

Synopsis of Presentations and Discussions

SESSION 1.

GOOD GOVERNANCE: DOES AN ASIAN MODEL EXIST?

Presentation

Anggito Abimanyu, Gadjah Mada University, Indonesia, started off the first session of the conference with his paper entitled "Challenge toward Good Governance and Anti-Corruption: The Case of Indonesia." Addressing the provocative question contained in the opening session's name, Abimanyu broke down the term *good governance* into such defining aspects as participation, consensus building, the rule of law, transparency, and accountability, as well as the effective and equitable achievement of objectives. Further, he specified four factors delimiting good governance: economic, political, administrative, and legal.

Given that both the structure and the stability of a nation's political system affect the quality of governance, it is natural that Asian countries' respective governance systems vary widely in quality. As well, these governance systems have been arrived at through different processes. For example, some have evolved toward good governance via a change in political regime, as in India, South Korea, and Thailand, while others have attained a federal structure, as in Malaysia. Still other governance systems have evolved out of a dominant ruling party system, as in China, Vietnam, and Indonesia. On this point generally, Abimanyu concluded that good governance is a "conceptual component of a state striving toward greater democracy."

According to Abimanyu, the current political and economic crises that have converged in Indonesia testify to the challenges facing many Asian nations today in creating good governance. In particular, corruption, cronyism, lack of transparency, and abuse of power are important factors

that have prevented good governance from taking hold thus far in Indonesia. Ideally, two distinct spheres of governance—political and economic—coexist in each country. In Indonesia, however, this distinction is absent as a result of the overlap and commingling of the government and business sectors. Noting that a similar situation exists in many other Asian countries, Abimanyu explained that the problem is exacerbated in Indonesia by the dominant influence of the military on both government and business.

The chief factor engendering poor governance in Indonesia is widespread corruption resulting from the abuse of power, Abimanyu asserted. It is difficult to determine whether or not this situation is improving, as there has been no political assessment of the impact of such corruption. Institutional corruption, in particular, is a big problem: kickbacks, slush funds, and official fraud via informal tax practices are common features of governance in Indonesia. This type of corruption reinforces the business-government overlap referred to above.

Finally, Abimanyu noted that it is difficult to assert that an Asian model of good governance exists, owing to the various political structures and different degrees of political stability in the region. A more practical question to consider regarding an Asian model, he suggested, is whether or not zero-corruption governance is possible. Positing that good governance in Asia does not necessarily entail zero corruption (and remarking in an aside that Singapore probably comes closest to this ideal), Abimanyu argued that an Asian model of good governance must comprise legitimacy, equitable legal redress, improved monitoring, freedom of the media, and fiscal restructuring and institutional reform programs. Although such a model does not guarantee zero-corruption governance, it should adequately facilitate the management of existing and recurring corruption.

Comments

Tanaka Akihiko, professor at the Institute of Oriental Culture, University of Tokyo, began his comments by welcoming Abimanyu's presentation as a good starting point for comparing the processes of governance in Asia. Tanaka reiterated the difficulty of defining good governance and additionally noted the near impossibility of translating the term into Japanese and some of the other Asian languages. Although this lack of an agreed-upon definition causes many in Asia to question the appropriateness of

using the term, good governance is nonetheless often applied to governance systems at the global, state, and corporate levels. The use of the term *good governance* at the global level is particularly controversial, Tanaka noted, as this implies to some the establishment of a global government.

When used at the state level, Tanaka continued, good governance is often a euphemism for democratization and thus disguises a conscious attempt to make democratization seem inevitable and necessary. Here, he noted that Western liberal democracies have often used the term as a polite way of urging undemocratic governments to implement democratic reforms. Citing the United Nations Development Program's (UNDP's) suggested ten characteristics of good governance—i.e., participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity, effectiveness, efficiency, accountability, and strategic vision—which Abimanyu referred to in his paper, Tanaka questioned the validity of using the term good governance if liberal democracy is in fact the intended meaning.

Next, Tanaka noted that Confucianism remains the predominant version of good governance in Asia. Although not necessarily democratic, the Confucian model does prescribe that leaders carry out their duties in a virtuous manner. Unfortunately, Asian leaders oftentimes do not behave in accordance with the Confucian model. To effectively reduce corruption, then, Asian countries may need to adopt a more Western system of checks and balances, Tanaka suggested, although this raises the difficult issue of determining which checks and balances are needed. Transparent rules that apply equally to everyone and in every situation are the ideal, but for every rule there are likely to be exceptions. Tanaka concluded with the recommendation that further research be carried out to determine which checks and balances are actually useful in preventing corruption.

Jusuf Wanandi, chairman of the Supervisory Board of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Indonesia, commented next. Prefacing his remarks with a statement of concern that Asia has grown somewhat complacent as a result of the recent recoveries in its economies and consequently lost a sense of urgency regarding further necessary reforms, Wanandi urged participants to be mindful of the fundamental changes that still need to be made to the Asian model of private- and public-sector governance.

Regarding an Asian model of governance, Wanandi made three points. First, he suggested that history be examined in order to create a better future. In this regard, he argued that the traditional Asian system of Confucianism, which is based more on relationships than on rules and

institutions, is no longer adequate in today's quickly changing socio-economic context. Second, he noted the need for institutionalized flexibility in governance systems, irregardless of whether or not such flexibility be called democracy. For example, to prevent corruption and the abuse of power the people of a nation must be able to throw their leaders out if they are not doing a good job. Third, Wanandi asserted that Asian nations need to critically examine the fast economic growth of the past few decades, which has spawned bad corporate governance and widened inequalities in wealth distribution. Accordingly, he suggested that Asian nations work toward achieving balanced and sustainable economic growth and development that is fairly distributed throughout all levels of society.

Importantly, Wanandi dismissed the notion of an Asian model of good governance as being beside the point. Instead, he emphasized those fundamental elements of good governance that transcend history and cultures, including common sense, transparency, government oversight, political system flexibility, equity-based justice, a strong rule of law, and economic policies targeting sustainable development. Until Asia puts these fundamental elements of good governance in place, it cannot build a better system capable of averting future crises.

Discussion

During the discussion, no clear consensus emerged regarding the existence of a uniquely Asian model of good governance. Instead, discussion mostly revolved around three questions concerning good governance generally: (1) How should public-sector governance interact with private-sector, or civil society, governance? (2) Should a definition of good governance focus on the governance process or on its product? and (3) Should a model of good governance espouse Asian values or universal values of governance, or a combination of both?

Regarding the question of public-sector and private-sector, or civil society, governance, a South Korean participant offered his understanding of the meaning of good governance by considering its two components separately. First, he defined *good* as both effectiveness, especially in dealing with urgent problems, and legitimacy. Next, he described *governance* as comprising the three key sectors of society: government, business, and civil society. To define *good governance*, then, he applied his definition of good to all three of these areas of governance. Good government alone is

not enough to attain good governance; it must also be supported by good business and good society. Good governance, he concluded, is necessary to ensure survival in a globalized world. By corollary, if globalization is inevitable then Asian nations are obligated to reform to restore competitiveness and increase flexibility. A Thai participant echoed these thoughts by describing good governance as the responsibility not only of government but also of companies, civil society organizations, and citizens. Also, he added that it is easier to define bad governance than to define good governance.

A Singaporean participant suggested that government leadership with the political will to minimize corruption is the key to curtailing this problem on both the governmental and corporate sides of the equation. Agreeing with the need for political will, an Indonesian participant added that good governance is a combined effort involving both the state and civil society and, furthermore, includes such key elements as an independent media able to articulate problems and solutions, as well as effectively mobilized grass-roots movements. Asserting that a satisfactory resolution of the governance question is important to ensure human security in the wake of the Asian financial crisis, the same Indonesian participant concluded by urging the group to measure the Asian recovery not only in terms of economic indicators but also in terms of social and political indicators.

Regarding the question of whether a definition of good governance should focus on process or on product, a British participant urged the group to rethink the approach taken up to that point in the discussion. He argued that the discussion was overemphasizing the inputs of governance—the process—in particular accountability and transparency, and largely overlooking the outputs of governance—the product. In support of this point, he cited countries with bad governance in terms of transparency and accountability, but whose societies benefit from the rising prosperity, improved access to health care, growing labor opportunities, and enhanced security that such governance sometimes produces. Such cases, he concluded, should be considered in any comprehensive discussion of good governance.

A Thai participant offered further support for the product-focused approach by positing that good governance is not just a means, but rather a means to an end. The end, or goal, of governance is to assure the quality of life of citizens, and the means to achieving this and other universal objectives differ among countries. Depending on a country's history and cultural inheritance, its governance processes will differ. There is no perfect

model out there, which is why we must accept a range of characteristics in a model of good governance.

Regarding the question of adopting Asian values as opposed to universal values of governance in a model of good governance, a Japanese participant expressed his agreement with Wanandi's conclusion that there is no Asian model of governance *per se*. Still, he argued strongly for an Asian contribution to the model of good governance, insisting that every governance system contains both good and bad elements and that Asian countries therefore must glean the essentially good elements from the Asian system and add them to a definition of good governance. Indeed, this theme of combining the best values of governance and preserving the strengths of each system was highlighted in the conference's keynote speech, delivered by Nobel laureate Amartya K. Sen.

Next, a Singaporean participant seconded the proposal that Asian values be included among the defining characteristics of good governance. Objecting to the notion that good governance is necessarily synonymous with democracy, he argued that democracies can be just as flawed as some Asian forms of government. Moreover, instead of accepting wholesale the UNDP's ten characteristics of good governance mentioned by Abimanyu in his presentation, the Singaporean participant recommended infusing those Western liberal democratic values with distinctly Asian values. To this end, he offered his own list of ten characteristics of good governance for Asia: accountability to the people through regular, free, and fair elections; competence; noncorrupt behavior; the rule of law and an effective judiciary; the humane treatment of citizens; the provision of housing, health care, and educational facilities, and the presence of social harmony and a clean environment; the growth of civil society; responsible world citizens; the office of ombudsman; and transparency. In response, some participants argued that this list was really no different than that of the UNDP.

An Indonesian participant argued that good governance should be defined as the achievement of objectives without resorting to political repression and corruption. Further, he asserted that the question regarding the existence of an Asian model of good governance could be substituted with a question regarding zero corruption, suggesting that a useful categorization of corruption levels in Asia might be minimal, maximal, and optimal corruption. If zero-corruption governance is not an option in Asia, then the region should aim to manage its level of corruption, as suggested by Abimanyu in his presentation.

Another Singaporean participant urged the group to move beyond the Asian-Western dichotomy when considering good governance. To this he added that the process of good governance has to be defined in some relation to its product, and that it must accommodate an increased role for both business and nongovernmental organizations. He concluded that good governance evolves both from internal rules of conduct determined by culture and from external rules of conduct defined by laws and regulations. Following up on this last point, a Japanese participant emphasized that governance necessarily reflects the social arrangements of each country and, moreover, is linked to each nation's own culture, religions, history, and so on. Accordingly, Japan cannot just mimic the United States, for example, but instead must encourage an indigenous social awareness among its people. Governance in any given context cannot be truly good unless it fully incorporates all the defining characteristics of that context.

SESSION 2.

SOCIAL SAFETY NETS: HOW DESIRABLE? HOW FEASIBLE?

Presentation

Mukul G. Asher, associate professor of economics at the National University of Singapore, began session two with a presentation of his paper entitled "Social Safety Nets in East Asia: How Desirable? How Feasible?" After defining the factors that contributed to East Asia's modern social development, Asher then described the impact of the recent Asian economic crisis on this development. Related to this, he noted that the human suffering resulting from the crisis generally has inspired East Asian nations to reexamine the status of their respective social safety nets and to reconfirm that these safety nets can actually fulfill the objectives for which they were designed. Cautioning that countries must design and implement social safety nets that adequately protect individuals against an "abrupt and sharp fall in living standards in the event of unemployment, disability, sickness, incapacitation, or retirement," Asher in this regard recommended that East Asian nations consider three factors: (1) the current

situation and structures of social safety systems within each of the region's nations, (2) the best tools for implementing adequate social safety nets, and (3) general assumptions in the region underlying the provision of social safety.

Although East Asia has coped with the short-term social impact of the Asian crisis much more adroitly than was feared it would at the height of the crisis, Asher argued that reforms to formal social security arrangements remain essential if the goal is a return to sustained economic growth, particularly in light of several social factors typically inherent to economic growth and modernization. Among these factors, Asher stressed the likelihood of further erosion in informal community and family support systems consequential to rising individualism and a widening of lifestyle options. As well, the relative rise in elderly populations resulting from increasing longevity and declining birthrates throughout Asia portends an expansion in social safety costs. Given these simultaneous trends, meeting these higher social safety costs will increasingly be the responsibility of governments. Here, Asher noted that the mere existence of secure social safety nets will substantially reduce much of the anxiety about the future currently gripping many in the region.

Social safety nets are not only desirable but also feasible, Asher maintained. Their realization implies a significant amount of work, however, because in many Asian nations existing systems that facilitate corruption must be eliminated before those consonant with good governance can be put in place. Moreover, the current environment of fiscal constraint on and weakening efficacy of governments is not conducive to the success of ambitious initiatives. Consequently, effective reform and implementation will require an extraordinary assertion of political will and an unusual concentration of government capacity. To support social safety net reform, public services in general will need to be made increasingly efficient and focused. Also, strict controls safeguarding against the illicit disbursement of funds will have to be put in place and enforced. Social safety net feasibility, Asher indicated, therefore depends on broader reforms in areas such as the financial sector, labor markets, civil service, and corporate governance.

Admittedly, carrying out these reforms represents a significant challenge to governments and, more specifically, to their social safety systems. Be that as it may, Asher concluded insistently, reforms are indispensable in Asian nations wanting to sustainably provide their respective populations with greater financial security and at the same time maintain international competitiveness.

Comments

Le Dang Doanh, president of the Central Institute for Economic Management, Vietnam, started off his comments by concurring with Asher's assertion that social safety nets are essential to guaranteeing the general welfare of Asia's populations. The operative question, then, is what form these social safety nets should take. Maintaining that the overly generous former Soviet model robbed people of the incentive to work, while the Swedish model is far too costly to sustain, Le suggested that Asian nations should develop social security nets that both provide adequately for people and simultaneously offer enough incentive to sustain economic growth. He also noted the importance of ensuring an efficient allocation of resources, adequate investment in rural areas, and equitable distribution to women and minorities. In addition, Le recommended actively employing the resources of civil society groups, including nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), to meet the needs of those falling through governmental social safety nets. This, he reasoned, will allow governments to spend less on social security yet guarantee comprehensive welfare protection.

Komachi Kyoji, director of the General Affairs Department of the Japan International Cooperation Agency, offered his comments next. Also in agreement with Asher's analysis, Komachi called on Asian nations to remain ever-mindful of the continued suffering in the region, despite the fact that dire predictions of massive damage to human security and welfare due to the crisis did not materialize. Accordingly, he urged that Asian nations put in place adequate social safety nets both to assist those in immediate need and to provide for those finding themselves in need in the future.

Next, Komachi reminded the group that the international donor community has been simultaneously encouraging macroeconomic restructuring and attempting to provide for social safety nets in the wake of the Asian crisis. While such efforts have been helpful, the sheer scope of the crisis has highlighted the urgent need to muster broad-based, multisectoral participation in providing social safety nets, including that of international agencies, national governments, businesses, and civil society groups. To this end, Komachi recommended that civil society leaders and government officials convene to discuss about and determine appropriate divisions of labor among the various participants, in particular national and local governments, businesses, and civil society organizations. Considering the likely future erosion of informal social safety systems traditionally

provided by families and communities in Asia, this type of dialogue between government representatives and civil society leaders is particularly important inasmuch as it can help determine the most effective combination of formally administered government social safety nets and informal community and family support systems. Noting that the provision of social safety is ultimately the government's responsibility, Komachi concluded with the point that only in tandem with informal support systems and nonofficial entities can a government ensure the social security of an entire population.

Discussion

Discussion in session two produced only a weak consensus on the desirability of social safety nets and revealed discordant views on the definition, nature, and scope of such support systems. Broadly, discussion revolved around four questions: (1) Should the administration and provision of social safety be formal, or should it be informal? (2) Can social safety nets offer limited assistance without engendering long-term dependence? (3) Should social safety nets focus on immediate crisis management, or should they aim to provide continuous assistance? and (4) Should new money be devoted to alleviating immediate pains, or should it be allocated to comprehensively improving social safety systems?

Regarding the question of formal or informal safety net administration and provision, several participants suggested that each country choose the model that fits its existing system. An American participant pointed out that although the discussion had tended toward favoring formal government programs, most Asians today actually depend less on government systems than they do on informal systems of security such as mosques, churches, communities, and family. Considering that many nations in the region already suffer from overburdened public systems, he recommended that the third sector, including NGOs and other civil society organizations, be given greater formal responsibility. To this end, he suggested that governments and private-sector donors focus on how to involve the third sector in efforts to provide social safety nets.

A South Korean participant next stated that fundamental elements of the Asian model, including a strong work ethic and community spirit, helped South Korea attain its recent economic recovery. Commenting more generally that the relative absence of formal social safety nets has

promoted economic growth and dynamism in Asia, he then cautioned against implementing such support systems in the belief that they reduce people's incentive to work. Noting that informal support mechanisms have always been what keeps things together during times of crisis in Asia, a participant from the Philippines stressed the need to preserve traditional community and other informal systems.

A Singaporean participant pointed out that whereas most Asians are not supported by formal social safety nets, citizens of Western nations typically have access to an official welfare system of some sort. He then offered up the question of whether or not the Western welfare model, based on one generation saving for the next, is more sustainable than the Asian model, based on one saving for oneself. Next, a Vietnamese participant voiced his support for a combination of formal and informal social safety nets, or the collaboration among government and civil society organizations, as described by Komachi. The need for such a dual approach is especially urgent, he argued, especially considering the rapidity of globalization and its potential impact on employment stability in Asia, as well as the recent Asian financial crisis. In response, the Singaporean participant cautioned that while informal support systems and NGOs, for example, might correctly be expected to provide complementary social safety nets, it was unrealistic to expect such systems alone to provide adequate social security.

Regarding the question of whether social safety nets can provide limited assistance without engendering long-term dependence, an Indonesian participant made the point that Asians have only recently begun to talk about social safety nets and social security systems. From the outset, therefore, he recommended that social safety nets be defined more carefully and more broadly, especially in the wake of the crisis. Specifically, he suggested the need for a social safety system able to function more like a trampoline than a net—a system that helps people to bounce back after they fall.

Discussion then turned to the question of whether social safety systems should focus on immediate crisis management (short-term needs) or on continuous assistance (long-term needs). A Japanese participant stated that Asian nations need to incorporate flexibility into social safety nets to maintain their effectiveness in times of crisis. During an economic crisis, social safety net levels are fiercely debated; conversely, once an economy has recovered, further debate takes place over maintaining the social safety net. A Chinese participant recommended a comprehensive,

income-indexed social safety net as opposed to subsidies alone. Noting the complexity of the network of social safety systems in developing countries, he stressed the need for Asia to focus on the crisis right now, in addition to building long-term programs.

Here, the discussion finally turned to the question of how to spend new money: on alleviating immediate pains, or on comprehensively improving the entire social safety system. Asher, the presenter for the session, stressed that the operative question in Asia is not about having or not having social safety systems—each country in East Asia has elaborate social safety net laws—but rather it is about how to make social safety systems work better. In this sense, Asher argued that it is essential for Asian nations to set up systems that will endure for 60 to 80 years. Based on the assumption that inequalities will increase as globalization progresses, Asher concluded with a warning that the social cohesion necessary for national growth and increased productivity will be unattainable in Asia if these increasingly huge inequalities are not addressed.

SESSION 3. HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT: WHERE TO INVEST FOR THE FUTURE

Presentation

Somkiat Tangkitvanich, a research specialist at the Thailand Development Research Institute, started off the third session by presenting his paper on investment in human resource development for the future. The paper presentation focused on information and communications technology (ICT) and its implications for Asian nations at the dawn of the 21st century as an instructive case of human resource development in the region for the future.

Tangkitvanich made three broad recommendations regarding near-term human resource development. First, he recommended that Asian governments introduce more flexibility into their labor markets. In keeping with the extremely rapid pace of change in the global economy as evidenced

by the ICT revolution, Asian nations should facilitate the movement of workers from outmoded industries to new growth fields by providing pension mobility, retraining, and reeducation.

Second, Tangkitvanich stressed the need for educational reform in Asian nations. Because the new growth industries, such as ICT, require a workforce equipped with strong information-processing skills as opposed to fact-gathering skills, school curriculums must increasingly emphasize creativity, innovation, and reasoning ability. Only with this type of educational training, he asserted, will future generations be able to keep abreast of changes accompanying continued globalization.

Third, Tangkitvanich proposed that Asian nations provide all citizens with increased access to and training in the basic tools of globalization, specifically computers, the Internet, and high-tech services. Access to and proficiency in new technology can only enhance the ability of Asian businesses and individuals to compete in worldwide markets, regardless of industry or field of expertise. Rounding out his third recommendation, Tangkitvanich proposed that businesses, governments, and civil society organizations together determine optimal cost-sharing strategies for ensuring adequate access to technology, training, and high-tech services for the underprivileged members of society.

Comments

Dantes B. Canlas, the Enrique Virata Professor of Economics at the University of the Philippines, began his comments by praising the ICT example's usefulness in framing key issues relating to human resource development in the region. In particular, he noted three key issues that governments and societies need to address in training citizens. First, nations must provide basic education and training opportunities to their citizens. This is especially important in Asia, where a comparatively large portion of the population currently lives below the poverty line. Here, Canlas indicated that now is the time to lay foundations of solid training and education that will enable Asians to broadly participate in the economic trends and developments of the 21st century.

Second, Canlas highlighted the necessity of pinpointing and guaranteeing a continuous flow of financial resources to support such training and education. This issue is particularly relevant now, in the wake of the financial crisis, because many nations remain fiscally constrained.

Therefore, he argued, how nations allocate the financial burden of providing better education, improved access to technology, and increased training opportunities is an important issue to be mutually resolved by governments and businesses.

Third, Canlas called for a strengthened correlation between training and education resource allocations and stated national goals. While acknowledging the difficulty of clearly defining this link, he nevertheless insisted on its importance for successful human resource development in the future.

Mohamed Ariff, executive director of the Malaysian Institute of Economic Research, started off his comments by reiterating the need to invest in human capital to ensure Asia's active participation in the global economy and, like the two previous speakers, stressed the need for better education and training opportunities. In addition, he urged Asian nations to embrace ICT by simultaneously reforming their institutions and their worldviews.

Ariff noted that ICT has revolutionized the way that people do business, not necessarily by making the world smaller but by exposing people to endless possibilities. Concepts of competitive advantage, market share, labor mobility, and other factors are all evolving in line with reforms to business conduct dictated by technological change. Although such change may lead to unemployment and other negative results in the short term, in the long term it will yield many benefits. Ariff's characterization of change as engendering both good and bad results echoed a theme running through Professor Sen's keynote speech for the conference. Asserting that both positive and negative aspects exist in each governing model, Professor Sen urged nations to learn to work together by combining the best, rather than merely condemning the worst, elements of the various governing models.

Discussion

Discussion during session three revealed general agreement on the usefulness of viewing human resource development through the lens of ICT, with the qualification that ICT is only one of several target areas for investment necessary to ensure Asia's future. Discussion centered on three key considerations for the development of human resources in the region: (1) necessary skills, (2) type of education to be provided, and (3) equitable access to education and resources.

Regarding necessary skills, a South Korean participant argued that the Asian financial crisis illustrates the need to prioritize creativity and productivity for the region's postcrisis growth, which will require that most Asian nations effect a paradigm shift in education, culture, and market structure. In response, Tangkitvanich expressed full agreement with the need for a paradigm shift, adding that in addition to shifting from the old to a new way of thinking students will still have to master traditional knowledge and methods. Reiterating the importance of moving away from a facts-based education and toward one emphasizing processes, he again cited ICT-type work skills as representative of those needed in the future in a vast range of career fields, from health care and education to automotive production.

A Chinese participant suggested that governments need to provide training and resources at both the popular and institutional levels, thereby enabling individuals and businesses to develop the skills required to compete in the new global economy. While basically agreeing with this comment, a Japanese participant warned against promoting the belief among individuals and enterprises that they can depend entirely and indefinitely on government assistance, especially given that governments cannot sustainably offer such help. Accordingly, he argued that Asians must become more self-dependent and creative, and to this end suggested that government-assisted human resource development programs focus on instilling such traits as independence, initiative, and self-discipline.

Next, a participant from the Philippines stressed the benefits to be gained from taking a long-term perspective when examining the issue of human resource training in Asia, particularly if the region's goal is to ensure sustainable development well into the future. To meet the demands of tomorrow, this participant continued, Asian governments have to offer more than just high-tech training. In addition, they must also promote humanistic values and the notion of world citizenship, especially if the region is serious about building a more integrated community. A British participant agreed, adding that fields other than ICT, such as biotechnology and health care, are also essential to the development of the region.

The discussion then touched upon the type of education that the region's nations ought to provide students. Citing the fact that the United States has some 70 research universities while Asia has only about ten, a South Korean participant recommended the creation of more research universities in the region. This, he maintained, would have the effect of increasing Asian university graduates' competitiveness. Noting that many

activities need to be carried out on national levels to facilitate advanced education and information sharing, this participant recommended that such activities also be pursued on the regional level. Viewing the issue from a different perspective, a Japanese participant urged Asian nations to focus more on enhancing the primary education curriculum. For example, he suggested greater offerings in art, music, information sciences, and other areas that will foster the development of new ideas and skills essential for future generations to succeed in a globalized world.

Finally, the discussion turned to the question of equitable access to education and resources. Citing the fact that the primary language used on the Internet is English, a Japanese participant expressed concern that this might prevent many in Asia from effectively accessing the basic tools of the 21st century. An American agreed, but added a fine-tuning qualification. Positing that understanding and adapting to ICT, and to high technology in general, is simply a question of gaining access to it, he maintained that the educated elite in Asia operate under conditions that are identical to conditions in Western countries. More to the point, it is the Asian poor who are being denied access to basic tools. He concluded with the suggestion that Asian nations examine how to stem the massive brain drain weakening the region.

A Japanese participant stressed the need for Asian nations to guarantee women greater access to education and resources, as well as to provide access to retraining and reeducation resources for those who lose their jobs. Agreeing with this sentiment, and in response to the previous American participant's comments, a South Korean participant proposed that conference participants devise systems for providing the underprivileged in their respective nations with access to used computer hardware and software. Tangkitvanich concluded the session by observing that ICT represents a tremendous wealth-enhancing opportunity for Asian nations and that it therefore ought to feature prominently in discussions of human resource development policy for the future. Citing studies suggesting that the creation of one software industry job ultimately results in the creation of four or five additional jobs in other parts of the economy, he urged Asian nations and Asian companies to join this revolution for the greater prosperity of the whole region.

SESSION 4.
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ECONOMIC NEEDS:
MAINTAINING A BALANCE

Presentation

Ichikawa Hiroya, professor of economics at Sophia University, Japan, began session four with a presentation on economic development and environmental protection. In discussing the origins of the concept of sustainable development, Ichikawa cited a passage from the 1987 Bruntland's Report that describes sustainable development as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." Defined as such, sustainable development implies an obligation to preserve the environment while simultaneously pursuing economic development.

To illustrate the challenges involved in balancing environmental and economic interests, Ichikawa referred to the current debate on global warming surrounding the three mechanisms for managing environmental degradation promoted at the third Conference of Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, or COP3, held in Kyoto in December 1997. These three mechanisms—emissions credit trading, international transfers of emissions reductions, and clean-development mechanisms—adopted at Kyoto were intended to encourage the developed nations to establish higher reduction targets for greenhouse gas emissions. However, concrete analyses of the technical and environmental aspects of these mechanisms were not carried out, which one might cynically, and not necessarily incorrectly, view as strategic inaction on the part of the developed nations in order to load the balance in favor of their interests in further industrial development and against reductions of greenhouse emissions. Be that as it may, Ichikawa continued, the practical result is that various nations and industries have implemented environmental protection measures which perhaps are less effective in preventing global warming than was originally believed.

Based on current technology, emissions credit trading and other newly implemented mechanisms will neither reduce nor stabilize atmospheric carbon dioxide levels, Ichikawa argued. Consequently, nations and industries must work together to develop new technology that will contribute

to the attainment of sustainable development. Here, he cited the Japanese government's "green technology" and "green aid" policies as examples of this type of effort. Through its green technology policy, Japan has made a commitment to develop innovative energy- and environment-related technologies. Through its green aid policy, designed to assist developing countries, Japan will transfer technologies related to energy conservation and alternative energy sources, work to ensure clean water and hygienic sewerage systems, and support the preservation of biodiversity.

In an effort to stimulate discussion regarding the appropriate balance between economic development and environmental protection, Ichikawa provided a detailed and provocative analysis of the damage resulting from global warming, as well as the motivations of those responsible and the responses of the victims, according to conventional welfare economics. This exercise neatly demonstrated how the assumptions and theories of conventional welfare economics either categorically exclude or cannot adequately explain some of the most important issues raised by global warming, including "inequality in income distribution, well-being, hunger, malnutrition, gender inequality, and indeed all aspects of liberty, freedom, and the fulfillment of human potential." Here, Ichikawa noted that these issues feature prominently in the works of Professor Sen.

Ichikawa concluded by pointing out that the environment-versus-economy debate centers overwhelmingly on equitability issues, and that the outcome depends largely on who gets a place at the discussion table. Decisions and consequent activities that contribute to environmental degradation affect the planet's entire population and future generations. Ironic, then, is the fact that a very small group of actors, which is by no means proportionally representative of the population at large, decides and enforces the balance between economic development and environmental protection.

Comments

Carolina G. Hernandez, president of the Institute of Strategic and Development Studies at the University of the Philippines, limited her comments to Ichikawa's basic argument. Reiterating that sustainable development by definition obligates nations to meet present needs without compromising future generations' ability to meet their own needs, Hernandez stated that the implication was nations' obligation to determine the proper

balance between economic development and environmental protection. Maintaining that the two are not incompatible, she also noted the inevitability of a trade-off owing to the creeping threat to human security posed by environmental degradation.

Using the same three categories that were proposed during the first session's discussion of acceptable corruption levels in Asian governance systems, Hernandez asked the group what the proper environmental protection level might be in the environmental-economic balance: minimal, maximal, or optimal? To answer this question, countries need to analyze both costs and benefits in their respective environmental-economic equations. This is particularly relevant to the current situation in Asia, where rates of economic growth and development approach those in developed countries in the Northern Hemisphere, while at the same time environmental damage and hazardous living conditions correspond to those in developing countries in Latin America and Africa.

To reconcile the competing interests of economic growth and environmental protection, Hernandez recommended broadly that (1) countries engage in multilateral rather than bilateral or unilateral actions as much as possible; (2) multilateral organizations, NGOs, and other civil society organizations work to increase interest in and awareness of the environment among nations that are less affected by environmental problems than are the Asian nations; and (3) governments, businesses, and civil society organizations educate stakeholders on both sides of the issue so that they realize the environmental or economic costs of their respective actions.

Lorraine Elliott, a research fellow in the Department of International Relations, Research School of Pacific & Asian Studies at Australian National University, offering her comments next, emphasized that environmental degradation is a core threat to human security. While agreeing that the concept of sustainable development implies balancing the objectives of economic growth and the needs of environmental protection, she observed that this has not yet been achieved. As part of this work in progress, nations are struggling to establish structures for environmental governance on local, regional, and global levels. To succeed, she asserted, multilateral organizations, governments, and civil society organizations must identify methods for creating the substantial amount of political will necessary to address key environmental issues.

In addition, at a technical level these same groups must resolve resource sharing, capacity building, and other modalities. Finally, they must develop

better flows of information and cooperation to more effectively assess the equities involved in the environmental protection versus economic development debate. Elliott concluded by noting that balancing the two interests is not just an intellectual challenge but also a financial one, particularly as economic development receives much more money and attention than environmental protection.

Discussion

The discussion in session four revealed agreement on the imperative to find a balance between the mutually desirable goals of promoting economic development and strengthening environmental protection, although the question of how to achieve such balance yielded up disparate responses. Discussion focused chiefly on two topics: (1) the relative urgencies of the long-term problem of global warming on the one hand and the short-term regional problems of sanitation, sustainable forests, and air and water pollution, among others, on the other; and (2) considerations for economic promotion and environmental protection in the region.

On the question of whether Asian nations ought to focus on the long-term problem of global warming or on the short-term problems in Asia of sanitation, sustainable forests, air and water pollution, and so forth, the participants were markedly divided. A Singaporean participant stated that short-term environmental problems, rather than global warming, pose one of the most important challenges to Asia today. In support of this view, he cited that half of all Asians have no access to proper sanitation services and one-third lack clean water. In addition, 13 of the world's 15 most polluted cities are in Asia. Moreover, only a few Asian countries have implemented sustainable-use policies regarding forests, and other natural resources are similarly not tended with an eye to preservation.

The same participant urged that Asians take the initiative in breaking the stalemate between mainstream economists and environmentalists on the question of economic development versus environmental protection, arguing that the goal is to get industrialists and environmentalists to work together in the future. Here, he cited the use of environmental impact statements, now required for all economic development projects, as an example of the two sides working together.

A British participant agreed that the region currently suffers many problems that outweigh global warming in importance, some of which have

exacerbated the financial crisis pains. Asian nations need to focus on how to access the resources for cleaning up the environment and, more generally, how to make the environment more of a priority—especially urgent tasks at a time of growing pressure for economic growth. Ichikawa and various other participants, however, reiterated that global warming must be addressed today to curtail long-term future damage. Concretely, a Japanese participant recommended that a global committee be formed, perhaps under the United Nations, to determine a clear agenda and a time frame for eliminating global warming.

The second part of the discussion featured general considerations regarding economic promotion and environmental protection. Encouraging Asian countries to find ways to combine their desire for economic development with their concern for environmental protection, an Indonesian participant proposed green technology as one obvious area for companies to pursue. In addition, she urged developing countries to take advantage of the rising convergence of interests linking sustainable development and political reform.

A Singaporean participant concurred with the previous comment and, in a different vein, suggested that Asia needs better information databases in order to better manage the environment, maintaining that the region cannot effectively manage its own environmental problems without a strong information base. To this, he added the caveat that even a limited database, if effectively managed, can help to address some of the everyday problems in Asia. Next, another Singaporean participant called for a clean-development mechanism that would obligate the global community to work together. To this end, he recommended a mechanism through which developed countries provide developing countries assistance in attaining sustainable growth, in exchange for energy credits. In addition, this participant argued for the implementation of a qualitative method of measuring growth that provides for an accounting of environmental degradation, adding that all nations and industries would do well to remember that environmental degradation entails high costs.

Although in agreement with these thoughts, a Japanese participant more soberly observed that the economic crisis in Asia has made it more difficult to gain support for environmental initiatives, particularly as the priorities of cash-strapped governments tend to bypass the environment. As an alternative, he recommended that Japan share information with neighboring countries about mistakes that it has made in its industrial pursuits, thereby helping other countries to avoid repeating these mistakes.

Finally, a Thai participant reminded the group that the current economic and environmental crises are the direct and inevitable consequences of the high-growth strategies pursued by Asian economies during recent years. Consequently, Asian nations must abandon the competitive, high-growth focus of the past and proactively pursue a sustainable growth strategy that allows for both economic prosperity and environmental preservation in the future.

PANEL DISCUSSION:
CROSS-SECTORAL COOPERATION IN
ADDRESSING HUMAN SECURITY ISSUES

Yamamoto Tadashi, president of the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE), opened the panel discussion by noting that solving the increasingly complicated problems facing society today requires multifaceted resources from a variety of sectors. Accordingly, it is important to explore how to enhance the cooperation necessary for promoting the welfare and security of nations and people as the 21st century approaches. As a start, Yamamoto recommended the inclusion of local and national governments; national, regional, and international organizations; and grass-roots organizations in the process. As well, he cited the interesting discussions on cross-sectoral cooperation between business and NGOs relating to human security issues that took place at a JCIE-hosted conference on corporate-NGO partnerships held in June 1999 in Tokyo.

Presentations

Starting off the panel presentations, Takemi Keizo, state secretary for foreign affairs, Japan, focused on the important role Japan can play in addressing globalization and its potential impact on the lives of ordinary people in the 21st century. Providing for and protecting human security are essential components of Japan's effort to play an active role in the global community and in the promotion of human security, in Asia and elsewhere, Takemi stated. Defining human security in three basic stages

of human survival, human well-being, and human freedom, he then described freedom in terms of living one's own life, assuming one's responsibilities, and being respected as an individual.

Citing health care as a human security issue of the utmost importance, Takemi noted that Japan has provided significant assistance in this area to developing countries, including the construction of hospitals, technological improvements, human resource training, and operational software that links rural hospitals to urban medical centers. Health-care assistance provides a good example of cross-sectoral cooperation, he pointed out, as it involves educational, industrial, technical, and financial sectors of the community.

Drawing conclusions from Japan's recent participation in cross-sectoral cooperation to provide health care in Indonesia during the Asian financial crisis, Takemi stressed first the importance of treating all individuals equitably and with respect. Specifically, he emphasized the need to empower all segments of the population, including women, children, and the poverty-stricken. Second, he noted the valuable contribution of NGOs and civil society organizations in providing a share of the assistance and care to those who need it in the wake of crises. For example, Japanese NGOs have been active in assisting other Asians in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis, as well as refugees from Kosovo. Third, he recommended strengthening and coordinating the roles of donor nations, recipient countries, international organizations, and individuals working to promote human security. With this goal in mind, Japan established a Human Security Fund of approximately ¥500 million, including microcredit financing, at the United Nations Secretariat to mount a response to the various challenges confronting the international community. Takemi concluded that it is absolutely essential to provide coordinated and comprehensive assistance and to use all available resources.

Tommy Koh, executive director of the Asia-Europe Foundation, Singapore, made the next presentation, opening with an expression of support of Japanese Prime Minister Obuchi's call to Asian scholars and intellectuals to determine a better future for Asia. While Koh agreed that Asia's future should be determined primarily by Asians, he added that the region ought to also take into account views of other observers in this rapidly globalizing world. A better future implies the promotion and protection of human security, which Koh defined broadly as the elimination of all threats to the dignity, survival, and well-being of human beings. The most imminent threat facing the majority of Asians today, Koh

asserted, is environmental degradation and the lack of access to clean air, clean water, and functioning sewerage and disposal systems.

To prevent this threat from encroaching any further on the dignity and well-being of those in the region, environmental protectionists and economic developers must work together, Koh argued. No single group can alone achieve the mutually desirable goals of human security and sustainable development; rather, cross-sectoral cooperation, which is not always easy to achieve in Asia, is essential. To overcome traditional biases and alliances, business must learn to trust the government, NGOs must learn to trust business, and government must work to build credibility among all sectors. For Asians to achieve their aspirations of living in peace with the environment, the government, business, and civil society sectors must all contribute to the effort.

Shivsharan Someshwar, assistant director in the office of the vice president, the Rockefeller Foundation, United States, presented a paper coauthored with Lincoln C. Chen, vice president of the Rockefeller Center. Defining human security similarly to Takemi and Koh, Someshwar highlighted the concept's deep-rooted history in all societies and cultures. As well, he noted philanthropy's long history in Asia as a means of promoting human security. Regarding threats to human security, Someshwar asserted that one of the most serious in the past decade has been globalization, which has brought "three new horsemen—inequality, social exclusion, and instability"—instead of the age-old trio of famine, pestilence, and early death.

Unprecedented growth and prosperity in some countries have been paralleled by high levels of poverty in others. Within Asia, significant disparities in wealth have arisen, as evidenced by comparing per capita incomes in Japan and Laos, for example. Someshwar cited the overheating of several Asian economies, which resulted in the Asian financial crisis, as another casualty of globalization. The collapse of many businesses during the crisis has in turn led to the social exclusion of those pushed out of work, or under the poverty line, in the recent period of contraction. Finally, Someshwar noted that the Asian financial crisis has led to large-scale systemic instability and vulnerability, adding that in some cases the attempts to recreate stability have been futile and even aggravated the situation.

In order to secure stability and harness the power of globalization to the benefit of the poor and underprivileged, governments, businesses, NGOs, and civil society organizations must work together to find an equilibrium

that will protect and promote human security. Using environmental security as an example to illustrate the various kinds of equilibriums that could be established, Someshwar noted the importance of commingled resources, shared responsibilities among all sectors of society, and institutional flexibility. In conclusion, he called on all groups, institutions, and individuals to work together to provide sustainable development and human security for the entire world, and particularly for Asia.

M. G. Quibria, assistant chief economist of the Asian Development Bank, the Philippines, gave the final panel presentation. He discussed the issue of cross-sectoral cooperation through the lens of economic and financial security. The Asian financial crisis revealed the inadequacies of existing international institutions to deal with the widespread damage caused by the regional economic collapse. As a result, Quibria argued the need for an Asia-based institution that would work with existing global institutions to serve the region in times of trouble.

He recommended a regional financial institution for four reasons. First, a regional entity could help stem a tide of contagion such as the one that occurred after the Thai crisis in Asia and limit any spillover effects better than current global institutions. Second, a regional institution would be better equipped to recognize local trouble spots and use peer pressure to encourage early or preventative reforms. It could serve as the watchful eye of the global institutions, but on a regional basis. Third, a regional entity would have a better chance of reaching consensus than larger, global institutions, which tend to have difficulty acting quickly. The larger institutions are often simply too large or too removed from a particular region to be able to come efficiently to consensus on policy recommendations. Fourth, as evidenced in the Asian financial crisis the International Monetary Fund (IMF) did not have enough funds to deal with the extent of the collapse. A regional institution would complement the IMF by providing extra resources designated specifically for the Asian region.

Quibria rejected two objections to the idea of an Asian Monetary Fund (AMF) as overstated. He disagreed that AMF assistance would come without conditions and would therefore only increase moral hazard risks. He also disagreed that coordination between the AMF and the IMF would be a problem. He felt that global institutions should play a coordinating role, while allowing the regional institutions to take primary responsibility for monitoring and remedying problems in the region. Regional fund institutions could provide the additional strength needed for a truly successful global financial architecture in the 21st century.

Discussion

Commentary subsequent to the presentations centered on how to accomplish the goals of cross-sectoral participation. The Japanese moderator opened the discussion by noting that the concept of governance discussed earlier presupposed the need for various actors to work together to meet society's needs.

On the subject of how cross-sectoral participation could be realized in East Asia, a Japanese participant stressed the importance of creating a dialogue among all interested groups. Agreeing, an Indonesian participant suggested that mutual trust among dialogue partners could be enhanced through the participation of credible and neutral intermediaries, such as research institutes and university staff. She also recommended establishing councils at the national level for sustainable development, as called for at the Rio Convention on Global Warming. An Australian participant urged the group to consider ways to foster dialogue between scholars of traditional security and the new breed of scholars studying human security. Calling for increased dialogue on human security and sustainable development in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, a Singaporean participant recommended the establishment of a formal committee on human security in one or both bodies.

To enable interested groups to participate in cross-sectoral discussions and forums, a framework for staging gatherings and sustaining communication needed to be built, pointed out a participant from the Philippines. A second requirement, this participant instructed, was to empower civil society and other organizations so that their strengthened voices are not only heard but also taken seriously in these dialogues. Perhaps the goal of strengthening civil society organizations could be achieved by creating a formal role for such groups either in constitutions or through legislation, suggested a participant from Indonesia. If civil society organizations and NGOs showed more professionalism and based their positions on concrete facts, they would be taken more seriously by the business and government sectors, pointed out a Japanese participant. This same participant emphasized the importance of enhancing the professionalism of individuals, as well.

One key to improving cross-sectoral cooperation is encouraging people to look beyond economics as the main measurement of people's well-being, recommended another Japanese participant. He stated that to

improve well-being and the quality of life, indicators other than economic statistics must be used as common tools for measuring achievements. The difficulty, he cautioned, will be overcoming the vested interests in the business, government, and civil society sectors. A Philippine participant concurred, noting that creating stable economic systems for Asia requires balancing the core interests and development of all three sectors.

Professor Sen closed the panel discussion with several remarks. Traditional economic analysis, he noted, used to involve a simpler and clearer debate over interests and passions, with less consideration given to motivations. Economic analysis today is necessarily complex, because holding up profit as the only explanation of business motivations is a false depiction of reality. The actions of every group are inspired by various factors, all of which are equally important to recognize. Agreeing with the participants' consensus that different disciplines can and should work together, Professor Sen reiterated the importance of fostering cross-sectoral cooperation so as to ensure that all the factors affecting the well-being of East Asians receive attention.

SESSION 5.

THE ROLES OF GLOBAL AND REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Presentations

Jesus P. Estanislao, professor at the University of Asia and the Pacific, the Philippines, began session five with a presentation on the roles of global and regional institutions. In support of his point that the Asian financial crisis indicates a need for coordinated subregional, regional, and global initiatives and institutions, Estanislao stressed that certain interdependencies created by the recent globalization of economies, in addition to domestic factors, are to blame for the Asian financial crisis. Specifically, he cited the interdependence of macroeconomic fundamentals, the interdependence of the economic/financial and sociopolitical sectors, and the interdependence generally among East Asian economies, which together strongly underline the need to complement domestic economic reform

in individual Asian nations with institution building and reforms on the subregional, regional, and global levels.

On the subregional level, ASEAN needs to focus on human resource development by providing improved training and education programs, increased opportunities, and enhanced information transmission. In addition, Estanislao continued, regional leaders ought to consider developing an ASEAN "plus-or-minus" group, which would include some non-ASEAN Asian nations from APEC and exclude some of the ASEAN nations that are not ready to engage on these issues. Specifically, Estanislao proposed a group of ten economies—the five original ASEAN nations, plus China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan—which could undertake efforts on globalization, financial systems reform, trade regulation, and other regional community-building initiatives, in addition to establishing a fund or other resources to be used to support these initiatives.

On the regional level, Estanislao proposed that APEC be used to complement the work of subregional groups. For example, he argued that it is essential for APEC to do more to promote consistency in trade and investment, as well as in financial and monetary flows, in the region. Further, on the assumption that more creative initiatives are debated and designed on the subregional level, APEC can then broaden their potential impact by introducing them at regional forums. On the local level, Estanislao continued, Asians ought to be putting more energy into devising creative ideas and action plans, which then must be rigorously analyzed on the regional level. By means of such a process, on the global level Asians will be able to challenge the traditional leadership of the Western nations with a conviction born of indigenous ideas, competent analyses, and realistic rationales.

Hadi Soesastro, executive director of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Indonesia, followed with a presentation of his paper "The Role of Regional Institutions in the Asia Pacific." Starting off by noting the widespread disappointment felt in Asia over the inability of Asian institutions, particularly ASEAN and APEC, to adequately assist the region's nations during the Asian financial crisis, Soesastro posed the question of whether or not these two institutions ought to be reformed or restructured to better enable them to deal with similar crises in the future. Here, he noted that the idea of reforming these two regional institutions, bandied about before the crisis, has been given renewed impetus by the impact of the financial crisis.

With respect to ASEAN, Soesastro suggested the need for reform aimed at promoting more interaction among member nations. On this point, he noted that ASEAN could provide a vehicle for member countries to play enhanced roles in each other's internal affairs, on a case-by-case basis where merited. Regarding APEC, Soesastro recommended adding a fourth pillar—financial and monetary cooperation—to the existing three of trade and investment facilitation, trade and investment liberalization, and economic and technical cooperation.

Soesastro approached his concluding point by observing that both his own and Estanislao's presentations, when considered together, strongly argued for the creation of a new regional entity, via either reform of an existing institution or birth of a new one. Bearing in mind lessons learned from the Asian financial crisis, this new regional entity ought to provide constant surveillance and monitoring of economies in order to ensure the early detection of problems, as well as joint consultations when potential problems are spotted. In addition, he continued, it should establish a regional fund that could be accessed quickly by those nations in the region in need, as well as come up with an effective exchange-rate strategy for the region. Reiterating the point made in an earlier session that ASEAN is too small to carry out such initiatives while APEC is too large, Soesastro concluded that now is the time to find a third option for the region.

Discussion

Discussion during session five centered on the two core questions posed during the two presentations: Should a new Asian regional institution be created, or should those already in existence simply be revamped? What should be the essential elements of this institution, whether new or revised?

In discussion regarding the first question, a Singaporean participant noted that the region has appeared helpless in the eyes of the rest of the world throughout the Asian financial crisis. Although collectively holding 38 percent of the world's total savings, Asians could not organize themselves quickly enough to work together for their common good. This fact alone demonstrates the need to examine the idea of a new Asian forum, he argued, cautioning that such an examination must be conducted openly and in a spirit that does not threaten the West. In this context, he suggested

that the group consider the annual meeting of ASEAN plus three, i.e., China, Japan, and South Korea, as an appropriate grouping for this type of forum.

Next, a participant representing the World Bank noted that whereas the World Bank's precrisis role was declining owing to increased private-capital flows, now the region faced a new situation and different needs. The definition of public goods, for example, is evolving, and with rapid globalization and institutionalization the Bank's role has to evolve, too. She concluded by admitting that the Bank is struggling with the same conundrum now facing the region's governments, that is, determining how this evolution ought to occur. Returning to the question of institutions, a Japanese participant suggested that one type of new regional institution might be a university for Asians similar to those for citizens of European Community nations.

Next, a Japanese participant offered support to the earlier suggestion of ASEAN plus three as an appropriate group for starting a new regional institution, noting that the group, although not formalized, has already met many times. In response, another participant countered that without further political reconciliation in East Asia, the ASEAN plus three forum will always be plagued by internal contradictions, particularly as the intractable problems in Asia are political, not economic. Following up on these comments, Soesastro observed that while the ASEAN plus three forum is already in existence, it is unwise to limit a new regional institution only to the current member countries. Reiterating Estanislao's call for an ASEAN plus-or-minus configuration, Soesastro added that this would produce a much more credible, results-oriented group, despite potential political difficulties. More conservatively, an Australian participant suggested looking to the already-existing institutions, pointing to the fact that ASEAN had been used effectively to support member nations in times of crisis before. Rather than define a new institution, he suggested that the region define a new cohesive rallying point for itself and use it as a focus for new policies.

Although discussion yielded no firm consensus on whether to create an entirely new regional institution or build on an existing foundation, much interest was shown in the question of what the essential elements of such an institution ought to be. A Singaporean participant suggested three general conditions regarding an effective cross-sectoral regional institution: (1) Instead of continuing to rely heavily on the traditional Asian preference for consensus and consultation, member nations should actively

and frequently use the regional institution to effectively solve problems; (2) a new regional institution should be a forum for freely discussing issues that have an impact on other members, thus providing a clear departure from the previous policy of mutual noninterference; and (3) the new institution should mirror changes in society, particularly the shrinking role of the state and the increasing roles of the market and civil society. As well, ASEAN's emphasis should similarly reflect this new balance of power. A regional forum combining these characteristics, he concluded, will provide Asian nations and individuals with the institutional support necessary to pursue their own foreign policy agenda, such as the proposed Asian Monetary Fund and an Asian currency.

A Japanese participant recommended that a new regional institution also allocate resources to the marketing of its foreign policy ideas, pointing out that Japan has not done a good job of promoting either the Asian Monetary Fund or the ongoing Miyazawa Plan. Future policy ideas would benefit from better dissemination and marketing, this participant maintained. A South Korean participant noted that it is important to consider the political implications of the membership of any new regional institution. It cannot exclude China, for example, and it must provide for information sharing on a governmental level. Right now, Japan, South Korea, and China all share information on a private, as opposed to official, level. In addition, he continued, traditional security threats must be considered. During the cold war, the United States intervened in Asia primarily to maintain peace in the region and prevent the spread of antidemocratic influences. Any institution must be mindful of such historical considerations.

A Malaysian participant recommended that any Asian institution, whether old or new, focus on a long-term strategy for the region, rather than on a fire-fighting, crisis-oriented strategy. A Singaporean participant stressed that the institution should consider broader issues transcending economics and draw out their linkages to human security, asserting that Asia will not be well-served by the start-up of a new institution oriented only toward financial matters. A South Korean participant firmly supported the idea of a formal regional meeting mechanism, holding up the Nordic Council as a model for enhancing Asian cooperation on human security and sustainable development. He also argued that a Northeast Asian cooperative body mirroring ASEAN would be helpful in preventing Asian regionalism's entry "through the back door." A formal dialogue could have an agenda that includes stabilization and monetary

packages, as well as a global policy-setting element. In conclusion, he added that although ASEAN has done a good job, it is time for a fully Asian voice to set some of the foreign policy agendas.

Estanislao and Soesastro both concluded by pointing out that a faltering economic situation, particularly regarding trade, presents one of the main threats to human security and sustainable development in a globalized world. Trade and investment serve as objectives that facilitate community building in Asia, they observed, warning that if Asia doesn't focus on its financial and economic objectives then it will be unable to focus on anything else, as proven by the recent financial crisis. A new regional institution can help provide social safety nets and resources for the region, even though the specific problems to be solved remain within individual countries. In conclusion, they urged that Asians can and must help each other.

SESSION 6. THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Presentation

Erna Witoelar, executive director of the Asia Pacific Philanthropy Consortium, Indonesia, began session six with the presentation of her paper, entitled "The Role of Civil Society in Promoting Sustainable Development and Human Security." Witoelar stressed the importance of getting civil society to work together with the government and business sectors, maintaining that a tripartite civil society/government/business linkage will enhance the effectiveness of all three sectors. She used the example of sustainable development and human security as an area where civil society, government, and business can join together to provide improved social protection, enhanced governance, and sustainable economic growth.

Civil society can play a key role in empowering people by bringing popular concerns to the attention of traditionally distant national governments and big businesses. In addition, Witoelar continued, civil society can help

to link rural areas to urban, poor areas to affluent, and disadvantaged people to opportunities. Even though it can provide such linkages, however, civil society ought never to strive to be a replacement for either government or business, she cautioned. Instead, civil society must carve out its own indispensable role as it cooperates with these two sectors. Sometimes this will be difficult owing to the diversity of interests represented in civil society, which is both its greatest strength and its largest weakness. Be that as it may, trilateral civil society/government/business coordination will be a key component to promoting human security in the 21st century, Witoelar concluded.

Comments

Jung Ku-Hyun, dean of the Graduate School of Business Administration at Yonsei University, South Korea, began his comments by noting that civil society organizations in South Korea recently have enhanced national discussions on the environment, human rights, women's rights, consumers' rights, corporate governance, and equity and justice generally. According to Jung, civil society organizations have been able to make this valuable contribution in his country thanks to an increasingly democratic political environment, the emergence of a middle class, a greater awareness of needs as revealed by the Asian financial crisis, and the rise to the presidency of a former political dissident.

Civil society organizations offer many benefits to nations, Jung argued, including to the business and government sectors. Regarding Asian governments, for example, civil society organizations can provide the internal pressure necessary to reduce corruption, while multilateral organizations and international agreements provide the requisite external pressure. Furthermore, in the wake of the Asian financial crisis the contributions of civil society organizations are increasingly viewed as indispensable, as the crisis made it clear that governments in the region are unable to single-handedly solve all present and future problems. Indeed, civil society organizations have the resources and know-how to offer assistance to governments and businesses in such situations, Jung asserted. As a result, governments, businesses, and already-existing institutions would do well to actively find ways to include and encourage participation by civil society organizations. These groups are here to stay, and governments and businesses must learn to work with them, Jung concisely concluded.

Simon Tay, chairman of the Singapore Institute of International Affairs at the National University of Singapore, offered his comments next. He began by reiterating Jung's point that the Asian financial crisis has created a crucible of change that has allowed civil society organizations to take root and grow in the region. Although their animating spirit is easy to understand, civil society organizations have long been highly controversial precisely because they give a voice to the disenfranchised, Tay observed. In today's increasingly globalized postcrisis world, however, newly empowered groups are urging governments to spend more effectively, govern more honestly, and provide greater human security.

In the past, civil society organizations tended to espouse negative linkages to force governments and businesses to act, whereas today it is important that civil society organizations find positive linkages, Tay argued. Civil society organizations have an opportunity and an obligation to broaden agendas and thus bring mainstream attention to those problem areas that would not otherwise receive it. Moreover, the tools and means that civil society organizations use are complementary to those of government in the sense that they enable the organizations to reach groups that the government cannot. Tay then conceded that Asian civil society organizations have much to learn from their counterparts in the West, which are better organized, enjoy greater media access, and present their cases more forcefully and rationally. In addition, while guarding their independence and integrity civil society organizations must at the same time work more closely with governments and businesses. Positing that economic policies should not be formulated only in boardrooms and that civil society policies should not be designed only in the street, Tay concluded by asserting that all sectors of society must aim for broader cross-linking engagement.

Discussion

With participants generally agreeing that civil society organizations ought to be the voice of the underprivileged, discussion centered on how and on which tools were necessary to fulfill this role. Beginning the discussion with a comment on definitions, a Malaysian participant observed that people tend to equate civil society organizations with NGOs, while in fact civil society organizations form an all-encompassing group comprising NGOs and other civil society entities. As an unrelated point, he added

that civil society organizations should work not only toward limiting the human damage from crises but also toward preventing crises in the first place. A Thai participant agreed on the existence of a definitional dilemma, observing that in some cases NGOs believe that civil society organizations are just a variant form of NGO. He defined civil society organizations, as distinct from NGOs, as organizations that empower people to take control of their lives. Noting the importance of identifying ways to empower people, he cited a Thai example in which a large company provided technical assistance to local people all over the country who were interested in opening gas stations. In another Thai example of empowerment, big corporations "adopted" villages and provided work and some social services to the residents.

Next, a Japanese participant pursued the definition issue, wondering aloud whether or not an international civil society organization could exist. Noting that no clear model of a civil society organization exists, he stated that it is up to individuals and nations to come up with a definition for civil society organizations which includes transnational civil society. He concluded that the intellectual community should work toward this in an effort to address human security concerns. Another Japanese participant argued that one of the keys to productive cooperation among business, government, and civil society is the promotion of civil society itself, noting that it is the weakest of the three and that the other two sectors can promote it. Civil society organizations not only connect individuals with the state and the market but also provide the strongest link between states and people. Nurturing civil society in Asia is important not only to promote human security and sustainable development but also to build a sense of community and regional identity, he added.

Taking a different approach, another Japanese participant called for increased monitoring of civil society organizations, arguing that if the group advocates civil society organizations then it is obligated to address the inadequacies and other problems regarding them. Specifically, he called for the design of some method for evaluating civil society organizations, their actions, and their staff. He then stated that civil society organizations often suffer from two types of deficiencies: political, i.e., undemocratic; and economic, i.e., inefficient. Civil society organizations are politically deficient because they are organized and run by unelected, self-appointed leaders, who oftentimes unilaterally determine the content of agendas. They are usually economically deficient as a result of their tendency to continue programs to the point where marginal costs far outweigh

marginal utility, which makes them extremely inefficient spenders of scarce resources. As a solution, this participant recommended that a yardstick be invented for objectively measuring each civil society organization's achievements, reasoning that the damage resulting from failed efforts is not neutralized by the good intentions of a civil society organization. If these problems are not addressed, he warned, civil society organizations will not survive. An American participant seconded the need to establish a method for distinguishing good civil society organizations from merely neutral or bad ones. As well, he emphasized the need to determine just how independent civil society organizations actually are in the determination of their agendas and courses of action.

Pursuing the themes of evaluation and legitimacy, a Singaporean participant questioned the appropriateness of defining the legitimacy of civil society organizations in the same terms as that of elected governments. In this regard, he pointedly noted that the conference group would not imagine questioning the legitimacy of intellectuals, who are similarly unelected yet influential. Here, he suggested that civil society organizations can effectively assert their legitimacy by demanding a voice when denied official recognition by governments. While in agreement, a South Korean participant added the caveat that civil society organizations' recent rise in influence has reached the point where those in the government and business sectors are constantly questioning the right of civil society organizations to be involved. This issue merits attention, he concluded. Seconding the significant need to distinguish illegitimate civil society organizations from legitimate ones, Witoelar cited the phenomenon of illegitimate civil society organizations coming into existence simply to gain access to the abundance of money entering the region in the wake of the financial crisis. She concluded that civil society organizations, not unlike all other types of organizations, will inevitably have to suffer a few bad apples among the good ones.

Offering a developing country's perspective on civil society organizations, a Vietnamese participant stated that they have cropped up in his country in response to concerns and issues of importance to groups that have no say in either local or national governments. In this sense, civil society organizations really symbolize a strong people-power movement in both urban and rural areas. This is not, however, the case with state-owned NGOs, according to this participant. He reported that although many state-operated NGOs exist in Vietnam, they have no freedom and maintain no meaningful links to the people. As long as Vietnam continues to move toward a minimum of political and economic freedom, civil

society organizations will remain essential. Although civil society organizations are still rudimentary in Vietnam, they are growing, he concluded. Finally, this participant expressed his thanks to all the volunteers from other Asian countries who traveled to Vietnam to share their knowledge of and practical experience with civil society.

A British participant urged the group to give further consideration to the question of how civil society organizations might play a more useful role in Asia. For example, he suggested an examination into which factors are likely to facilitate the effective functioning of civil society and, more specifically, how efforts by civil society organizations ought to be directed at such issues as sustainable development and human security. A Japanese participant pursued that thought with the recommendation that civil society organizations focus on promoting international exchange, adding that if groups go abroad they cannot help but benefit from exposure to fresh ideas and new perspectives. He stipulated that exchanges not only consist of intellectual exchanges but also include experiential exchanges. As an example of the latter, he related the experience of a Japanese drum corps that went overseas to play and benefited in unexpected, invaluable ways simply from the daily interaction with their hosts. Finally, this participant recommended the establishment of an information clearinghouse for civil society organizations and their activities to help these groups to determine how best to play a role in the region.

An American participant described five ways that government can contribute to the health and vitality of the civil society sector. First, the government should establish a fiscal and regulatory framework in which civil society organizations can function. Noting that such a framework already exists for the business sector, he argued that it would both enhance the legitimacy of civil society organizations and help them to establish themselves by providing a context of universal standards. Second, government should create ancillary organizations expressly for the systematic gathering of information on civil society organizations, which would serve to increase public understanding of what civil society organizations do and why they are needed. Third, government should monitor the professionalism of these organizations, especially if the government itself is funding them. Fourth, government should channel aid funds directly to the community level. A government will be more effective if it functions in a way that enables intermediaries to reach out to third parties in the system. There are a number of other intermediary functions that government could support to enhance the vitality of civil society organizations, as well.

Fifth, government should facilitate the exchange of information and experiences among civil society organizations on both the national and international levels.

Witoelar concluded the session by observing that the achievement of power sharing among the government, business, and civil society sectors is still very much a goal in progress. At the same time, she noted the tremendous importance of groups such as the present one gathered in Singapore to continue to push for a strengthened role for civil society organizations in and among the business and government sectors in every nation in Asia.

SESSION 7. CONCLUSIONS: DEFINING AN INTELLECTUAL AGENDA FOR THE FUTURE

Presentation

Zhang Yunling, director of the Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, made the opening presentation of the conference's final session. In an attempt to define a future agenda for the continuing intellectual dialogue on building Asia's tomorrow—begun in Tokyo and continued in Singapore at the conference summarized herein—Zhang came up with three main near-term challenges for the region. First, he recommended getting Asian economies on a road to recovery and long-term full health. When discussing the financial crisis, Asians generally admit to the existence of significant domestic factors at play. As a result, the immediate focus has been on moving the most affected Asian economies out of their actual crises by means of structural reforms. Defining the base for future economic growth in Asia, however, remains a big challenge.

Second, while Asian nations need to return to high economic growth, they must find a method that simultaneously incorporates long-term sustainability. The exigent goal of finding a balance between economic growth and sustainability implies that the region must prioritize comprehensive human progress, Zhang asserted. As demonstrated by the Asian

financial crisis, countries in the region must move away from a growth-oriented policy toward a people-oriented policy to ensure human security in the future.

Third, Asian nations must find a way to digest further globalization and technological change without widening the gap between the haves and the have-nots. Liberalization of Asian economies cannot be a goal in and of itself, Zhang stressed; rather, globalization and liberalization must be pursued in a way that promotes sustainable development and human security, as well. After describing these challenges, Zhang called on the participants around the table to discuss them with an eye to producing fresh ideas, regardless of whether they appear at first glance appropriate or not, and to participate actively in the debates that arise.

Zhang then highlighted five specific imperatives that could usefully guide an agenda for intellectual research on the region's future: (1) Asia should find sustainable models for growth that will revive and stabilize the region's economies; (2) Asia must not only keep up with but also become a contributor to the development of new opportunities in the rapidly changing field of information technology; (3) Asia must develop reliable and realistic economic indicators that will enable the region's nations to engage in economic development yielding reasonable growth rates but not resulting in an overheating of their economies, with a special emphasis put on the development of human resources, the implementation of appropriate social safety nets, and the improvement of environmental protection measures; (4) some Asian nations must develop strategies for smoothing the transition from rural and agricultural economies to industrial and technological growth that much of their rural populations will be obligated to endure as the world economy continues to globalize rapidly; and (5) Asia must focus its attention on the task of economic and institutional integration in the region, which might involve restructuring APEC and ASEAN, implementing an Asian Monetary Fund, or finding other alternative institutional frameworks.

Emphasizing the importance of intellectual networks and the need to improve the links between policymakers and intellectuals, Zhang concluded by calling on conference participants to remain active in their efforts to this end and in this dialogue going forward.

Comments

Arun Mahizhnan, deputy director of the Institute of Policy Studies, Singapore, began his comments by outlining the following four issues for Asian intellectuals to keep in mind as they pursue their agenda: (1) the need to repair the weak links existing between intellectuals and government in most countries, which result from mutual disdain, by including policymakers in their intellectual dialogue and by increasing exchange and interaction between the two groups; (2) the importance of clarifying the differences between academics and intellectuals, as well as redefining the traditional interaction between the two groups; (3) the imperative to develop better methods for disseminating research results and other information, particularly given that many of the institutions carrying out valuable research do not know how to market it; and (4) the responsibility of conferences such as the present one in Singapore to promote cross-sectoral research that is designed and executed by integrated teams of business, government, and academic leaders. Mahizhnan also suggested that two topics be added to Zhang's aforementioned recommendations for further research: (1) the future fate of the nation-state in an era of regional integration and globalization, and (2) the use of economics and information technology as strategic forces for projecting power and conducting war.

Charles Morrison, president of the East-West Center, the United States, offered his comments next. After reminding conference participants that the notion of human security has been around for some time, Morrison pointed out that recently it has acquired some distinctly new characteristics. For example, economic development and political empowerment used to be the key elements of human security, and indeed these traditional concerns remain important. However, instead of affecting only particular areas or marginalized groups, as in the past, today's human security issues have an impact on societies in their entirety. To help intellectuals and civil society generally to identify and help those truly in need today and potentially in the future, Morrison suggested that four simple questions be posed: (1) Whose human security is being discussed? (2) What are the threats? (3) Where are they likely to arise? and (4) How should potential problems be addressed?

As a concrete example of intellectuals missing the mark, Morrison cited analyses of the Asian financial crisis. The initial impact of the crisis engendered many predictions of eventual damage that in the end turned

out to be overly pessimistic. Despite making such dire general predictions, however, many observers failed to foresee the extent to which the crisis would affect people on the margins, who have suffered inordinately. From this, Morrison made the point to the gathered participants that, as intellectuals, they must improve their ability to identify which groups are likely to be affected by crises. To this end, it is necessary to determine both what the threats are and where they are likely to manifest themselves. As part of a strategy for improving preemptive diagnoses and proactive action plans, the role of civil society organizations must be promoted, Morrison argued. Because they traditionally represent those interests that the government has chosen not to, or simply been unable to, acknowledge, civil society organizations ought to be part of the intellectual agenda. For their part, intellectuals can help by defining contextual and enabling-environment issues, in addition to sparking debate on many other important questions such as the development of a sense of rights, political parties, and empowerment. Particularly in Asia, where national governments often wield strong, centralized power, civil society organizations are oftentimes perceived to be acting against the government and by extension the nation. This perception tends to result in strained working relationships, or even outright conflict, between civil society organizations and governments. It is again intellectuals, Morrison specified, who must help to bridge this perception gap.

Next, Morrison noted that networking is key to building the political support base necessary for underwriting a regional agenda, which in turn buttresses regional cooperation. Regarding this last point, he urged the participants to emphasize regional cooperation as they define a regional agenda, reminding them not to underestimate their influential role as intellectuals. Morrison concluded by encouraging the participants to provide more solid analyses rooted in realism and reflecting long-term perspectives, and cautioned them to be particularly mindful of their roles as advisors and educators not only to students but also to the public at large. As a final comment, he noted that these issues are too important to leave to politicians and government officials, who have much less time and resources than intellectuals do to think creatively about them.

Discussion

Chia Siow Yue, director of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, opened the final session's discussion by reiterating its objective of establishing an intellectual dialogue and research agenda aimed at most effectively promoting sustainable development and human security. Next, Yamamoto Tadashi provided three reasons in support of the establishment of an intellectual dialogue and research agenda on these issues: (1) to facilitate the mutual sharing of ideas in the region, (2) to improve the quality of thought and analysis on these vital issues, and (3) to strengthen human networks. Noting that the initial two conferences in this conference series were devoted to discussing and promoting human-centered development, he declared the need for the group to now establish a more substantive and specific joint research agenda for future conferences.

This research agenda should not be simply a repackaging of the old issues as discussed over the years, Yamamoto argued. Rather, the old issues must be made increasingly pertinent and provocative by considering them from new angles and with innovative research methods, both of which abound and promise fruitful results. Here, Yamamoto forwarded four ideas: (1) the interconnectedness of issues, brought into clearer focus recently as a result of the Asian financial crisis and ever-expanding globalization; (2) a change of paradigm in which nonstate actors are regarded as being equally if not more important than the traditional state; (3) the use of research methods designed to facilitate popular participation in discussions of human security; and (4) partnership arrangements, which take on unprecedented importance in the context of addressing human security issues.

In agreement with the above analysis, a British participant noted that the concept of human security certainly outperforms a mere repackaging of old issues. He then enumerated three ways in which the human security concept can empower intellectual dialogue. First, human security as an intellectual construct facilitates the analysis of multidisciplinary issues. Second, human security as a universally relevant discussion topic tends to help mobilize resources for individual nations requiring them but unable to muster them alone. Third, human security as an intellectual framework provides an approach to defining future tasks. Noting that intellectuals in the region face enormous tasks with finite resources, the participant highlighted the need for all the conference participants to consider how to leverage resources to obtain maximal results, and, moreover,

to encourage other individuals and institutions to work on attaining a maximal-results effect. He concluded with the comment that by leveraging what it already has, as opposed to creating new institutions, the region will most effectively achieve its goals.

Next, a Japanese participant suggested the need for a more substantive intellectual dialogue in future conferences. To this end, he suggested that the group commission case studies that are multidisciplinary in scope and cross-sectoral in approach, offering up health care as a possible topic. Specifically, he recommended an examination of government/civil society organization cooperation in cases variously exemplifying successful, failed, and indeterminate results, and then suggested that these results be collated to determine whether they yield new insight or merely rehash old issues. Moving to other topics, this participant offered his endorsement of a new East Asian framework that would facilitate more intensive discussions of specific issues. Finally, he recommended the initiation of an intellectual dialogue that would make the content of secretive, high-level government discussions accessible to the average citizen.

Agreeing that case studies can be of practical benefit, another Japanese participant cited African and Mexican health-crisis case studies that proved useful in predicting developments in Asia during the financial crisis. He seconded the previous participant's proposal for a review of case studies as a research approach yielding results with potential usefulness for dealing with crises in the future. At this juncture, Chia related that her own past efforts to provide timely case studies to regional institutions and governments were markedly unsuccessful. One case study, on the environmental problem of haze in Southeast Asia, simply disappeared into a pile of other bureaucratic papers, while another, on the Asian financial crisis, quickly became obsolete because of the fast pace of actual developments on the ground.

Next, an Indonesian participant expressed the opinion that the future intellectual research agenda had for the most part already been laid out in a previous discussion, adding the caveat that one distinctly new idea had come up during the conference: regionwide social security and social safety nets. This is a topic worthy of close attention and debate, he concluded. While in agreement with the Indonesian participant, an American participant added one necessary condition: any review of regional social safety networks must consider initiatives that existing traditional programs cannot comprehend, particularly if the goal is to ensure the inclusion of those persons who are currently unprotected.

Staking out a position of restraint, a Thai participant cautioned against defining the intellectual dialogue too broadly. Instead, he urged the group to establish a more focused agenda, citing the point made by Professor Sen in his conference keynote speech about the need to implement methods for dealing with and providing protection from shocks to the economic system. According to the Thai participant, the most important way for countries in the region to come up with new initiatives to address immediate problems is to provide intellectual leadership by responding to policy proposals as quickly as possible.

Next, a Japanese participant reiterated the importance of evaluating the achievements of civil society organizations. Acknowledging that the evaluation process for civil society organizations is extremely unpopular among both donors and recipients, he nevertheless characterized it as essential to establishing the legitimacy of organizations' endeavors. Shifting the focus of this comment, a South Korean participant proposed that the concept of human security itself be evaluated, especially with regard to what it means and for whom. Proposing that the notion of the individual varies from society to society and country to country throughout Asia, he recommended further comparative study on the status of individual rights in various levels of society and countries in the region.

A Japanese participant cited the need for enhanced information sharing among intellectuals within the region. As well, noting that the energy and resources spent on holding the Singapore conference and disseminating its results are likely to far outweigh its actual impact, he argued that intellectual dialogue is mere self-indulgence unless greater efforts are made to disseminate its conclusions to the general public. Organizations, he concluded, must allocate more resources to the popular dissemination of the fruits of intellectual dialogue and research. A Philippine participant echoed the importance of both rigorous research and its effective transmission to the general public. To this, he added that regional intellectual dialogues are successful only to the extent to which they help establish a higher level of common awareness, which is the necessary base for building a consensus for change.

These comments inspired a flurry of discussion regarding the potential value and feasibility of disseminating all the important work being done in the region. An Indonesian participant described another multinational project in which he is involved where dissemination is considered to be no less than essential. Accordingly, the group has created a series of eco-seminars, to be held on eight occasions in different cities and countries,

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in addition to sending out newsletters as research progresses, all with good results. Finally, a New Zealand participant asked about the existence of an intellectual clearinghouse for all the research “out there,” to which the two conference chairpersons spoke up in response. Chia noted that ISEAS coordinates an East Asian intellectual network, which is currently creating a database on development in the region. Yamamoto explained that the report resulting from the previous conference on human security was published in both Japanese and English and is available on both JCIE’s and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ websites.