

## **Chapter 5**

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# **Southeast Asia— Elections and New Governments**



Terrorism in Southeast Asia showed no sign of winding down in 2004. A terrorist bombing believed to have been organized by an Islamic extremist group occurred in front of the Australian Embassy in Jakarta. Disturbances suspected to have been instigated by separatist groups continue in Thailand's deep south. Southeast Asian countries, aiming to maintain law and order in the short run and strengthen economic and social policies over the long term, are actively involved in antiterrorist campaigns. They are also cooperating with one another, and sometimes with countries outside the region, in sharing intelligence, assisting legislation, working out closer coordination for border and maritime patrols, and conducting joint exercises. Parallel to this, a movement is afoot among the member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to form a security community. However, in order to enhance cooperation to a level that would lead to, for instance, the creation of an ASEAN peacekeeping force, the countries concerned will have to clear a number of hurdles.

In these Southeast Asian countries, 2004 was also a year of elections. A general election was held in Malaysia, a presidential election was held in the Philippines, and a general election and a presidential election were held in Indonesia. As a result, the National Front (BN) won an overwhelming victory in Malaysia, and incumbent President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was reelected in the Philippines. In Indonesia, the ruling Indonesian Democratic Party-Struggle (PDI-P) slipped from power, and incumbent President Megawati Soekarnoputri, who headed the party, lost the election to Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. In all these elections, the points at issue were economic (economic recovery and poverty reduction) and social (political corruption and law and order). Thus, the major thrust of the foreign and security policies of these countries will have to be directed toward the creation of an international environment conducive to enabling their governments to concentrate their efforts on addressing these domestic problems. Particularly important in this context are the kind of relations these ASEAN countries will build with external powers such as the United States, Japan, and China.

## 1. Trends in Terrorism and Responses of Countries in the Region

### (1) The Bombing in front of the Australian Embassy in Indonesia and Disturbances in Thailand's Deep South

Since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, in the United States, the existence of international terrorist organizations composed of operatives of al-Qaida and other Islamic extremist groups have commanded the world's attention. Countries in Southeast Asia continue to exercise vigilance against the activities of the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), which is thought to be linked with al-Qaida. Following the terrorist bombing in Bali, Indonesia, in October 2002, and another bombing in August 2003 of the JW Marriot Hotel Jakarta, there was a large-scale bombing in 2004. On September 9, a car exploded in front of the Australian Embassy in Jakarta. The bombing killed 10 Indonesians including the suicide bomber and injured more than 180 people. As the method employed—a car laden with explosives detonated by a suicide bomber—was similar to that used in other terrorist bombings, the National Police of Indonesia suspected that Azahari bin Husin, who was believed to be a senior member of the JI, was involved. On September 16, the National Police announced that it had arrested eight suspects, but Azahari, thought to be the ringleader of the terrorist group, is still at large.

Prior to the bombing in front of the Australian Embassy, there was speculation that the JI might switch tactics from conventional terrorist bombings to assassination of government and business leaders. An article in the

June 10, 2004, issue of the *Wall Street Journal* reported that the JI had changed its terrorist tactics and was planning to assassinate public figures, diplomats, and business people (particularly in the mining and energy industries) of the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia, as well as officials of the Indonesian government. It also reported that British and

**A policeman on guard at the site of terrorist bombing in front of the Australian Embassy in Jakarta**  
(Reuters/Kyodo Photo)

Australian intelligence had obtained information that JI operatives had entered Indonesia for that purpose. Concerning the change in tactics, these sources speculated that the JI considered the bombing of JW Marriot Hotel Jakarta a failure because it killed only one foreigner while taking a toll of 11 Indonesian lives. Under these circumstances, a warning came from a Western intelligence agency in May that a senior executive of a Canadian mining company in Sulawesi was to be the target of a JI assassin. A total of 35 foreign workers and their families, including the executive, left for another part of Indonesia. To date, however, no assassination of public figures has been reported, nor is there any confirmation that the JI has indeed changed its tactics.

In Thailand, meanwhile, a series of attacks on schools and police stations by armed groups have taken place since early 2004 in the deep south near the border with Malaysia. Early on the morning of January 4, 2004, 20 schools and an army camp were attacked simultaneously. On that occasion, four soldiers were killed and a large number of weapons such as guns were stolen. On the heels of these incidents, terrorist bombings and armed attacks on government buildings took place in the three southernmost provinces—Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat. On April 28, 2004, armed groups simultaneously attacked police stations and army installations in these provinces. In the ensuing firefight with security forces, more than 100 members of the armed groups were killed. Subsequently, attacks on policemen, government officials, and even Buddhist monks occurred one after another, and law and order in these provinces deteriorated.

Immediately following the January incidents, the Thai government imposed martial law in the three southernmost provinces and dispatched 3,000 troops to calm the situation. However, as it became clear that these strong-arm tactics failed to have the desired effect, the government changed its approach and sought to pacify the people in the region by promoting dialogue and promising economic assistance. At the same time, the government declared that it would deal with the problem in cooperation with the government of neighboring Malaysia. The significance of this lies in the Thai government's realization that as members of armed groups can move freely across the border between the two countries, the cooperation of the Malaysian government is essential to track down and arrest suspects.

As these multiple attacks were carried out simultaneously and in an organized manner only in the three southernmost provinces where the majority of the population are Muslims, the Thai government believes that the Pattani

## Does the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) really exist?

In Southeast Asia, terrorist groups linked to Islamic extremism are active and cooperate closely with one another, posing a serious problem for countries in the region. On the other hand, the challenges posed by Islam-linked terrorism have become so complex that they cannot be treated as a mere clash of ideologies. This is because of the existence in the region of several Islamic states, including Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim country, Malaysia, and Brunei.

In the eyes of Muslims, who constitute the overwhelming majority of Indonesia's population, the existence of the JI, an Islam-linked terrorist group, is not self-evident. For instance, Hasyim Muzadi, chairman of Nahdlatul Ulama, the largest Muslim organization in Indonesia, and several other Islamic leaders question the very existence of the JI. Some of the suspects who were arrested as JI terrorists and charged with the Bali bombing denied that the organization existed. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, who is thought to be the spiritual leader of the JI, was arrested twice (in October 2002 and on April 30, 2004) on suspicion of involvement in the Bali bombing. But many Indonesians believe in his innocence. In response, a researcher at the Jogjakarta-based Siyasa Research Institute released the findings of his 18-month-long investigation, which concluded that an organized group called "Jemaah Islamiyah" does exist in Indonesia.

Any discussion of terrorist activities in Indonesia must therefore bear in mind that the existence of a terrorist organization called "JI" is disputed. Furthermore, when a country outside the region wants to stamp out terrorist activities in Indonesia that are inspired by Islamic extremism, it needs to realize that the Indonesian government will be mediating between it and Indonesia's Muslim population. The government may ask other countries for their cooperation in stamping out terrorist activities by Islamic extremists, but it must exercise due care not to make a facile linkage between Islam and terrorism when explaining its actions. That being the case, it is worth mentioning that in his inaugural address delivered on October 20, 2004, President Yudhoyono of Indonesia explicitly mentioned Islamic extremism along with poverty, corruption, and separatism as challenges for his government.

Islamic Mujahideen Movement (GMIP), a Muslim separatist group, is behind these incidents. However, opinion is divided as to whether these terrorist groups have ties to international terrorist organizations. Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra did acknowledge that Islamic armed groups were involved in these incidents but denied the JI was behind them. But Kittirattachaya, a senior security adviser to the prime minister, argued that the GMIP was receiving assistance from the Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia, a Malaysian Islamic extremist group associated with the JI.

Basically, this problem should be viewed in the context of the separatist movement that Muslims in the deep south launched in the 1970s. In Thailand,

where Buddhists account for 95 percent of the population, Muslims in the deep south have missed out on the benefits of economic development. Furthermore, the growing role played by the Thai government in support of US forces in Iraq antagonized Muslims and helped trigger the attacks. If the Thai government characterizes the disturbances that have occurred in the southernmost provinces as terrorist acts and puts them down by force, this tactic may help calm the situation in the short run, but it is not enough to establish enduring stability in the region. It is thought that, in order to give a durable solution to the problem, the Thai government must accelerate economic development in these provinces, alleviate the sense of alienation felt by Muslims in the region, and transcend religious divisions to unite the Thai population as a whole.

In the Philippines, terrorist activities carried out by Abu Sayyaf militants, an armed terrorist group operating out of bases in the southern Philippines, have done serious damage. A ferryboat that left Manila on February 26, 2004, exploded the next day, leaving 116 passengers dead or missing. The Abu Sayyaf claimed responsibility for the explosion, but initially the government dismissed the claim as an attempt by the Abu Sayyaf to capitalize on the incident for propaganda purposes. After investigations, however, the law enforcement authorities concluded that Abu Sayyaf operatives were behind the bombing. The Abu Sayyaf has been suspected of having connections with the JI, which has been reportedly instructing Abu Sayyaf members in sniper and combat techniques and in making bombs. The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), an Islamic extremist group based in the southern Philippines, is also reportedly cooperating with the JI. In April, then Secretary of National Defense Eduardo R. Ermita of the Philippines revealed that the MILF gave refuge to about 30 members of the JI and Khaddafy Janjalani, the leader of the Abu Sayyaf. It has thus emerged that terrorists in Southeast Asia have built a network through Islamic extremism.

## **(2) Responses: Regional and International Cooperation**

The Thai government has come to grips with the problem of poverty, which is said to be the root cause of the disturbances in the southernmost provinces. In a joint statement issued after a Thai-Malaysia summit meeting held on January 16, 2004, the leaders of the two countries said that they had decided to set up a committee chaired by their foreign ministers, which would review and implement development measures covering fisheries and tourism and the

## Muslims in Thailand's deep south

An overwhelming majority of the population of the three southernmost provinces of Thailand are Muslims. Historically, the area used to be an independent Islamic Malay kingdom, the Pattani kingdom, from the 14th to the 18th centuries. In 1785, the Pattani kingdom came under the rule of the Thai kingdom. In 1909, the southern half of the former Pattani kingdom became a part of British Malaya under the Bangkok Treaty. At that time, the Thai kingdom abolished the sultanhip in the remaining northern half of the former Pattani kingdom and brought it under its direct rule. Since the 1960s, the Thai government has vigorously enforced a policy of cultural assimilation on Muslims living in this region. For instance, situated in the region are private religious boarding schools called *pondok*. Those who have finished elementary school courses move on to the *pondok* to learn Islamic doctrine. The Thai government has strengthened control over these institutions by requiring them to register with the authorities as a private school and to follow a standardized curriculum. Muslims strongly resent the repressive religious policy of the Thai government, resentment further stoked by chronic widespread poverty resulting from the region being frozen out of Thai's economic development. Together this has provided Islamic extremists and separatists with political ammunition to stir up disturbances.

Early in the 1970s, a political organization called the Patani United Liberation Organization (PULO) was formed with the aim of founding an independent Islamic state. At one time, the number of activists involved in separatist movements ranged around PULO exceeded 3,000. However, unlike separatist groups in other Southeast Asian countries, PULO never became radicalized. There are several reasons for this: the governments of Thailand and Malaysia joined forces to tighten the border so as to crack down on terrorism; the Thai government policy toward Muslims was not so high-handed as to unite Muslims against the establishment; the benefits of Thailand's economic growth began to trickle down to Muslims although there still exist regional disparities; and the financial aid PULO received from Islamic countries such as Libya and Syria was rather limited.

However, although the separatist movement in Thailand did not gain a following large enough to threaten the integration of the state, disturbances have occurred, if sporadically, from the 1990s, and PULO and other Islamic extremist groups are suspected of involvement. Even as late as 2004, disturbances in the southernmost provinces are showing no sign of winding down. To solve the problem, the Thai government needs to bolster law and order in such a way that the measures taken are not perceived as directed against Islamic communities. At the same time, the government will be under constant pressure to promote economic development in the region and to tackle the problem of maintaining the balance between "national" education and religious education.

establishment of an Islamic bank. The two leaders had another meeting on April 12, at which they confirmed measures to promote economic development and eradicate poverty in the southernmost provinces. Prior to that, the Thai government decided at a cabinet meeting on March 16 to inject 12 billion bahts into projects designed to boost the economy and address security problems in the region. In addition, Prime Minister Thaksin indicated that his government was ready to hold talks with Wan Kadir Che Man, the leader of Bersatu, an umbrella group of insurgent organizations including the GMIP. He also said that mistakes had been made in employing strong-arm tactics and dispatching reinforcements to crush disturbances in the deep south, and declared his intention to form panels of villagers and officials in the region to regain their trust and cooperation.

Thailand and Malaysia are basically searching for an intra-regional solution to the terrorism problem. In countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia, where Muslims are in the majority, accepting assistance from the United States and other extra-regional countries in dealing with terrorist acts committed by Islamic extremist groups risks angering the population—in particular, the Muslim population—and they have to tread cautiously. The governments of these countries are thus wary of any involvement by extra-regional countries when taking measures to deal with terrorism and domestic disturbances. For instance, Prime Minister Thaksin, after a clash between an armed rebel group and security forces in the deep south on April 28, warned the United Nations (UN) and foreign countries not to interfere in Thailand's internal affairs. It was reported after the clash that the United States had proposed the construction of a military base in Thailand, but Foreign Minister Syde Hamid of Malaysia told reporters that outside interference would “complicate the atmosphere” and was “not the best approach.”

The problem of security in the Malacca Strait also can be understood in this context. At a hearing held by the US House Armed Services Committee on March 31, Adm. Thomas B. Fargo, then commander of the US Pacific Command, reportedly testified that the United States planned to deploy Marines and special operations forces on high-speed vessels as part of its “Regional Maritime Security Initiative.” In response, Deputy Prime Minister Najib Razak of Malaysia said that Malaysia had no plans to seek military assistance from the United States to guard the Malacca Strait, and that this task was the joint responsibility of the littoral states, Malaysia and Indonesia. Navy Chief of Staff

Adm. Bernard Kent Sondakh of the National Armed Forces of Indonesia (TNI) echoed the opposition to the US proposal by calling it “baseless,” and said that security in the strait was guaranteed under international maritime law and was the rightful responsibility of the states bordering on it. The reaction of Malaysia and Indonesia to the report was an indication of their strong will to realize safety in the strait by themselves and reject the involvement of extra-regional countries. Subsequently, then US Ambassador to Indonesia Ralph L. Boyce denied the earlier report, saying that the United States had no plan to deploy its troops to the Malacca Strait.

Initially, Singapore planned to ask for US cooperation in carrying out coordinated patrols of the Malacca Strait. At the opening ceremony of the Western Pacific Mine Countermeasure and Diving Exercises 2004 held under the auspices of the navies of Singapore and Indonesia on April 26, Minister for Defence Teo Chee Hean of Singapore revealed his view that the measures put in place by the three littoral states to enhance the security of the Malacca Strait were not adequate. In the belief that not only the littoral states but also other countries have a strong economic interest in keeping the Malacca Strait open and safe, the defense minister stressed the critical importance of assistance from interested extra-regional countries and international organizations to safeguard regional waters. In response, Foreign Minister Syde Hamid of Malaysia said the following day (April 27) that Malaysia would strongly object any suggestion that any third country should be involved in determining the security of the Malacca Strait, and sharply criticized Singapore for suggesting the necessity of US involvement in the defense of the strait. In the face of Malaysia’s strong opposition, Singapore seems to have given up for the time being the idea of defending the Malacca Strait with the assistance of the United States and other extra-regional countries.

On June 20, Defence Minister Hean of Singapore announced his acceptance of a proposal by the chief of staff of the Indonesian Navy that the three countries facing the Malacca Strait (Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia) carry out trilateral coordinated patrols. Under this plan, the patrols carried out four times a year by Indonesia and those carried out separately by Singapore and Malaysia will be consolidated. Each participating country will send five to seven corvettes to form a special task force, and they will patrol the Malacca Strait year round. Pursuant to this plan, 17 vessels dispatched by the three countries (seven ships from Indonesia, and five each from Singapore and

Malaysia) started trilateral coordinated patrols on July 20. In this way, Malaysia and Indonesia are insisting that only vessels of the three countries facing the Malacca Strait carry out patrols there. However, these two countries are looking to the United States for assistance and cooperation in areas such as information sharing, training, and the supply of equipment.

It may be said that Southeast Asian countries are actively cooperating with extra-regional countries in sharing intelligence on terrorist activities. On February 5, the governments of Indonesia and Australia announced an agreement to establish an Indonesia Center for Law Enforcement Cooperation. Australia contributed A\$38.3 million to finance the establishment of the center, and plans to solicit additional funds from other countries. Australia will dispatch its federal police officers to the center. The center will not only investigate the activities of terrorist groups but also offer training in scientific investigation, bomb disposal, and other counterterrorist techniques. The Indonesian and Malaysian police have agreed to launch a joint operation to tackle international crimes occurring in areas bordering the two countries and to establish a terrorism crisis center in Indonesia. The center will establish its headquarters at the police academy in Semarang in central Java, serve as a joint information center, and train antiterrorist troops for the Asia-Pacific region.

The International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, launched as a program of the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies of Singapore, is playing the role of an information agency on terrorism. Aware of the growing seriousness of terrorist threats, the Singapore government has decided to strengthen the center. This center assembled research staff members—researchers, religious scholars, and members of military and intelligence agencies—from various countries. It aims to build a region-wide database of terrorist incidents and terrorist profiles by gathering photographs, posters, training manuals, and other materials collected from terrorist camps; by conducting interviews; and by analyzing Internet messages and newspaper articles.

The Philippines, which enjoys close political and economic relations with the United States, is also continuing to cooperate with it in counterterrorism. During the weeks from late February to early March, 2004, the Philippines carried out a combined exercise with the United States code-named “Balikatan 2004,” followed by a counterterrorism exercise “Balance Piston 04-03” in July and another joint exercise “Bayanihan 2004” in August. In July, a maritime law enforcement exercise in counternarcotics and counterterrorism, “Fusion Piston

04-02,” was carried out with the participation of the US Navy and the Joint Interagency Task Force West from the US Pacific Command, and the Navy, National Police, Coast Guard, and Drug Enforcement Agency of the Philippines.

## **2. ASEAN’s Challenges: The Search for Deeper Cooperation**

### **(1) ASEAN Security Community: Prospects and Challenges**

The concept of forming an ASEAN Security Community (ASC) was first proposed by Indonesia at the 36th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting held in June 2003 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. This concept was taken up at the ninth ASEAN Summit held in October the same year in Bali. After discussions, the leaders of the participating countries agreed to the principles behind the idea: peaceful settlement of regional disputes, comprehensive security cooperation including broad political, economic, social, and cultural aspects, and noninterference in internal affairs. The ASC concept was also taken up at various ASEAN meetings in 2004 at the insistence of Indonesia.

At the fourth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) held on January 8, 2004, in Bangkok, the ministers considered steps necessary to realizing the ASC concept. Topics included the establishment of centers for combating terrorism, training in peacekeeping activities, the establishment of a center for cooperation on nonconventional issues, and holding regular meetings of ASEAN police and defense ministers.

In February, Indonesia suggested to nine ASEAN members that existing and future peacekeeping centers in ASEAN countries be formed into a network; that an ASEAN Peacekeeping Center be established by 2010 for the purpose of joint planning and training; and that an actual peacekeeping force be established by 2012 as a standby rapid deployment unit.

Indonesia has been actively promoting the ASC concept because it felt that in order to deal with terrorism and other transnational crimes, actions taken by individual countries or measures taken on a global scale alone are inadequate and regional measures are necessary. One reason prompting Indonesia to propose this concept is its keen awareness that Indonesia has become a center of JI terrorist activities. Another is the realization that problems arising in the ASEAN region should be solved by the countries of the region. At the fourth UN-ASEAN Conference held on February 24–25 in Jakarta, Foreign Minister N. Hassan Wirajuda of Indonesia stressed that there was a “crying need” for ASEAN

countries to strengthen their conflict resolution mechanisms including a regional peacekeeping force, and explained that most conflicts in the world today “are not between states but within states, and internal strife has a way of spilling over from the embattled country to the rest of the countries of the region.”

No member of ASEAN objects to measures taken by ASEAN on its own to solve various problems in the region including terrorism. However, member countries other than Indonesia refused to yield in their opposition of Indonesia’s proposal to establish a peacekeeping force as part of the ASC because it might violate their sovereignty. In addition, the establishment of an ASC itself means that problems arising in individual countries would ultimately be solved within the collective framework of the ASC. This conflicts with the principle of noninterference in internal affairs that ASEAN has long upheld as one of its basic principles. In particular, countries that have newly joined ASEAN strongly insist on maintaining the principle because they wanted to preserve the military autonomy that constitutes the fundamentals of their sovereignty. Vietnam, for one, asserted that it was too early to think of setting up a peacekeeping force and that each country had its own policy about politics and the military. Herein lie factors that impede the deepening of political and security cooperation among the member countries of ASEAN.

At the 37th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting held on June 29–30, the ministers discussed an action plan that laid down a timetable leading to the creation of an ASC, but Vietnam and other new members strongly opposed the Indonesian proposals setting forth the creation of national human rights commissions and a regional peacekeeping force. In the end, the proposals were reduced to statements of principle without any deadline. With respect to the ASC, a joint declaration issued by the ministerial meeting papered over the differences by stating that the ASC “would lead to an ASEAN that is at peace with one another and with the world at large”; that it “would strengthen our capacity to deal with security challenges, both traditional and nontraditional security issues”; that it “would strengthen ASEAN relations with Dialogue Partners”; and that it “would . . . enhance ASEAN’s role as the ASEAN Regional Forum’s primary driving force.” As regards the ASC Plan of Action, the joint declaration, while commending Indonesia for developing and elaborating the ASC concept and senior officials of ASEAN countries for their substantive work, merely said that it would recommend the text for adoption at the 10th ASEAN Summit scheduled for November 2004. The chairman’s statement issued after that summit, held on

November 29 in Vientiane, Laos, said that the leaders had adopted the Vientiane Action Programme to implement the establishment of an ASC following the ASC Action Plan in parallel with an ASEAN Economic Community and an ASEAN Socio-cultural Community that will be established for the purpose of ensuring long-lasting peace, stability, and shared prosperity in the region.

Meanwhile, the joint declaration of an ASEAN+3 (Japan, China, and South Korea) Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC+3) held in January 2004 expressed support for the establishment of an ASC, suggesting that Japan, China, and South Korea also supported the ASC concept. At the fourth UN-ASEAN Conference mentioned earlier, the leaders discussed the necessity of establishing an ASC and the roles to be played by the UN under the theme “Conflict Prevention, Conflict Resolution, and Peace Building in Southeast Asia: ASEAN Security Community and the United Nations”; and both the Department of Political Affairs of the UN Secretariat and the UN Development Programme, which hosted the conference, were positive toward the proposal. Such support from extra-regional entities would act as a tailwind for the promotion of the ASC concept. However, to reach the stage where, for instance, an ASEAN peacekeeping force is created will depend on whether the benefits to the participating countries outweigh what they have to give up in terms of their sovereignty.

## **(2) Countermeasures against Terrorism and Transnational Crime**

Southeast Asian countries have been holding multilateral consultations on measures against transnational crimes—terrorism, piracy, weapons smuggling, human trafficking, and money laundering—by actively utilizing the framework of ASEAN or ASEAN+3. The fourth AMMTC meeting was held on January 8, 2004, in Bangkok, and the first AMMTC+3 meeting was held two days later. The joint declarations issued by these meetings stressed that the countries concerned would actively build cooperation in dealing with transnational crimes through the framework of ASEAN or ASEAN+3.

Multilateral cooperation in dealing with transnational crimes will be promoted in three areas: exchange of information, personnel training, and the establishment of consistent legal systems. Specific areas of cooperation are spelled out in the joint declaration of the AMMTC+3 and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Governments of the Member Countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Government of the People’s

Republic of China on Cooperation in the Field of Non-traditional Security Issues, both issued on January 10.

Discussions on transnational crimes have taken place among the police and the military of ASEAN member countries. On August 16–20, the 24th ASEAN Chiefs of Police Conference was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand. At that meeting, the police chiefs discussed measures to be taken to build a database on transnational crimes and to exchange and train personnel. At the fifth ASEAN Army Chiefs' Meeting held on September 6–7 in Jakarta, discussions focused on cooperation to crack down on training camps of terrorist groups and on unearthing weapons-smuggling routes. The participants also agreed to set up a task force charged with implementing antiterrorism measures and to hold regular training sessions to improve their counterterrorist capabilities.

Southeast Asian countries and extra-regional countries have no objection to forming some sort of international cooperative framework to combat terrorism and other forms of transnational crimes. Specifics of cooperation worked out at this stage center around information sharing and instituting legal systems. In arranging for multilateral security cooperation, it is important to build cooperation step by step, starting with matters on which the countries concerned find it easy to reach agreement.

### **(3) The Myanmar Issue: Steering a Course Away from Diplomatic Isolation**

Democratization in Myanmar showed no sign of progress in 2004. Aung San Suu Kyi, secretary general of the National League for Democracy (NLD), has not been freed from house arrest by the military government since May 2003. On May 17, the military government convened the National Convention to draft a new constitution for the first time since 1996, but members of the NLD did not participate.

In the original draft of the joint communiqué of the 37th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting held toward the end of June, the ASEAN ministers were supposed to demand the early release of Aung San Suu Kyi from house arrest and other NLD members from prison. The draft at the same time urged the two sides to resolve the impasse to ensure full participation of all parties in the country's ongoing political process and to resolve problems of political reform in accordance with the government-proposed roadmap. However, they had to modify the draft on account of strong opposition from Myanmar.

In the end, the wording of the joint communiqué went no further than acknowledging the potential contribution the National Convention will make in paving the way for a new constitution and recognizing the role of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in assisting Myanmar's democratization. The joint communiqué did not touch on the release of Aung San Suu Kyi and underlined the need for the involvement of "all strata of Myanmar society" in the National Convention. The statement of the ASEAN Regional Forum chair did not go beyond this joint communiqué. Of late, ASEAN has shown signs of favoring a revision of its long-standing principle of noninterference in internal affairs. However, many countries, with their different political systems and problems associated with ethnic minorities, remain opposed to interference in their internal affairs by other countries.

The issue of Myanmar's democratization came to the fore once again when that country sought to join the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). In an effort to press Southeast Asian countries to hold talks on the democratization of Myanmar, the European Union (EU), which had refused to admit Myanmar into the ASEM because of its record on human rights, threatened to boycott the ASEM Summit Meeting initially scheduled to be held in Hanoi in October. Not to be outdone, then Prime Minister Khin Nyunt of Myanmar visited Malaysia, Thailand, and the three countries of Indochina in June and August in an attempt to win them over. Myanmar, together with Laos and Cambodia, which also wanted to join the ASEM, began demanding that the three be admitted at the same time. Vietnam, as host of the ASEM, took it upon itself to mediate with the EU.

Early in July, Vietnam and another mediator (Japan) proposed a compromise plan in which the EU would approve the admission of Myanmar into the ASEM in exchange for Myanmar's prime minister staying away from the ASEM and sending his foreign minister in his place. The EU accepted the compromise, and Myanmar, Cambodia, and Laos were admitted to the ASEM at the summit meeting held on October 8. However, the EU demanded that the chairman raise the issue of Myanmar's democratization in his statement, in deference to which the leaders inserted the phrase "They looked forward to an early lifting of restrictions placed on political parties" in the chair's statement issued after the meeting. However, the joint communiqué issued after the ASEAN Summit in November did not mention the military rule or the transition to democracy in Myanmar.

Myanmar's military junta has adroitly used international relations to deflect the demands of Western countries and the UN for democratization. Myanmar has also successfully taken advantage of its geopolitical environment to win military and economic assistance from China and India. It was reported that a military delegation from Myanmar visited India in February 2004 to discuss the purchase of weapons from India. It is said that both Myanmar and India are very keen on trade in weapons, especially equipment for the navy and air force. It is thought that this is because both Myanmar and India want to reduce the growing influence, economic as well as military, that China wields in Myanmar. In the face of Western demands for democratization, Myanmar has been successful to a certain degree in maintaining its military rule; and it has also managed to stave off diplomatic isolation by strengthening its relations with ASEAN members and other neighboring countries. This has served to embolden the military government to hold out against calls for democratization.

In mid-September, the military government replaced Foreign Minister Win Aung and Deputy Foreign Minister Khin Maung Win with Maj. Gen. Nyan Win and Col. Maung Myint, respectively. The new foreign minister and his deputy are almost unknown outside the country. On October 19, the military government announced the resignation of Khin Nyunt and the appointment of Secretary-1 Soe Win, a hard-liner, in his place as prime minister. Rumor has it that a squabble between Chairman Than Shwe of the State Peace and Development Council, the military government's top leader, and Khin Nyunt over business interests was behind the replacement of the prime minister and the foreign minister. Another theory has it that Than Shwe gave up on Khin Nyunt, who was strongly committed to drawing up a roadmap to democracy, and his supporter, Win Aung. This shakeup can be seen as a rebuff by the military government of the demand by Western countries and the UN for rapid democratization, including the release of Aung San Suu Kyi from house arrest. It was reported that toward the end of November the military government extended the house arrest of the secretary general for another year. The prospect for democratization of Myanmar thus remains bleak.

### **3. New Administrations and Their Policy Outlooks**

#### **(1) Malaysia: Landslide Victory of the National Front (BN)**

In the general election held in Malaysia on March 21, 2004, the BN, a coalition led by the United Malay National Organisation (UMNO), won a landslide victory. In the previous general election held in 1999, the BN had won 148 (about 77 percent) out of 193 seats. This time, it won an overwhelming 198 (about 90 percent) out of 219 seats. What is more, in the state parliamentary elections held at the same time, the BN won back a majority in the state of Terengganu, which it had ceded in the previous election to the Islamic Party of Malaysia (PAS), and has won control of state governments across the country with the exception of Kelantan. Although the BN failed to win a majority in Kelantan, it has increased the number of its parliamentary seats substantially, and is closing in on PAS.

Factors contributing to the BN's victory in the last elections may be summed up as follows: firstly, Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who had taken over the reins of government from Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamad in October 2003, took a resolute stance on corruption. Soon after taking office, the prime minister instructed law enforcement agencies to crack down on corruption in and out of the party and the government. In February, the Anticorruption Agency arrested and prosecuted then Land and Co-operative Development Minister Kasitah Gaddam and a number of business leaders and government officials. The arrest of an incumbent minister in advance of a general election was hailed by the people as an act signaling the prime minister's firm resolve to root out corruption. Parallel to the anticorruption campaign, Prime Minister Abdullah has introduced an open tender system for placing orders for public works projects, and has appointed a 16-member royal commission to look into the corruption- and scandal-ridden police with a view to restoring public trust in the institution.

Secondly, on the economic policy front, the prime minister froze the KTM double-track railway project that had received the go-ahead during the Mahathir administration, and ordered a review of all large-scale projects. He also gave measures to combat poverty top priority, pushing ahead with programs, such as scholarships for the children of impoverished families, to improve the social security system. The prime minister has shifted emphasis away from a manufacturing-centered industrial policy to a policy of agricultural

development as part of his antipoverty campaign. It is thought that his policy thus aimed at building a fair and equal society by giving priority to antipoverty measures and narrowing the gap between the haves and have-nots has helped him win broad popular support.

On the other hand, the opposition PAS's tilt toward radical Islamism has alienated the people and cost it heavily in terms of parliamentary seats. Prior to the general election, PAS published the *Blueprint for the Islamic State*, in which it declared that it will build an Islamic state based on Shariah (Islamic law). In response, the UMNO advocated a "progressive" Islamism that calls for tolerance and interethnic harmony. The results of the recent elections show that the people preferred the moderate Islamism of the UMNO to PAS's radicalist leanings. According to opinion polls conducted by the *New Straits Times*, a leading daily, and the Northern University of Malaysia immediately prior to the dissolution of the parliament on March 4, 52 percent of the people supported the moderate Islamism of the UMNO, and only 16 percent of them approved the PAS version of Islamism.

The overwhelming victory he won in the recent election helped Prime Minister Abdullah consolidate his power base. With such backing, he is expected to devote major efforts to eradicating corruption, rebuilding government finances, developing rural areas, and attracting foreign investment.

On his policy toward the United States, the prime minister is expected to soften the hard-line foreign policy pursued by his predecessor. While the anti-US stance Malaysia had taken on the Iraqi issue may have been understandable given the fact that it is an Islamic country, it also largely reflected the personal thinking of former Prime Minister Mahathir. Now that he is no longer in the picture, Malaysia's hard-line policy toward the United States is being toned down. At the talks with President George W. Bush in the White House on July 19, Prime Minister Abdullah reportedly told President Bush that Malaysia was ready to dispatch a medical team to Iraq. This is noteworthy as a sign of Malaysia's readiness to cooperate in the reconstruction of Iraq. Factors at work behind the policy switch are that the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1546 in June served as a clear signal that the Iraqi reconstruction will be carried out under UN leadership; and that the overwhelming support given to the prime minister in the recent general election allowed room to take a different approach from the Mahathir administration in dealing with the United States.

## **(2) The Philippines: The President Entering a Second Term**

In a presidential election held on May 10, 2004, incumbent President Arroyo was reelected. The final result was announced by the Joint Congressional Canvassing Committee composed of 20 senators and congressmen on June 20, more than a month after polling took place. In the election, President Arroyo garnered about 12.91 million votes, and Fernando Poe, Jr. came second with about 11.78 million, a difference of about 1 million votes. Senator Noli De Castro, Arroyo's running mate, also defeated his opponent for vice president, Senator Loren Legarda Leviste.

A poll conducted during the first week of the presidential election campaign showed that Poe, who enjoyed the overwhelming support of voters, had pulled ahead of Arroyo by a margin of almost 10 percent. In an effort to win back popular support, Arroyo launched an aggressive campaign aimed at low-income voters by announcing a raft of policies: premium subsidies under the National Health Insurance Program, free medical services at government-run hospitals, the provision of housing, and the creation of jobs by hiring unemployed workers to clean up national highways. She also nominated Noli De Castro, a former newscaster who commanded wide popularity among the voters, as her running mate. This campaign paid off handsomely—to such an extent, in fact, that her preelection approval rating outraced her opponent, Poe, by several points. Meanwhile, although Poe had initially leapt ahead of the pack on the strength of his name recognition and popular support, he had no experience in the political arena. He did trumpet an antipoverty policy as his top priority, but he had no economic and fiscal policies convincing enough to keep his grip on popular support.

President Arroyo did get reelected but it cannot be said that she won with the overwhelming support of the people. This is because she was unable to improve the living standard of the poor during her first term, and the uphill battle she had to fight during the election campaign, despite her incumbency, reflected the strong discontent people felt over her policies to date. In an inaugural address delivered on June 30, 2004, she enumerated her policy goals: to create 6 million to 10 million jobs; to provide education for all children in computer-equipped schools; to achieve a balanced budget by 2009; to provide power and water to every part of the country; and to reach a “just” conclusion to peace processes with Communist and Muslim rebels, among others. Over the next six years of her second term, President Arroyo will have to contend with a mountain of economic and social problems.

The first problem facing her after assuming office was the abduction of a Filipino worker in July in Iraq. The armed group that abducted the worker offered to release him on condition that the Philippine government withdraw its troops from Iraq. Initially, the government rejected the demand. Subsequently, however, President Arroyo decided to pull the Philippine contingent out of Iraq as soon as possible. On July 14, then Foreign Affairs Secretary Delia Domingo-Albert announced that Philippine troops had started arriving home, and when the contingent pulled out of Iraq completely, the hostage was released on the 20th of the same month.

The decision of the Philippine government was sharply criticized by the United States and its allies. On July 22, US Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said: “Weakness is provocative.” Foreign Minister Alexander Downer of Australia echoed his criticism, saying that by capitulating to the kidnappers’ demands, the Philippines had empowered the kidnappers.

Prompting President Arroyo to withdraw the troops, despite knowing she risked worsening relations with the United States, was the issue of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs). About 10 percent of the Philippine population are said to be engaged in jobs overseas, and the money they send back home each year reportedly accounts for about 10 percent of the gross national product of the Philippines. The remittances made by the OFWs thus make an important contribution to the national economy, and the majority of people believe their safety should be protected. As a matter of fact, a poll taken in Manila found that about 70 percent of the respondents were in favor of withdrawing the Philippine contingent from Iraq. As the election results indicate, popular support for President Arroyo is anything but strong. It seems that President Arroyo calculated that if she rejected the kidnappers’ demand and the hostage was killed as a result, it would be seen as sacrificing the worker’s life in favor of the country’s relations with the United States and, as a result, would plunge her approval rating to a level threatening the foundations of her presidency. However, this did not mean a change in her policy toward the United States. The decision she took this time around was mainly with a view to accommodating domestic public opinion; it did not originate from or represent a change in her policy of attaching importance to relations with the United States. In fact, Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert went so far as to say that “our relations with the United States have withstood its most recent challenge.”

**Table 5.1. Parliamentary systems of the ASEAN5**

	Parliament	Upper house		Lower house	
		No. of seats	Term	No. of seats	Term
Indonesia	Unicameral	550	5 yrs	—	—
Malaysia	Bicameral	70	3 yrs	193	5 yrs
The Philippines	Bicameral	24	6 yrs	262	3 yrs
Singapore	Unicameral	84	5 yrs	—	—
Thailand	Bicameral	200	4 yrs	500	4 yrs

*Sources:* Data from the Web sites of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the parliaments of the countries concerned.

*Note:* In the case of a country with a unicameral system, the number of seats and the term of office are shown in the column of the upper house.

### (3) Indonesia: First-ever Direct Presidential Election

In Indonesia, both a general election and a presidential election were held in 2004. Since the collapse of the authoritarian Suharto regime in 1998, Indonesia has been reforming its electoral system with a view to establishing a democratic political system. The People's Consultative Assembly amended the constitution in 2002 to increase the number of parliamentary seats from 500 to 550, to establish a Regional Representative Council composed of 128 representatives from 32 provinces and regions, and to institute a provision to elect the president by direct popular vote. The recent general election and the presidential election were the first ever held under the new system.

In the April 5 general election, the PDI-P headed by then President Megawati was defeated, and the Golkar Party won the largest number of seats. The percentage of votes won by the PDI-P almost halved from 33.7 percent in the 1999 election to 18.5 percent, and its share of parliamentary seats likewise fell from 33.1 percent to 19.8 percent (109 out of 550 seats). Though the results gave the Golkar Party a leading position in the parliament, the figures for the party also showed a slight decline, from 22.4 percent to 21.6 percent and from 26.0 percent to 23.3 percent (128 seats), respectively.

While the votes won by both the PDI-P and the Golkar Party decreased, those picked up largely in urban areas by the Justice and Prosperity Party (PKS) increased significantly from 1.4 percent to 7.3 percent, from 1.5 percent to 8.2 percent (45 seats), respectively. The number of parliamentary seats captured by the Democratic Party (PD), which was formed in 2001, soared from zero to 57. It is fair to say that the setback suffered by the two largest parties and the dramatic advance made by the PKS and the PD, which campaigned for the

eradication of political corruption, reflect the popular will of the Indonesians who seek higher living standards and a fair society. Following the general election in April, a presidential election was held on July 5. According to the results announced by the General Elections Commission on July 26, the Yudhoyono-Kalla (Jusuf Kalla) ticket won first place with 33.6 percent of the votes, and the Megawati-Muzadi (Hasyim Muzadi) ticket placed second with 26.6 percent. As neither ticket won 50 percent or more of the national vote and 20 percent or more of the vote in every state, as required by law, a runoff election was held on September 20. The General Elections Commission announced on October 4 that the Yudhoyono-Kalla ticket won the election with 62 percent of the vote.

The loss of a large number of parliamentary seats by the ruling PDI-P in the general election and the defeat of incumbent President Megawati in the presidential election may be explained as follows. It is true that the Megawati administration had succeeded to a certain degree in curbing fiscal spending and stabilizing the currency and the economy, but her administration failed to address the high jobless rate and the lack of investment in growth industries. A large majority of the Indonesians were disappointed by the lack of social justice and rampant corruption. Meanwhile, the PKS and the PD held out hopes for resolving these problems and campaigned on a platform of eliminating corruption and building a fair society. They as a result captured a large number of seats. Similarly, Yudhoyono was elected president because he also projected a clean image and was expected to exercise leadership in eliminating corruption.

To the extent that the new administration attaches importance to alleviating poverty and carries out a pragmatic, market-based economic policy, the course it promises to follow is not much different from that of its predecessor. In an inaugural address delivered on October 20, President Yudhoyono mentioned as his administration's agenda antipoverty measures, the elimination of corruption, and measures to deal with Islamic extremists and separatist movements. The lineup of the new cabinet he announced the same day attached importance to solving economic problems and was made up of people largely drawn from government and industry. Juwono Sudarsono, a political scientist, was appointed as defense minister, and N. Hassan Wirajuda remained in office as foreign minister.

The new president does not support Islamic extremism, and Indonesia's foreign policy is less likely to turn anti-American. Creating a stable

international environment conducive to the solution of mounting problems at home will be the basic course of Indonesia's foreign policy. Particularly urgent is the need to take antiterrorism measures. It is thought that the failure to adopt effective measures against terrorism was one of the factors that contributed to the loss of popular support for the Megawati administration. In his inaugural address, President Yudhoyono mentioned taking measures against Islamic extremism as one of his top priorities. What form these measures take bears close watching.

#### **(4) Singapore: Former Prime Ministers in the New Cabinet**

Elected by the Central Executive Committee of the ruling People's Action Party (PAP) on May 28, 2004, Lee Hsien Loong took office as prime minister on August 12. The unicameral Singapore Parliament has been monopolized by the PAP over a long period, with the result that the PAP has held absolute sway over its proceedings. In the new cabinet organized by Prime Minister Lee, the first prime minister and former senior minister, Lee Kuan Yew, remained as minister mentor, and former Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong as senior minister. In addition, Tony Tan remained in office as deputy prime minister and coordinating minister for security and defense; Teo Chee Hean stayed on as minister for defense; the former minister for foreign affairs, S. Jayakumar, was promoted to deputy prime minister; and the former minister for trade and industry, George Yong, was appointed as minister for foreign affairs.

New Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong is the eldest son of the first prime minister, Lee Kuan Yew. Given the makeup of the new administration including the first and the second prime ministers, it is highly unlikely that the new prime minister will sharply change the government's traditional policy. Therefore, the new administration is expected to use the framework of ASEAN in conducting its foreign and security policies while maintaining cooperation with the United States and other extra-regional countries. However, a visit made by Lee Hsien Loong, then deputy prime minister, to Taiwan in July 2004 infuriated China, and Singapore's relations with China temporarily worsened. Lee Hsien Loong, who was subsequently elected as prime minister, tried to mend frayed relations with China by announcing his support for the "one-China" principle. The question of how the new administration will handle its relations with China, and what position it will take on relations between China and Taiwan, will pose an important challenge for Singapore's foreign policy in coming years.

## **4. Trends in Military Modernization**

### **(1) Indonesia: New Equipment and Old Problems**

Indonesia's defense budget has been increasing over the past several years. What percentage of the defense budget is allocated to the procurement of new equipment is not clear, but what is certain is that all three services of the TNI are actively procuring new equipment. On April 8, the commander of the air force indicated his intention to procure, in addition to the four Sukhoi fighters the air force already has, eight more Sukhoi fighters (six Su-27SKs and two Su-30MKs) to form a squadron of 12 jet fighters and indicated his intention to have three such squadrons in the future. In her annual speech to the House of Representatives delivered on August 16, then President Megawati also made clear that her government would buy additional Sukhoi fighters in the near future.

As epitomized by Sukhoi fighters, purchases of military equipment from Russia and East European countries by Southeast Asian countries have stood out in recent years. By way of explanation, Russian- and Eastern European-made equipment is relatively inexpensive, and these countries have lately been pushing their weapons hard in Southeast Asia. Vice Air Marshal Suprihadi, secretary-general of the Ministry of Defense and Security, announced on May 4 that the Indonesian Navy will buy 11 PLZ-M28-05 light transport aircraft from Poland. An agreement was signed late in May, and the first aircraft was supposed to be delivered toward the end of 2004, although the details are unknown. The cost of procurement is estimated at more than \$50 million. Encouraging Indonesia to purchase military equipment from Poland was a \$135 million loan the Polish government extended to the Indonesian government in February 2004 for the purpose of helping the latter to purchase weapons and aircraft from Polish companies. In addition, Romania's former president, Ion Iliescu, visited Indonesia in February. The main objective of his visit was said to be to pitch Romanian-made weapons to Indonesia.

The Indonesian government is actively planning to modernize its armed forces, but the procurement program is mired in scandals. In 2002, the Indonesian Army decided to buy four Mi-17 helicopters from Russia, and assigned the purchase to a subsidiary of army-affiliated P.T. Putra Pobiagan Mandiri. However, there was trouble between Rosoboronexport, a Russian state arms export agency, and an Indonesian arms broker over payment, and a portion of the commission paid to the broker by Indonesia's Ministry of Finance

**Table 5.2. Changes in defense expenditure of ASEAN countries**

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Indonesia (In billions of rupiahs)	9,984	11,449	16,416	19,291	27,446
Malaysia (In millions of ringgits)	9,230	9,291	11,597	13,383	16,433
The Philippines (In millions of pesos)	32,959	36,208	36,288	42,330	40,660
Singapore (In millions of S\$)	7,595	7,701	8,141	8,200	8,200
Thailand (In millions of bahts)	74,809	71,268	75,413	76,724	77,027
Brunei (In millions of Bruneian \$)	—	—	484	455	450
Cambodia (In billions of riels)	437.5	455.0	404.4	423.0	413.0
Laos (In millions of kips)	66,542	224,224	277,760	—	—
Myanmar (In billions of US\$)	—	—	2.3	3.0	—
Vietnam (In billions of US\$)	—	—	2.4	2.4	—

Sources: Data from the Asian Development Bank, *Key Indicators of Developing Asian and Pacific Countries 2004* (Manila: Asian Development Bank, 2004); the International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2003/4* and *2004/5* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003 and 2004).

was not passed on to Rosoboronexport. As a result, the production of the Mi-17 helicopters was suspended and they have not been delivered to Indonesia as late as 2004.

Similar trouble has occurred with the Indonesian Navy. In March 2003, the Indonesian Navy decided to buy 16 Mi-2 transport helicopters from Russia and signed an agreement providing for delivery by September 2004. The payment was to be financed by an export credit loan to an agent. However, due to funding difficulties involving the agent, payment has been delayed, and only two helicopters have been delivered as of May 2004.

The Indonesian Navy concluded an agreement with Schelde, a Dutch navy shipbuilder, for the purchase of two *Sigma*-class corvettes. However, the navy signed the agreement with Schelde without clearing it with the Ministry of Defense and Security or the Ministry of Finance. Moreover, the purchase of these corvettes was not included in the defense budget for FY2004, and the coordinating minister for economic affairs sharply criticized the behavior of the navy. Such complex and opaque agreements, and the troubles that have occurred in the process of realizing them, have led to delays in equipment deployment and impeded the modernization of the TNI.

## (2) Singapore: A New-generation Armed Forces

The strategic environment in which Singapore now finds itself poses serious challenges to its armed forces, making the country's security situation

increasingly complex. The Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) are being pressed to play new roles—peacekeeping, counterterrorism, and nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction—in addition to the defense of the homeland. To meet these challenges, the SAF is progressively modernizing the facilities and equipment of its three services under the slogan of “Developing the Third-generation Singapore Armed Forces,” which will be composed of a few units highly capable of operating equipment integrated by computer networks.

The Singapore Navy started using the entire facilities of Changi Naval Base on May 21, 2004. This naval base has comprehensive facilities to support the navy’s wide range of operational, logistical, and training requirements, and these facilities are capable of supporting new frigates coming into service from 2007 and other vessels the navy may acquire in the future. As part of the modernization of its navy, Singapore has concluded an agreement with the French shipbuilding company DCN to buy six frigates. Under this agreement, DCN will transfer shipbuilding technology to Singapore. The first of these *Lafayette*-class frigates, the RSS *Formidable*, was built by DCN and launched in France on January 7, 2004. A second frigate built by Singapore Technologies Marine under license from DCN was launched in Singapore on July 3. This is the first frigate built by and in Singapore, and the remaining four of the six frigates will also be built in Singapore. The first frigate will return to Singapore by May 2005, and all six frigates are scheduled to go into operation by 2009.

The Ministry of Defence announced on March 16, 2004, that Singapore had decided to participate, as a Security Cooperation Participant (SCP), in the System Development and Demonstration Phase of the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) program led by the United States. The Singapore government considered the SCP arrangement as a golden opportunity for assessing the JSF’s ability to meet the long-term operational requirements for a multi-role fighter that its air force planned to introduce in the future, and said that as an SCP, it can expect early purchase of the aircraft from 2012 onwards.

At present, the Singapore Air Force plans to procure next-

**A launching ceremony of the frigate RSS *Formidable* of the Singapore Navy (January 7, 2004)** (Ministry of Defence, Singapore)

generation fighters, and announced in late 2003 that it had narrowed the choice down to the following three aircraft: Eurofighter Typhoon, Dassault Rafale, and Boeing F-15E Strike Eagle. Under this plan, Singapore will buy 10 fighters and possibly 10 more. It is said that the government has estimated the cost at \$55 million to \$96 million per fighter, and that it will finalize its choice of fighters early in 2005. During his visit to the United States, Minister for Defence Teo Chee Hean indicated on May 10 that a total of 20 AH-64D Apache Longbow attack helicopters to be purchased from the United States for about \$1.2 billion would be deployed in stages from Arizona to Singapore by 2006. The SAF's modernization program of military facilities and equipment has thus been making steady progress.

## **Japan's relief activities following the earthquake off the coast of Sumatra and the tsunami disaster in the Indian Ocean**

While helping accelerate the free movement of people, capital, goods, and information, globalization also causes countries of the world to share crises. The earthquake that struck off the coast of Sumatra on the morning of December 26, 2004, triggered a huge tsunami resulting in nearly 300,000 dead or missing. The international community was quick to respond to calls for assistance in the wake of the unprecedented devastation caused by the disaster. Western countries dispatched aircraft and naval vessels to provide medical services and deliver relief goods. China, Singapore, Malaysia, and other East Asian countries also began relief activities. The Japanese government decided the same evening to dispatch a Japan Disaster Relief Medical Team to Sri Lanka, one of the countries affected. On December 28, Minister of State for Defense Yoshinori Ohno ordered the dispatch of Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) units to Thailand to conduct rescue operations off its coast. The units consisted of three vessels equipped with shipboard helicopters that had been operating in the Indian Ocean under the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law and were on their way back to Japan. On January 4, 2005, the Japan Defense Agency decided to dispatch units of the Self-Defense Forces (SDF), and on January 5 and 7, the minister of state for defense ordered the three services of the SDF to dispatch their units to the disaster areas pursuant to the International Disaster Relief Law.

As of January 20, 2005, Japan has dispatched 12 international disaster relief teams (about 240 personnel in total) consisting of medical and rescue specialists, and SDF units consisting of about 1,000 personnel (or 1,600 if those engaged in the initial relief operations by the MSDF are included) drawn from the Joint Staff Council as well as the Ground, Maritime, and Air Self-Defense Forces. This is the fifth time SDF units have been dispatched overseas under the International Disaster Relief Law. It marks the first time for such a large contingent of the SDF, involving more than 1,000 personnel, to be dispatched on an overseas mission, and also the first time that all the three SDF services simultaneously participated in an international emergency relief operation. International disaster relief teams were sent to Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and the Maldives. Three vessels of the MSDF carried out search and rescue operations off the coast of Phuket, and in Indonesia, SDF vessels and aircraft carried out the transport of relief goods, medical services, and epidemic prevention activities.

### **International disaster relief activities carried out by the SDF in Indonesia (as of March 6, 2005)**

- Ground Self-Defense Force
- Number of local people treated: 5,930 (3,900 in Lamara, and 2,030 in Miboh)
- Vaccination: 2,277 people were vaccinated against measles.
- Sanitization: 133,800 square meters
- Airlift (terminal): about 160.3 tons of goods, and 1,570 people

- Maritime Self-Defense Force
  - Airlift (terminal): 1.3 tons of goods, and 128 people
  - Maritime transport: 34 units of heavy-duty and other equipment
- Air Self-Defense Force
  - Airlift (trunk line): about 226.8 tons of goods, 405 people, and 1 vehicle

In addition to emergency relief, it is essential to provide these disaster-stricken areas with reconstruction assistance and build a disaster prevention system from a long-term point of view. On January 6, 2005, the Special ASEAN Summit on the Aftermath of Earthquake and Tsunami was held under the auspices of ASEAN in which representatives of 29 countries, regions and international organizations took part, including Japan, the United States, China, the EU, the UN and the World Bank. They adopted a "Declaration on Action to Strengthen Emergency Relief, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Prevention on the Aftermath of Earthquake and Tsunami Disaster of December 26, 2004." At that meeting, participating countries also announced details of their offers for emergency relief and longer-term reconstruction assistance. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi announced that Japan will provide assistance "to the maximum extent possible in three ways: financial resources, human resources, and knowledge and expertise," and pledged, for the time being, to extend up to \$500 million in grant aid. He also indicated that Japan will make vigorous efforts to expeditiously establish a tsunami early-warning mechanism for the countries bordering on the Indian Ocean. At the UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction held on January 18–22 in Kobe, Prime Minister Koizumi proposed an Initiative for Disaster Reduction through Official Development Assistance (ODA), and indicated that Japan will extend assistance to developing countries in training disaster prevention experts through ODA. In coming years, how donor countries grasp the situation in disaster-stricken countries and territories, and how they help these countries address the longer-term challenge of building social infrastructure, will take on growing importance.