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ASEAN-JAPAN RELATIONS

Trade and Development

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Foreword

This volume has developed out of the Asian Dialogue project, which is an ongoing activity designed to promote policy-oriented research, discussion, and an interchange of ideas between Japan and Southeast Asia on problems of mutual concern. The Asian Dialogue project has made steady progress since its inauguration in 1977 by the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE) and the East-West Seminar of Tokyo, with the co-operation of a number of Southeast Asian scholars. The project was further expanded in late 1980 with the involvement of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) and the National Institute for Research Advancement (NIRA) of Japan and the establishment of two research task forces, one to study issues relating to foreign investment and the other to examine problems of trade and development. Each task force consisted of economists and political scientists drawn from all the ASEAN countries and Japan. They were to complete two sets of six papers, one each for the five ASEAN countries and the other for Japan — combining political and economic aspects of the issues involved. Two co-ordinators, Professor Sueo Sekiguchi of Osaka University, and Dr Narongchai Akrasanee, then of ESCAP, were responsible for integrating the various country reports as well as providing an “overview” of the findings of each task force as a whole. The net result of these efforts has been a set of seven papers each on Investment, and Trade and Development, edited by Professor Sekiguchi and Dr Narongchai, respectively. They are being published as companion volumes under the titles *ASEAN-Japan Relations: Investment* and *ASEAN-Japan Relations: Trade and Development*.

These volumes reflect not only research by the individual Southeast Asian and Japanese scholars but also an extensive process of consultations amongst these scholars themselves and between them and others from the business community, the media, and the government in each of the countries involved. In the case of ASEAN, for instance, a seminar was held in each country at which were presented the initial findings of each country research team. These seminars were attended by both scholars and practitioners drawn from a wide spectrum of interests. These country-level discussions were followed by a regional seminar held in Singapore at which were present all the researchers concerned from Japan and ASEAN, together with participants from both the public and private sectors. Finally, the conference at Oiso, Japan, was held in May 1982. In addition to the Japanese and ASEAN scholars, businessmen, media representatives and government officials, participants in this conference included those from Europe, South Korea, the USA, and China.

This phase of the Asian Dialogue was co-sponsored by four institutions: the East-West Seminar, ISEAS, JCIE, and NIRA. The main financial support was provided by NIRA, whose president, Mr Atsushi Shimokobe, and researchers participated actively in the various aspects of the project. Mr Masahide Shibusawa, of the East-West Seminar, too played a major role in the project from its very inception, and we are grateful for his deep personal involvement in it and for the financial support from the East-West Seminar. The Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and the Rockefeller Foundation have also provided support for the project and this encouragement and assistance is greatly appreciated.

We are also indebted to Prof Sekiguchi and Dr Narongchai for their willingness to assume the burden of co-ordinating the task forces and for agreeing to edit the resulting volumes. They were substantially assisted by Dr Charles E. Morrison, a visiting scholar at JCIE and a fellow at the East-West Center of Honolulu, Hawaii, to whom we would also like to extend our thanks.

Finally, in wishing the work that follows all the best, it is clearly understood that the individual authors are exclusively responsible for the facts and opinions expressed in their respective contributions, and their interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of JCIE or ISEAS themselves or their supporters.

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13 June 1983