

POLITICAL
AND SECURITY
DYNAMICS
OF SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

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POLITICAL
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Foreword

This volume is a collection of edited papers which were first presented at the inaugural Dialogue between the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) of Singapore and the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) of India.

The idea of such a Dialogue was first mooted at the end of 2004 by Mr B. Raman, then Distinguished Fellow with ORF and Convenor of the ORF Chennai Chapter. In May 2005, in his first formal communication to ISEAS on the subject, Mr Raman spoke of the need “for studying and having a periodic exchange of views on subjects of common interest and concern to India and Singapore”. He wanted the Dialogue to be with ISEAS because of its expertise on Southeast Asia, a region of growing importance to India.

ISEAS found the proposal to be timely and far-sighted. The exchange gives ISEAS the opportunity to contribute to a better understanding of Southeast Asia in policy-related research circles in India. ISEAS for its part benefits from Indian perspectives on contemporary issues like terrorism, policies of the major powers in Asia, Asian regionalism, and developments in Southeast Asia itself.

The inaugural Dialogue, held at the ORF headquarters in New Delhi on 30–31 March 2006, under the banner “Political and Security Dynamics in South and Southeast Asia: Shared Concerns” more than lived up to expectations. The presentations generated lively and insightful discussions. ISEAS had agreed to edit and publish the papers and it is my pleasure to present them in this volume.

K. Kesavapany
Director
Institute of Southeast Asian Studies
Singapore

Introduction

The Dialogue on 30–31 March 2006 between the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) and the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) provided an opportunity for scholars from India and Singapore to reflect on Asia's resurgence and regional transformations. The delegations from both sides included members with a strong policy background. The broad-ranging opening presentations and observations on the East Asian Summit (EAS) set the context for the subsequent discussions.

The Indian side enquired about the Singaporean and ASEAN perspectives on how the EAS was likely to evolve while the Singapore side emphasized that Asia was now inter-connected as never before and India had to become even more outward looking — developments in East and Southeast Asia could no longer be viewed with indifference. In this context it was also interesting to note the observation of Professor Muni, Executive Director of International Affairs at ORF, that eventually it may not be possible to divorce East Asian integration, as defined by the EAS, from what was happening in West Asia and Central Asia since the whole question of Indian Ocean maritime security and energy security involves these two regions.

The roles of the USA, China and Japan elicited extensive discussion. Indian views on the security dynamics of the Indian Ocean, including as a theatre of deployment of the navies of extra-regional powers, were appreciated by the Singapore side. The Indian scholars also felt that Russia should not be written off in the Asian strategic equation, especially in view of its vast energy and other resources which not only bring it much foreign exchange but can also be used as instruments of influence.

Another issue which received considerable attention was non-traditional security, both in the context of the Indian Ocean region and Southeast Asia, particularly the danger of possible failed states in South Asia and uncertainties about the domestic politics and stability of a number of states in both South and Southeast Asia. Non-traditional security issues also featured prominently in the papers on Maritime Terrorism and Piracy and Southeast Asian Politics and Security.

There were different perspectives on some of the issues, as befits a frank exchange. Notwithstanding this, there was considerable convergence of views on the main factors shaping the security environment and the main areas of concern. The divergence was often more of the nature of whether a glass should be seen as half full or half empty. The Singapore side seemed more upbeat about the future, in view of the economic spill over from the rise of China and India and the regional community building trends that are taking shape. ISEAS Director Mr Kesavapany highlighted the integrative trends in Asia as illustrated by the EAS, describing them as the dawn of a new era, while at the same time recognizing that there were also many difficult challenges posed by modernization and globalization, diseases like avian flu, international terrorism, and other non-traditional security threats. The Indian side, while acknowledging the salubrious regional trends, noted that power politics among states, including the great powers, as well as domestic instabilities, could still adversely affect the Asian century.

The papers in this volume constitute the revised versions of the formal presentations on designated topics for the ISEAS–ORF Dialogue. They seek to provide an analysis of the changing South and Southeast Asian security and political dynamics from the vantage point of mid-2006. Naturally they do not capture all the richness of the wide-ranging discussions held in New Delhi, but to the interested reader they can still offer useful and interesting perspectives.

Daljit Singh
Editor

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List of Abbreviations

| | |
|---------|--|
| AFP | Armed Forces of the Philippines |
| AIDS | Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome |
| AP | Associated Press |
| APEC | Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation |
| ARF | Asean Regional Forum |
| ASEAN | Association of Southeast Asian Nations |
| ASG | Abu Sanyaf Group |
| ATP | Amphetamine-Type (psychotropic) Products |
| BBC | British Broadcasting Corporation |
| BCIM | Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar |
| BIMSTEC | Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation |
| BN | Barisan Nasional |
| CEP | Closer Economic Partnership |
| CECA | Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement |
| CG | Coast Guard |
| CII | Confederation of Indian Industry |
| CNOOC | China National Offshore Oil Corporation |
| CPP | Communist Party of the Philippines |
| CSI | Container Security Initiative |
| DPR | Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat or House of People's Representatives |
| DP | Democrat Party |
| EAS | East Asian Summit |
| EEZ | Exclusive Economic Zone |
| EIU | Economist Intelligence Unit |
| EU | European Union |
| FDI | Foreign Direct Investment |
| FPDA | Five Power Defence Arrangements |
| FTA | Free Trade Agreement |
| GAM | Gerakan Aceh Merdeka or Aceh Freedom Movement |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |

| | |
|----------|--|
| GRP | Group Representation Constituency |
| HIV | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| ICBM | Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile |
| IDSS | Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies |
| IMB | International Maritime Bureau |
| JASDF | Japan Air Self-Defence Forces |
| JI | Jemaah Islamiyah |
| KNLA | Karen National Liberation Army |
| KNPP | Karenni National Progressive Party |
| KNU | Karen National Union |
| LDP | Liberal Democratic Party |
| LET | Lashkar-e-Toiba |
| MALSINDO | Malaysia-Singapore-Indonesia |
| MILF | Moro Islamic Liberation Front |
| MSDF | Maritime Self-Defence Force |
| NATO | North Atlantic Treaty Organisation |
| NCMP | Non-Constituency Member of Parliament |
| NLD | National League for Democracy |
| NMP | Nominated Member of Parliament |
| NPA | New People's Army |
| NRC | National Reconciliation Commission |
| ODA | Official Development Assistance |
| OPM | Organisasi Papua Merdeka or Papua Freedom Organisation |
| ORF | Observer Research Foundation |
| P&O | Peninsular & Oriental |
| PAP | People's Action Party |
| PLA | People's Liberation Army |
| PRC | People's Republic of China |
| QDR | Quadrennial Defence Review |
| R&D | Research and Development |
| RMSI | Regional Maritime Security Initiative |
| ROK | Republic of Korea |
| SAARC | South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation |
| SAR | Search and Rescue |
| SARS | Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome |
| SBY | Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono |
| SCO | Shanghai Cooperation Organisation |
| SEANWFZ | Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone |

| | |
|--------|---|
| SEZ | Special Economic Zone |
| SLORC | State Law and Order Restoration Council |
| SPDC | State Peace and Development Council |
| SSA | Shan State Army |
| SURA | Shan United Revolutionary Army |
| SSN | Attack Submarine Nuclear-powered |
| TAC | Treaty of Amity and Cooperation |
| TRT | Thai Rak Thai |
| UAE | United Arab Emirates |
| UMNO | United Malays National Organisation |
| UNSC | United Nations Security Council |
| UNCLOS | United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea |
| UNOCAL | Union Oil Company of California |
| WMD | Weapon of Mass Destruction |