesh through Agartala and Mahishashan should be re-established.

Riverways

- The Brahmaputra and Barak rivers, which used to be the lifeline of connectivity prior to 1947, are grossly underutilised now. There is potential to develop as many as 20 river ports in these rivers.
- Development of river port towns and ancillary facilities would greatly reduce transportation cost within the region, and would effectively negate the need for transport subsidy.

Air Connectivity

- Until the 1970s, there were as many as 17 operational and serviced airports in the region. This number has now been reduced to 10 now.
- Steps should be taken to operationalise and service the airports at Tura, Tezpur, Rupsi and Kamalpur. The proposed airports at Itanagar, Kohima, and Gangtok need to be implemented speedily.

Wayside Amenities

- A network of wayside integration facilities along the Highways with facilities for logistics, processing facilities, townships, etc. could give a major boost to economic activities and rural development.
- A Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) study has found scope for developing as many as 50 such facilities across the region.

Border Townships

- To truly reap the benefits of its geographic location, the region needs to integrate better with the neighbouring economies. Setting up of modern border townships with facilities for trade, manufacturing, etc. could pave the way for such integration.
- There is scope for establishing at least six border townships at Moreh, Avankhung, Karimganj, Dawki, Agartala and Zokhawthar.

Power

- The North East has huge potential for power generation, but at the moment the region is deficient in power.
 - While large power projects may take time to fructify, some power projects which are already in the pipeline like the 750 MW Bongaigaon Thermal Power Plant and the 726 MW gas-based power project in Tripura could effectively negate the current power deficit.
 - These projects should be expeditiously completed if necessary with military help.
 - By the end of 2022, it is projected that the region would have surplus power to the tune of 10,000 MW. Transmission projects like the ultra-high mega transmission line need to be completed expeditiously to enable evacuation of surplus power.
- All these development projects if taken up is likely to cost over Rs 500,000 crore and provide employment to upto five million people.
 - To attract capital of these magnitude will require a very effective strategy and the government will need to play a critical facilitative role.

12

Role of North East India in India's Look East Policy with a Special Focus on Mizoram State

H. Rohluna

New Delhi had expressed an interest in building the India-Myanmar-Thailand Highway and the Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Project which would go a long way in the economic integration of India's North East with Southeast and East Asia. This may, however, be a while in the making; and the benefits that would accrue to India's North East from such projects are yet to be articulated. If implemented, the plan could have a significant impact on the border regions of the North East, particularly in areas where border trade flourishes.

Almost 4,500 km, or 98 per cent of the boundaries of the North East States constitute India's international borders with China and Bhutan in the north, Myanmar in the east and Bangladesh in the south and west. India's border trade with Myanmar takes place mainly through Moreh in Manipur and to a lesser degree at Zokhawthar in Mizoram. With Bangladesh, the Indian States of Tripura, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Assam share a 1,880 km long border; but much of the cross-border trade takes place through Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura (see map).

Mizoram, which benefits as a peaceful state and as the only North East state to border Bangladesh and Myanmar, has been unable to capitalise on such an advantage of location that it enjoys. Having signed a Peace Accord in 1986, the state saw an end to over two decades of insurgency. This frees it

from the concerns of political violence, road blockades, strikes, kidnappings and ransom by insurgent groups that are often cited as some of the main impediments to the development of trade in North East India. Despite historical, cultural and economic links across the border, the stumbling block that prevents trade from taking off in Mizoram continues to be the lack of soft and hard infrastructure that is crucial to the development of border trade.

As such, cross-regional studies of border trade highlight its importance to border areas, which are often least-developed. Studies reveal that border trade positively impacts the lives and incomes of traders, strengthens local production and fosters service provision such as storage facilities, transportation and ancillary services in the local bazaars. In the remote regions, where employment is scarce and salaries are low, border trade has the potential to generate income for a whole household and is more profitable than most available economic activities.

Cross-border trade lowers the import-process hassles and enables exporters to benefit from the higher value-add factors. Furthermore, by strengthening commercial ties, promoting cultural understanding and deepening community relationships, border trade helps to nurture amicable relationship among neighbouring countries. Some studies have also observed that border trade has a gender dimension—women are more actively involved in border trading activities such as selling goods in bazaars as well as moving goods through the border crossing points.

Yet, cross-border trade is vulnerable to government policies, and the lack of infrastructure can determine the extent of its success. I have been informed that the World Bank and Asian Development Bank are keen to develop infrastructure as an important determinant of productivity, development and poverty reduction within international borders and across them. Increases in income and overall national growth create new and greater demands for better infrastructure-based services, such as transport, telecommunications, energy and water supply and sanitation, all of which are important services for fuelling and sustaining growth. In turn, it is argued that national and regional growth can contribute to regional security and economic development.

The challenges of bridging the infrastructure gap in Asia include high investment costs, uneven distribution of benefits (and the related issue of who should pay for the infrastructure), financing constraints and varying regulatory

responses, which make coordination very difficult. These are also relevant in the case of North East India.

The visit by India's Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh to Myanmar in 2012 was a welcome initiative that brought the development of the border areas into sharp focus. The visit saw the signing of several Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs), which included an MoU on India-Myanmar Border Area Development and an MoU on Establishing Border Haats (markets). In October 1999, the Federation of Bangladesh Chamber and Industries signed an MoU with the Mizoram Chamber of Commerce and Industry. This was followed up, with a trade delegation, under the Government of Mizoram, visiting Bangladesh (Dhaka, Chittagong, Syhlet and Rangamati) to explore the viability and marketability of local Mizoram products such as ginger and chillies. The exchange visit created awareness and interest amongst the traders of the two countries, apart from the supportive government.

The Government of Mizoram, mainly with the help of India's Union Ministry of Commerce, has made some progress to promote border trade with both Myanmar and Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Border

ICP Kwrpuichhuah

In December 2011, a Border Trade Facilitation Centre was jointly inaugurated at the Mizoram-Bangladesh border town of Tlabung (in south Mizoram's Lunglei District) by Bangladesh's State Minister, Lalrinliana Sailo. The two Ministers also unveiled the India-Bangladesh Shared Vision of Peace, Prosperity and Partnership stone at Kawapuichhuah, the proposed border trade centre for Indo-Bangladesh trade. While the setting up of an Integrated Check Post (ICP) at Kawrpuichhuah began with a survey by RITES Ltd. in 2005, and subsequent visits by Mr. Tariq Bangladesh High Commissioner to India, Secretary, Border Management (MHA) and other Senior Officials of Ministry of Home Affairs still there has been a delay in its implementation mainly due to the pending approvals from Ministry of Home Affairs, Border Management.

Border Haats

Four locations have been identified along the Mizoram-Bangladesh border

where 'haats' are to be developed. These are at Marpara and Tuipuibari in Mamit District, Sillsury and Nunsuri in Lunglei District.

The opening of border 'haats' will allow for the exchange of agricultural and horticultural products, small agricultural and household goods, for example, spices, minor forest products (excluding timber), fresh and dry fish, dairy and poultry products, cottage industry items, wooden furniture, handloom and handicraft items, etc. For Mizoram, border 'haats' will boost exports of agricultural, horticultural, sericulture items and floricultural goods besides forest-based products. There is also a high demand in Bangladesh for quarry stones from Mizoram. The current proposal is that there will be no imposition of local taxes, and Indian as well as Bangaldeshi currencies will be accepted.

Currently, state government of Mizoram is keen to supply bamboo, either in raw or semi-processed form, to Karnaphuli Paper Mill of Bangladesh. Mizoram is also keen to export ginger, chillies, chow-chow (squash), passion fruit, grape, anthurium, oranges, sesame, bananas, cotton, papaya and pumpkin to Bangladesh. In turn, Mizoram looks at the opportunity to import crockery, cement, iron and steel, meat on hooves, poultry items, cosmetics and toiletries, garments, gas jute, rubber, shoes, ceramic, fish, etc.

On the back of these developments, the argument for greater trade between North East India and Bangladesh is that the latter needs the North East's market to sell its products, while the former needs investments. This is also an opportunity for Bangladesh to rectify its trade imbalance with India while North East India can capitalise on this and bargain for investments in lieu of opening its markets to Bangladesh. Another argument is that importing goods from Bangladesh will be cheaper than products which are brought into the region from other parts of India, as the cost of transportation will be reduced.

Riverine and Land Route from Mizoram Border to Rangamati

While there is much to be done in the Mizoram-Bangladesh border trade sector, Mizoram has requested the Governments of India and Bangladesh to look at ways to open up the traditional river route from Tlabung to Chittagong. An alternative suggested by the state government was to develop a land corridor between Tlabung and Kaptai Dam in Bangladesh. The opening of Karnaphuli river route between South Mizoram and Rangamati can also have positive

economic impact. Further, requests have been made to Bangladesh to reactivate the Land Custom Station at Thegamukh.

Myanmar Border

According to the Myanmar Department of Border Trade, the border trade turnover between India and Myanmar has ranged from US\$ 10 million to US\$ 22 million, though it is probably higher if the huge unaccounted informal trade is also taken into account. Major imports from Myanmar include betel nut, dried ginger, green moong beans, black matpe, turmeric roots, resin and medicinal herbs. Major exports into Myanmar include cotton yarn, auto parts, soya bean meal pharmaceuticals, tobacco, medicines and fertilisers.

To facilitate a limited movement of the people residing along the Indo-Myanmar border, the Governments of India and Myanmar have permitted the entry of persons residing within 16 km from the international border on the basis of permits but not visa with certain terms and conditions. Local nationals of both sides can stay in the other country for three days within 16 km from the border on either side.

Zokhawthar LCS

Of the four Land Custom Stations (LCSs) along the India-Myanmar border, most of the trade takes place at Moreh in Manipur while a much smaller quantum of trade takes place through Zokhawthar in Mizoram and a negligible amount through Nampong in Arunachal Pradesh and Avakhung in Nagaland. The current infrastructure in place at Zokhawthar includes the main building of the LCS, a State Bank of India outlet, which opens three days a week, a weighbridge and a plant quarantine building.

Border Haats

Border 'haats' along the Mizoram-Myanmar border would be located in Hnahlan and Vaphai in Lawngtlai District and Chakhang in Saiha District.

Even as the Government speeded up the completion of LCS infrastructure in Zokhawthar, the 28-km long road between the LCS complex and the nearest district headquarters, Champhai, however, continues to be in a very poor condition and needs substantial upgrading. The road connecting Zokhawthar from the Myanmar side is in a poorer condition.

Rih-Tiddim and Rih-Falam Road

The road from Zokhawthar to Kalembo via Tiddim-Falam is a poor-grade single-lane kutch road where the transportation of tradable commodities, in bulk quantity, is not possible. A project for the improvement of the Rih-Kalembo road via Tiddim-Falam was proposed and a survey conducted by the Border Road Organisation. The total cost of this road was estimated at Rs 711.47 crore and has been approved by the Government of India, but actual work is yet to commence. This road is expected to have an enormous impact in facilitating trade across the Mizoram-Myanmar border.

Mizoram welcomes the signing of the US \$ 60 million Rih-Tiddim Project agreement between India's External Affairs Minister and Myanmar's Construction Minister in June 2011 at Nay Pyi Taw. The project must be started without further delay.

Zorinpui LCS

The DPR for setting up of LCS at Zorinpui for Rs 56.00 crore in Lawngtlai District on the India Myanmar Border has been approved by Ministry of Commerce. In this sector traditional, informal trade-transactions have been carried out for generations. Zorinpui LCS will be the main border post for goods that come through the Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Project one it is up and running.

Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Project

The Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Project is also anticipated to provide access to the Southeast Asian Countries and shorten the distance between Kolkata and North East India. The multi-modal transport infrastructure will connect Aizwal in Mizoram to Sittwe port in Myanmar via Lawngtlai, Zorinpui, Kaletwa and Paletwa. Work on the segments on the Indian side on National Highway 54 is expected to be completed soon. The corresponding work, however, needs to pick up pace on the Myanmar side. Zorinpui LCS to Kaletwa and Paletwa is 129 km by road, and the distance from Paletwa to Sittwe Port is 158 km by the inland water transportation system on Kaladan River.

The development of border trade is crucial to the success of the grand plans that will link Mizoram and India's entire Northeast region to Bangladesh

and Southeast Asia through a web of transportation and communication infrastructure. Accrual of benefits to the communities residing in the border regions—often the most neglected and under-developed area—has the potential to create a mind-set that is open to greater trade and economic activities. The buy-ins, which are created over time, will help foster an environment conducive to the development of infrastructure and greater economic activities. For Mizoram, this is an opportunity to position itself at the heart of a sub-regional trading bloc in which it can benefit from the trade of its high-in-demand exportable consumer goods at lower prices. The development of logistics and related services can also enable it to benefit from transit trade in the future.

For India, the management of complex relations with two important neighbours, Bangladesh and Myanmar, places the role of the Ministry of External Affairs at the centre of developing trade with them. Then, there are questions about the state Government's capacity to capitalise on the infrastructure that is being developed as well as its ability to ensure a corresponding planning of its agro-processing sectors, industries and value added services that will bring in the much needed revenue to traders and the government.

Mizoram must seize the opportunity presented by its location and the peaceful environment that it enjoys, and New Delhi needs to understand that any success on this front will have an impact on changing the mind-set in the entire North East towards the building of infrastructure that will facilitate greater economic integration of this region with South East Asia.

Map 1



PART III

Regional Architecture in Asia-Pacific:
Role of India and ASEAN

Chaired by Gopinath Pillai

13

Regional Architecture and ASEAN-India Partnership

Chitriya Pinthong¹

Regional Architecture in the Asia-Pacific

The existing regional architecture has unique features. It has evolved over time, in response to circumstances, rather than by design, with well laid out blueprints. It appears confusing with multiple institutions and fora, overlapping membership and agendas, and even possible clashing interests.

There is no overarching body. Rather, there is a jigsaw of overlapping frameworks for cooperation based on shared interests, and some shared understanding of similar norms of behaviour, and in some cases, codes of conduct.

The unstructured and loose arrangement of multiple frameworks reflect the very diverse character of the Asia-Pacific, comprising States of different sizes, levels of development and political culture. The regional architecture is open and inclusive, focusing on cooperation rather than having hard and fast rules to abide by.

Supplementing this regional architecture are sub-regional cooperation frameworks having their own interests. Generally, they seek to promote economic and development cooperation, drawing on available resources and expertise, but not excluding support from non-members.

India today, is part of all key Association of Southeast Asian Nations

(ASEAN)-led arrangements in the regional architecture—ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus, East Asia Summit (EAS)—with the exception of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

India—Partner of the Asia-Pacific Regional Architecture

From the late 1990s onwards, India became a more important partner of ASEAN, and generally viewed as potentially an important partner of the Asia-Pacific, although not part of the Asia-Pacific.

India's greater engagement with the Asia-Pacific was partly India's own policy, namely, the "Look East Policy", supplemented by the recognition of growing opportunities of closer trade and economic links with Southeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific.

The ASEAN-India Vision Statement at the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit on December 20, 2012 charted the course of ASEAN-India Partnership across the whole spectrum of political-security, economic, socio-cultural and development cooperation. The Vision Statement echoes the commitment of both ASEAN and India in advancing regional cooperation and integration, and reaffirms continued engagement of India in the evolving architecture of the Asia-Pacific.

Connectivity between India and ASEAN has gained emphasis as a means to enhance partnership and opportunities for trade, investment and industries. One concrete example is the joint effort to develop the Trilateral Highway (India-Myanmar-Thailand). This and other initiatives, including development of railways to link up with the Trans Asian railway, support the transformation of northern India into "bridges of opportunity" linking up with Southeast Asia. They also support ASEAN's efforts to "Look West" and develop stronger partnerships with India and South Asia as a whole.

With enhanced connectivity, however, there is also greater potential for risks. This could translate into greater cross-border challenges such as transnational crime, terrorism and piracy. At the same time, natural cross-border challenges will continue to pose threats, such as natural disasters and public health issues, affecting economic and social stability.

In order to take forward the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership, it will

be important for both sides to work closely together to take advantage of the potentials while addressing these challenges, so that the Partnership can contribute to mutual growth and stability.

Beyond ASEAN-India cooperation, ASEAN and India are also part of the regional architecture in the Asia-Pacific, which is widely acknowledged as undergoing transformation.

Many factors contribute to the dynamics of the transformation:

- First is the rise of China as a significant global economic and political power—a country that is also a Strategic Partner of ASEAN.
- Second is the rebalancing policy of the United States in the Asia-Pacific—a country with which ASEAN is seeking to develop a strategic partnership.
- Third is the rise of India as a key regional and global power.
- Fourth is the reassertion of Japan's role in the economic and security picture in the region and the world, in tandem with its economic recovery. This is another country that is a Strategic Partner of ASEAN.
- Fifth is the rising tension in some maritime areas which can potentially affect regional security and, as a consequence, the Asia-Pacific's role as a key engine of the global economy.
- Sixth is the increasing scope and complexity of transnational and cross-border challenges that affect all countries in the region, from transnational crimes and terrorism to piracy and natural disasters.

With ASEAN at the geographical crossroads between the Asia-Pacific and the Indian Ocean, and at the helm of the regional architecture in the Asia-Pacific, ASEAN and India are natural, strategic partners in managing these dynamics of change in the region to ensure continued stability and economic growth. In other words, the strategic partnership operates not only in the ASEAN-India context but also in the context of the regional architecture.

From Thailand's perspective, the closer engagement of India with ASEAN and the Asia-Pacific is not only important but also necessary for the evolving regional architecture. ASEAN will benefit from the wisdom of India, one of the world's largest democracies, a growing economic power with high strategic impact. ASEAN and India have also strong historical and cultural links and interests. A rising India with more engagement in the region does not mean competition for influence but rather competition for cooperation.

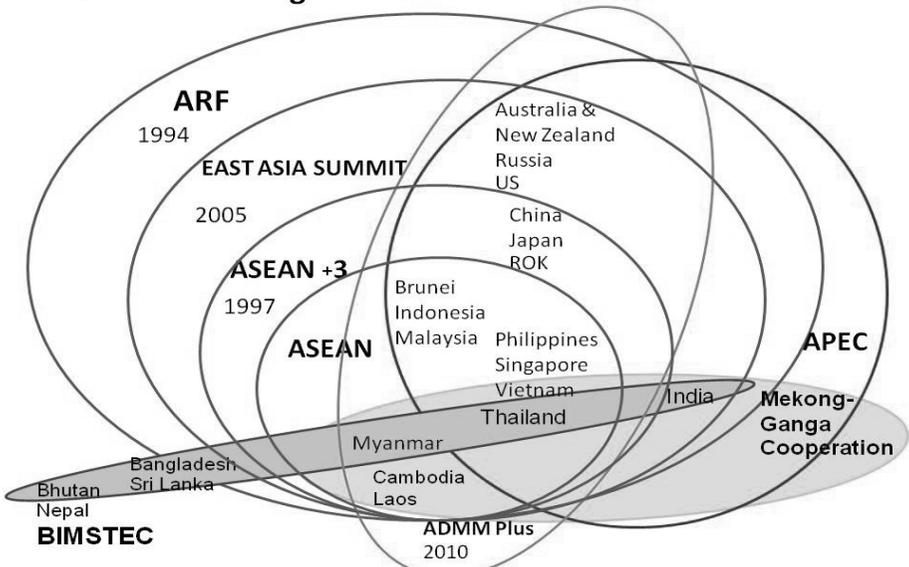
India's proactive engagement with ASEAN and the Asia-Pacific will add resilience to the regional architecture. This enhances the region's ability to address shared challenges and promote economic prosperity. It enables ASEAN to enjoy even more the benefits of enhanced connectivity with India and South Asia. It contributes to promoting a culture of closer cooperation to promote shared interests and address shared challenges in the region. This is at the heart of the open and inclusive regional architecture that ASEAN is seeking to develop further with its partners.

Looking Beyond the Asia-Pacific—An Indo-Pacific Idea?

How could the Asia-Pacific jigsaw potentially relate to the emerging idea of an Indo-Pacific link or framework of cooperation?

With growing maritime commerce, growing links between the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean are inevitable. Climate change is fuelling natural disasters that have affected both Oceans and their rims at the same time—this has encouraged the development of early warning systems that cut across the two Oceans. From a maritime security standpoint, some analysts view that growing naval capabilities can potentially make it more difficult to separate the two Oceans as distinct theatres of operations.

ASEAN-India Regional Architecture in Asia-Pacific



A framework for shared norms and cooperation is emerging that would link up the Pacific and Indian Oceans.² The concept is still in its infancy and fluid, in need of elaboration and concreteness. Perhaps it can be an extension of land connectivity and areas of cooperation to help promote trade and investment in the region. In the spirit of cooperation, it can provide another opportunity to ensure peace, stability and prosperity.

An Indo-Pacific idea is therefore an idea worth exploring because of the potential benefits for India, ASEAN and the Asia-Pacific. It would provide a framework that would cement India's valued engagement with the Asia-Pacific, and provide another dimension to ASEAN-India strategic cooperation. All this is important for mutual growth and stability in the region.

NOTES

1. I wish to acknowledge Ms Suwanit Sombatpiboon and Mr. Suriya Chindawongse of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand for their contribution and comments.
2. Dr. R.M. Marty Natalegawa, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Republic of Indonesia, "An Indonesian Perspective on the Indo-Pacific", Keynote Address, Conference on Indonesia, CSIS, Washington D.C., March 16, 2013.

14

Regional Architecture in the Asia-Pacific— Roles of India and ASEAN

S.D. Muni

Introduction

The question of building a vibrant economic and a resilient and responsive strategic architecture in the Asia-Pacific region has been discussed and debated for long, particularly since the establishment of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The need for such an architecture has become all the more compelling due to transformational changes taking place in the region. These changes can be discerned at two levels. One is regarding internal political, social and economic pressures; the economies of the region are growing, some of those like China at a phenomenal rate, the polities are seeking greater openness and democratisation, despite set-backs in countries like Thailand, and societies are facing turbulence driven by rising aspirations and exploding identities.

At the second level, the tectonic plates of regional power hierarchy are shifting. Since the end of the Second World War, the region has been witnessing a period of stability and order notwithstanding minor conflicts such as between China and Vietnam during 1979-80, under the US hegemonic sway. This is now being challenged with China's economic rise and strategic discomfort with the US dominance in the region. China is seeking a "new great power balance" in the region where its core economic and strategic interests are neither challenged nor constrained. China's reassertion of its territorial claims with all its neighbours in the South China Sea, East Asian Sea and the Himalayas

is indicative of China's growing regional aspirations. The US in order to perpetuate its hegemonic order has recast its strategic posture. This has been done in the name of "Rebalancing" under which the US is reinforcing its existing alliance structure and building new strategic partnerships to ensure that China is kept in balance. These Chinese and US moves have stirred up the prevailing balance in the region spreading anxieties and concerns among all the regional countries.

The existing regional structures, such as those of ASEAN and its affiliated institutions, like ASEAN Dialogue partners, ASEAN+ Summits, ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting plus (ADMM+), as also the East Asia Summit (EAS), do not seem to be fully capable of coping with the transformational pressures generated in the region. ASEAN could do precious little to soften internal political pressures within Myanmar or Thailand. It is struggling to calm the tensions between China and its members in the South China Sea, but its vulnerability was exposed in July 2012, when it failed to get a Summit Declaration issued in Cambodia. In economic matters, the tensions between the East Asian initiative of Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and the US initiated Trans Pacific Partnership are clearly evident. Therefore, much as the worth and value of the existing arrangements are being recognised and appreciated, their limitations and inadequacies are also being acknowledged, lending urgency to the moves towards building a broader regional economic and strategic architecture to cope with the contingencies of peace, stability and prosperity in the region.

The parameters of the region to be covered by the prospective architecture have also somewhat altered. ASEAN has been focused on Asia. The EAS also covers East and South East Asia though India has been included in the EAS. This is because the Indian Ocean and its Bay of Bengal section is increasingly seen as integral to economic and strategic developments in East Asia. This is in view of India's economic rise, its active Look-East policy and China's outreach to Indian Ocean to protect its energy and export trade. These developments have been taken into cognisance in the US "rebalancing" strategy for the Asia-Pacific region as India is expected by the US to be one of the "lynch pin" in this strategy. Explaining the rationale of the wider region and India's importance in it, the then US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said in her address at Hawaii on October 28, 2010:

...Our military presence must evolve to reflect an evolving world. The Pentagon is now engaged in a comprehensive Global Posture Review, which will lay out a plan for the continued forward presence of U.S. forces in the region. That plan will reflect three principles: Our defense posture will become more politically sustainable, operationally resilient, and geographically dispersed...And we are expanding our work with the Indian Navy in the Pacific because we understand how important the Indo-Pacific basin is to the global trade and commerce.¹

Therefore, we need to look at the region in its broader parameters when thinking of an architecture to serve its security and developmental needs.

This is where the emerging concept of Indo-Pacific in the strategic discourse on Asia-Pacific needs careful attention. Much before the use of the term Indo-Pacific by the US leaders, it was the Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe who is given credit for introducing the concept in the contemporary strategic discourse. During his official visit to India in 2007, while addressing Indian Parliamentarians, he referred to a book titled *Confluence of the Two Seas*, written by an Indian Mughal Prince Dara Shikoh way back in 1655 and said:

The Pacific and the Indian Oceans are now bringing about a dynamic coupling as seas of freedom and of prosperity. A 'broader Asia' that broke away geographical boundaries is now beginning to take on a distinct form. Our two countries have the ability – and responsibility —to ensure that it broadens yet further to nurture and enrich these seas to become seas of clearest transparence.²

The reference to Dara Shikoh's work in the Japanese Prime Minister's address clearly underlines that the concept has been relevant to India for a long time. Dara Shikoh used it more in the cultural sense of civilisational ideas, but presently we are using it in the geo-strategic perspective. Strength to this concept for India is derived from a long history of civilisational and commercial contacts that flourished between India and the Asia-Pacific region, especially South East Asian countries for centuries. Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam travelled through these contacts from India to this region. Recall, what a famous Indian historian Kalidas Nag wrote in his book, *India and the Pacific* way back in 1941:

The expansion of Indian culture into the Pacific world is a grand chapter of human history...What parts of this cultural complex could reach the Eastern pacific basin and the New World are problems of future

anthropologists and antiquarians...This colossal cultural drama is reappearing to us like an ancient mutilated play with many acts and interludes still missing which future research alone would probably restore and reconstruct. But whatever portions have already been discovered inspire us with awe and admiration. There was no sordid chapter of economic exploitation or political domination in the development of greater India which coming as a legacy from Emperor Ashoka of third century BC continues for over 1000 years to foster the fundamental principles of *mâitre* (fellowship) and *Kalyana* (universal wellbeing) which form the bed-rocks of Hindu-Buddhist idealism.³

Cultural and commercial roots of India's longstanding engagement with the Pacific are being echoed in the strategic projections of the present day, to recall Hillary Clinton's words again when she wrote in *Foreign Policy* magazine (November 2011 issue) under the title "America's Pacific Century":

Asia-Pacific has become a key driver of global politics. Stretching from the Indian sub-continent to the western shores of Americas, the region spans two oceans—the Pacific and the India—that are increasingly linked by shipping and strategy. It boasts almost half of the world's population. It includes many of the key engines of the global economy as well as the largest emitters of greenhouse gases. It is home to several of our key allies and important emerging powers like China, India and Indonesia.

From India's strategic point of view, what the American leadership was projecting in the second decade of the 21st century, India's Jawaharlal Nehru had envisaged 70 years earlier in 1944 in *The Discovery of India* when he said:

The Pacific is likely to take the place of Atlantic in the future as the nerve center [*sic*] of the world. Though not directly a Pacific State, India will inevitably exercise an important influence there. India will also develop as the center [*sic*] of economic and strategic importance in this part of the world which is going to develop in future. India will have to play a very great part in the security problem of Asia and the Indian Ocean, more specifically Middle east and South East Asia which India is the pivot around...

It is unfortunate that despite this vision of Nehru's, contemporary Indian diplomacy appears shy and reticent in projecting the concept of Indo-Pacific from India's strategic perspective, though a number of Indian diplomats and policymakers, in recent years have endorsed and echoed this concept in their official pronouncements. Speaking at the commemorative India-ASEAN

summit in 2012, the Indian Prime Minister underlined the Indo-Pacific link between India and ASEAN.⁴ Subsequently, India's Ambassador in Washington, Nirupama Rao, in her address at the Brown University on February 4, 2013 said:

It has also been observed how the geographical sub-text of India's engagement in the Asia-Pacific is also manifest in the term 'Indo-Pacific' which is increasingly defining the cultural, economic, political and security continuum that straddles the Indian and the Pacific Oceans and is fast becoming an geo-strategic construct to comprehend the common opportunities, the intersecting maritime interests and challenges confronting the region.⁵

The thrust of these statements is that India is prepared to play its perceived role in the Indo-Pacific region.

The Indo-Pacific concept has been readily adopted by a number of countries in Southeast Asia. Indonesian Foreign Minister, Dr. Natalegawa at a conference in Washington DC on May 16, 2013 presented his country's perspective on the 'Indo-Pacific'. Defining the region, he said:

The term "Indo-Pacific" has become increasingly common in the lexicon of geopolitics. In terms of geography, it refers to an important triangular spanning two oceans, the Pacific and India Oceans, bounded by Japan in the north, Australia in the south-east and India in the South-west, notably with Indonesia in the center [*sic*]. Thus as a result, in this largest archipelagic state in the world, amidst its archipelagic waters are found some of the most strategic sea lanes in the world: connecting the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Serving as highways for the movement of global trade, as well as of people and the associated ideas and cultural expressions they bring forth.⁶

He talked of existing trust deficit in the Indo-Pacific region and the threat arising out of unresolved territorial disputes as well as radical socio-political transformations the region has been undergoing. To address these challenges, the Indonesian Foreign Minister called upon an "Indo-Pacific wide treaty of friendship and cooperation".⁷ At the recently held Delhi Dialogue, a number of other ASEAN representatives endorsed the concept of Indo-Pacific in their inaugural presentations.

The thrust of the foregoing is that Indo-Pacific concept should define the basic area of operation for building a regional strategic architecture in the Asia-Pacific region. The geographical contours of the concept have been defined

by the Indonesian Foreign Minister in the form of countries and ocean space covered by the triangle of Japan, Australia and India. Hillary Clinton as the US Secretary of State had defined the Indo-Pacific region even more broadly, "Stretching from the Indian sub-continent to the western shores of America." This region obviously includes China and must have a place for the US as well as Russia, which have substantial presence and influence in the region.

The need for one overarching architecture arises from the challenges posed in the region to its peace, security, stability and development as outlined by the Indonesian Foreign Minister. They fall into two broad categories, namely internal transformations and restructuring of strategic power relations among countries. The internal transformations and turbulence in the countries of the region manifesting in democratic upsurge or ethnic sharpness were witnessed in Myanmar and Thailand, for example. The changing strategic power relations are being driven by the rise of Asian countries like China and India. China's assertive and confident reflection of its economic rise and military modernisation has not only been reflecting in its territorial disputes with Japan, South China Sea countries and India, but also in the pressures generated on the hitherto existing global hegemonic order led by the US. All these transformations and changing equations have created an atmosphere of anxiety and uncertainty in the region that should be addressed by the regional architecture.

The basic thrust of the architecture should be on the non-use of force and resolution of disputes through peaceful negotiations. That in turn will naturally promote mutual trust and encourage greater economic engagement through trade, investments, flow of technologies and services and possibility of regulating labour migration. The non-use of force must involve transparency in defence expenditures, military doctrines, military deployments and exercises. It would be ideal to put in place a credible dispute settlement and/or conflict management mechanism to address the difficulties of the region, but this is not easy to achieve. An underlying principle to avoid threat or use of force would be to adhere to universally accepted norms that govern international and regional order, such as the 1982 UN Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in maritime engagements. As and when a clash of interests emerges with such norms, the country concerned must strive for intermediate or alternative norms, like the Code of Conduct in South China Sea territorial

disputes proposed by ASEAN, rather than resorting to the use of threat or use of force.

Some of the existing structures like ARF or ADMM+ evolved under ASEAN cover questions of confidence building and resolution of disputes. They are useful but inadequate to cope with the growing pressures in the region. The procedures are based on voluntary sharing of information and, the ARF and ADMM+ members are not obliged to advocate transparency in the defence plans of their countries. Therefore, these existing structure of ASEAN, wherever possible, need to be revamped, and wherever needed, alternative instrumentalities may be evolved. These ASEAN institutions, as also the EAS, can serve as building blocks of the required overarching regional architecture. ASEAN must remain in the driver's seat to evolve this architecture despite reservations on the part of some of the countries or leaders. In this respect, ASEAN's commitment may be recalled. At the 47th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' meeting in Hanoi on August 10, 2014, the regional groupings' earlier resolve (43rd Foreign Ministers' meeting in 2010) was reiterated:

We affirmed our efforts to continue enhancing ASEAN's external relations. In this regard we reiterated the importance of ASEAN centrality in evolving regional architecture and reaffirmed our commitments to work closely with all our partners through various ASEAN-led mechanisms including ASEAN plus One, ASEAN plus Three, ARF, ADMM plus and EAS, in ensuring the maintenance of peace, stability, security and prosperity in the region.⁸

It may however be kept in mind here that if ASEAN has to lead effectively and decisively in this respect, it must keep its intra-group solidarity intact. Serious breaches in this solidarity were manifested in July 2012 during the Phnom Penh ASEAN summit. The corollary of such internal cohesion is also that the ASEAN evolves a broad regional consensus on critical security issues of the region including dealing with the emerging threats and challenges and preserving the strategic balance.

India will play a supporting role in ASEAN's endeavours towards evolving a regional architecture. India has deep stakes in peace, stability and order in the Indo-Pacific region, based upon its deep rooted civilisational links and a dynamic economic and strategic engagement under its 'Look-East' policy. The difficulty for India at times arise out of unrealistic and inflated expectations out of it in the region, where at times, India is looked upon to match China's

economic largesse and military might. This is not possible as India is not as deep pocketed as China is nor does it have any expansionist or hegemonic ambitions in the region. India indeed suffers from a serious delivery deficit in its international engagements owing to paucity of resources and slow and cumbersome democratic decision-making enveloped into a lack of long-term strategic thrust. This has to be overcome if India has to play its legitimate role in the region. There is however no lack of will on India's part to engage itself creatively in the region.

India is one of the important legs of Asian juggernaut along with China, Japan and Indonesia. In the Asia-Pacific region, India's growing ties with the United States and other countries in North and South America brings with it a commensurate role in the region... India's role is crucial for ensuring and maintaining long term peace, stable balance of power, economic growth and security in Asia. It's a core state whose role is crucial for the economic wellbeing, institution building, collective and cooperative security, economic integration and trade expansion, and political and civilisational dialogue, essential for a growing Asia.⁹

Within this broad framework, India's preference has been for an "open, inclusive and transparent regional strategic architecture" in the Asia-Pacific region. Elaborating on India's preference, then National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon asked for a "security architecture with Asian characteristics", which should be:

political-military equivalent of the open interlinked economic order that has so benefitted the region, taking into account the primarily maritime nature of many regional security issues and disputes amenable to collective solutions... The commons, on the high seas, in air space and in cyber space should be safe and open to all lawful users. That is why maritime security and freedom of navigation is so important and should be one of the first orders of business.¹⁰

It is not clear how seriously ASEAN has taken the question of regional security architecture on its agenda. It is time that a Track 2 or 1.5 of EAS be created under the ASEAN leadership to explore various aspects of the desired architecture and prepare its blueprint. That may form the basis for regional consensus to institutionalise such an architecture, keeping in mind that contours of such sensitive strategic structures are always resilient so that they can evolve and adapt themselves to changing needs and necessities.

NOTES

1. For the text of this speech delivered at Honolulu on October 28, 2010 on “America’s Engagement in the Asia-Pacific”, see the U.S. Department of State website, at <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/10/150141.htm> (Accessed January 23, 2012).
2. Text of the speech by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, August 22, 2007, at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/pmv0708/speech-2.html> (Accessed April 15, 2013).
3. From the review of the book by U.N. Ghoshal, in *Journal of the Greater India Society* (IX/1, 1942, 39-41), as cited in Kwa Chong-Guan (ed.), *Early Southeast Asia Viewed from India: An Anthology of Articles from the Journal of the Greater India Society*, Manohar Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, 2013, Chapter 4, pp. 51-52.
4. http://pmindia.nic.in/content_print.php?nodeid=1259&nodetype=2.
5. Text of her speech on the official website of the Indian Embassy Washington, at <http://www.indianembassy.org/includes/page.php?id=2097>.
6. For the text of the speech, see http://csis.org/files/attachments/130516_Marty_Natalegawa... (Accessed September 22, 2014).
7. Ibid.
8. 47th ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting, Joint Communique, August 10, 2014, part Three, para 78, at <http://en.vietnamplus.vn/Home/Jointcommunique>.
9. Text of Pranab Mukherjee’s address at the Fifth IISS Asia security Summit (Shangrila Dialogue), Singapore, June 02-04, 2006.
10. His address at the Institute for Defence Studies & Analyses, on February 21, 2014. He was speaking on the concluding day of the 16th Asian Security Conference in New Delhi.

15

Significance of Principles and Values in the Emerging Asia-Pacific Regional Architecture: Role of India and ASEAN

Laura Q. Del Rosario

A summation of my statement is as follows:

- The obvious and ultimate objective of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-India strategic partnership is a prosperous, peaceful and stable Asia-Pacific region.
- We want peace and security in order to create the right conditions for human development and human security. And this is basically what we are aspiring for in our regional integration efforts.
- Connectivity is the current buzzword when discussing the ASEAN and regional integration. And in ASEAN, we are preoccupied with addressing physical, institutional and people-to-people connectivity. The private sector could be entrusted with physical connectivity—as long as there are bankable infrastructure projects, it is easy to invite the private sector
- But the government has to play its role—it has to set the overall vision. It also has the unique role of setting the rules and the order of things. And when rules are in place, the economy can run like a well-oiled machine that cannot be disrupted by politicians and political platforms.
- The strategic partnership between ASEAN and India has a similar

role for our region: to establish law and order, transparency and governance, in service of human development and human security.

- However, we have somehow overlooked the need for connectivity in principles and values. India, which was born as a free nation on the heels of Satyagraha or the firm insistence on truth and universal principles, eventually becoming the world's largest democracy, should be able to provide a valuable input to the ASEAN-India strategic partnership in this respect.
- And while the Philippines, among the ASEAN Member States, is the least connected to India physically, the two countries are the most connected in terms of principles and values. And this is the kind of the connectivity we would like ASEAN to pursue with India as well.
- At its height, the Roman Empire achieved outstanding physical and institutional connectivity. It nonetheless crumbled, unable to hold itself together. I believe that it overlooked the connectivity in principles and values of its peoples, which should underlie all other kinds of connectivity. In its hubris, the Roman Empire neglected connectivity that would have ensured its survival. It was overrun by so-called "barbarians" who built societies that eventually gave rise to the nation states of Europe.
- In our present time, in the context of the role that the ASEAN-India strategic partnership can play in the creation of a desirable Asia-Pacific regional architecture, connectivity in principles and values may be summed up in one word: democracy. All peoples, all nations, have a voice. All peoples, all nations, are equal. Only then can we achieve credible regional integration.

16

Regional Security Architecture in Asia-Pacific: Role of India and ASEAN

P.S. Das

I joined the Navy to see the world and as an 18-year old cadet my ship sailed for a foreign cruise which interestingly, took me to, Penang, Singapore, Labuan, Kuantan, Trengganu, Bangkok and what was then Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City); seven countries which are part of the ASEAN group today. In later naval life of nearly four decades I visited these countries and their ports several times and it has been my good fortune in retired life to visit them even more often than I did whilst in service. So, what a pleasure it is for me to be present at a seminar where India-ASEAN security interface is the topic of discussion.

When we look at regional architecture, and I am going to confine myself to security aspects, I am immediately struck by one theme, it is a much larger picture than just India and ASEAN. When we look at the Asia-Pacific in economic terms as APEC, it is no longer just an economic entity but something much more than that. It is a geopolitical and geostrategic entity and nobody has realised it better than members of ASEAN themselves otherwise there would never be an East Asia Summit, there would never be an ASEAN Regional Forum, there would never be a Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific, there would never be an ADMM+ and there would never be an Extended ASEAN Maritime Forum. So, when we look at security we have to look at this larger picture and apart from India and ASEAN there are some other players as well. There are China, Japan, Russia, South Korea, Australia,

USA, which are also actors in this overall landscape of the regional security architecture.

There was some discussion earlier on Indo-Pacific. The terminology is not important but one thing is clear that whatever be the security scenario, it is much more than just the Western Pacific. So, if there is an “Indo” it is merely in recognition of the emerging reality. So, whether Indo-Pacific or Asia-Pacific, we are actually looking at a theatre which encompasses both the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and the Western Pacific including the East and South China Seas.

Clearly, ASEAN countries are the main players in any regional security architecture of the region and let us not forget that 4 of them are littorals of the Indian Ocean region—Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. Actually, I would call it 5 because Singapore is located at the very edge of Malacca Straits and should be counted as an Indian Ocean littoral. How about India? It is an IOR player but one-third of its overseas trade passes through waters of the Western Pacific, over, \$ 300 billion last year (2013). So, it is not possible that it can be excluded from whatever happens in the Western Pacific. China is a player and so is Japan, their energy lifelines run through the Indian Ocean. So, it is not possible to say that they belong only to the Western Pacific. Then there is Australia; it is a littoral of the Indian Ocean, it is a littoral of the Pacific. When we look at the security scenario it is this larger theatre that has to be recognised...in which ASEAN has an important role, standing as it does at the confluence of the two water spaces; Indonesia being the largest of them is one of the key players in this context. In the IOR, India is a key player because it sits astride all the major energy routes which go from East to West. Any regional security architecture has to be based on these fundamental strategic realities.

What are India's interests? As mentioned earlier, it is essentially an Indian Ocean power. Its capabilities lie here and its responsibilities lie here, so also its interests but it also has an interest in the Pacific. Its core interests in the Western Pacific are essentially two; one, its commerce must move safely at sea and two, international laws must be adhered to. The sanctity of Territorial Waters and Exclusive Economic Zones are part of this package. Strategically, peace and tranquility in the Indo-Pacific are critical to India's national interest.

What are our concerns? In the Indo part, the concerns are mainly non-

traditional—piracy, whether first in Malacca Straits, then in gulf of Aden, maritime terrorism—the attacks on USS Cole in Aden, on the French tanker Limburg in the Gulf of Aden, on offshore oil terminals at Basra and the mother of them all, sea launched attacks on Mumbai on 26th November 2008 are some examples, then there is pollution, the frequent exposure to natural disasters such as the Tsunami a decade ago. These are very critical concerns but all them lie in the non-traditional sector. And they have been met successfully; the three nation MALSINDO patrols and the four country Eye in the Sky four nation surveillance in the Malacca Strait, combined Task Force 151, Chinese and Indian ship patrolling in the Gulf of Aden off Somalia and so on.. As a result of these multi-lateral cooperative measures, these threats have diminished greatly in the last few years.

The scene in the Pacific is entirely different. Here the tensions are between nation states whether in the East China Sea or the South China Sea. These issues can be easily managed if subject to international laws but a sense of excessive nationalism has given rise to tensions which are potentially worrisome as they could lead to conflict which even if minor, can affect tranquility in this very important part of the Indo-Pacific Any such confrontation will automatically and inevitably have an impact in the IOR.

India's approach to this developing situation is essentially two pronged. We believe in a multilateral framework, that is why we are members of EAS, ADMM+, ARF, CSCAP, RECAP, ASEAN+1 et al and along with this there is a one-to-one a bilateral engagement with like minded nations. India has defence cooperation agreements with many littoral countries of the region—Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore South Korea, and Vietnam. This cooperation is not against any nation state it is only structured towards non-traditional threats already highlighted earlier where information exchange requires mutual trust and confidence. Ship visits, exchange of people and dialogue at different levels are key to build the kind of mutual confidence that is needed. At their New Delhi Summit in 2013 all ASEAN leaders and India agreed that maritime security cooperation must be enhanced for this very reason.

Now, India is a five-letter word, ASEAN is a five-letter word, let me bring in another five-letter word without which the security scenario is not complete and that is China. In ASEAN, the scene is divided. There are three countries

which are essentially what I call centerist, they have concerns in the South China Sea which conflict with those of China but not of such a serious nature that they could lead to confrontation—Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia. There are two countries which are seriously affected, Vietnam and the Philippines and there are three which are not at all affected by the South China Sea—Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia. So, this is the scene in ASEAN. As for other players—Japan, China and South Korea—they each have problems with China and between themselves in the East China Sea. Yet for all of these countries engagement with China is very important because they profit enormously with trade, for most of them China is their largest trading partner. And yet, for all of them, the desire to get others involved becoming increasingly important, whether one terms it for soft balancing or whatever. American presence is already there; so also their relationship with Australia. Almost all are now seeking greater involvement of India both bilaterally and multilaterally. This, in effect, is the merging security scenario in the Indo-Pacific.

What is common between India and ASEAN the engagement with China. Both need to and must engage China. India has had border problems with China but we have to handle that and any other issues even as engage. This interaction has to be watchful and mutually satisfying. For both ASEAN and India, China is a very important player in the Indo-Pacific security environment and engagement multilaterally and bilaterally, is important. India's relationship with China is itself undergoing a change. China is our second largest trading partner and much the same is true of all others. In 2012 the Chinese defence minister visited India and signed an MoU of cooperation with his Indian defence counterpart. The following year our defence minister went to China. Some joint exercises between the two armies and navies of the two countries have begun albeit limited in scope and an Indian warship was present at Qingdao for the 60th anniversary celebrations of the PLA Navy during which the Chinese Chief of Navy visited the ship. One must hope that the relationship moves forward. China has initiated proposals for a Maritime Silk Route linking littorals of the Indo-Pacific through safe-to-travel ocean routes, ports and harbours and other related infrastructure and this should be viewed carefully but positively. In short, diplomacy, trade and security must operate in tandem.

In the same context of multilateral interaction, exchanges between the Indian Navy and the Japanese Navy are strengthening with both bilateral

engagement at sea and those conjoined with the India-USA Malabar series of joint exercises. India's defence interface with Vietnam is also positive and ship visits and exchanges of personnel add to it. The same is true of interactions with other ASEAN countries, principally Singapore and Indonesia. Such networking contributes to the larger objective of peace and tranquility in the Indo-Pacific.

To summarise, it is no longer possible to separate the IOR and Western Pacific as two separate and unrelated spaces and to look at issues holistically is important. As a first step, India and ASEAN have to engage China. Two, disputes in the East and South China Sea disputes must be settled peacefully and consistent with international law. Three, there must be safe movement of commerce. Soft balancing of relationships through multilateral and bilateral networks will be conducive to the overall security environment. In this process, maritime security cooperation will play a very important role in which India and ASEAN must be proactive players.

17

India and the Concept of the Indo-Pacific¹

Vo Xuan Vinh

The Indo-Pacific has become an increasingly influential term regarding the evolving economic and strategic architecture in Asia-Pacific region. Although it is not a Pacific nation in terms of geography, due to its historical, economic and strategic cohesion with the Asia-Pacific India has been named an Asia-Pacific country. The Indo-Pacific concept has been differently considered in India. While the proponents of the idea urge the Indian Government to build alliances with like-minded countries to counter China's hegemonic ambition, the opponents reject India's adoption of the concept with the view that pursuing a multilateral approach and remaining with the principle of non-alignment are the best ways for India to realise its strategic calculations. The third option comprises a policy combining both hard and soft approaches.

The paper attempts to summarise the perceptions of the US, Australia and Japan of the Indo-Pacific concept. Indian responses to the idea will be discussed too. The paper also tries to analyse challenges facing India and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in the context of an evolving Indo-Pacific architecture through two cases of Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) led by the US and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) with China as a dominant player.

The Concept of the Indo-Pacific

Why has the idea of the Indo-Pacific been initiated and promoted? According

to Nick Bisley and Andrew Phillips, “Indo-Pacific boosters invoke two main developments to justify the term. The first is the expanding maritime interests and naval ambitions of India and China, which potentially portend a growing strategic competition that will pull together the formerly separate domains of the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Second, economic linkages—especially East Asia’s voracious demand for Middle Eastern hydrocarbons—have enhanced the Indian Ocean’s importance as an ‘energy superhighway’, binding together the fates of societies on the littorals of both oceans and broadening the relevant strategic geography of states formerly focused only on their immediate regions.”² Moreover, the US ‘pivot back’ to the Asia-Pacific region aiming at maintaining its major influence with the move of Japan under Abe administration and that of Australia to enhance their respective relations with India have made many believe that a concept of Indo-Pacific is being constructed.

Australia

Australia has been regarded as the country which initiated the idea of the Indo-Pacific, but actually, its initial idea in 1980s was the building of an Australian “Two Ocean Navy”. Its 1987 White Paper set key decisions and announcements relating to force posture, that included, among others, “the establishment of a ‘Two Ocean Navy’ posture, involving the development of HMAS Stirling as a major fleet base, with the long-term objective of basing half of the Navy’s fleet in the West”.³ ‘Two Oceans’ means the Pacific and Indian Oceans, but in this case, the term was applied to the operations of its Australian Navy only.

In 2008, then Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd initiated an idea to envisage an Asia-Pacific Community⁴ in 2020 as “a regional institution which spans the entire Asia-Pacific region—including the United States, Japan, China, India, Indonesia and the other states of the region” and “a regional institution which is able to engage in the full spectrum of dialogue, cooperation and action on economic and political matters and future challenges related to security”. Although Rudd’s proposal was not called Indo-Pacific, but the presence of India in the community indicated that the proposed Asia-Pacific community went beyond the mere geography of Asia-Pacific, like the East Asia Summit (EAS).⁵

In Australian perceptions, “a new Indo-Pacific strategic arc is beginning to emerge, extending from India through Southeast Asia to Northeast Asia, including the sea lines of communication on which the region depends”.⁶ Australia however officially came to use the term ‘Indo-Pacific’ after the US under Obama administration committed its engagements in Indo-Pacific. In his remarks to the Australian Strategic Policy Institute in August 2012, Australian Minister of Defence clarified his country’s shift towards the Indo-Pacific by stating that, “in this century, the Asia-Pacific and the Indian Ocean Rim, what some now refer to as the Indo-Pacific, will become the world’s strategic centre of gravity” because of the following considerations: (1) The rise of China is a defining element, but it is far from the only or whole story. (2) The rise of India is still under-appreciated, as is the rise of the ASEAN economies combined. (3) The major and enduring economic strengths of Japan and South Korea also need to be acknowledged. (4) The great individual potential of Indonesia—as it emerges from a regional to a global influence is also very important to Australia. (5) Finally, the US re-balance to the Asia-Pacific will see greater US military, economic and political engagement in the region.⁷ The Minister also charted the vision of Indo-Pacific in the second half of 21st century, “by the second half of this century, the Indo-Pacific will be home to three super powers and the strategic environment will be defined ...not just by the relationship between Washington and Beijing but also by the relationships between Washington and New Delhi and New Delhi and Beijing.” However, a detailed structure of the Indo-Pacific has not been defined yet.

The US

In US perceptions, the links between Pacific and Indian Oceans are very important in its global strategy, particularly, in security and economic terms. On the security front, the US allies in the Asia-Pacific, such as Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand and Australia, and the rise of Indian Navy have become the strategic focus. In her remarks presented in Honolulu, Hawaii in October 2010, then Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton stated: “In Southeast Asia and the Pacific, we are shifting our presence to reflect these principles. For example, we have increased our naval presence in Singapore. We are engaging more with the Philippines and Thailand to enhance their capacity to counter terrorists and respond to humanitarian disasters. We have

created new parameters for military cooperation with New Zealand and we continue to modernise [*sic*] our defense [*sic*] ties with Australia to respond to a more complex maritime environment. And we are expanding our work with the Indian navy in the Pacific, because we understand how important the Indo-Pacific basin is to global trade and commerce.”⁸ In her remarks in *Foreign Policy* one year later, Clinton reaffirmed the US commitments to expanding its strategy from Asia-Pacific to Indo-Pacific by emphasising that “our treaty alliances with Japan, South Korea, Australia, the Philippines, and Thailand are the fulcrum for our strategic turn to the Asia-Pacific....We are also expanding our alliance with Australia from a Pacific partnership to an Indo-Pacific one, and indeed a global partnership”.⁹

Economically, due to the increasing importance of economies in Indo-Pacific and the role of trade routes in Pacific Ocean and Indian Oceans, the US has further affirmed its commitments to the region. In her remarks in Australia at the end of 2012, Clinton emphasised that: “Australia’s gateway to the vibrant trade and energy routes that connect the Indian Ocean to the Pacific, the oil, the natural gas, the iron ore produced here that flows through those trade routes to the entire world. It is no surprise that foreign investment is soaring, including more than \$100 billion from the United States, because increasingly, these waters are at the heart of the global economy and a key focus of America’s expanding engagement in the region, what we sometimes call our pivot to Asia.... We consider ourselves a Pacific power. But in the 21st century, it’s important that we make absolutely clear we are here to stay. And how we think about the Asia-Pacific or the Indo-Pacific region is going to be critical to our future as well as yours. We’ve made it a strategic priority to support India’s Look East policy and to encourage Delhi to play a larger role in Asian institutions and affairs. And it’s exciting to see the developments as the world’s largest democracy and a dynamic emerging economy begin to contribute more broadly to the region.”¹⁰

It seems however that the US is not actually active in charting a detailed economic plan regarding the idea of the Indo-Pacific. In her remarks in Singapore in November 2012, Clinton for the first time introduced the idea of the Indo-Pacific Economic Corridor when she said: “As Burma opens up and establishes new ties to its neighbors [*sic*], it could become a commercial hub linking markets in India and Bangladesh with Southeast Asia. An Indo-

Pacific economic corridor powered by new energy and transportation infrastructure and fewer trade barriers could create jobs and help lift millions out of poverty. It could also promote stability and drive cooperation on shared challenges like narcotics and human trafficking, refugees, and natural disasters.”¹¹ Later, John Kerry, who replaced Clinton as the US Secretary of State, further explained about this economic corridor thus: “India, the world’s largest democracy and a nation with a booming young population, is building an Indo-Pacific economic corridor that can promote development, trade, and security in a crucial part of the world”.¹² The corridor is expected to be able to “spur development and investment as well as trade and transit between the dynamic economies of South and Southeast Asia”.¹³ It is therefore quite clear that regarding the idea of the Indo-Pacific, US focuses mainly on security and strategic domains while economy still remains a weak factor in its calculations.

Japan

Some say that “Australia initially formulated the idea of the Indo-Pacific; the United States advocated it initially, and Japan followed suit”,¹⁴ but taking cognisance of Shinzo Abe’s speech at the Indian Parliament on August 22, 2007, Japan should be regarded as one of the first countries to have developed the concept of the Indo-Pacific.

By quoting the title of the book, *Confluence of the Two Seas*, authored by the Mughal prince Dara Shikoh in 1655, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe emphasised the ambitions of India in a ‘broader Asia’ and the preparedness of both India and Japan in working together to “carry out the pursuit of freedom and prosperity in the region”.¹⁵ Prime Minister Abe further stated: “Both India and Japan have vital interests in the security of sea lanes” and “the sea lanes are the shipping routes that are the most critical for the world economy”. The question of security cooperation was also mentioned when Abe talked about “the question of what Japan and India should do cooperatively in the area of security in the years to come”. However, in Abe’s perspective, the main actors involved in the two-sea network were Japan and India, along “with the United States of America and Australia”.

Before the elections, which Abe won, resuming office as Japan’s Prime Minister in 2012, he revived his idea of two seas by introducing the idea of “Asia’s Democratic Security Diamond”¹⁶ in November 2012. Abe emphasised

that “peace, stability, and freedom of navigation in the Pacific Ocean are inseparable from peace, stability, and freedom of navigation in the Indian Ocean”.

Abe’s idea was a consequence of China’s activities to claim sovereignty over the South China Sea and Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. He was afraid of the fact that: “The South China Sea seems set to become ‘Lake Beijing’, which analysts say will be to China what the Sea of Okhotsk was to Soviet Russia” and “Chinese government’s daily exercises in coercion around the Senkaku (/Diaoyu) Islands in the East China Sea” to “seek to establish its jurisdiction in the waters surrounding the islands”. He pointed out that: “If Japan were to yield, the South China Sea would become even more fortified. Freedom of navigation, vital for trading countries such as Japan and South Korea, would be seriously hindered. The naval assets of the United States, in addition to those of Japan, would find it difficult to enter the entire area, though the majority of the two China seas is international water.” Facing the challenges posed by China, Abe sought the cooperation of India. He “spoke in India of the need for the Indian and Japanese governments to join together to shoulder more responsibility as guardians of navigational freedom across the Pacific and Indian oceans”. There are four main points in Abe’s idea of “Asia’s Democratic Security Diamond”:

First, he envisaged “a strategy whereby Australia, India, Japan, and the US state of Hawaii form a diamond to safeguard the maritime commons stretching from the Indian Ocean region to the western Pacific”. In other words, Australia, India, Japan and the US are four key countries—four democracies—in Abe’s idea of Democratic Security Diamond in Indo-Pacific.

Second, Abe invited European naval powers such as Britain and France to join his proposal to strengthen Asia’s security because “the sea-faring democracies in Japan’s part of the world would be much better off with their renewed presence”.

Third, Abe wanted Japan to join the system of bilateral defence agreements established in 1971 between the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia and Singapore. He stated in his speech that “the United Kingdom still finds value in the Five Power Defense Agreements¹⁷ with Malaysia, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand. I want Japan to join this group, gather annually for talks with its members, and participate with them in small-sized military drills”.

And fourth, he figured the principles which should apply for Japan-China relations as well as for the Diamond. He admitted that “Japan’s relationship with its biggest neighbor [*sic*], China is vital to the well-being of many Japanese”. In order “to improve Sino-Japanese relations, Japan must first anchor its ties on the other side of the Pacific” and “Japan’s diplomacy must always be rooted in democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights” and “in 2013 and beyond, the Asia-Pacific region’s future prosperity should rest on them as well”.

India

It is necessary to note here that India has been re-engaged in the Asia-Pacific region since it launched the Look East Policy in early 1990s. In his statement at the sixth East Asia Summit Plenary Session in Bali, Indonesia on November 19, 2011, the then Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh also mentioned “the evolution of a cooperative architecture”.¹⁸ It seems however that Indians have not reached consensus on how to adopt a new concept of cooperation like the Indo-Pacific due to their different perceptions of India’s foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific region.¹⁹

The proponents of the concept urge the Indian Government to build alliances with like-minded countries to counter China’s hegemonic ambition. “Some Indian commentators have embraced the idea of an ‘Indo-Pacific’ region as a way to contest established foreign policy traditions, namely non-alignment—the rejection of military alliances with any country or group of countries—and position India within a counter-hegemonic regional security architecture, which is designed to balance China’s growing power.”²⁰ A supporter of the idea, urges the Indian Government to realise the natural alliance between India and Japan to maintain “a peaceful and lawful maritime domain, including unimpeded freedom of navigation’ for the sake of ‘their security and economic well-being’.”²¹ Another viewpoint alleges that New Delhi and Canberra “now have a common interest in promoting stability and security in the Indo-Pacific in concert with others” so they “must step up their consultation and coordination in such existing forums as the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) and the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS).”²² Supporting India-Australia relations in the context of Indo-Pacific, other proponent of the idea even states that “the Indo-Pacific offers leadership roles to India and Australia” and “working with

Australia would be a good start” for India to “demonstrate (its) diplomatic skill in this emerging (Indo-Pacific) region”.²³

In contrast, there have been viewpoints urging the Indian Government not to adopt the idea because India’s “foreign policy matrix does not (and should not) change dramatically in response to a change in terminology by the United States. On the whole it would appear that the change in terminology does not bring with it any patent advantages. Its adoption by India would be unnecessary”.²⁴ Others suggested cautious approach to the concept because, according to them, negotiating the growing economic and military might of China and its assertive behaviour “through the unwitting adoption of a geopolitical categorisation might send a wrong, if not false, signal to other countries about India’s intentions and actions”.²⁵

For its part, the Indian Government has approached the concept cautiously. Then US Secretary of States Hillary Rodham Clinton could be the first official who propagated the concept of Indo-Pacific in 2010 (as mentioned above), and one of the Indian analysts for the first time in January 2011 publicised his views of the concept of Indo-Pacific in which he suggested Indonesia was destined to play a great role in both Indian and Pacific Oceans in a new era of the Indo-Pacific.²⁶ However, responding to the media on what was the kind of role India saw in the word ‘Indo-Pacific’ before the then Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh’s visits to Brunei and Singapore in November 2011, the then Secretary (East) of Indian Ministry of External Affairs said that: “this is a word that has no clear definition at the moment. If it means a region which takes us from India all the way to Pacific, this is a region where we have very strong relationship with the countries of the region, and we wish to strengthen our relationship bilaterally and the region as a whole.”²⁷ The ‘Indo-Pacific’ terminology appeared in official government statements at a time when India saw it had “growing strategic and security engagement(s)” (while India’s Look East Policy began with a strong economic emphasis and content) “with Southeast and East Asia, and, increasingly, the Pacific”,²⁸ and in the context of “deepening India-US Strategic Partnership”,²⁹ as stated by Ranjan Mathai, then Foreign Secretary of India.

The term ‘Indo-Pacific’ has long been in usage; in the speeches by the National Security Advisor,³⁰ Prime Minister,³¹ Minister of External Affairs,³² Foreign Secretary, among others. India’s official views of Indo-Pacific can be

seen in the Valedictory Address on “Geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific Region: Asian Perspectives”³³ by the Secretary (East) at the Asian Relations Conference IV (2013).

According to the Indian views, Indo-Pacific is “a politico-security architecture”³⁴ or ‘a plural, inclusive and open security architecture’.³⁵ India has paid attention to this concept because Indo-Pacific is “described as a logical corollary to India’s Look East Policy”.³⁶ There are cautious views of the concept among policymakers when they proposed to adopt the idea “within a tradition and culture of thought which was relativistic, idea driven and omni-directional”.³⁷ The deliberation can be seen from India’s approach of assessing partnership.

India has recognised that the US reengaging (or rebalancing, or pivoting) towards Asia “synchronises [*sic*] with India’s own enhanced engagement with (its) extended neighborhood [*sic*]”,³⁸ but interestingly, the US has been not a ‘insider’ of the Indo-Pacific region. In Indian perspectives, “The wider Indo-Pacific region...has three of four largest economies in the world i.e. China, India and Japan.”³⁹ Japan is seen “as a natural and indispensable partner in (India’s) quest for stability and peace in the vast region in Asia that is washed by the Pacific and Indian Oceans”⁴⁰ so “India and Japan must cooperate in ensuring the security of the global commons including freedom of navigation on the high seas that is critical for both countries”.⁴¹ India believes in and promotes “the central role of ASEAN in the evolving regional architecture”⁴² and “the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership...has to be secured not just within the new security and economic architecture of the Asia-Pacific but also the Indo-Pacific”.⁴³ Unlike Japan, India sees China as a factor that “will play a very important role,”⁴⁴ and the most populous country in South Asia will “continue to invest in building a stable and cooperative relationship with China that is mutually beneficial, and also a source of regional stability and prosperity”.⁴⁵

It seems that, although India urged countries in the region to “work towards a security construct that leverages the civilisational [*sic*] linkages to expand cooperation and build partnership across the Indo-Pacific”, no new idea to realise the security construct has been initiated yet. To India, the existing forums and mechanisms such as Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC), ASEAN+1, East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN

Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM+), Expanded Maritime Forum, Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) play important roles in India's "vision of a stable, secure and prosperous Asia and its surrounding Indian Ocean and Pacific regions".⁴⁶ India has not responded to the US idea of Indo-Pacific Economic Corridor initiated by then Secretary Clinton in her remarks in Singapore in November 2012. As mentioned above, India is following "relativistic, idea-driven and omni-directional approach" as mentioned by the then National Security Advisor Shivshankar Menon at the Workshop on Kautilya, "Kautilya Today" in October 2012 regarding the concept of the Indo-Pacific. However, India has clarified its security priority in the context of Indo-Pacific: "As a key national security priority" ...maritime security requires, first and foremost, a collective affirmation of the principles of freedom of navigation, unimpeded commerce and peaceful settlement of maritime disputes, in accordance with international law."⁴⁷

Challenges

The concept of Indo-Pacific has been taken into consideration by India. In fact, the Indo-Pacific region is also within the scope of India's Look East Policy.⁴⁸ Most of the stakeholders in the Indo-Pacific region, such as Australia, India, Japan, the US and ASEAN member states are committed to securing maritime security which requires all sides to respect and protect principles of freedom of navigation, unimpeded commerce and peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law.

However, the US-China strategic competition in Asia-Pacific in recent years has become challenging for India. China's rise and its growing assertiveness in the West Pacific and Indian Oceans has been regarded as a threat to the US dominant role in the region. The US pivot or balance was launched to cope with that fact. The introduction of Indo-Pacific by then Secretary Clinton in 2010 could be a part of the new US regional strategy. After the Obama administration decided to 'pivot' back to the Asia-Pacific, Japan under Shinzo Abe has reaffirmed its determination in its relations with China, especially in fields of disputes over territorial sovereignty. In Chinese perception, "China is facing immediate challenges posed by the US increased involvement in the region."⁴⁹ Although the Indian Navy is prepared for being required to go to the South China Sea to protect India's interests⁵⁰ regardless of China's

objections, India, as mentioned above, will continue to invest in building a stable and cooperative relationship with China. Undoubtedly, China has become India's third largest trading partner in recent years, after the European Union and United Arab Emirates.⁵¹ The importance of its economic relations with China puts India in dilemma when the latter adopts the concept of Indo-Pacific.

The formation of TPP and the initiation of RCEP negotiations a couple of years ago have manifested in both the economic dynamics of Indo-Pacific and strategic rivalry between the US and China. While the TPP is considered as a US-led process,⁵² RCEP though said to be driven by ASEAN,⁵³ is also seen to be dominated by China.⁵⁴ India expects to have 'likely fruition'⁵⁵ from RCEP, especially trade and services sectors,⁵⁶ but there will be likely challenges posed by China. "As regional trade and economic dependence intensifies", it is possible that "China will be better placed to use greater economic integration as a tool to arm-twist others. The banana trade incident between China and the Philippines is a case in point here".⁵⁷ While India has found difficult to become one of the negotiators of RCEP due to the China's reservations,⁵⁸ the US wants to see the inclusion of India in the TPP,⁵⁹ but the latter is not ready.

In the context of the US-China strategic competition in the Indo-Pacific, ASEAN's centrality or driving force in cooperative mechanisms in the region is being questioned. In the cases of EAS and ADMM+ where economic factor just accounts for a part, the commitments among participants have not been highly expected, the central role of ASEAN remains. Although RCEP as mentioned above is driven by ASEAN but with the presence of three of four largest countries in the world, i.e., China, India and Japan, this regional economic arrangement can become competition place of these three economies. Only four of 10 ASEAN Member States get involved in TPP negotiations and if this trend remains, ASEAN as a community could be partly divided in terms of economic integration. "Any competition between these two agreements may lead to disunity within ASEAN, which may undermine the organisation's centrality in the region."⁶⁰

The Indo-Pacific terminology has just appeared a couple of years ago, but it has increasingly become a concept that has attracted the attention of many countries in the West Pacific and Indian Oceans. The concept has likely

enhanced from the US rebalancing strategy in the wake of China's rise and the latter's growing assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific. Adopting the concept cautiously, India has not reached far beyond the West Pacific region, at least in economic domains. In that sense, India has made efforts to be a party of RCEP negotiations though it understands clearly that, China is a significant hindrance. In contrast, seeing the US pivoting strategy as a factor that can synchronise with its own enhanced engagement with extended neighbourhood, but India still keeps distance with US-led TPP. The US-China strategic competition has created challenges that India and ASEAN will have to deal with in the context of an evolving regional architecture in the Indo-Pacific.

NOTES

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18

ASEAN's Role in Shaping the Asia-Pacific Regional Architecture

Tan Sri Rastam Mohd Isa

ASEAN is a regional organisation that has existed since 1967. Ten years after its formation, ASEAN began to engage in dialogue partnerships with countries outside of Southeast Asia, namely Japan, Australia and New Zealand. This arrangement has now expanded to include other countries, the United Nations and other regional organisations. The relations which ASEAN has forged with the dialogue partners have formed the basis of the regional architecture and have resulted in ASEAN being recognised as a central player in the process. With the adoption of the ASEAN Charter, ASEAN has transformed itself into a rules-based organisation poised to meet future challenges including the establishment of the ASEAN Community in 2015, while ensuring that it can maintain its centrality in the evolving regional architecture

The Regional Architecture

The regional architecture in the Asia-Pacific has in many ways centred on ASEAN and evolved largely at a pace set by the regional organisation. ASEAN's role and standing in this regard is recognised worldwide. ASEAN is a regional organisation that comprises mainly developing countries and has consciously limited its geographical foot print to cover only the countries in Southeast Asia. Yet ASEAN has been able collectively to gain the power and influence to shape and set the agenda for the region's political-security and economic architecture. ASEAN has developed an enduring dialogue relationship

individually with all the major powers in the Asia-Pacific to varying degrees. Most of these dialogue relations have been elevated to the level of strategic partnerships. All major powers have acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC). Indeed many other countries outside the region have either acceded to the TAC or aspire to do so. ASEAN has developed close relations and cooperation with the United Nations, the European Union and other regional organisations. All the partners recognise ASEAN's centrality in the evolution and management of the ASEAN-led mechanisms and structures which facilitate dialogue and cooperation among the states concerned.

It is to be recognised that the security and economic architectures in the Asia-Pacific are not merely comprised of the ASEAN-led mechanisms and structures. There are others, such as APEC which cover a wider geographical span and initially focussed on economic and trade related issues. However, even APEC has become a forum for discussion on a wider set of issues going beyond economic cooperation and trade. Then there is the web of comprehensive economic partnership agreements (CEPAs) and free trade agreements (FTAs) linking ASEAN with its dialogue partners as well as those that entered into bilaterally among states in the region. New initiatives, in particular the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Arrangement (RCEP) are being discussed in the region.

On the security front, various bilateral security arrangements and military alliances are in place, including those that place some countries in the region under US security guarantee. Some of these have been in existence even before ASEAN was formed. It can be argued that these arrangements have served to provide some form of stabilising factor in the region. The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) which has been in place since 1994, the East Asia Summit (EAS) which began in Kuala Lumpur in 2005, the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM+) and the ASEAN Maritime Forum are now integral components of the regional architecture. The EAS remains a leaders-led forum for strategic dialogue. There are views being expressed that the EAS could be made more structured compared to what it is today so as to become more effective in dealing with the security issues and challenges facing the region.

The intra-ASEAN processes and the ASEAN-centred dialogue mechanisms have helped to contribute to the development and enhancement of the process of dialogue and cooperation on issues of strategic interest to the participating countries. The building of the three pillars of the ASEAN Community by 2015, in particular the ASEAN Economic Community, and the robust implementation of ASEAN's post-2015 vision should further strengthen and transform the character of the Asia-Pacific regional architecture. Yet there remains concern among some quarters that these are inadequate. Doubts continue to be expressed about ASEAN's ability, readiness and effectiveness to continue to manage increasingly complex and challenging issues. The efficiency of the ASEAN processes and methods have come under scrutiny, including in respect of the ASEAN Secretariat, organs, processes, decision-making and capacity to respond to situations.

The criticisms directed at ASEAN can be expected. Some are fair while others are unfounded, partly due to the refusal to accept the reality of ASEAN which remains an association of states. Regardless of the criticisms and adverse comments, ASEAN quite remarkably has achieved the power to convene and sustain a regional dialogue process by bringing together ASEAN member states, the major powers and other parties to the table, through the summit, ministerial and official level mechanisms, to discuss issues of common interest and concern and to work out practical measures for cooperation in various fields. ASEAN is also entrusted with the responsibility to organise and chair the summits and numerous meetings and coordinate various activities including in relation to the EAS. ASEAN has also been able to contribute to and, in many instances, lead in the development of regional norms as it seeks to balance the interests of its own members as well as those the major powers.

Current Challenges

The regional architecture is facing increasing pressure and enormous challenges. This may require urgent rethinking of some of the assumptions associated with the various components and elements of the architecture. It may be argued that change is required in the manner of doing things among the regional stakeholders. Some people may argue that ASEAN centrality may not be as essential or even material as it would appear to be and it would be incumbent upon ASEAN to prove otherwise. There is obviously increasing tension between

the imperatives for economic cooperation among states and the emerging power balance in the region, leading to heightened security concerns.

There are many signs of tension that would give rise to concern among various actors in the region. These are manifested in the renewed political and diplomatic standoffs among neighbours in Northeast Asia, the continuing tension in the Korean Peninsula, military competition in the region leading to a possible escalation of a regional arms race, territorial disputes and overlapping claims in maritime areas particularly in the East China Sea and South China Sea and a new round of major power rivalry in East Asia. All these would not bode well for regional peace and stability if allowed to continue unresolved.

Many countries in the region are facing internal political, economic and social challenges which could weaken democratic institutions, retard economic development and threaten the social fabric. ASEAN cannot afford to see this happening within its midst. Demographic and social changes within countries have given rise to the heightening of national consciousness and patriotic fervour which in turn could have a major influence on states' policies and behaviour towards others and impact upon their approach towards dealing with regional issues. The emerging threats of non-traditional security issues which are becoming increasingly complex would also require increased cooperation among regional states. Some of the efforts undertaken so far have been laudable. But clearly more could be done in many areas through greater cooperation and coordination among countries in the region.

I would maintain that the existing regional architecture remains viable. The various processes that are in place continue to serve well to complement one another and provide guarantees for peace and stability and economic development and cooperation. There are obvious duplications and overlaps that need to be streamlined. But the system has worked relatively well and has provided both normative and practical value for states in the region. There is no necessity to replace them with new creations such as an overarching region-wide structure that seeks to bring together all states under one single entity. What is required is the strengthening of the mechanisms and institutions. The processes could be further streamlined. The method of creative and even incremental innovation though the "ASEAN way" has worked quite well in the past. There should not be any reason to move on to more drastic

ways which could put a severe strain on the regional consensus. What is required is the proper and effective management of the methods and mechanisms to strengthen the linkages and improve coordination among the various processes to cope with new and emerging challenges.

Role of ASEAN

ASEAN undoubtedly has a major role to play in ensuring the continued existence of a regional architecture equipped to meet the expectations and cater to the interests of all concerned. In continuing to play its role, ASEAN needs to focus on the following:

- **Maintenance of unity and cohesion among ASEAN member states in addressing issues and meeting challenges:**

ASEAN has derived its strength and standing mainly from the perception within and outside ASEAN that the members are generally united and committed to maintaining cohesion among themselves. The need to maintain unity and cohesion of course would not necessarily prevent individual ASEAN member states from pursuing policies and initiatives that promote its own national interest. But it is obvious from recent events that the perception of ASEAN unity and cohesion has been seriously tested, most glaringly at the AMM in Phnom Penh in 2012. Unity can guarantee respect from others which could translate into peace, stability and development for the member states. Division and disunity, on the other hand, will create doubt and uncertainty and can result in severe consequences for the future wellbeing of the ASEAN Community.

- **Implementation of the ASEAN Community Blueprints:**

ASEAN member states should be ready to implement the programmes set out in the respective blueprints faithfully so as to achieve the goals and objectives of the ASEAN Community. 2015 is a crucial year for ASEAN when the various elements of the ASEAN Community, in particular the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) should be in place. Member states must be willing and able to commit and deploy adequate human and financial resources for this purpose.

- **Serious review of the ASEAN Charter:**

The Charter provides for a review after five years of its adoption. As ASEAN

prepares to usher in the ASEAN Community, a review of the Charter leading to possible revision of at least some of its provisions, would be in order. Myanmar has pledged to begin this review process under its current chairmanship. This may have to continue under the Malaysian Chairmanship in 2015 and could even go beyond 2015. It can be envisaged that it will not be an easy undertaking given the difficult and contentious process that was encountered during the drafting of the Charter. Therefore it can be expected that a review could be equally difficult and contentious especially if there are attempts to revise or amend certain provisions in the Charter. Obviously there are provisions and areas that can be strengthened and clarified, such as in respect of human rights and the creation of the ASEAN human rights body. But ASEAN members would have to be prepared for a long and tedious process.

- **Adherence to principles, rules and norms:**

As a rules-based organisation, ASEAN has to ensure the respect for and adherence to those principles, rules and norms which it has adopted. This is important in maintaining ASEAN's credibility as a central player in the regional architecture. ASEAN's partners must be prepared to do the same and support ASEAN's efforts.

- **Strengthening of ASEAN organs, structures and institutions:**

To meet the present and future challenges, ASEAN must seriously consider strengthening its various organs and institutions, including the ASEAN Secretariat. While the roles of the Secretariat and the ASEAN Secretary General are provided for in the Charter, both need to be given the appropriate powers and resources to effectively carry out their mandate especially in the post-2015 ASEAN Community era. The question of increasing the Secretariat's budget must be given utmost priority. Other ASEAN organs need to be reviewed in order to ensure efficient and effective of decision-making and implementation.

- **Preservation and enhancement of ASEAN Centrality:**

ASEAN has to ensure the continued relevance and acceptance of ASEAN centrality and demonstrate that it is capable of playing its role in the driver's seat. If the concept of being in the driver's seat were to be accepted and applied to describe the way in which the regional architecture is being shaped and driven, the ASEAN to ensure that remains the proud owner and driver

of a late model limousine that generates confidence among the guests who ride in it, rather than merely the driver of an early model taxi that needs a lot of fixing, who is told by his passengers where to go and what to do.

- **Concerted and sustained efforts to close the development gap and increase connectivity:**

ASEAN member states have continuously pledged their commitment towards closing the development gap and increasing connectivity within ASEAN and between ASEAN and outside partners. Efforts in this direction need to be intensified to ensure equilibrium and lessen the pressure upon ASEAN unity and cohesion in the face of regional economic and security challenges. Massive amounts of investment and resources are required and much of it has to be generated internally, while support and assistance from the partners would be crucial.

Role of Others, including India

It is crucial that in the years ahead—especially following the entry of ASEAN into the era of a community after 2015—for ASEAN's partners to continue to nurture their relations and cooperation with ASEAN and to work together to maintain a peaceful and stable environment in the Asia-Pacific. With ASEAN's centrality in the evolution of the regional architecture having been accepted, all states should encourage ASEAN to continue to play its role as an important regional player. They should maintain their support for ASEAN's initiatives, efforts and activities. There should not be any effort to dilute ASEAN centrality through whatever means.

While it is important for ASEAN to maintain its unity and cohesion, others should be able to respect and encourage ASEAN unity and cohesion so as to help ASEAN and the region move forward in a climate of peace and stability. Any effort to undermine ASEAN unity and cohesion could have strong consequences for ASEAN's future and the fabric of the existing regional architecture.

Continued support by the strategic and dialogue partners for ASEAN's visions, plans of actions and programmes is crucial for ASEAN's further development of the ASEAN Community. ASEAN would require massive investments and infusion of capital to narrow the development gap, improve connectivity and build a strong and vibrant regional economy. India and China

can especially play a major role in these efforts given their geographical proximity to the ASEAN region, their position as the emerging leaders of the world economy and the resources that they can deploy to assist and cooperate with ASEAN.

It is important that partners continue to support the efforts to strengthen ASEAN institutions by providing diplomatic support, meaningful advice and resources. While the creation of various funds aimed at promoting cooperation has been very useful, some creative means of making additional resources available to ASEAN need to be found. ASEAN needs to work with the partners to explore various possibilities in this regard.

What Can ASEAN and Partners Do Together?

ASEAN and its partners must continue to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the present frameworks, structures and mechanisms to ensure that they are able to cope with emerging challenges. Where there is room for improvement, efforts should not be spared to do so without necessarily compromising ASEAN centrality. The efficiency and effectiveness of the ASEAN-led processes, in particular the EAS and ARF have often been criticised. ASEAN and the partners must respond to those criticisms positively and constructively. There is merit in studying them with a view to reviewing and improving the roles and functions of the various structures and mechanisms. The EAS would reach its tenth year in 2015. It may be worth for the leaders, for example, to agree to a review and revision of the list of priority areas under the EAS in keeping with the emergence of new challenges and threats faced by the region.

In maintaining a regional architecture that promotes peace and stability, it is important for all stakeholders to respect the principles and norms that govern state behaviour and inter-state relations. These principles are enshrined in the UN Charter, ASEAN Charter, TAC and other instruments of international law, including the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. If states in Asia and the Pacific adhere to these principles, the region could remain stable and prosperous. ASEAN must continuously work with its partners to ensure respect for those principles.

Conclusion

ASEAN definitely has an important role to play in the regional architecture. For ASEAN to continue with this role, it needs the support of the various partners. India is one of those partners who have continuously engaged ASEAN in the common endeavour to bring about peace, security and development in the region. The strategic partnership between India and ASEAN could be strengthened further through various means. The successful implementation of the India-ASEAN Vision is crucial in this endeavour.

PART IV

Delhi Dialogue:
The Way Forward

Chaired by Arvind Gupta

19

The Way Forward: Salience of the Strategic

Dato Haji Erywan Bin Pehin Yussof

Delhi Dialogue is a Track 1.5 forum that is growing in significance and importance in strengthening and deepening the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-India cooperation. Within the ASEAN process, if I am not mistaken, the only other Track 1.5 forum is the one ASEAN has with the +3 countries, called the East Asia Forum, where views are exchanged on political, economic and socio-cultural issues. In this context, the Delhi Dialogue becomes an extremely important avenue for discussion on ASEAN-India relations.

The success of the ASEAN-India relationship over the past few years has catapulted to a new level: we have adopted the ASEAN-India Vision Statement, elevated to a new strategic level of partnership, as well as the on-going Plan of Action which will be ending soon. Further, I hope that the new Plan of Action will pave way for a much more exciting phase in the ASEAN-India relationship, for which I will be working closely as the co-coordinator. What is so significant about the next Plan of Action is that it comes into effect immediately after the ASEAN Community 2015 is established. I believe the ASEAN Community Post-2015 will also have to be taken into account when drafting the new Plan of Action.

Further, I would just like to echo the point that central to the economic cooperation, and also the ASEAN-India relationship in general, the newly established ASEAN-India Centre has a key role to play. This is because at the senior officials' level we have agreed to not just focus on the economic aspect of our cooperation, but also on political, security, social, cultural and people-

to-people linkages. Therefore, the role of the ASEAN-India Centre would be expanded to encompass the other pillars of cooperation which, I believe, would provide balance to the ASEAN-India relations.

Looking ahead, we must focus on other areas of cooperation between the ASEAN and India as well. Particularly, the political and security partnership between ASEAN and India plays an important role, because it ensures continued economic development, prosperity and growth in the region. Hence, development in our region is very clearly intertwined with addressing political-security issues. Terrorism and maritime security, for example, and issues like humanitarian assistance and disaster relief are also becoming issues of growing concern within Asia and the Asia-Pacific.

With all these 'big picture' elements in the background what can the Delhi Dialogue do? We believe that the ASEAN-India cooperation is significantly enriched by the annual Delhi Dialogue, this being the 6th in a series, because it provides a platform for government officials, academicians, strategic think tanks, etc. to provide views and share the best practices and experiences with one another. The outcomes from this discussion also serve as good recommendations and ideas for policies.

In addition, the Delhi Dialogue has also helped, in the last few years as a good framework for deliberation, for a series of meetings that happen between ASEAN and India throughout the year. So, in a sense, the Delhi Dialogue in itself consolidates inputs from various aspects of ASEAN-India cooperation. And, I look forward to seeing more of these inputs and outcomes at our senior officials' meeting so as to deepen and strengthen the ASEAN-India strategic partnership.

I also hope that the ASEAN-India dialogue could be further enriched with participation from not just ASEAN and India but also from the East Asia region, as well as beyond that region.

Finally, I would just like to wish that the Delhi dialogue continues to grow in significance and prominence in the future.

20

Envisioning ASEAN-India Partnership and Prosperity through Youth and Connectivity

N. Ravi

The crafting and emergence of the Look East Policy of India in the nineties was an inevitable development in the Indian firmament, arising from the near collapse of the market for Indian goods in Eastern Europe, particularly after the fall of the Berlin wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The Government of India was compelled to look elsewhere for compensating this loss. When the Look East Policy emerged, it was in a sense a revival of the age-old civilisational and cultural links that peninsular India had always had with kingdoms and cultures in Southeast and East Asia. It is to the credit of the countries concerned on either side, that the speed, with which this revival was accomplished, revealed that there was abiding interest in reviving the ancient links on the one hand, while simultaneously building a responsive network for the future development of the relationship. The latter has been particularly reflected in the establishment of institutions and in the designing of strong structures for bilateral interactions in all areas. Instances would include, among others, signing of the bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in goods between India and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), establishment of schools of training in information technology, English language, etc. The inauguration of the “Delhi Dialogue IV” in 2012 on the 10th anniversary of the first summit-level discussions between India and the ASEAN was the fruitful culmination of a two-decade-long effort.

The India-ASEAN exchanges have been in existence for a little over two decades, and have now acquired a character of their own. There is a deeper understanding of each other, especially the need felt on both sides, on where the contours of contemporary cooperation need to advance so that the current century can craft a mechanism for intensifying and diversifying the exchanges. The important characteristic has been the gradual nature of the growth of these exchanges that have reflected “the principle of gradual growth and maturity from small beginnings”, always found in nature. This perhaps has arisen from the fact that the major economic occupation in both India and ASEAN, i.e., agriculture in many forms, is sustained by nature.

Exemplifying this was India’s graduation from a sectoral dialogue partner, through a full dialogue partner to the summit-level partnership. While this growth was helped in no small measure by the general uptick in world economic growth during these decades, it is actually a credit to the leadership on either side of the Bay of Bengal that they seized opportunities along the way and consolidated a process of building closer links across the political, economic, social, cultural spectrum. Activities centred not only on building links across various segments but also on sustaining and strengthening them for enhancing people to people contacts. This has been achieved across age groups and vocations, pointing to a rejuvenation of the links that existed a millennium back.

The past always has important lessons for the present and the future. Given India’s intense socio-cultural links reflected in wide-ranging commercial linkages with southeast Asia in the last millennia and the rapid growth of bilateral links (especially in trade) over the last two decades, the emergence of the Delhi Dialogue is but a natural outcome of the process of evolving a framework for crafting a fresh mechanism for deepening exchanges between the two entities in newer areas. This assumes special relevance in the modern context of enhanced and efficient communication links that have emerged globally. If the elders established the frame in the 20th century, it now behoves upon the young to use the modern tools of communication to add a new dimension to the socio-economic and socio-cultural interactions that have been one of the defining features of India-ASEAN relations. To enable a smooth passage, however, it is necessary that this transition should yield a structure that remains relevant at least till the decade of the 2040s.

The Delhi Dialogue process, in vogue for less than a decade, has been able to bring about a focus on issues that need to be given priority for enhancing the quality, content and form of cooperation between India and the ASEAN. The format has been helped in its way by the three pillars that characterise ASEAN's own internal dynamics. In the bilateral context, however, there are a number of possibilities that can enhance the intensity of exchanges between India and ASEAN. If there is one attribute that describes the bilateral frame, it is the size of the population and the desire of all countries in the grouping to participate in the socio-economic progress of their respective population. Given the proportion of the young in the population of many countries on either side of the Bay of Bengal, and the need for economic security both with regard to employment and growth, a variety of possibilities emerge. A future-oriented framework is needed to supplement the energy and verve of bilateral exchanges, as the details duly get filled up towards a new level of cooperation for the coming generations.

Since 2007, youths from the ASEAN countries have been visiting India annually, in groups of 100 or so. By now, a fair proportion among them should have entered the job market or become entrepreneurs. This constituency represents a starting point for fashioning a future framework. The data base of these persons should be identified first, and then attempts made to ascertain ideas for the future opportunities be it economic or cultural or educational. India's institutional strength, especially in the private sector, offers many avenues for reviving contacts with those who are familiar with India. This particular set of persons can form the spring board for two purposes. First, for enriching existing bilateral exchanges, and second, to act as a source for reaching those who are younger than them and who are about to enter the job market in the respective ASEAN country. Opportunities in education, entrepreneurship and training abound.

In this regard, a public private partnership can be evolved on the Indian side to intensify contacts at this age level by a variety of measures. For instance, an entrepreneurship award can be instituted; experts on small and medium enterprises (SMEs) can impart practical knowledge of setting up and managing enterprises; human resource development experts can focus on imparting knowledge on training and help build a frame for creating institutions at the village/small town level. This young group in the ASEAN countries can be

sensitised on issues like urban migration, energy conservation, water conservation, health management in the non-urban context, conservation of forest wealth, etc., the list can be quite long. In addition to the IT centres of excellence and the English language training schools set up by India in some of the ASEAN countries, the Government of India can make a push for setting up of institutions focusing on natural resource management and conservation: one at a location in the Indo-China region and another perhaps in Indonesia. It should be ensured that these initiatives focus on young persons, quality of whose lives a few decades hence, would depend on the efficient management of natural resources, especially like the ones mentioned above. Young people's vision of the future is likely to be original, daringly different and interesting to work on. Popular level cooperation can thus project itself well into the future.

At the socio-cultural level it is necessary to emphasise, particularly between India and the CLMV countries (Cambodia-Lao PDR-Myanmar-Vietnam), the need for people-to-people exchanges. While the Nalanda University project is aimed at a particular section of the population in the ASEAN and other countries, the need of the common persons in these countries, especially those with modest economic means, to travel to India on pilgrimage, should be encouraged by offering cheaper alternatives to air transport.

The following alternative presents itself in the context of the completion of the East-West corridor under the Greater Mekong Sub-region initiative. This highway runs from Da Nang in Vietnam on the coast of the South China Sea up to Mawmyine in Myanmar. Separately, India Myanmar and Thailand are attempting to build the Trilateral Highway starting in Moreh in Manipur, and after touching the port of Mawmyine before ending at Mae-Sot, on the Myanmar-Thailand Border. Further, the Indian Government is currently implementing the Kaladan project (connecting Kolkata with Aizawl in Mizoram via the port of Sittwe in Myanmar) involving the over-sea element. The important aspect of any infrastructure project, especially roads, involves its optimal use after completion to keep the physical parameters of such roads in usable condition. Trade alone may not be enough to ensure the capacity utilisation of these roads up to the desired level. The people who live in the catchment area of these roads are an automatic constituency and market for tourism, pilgrimage, especially Buddhist pilgrimage into India. Regular use

of the highway will automatically yield the “ribbon based economic development”, enabling establishment of family-based enterprises in the tourism-, trade- and automobile-related sectors. The maps and roads delineated below give an indication of the geographical spread of the opportunities.

Since the trilateral highway has been a long pending project, with a long gestation period, there is a need to examine if another interim alternative exists. In the current scenario this would involve surface travel across the East West Corridor up to Mawmyine in Myanmar, and then by sea transport up to Kolkata and onwards to Bodh Gaya. This is a project that can be easily implemented. The only infrastructure needed are buses to ply on the stretch from Da Nang to Mawmyine, a passenger ferry from there to Kolkata and then by train/bus to Bodh Gaya. Most of these can be acquired off the shelf. The Kaladan project also attempts to connect India and Myanmar as part of our efforts to get a riverine link between Kolkata and Aizawl in Mizoram, while avoiding Bangladesh altogether. Till such time as the latter project gets ready, the former can be activated to emphasise the aspect of connectivity. Maps 1 and 2 give the locational aspects of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) East-West corridor and the Kaladan project.

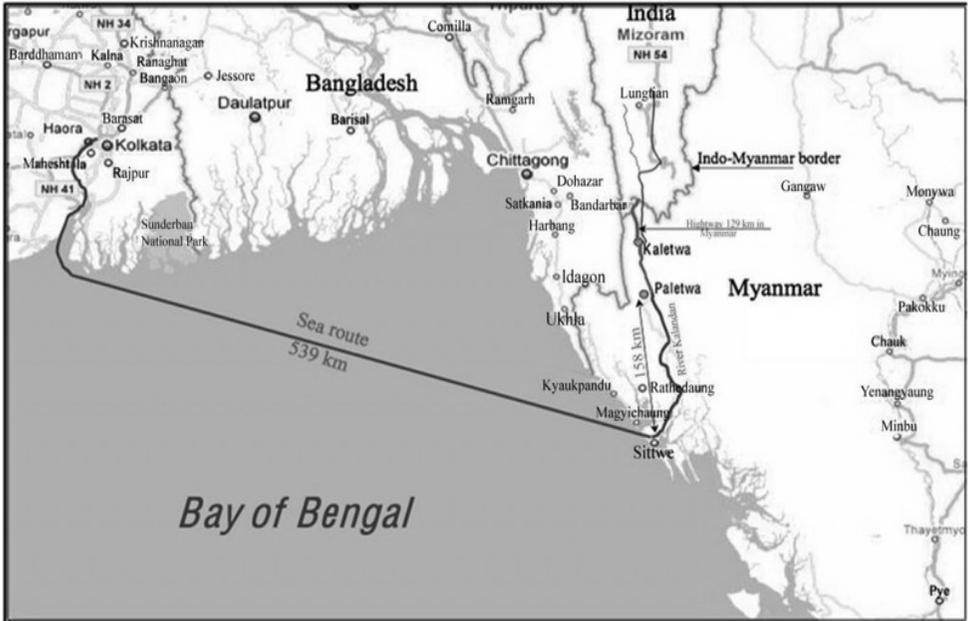
In the background of the routes mentioned above and given the huge forest and agricultural wealth available across the regions along the route, a new initiative could be made for enabling exchange of good practices in all those sectors that contribute to the preservation of the environment. In the background of the civilisational linkages between the partners, the body of traditional knowledge that exists among the people should be collated into a database for easy access and use by the rural population along the ribbon. Given the climatic similarity of the major areas in the region, this would enable not only consolidation of such important traditional knowledge but also form a basis for using environment friendly methods for livelihoods across the spectrum, especially in the area of agriculture, which accounts for a majority of the working population in the CLMV countries.

The civilisational linkages referred to above give us yet another dimension for examination and assessment. It is necessary that these historic bonds are made known to the younger generation. A reading of the syllabus prescribed for the senior school children in India reveals something very interesting. It has to be conceded that India’s Look East Policy is but a revival, nearly a

Map 1: East West Corridor and the Kaladan Project



Map 2: Indian Ocean Connectivity: India and Myanmar



Source: www.gmsbizforum.com; www.arakanrivers.net.

millennium later, of the maritime silk route connections that characterised the southeastern and southwestern coastline of India with kingdoms and cultures towards the east right up to China. Some scholars hold that such links extended even up to the southern islands of Japan by pointing to some linguistic links between the Tamil and Japanese languages.

This juncture is probably ideal for examining what the history syllabus of Indian high school students comprise. Two documents, namely, *Secondary School Curriculum, 2012, Main Subjects, Volume I*, published by the Central Board of Secondary Education and *Syllabus History (027) Class-XII (2012-13)* have been examined for this purpose.

It is well known that the Cholas in the 11th and 12th Century CE and the Pandya Kings earlier on are credited with establishing sea borne links with kingdoms and cultures to the east of India. In the latter document there is but one reference to the Cholas under the heading.

Distribution of Ashokan Inscriptions

- (i) Kushans, Shakas, Satvahana, Vakatakas, Gupta

- (ii) Cities/towns: Mathura, Kanauj, Puhar, Brahukachchha
- (iii) Pillar inscriptions: Sanchi, Topra, Meerut, Pillar, Kaushambi
- (iv) Kingdom of Cholas, Keralaputras and Pandyas

An examination of the overall curriculum (the first document) also reveals that even under the heading “Globalisation”, there is no reference to India’s Look East Policy. It refers to *(d) Implications of globalisation for livelihood patterns. Case study: The post War International Economic order, 1945 to 1960s (Chapter 6)*.

India has been hosting 100 ASEAN students since 2007 to tour India for a fortnight or so. It may be equally useful for us to influence our own educationists to have India’s contemporary history taught with a pan-Indian coverage and not necessarily a northern India-oriented coverage, which is more resonant with the approach of India’s colonisers. India’s school students need to know that India’s coastline, and the people who have lived there and in the hinterland, have contributed positively to India in the last millennium by trading across the seas. If we have to succeed in the future, there is a clear need to remember our past and take good lessons from that time period. It goes without saying that the need of the hour is to inform our students in a comprehensive manner on how India’s Look East Policy has its roots in the past millennium and how it can be structured from hereon, in a way that can help us bond better for the future growth of our relations with the ASEAN. The focus on ASEAN students visiting India has to be balanced by educating the young amongst us suitably, at least the urban school students, so that they can look to an opportunity in the future for taking India-ASEAN relations to a new level. In fact, it may even be productive to consider holding of a two tier annual essay competition on the future area of growth and promise in India-ASEAN relations. One tier could cater to submission of an essay or a paper in English by non-CLMV countries’ students, on the subject of the future trajectory of India-ASEAN relations, and the other exclusively among students of the CLMV countries who could contribute in their own mother tongues on the same subject. Minor variations can be worked out by the think tanks and similar organisations dealing with the operational part of India-ASEAN relations.

There is a general belief that urbanisation is the phenomenon for the future and that nearly 50 per cent of the population of many developing countries

would be living in urban areas by the middle of this century. The beginnings of this type of movement have already been experienced in many countries in the region. The challenges that such movements pose need to be anticipated and policies have to be evolved to meet the needs of such people. Apart from the students referred to above, it would be useful for the Delhi Dialogue to focus on the theme of urbanisation and see if environment friendly lessons are available for mutual consideration and benefit. The theme of people to people linkages has to be looked through the glass of sensitive social issues that are already facing different societies in the region and those that are likely to emerge as challenges for the coming generations.

As for the ways in which the Delhi Dialogue should proceed in the future, two aspects need to be considered. First is the timing and the second is the content. The timing of the dialogue should be such that it feeds into the India-ASEAN summit. Ideas for consideration by the summit, normally held around the end of the calendar year, could be given by the Delhi Dialogue for discussion at the summit level. Moreover, some of the ideas that have emerged at previous summit level or official level meetings need a degree of evaluation and course correction, if called for. In this regard, expertise provided by organisations dealing with study of and research in public policy should be utilised. For instance, the Centre for Public Policy at the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, the LKY Institute of Public Policy in Singapore, the newly started School of Government and Public Policy Institute, which opened in September 2013 with its first cohort in Jakarta and others as desired, could be identified for this purpose.

While links among public policy institutes will give an experiential vigour, the youth of India and ASEAN countries through more frequent contacts can contribute to the vision 2020 so that the new century gives everyone in the India-ASEAN construct something to look forward to.

21

Delhi Dialogue: The Past and Directions for the Future

R. Ravindran

I would like to begin by describing in brief how the Delhi Dialogue came about. When I first put up the proposal in 2008, the intention was very simple, how do you bring India and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) closer to each other. That was the objective, and we brought in the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and another institution from Singapore, the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), and embarked on this project. I must highlight that throughout the last six years we have received tremendous support from all the stakeholders.

However, I want to emphasise that there are several areas where we can do better, and these are my suggestions.

- First, we should include more ASEAN partners in this partnership. We already have, besides the Indian partners, two Singapore partners, the ISAS and SAEA Group Research and one from Jakarta, the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA). Bringing in more stakeholders from the ASEAN countries will undoubtedly enrich the organisational experience, enable more suggestions and ideas and also help us to see how we can improve the whole Delhi Dialogue process.
- Second, I want to highlight issue of the Conference venue. Some have

already suggested to shift the venue within the country, and some have pointed out that instead of always making it India-centric, we would do better to have a part of this dialogue process at least in various ASEAN countries for variety. I too, feel that for a change, and also to bring in greater participation from the ASEAN partners, some processes within the Delhi Dialogue could be held in some of the ASEAN countries. Perhaps, some of the new stakeholders who may join the Delhi Dialogue could help us organise a few of these activities within the ASEAN region.

- Third, I want to share with you that the Delhi Dialogue has been funded by MEA for the last six years, and in the first year we actually brought in some corporate sponsors to help out in the organisation. Therefore, today too I would like to suggest that we should seek some kind of corporate involvement for several reasons. One is these sponsors are rich, and two, they can also enable us to reach a bigger audience and help bring the participation of their sector. FICCI has already been very active in this process. We could also consider setting up some sort of a corpus fund where we can create funding for several projects within the Delhi Dialogue process. It need not be only Indian businesses; ASEAN businesses could also be involved.
- Fourth, there is always scope to include more participants. In particular, I want to see greater participation by Indian politicians, particularly Members of Parliament and other policymakers. India is an upcoming and rising power, and it is critical that the politicians who decide policy in the country should be involved in the Delhi Dialogue. They need to understand the bigger picture of what is happening globally, in Asia and ASEAN, so that when they debate policies in Parliament or anywhere else they are better able to understand some of these developments. On that note, I would also like to see greater involvement by younger scholars in ASEAN, as well as within India.

I think we have to recognise that there are other players in the Asia-Pacific who hold contrary views on what we are discussing. Some of these participants from other Asia-Pacific countries are equally interested, equally eager to participate in these discussions. Perhaps

they can be invited so that we can understand what their thinking processes and strategic considerations are, recognise each other's aspirations and desires and determine whether we can frame positions and policies that are acceptable to everybody.

- Finally, I want to highlight the structure of the Delhi Dialogue. Instead of requesting all the visiting dignitaries to give speeches, perhaps what we could do is, besides the Minister for External Affairs and ASEAN Secretary-General, get all the ministers to be panellists and engage them in a question-and answer session where ideas could be discussed or various concerns of the delegates and participants could be shared with the ministers. In this manner, they too will have a better understanding of some of the issues and get feedback from the participants.

22

Ways to Improve Delhi Dialogue

Rajiv K. Bhatia

I think the time has come to recognise that the India-Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) partnership has been developing extremely well. But it has been marked by a great deal of change and transformation. Keeping that in mind, it is also important for us to attempt a critical appreciation of the Delhi Dialogue as an institution. We know that the partnership went through the foundational phase in the first decade, then it went through the elevation and upgrade phase in the second decade, and now in the third decade it is potentially transformational. So, keeping this pattern of evolution in view, it is apt to make an assessment of the Delhi Dialogue. It has been of great benefit both to the government and to the non-governmental sector. The government gets tremendous exposure to diverse ideas from scholars, business and media. The latter sector gets a chance to hear directly from the policymakers, enriching the scholarship projects. In this context, I would like to share the following five ideas:

First, the format for discussions on the first day needs to be changed drastically. We cannot simply subject our guests to a dozen speeches in the course of two hours. It is not easy to find a solution to this problem. When we invite ten ASEAN Ministers/Deputy Ministers, we have a unique role in mind for each one of them, else we risk losing their presence altogether. Consequently, Delhi Dialogue will forfeit its importance and value. My suggestion is that we should invite the ministers, welcoming and urging them to bring their speeches for circulation. Their speeches should be part of the conference volume. They will certainly be read and used by all our scholars. But the first day's programme should feature principally a well-designed

conversation, moderated by one or two knowledgeable experts, so that at the opening session we could have a very informed debate involving all those 10 ASEAN Ministers, the Indian Minister and the ASEAN Secretary-General. The event then would become interesting, innovative and fruitful.

Second, it is very difficult to shift the Delhi Dialogue to other towns of India. It is an institution, and when we build an institution, we also try to protect and strengthen it. At the same time, there is merit in other suggestions. So, I am suggesting a *via media*. The annual flagship Delhi Dialogue should continue to be in Delhi, but there should be two intermediate events of a smaller size, which if held, would further enrich and strengthen the flagship event: To that effect, there should be an intermediate event in a capital town of Northeast India. Also, there should be an intermediate event in an ASEAN capital. We have now reached a stage where we should generate additional resources and energy to not only carry on with the main event but also create two supporting events.

Thirdly, we should also have an outcome document of Delhi Dialogue within a matter of three days after the conclusion of the event. We should not wait for the host to produce the document in six months. This outcome document should not be the property of one person or institution. There should be a panel of three or four people, a representative panel, and it must produce the outcome document quickly. The outcome document should be given the widest possible dissemination through media channels.

Finally, the central message of Delhi Dialogue VI is clear: act, execute, implement. But let us be clear, this is not a message only for India; it is a message for each ASEAN country, for India and also for the ASEAN Secretariat. The entire burden of implementation of agreements and understandings reached rests on all of us. Therefore, I suggest that the Delhi Dialogue should have a Monitoring Committee. It could be an informal monitoring committee of people with credible credentials and a copy of the Vision Statement, who meet every year and produce a frank progress report as to what percentage of the Vision Statement has actually been implemented during the previous year.

In short, it is time for Delhi Dialogue to focus on a follow-up and become pragmatic, practical and result-oriented, rather than be content with articulation of big ideas, projects and schemes through long speeches, which may not see the light of the day.

23

Advancing the Delhi Dialogue

Tan Tai Yong

Before I share my thoughts on how the Delhi Dialogue could evolve, I would like to re-visit the original purpose of the Delhi Dialogue. I want to thank Mr. R. Ravindran, who played an instrumental role in initiating and sustaining this important enterprise, for giving us a background of how the Delhi Dialogue was originally conceived and the purposes which it was supposed to achieve. According to a 2009 statement, the Delhi Dialogue was originally conceived as an international conference to “chart for leaders and business investors the issues and dynamics facing the Asia-Pacific region”. The Dialogue was intended as a conference to highlight issues that are relevant to India and Southeast Asia. It has since developed into an annual Track II event that has always been hosted in Delhi, and faithfully attended by Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) policymakers and scholars. To the extent that the Delhi Dialogues have brought together leaders and thinkers to deliberate and disseminate issues and information that affect Indo-ASEAN relations, the meetings have been useful platforms for interactions.

After six sessions, all of which have been very successful, I find the following questions relevant: what more can the Dialogues achieve? Should it remain as an annual talk-shop, gathering people annually to go through well-trodden grounds, and arriving, more or less, at similar conclusions where India-ASEAN relations are concerned?

If we want the Delhi Dialogue to continue serving this purpose, the current structure and format of the event would be very suitable. Some tweaking could

be done to bring in more partners, find new sources of funding, refresh the structure and add new themes. Ultimately, however, even with these changes, the Delhi Dialogue would remain a talk shop. However, if the Dialogues wish to move beyond deliberations and discussions, and hope that action would follow purposeful engagement, I would argue that a different approach might be necessary. Hence, I would like to advocate that the Delhi Dialogue move beyond being an annual talk shop and evolve into an action-oriented platform to pursue a development agenda. In this regard, I would like to make three suggestions:

- First, the annual Delhi Dialogue should not just be a conference bringing people together to share things that we already know. I would suggest that the Dialogue become a stocktaking exercise to reaffirm if joint initiatives are indeed moving in the right direction, and to do course correction if necessary. In other words, when we come together for the Delhi Dialogue, it should not be to rehearse plans that have been agreed on previously or to reiterate vision statements which have already been adopted. Rather, the question that needs to be asked is: What have we achieved (or what has changed) since we last met in Delhi a year ago? In other words, it would be useful to us to stocktake and review work progress, and to suggest ways to remove road blocks, if they exist. When the delegates come together for the Delhi Dialogues, they must bring with them concrete recommendations and, if necessary, a commitment of resources for the realisation of action plans. These recommendations could be taken up to higher levels to various ministerial forums so that they can actually be incorporated as actual policies to be implemented.
- The second point I would like to raise is that for purposeful engagement, there should be focus. I believe we have been trying to cover too much ground in the past few years. With already so many items on the agenda, adding more topics, in my view, is not the solution. The delegates would have to decide what the key four or five topics are that the Dialogue would focus on, with a commitment to achieve results. So, I suggest that we develop a series of core issues—like water, energy, tourism, aspects of connectivity, even regional security architecture—on which to work out implementable plans. These progress of these plans should then be tracked in the Forum.

These need not be single-agency, single-country initiatives, but should be collaborative. Agencies like the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) have the depth of knowledge and expertise to contribute to these collaborative efforts. While projects are underway, it would be useful to have inter-sessional meetings, where groups can come together to track their progress.

- Finally, I concur with a suggestion which has been raised by most of my co-panellists that the Delhi Dialogue need not always be in Delhi. It can move beyond India to the ASEAN capitals to show its presence and garner support. By moving the Dialogues to the different ASEAN capitals, the meetings will be able to engage a wider constituency in the Southeast Asian region.

In summary, I would like to suggest that the Delhi Dialogue must move beyond being just a talk shop. It should be focused and should have purposeful projects. We should choose partners that can deliver these projects, and develop a year-long inter-sessional programme to achieve these projects.

24

Celebrating the Third Decade of ASEAN-India Partnership: Agenda for Delhi Dialogue Series

Prabir De

The relics of the true history of India are outside India. For our history is the history of ideas, of how these, like ripe pods, burst themselves and were carried across the seas and developed into magnificent fruitfulness. Our history runs through the history of the civilisation of Eastern Asia.

Rabindranath Tagore in *Letters from Java*

The year 2012 marked the beginning of the third decade of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-India relationship. In the same year, the Delhi Dialogue IV was organised in Delhi, where leaders from all ASEAN countries, who attended the Commemorative Summit in 2012, endorsed elevating ASEAN-India Dialogue Partnership to Strategic Partnership level. The ASEAN-India Eminent Persons' Report recommends expansion of connectivity to bring South Asia and Southeast Asia closer. Nonetheless, regional economic integration continued to get the utmost attention in the first two decades of partnership.

With the free trade agreement (FTA) in goods between India and ASEAN in effect from January 1, 2010, ASEAN-India Partnership has assumed greater economic depth. This is set to further strengthen once the FTA in services and investment becomes effective. The trade in goods' agreement focuses on tariff liberalisation on mutually agreed tariff lines from both the sides and is targeted to eliminate tariffs on 80 percent of the tariff lines accounting for 75

percent of the trade in a gradual manner.¹ ASEAN and India already met the target of achieving bilateral trade volume of US\$ 50 billion ahead of 2010. In 2012-13, two-way trade between ASEAN and India has crossed US\$ 75 billion, with India contributing US\$ 33 billion, and the ASEAN, US\$ 42 billion. The ASEAN and India expect tariff-free lines to increase beyond the existing level in subsequent years.² There is no doubt that continuing economic uncertainties in the global economy have affected our bilateral trade as well: in 2012-13, two-way trade had declined by over 4 percent. However, in the second half of 2013, ASEAN-India trade was back on its growth path. Despite these trends, ASEAN-India bilateral trade can achieve US\$ 100 billion by 2015 and US\$ 200 billion by 2020.³

Barring minerals and gems and jewellery, commodities such as electrical machinery, transmission apparatus, motor vehicles, etc. have emerged as important Indian exports to the ASEAN countries. On the other hand, India's imports from the ASEAN countries are primarily driven by electronics, electrical machinery, palm oil, mineral fuels, gems and jewellery, etc. India's imports from this region are relatively more diversified than its exports to the ASEAN or ASEAN+3 countries. Interestingly, India's trade with the ASEAN+3 countries has been witnessing a compositional shift. Traditionally, India's export-import trade with the ASEAN+3 countries are driven by intermediate and capital goods, respectively, in absolute terms. However, over time, these countries have appeared as major suppliers of capital goods to India, and witnessed a rising trend in trade in parts and components for capital goods.

At present, India has realised a bilateral trade of US\$ 76 billion with the ASEAN in 2012, against a potential of US\$ 135 billion.⁴ In case of ASEAN+3, India has achieved US\$ 182 billion trade, out of an estimated potential of US\$ 313 billion. Quite clearly, large amount of India's trade with ASEAN and ASEAN+3 have remained unrealised. The highest unrealisation of trade comes from India's trade with China (US\$ 34 billion in 2012). The trade potential between ASEAN and India may touch US\$ 169 billion in 2015 and US\$ 202 billion in 2018, which in case of ASEAN+3 may cross US\$ 445 billion in 2018.⁵ ASEAN is negotiating Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) with its FTA partners, including India.⁶ With both sides showing keenness to deepen and widen their economic partnership,

there is need to dwell on a range of issues, including trade in services, investment and connectivity, and development cooperation, which can help realise this objective. Building a common market between ASEAN and India may be achieved provided the trade liberalisation is adequately complemented by removal of non-tariff measures (NTMs), trade facilitation and connectivity. NTMs have gained importance as tariff-based barriers to trade have gradually declined. Thus, India and ASEAN have to remove the barriers to trade and investment such as high NTBs, lack of connectivity—physical, digital and social—and regulatory barriers, to mention a few.⁷

Research reveals that India's regional economic integration process with Southeast and East Asia has been moving primarily in two key tracks:

- (i) ASEAN-India FTA (software)—RCEP, Single Window in Customs, etc.
- (ii) ASEAN-India connectivity (hardware)—Trilateral Highway, Kaladan Multi-modal Transit Transport Project (KMTTP), Mekong-India Economic Corridor (MIEC), etc.

While the first track may lead us to achieve paperless trade, the second will help us achieve seamless trade. In a related vein, India's connectivity with Southeast Asia is being evolved on two pillars—Northeast India for multimodal as well as intermodal transportation and Southern India for multimodal operation. Realising the potential of improved connectivity, ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) has opened a comprehensive dialogue with India in 2013 to enhance air, sea and land connectivity between ASEAN and India. India was the third country, after Japan and China, to have this annual dialogue with ACCC. South Korea is another country, which has opened dialogue with ACCC. The Inter-Ministerial Group on Transport Connectivity with ASEAN, set up by India in 2012, has been participating in the ASEAN Land Transport Working Group and Maritime Transport Working Group meetings. Nonetheless, this type of institutional mechanism is likely to facilitate the connectivity, at least to build the base level. However, the requirement is very vast, and we need deeper cooperation to strengthen the connectivity between India and ASEAN.

Looking into the future, ASEAN and India will be celebrating three decades of their partnership in 2022, and the Delhi Dialogue will enter into 14th year in the series. What are the possibilities in 2022?

First, ASEAN will successfully achieve an Economic Community (ASEAN Economic Community). Merchandise trade between ASEAN and India may cross US\$ 300 billion under the business as usual scenario. If services are added, the bilateral trade will be more. By 2022, East Asia will ensure a common market as a result of RCEP and other agreements. However, managing dispute settlement will continue to be the headache of trade policymakers.

Second, Trilateral Highway will be operational, undoubtedly. Inter-country connectivity agenda will focus on economic corridor and 'backend' infrastructure.

Third, the Bay of Bengal will be a hotspot of maritime activities with more major ports, namely, Sagar in West Bengal, Kyaukphyu and Dawei in Myanmar, etc.⁸

Fourth, India will effectively enter into 'factory Asia', embedded with global and regional production networks driven by MNCs, provided there is no major economic crisis.

Fifth, ASEAN will witness an investment area with free flow of capital and labour. FDI flow between India and ASEAN will rise as value chains are envisaged to grow between them.

Sixth, Northeast India will be better connected with rest of India as well as with Myanmar, Southeast Asia and Bangladesh by rail, road, air and inland water transport. Daily international flights will operate between major cities of the Northeastern states and Southeast Asia and Bangladesh. There will be more industries in Northeast India, compared to what is today. At the same time, power grids in India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Myanmar will be connected. Northeastern India will export hydro-power in the region, particularly to Bangladesh.

The major challenges may continue to be regional income disparity between CLMV (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam) and the rest of ASEAN. NTMs may remain unresolved as some countries are yet to implement MRAs in services (particularly in Mode 4) and standards. Labour market regulations may remain unresolved. By the turn of the ongoing decade, the region including China may witness a massive rise in economic size with major risks of environmental and socio-economic crisis due to climate change, flooding, natural disasters, migration, etc. Culturally, economically and financially, India and the ASEAN will be much closer, with more or less free

flow of labour and capital. Therefore, the agenda of the Delhi Dialogue will be very different from what is now. Delhi will continue to host the Dialogue with more focus on economic relations; and the ASEAN-India partnership will hold priority in the Delhi Dialogue process.

NOTES

1. The Agreement has provided flexibilities to India and ASEAN countries to exclude some of the products from the tariff concessions or eliminations to address their respective domestic sensitivity. India on its part has excluded 489 items from the list of tariff concessions and 590 items from the list of tariff elimination to address sensitivities in agriculture, textiles, auto, chemicals, crude and refined palm oil, coffee, tea, pepper, etc. The ASEAN countries have also maintained similar exclusion list from the proposed tariff concessions or eliminations.
2. Refer Appendix 1, Vision Statement, ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit 2012.
3. In the recent past, bilateral trade between ASEAN and India has grown at over 20 percent annually. At this rate of growth (business as usual scenario), achieving US\$ 200 billion trade by 2020 may not be beyond our reach, *ceteris paribus*. Refer, for example, "ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership: Perspectives from the ASEAN-India Network of Think-Tanks", Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi, 2013..
4. For a detailed analysis of trade potential analysis, see: Prabir De, "India's Emerging Connectivity with Southeast and East Asia: Progress and Prospects", Mimeo, Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI), Tokyo, 2014.
5. Estimate based on an augmented gravity model, refer, Prabir De, "India's Emerging Connectivity with Southeast and East Asia: Progress and Prospects", Mimeo, Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI), Tokyo, 2014.
6. The RCEP is a Free Trade Agreement between ASEAN nations and ASEAN's FTA partners. The agreement is between 16 countries, which make up 45 percent of world population and contribute 1/3rd of world's total GDP (2013).
7. Refer, for example, "ASEAN-India Maritime Connectivity Report," ASEAN-India Centre (AIC), New Delhi, 2014; "Dynamics of ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership", ASEAN-India Centre (AIC), New Delhi, 2014.
8. Ibid.

Outcome Document

Delhi Dialogue VI: Realising the ASEAN-India Vision for Partnership and Prosperity

The ASEAN-India Delhi Dialogue VI titled “Realising the ASEAN-India Vision for Partnership and Prosperity” was held in March 2014 in New Delhi. Partnered by IDSA, FICCI, ICWA, ISAS, SAEA Group and ERIA, the Delhi Dialogue has evolved over the years as an important forum of exchange of views between ASEAN and India.

During the academic session panellists belonging to ASEAN/Indian strategic and business community sought to make a realistic assessment of the progress made in ASEAN-India relations and the direction that this partnership has taken. Panellists spoke and deliberated on issues such as “Translating the Vision Statement”, “Role of Northeast India in India’s Look East Policy”, “Regional Architecture in Asia-Pacific: Roles of India and ASEAN” and “Delhi Dialogue: The Way Forward”.

Delivering the Special Address on the occasion was ASEAN Secretary General, Mr. Le Luong Minh, who emphasised upon the need for ASEAN-India cooperation in food security and tourism. He focused on ASEAN-India strategic partnership and urged for the need for enhanced people to people contact, development of transport linkages and trade investments, along with development of communication technology, social and cultural exchanges and sharing of knowledge and culture and education.

During a session on **Translating the Vision Statement** panellists deliberated on the ASEAN India Commemorative Summit Vision Statement and ways to implement it. Emphasis was laid on political, economic and security cooperation between India and ASEAN countries. The panellists agreed that efforts should be made to further strengthen connectivity and facilitate

unfettered access. India and ASEAN should bring up a regional architecture which embodies the well-being and prosperity of the wider section of societies in the region. Several opportunities to further expand cooperation were laid out—encouraging cross fertilisation of technology, developing sustainable social entrepreneurship, fast pace urbanisation and increase business productivity. Corporate sector in India should work as a team to drive the growth engine in the region. It was felt that India is seen as a potential player in the region and in view of its phenomenal economic growth during the past few decades, India should be more proactive and visible in its endeavour to forge a concrete partnership with the ASEAN.

The session on the **Role of North East India in India's Look East Policy** focused on the centrality of North East to India's Look East Policy, especially to improve India-ASEAN connectivity. The speakers stressed that the Look East would benefit North East better when land and air connectivity within North East are established. In particular, it is imperative to establish connectivity between North East and rest of India at first to create connectivity between India and ASEAN countries. The discussion shed light in to the cultural, historic and ethnic linkages between India's North East and ASEAN countries and economic and transport corridors as a way to revive such connections. The participants pointed out that the role of Bangladesh and Myanmar is essential to India's Look East and their role in facilitating transport corridors. Lastly, the speakers agreed on the need for institutions in North East to supervise economic connectivity, to promote viability gap funding, and create regional projects that engages stake holders in North East in the process.

Panellists during the session on **Regional Architecture in Asia-Pacific: Roles of India and ASEAN** noted the plural and inclusive character of the regional architecture and the need for India and ASEAN to work together in order for their strategic partnership to grow further. 'Indo-Pacific' could become the basis of strategic architecture. Suggestions were made in favour of an 'Indo-Pacific Treaty of Peace and Friendship' and also for an 'Indo-Pacific Code of Conduct on Maritime Issues'. It was pointed out that maritime security was India's foremost priority.

The seamless manner in which the two oceans are connected can be seen from the fact that of the 10 ASEAN states, at least five could be considered

as littorals of the Indian Ocean—Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore and one-thirds of India's trade passes through the Western Pacific, with a value of over \$300 billion in 2013.

It was felt that for ASEAN to play its role as the 'pivot', it needed to resolve its intra-group disputes and evolve a security consensus. India has to reduce the 'delivery-deficit' especially on the strategic front. According to another view shared values and core principles were as important as physical connectivity. ASEAN centrality in the evolving regional architecture, strengthening existing institutions and greater budgetary support to the ASEAN Secretariat was stressed. To make it more relevant to the post-2015 era, a review of the 2008 ASEAN charter could be considered.

In the last session titled **Delhi Dialogue: The Way Forward** deliberating on how Delhi dialogues can be improved, the panellists emphasised that the Delhi Dialogue should be "more than an annual talk shop" and to move forward to "act, execute, implement". It could focus on broader themes to move beyond physical connectivity, bringing in issues like cultural and tourism links within the region.

They were of the view that although the annual Delhi Dialogue should continue to be held in Delhi, intermediary sessions can be organised in different cities of India and ASEAN for outreach. The panellists called for increased participation from Indian politicians and young scholars.

Delhi Dialogue should undertake focussed purposeful projects between sessions. There was a suggestion that projects could be funded by the corporate sector and increasing the participation even within ASEAN region. Scepticism was expressed about the suggestion to involve non-Indian/non-ASEAN participation. Suggestions regarding the format of DD, especially Day 1 (which tended to get prolonged) were made. It might be a better model to secure ministerial involvement through a Q&A session/conversation among the ten ASEAN Ministers, the Indian Minister and the ASEAN Secretary General.

Summing Up

Delhi Dialogue is a useful and unique Track 1.5 forum for exchange of views among diverse stakeholders in India and ASEAN. It has made a useful contribution and must be continued. However, its format and content could be reviewed to make it more suitable to the changing times.

ASEAN should be more visible in India's North Eastern States. Delhi Dialogue should hold some visible activities in North East. Greater awareness about the cultural links between North East India and ASEAN countries should be created.

Participants agreed that India should shed its reluctance and engage more deeply with ASEAN countries. This will help in promoting peace and stability in the region. India should devote more resources to engagement with ASEAN. Cooperation in connectivity, particularly infrastructure development such as India-Myanmar-Laos-Vietnam-Cambodia road link as well as India-Myanmar-Thailand highway connecting Laos and Cambodia, was emphasized. India and ASEAN should work closely to evolve suitable regional security architecture with ASEAN countries.

It was pointed out that apart from connectivity, maritime security should become the focus of India-ASEAN engagement. The formation of ASEAN Community in 2015 will open up more opportunities for deeper engagement between India and ASEAN. These should be exploited. Services and Investment Agreement between India and ASEAN should be ratified at the earliest. India and ASEAN should focus on implementation and delivery. Faster progress on agreed projects is called for.

For the Look East Policy to be meaningful for North East India, it must touch the lives of the common people. "Mizoram must seize the opportunity presented by its location and the peaceful environment that it enjoys and New Delhi needs to understand that any success on this front will have an impact on changing the mindset in the entire Northeast towards the building of infrastructure that will facilitate greater economic integration of this region with South East Asia." (Mr. H. Rohluna, the then Minister of Trade & Commerce, Government of Mizoram, India). This sentiment found an echo among the ASEAN countries too.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Vision Statement—ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit December 20, 2012

WE, the Heads of State/Government of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Republic of India, gathered in New Delhi, India, on 20 December 2012, to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations under the theme of “ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace and Shared Prosperity”;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the civilisations of ASEAN and India have been enriched by cross cultural exchanges over several millennia, where knowledge and ideas, goods and spiritual traditions have moved seamlessly across borders, providing a strong foundation for cooperation in a globalised world;

SATISFIED with the rapid growth and progress of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations since its establishment as a sectoral dialogue partnership in 1992;

RECOGNISING the successful conclusion of the first Plan of Action for the period 2005-2010 and the implementation of the new Plan of Action for the period 2010-2015 to implement the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity;

APPRECIATING India’s role in ensuring regional peace and stability through India’s accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) in 2003 and India’s active contribution in the ASEAN+1, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the East Asia Summit (EAS) and the ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting (ADMM) Plus;

RECOGNISING ASEAN’s centrality and its role as the driving force of both economic and security structures and institutions currently emerging in the region, which allow for a stable and peaceful regional environment that is essential to the pursuit of sustainable development;

INSPIRED by the progress made in realising the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement, consolidation of the annual ASEAN-India Business Fair and Conclave and reactivation of the ASEAN-India Business Council, which has enhanced trade linkages and economic cooperation between ASEAN and India, as well as contributed to the economic development of the region and a robust bilateral trade volume between ASEAN and India, which has surpassed the USD 70 billion mark as targeted for 2012;

WELCOMING India's consistent support for ASEAN integration, the ASEAN Community building process and ASEAN-India cooperation through contributions via ASEAN-India Fund (AIF), ASEAN-India Green Fund (AIGF), ASEAN-India Science & Technology Development Fund (AISTDF) as also through direct financial assistance to various research and development initiatives;

COMMITTED to working closely together on common regional and international issues of mutual concern and supporting each other's role at the global level as well as working together to promote and strengthen inclusive and multi-track regional arrangements, including promoting the goal of open regionalism and enhancing the prospects for peace, stability and prosperity in Asia;

RECOGNISING the emergence of Delhi Dialogue as one of the premier ASEAN-centric Track 1.5 platforms for discussions on regional and international issues of mutual importance; and

CONSIDERING the work of the ASEAN-India Eminent Persons Group (AIEPG) and its Report with recommendations for forging an even closer partnership for peace, progress and shared prosperity;

HEREBY adopt the following:

We declare that the ASEAN-India Partnership stands elevated to a strategic partnership.

We will strive towards the full, effective and timely implementation of the ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations across the whole spectrum of political and security, economic, socio-cultural and development cooperation, through further strengthening of relevant institutional mechanisms and broadening of the network between government institutions, parliamentarians, business circles, scientists, think-tanks, media, youth and other stakeholders, for the

building of a peaceful, harmonious, caring and sharing community in our regions. In this context, we will continue to support and encourage active participation of relevant stakeholders in the Delhi Dialogue.

We will continue to exert efforts and cooperate to effectively implement the Plan of Action to implement the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity (2010-2015).

India will support and cooperate closely with ASEAN to realise the ASEAN Community in 2015, comprising three pillars, namely, the ASEAN Political Security Community, the ASEAN Economic Community and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community. To further strengthen this cooperation, we agree to establish an ASEAN-India Centre using existing capacities.

Political and Security Cooperation

We share the vision of a peaceful, prosperous and resurgent Asia, which contributes to and promotes global peace and security.

We are committed to enhancing mutual understanding and friendship through close high-level contacts and exchanges and will continue to strengthen regular bilateral and multilateral dialogue and consultation at different levels on various regional and international issues of common interest.

We will make use of existing ASEAN-led regional processes, such as the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus to promote defence and military exchanges and cooperation, and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) to foster constructive dialogue and consultation on political and security issues.

We are committed to fostering greater security cooperation and information sharing in the form of regular and high-level security dialogues to further address traditional and non-traditional security challenges, including transnational crimes, and strengthening the effective implementation of the ASEAN-India Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism.

We are committed to strengthening cooperation to ensure maritime security and freedom of navigation, and safety of sea lanes of communication for unfettered movement of trade in accordance with international law, including UNCLOS.

We agree to promote maritime cooperation, including through engagement

in the ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF) and its expanded format, to address common challenges on maritime issues, including sea piracy, search and rescue at sea, maritime environment, maritime security, maritime connectivity, freedom of navigation, fisheries, and other areas of cooperation.

Economic Cooperation

In the context of economic globalisation and regional integration, we are committed to our efforts in advancing economic cooperation and engaging the emerging regional economic architecture, including organising multi-sectoral strategic economic dialogues.

We are committed to reaching greater trade volume through our FTA and realising our trade and economic potential under our strategic partnership by expanding trade facilitation initiatives. We are, therefore, committed to achieving a target of USD 100 billion for ASEAN-India trade by 2015, and also expect tariff-free lines to increase beyond the existing level in subsequent years.

We are committed to realising the ASEAN-India Free Trade Area (FTA) with a combined market of almost 1.8 billion people and a combined GDP of USD 3.8 trillion. In this regard, we welcome the successful conclusion of the negotiation on ASEAN-India Trade in Services and Investment Agreements. The signing of these Agreements will facilitate further economic integration between ASEAN and India, and also contribute to the overall East Asian economic integration.

We are committed to promoting private sector engagement and encouraging business-to-business relations, including through establishing a necessary framework to strengthen private sector engagement and public-private partnership (PPP) linkages. Recognising the important role of Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) in the region, we are also committed to encouraging collaboration in the SME sector.

We recognise the need to ensure long-term food security and energy security in our region, and the use of appropriate technologies for this end, and in this regard, we welcome the efforts to strengthen cooperation in the agriculture sector, and cooperation among centres of energy in ASEAN and India.

We encourage further cooperation between ASEAN and India in support of subregional developments including within the frameworks of Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC), Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA), Cambodia-Laos-Viet Nam Development Triangle Area (CLV-DTA), Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT), Greater Mekong Sub-Region (GMS) and the ASEAN Mekong Basin Development Cooperation (AMBDC), and other areas.

Socio-Cultural and Development Cooperation

We will strengthen socio-cultural cooperation and promote greater people-to-people interaction through increasing exchanges in culture, education, youth, sports, creative industries, science and technology, information and communication technology and software, human resource development and scholarly exchanges. We will also enhance contacts between parliamentarians, media personnel, academics and Track II institutions such as the network of think tanks.

We encourage the study, documentation and dissemination of knowledge about the civilisational links between ASEAN and India.

We will intensify efforts to preserve, protect and restore symbols and structures representing civilisational bonds between ASEAN and India, including Angkor Wat in the Kingdom of Cambodia, Borobudur and Prambanan temples in the Republic of Indonesia, Wat Phu in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Bagan in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Sukhothai Historical Park in the Kingdom of Thailand, and My Son in the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

We are committed to working together to overcome challenges such as climate change, energy security, rapid urbanisation, natural disasters, food security, drug abuse, through both regional cooperation and participation in relevant global initiatives.

We are committed to enhancing cooperation in bridging the development gaps among ASEAN Member States, inter alia, through support for the effective implementation of the IAI Work Plan II (2009-2015) and the Phnom Penh Agenda for ASEAN Community Building, including enhancing capacity

building, strengthening human resources development and encouraging involvement of private sector and academic institutions to contribute to the ASEAN integration and the realisation of the ASEAN Community by 2015.

We appreciate India's commitment to continue the special focus on the CLMV countries that represent a bridge between ASEAN and India by intensifying focus on human resource development and capacity building e-initiatives, particularly in the fields of information technology, science and technology, English language training, among others. We support India's call to synergise efforts under the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation from the USD 1 million annual India-CLMV Fund.

Connectivity

We are committed to enhancing ASEAN Connectivity through supporting the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity and the ASEAN ICT Master Plan 2015. In this regard, we encourage the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee to work closely with India's Inter-Ministerial Group on ASEAN Transport Connectivity to enhance air, sea and land connectivity within ASEAN and between ASEAN and India, through ASEAN-India connectivity projects. We are also determined to cooperate and make the best use of all available resources, including financial and technical assistance, investment and public-private partnership to achieve physical, institutional and people-to-people connectivity within ASEAN and with India.

We are committed to assisting in the completion of the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and its extension to Lao PDR and Cambodia and the new highway project connecting India-Myanmar-Lao PDR-Viet Nam-Cambodia as well as developing the Mekong-India Economic Corridor (MIEC) connecting Southeast Asia to South Asia on the eastern part of India in order to add greater momentum to the growing trade and investment linkages between ASEAN and India.

Regional Architecture

We are committed to a stable and peaceful regional environment for the pursuit of sustainable development in the region. India reaffirms its continued support for ASEAN's centrality in the evolving regional architecture, including the EAS, ARF, ADMM Plus, and other regional processes.

We call for the formulation of specific initiatives to achieve the objectives of this Vision Statement, which would be funded through the AIF, AIGF, and AISTDF.

Adopted in New Delhi, the Republic of India, on the Twentieth Day of December of the Year Two Thousand and Twelve.

New Delhi

December 20, 2012

Source: ASEAN website at: <http://www.asean.org>

Appendix 2

ASEAN-India Eminent Persons' Report to the Leaders

The ASEAN-India Eminent Persons Group (AIEPG) was established to review the ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations and explore ways to widen and deepen existing cooperation towards a long-term strategic partnership between ASEAN and India.

The Eminent Persons Group consisted of the following:

H.E. Pengiran Datin Paduka Masrainah Ahmad from Brunei Darussalam; H.E. Shyam Saran, Dr. (Mrs.) Isher Judge Ahluwalia, Dr. (Mrs.) Kapila Vatsyayan, Dr. Sanjaya Baru

And Mr. Subramaniam Ramadorai from India; H.E. Dr. KAO Kim Hourn from Cambodia;

H.E. Donnilo Anwar from Indonesia; H.E. Dr. Khiane Phansourivong from Lao PDR;

H.E. Dato' S. Thanarajasingam from Malaysia; H.E. Wynn Lwin from Myanmar; H.E. Laura Q. Del Rosario from the Philippines; H.E. Gopinath Pillai from Singapore; and H.E. Do Ngoc Son from Vietnam.

It met on four separate occasions, in Cambodia, Malaysia and India during 2011-2012 to review the past and existing relations, and suggest various recommendations on the future areas of cooperation between ASEAN and India. It envisioned the potential of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations in the areas of political and security cooperation, sustainable economic development, socio-cultural development, and connectivity, in the midst of changing global political landscape and the growing importance of Asia in the world economy.

Following the elevation of the existing relations to a strategic partnership it was felt that it opened up many new opportunities for stronger cooperation

in maintaining peace, security and prosperity in ASEAN and India, thus strengthening economic relations between them.

ASEAN-INDIA EMINENT PERSONS' REPORT TO THE LEADERS

I. Introduction

The ASEAN Member States and India share a long and glorious history of friendly relations. They are both heirs to a cross-roads culture, situated as they are at the intersections of major land and sea routes. This enabled a dense and free flow of peoples, merchandise, cultures and ideas among them. Over the centuries, each country drew inspiration from the genius of the others and contributed to the cultural enrichment and advancement of our entire region. In contemporary times, they supported and sympathised with each other in their respective struggle for national independence and economic and social justice. This has reinforced the strong and abiding affinity they share since ancient times.

While peoples of ASEAN and India inhabit a shared geographical and cultural space, each country retains its distinctiveness and unique identity. It is this celebration of diversity, of plural yet related cultures, which underlies the ASEAN-India partnership. Our vision is to recreate, in a contemporary setting, the many linkages that have bound our countries together in the past and unleash a creative surge, which will impart even greater momentum to the Asian resurgence, of which we are a part.

At the 8th ASEAN-India Summit in Ha Noi in October 2010, the Leaders of ASEAN and India welcomed the establishment of an ASEAN-India Eminent Persons Group (AIEPG) to take stock of the 20 years of ASEAN-India cooperation and chart future direction of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations. The AIEPG report was scheduled to be submitted to the 10th ASEAN-India Summit in Phnom Penh in November 2012.

The AIEPG met four times: August 2011 in Phnom Penh, October 2011 in New Delhi, March 2012 in Kuala Lumpur and September 2012 in Kochi. There were also two Intersessional Assistants Meetings of the AIEPG in January 2012 in Vientiane and May 2012 in Da Nang to facilitate the preparations of the final report.

II. Review of Past and Current Relations

ASEAN-India dialogue relations have grown rapidly from a sectoral dialogue partnership in 1992 to a full dialogue partnership in December 1995. The relationship was further elevated with the convening of the ASEAN-India Summit in 2002 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Since then the ASEAN-India Summit has been held annually. This clearly signifies the importance of the dialogue partnership to ASEAN and India and the progress made in the cooperation.

Since India became a Dialogue Partner of ASEAN, the collaboration has transcended the realm of functional cooperation to cover political and security dimensions. India acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) in 2003. India has also participated in a series of consultative meetings with ASEAN under the ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations, which include Summit, Ministerial meetings, Senior Officials meetings, and meetings at experts level, as well as through dialogue and cooperation frameworks initiated by ASEAN, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the Post Ministerial Conference (PMC) 10+1, ASEAN Economic Ministers+1 Consultations, the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus), Mekong-Ganga Cooperation and Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multisectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), which help contribute to enhancing regional dialogue and accelerating regional integration. After the entry into force of the ASEAN Charter, India has designated its current Ambassador to Indonesia as concurrently accredited to ASEAN to interact with the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN in the framework of the ASEAN-India Joint Cooperation Committee (AIJCC). Currently, there are 25 mechanisms coordinating the ASEAN-India cooperation in the areas of political-security cooperation, economic and socio-cultural cooperation.

As a reflection of the interest of ASEAN and India to intensify their engagement, the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity, which sets out the roadmap for long-term ASEAN-India engagement, was signed at the 3rd ASEAN-India Summit on 30 November 2004 in Vientiane. A Plan of Action (2004-2010) was also developed to implement the Partnership. Subsequently, the new ASEAN-India Plan of Action for 2010-2015 was developed and adopted by the Leaders at the 8th ASEAN-India Summit in October 2010 in Ha Noi.

On the economic front, volume of trade and investment flows between ASEAN and India remained relatively low compared with other Dialogue Partners of ASEAN. Trade with India accounted for 2.9% of total ASEAN trade in 2011. The ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement which was signed on 13 August 2009 is expected to boost trade and investment between ASEAN and India. However, the tariff liberalisation under this Agreement covers only 80% of the total tariff lines compared with ASEAN's other FTAs which have a much higher ambition with tariff liberalisation covering at least 90%. At the drafting time of this report, the Trade in Services and Investment Agreements negotiations are still ongoing.

There have been significant developments in the agriculture, forestry and tourism sectors. There are also opportunities to significantly increase people-to-people relations. However, the promising potential in areas such as regional infrastructure development, ASEAN-India connectivity projects, small and medium enterprise development and energy security remains to be explored.

India has made a significant contribution towards the enhancing of ASEAN-India cooperation through the ASEAN-India Fund, the ASEAN-India Green Fund and the ASEAN-India Science and Technology Development Fund. India has also been actively participating in the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan by implementing projects such as the Entrepreneurship Development Centres (EDC) and the Centres for the English Language Training (CELT) in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam.

III. Guiding Principles

ASEAN-India's future partnership should be based on the following guiding principles:

- ASEAN-India relations should be based on the principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia and other relevant regional instruments.
- ASEAN and India should continue to build upon existing ASEAN India mechanisms and in line with mutually agreed processes and structures.
- India fully supports ASEAN's efforts in building an ASEAN Community. India welcomes the vital and expanding role of ASEAN at the global level particularly after the signing of Bali Declaration on

ASEAN Community in a Global Community of Nations (Bali Concord III) and looks forward to collaborate with ASEAN.

- While sharing common goals of regional peace, progress and shared prosperity, ASEAN and India should contribute to the strengthening of relations with other countries and organisations, as well as contribute to the community building in East Asia.
- India will continue to support ASEAN as the driving force of both economic and security structures and institutions that are currently emerging in this region, based on the centrality of ASEAN. ASEAN and India welcome and mutually support their increasing role at the global level. In this regard, ASEAN and India will collaborate in the solution of a number of regional and international issues of mutual concern.
- The two sides will work together to promote and strengthen inclusive and multi-track regional arrangements.

IV. Vision for the Future

ASEAN and India will build upon the achievements of the past and pursue enhanced cooperation within the framework of a new Vision for the Future based on a Strategic Partnership between ASEAN and India.

The ASEAN Member States and India welcome the growing role of Asia in the global economy and international affairs. This generates both significant opportunities for accelerated economic and social development of their countries as well as complex and difficult challenges which require their collaborative response. They are conscious of the fact that a new economic architecture is emerging in our region and new security arrangements are taking shape concurrently. It is in the common interest of ASEAN and India to work together to ensure that the evolving regional economic and security architectures will promote the goal of open regionalism and enhance the prospects for peace, stability and prosperity in Asia. As the global profile and impact of Asia over the international political and economic order increases, ASEAN Member States and India will also have to shoulder a greater responsibility for, and make their increased contribution to, the reshaping of this order. This, too, will become an important component of their expanding partnership.

The two sides are convinced that a strategic partnership can be sustained

through establishing strong, multi-faceted and broad-ranging people-to-people relations, in particular, among the youth of our countries. A very significant increase in people and youth-centred activities is called for. These will include, inter-alia, cultural, sports, media, tourism, parliamentary and academic exchanges.

ASEAN and India declared that a stable and peaceful regional environment is essential for the pursuit of sustainable development in the region. To this end, ASEAN and India recognise that the centrality of ASEAN and the strengthening of ASEAN-led processes will continue to contribute to the creation of structures for dynamic cooperation for peace, security and development.

V. Recommendations

Over the past two decades, there has been a remarkable increase in ASEAN-India engagement and expanded cooperation across the board. As the two sides head towards the celebration of the 20th anniversary of their Dialogue Partnership in 2012, there are new and significant opportunities for forging an even closer partnership for mutual benefit. To this end, it is desirable for ASEAN and India to consider for adoption the following recommendations for 2012-2022:

A. Political and Security Cooperation

Declare ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership in the Vision Statement to be adopted by the Heads of State/Heads of Government at the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit to be held in New Delhi in December 2012.

India to establish its separate diplomatic mission with an Ambassador accredited to ASEAN residing in Jakarta to facilitate further the enhanced dialogue partnership cooperation in all three pillars of ASEAN Community.

ASEAN Member States and India being maritime nations whose prosperity throughout history has been linked to sea-faring and sea borne trade, to work together to ensure maritime security and freedom of navigation to all littoral and user countries, in accordance with international law and on the basis of open, inclusive, transparent and balanced multilateral arrangements in the region. The agenda for maritime cooperation must include combating piracy, dealing with maritime emergencies, establishing a collaborative early warning system and providing prompt and effective disaster relief.

Promote regular and high-level security dialogue and strengthen the implementation of the ASEAN-India Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism signed in Bali, Indonesia, on 8 October 2003 in order to confront the common challenge of international terrorism and threats to their societies from extremist and exclusivist ideologies, which are hostile to the respect for diversity and our culture of tolerance. A much higher level of security cooperation and information sharing would be required to overcome these growing threats.

India to fully support ASEAN's strong commitment to realise a drug-free ASEAN 2015 and to pursue full cooperation with ASEAN in combating and eventually eliminating drug-trafficking. In this context, to convene regular bilateral consultations between ASEAN and India on drug related matters at the senior official level.

B. Economic Cooperation

Given the Asian resurgence and its relevance to the global economic recovery, it is incumbent upon our region to develop Asian perspectives on global issues. The ASEAN Member States and India will work towards shaping the new international financial and economic architecture in a proactive manner. In this context, ASEAN and India should establish a multi-sectoral Strategic Economic Dialogue:

While ASEAN and India have concluded a Free Trade Agreement in Goods, negotiations are still ongoing in the areas of services and investment. These negotiations should aim to conclude at the earliest, bearing in mind the fact that the conclusion of such Agreements would serve to cement our existing ties and, subsequently, take our economic relations to a higher plane:

The volume of ASEAN-India trade in 2010 was US\$ 55.4 billion and this has grown to US\$ 74.9 billion in 2011, surpassing the target of US\$ 70 billion set for 2012. There are, however, prospects for reaching a much higher level of trade and investment under the proposed strategic partnership, by improved air, sea, land and digital connectivity between the two sides, expanding trade facilitation initiatives, including through collaboration in the SME sector, which is vital to the economies of ASEAN as well as India and by fostering business to business relations:

Declare a target of US\$ 200 billion for bilateral ASEAN-India trade by the year 2022 under the ASEAN-India Free Trade Area.

Harness and pool our resources together to ensure that there is constant supply of talent within the ASEAN-India region, in recognition that human resources and skills have become a key factor in modern economic and social development. Encourage governments to work towards providing such talents with the opportunity to move seamlessly between ASEAN and India in order to share their expertise and knowledge to the mutual betterment of our economic prospects.

Enhance private sector engagement and encourage business-to-business relations, including the reactivation of the ASEAN-India Business Council. Establish an ASEAN-India Business Portal to facilitate exchange of economic and trade information and promote easy interface between companies and business persons.

Facilitate a mutually beneficial business visa regime, including the grant of long-term, multiple entry business visas and stay permits for professionals and their families.

Establish an ASEAN-India Meeting of Ministers in charge of SMEs to promote cooperation in the SME sector, with a Joint Working Group (JWG) and Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) to prepare a detailed draft plan for the consideration of the Ministers.

Emphasise the importance of human resources development and, in this context, propose an ASEAN-India Knowledge Initiative which would include institution-to-institution linkages between their universities and their respective centres of excellence in different fields.

Launch an ASEAN-India Skills Initiative and establish a virtual network of existing, upgraded and new human resource and training institutions in identified strategic sectors. An ASEAN-India Centre for Skill Development and Vocational Education could be set up in Guwahati, India, where there is already a presence of the Indian Institute of Technology. This initiative should draw upon the strengths of ASEAN Member States and India in different sectors, including in the areas where ASEAN Member States and India have a rich reservoir of time-tested traditional skills such as in textiles, metallurgy, building architecture and medicinal herbs and holistic healing practices.

Set up an ASEAN-India panel of experts to draw up a Food Security Plan for the region.

Set up an International Centre for Water Management Technologies in India to facilitate transfer of technologies by bringing together all stakeholders including governments and corporate sectors between India and ASEAN in the sector of water, likely to be on the national and international priorities for the region in the coming years. The Government of India should announce its location in due course.

C. Development Cooperation

ASEAN and Indian economies are in the midst of a structural transformation and confront many common challenges such as climate change, energy security, rapid urbanisation, natural disasters and food security. Cities will become the engines of growth in the coming decades and will impact on each of the cross-cutting challenges identified above. ASEAN and India will need to work together to overcome these challenges both through regional cooperation as well as through their active participation in global initiatives:

Enhance cooperation in bridging development gaps among ASEAN Member States, including through enhancing capacity building, strengthening human resource development and encouraging involvement of private sector and academic institutions, to contribute to the ASEAN integration and community building. In this context, ASEAN-India Eminent Persons took note of the recently held 6th Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) Ministerial Meeting.

Enhance cooperation between the ASEAN Centre for Energy in Jakarta with the International Centre for Energy being set up by India in Bangalore, given that India and ASEAN confront a common challenge in ensuring energy security for their peoples. Such an initiative should draw together expertise across sectors such as urban development, energy management, use of renewable energy sources, energy efficient building materials and architecture, in particular the adaptation of the rich traditional technologies that our countries possess, to meeting contemporary challenges in each of the above sectors. The International Centre could serve as a platform for sharing knowledge, experiences and best practices for urban public service delivery and governance patterns. This initiative would be announced at the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit in December 2012.

Strengthen cooperation in disaster management to create disaster resilient and safer communities, enhance cooperation in addressing global

environmental issues, and strengthen cooperation in responding to climate change and addressing its impacts.

Set up an International Centre for Natural Disaster Management and Relief in India which would collaborate with the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA Centre) in providing prompt, coordinated and effective disaster relief.

D. Socio-Cultural Cooperation

Collaborate in promoting corporate social responsibility (CSR) to ensure that CSR is incorporated in the corporate agenda and contribute towards sustainable socio-economic development in ASEAN and India.

Establish a regular exchange of visits by Parliamentary delegations between the Indian Parliament and the ASEAN Inter Parliamentary Assembly.

Promote online interactions for the active participation of youth in India and in each of the ASEAN Member States that would generate deeper understanding and friendship.

Undertake greater exchange in the area of sports through strengthened collaboration between the relevant sports associations and/or commissions in ASEAN Member States and India.

Announce an annual ASEAN-India Essay Competition open to school/university students, on the theme of ASEAN-India relations in different fields.

Further intensify cooperation in media exchange including the exchange of resident correspondents of major media organisations and a Senior Editors Exchange Programme, whereby Senior Editor may spend a mutually agreed period of time as Guest Editors in major media organisations in India and in ASEAN Member States respectively.

Further support and leverage the establishment of ASEAN Promotional Chapter of Tourism (APCT) in Mumbai, India to further strengthen the tourism cooperation between ASEAN and India.

Pursue a sustainable programme of interactions in culture, which would include experts from ASEAN and India working together on the shared legacy in fields such as archaeology, linguistics, libraries, textiles, fine arts, performing arts etc. A regular film festival with the participation of popular film artists should be institutionalised. ASEAN and India should also hold exhibitions illustrative of civilisational links in arts and culture.

Further support the revival of Nalanda University as an icon of Asian renaissance and promote its networking with centres of excellence in the regions.

Consider establishing an ASEAN-India Centre in India to promote trade, investment, tourism, and cultural exchanges.

Encourage networking of existing ASEAN and India Study Centres in ASEAN and India, as well as think tanks and research institutes to promote studies on various aspects of economic, social and political development in ASEAN Member States and India.

E. Connectivity

As Asia becomes the engine for the growth of the global economy, ASEAN and India must leverage their recommended strategic partnership through enhanced connectivity to reap the benefits from this development. India is one of the two Dialogue Partners that shares both maritime and land borders with ASEAN. Given this close proximity, there is much potential for ASEAN and India to promote connectivity. To this end, India supports the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC), which encompasses physical, institutional and people-to-people connectivity. Such connectivity must be expanded to bring South Asia and Southeast Asia closer together:

Conclude as soon as possible the pending agreement between ASEAN and India on Open Skies.

Establish regular exchanges between ASEAN and the recently established Indian Inter-Ministerial Group on ASEAN Connectivity to explore ways and means to support the MPAC as well as come up with new practical initiatives to further deepen regional integration between ASEAN and India. The emphasis can be placed on promoting and upgrading regional infrastructure and inter-connectivity between ASEAN and India, combined with enabling policy framework to facilitate and promote goods in transit, multi-modal transport and inter-state transport, which would benefit both sides and a wider free trade zone.

While ASEAN utilises the Infrastructure Fund to finance priority projects, consider bringing in the public private partnership to support the MPAC and ASEAN Connectivity Plus. The proposed new highway project connecting

India-Myanmar-Lao PDR-Viet Nam-Cambodia and the extension of the India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway to Lao PDR and Cambodia as well as the development of Mekong-India Economic Corridor connecting Southeast Asia to South Asia on the eastern part of India through the Andaman Sea should receive high priority in order to add greater momentum to the growing trade and investment linkages between ASEAN and India.

Work together to promote the development of information and communication technology (ICT) in ASEAN Member States. In this connection, India supports ASEAN's efforts to realise the ASEAN ICT Master Plan 2015, drawing upon India's expertise in the sector and including through sharing of best practices in policy, regulations and technological development and capacity building programmes. ASEAN and India should establish an ASEAN-India broadband high speed optical fibre network to enhance virtual connectivity. This could become an ASEAN-India Broadband Corridor. F. Regional Architecture

ASEAN and India reemphasised that a stable and peaceful regional environment is essential for the pursuit of sustainable development in the region. To this end, India continues to support the centrality of ASEAN in the evolving regional architecture and the strengthening of ASEAN-led processes, which has contributed to creating a dynamic environment of cooperation in various areas:

Deepen coordination and cooperation between ASEAN and India at the regional and multilateral levels, particularly:

- Work towards contributing to the realisation of the goals and objectives as set out in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Vision Statement;
- Promote cooperation projects within the ARF;
- Continue to enhance the East Asia Summit as Leaders-led forum for dialogue on broad strategic, political and economic issues of common interest and concern with the aim of promoting peace, stability and economic prosperity in East Asia;
- Promote maritime cooperation through engagement in the future expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum to address common challenges on maritime issues, including sea piracy, search rescue at sea, maritime environment, maritime security, maritime connectivity, freedom of navigation, fisheries and other areas of cooperation; and

- Promote cooperation in the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus to ensure the maintenance of peace, security, stability and enhancing prosperity in the region.

G. Institutional Support and Implementation Mechanism

The Eminent Persons Group is convinced that these recommendations will contribute significantly to the elevation of ASEAN-India relations to a strategic partnership. The Group recommends that a mid-term review be conducted by senior officials of ASEAN and India in 2017 on the progress in the implementation of the recommendations:

To ensure successful implementation of the recommendations, the institutional support and framework are necessary to closely coordinate, facilitate, monitor, review, and allocate resources effectively:

Recognising the important role played by other stakeholders, ensure inclusiveness of non-governmental agencies, private sector, academic institutions, think tanks, youth organisations, media groups, social and cultural foundations of ASEAN and India to support the implementation of these recommendations.

Streamline (i) the use of existing funds, such as the ASEAN-India Fund (AIF), the ASEAN-India Green Fund (AIGF), and the ASEAN-India Science and Technology Development Fund (AISTDF) and (ii) cooperation mechanisms under ASEAN-India relations to support the implementation of ASEAN-India cooperative activities contained in these recommendations.

VI. Conclusion

Taking into account the past twenty years of cooperation and achievements between ASEAN and India as well as the fast changing regional and global environment and evolving regional architectures, the AIEPG has looked at ways to elevate the comprehensive partnership between ASEAN and India to a strategic level.

In order to achieve and strengthen the strategic partnership, it is recommended that ASEAN and India should endeavour to implement the proposed recommendations as outlined in this AIEPG Report and continue to work together with the shared values of peace, progress and prosperity.

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