

# Toward East Asian Community Building

New Challenges of Regional Cooperation and Partnership



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## Foreword

This booklet contains the summary of presentations and subsequent discussions at the 9th annual forum of the Asia Pacific Agenda Project (APAP), which was convened in Tokyo on March 19–21, 2004. The APAP, an evolving consortium of policy research institutions in Asia Pacific, was first launched in 1996 with major funding from Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other sources for the purpose of building a network of policy research institutions, intellectual leaders, and policy thinkers in Asia Pacific in order to strengthen the network and working relationships.

This year the APAP selected the issue of regional community building in East Asia as the theme of the conference. The idea of an East Asia community has begun to attract official as well as intellectual attention as a possible third arm in today's international relations. We are particularly interested in the intellectual underpinnings that should assist and facilitate this community building, in the form of the network of intellectual leaders who share the same aspirations, sense of values, and sense of common challenges. We were fortunate to be able to organize two multilateral study teams composed of top minds in the region, and these teams approached this issue of East Asian community building from different angles prior to the Tokyo Forum.

One approach was a joint research and dialogue project under the theme of the ASEAN-Japan relationship and its implications for East Asian community building, conducted by senior intellectual leaders in the region. The final phase of this project coincided with the period leading up to the Bali Summit of the ASEAN leaders in September 2003 and the special ASEAN-Japan Summit Meeting in December 2003. We were able to present to these occasions the essence of this project's findings as well as recommendations in the form of a book titled *ASEAN-Japan Cooperation: A Foundation for East Asian Community*.

Prior to this ASEAN-Japan project, another project under the title of "Rise of China—Its Implications for East Asia Community Building" was

launched by APAP under the guidance of Professors Kokubun Ryosei and Wang Jisi. This joint intellectual inquiry into one of the most critical issues presently facing the region was conducted by some 15 East Asian scholars, including four emerging intellectuals from China. Results of this study were compiled in *The Rise of China and a Changing East Asian Order* that was published just prior to the Tokyo Forum.

These two books provided a background for this year's conference. Additionally, the APAP secretariat prepared the *Dialogue and Research Monitor: Towards Community Building in East Asia*, a compilation of data on policy research and dialogue projects related to both traditional and non-traditional security and community building undertaken in East Asia during 2003. It is hoped this publication will help to identify major actors in developing the intellectual underpinnings for community building.

Participants of the Tokyo Forum also benefited from a very comprehensive overview presentation by Tanaka Hitoshi, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Japan, at the outset of the Forum. His emphasis on the importance of functional approaches to community building became an undercurrent throughout the forum. Mr. Tanaka also encouraged forum participants to present a vision for East Asian community building, a role expected of intellectual leaders and policy analysts in this region. Forum participants responded to this challenge by publishing, at the end of the conference, the *APAP Tokyo Forum Statement: Towards East Asian Community Building*.

Thanks to these substantive inputs as well as very active participation by all the attendees, the Tokyo Forum became a stage for vigorous exchanges of views representing diverse perspectives. It is our strong hope that this booklet can convey even a fraction of the intellectual stimulation enjoyed by the participants. On behalf of the APAP Steering Committee, I wish to take this opportunity to express our deepest gratitude to all the presenters and participants as well as for the generous funding provided by the Japanese government, without which the conference could not have been convened.

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