
ASEAN-Japan Strategic Partnership in Southeast Asia: Political-Security Pillar

RIZAL SUKMA and YOSHIHIDE SOEYA

ASEAN-JAPAN COOPERATION has the potential to make an important contribution to regional security as the two sides share a common vision of a rules-based regional order. The guiding philosophy of such a regional order is internationalism, sustained by the principle of a people-based approach. ASEAN and Japan can and should take the initiative to deepen their cooperation to create a regional infrastructure for peace and prosperity. To that end, one of the most prominent and urgent items on this common agenda is to bring ASEAN's community-building efforts to fruition.

Such a cooperative endeavor between ASEAN and Japan could be regarded as a proactive contribution to regional stability at a time when historic changes are underway due to the rise of China, the United States' search for its new role in the region and the world, the growing role of India, and the shift of geo-economic gravity to East Asia. No single country can deal with such fundamental shifts in the international order alone, and the critical considerations for the countries concerned, particularly East Asian countries, should be how to deepen and expand cooperation. In this respect, ASEAN and Japan are natural partners, and can establish a model of regional cooperation toward institutionalizing a new regional architecture for democracy, peace, and stability in the years ahead.

In the past, particularly since the second half of the 1970s, Japan has contributed substantially to the regional integration of Southeast Asia primarily through economic means. After the end of the Cold War, ASEAN undertook an important initiative by establishing the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the first multilateral institution to discuss political and security issues in the region. Japan sought to be a political partner of ASEAN not

only in the creation of the ARF, but also in the Cambodian peace process, and more recently in the establishment of the East Asia Summit. Building on these past achievements, Japan should now commit itself to becoming a genuinely equal partner of an ASEAN Community.

Building on the five papers prepared for this project on the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) by experts from ASEAN nations and Japan, this overview chapter will first examine the long-term global and regional trends and challenges ASEAN and Japan are likely to face from 2015 to 2030, and then will discuss common interests and five priority issue areas for ASEAN-Japan cooperation: (1) democracy and human rights, (2) maritime security, (3) nontraditional security, (4) peacekeeping and preventive diplomacy, and (5) defense cooperation. It will then conclude with recommendations on how to strengthen ASEAN-Japan cooperation in building the APSC in the years beyond 2015.

REGIONAL AND GLOBAL TRENDS AND CHALLENGES FOR ASEAN AND JAPAN

As a macro trend, the steady progression of world history toward democratization is undeniable, and that in turn provides the foundation for the APSC. This of course does not mean that the role of governments will become obsolete, but the domains of government intervention and control are constantly diminishing both in domestic and international affairs among the member countries of ASEAN. The flipside of the coin is that the role of civil society organizations (CSOs) in building a democratic base for the APSC is growing.

This long-term trend makes it a natural goal for ASEAN and Japan to strengthen linkages among CSOs in ASEAN as well as between CSOs in ASEAN and Japan. In the medium and short terms, however, this should be pursued carefully, paying due attention to the convergences and divergences in the movement toward democratic practices in the region.

In sharp contrast to the domain of democracy and human rights, the dimension of maritime security still faces the danger of traditional security uncertainty and instability, mainly due to the unresolved maritime disputes in the South China Sea and the East China Sea. ASEAN and Japan should encourage all parties involved to place the focus of joint efforts on the legal and civilized management of these difficult issues, emphasizing the importance of a rules-based order. It is our belief that this approach is more in line with the long-term evolution of an international order premised on democratic values and a people-based perspective.

The same principles of internationalism and liberalism would apply to ASEAN-Japan cooperation in the domain of nontraditional security. Indeed, there is much overlap between the domains of maritime security and non-traditional security, both of which require comprehensive and multilateral approaches to new security issues emerging against the backdrop of globalization. These issues include piracy, irregular migration, natural disasters, climate change, resource scarcity, infectious diseases, food shortages, people smuggling, drug trafficking, and other transnational crimes. A recent addition to the list is cybersecurity, as cybercrimes have been intensified by the unstoppable forces of technological innovation and globalization.

After the end of the Cold War, the concept of UN peacekeeping operations (PKO) has been undergoing a transformation, shifting toward operations aimed at solidifying peace beyond the mere absence of military conflict. Thus, a wider definition of peacebuilding has emerged, calling for the international community's efforts to support post-conflict reconciliation and humanitarian assistance. Such assistance would go beyond ensuring basic safety and security in a country to supporting political and economic processes and even efforts to revitalize human security.

As such, a primary challenge to peacekeeping cooperation between ASEAN and Japan may not be a lack of ability or resources, but rather a question of norms and political will. ASEAN traditionally adheres to the norm of noninterference in a country's internal affairs as part of the "ASEAN way." Yet new challenges and ambitions, especially the drive to create the APSC, require a commitment to wider principles of peace and security, and in this area Japan can provide an important impetus. For both ASEAN and Japan, the wider definition of peacebuilding, as compared with the relatively narrow definition of traditional UN peacekeeping, offers opportunities to contribute to post-conflict humanitarian and technical assistance.

ASEAN-Japan defense cooperation is most sensitive given the memories of Japanese military aggression in the past. ASEAN, however, has more or less overcome the burden of historical baggage, while Japan also has worked hard to convince ASEAN of its peaceful intentions toward the region. As a result, there is a reasonably solid understanding among ASEAN countries that the Japan Self Defense Forces (SDF) have been a force for peace and stability for the last 60 years.

This means that there is no expectation from the ASEAN side for Japan to play a traditional military role for regional security. Rather, comprehensive and common security is a conceptual tool that should guide ASEAN-Japan defense cooperation. The broadening of security issues to include "non-traditional" threats and concerns allows for a multidimensional approach to peace and stability. In addition, common security places a premium on

the identification and targeting of threats that are pervasive and common to all. A threat that impinges on the security of one state will also imperil the interests of others. This guides us to focus on achieving a “security for” doctrine as opposed to the realist tradition of “security against.”

COMMON INTERESTS AND PRIORITY ISSUES

The ASEAN-Japan Plan of Action 2011–2015, adopted during the 14th ASEAN-Japan summit in 2011, stipulates areas of cooperation in the field of **democracy and human rights** promotion. These are (1) supporting the work of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights and the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children through training, capacity building, and technical cooperation; (2) conducting women’s studies to address issues such as human trafficking and mail-order brides; (3) promoting democratic values and the empowerment of people in the region by seeking cooperation through seminars and other joint projects within the framework of the APSC Blueprint and the Bali Democracy Forum; and (4) continuing to promote capacity building in the law and justice sector in order to strengthen the rule of law, judicial systems, and the legal infrastructure.

These issue areas essentially require a bottom-up approach (strengthening the social basis for gradual democratic transition) rather than a top-down approach (imposing external pressure on regimes to conduct political reform). This approach should continue to inform ASEAN-Japan cooperation from a mid- to long-term perspective (2015 to 2030). Our study group findings emphasize the development of a more vibrant civil society as the key to a successful bottom-up approach. It is civil society–led advocacy and campaign activities that help promote citizen awareness and understanding of democratic norms and values, such as human rights, civil liberties, and social justice. This is exemplified by the democratic transitions occurring in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand.

The strengthening of civil society also serves to consolidate democracy in democratic ASEAN members. Promoting the rule of law requires not only the establishment of elaborated judicial institutions for limiting the abuse of state authority but also the building of autonomous media and watchdog civic organizations, such as anti-corruption and election-monitoring groups. The role of civil society in checking and limiting the potential abuse of state power is vital to the deepening of democracy in democratic ASEAN member states.

Yet, the expansion of CSOs does not automatically lead to successful democratization. The limited role of civil society in Southeast Asia in terms of democracy promotion has stemmed not only from the lack of a legally protected realm for civil society—one that ensures the liberties of individuals and groups—within many of the region’s countries, but also from the shortage of capability and expertise on the part of the CSOs. In order to remedy this, it is important to strengthen connectivity both among ASEAN CSOs and between CSOs in ASEAN countries and Japan.

In the area of **maritime security**, combating piracy was initially the primary driving force for Japan’s interest in cooperation with ASEAN. The Malacca Strait has been the focus of Japanese antipiracy efforts. Japan has long cooperated with Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia in the area of navigation safety and seabed mapping through joint research, sharing of equipment, and training. The Japan International Cooperation Agency funds the Japan Coast Guard’s seminars to train maritime authorities in Southeast Asia, and Japan’s aid is critical in helping to create maritime patrol authority where local capacity is lacking (especially in the Philippines and Indonesia).

With regard to the traditional side of maritime security, especially tensions in the South China Sea and East China Sea, Japan has been a strong advocate and supporter of a regional code of conduct to maintain a rules-based order in the South China Sea. Bilaterally, Japan has stepped up its support to several ASEAN member states to enhance their law enforcement capability, by supplying both the necessary hardware (i.e., coast guard ships) and software (i.e., training, techniques, etc.). We believe cooperation between ASEAN and Japan is thus on the right track in this field and should be strengthened beyond 2015 as well.

Another key aspect of the APSC has to do with the ASEAN concept of comprehensive security, where ASEAN-Japan cooperation on issues involving **nontraditional security** should play an important role in beefing up the foundation of the APSC. In this context, the aspirations of ASEAN and Japan have been converging on many issues, including humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), transnational crime, counter-terrorism, and cybersecurity.

Regarding HADR, the APSC Blueprint itself has 12 action lines that are related to strengthening intra-ASEAN cooperation in this area. Most of these are covered in the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response, through which ASEAN and Japan cooperation is being enhanced in emergency preparedness and HADR efforts.

There is also consensus on the need to help combat *transnational crime* through ASEAN-Japan cooperation. In the APSC Blueprint, there are

18 action lines mentioned that relate to this issue, covering a variety of concerns including trafficking in drugs, persons, and small arms and light weapons, and the need for a common legal framework to address these problems. The 2011 Joint Declaration for Enhancing ASEAN-Japan Strategic Partnership for Prospering Together, known as the Bali Declaration, has also made explicit the interest in ASEAN-Japan cooperation in addressing “non-traditional security challenges such as terrorism, trafficking in persons and other transnational crimes through the existing ASEAN-initiated mechanisms,” as well as to “cooperate in combating illegal transfer and excessive accumulation of small arms and light weapons in accordance with the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.”

Counterterrorism has also been a continuing concern for ASEAN-Japan cooperation. Cooperation in countering chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear terrorism, as well as cyberterrorism, are priority areas on which ASEAN and Japan have agreed to focus as part of their continuous counterterrorism efforts. ASEAN and Japan have cooperated in these areas through the ASEAN-Japan Counter-terrorism Dialogue and through Japan’s support to the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counterterrorism in Malaysia and the Jakarta Center for Law Enforcement Cooperation in Indonesia.

Cybersecurity, while not a new area for ASEAN, requires a recognition of the current limitations that have to be addressed by the individual member states of ASEAN. For instance, the political and economic diversity of ASEAN has led to different appreciations of the nature of the issues concerned. More politically liberal societies like the Philippines are debating the idea of giving people easier access to state information, a situation that would not necessarily be replicated in other countries. An even more fundamental concern is capacity. In this context, there is much that ASEAN-Japan cooperation can aspire to address, but at the same time it should be recognized that the extent of cooperation will be affected by these differences in the capabilities and needs of ASEAN member states.

In the domain of *peacekeeping and preventive diplomacy*, ASEAN countries face far fewer legal restrictions on the deployment of their armed forces compared with Japan. Several ASEAN member countries already make significant contributions of personnel to UN peacekeeping efforts. Looking ahead, ASEAN members have committed to playing a greater role in ensuring the Asian region’s peace and security as part of the APSC. Under the APSC blueprint, ASEAN members have agreed to promote peacekeeping capabilities within the grouping, and five ASEAN member states have already established national peacekeeping centers for training purposes, namely Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand.

In May 2011, at the 5th ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting in Jakarta, ASEAN members agreed to tie their national centers into an ASEAN-wide network of peacekeeping centers and to establish the ASEAN Peacekeeping Centres Network. It is hoped that Japan will commit itself to these multilateral efforts of ASEAN, which would provide an opportunity for Japan to be a good citizen in the domain of international security.

As stated above, for both ASEAN and Japan, the wider definition of peacebuilding offers opportunities to contribute to humanitarian assistance, undertaking actions that would not be considered political or military involvement or interference in another state's internal affairs. Timor-Leste is one example where ASEAN members and other Asian states such as Japan have taken the initiative to offer assistance beyond the remit of UN peacekeeping operations. Another potential area of action for ASEAN and Japan is preventive diplomacy within the Asia-Pacific region. The concept of preventive diplomacy is in line with the political culture of ASEAN, as well as Japan's own norms and principles.

Last but not least, Japan's engagement with ASEAN in **defense cooperation** must be managed delicately given the sensitivities on matters that pertain to territorial defense and sovereignty. Fundamental to these concerns is to keep ASEAN at arm's length from major power rivalry. Accordingly, Japan should focus on soft—as opposed to hard—security forms of defense cooperation. As such, areas of defense cooperation between ASEAN and Japan should include defense industry cooperation, search and rescue operations, antipiracy, capacity building for coastal operations, HADR, and nonproliferation. These are elaborated in the ensuing section on recommendations.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Democracy and Human Rights

Given the limitations of regional civil societies discussed above, ASEAN-Japan cooperation should focus on the task of overcoming fragmentation. One effective measure that Japan and ASEAN could implement together would be the fostering of linkages among civic organizations that bridge ethnic, urban-rural, and religious divides, allowing the engagement and mobilization of local constituencies.

To help regional civil societies overcome their weaknesses, Japan and ASEAN should actively support the growth of CSO networks in Southeast Asia. For instance, Japan and ASEAN could set up a special fund providing

necessary financial assistance to those CSOs that contribute to the building of nationwide CSO networks and to the empowerment of local CSOs on the forefront of democracy building and the protection of human rights. Furthermore, Japan and ASEAN should consider the possibility of establishing CSO networks between them.

Also, Japan and ASEAN should work together to consolidate the rule of law among democratic ASEAN members. Considering the differences in political development among ASEAN member states, the successful implementation of the APSC project will depend on efforts taken by democratic ASEAN members, in particular Indonesia and the Philippines. Although the two countries have already established special government bodies to fight corruption, such as an anticorruption commission and the office of ombudsman, these institutions have often been plagued by dysfunctional judicial systems in which corruption also prevails.

Japan is one of a small number of countries possessing the necessary expertise for judicial reform in Indonesia and the Philippines. Japan could help both of these countries to improve their educational and training programs for law students, judges, prosecutors, and other legal practitioners in order to increase the professional skills of law practitioners while strengthening the ethical performance of their judicial systems. Such collaboration would contribute to the empowering of democratic ideals in both countries, thus helping to strengthen their ability to lead the APSC project.

Maritime Security

ASEAN and Japan both need to recognize that the maritime security environment of Asia Pacific is holistic, interconnected, and continuous from the Indian Ocean through the Malacca Strait, from the South China Sea to the East China Sea, and it affects the security and prosperity of the whole region. It is therefore in the interests of ASEAN and Japan to promote nationwide cooperation to help ensure the security and stability of the Indo-Pacific maritime belt.

On the basis of this recognition, ASEAN and Japan need to cooperate to strengthen the principles of and respect for international law, and especially the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), as the basic framework for the regional maritime order. ASEAN and Japan should work together to encourage the region to identify areas and issues particular to East Asia that UNCLOS has not been able to address, or has addressed but inadequately.

In order to strengthen the rules-based order at sea, Japan should fully support ASEAN's "Six-Point Principles on the South China Sea," and particularly ASEAN's efforts to conclude a Code of Conduct on the South China Sea. Japan and ASEAN should jointly conduct confidence-building activities in accordance with international law, and particularly with UNCLOS.

Japan should further extend assistance to ASEAN to help enhance ASEAN's capacity to maintain maritime order in waters under their jurisdiction, as this will contribute to the overall security and stability of the region. The assistance should continue to be in the form of hardware (such as patrol boats, surveillance equipment, telecommunication equipment, etc.) and software (awareness promotion and training, joint exercises, etc.). Japan might want to consider extending the use of its official development assistance to the region more for strategic uses, such as those noted above.

Japan and ASEAN should conduct more joint maritime operations involving the coast guards or defense forces, which could include port visits; joint patrols; search and rescue training, exercises, and operations; disaster relief; scientific research; joint military exercises; and training.

Nontraditional Security

In the area of HADR, ASEAN and Japan should sustain the operations of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre). Japan has contributed to the establishment of the AHA Centre, especially in providing technical support. While the AHA Centre is focused on addressing Southeast Asian needs, the framework of cooperation could potentially be extended to facilitate ASEAN-Japan mutual support in the event of contingencies. Also, ASEAN and Japan should build closer cooperation between the AHA Centre and the Japan-initiated Disaster Management Network in the implementation of the comprehensive disaster management cooperation plan developed by Japan. Special attention should be given to the proposal to use satellites for disaster management to develop early warning systems for remote, poor areas across the region. An institutionalized framework of integrating elements of the Japan SDF and emergency response agencies within the AHA structure would solidify Japan's continuing support for HADR in the region.

To combat transnational crime, ASEAN should consider establishing an ASEAN Coordinating Center on Combating Transnational Crime as a monitoring office for compliance by the ASEAN states with specific ASEAN-related commitments on transnational crime issues. On combating drug trafficking, this center would work with the Japanese government

to assess the results of the mid-term review of the ASEAN Work Plan on Combating Illicit Drug Production, Trafficking, and Use (2009–2015) and identify gaps that need to be addressed. Similarly, the center should monitor efforts toward the implementation of an ASEAN common course of action against trafficking in persons. The APSC commits ASEAN to the establishment and implementation of an ASEAN Convention on Trafficking in Persons (ACTIP). Japan should encourage ASEAN leaders to adopt a more institutionalized commitment to ACTIP.

Cooperation on counter-terrorism was given a great boost with the entry into force of the ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism (ACCT). More importantly, Malaysia's ratification ensures the participation and commitment of all member states of ASEAN in the ACCT. Building on that, ASEAN and Japan should consider the following recommendations that go beyond what is addressed in the Bali Declaration,

As with the issue of transnational crime, the weakness of ASEAN's counter-terrorism efforts has to do with the inadequacy of institutional mechanisms that enforce implementation and compliance. Consequently, counter-terrorism remains largely based on national-level responses. It is in this context that Japanese assistance in enhancing national-level capabilities, especially on information processing and real-time response to tactical intelligence, becomes important.

Japan should encourage and assist ASEAN in strengthening institutional cooperation. Increasingly, however, institutional cooperation should emphasize counter-ideological operations, even as law enforcement and effective police work remain mainstays of counter-terrorism efforts in the region. Japan and ASEAN should jointly create programs within the context of the ACCT that will be directed at countering extremist teachings and weaning away young people from the influence of extremist ideologies.

The issue of cybersecurity did not receive much attention in the Bali Declaration. While the proposed ASEAN Masterplan on Security Connectivity is still very much a sensitive issue, there is nonetheless a need to put together a document that outlines ASEAN concerns, goals, and strategies on cybersecurity. This would provide the basis for collective action and cooperation with Japan on this issue.

The absence of such a master plan or strategy paper notwithstanding, Japan could assist ASEAN in the implementation of capacity-building and technical-assistance measures. Also, it is important to harmonize laws among the countries of the region in combating cybercrimes. Japanese laws and experience could be important in helping shape laws and legal standards that would be the bases of these laws.

Peacekeeping and Preventive Diplomacy

Both ASEAN and Japan have participated actively in peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and preventive diplomacy. Therefore, there is considerable potential for ASEAN and Japan to become more involved in cooperative efforts on peacebuilding, providing humanitarian and technical assistance in post-conflict situations, as well as in the practice of preventive diplomacy.

ASEAN and Japan should cooperate to build the peacekeeping capacity of ASEAN member states via efforts such as ASEAN's move to create an ASEAN Peacekeeping Centres Network. By anchoring these efforts within a framework set by ASEAN collectively and within principles of peace and cooperation, ASEAN can assist Japan by ensuring that growing efforts in this area are directed toward peace.

Both ASEAN and Japan should invest more in peacebuilding initiatives, providing not only troops or police officers, but also sharing technology and training to help create the conditions for long-term stability. Given their wealth of experience, ASEAN and Japan are well placed to help countries or territories in the region create civic institutions, construct key physical infrastructure, and build their human resources.

ASEAN and Japan should consider building greater capacity for preventive diplomacy, be it at the bilateral, multilateral, or regional level. In addition to hosting forums like the ARF and potentially providing a platform for such diplomacy, there is also a need for the foreign ministries of ASEAN countries and Japan to train and equip diplomats to play the role of envoys and mediators.

Defense Cooperation

To optimize resources and to foster intraregional defense industry cooperation, the ASEAN Defense Ministerial Meeting in May 2011 established the ASEAN Defense Industry Collaboration (ADIC). In light of the Japanese cabinet decision in December 2011 to lift the arms export and joint development ban, Japan and ASEAN could explore a strategic partnership for collaboration within the ADIC framework.

The waterways between the Indian and Pacific Oceans are some of the world's most vital and busiest. The possibility of a collision or an incident at sea cannot be discounted and merits consideration and planning for regional cooperation. The armed forces—particularly the navies—are often the first responders to such contingencies. Indeed the navy is positioned to play an instrumental role in search and rescue operations. Submarine

search and rescue operations are highly technical and sophisticated and not many countries that operate submarines have such capabilities. Japan, which operates the largest submarine fleet in East Asia and has the most experience in sub-surface operations, could take the lead in establishing an ASEAN-Japan framework for sub-surface search and rescue operations.

Japan has made immense contributions to curtailing the problem of piracy in the Strait of Malacca. While threats in those waters are contained and well managed under the framework established by the three littoral states—Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore—Japan and ASEAN shipping interests face a long-standing and sustained threat in the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. At present, Japan, Malaysia, and Singapore deploy naval assets in support of anti-piracy efforts off the coast of Somalia. While Singapore is a party to the multinational efforts of the Combined Task Force 151, Japan and Malaysia have opted for an independent mode of operation. Combining the Japanese and Malaysian resources would optimize their limited resources while providing the additional gain of enhancing interoperability and familiarization between the two navies. If it comes to fruition, the cooperation would be the first “live” out-of-area defense cooperation between Japan and an ASEAN country. Thus, Japan should explore opportunities to partner with the relevant ASEAN states to patrol the waters in the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean.

The protection of exclusive economic zones (EEZ) is a top priority for littoral states, and the coast guard is the frontline agency for building capacity for the coastal operations necessary to safeguard and enforce rights within the EEZs. Japan has taken the lead in engaging regional coast guards through the establishment of the Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting in 2004. In addition, it has contributed material and capacity-building resources to ASEAN member states. Japan played an important role in the establishment of the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency, and most recently it extended soft loans to the Philippine government to purchase 10 patrol boats. Japan’s continuing support for efforts to boost the capacity and strength of the ASEAN coast guards is a positive contribution toward regional peace and security.

Japan has long been at the vanguard of nonproliferation efforts and could contribute toward the implementation and consolidation of the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ). Signed in 1995 but only coming into effect in 2001, when the last ASEAN member state (the Philippines) ratified the treaty, the SEANWFZ seeks to establish a region that is free of nuclear weapons. The ASEAN states have pledged not to possess, develop, or “have control over” nuclear weapons, which is akin to Japan’s Three Non-Nuclear Principles. Japan could also assist and

collaborate with ASEAN to set up mechanisms to manage and provide oversight capabilities to guard against possible proliferation.



In sum, while ASEAN-Japan cooperation in the promotion of the APSC has not advanced as far as it has in the domains of economic or socio-cultural community building in Southeast Asia, this conversely means that the opportunities and potential for expanded cooperation are perhaps greatest in this area. Indeed, the time is now ripe for ASEAN and Japan to act given the regional and global trends of deepening democratization and globalization, which point to the increasing importance of a rules-based regional order for democracy, peace, and stability.

The lack of substantial political-security cooperation between ASEAN and Japan in the past was partly—but quite importantly—due to the self-imposed restrictions on the part of Japan that stem from its past history of military aggression and its ensuing postwar pacifism. Japan, however, has now succeeded in convincing many ASEAN countries that internationalist pacifism continues to inform Japanese engagement with ASEAN. Moreover, the nature of the political-security cooperation needed in the years ahead is basically *soft* cooperation, the kind that is essential to the further strengthening of the community-building efforts of ASEAN. Consequently, Japan's hesitation to engage in this field is no longer necessary. As recommended in this report, it should examine a variety of avenues, including the potential expanded role of the SDF, to actively engage in political-security cooperation with ASEAN.