

Chapter 4

Southeast Asia: Challenges in Creating an “ASEAN Political-Security Community”

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is engaged in creating new “communities” by 2015 that will include a “political-security community,” and its efforts during 2011 faced a variety of security challenges, including the intraregional relations of its members. During the first half of the year, the Thai-Cambodian relationship deteriorated, influenced by the ongoing Preah Vihear temple dispute that flared up again in 2008, before taking a turn toward improvement with the formation of a new administration in Bangkok. ASEAN actively sought to mediate in the relationship, centering on the efforts by chair nation Indonesia. Myanmar has completed its transition to a civilian rule that still reflects the strong political influence of its military. The new government has embarked on a bold policy of expanding political freedom, and has significantly improved its relations with the United States and other nations. As an example of new directions for ASEAN efforts toward creating a political-security community, the ASEAN Summit of May 2011 laid out the intention to study a common platform as a mechanism for forming a more coordinated, and coherent ASEAN position on global issues of common interest and concern, based on a shared ASEAN global view.

The tension between the Southeast Asian countries and China over the South China Sea continued during 2011. In March, Chinese patrol boats harassed a Philippine resource survey vessel, leading the Philippines to ratchet up its diplomatic activities aimed at checking China. In addition to increasing its multilateral and bilateral cooperation on South China Sea issues in ASEAN, the Philippines also sought to strengthen its security cooperation with the United States. Tension again increased between Vietnam and China after the May incident where a Chinese patrol boat obstructed a Vietnamese resource survey ship. Vietnam subsequently moved forward cautiously to increase its security cooperation with the United States and also made efforts to cool some of the tension with China. ASEAN chair Indonesia actively brought up the South China Sea issues in various ASEAN forums. One result of these efforts was that the China-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting approved the “Guidelines for the Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties” in July, and in November, ASEAN and China agreed to begin talks for formulating the code of conduct.

Within security-related multinational frameworks built around ASEAN, the Asia-Pacific countries are strengthening their substantive cooperation centering on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR). Military activity in Southeast

Asia during 2011 included active equipment procurement by the Philippines, influenced by the revival of issues in the South China Sea. The joint military exercises that the United States conducted separately with the Philippines and Vietnam also reflect the increasing salience of the South China Sea issues. In addition to the precedents set by Thailand and Singapore, the first joint military exercises (joint special forces exercises) conducted by Indonesia and China also appear to be another aspect of the growing security cooperation between Southeast Asia and China.

1. Issues in ASEAN Intraregional Security

(1) Preah Vihear Complicates the Thai-Cambodian Relationship

The struggle over which country will claim the Preah Vihear temple and the surrounding area along the Thai-Cambodian border reignited in 2008 when Cambodia applied to have the temple designated as a World Heritage Site. Since then, the issue has brought a series of improvements and deteriorations in the bilateral relationship. During the second half of 2010 there were various compromises between the two countries' leaders that hinted that the relationship was on the upturn, but on February 4, 2011, a battle between the two armies broke out over Preah Vihear and continued for several days, resulting in close to ten military and civilian deaths and the evacuation of over 20,000 residents. This confrontation also brought renewed deterioration in the Thai-Cambodian relationship.

This armed conflict sparked immediate ASEAN efforts at mediation. Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, ASEAN secretary-general, issued an urgent statement on February 5 stressing that the deterioration of the situation in and around Preah Vihear was undermining confidence in ASEAN and affecting the economies, tourism, and investments in Southeast Asia. Secretary-General Surin called on Thailand and Cambodia to exercise restraint and engage in dialogue and to accept ASEAN mediation. ASEAN chair Indonesia also embarked on mediation, with Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa holding consultations with the Cambodian foreign minister on February 7 and with the Thai foreign minister on the following day. He urged each foreign minister to make use of the ASEAN framework to calm the situation. An informal meeting of ASEAN foreign ministers was called in Jakarta on February 22; there, Thailand and Cambodia agreed to accept Indonesian

observers in the disputed area.

Disagreement later emerged, however, over dispatching the observers. This was influenced by the differences in Thai and Cambodian positions over how to resolve the Preah Vihear issue. Ever since the issue reemerged in 2008, Cambodia had consistently proposed a multilateral solution through the United Nations (UN) and ASEAN; in contrast, Thailand had called for bilateral negotiations with Cambodia. These opposite positions grew out of the differences in the two countries' military power, economic strength, and level of political influence within Southeast Asia. Cambodia sought to use a multilateral framework to throw the issue into the international arena and thereby undercut Thailand's direct diplomatic influence, while Thailand refused the intervention of third parties out of concern over complicating the issue.

Against this background, the Thai government's reaction to the dispatch of observers was inconsistent. Thailand's agreement to observers at the informal meeting of the ASEAN foreign ministers was likely the product of the persuasive arguments of the ASEAN states, chair nation Indonesia in particular. Based on this agreement, Indonesia dispatched an advance team to the Preah Vihear area on February 26, but Thailand persisted in calling for bilateral discussion with Cambodia, again turning negative toward accepting observers. It is said that this change in the Thai position resulted from the Thai military's objection to the observers. Having the results of diplomatic negotiations overturned in this way on the views of the national defense leadership exposed the lack of unity of position between the country's diplomatic and military establishments. Discussions were held by the Thailand-Cambodia Joint Boundary Commission in Bogor, Indonesia, April 7–8 without producing any significant results, and negotiations stalled. Furthermore, sporadic armed conflicts broke out from April 22 into early May, again resulting in fatalities among troops on both sides.

Indonesia tried anew to mediate at the ASEAN Summit in May. The Preah Vihear issue was on the agenda for the plenary session on May 7, but the discussions proved fruitless when the prime ministers of Thailand and Cambodia each unyieldingly argued his country's own position. The following day the leaders of Indonesia, Thailand, and Cambodia met in their own summit meeting; although Thailand and Cambodia agreed to dispatch observers, they came to an impasse over the procedures for signing an agreement for this purpose. ASEAN was thus unable to make any progress through its mediation, and at the request of

Cambodia, the matter was passed off to the International Court of Justice (ICJ). On July 18, the ICJ declared the Preah Vihear temple complex and the surrounding area a temporary demilitarized zone and ordered the immediate withdrawal of all Thai and Cambodian forces.

A breakthrough in this Thai-Cambodian deadlock over Preah Vihear came with the change in Thai administrations. For several years domestic Thai politics had been torn between the pro-Thaksin side supporting Former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who had been ousted in the 2006 coup d'état, and the anti-Thaksin groups centering on the Democrat Party supported by the royalists and the military. Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen had succeeded in improving cooperation with Thailand under the Thaksin administration, particularly regarding their economies, and had become personally close to Prime Minister Thaksin. Hun Sen's government was thus negatively inclined toward Abhisit Vejjajiva's Democrat Party administration, since the Democrat Party was a leading force in the anti-Thaksin groups. Amidst the ongoing controversy surrounding the Preah Vihear temple, Prime Minister Hun Sen at one point named former Prime Minister Thaksin as an economic advisor to Cambodia, a step that was strongly objected to by the Abhisit government. In this and other ways, the Thai domestic situation exerted a strong influence over the Thai-Cambodian bilateral relationship.

When the Thai general elections in July saw the Democrat Party government replaced by a pro-Thaksin administration, the bilateral relationship was thus ripe for improvement. The pro-Thaksin Pheu Thai Party won in the July 3 general elections, and with the installation of Thaksin's younger sister Yingluck Shinawatra as the prime minister in August, the third pro-Thaksin administration since the 2006 coup was born. In response to the new pro-Thaksin government, the Cambodian government called for visits to Cambodia by the new foreign and defense ministers, withdrew some of the military units that had been engaged in Preah Vihear, and took other steps to display a marked softening of its position. On September 15, Prime Minister Yingluck visited Cambodia and met with Prime Minister Hun Sen. In their talks, the two reached basic agreement to abide by the ICJ decision on the Preah Vihear issue, and at the December 21 session of the General Border Commission, the two countries' ministers of defense agreed to withdraw troops based on the ICJ decree. Close attention will be paid to whether the current agreement will lead to a smooth withdrawal of the troops on both sides. The new government in Thailand is already being sorely pressed to deal

ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint

The “ASEAN Political-Security Community” is designed to promote political and security cooperation among the ASEAN member states and seeks to make it possible for the member states to “live in peace with one another and with the world at large in a just, democratic and harmonious environment.” ASEAN formally opened its discussion on creation of an “ASEAN Security Community” (ASC) in 2003 at the Senior Officials’ Meeting. When Indonesia first raised the suggestion, it ambitiously proposed that the activities of the security community include nontraditional security cooperation such as establishment of a counterterrorism center and joint peacekeeping exercises, but it was unable to secure other members’ agreement. The Bali Concord II, which called for formation of an “ASEAN community” by 2020, envisioned an ASC that was not a military alliance but a comprehensive security framework to provide peaceful settlement of disputes based on the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC).

Work was later conducted on an action program to give substance to the ASC, but there was out-of-hand opposition to Indonesia’s ambitious proposal of elements such as an ASEAN peacekeeping force. As a result, the Vientiane Action Programme that was adopted in November 2004 was no more than a listing of abstract goals for future efforts, faithfully echoing ASEAN’s past security principles as found, for example, in the TAC. The Twelfth ASEAN Summit expanded the concept of an ASC to include political cooperation in an “ASEAN political-security community” (APSC) and voted to move its formation five years forward to 2015.

Later an ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint was adopted and work pushed forward on establishment of the community, but specific elements are still under development. It is worth noting, however, that based on the Action Programme, the ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting (ADMM) has been meeting annually since 2006, representing establishment of a system for consultations to promote cooperation among the ASEAN member states’ defense ministers. Further, an expanded ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) has been at work since 2010 and includes eight countries from outside the ASEAN region (Japan, the United States, Australia, South Korea, India, New Zealand, China, and Russia), marking the successful creation of a new security cooperation framework covering the Asia-Pacific region.

with the aftermath of last October’s floods; how effective the new administration can be in devising and applying substantive policies on Preah Vihear and relations with Cambodia will also be important in terms of building up the relationship between the government and the military.

Although ASEAN chair Indonesia attempted active mediation with an eye to reducing tensions between Thailand and Cambodia and finding a solution to the

Preah Vihear issue, its efforts have not yet achieved substantive results such as the dispatch of observers and a supervised ceasefire. ASEAN has been performing an important function in terms of conducting active shuttle diplomacy and providing opportunities for discussions between Thailand and Cambodia including bilateral meetings between their leaders on the fringes of the ASEAN Summit. Still, the improvement in their bilateral relations has hinged mainly on the appearance of a new government in Thailand and a resultant softening of the Cambodian stance, so ASEAN in effect has been deprived of an opportunity to demonstrate clearly the effectiveness of its intervention in intraregional conflicts. ASEAN aims to form a political-security community by 2015, and the ability of ASEAN to serve effectively as an arbiter of disputes between its members will be a vital factor in demonstrating that the community is one of substance and not just form. Thailand is one of the founding members of ASEAN, and for it to display disapproval of ASEAN dispatching observers and supervising a ceasefire in the Preah Vihear conflict suggests that the ASEAN member states themselves are wary of ASEAN creating a true security community. This indicates that Thailand is as fixedly attached as ever to ASEAN's traditional number one principle, noninterference in its members' domestic affairs. Whether Indonesia will actually be able to send observers to Preah Vihear and have them function effectively there will probably provide a telling test case for ASEAN's formation of a political-security community.

(2) Myanmar after “Transition to Civilian Rule”—Has Political Freedom Really Expanded?

Myanmar moved forward with political reform during 2011 with the inauguration of a new “civilian” government in March, bringing major expansion of political freedoms. The general elections of November 2010, undertaken in keeping with the “Roadmap to Democracy” adopted by the military government, resulted in over 80 percent of the legislative seats going to the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP), consisting primarily of cabinet members in the military government, and the 25 percent of the seats set aside for members of the military; the outcome was a transition to civilian rule that retained substantial influence for the military. When the legislature opened on January 31, 2011, Thein Sein, who had been prime minister under the military government, was elected president. The new government centered around the president was inaugurated on March 30, and the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC),

which had been the military regime's highest decision-making body since 1997, was simultaneously dissolved. In terms of the organizational chart at least, this marked to the end of the military government.

With over 80 percent of the seats in the legislature occupied by the USDP and members of the military, and further with many others being held by former members of the military government who had resigned their commissions and become civilians, there were originally strong concerns that the "transition to civilian rule" had been in name only. Still, at least in terms of structure and function the new arrangement offered a legislature and government that were clearly separate from the military, and the ruling USDP included members from financial circles as well as former military, so it was expected that the new government would differ from the military government in applying more flexible policies, particularly regarding the economy.

The new government clearly shifted away from the former military government's suppression of human rights and the democracy movement and boldly enacted a series of policies to expand political freedoms. First was the release of political prisoners. Following the presidential pardon issued in May, the government released some 20,000 prisoners, including political prisoners, by the end of July. Further, in order to protect and promote the citizens' basic human rights under the 2008 constitution, the government established the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission in September 2011, which released an open letter on October 10 encouraging President Thein Sein to conduct the release of political prisoners. In response, the government released more than 6,000 prisoners around the middle of that month, including some 200 political prisoners.

Second, the new government announced it would cooperate with democracy proponent Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy (NLD) led by her. Along with permitting her to resume her political activities including political speechmaking around the country, the government held two meetings between Suu Kyi and Minister for Labor Aung Kyi between late July and

the middle of August, and President Thein Sein also met with Suu Kyi on August 19 to discuss cooperation between the government and the NLD. Further, the government revised the Political Parties Registration Law at the beginning of November. This revision permitted the NLD, which had been stripped of its registration under the old terms in 2010, to be reregistered as a political party. Suu Kyi completed the registration procedures for the NLD late in December and indicated the intention of fielding candidates in the national legislative by-elections scheduled for April 2012.

Third, the new government indicated its intention to seek reconciliation with the ethnic minorities who had long been at odds with the central government. In an August 17 speech, President Thein Sein called for peace talks with the armed factions of each of the minorities and showed a readiness to address minority issues. This opened the way to the signing of a ceasefire agreement with the United Wa State Army on September 6. Also, a special presidential representative and representatives of the various armed groups met November 19–20 in northern Thailand for a series of one-on-one talks, and in the following month the Shan State Army-South signed a ceasefire agreement. Relations between the government and the Kachin Independence Organization in the north of Myanmar offer a particularly noteworthy example of current government positions: suspension of the Myitsone dam project. The project, which had been established in 2007, called for the construction of a major dam between Myanmar and China jointly carried out by the two countries' public electric companies. The project was strongly opposed by the Kachin population of the construction area, and its suspension was announced by the president on September 30. The new government has also made it possible to form unions, authorized some demonstrations, loosened censorship, permitted coverage of the parliament by foreign media, and otherwise carried out policies that greatly improved the human rights situation especially involving freedom of speech.

The military junta's repression of democracy and human rights left it largely isolated internationally and were one of the primary factors in imposition of economic sanctions by the United States and Europe. The implementation of policies aimed at improvement of the human right situation in Myanmar is thus closely linked to the improvement of Myanmar's foreign relations, in particular with the United States and Europe. After the new government was launched, the United States began a series of visits to Myanmar by high-ranking officials such

as Senator John McCain and Derek Mitchell, Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Burma; at the end of September, Foreign Minister Wunna Maung Lwin visited Washington, where he met with Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Kurt M. Campbell and Special Representative Mitchell. Early in December, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the highest official in the American diplomatic establishment, called on Myanmar for the first time in fifty years, where she met with President Thein Sein, Foreign Minister Wunna Maung Lwin, and other high-ranking officials. In these meetings she called for even more political reforms including the release of all political prisoners and expressed US concern over suspicions of nuclear development cooperation between Myanmar and North Korea. At a press conference following the meetings Secretary Clinton stated that the United States would study the lifting of sanctions on Myanmar in keeping with the progress of reforms.

Regarding its relations with ASEAN, the new Myanmar government broached the possibility of serving as ASEAN's chair nation in 2014. When it was last Myanmar's turn to serve as chair in 2006, ASEAN, mindful of American and European criticism of the condition of democratization and human rights in Myanmar, convinced it to forego the position. Given those circumstances, the aim of this new candidacy was no doubt that assumption of the chair by the new government born out of the transition to civilian rule would restore international acceptance of Myanmar. The United States at first expressed concerns about the ASEAN chair being occupied by a country that had not yet achieved marked improvements in the human rights situation. ASEAN itself basically approved Myanmar's intentions, but it was aware of the US misgivings and seriously studied the advisability of Myanmar's chairmanship. The matter was discussed at the May 8 ASEAN Summit, but any decision was deferred until later. To pave the way for study of the matter at the November 2011 ASEAN Summit, Marty Natalegawa, foreign minister of ASEAN chair Indonesia, visited Myanmar October 28–30 and met with both President Thein Sein and Aung San Suu Kyi. Against the backdrop of improvements in the US-Myanmar relationship, Foreign Minister Natalegawa observed the state of democratization in Myanmar and made a positive appraisal of its progress, indicating an inclination toward agreement to Myanmar's service as chair. As a result, the November ASEAN Summit gave approval for Myanmar as chair nation in 2014.

The expansion of political freedom in Myanmar by the new government has

been bold and quick, moving beyond expectations in both quality and quantity. Although Thein Sein is a veteran soldier who served as prime minister under the old military regime, as president he is seen as an honest pragmatist, and much of the progress seems due to his strong initiative. At the same time, it is said that Than Shwe, who as head of the old SPDC held ultimate power over the military government, has completely retired from politics; so far there has been no indication of any attempt on his part to use his influence to interfere with the new government's political liberalization. Given the background to the new government's establishment, there originally were many who doubted that the military government's "transition to civilian rule" would amount to anything more than lip service. The way that liberalization has made such progress, however, has changed such doubts to expectations. Myanmar's new government has achieved approval to be the ASEAN chair nation, and against the background of improving relations with the United States and Europe, lifting of the economic sanctions has entered the realm of possibility.

In that sense, while the new government's political liberalization was based on internal factors—the pressing need to escape from such issues as confrontation with ethnic minorities and the proponents of democratization or the economic slump brought on by international isolation—the new government was also strongly motivated to display internationally how it was making progress in democratization, with goals of this display including achieving the ASEAN chair and removal of the US and European economic sanctions. The outlook for the new government's success at introducing pluralistic democracy in ways that will bring real reductions in the military's political influence will depend in part on the military; as reforms are introduced and pursued, the conservative factions of the military can be expected to muster more resistance, making the outlook still unclear. As a method to improve Myanmar's international image, talks will no doubt continue with the former anti-establishment and pro-democracy groups, but only to the extent that Suu Kyi and other influential democracy proponents do not undercut the USDP's near monopoly in the national assembly, so ongoing talks will be conducted with great care. Since the USDP and the military together won over 80 percent of the seats in the 2011 general elections, in reality the number of seats that the NLD could win in by-elections would not be a threat to that predominant position. Thus if the NLD and other pro-democracy groups are able in the mid-term to increase their presence in the legislature and eat into the

USDP's position, that is probably when the true nature of Myanmar's policies on civilian rule will reveal itself.

Still, the position that the international community should take at present toward the new government, even if the claimed transition to civilian rule is seen as change in name only, is to enthusiastically embrace the potential for substantive change in Myanmar's politics by talking with and at times trying to persuade the new government. At such times, consideration could be given to resuming economic assistance aimed at reviving the private economy so as to stimulate changes in Myanmar's society, and in this sense, Japan's decision to resume ODA to Myanmar is expected to play an important role in the coming years.

In foreign policy, a trend carried forward from the military government is emphasis on the relationship with China. Following his inauguration, President Thein Sein's first official visit abroad was, as could be expected, to China. He visited China May 26–28 and met with Jia Qinglin, Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, Wen Jiabao, Premier of the State Council, and President Hu Jintao. In his meeting with President Hu, Thein Sein described Myanmar's ties with China as its closest and most important diplomatic relationship; he requested China's support of Myanmar serving as the chair of ASEAN in 2014 and appeared ready to build on China's influence to strengthen its own political standing in ASEAN. While placing importance on its relationship with China, admittedly a holdover from the military regime, the new government is also making the maintenance and strengthening of ties with India another priority in its foreign policy. This suggests that during President Thein Sein's visit to India in mid-October 2011, he probably firmly adhered to the basic thrust in Myanmar's foreign policy of maintaining a balance between China and India.

While the new government continues to place importance on its relations with China, it also is seeking to reduce the level of dependence on China. The suspension of the Myitsone dam project mentioned earlier was noted as a display of Myanmar's autonomy. One aspect of Myanmar's strategic importance to China is its role as a source of energy for Yunnan Province and other parts of the southwest and as a transportation route. The Myitsone dam project was designed to further those ends, and its suspension by Myanmar carried the risk of cooling relations with China; the fact that Myanmar put the priority on reconciliation with ethnic minorities indicates a change in how the new government ranks its policies.

The fact that a growing pluralism in Myanmar diplomacy made such a change possible also suggests that we may look forward to improvement in its relations with Europe, the United States, and Japan and more active cooperative relationships centering on economics. Myanmar's relationship with China, however, will remain its most important bilateral relationship, and such changes will ultimately be limited to reducing its degree of dependence on China.

(3) ASEAN Seeking to Become an EU?—Studying a Common Platform

Indonesia has taken a leadership role in Southeast Asia, and when the country was serving as the ASEAN chair in 2003, it foresaw the regeneration of an ASEAN that had been stagnating since the Asian economic crisis of 1997. Indonesia's leadership at that time succeeded in impressing international society with an image of a revitalized and developing ASEAN based on a vision of an ASEAN community. Indonesia was again the chair nation in 2011, and with pride in its position of leadership, it turned its efforts toward solution of a variety of ASEAN intraregional challenges such as the Preah Vihear temple issue, democracy in Myanmar, and the South China Sea territorial disputes to be discussed below. In the process, Indonesia engaged in energetic diplomatic activities centered on the various ASEAN forums, and at the same time, it strived to realize a developing and integrated ASEAN by creating a series of new approaches in the different ASEAN groups and meetings.

ASEAN has set itself the goal of creating an ASEAN community that will consist of three principal elements: a political-security community, an economic community, and a socio-cultural community. With creating this community in mind and with the goal of raising its effectiveness, the ASEAN member states have agreed to establish a mechanism to formulate common policies on issues of nontraditional security such as humanitarian assistance, maritime security, and peacekeeping operations. The ASEAN Leaders' Joint Statement on the ASEAN Community in a Global Community of Nations released on May 8, 2011, at the ASEAN Summit Meeting represents agreement by the leaders of the ASEAN member states that by 2022, ASEAN shall endeavor to have a common platform of action in the international community. One example would be for ASEAN to address global issues in the UN and other multilateral forums by adopting common policies that emphasize the ASEAN position, which would also increase ASEAN's capacity to respond to such issues. With this goal in mind, the May

ASEAN Summit also agreed to form a network tying together the peacekeeping centers in each of the ASEAN nations to promote joint training exercises and the sharing of information. The November 2011 ASEAN Summit adopted the Bali Concord III, which was based on the discussions at the May Summit and which called for establishment of a common ASEAN platform by 2022. The contents of the concord were almost identical to the Leaders' Joint Statement from May, but as of November it was still unclear specifically what path was to be pursued to establish the common platform. At a press conference following the summit, Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono addressed establishing this common platform of action, and he emphasized the need for cooperation among all the ASEAN countries to strengthen ASEAN's integration, doing so by dealing in concrete terms with creation of an ASEAN community that would reinforce substantive regional structures for ASEAN.

It is best, perhaps, to look at the issue of Timor-Leste's membership in ASEAN as an aspect of a developing and integrating ASEAN in the last stages of ASEAN expansion. Timor-Leste formally applied for ASEAN membership in March 2011, and ASEAN chair Indonesia indicated its readiness to actively support its membership. The matter was discussed at the May ASEAN Summit, but a final decision was postponed. According to press reports, Singapore and some other member states felt that admission of Timor-Leste would mean delays in ASEAN economic integration, a pivotal issue in achieving an economic community by 2015; further, since Timor-Leste was still building up its political and administrative system, it would find it difficult to deal with the one thousand and more ASEAN-related meetings held annually. These member nations thus opposed Timor-Leste's admission. In the long run, Timor-Leste will no doubt become an ASEAN member state at some point, but at least as of the November 2011 Summit, it has not yet won agreement from all the members.

2. ASEAN Response to South China Sea Issues— The Southeast Asian Strategic Environment and the Relationships with the United States and China

(1) The Philippines—Actively Approaching the United States and Checking China

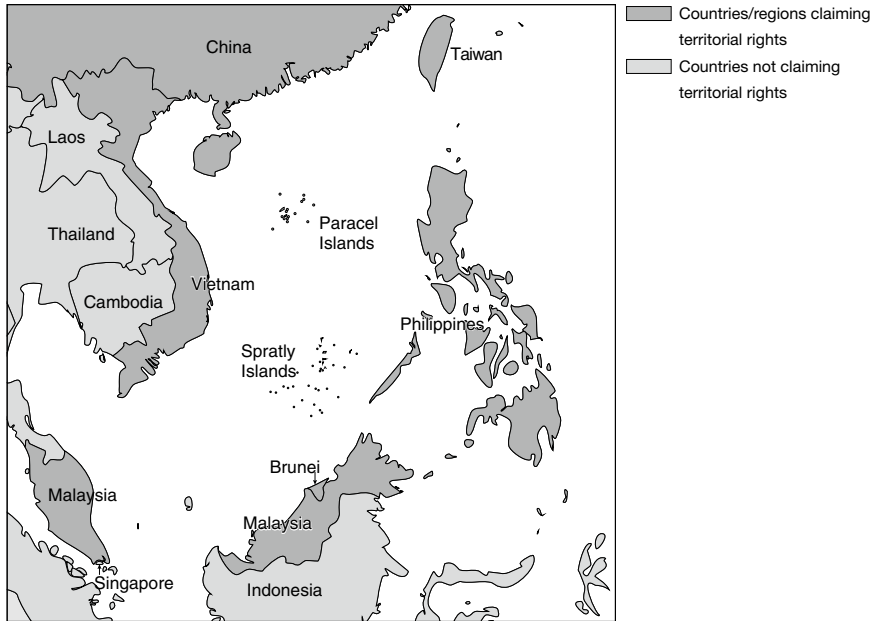
In recent years, territorial disputes have reignited in the South China Sea between

ASEAN member nations and China, and during 2011 there were sporadic outbreaks of tension as the ASEAN states directly involved stepped up their efforts to check China's assertiveness. The Philippines has sought primarily to defend those areas of the South China Sea already under its effective control by engaging actively in a variety of diplomatic approaches, in particular sparked by Chinese patrol boats' March 2 obstruction of a Philippine oil survey vessel in the Spratly Islands. Its independent actions included a formal protest to the Chinese government immediately after the incident, as well as registering a formal objection with the UN on April 5 regarding China's claims to territorial rights over almost all of the South China Sea. In addition, beginning in June, the government of the Philippines started to refer to those parts of the South China Sea over which it held territorial rights as the "West Philippine Sea" and used that designation in official pronouncements.

These steps are similar to the Philippines' response in the 1990s when the struggle over territorial rights in the South China Sea intensified. In February 1995, China occupied Mischief Reef in a part of the Spratlys claimed by the Philippines. The Philippines strongly urged the ASEAN states to take coordinated action as members of ASEAN when discussing the South China Sea with China, and at the same time it proposed a "code of conduct" that would legally constrain actions in the South China Sea by all concerned parties. Just as in the 1990s, the Philippines has responded to the latest incident by strengthening its cooperation with all the ASEAN states and calling strongly for unified ASEAN action toward adoption of such a code of conduct. Around the middle of March 2011, President Benigno S. Aquino III visited Indonesia and Singapore and discussed South China Sea issues with their leadership, and in advance of these visits, President Aquino also spoke out on the possibility of joint development of the South China Sea by ASEAN member states. Before the ASEAN Summit in early May, the Philippines foreign ministry announced President Aquino's intention to use that opportunity to make a strong call for the early and complete enactment of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (hereinafter, the "Declaration on Conduct").

The Philippines has also shown its readiness to strengthen its bilateral cooperation with Vietnam, one of the principal Southeast Asian countries involved in the South China Sea territorial issues. On April 5, Secretary of Foreign Affairs Albert F. Del Rosario visited Vietnam, and the two countries agreed on the

Figure 4.1. South China Sea territorial issues and neighboring countries/regions



necessity of peaceful consultations on those issues among all the concerned states. President Aquino also held informal bilateral talks with Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung during the May ASEAN Summit and discussed how to defuse tensions over territorial issues in the South China Sea. Further, Vietnamese State President Truong Tan Sang met with President Aquino during an October 26–28 visit to the Philippines. During this visit, the two countries signed a memorandum on bilateral maritime cooperation and the sharing of information, and they also agreed to establish a hotline between Vietnam’s Marine Police and the Philippines’ Coast Guard.

There are also parallels to the 1990s in the way the Philippines has recently markedly strengthened its security cooperation with the United States with a goal of constraining Chinese action. Following the March 2011 Chinese harassment incident, Foreign Secretary Del Rosario talked by telephone with Secretary of State Clinton; each stressed the necessity of maritime security in the Asia-Pacific region and agreed to cooperate in achieving a regional code of

conduct in the South China Sea that would be legally enforceable. On June 23, the foreign secretaries of the United States and the Philippines conferred in Washington, followed by a press conference where Secretary Clinton confirmed that the United States would honor the two countries' mutual defense treaty, and while the South China Sea was not specifically mentioned, she emphasized the US commitment to the Philippines' defense. In response, Foreign Secretary Del Rosario noted that he had received commitment from Secretary Clinton on US engagement in carrying out the mutual defense treaty, and he welcomed the strong and ongoing interest the United States had shown in ensuring freedom of navigation in the South China Sea. On November 16, Clinton visited the Philippines for discussions with its foreign secretary, and she touched on the bilateral mutual defense treaty, expressing the US support for the Philippines' reinforcement of its maritime defense capabilities. Again at the US-Philippines summit conference before the November East Asian Summit, President Barack Obama reconfirmed the US position of support for peaceful resolution of issues in the South China Sea. The Philippines is trying to encourage the United States into an even more active and specific position regarding such intervention. One such step is the Philippine proposal for establishing a "Zone of Peace, Freedom, Friendship, and Cooperation" in the South China Sea. This proposal would divide the South China Sea into disputed areas and nondisputed areas, with joint development to be undertaken in the nondisputed areas. The Philippines itself is responsible in part for speculation that this proposal was raised with the aim of promoting US involvement in the disputed areas. Discussion is also taking place in the Philippine legislature regarding revision of the mutual defense treaty to provide for immediate and automatic support from the United States if the Philippines is ever attacked by a third country. The Philippines is also making clear its position on cooperation with Japan regarding security at sea. During President Aquino's late September visit to Japan, the two sides

The "Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea" and the "Code of Conduct"

The "Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea" (the Declaration) is a political declaration adopted at the November 2002 ASEAN-

China Summit in Phnom Penh; its goal was to alleviate tensions among the parties concerned in territorial issues in the South China Sea and to confirm standards of conduct for these parties. Leading up to the signing of this Declaration by ASEAN and China were the confrontations between China and ASEAN, particularly its member state the Philippines, regarding the South China Sea and the Spratly Islands in particular during the first half of the 1990s. ASEAN's original goal was to conclude a legally-binding "code of conduct" between ASEAN and China and thereby control confrontations between China and the Southeast Asian countries concerned.

Based on a proposal by the Philippines, the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in July 1996 agreed to propose to China the creation of a code of conduct. The first stage in the process was preparation of a draft within ASEAN, which was undertaken separately by the Philippines and Vietnam. At that time, ASEAN had difficulty coordinating its members' opinions on such questions as the range to be covered by the code of conduct (whether to cover not only the Spratlys but the Paracel Islands as well); whether to prohibit occupation of islands, atolls, and reefs beyond those currently occupied; and the legal nature of the code of conduct (whether to make it a legally-binding document or a political document without legal force). In May 1999, China submitted its own draft code to ASEAN that reflected Chinese positions on matters such as resolution of issues arising in bilateral negotiations, joint development in waters not under active dispute, and exclusion of involvement of countries from outside the region (the United States in particular) that are not asserting territorial rights. Over three years were then devoted to negotiations that concluded in Malaysia's proposal that the code of conduct become a "declaration on conduct" without legally-binding force and China's assent to that proposal; the Philippines, which had been calling for insertion of a provision prohibiting additional occupation of islands or other areas, compromised and accepted prohibition of the "action of inhabiting on the presently uninhabited islands" and other areas.

The adopted Declaration is a concise document of ten articles that calls for peaceful resolution of issues in the South China Sea by the parties directly concerned and for self-restraint to avoid complication of such issues. Some of the characteristics of the Declaration are as follows:

1. The parties assent to the purposes and principles of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia and other documents. (Article 1)
2. The parties guarantee freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea. (Article 3)
3. The parties will resolve their territorial and jurisdictional disputes by peaceful means, without resorting to the threat or use of force. (Article 4)
4. The parties will avoid escalating situations, in particular exercising self-restraint by not inhabiting presently uninhabited islands. (Article 5)
5. The parties will promote cooperation in areas such as marine environmental protection, marine scientific research, search and rescue operations, and combating transnational crime. (Article 6)
6. The parties agree to cooperate toward eventual adoption of a code of conduct. (Article 10)

released a joint statement that indicated agreement on an exchange of visits by the chiefs of staff of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) and the Philippine Navy, port calls in the Philippines by JMSDF vessels, meetings between the chiefs of staff of the JMSDF and the Philippine Navy, and strengthening of cooperation and coordination between the Japan Coast Guard and the Philippine Coast Guard.

In these ways, the Philippines' South China Sea policies are clearly leaning toward checking China against a backdrop of greater cooperation with the United States. It is true, of course, that given the major expansion in the ASEAN-China economic relationship based on their free trade agreement, the Philippines is trying to avoid deeply undercutting the relationship with China solely over issues in the South China Sea. The Philippine government is thus giving attention as well to the stability of its bilateral relationship with China. Foreign Secretary Del Rosario visited China in July 2011, conducting bilateral talks regarding issues in the South China Sea, and President Aquino made a similar trip in late August, with both countries agreeing to the peaceful settlement of such issues.

(2) Vietnam—Cautiously Approaching the United States and Checking China

Tensions between Vietnam and China over the South China Sea continued from 2010 into 2011. The direct cause in 2011 occurred on May 26, when a Vietnamese resource survey ship operating in waters 120 nautical miles off central Vietnam was harassed by a patrol boat from the Haijian squadron of China's State Oceanic Administration and had its surveying cables cut. At a press conference called by Vietnam's foreign ministry on May 29, China was stridently criticized for "obstructive behavior within Vietnam's exclusive economic zone [that] violated Vietnam's sovereignty." Chinese harassment also continued against Vietnamese fishing vessels operating in the South China Sea, and there were incidents of Chinese naval vessels firing on Vietnamese fishing boats.

The Vietnamese People's Army responded to these incidents with new levels of strong criticism directed at China. In a speech delivered at the Tenth Asia Security Summit (the Shangri-La Dialogue) held June 3–5, Minister of National Defense Phung Quang Thanh addressed such harassment as "causing considerable concern for the maintenance of peace and stability in the South China Sea" and stressed Vietnam's expectation that such incidents would not be repeated. His remarks did

not specifically name China, and elsewhere in the same speech, Thanh did refer to the record of cooperation between the Vietnamese and Chinese navies and other positive matters, indicating some degree of consideration toward China. In the questions and answers that followed the speech, however, Thanh specifically mentions China and criticizes it for “violating the code of conduct and raising the concerns of Vietnam and other countries in the region.” On June 13, the Vietnamese Navy conducted live-fire exercises off the Vietnamese coast. The Vietnamese People’s Army newspaper *Quan doi Nhan dan* stressed that the exercises had been conducted to “resolutely defend sovereignty over the sea, islands, and continental shelf” and suggested their link to South China Sea issues.

Against this backdrop of reoccurring tension between Vietnam and China over territorial rights in the South China Sea, Vietnam also took action to move closer to the United States, showing a readiness to take another step forward in strengthening that relationship. At the deputy foreign ministerial level US-Vietnam Political, Security, and Defense Dialogue held on June 17, the two countries discussed South China Sea issues and released a joint statement at the end of the conference. The joint statement did not raise China by name but took a restrained approach by stating, “The two sides acknowledged that the maintenance of peace, stability, safety, and freedom of navigation in the South China Sea is in the common interests of the international community and that all territorial disputes in the South China Sea should be resolved through a collaborative, diplomatic process without coercion or the use of force.” Still, in its concluding remarks the statement notes that “The U.S. side reiterated that the troubling incidents [in the South China Sea] in recent months do not foster peace and stability within the region.” This makes plain the interest that the United States has in the friction arising between Vietnam and China.

Although Vietnam is clearly moving relatively closer to the United States, it is still too early to say that this is intended as a clear sign from Vietnam of confrontation with China. Progress in the ASEAN-China relationship particularly in economic affairs underlies Vietnam’s attitude toward China, as does the strictly Vietnamese element of China’s long and strong historical influence. In reality, accomplishments in Vietnamese-Chinese security cooperation have continued to grow even as tensions grew in the South China Sea. On June 21, two Vietnamese naval patrol boats called on Zhanjiang in Guangdong Province and later conducted joint patrol of the Gulf of Tonkin. *Quan doi Nhan dan* carried reports that the

Chinese had called this a contribution to maintaining calm and ensuring stability in the region.

Vietnam is also maintaining an exchange of important representatives and conducting frequent bilateral talks with China. On June 25, Vietnam's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ho Xuan Son visited China and met with Minister of Foreign Affairs Yang Jiechi and State Councilor Dai Bingguo. In these talks the two countries agreed on peaceful settlement of South China Sea issues and on early adoption of basic principles to guide the settlement of maritime border issues. Deputy Defense Minister Nguyen Chi Vinh's visit to China in late August produced agreement to establish a hotline linking the Vietnamese and Chinese defense establishments, while State Councilor Dai Bingguo's early September visit to Vietnam achieved bilateral agreement on peaceful reconciliation of issues in the South China Sea. Nguyen Phu Trong, general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, visited China October 11–15 and concluded an agreement on the basic principles for the settlement of maritime border issues. Thus while at times making small moves to shift toward the United States, Vietnam is also paying attention to stabilizing its relations with China and seeking stable balance between the United States and China.

Here, however, it is also necessary to pay attention to Vietnam's anti-Chinese nationalists. Anti-Chinese demonstrations broke out in Vietnam in 2007 over the South China Sea issue, but the authorities' crackdown prevented the demonstrations from spreading at that time. Most recently, however, there were eleven anti-Chinese demonstrations in the capital Hanoi from early June through late August 2011. The authorities vacillated in their response to the demonstrations: The first four were tacitly permitted by being ignored and the next three were broken up by force, but the following three demonstrations were again given the blind eye. The last demonstration in August was once again forcibly dispersed. Later, on November 27, some thirty demonstrators attempted to parade in opposition to the Chinese but were broken up by the authorities. It is assumed that the Chinese government pressured the Vietnamese government to suppress such anti-Chinese demonstrations. For their part, the Vietnamese authorities probably sought a balance between being pressured by the Chinese on the one hand while suppressing the citizenry's anti-Chinese sentiments on the other without excesses that would generate criticism of the authorities and their policies.

In contrast to the Philippines' active attempts to bring US involvement in

response to South China Sea issues based on their mutual defense treaty, Vietnam's response to incidents will likely continue to be policies for cautiously drawing closer to the United States while exercising careful consideration of China. In addition, Vietnam will likely try to maintain a balance between the United States and China and build on that balance by broadly diversifying its relationships outside its own region, while also trying to reduce China's relative influence on Vietnam. In that sense, attention should be directed to Vietnam's approaches to India. On September 14, Deputy Defense Secretary Shashi Kant Sharma visited Vietnam to take part in the Sixth Vietnamese-Indian Strategic Defense Dialogue at the deputy ministerial level, and September 15–17, External Affairs Minister S. M. Krishna made an official visit to Vietnam. Minister Krishna engaged in bilateral talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs Pham Binh Minh, and regarding South China Sea issues, the two sides agreed on the importance of freedom of navigation in those waters and the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Declaration on Conduct. Media reports indicate that Minister Krishna also assured Minister Minh that despite strong objection from China, India intended to carry out plans for joint development in the South China Sea by its Oil and Natural Gas Corporation and Vietnam's national petroleum corporation Petrovietnam.

In addition, during the same general period as Vietnamese Communist Party General Secretary Trong's visit to China, October 11–13, State President Sang visited India. The joint statement released to mark that visit included the two countries' reference to peaceful settlement of issues in the South China Sea and also confirmed the execution of a memorandum on joint development there. Deputy Defense Minister Vinh also accompanied President Sang on this visit to India and met with Deputy Defense Secretary Sharma. They agreed in their talks to promote cooperation between their two countries' defense establishments. At present, any Indian involvement in the South China Sea is based on its bilateral relations with Vietnam and in particular on its cooperation in economic development; there is a clear line drawn between such Indian involvement and questions of territorial rights. But as the relations between India and Southeast Asia deepen, and as India finds heightened strategic interest in maritime security in areas including the Indian Ocean, the Malacca Straits, and the South China Sea, attention will be paid, both in terms of security and in terms of a regional

balance between India and China, to see just how far Indian involvement in the South China Sea will expand.

(3) ASEAN Chair Indonesia and ASEAN-related Meetings

Indonesia, the ASEAN chair during 2011, placed South China Sea issues on the agenda of various ASEAN-related meetings, just as the preceding chair Vietnam did during 2010. The aim was to find a solution to such issues within a framework of multilateral discussions that include countries from outside the region. The Indonesian approach reflects a policy that has been applied ever since the South China Sea issues surfaced as an important challenge for ASEAN in the 1990s, a policy of using Track II dialogues to build trust with China while also using negotiations between ASEAN and China on matters such as the Declaration on Conduct adopted in 2002. At the joint press conference held on March 9, 2011, following a meeting between Philippines President Aquino and Indonesian President Yudhoyono, the latter announced that the South China Sea would be on the agenda for the East Asian Summit scheduled for October.

China, on the other hand, has viewed the South China Sea issues as bilaterally treated issues with the ASEAN country involved, and the Chinese diplomatic posture seems aimed at preventing ASEAN's monolithic approach. Premier Wen Jiabao visited Malaysia and Indonesia at the end of April, shortly before the ASEAN Summit in May. Immediately preceding these visits Wen was interviewed by leading Malaysian newspaper *Star* on April 25; at that time Wen held that territorial issues were by far bilateral issues, and he indicated opposition to taking up such bilateral issues within multilateral frameworks.

Given this Chinese position, the Chair's Statement at the Eighteenth ASEAN Summit held in Jakarta May 7–8 went through an interesting course of changes as it addressed the South China Sea issue. As released on May 8, it included the remark that South China Sea issues were best handled either bilaterally or among the states concerned, which seems to closely reflect the Chinese position. This wording does not appear in the Chair's Statement from the Seventeenth Summit, and according to press reports, it was not included in the final draft statement prepared before the meeting, so it would seem to be a hurried addition made at some point during the meeting after completion of the final draft. By May 11, however, that passage had been cut and replaced by reference to "the need to further intensify the efforts of both ASEAN and China"; that is the final version

carried on the ASEAN Secretariat's website. It is reported that the change resulted from Vietnamese objection to the reference to a "bilateral solution."

If these press reports are true, one can imagine a situation where a push was made during Premier Wen's visit to Indonesia to have the Chinese position reflected in the ASEAN Summit Chair's Statement, with Indonesia initially accepting those urgings. Later, however, the phrasing would have been returned to its final draft version in the face of objections from Vietnam and other member states that are not in favor of solution to South China Sea issues through bilateral consultation with China.

But even though there may not have been uniform agreement, it seems that in the end, those parties supporting continuing ASEAN's search for peaceful solutions to South China Sea issues in an ASEAN-China context were successful. The Fifth ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) held May 19, 2011, again addressed issues in the South China Sea, and the ADMM joint declaration indicated the intention to continue efforts to put the Declaration on Conduct fully into effect and to adopt the code of conduct. The question for the future, however, will be just how effective ASEAN can show itself at maintaining a coordinated ASEAN position and drawing on such unified policies to provide the power of collective diplomacy during actual negotiations with China, especially when Chinese concessions are being sought.

At the various ASEAN meetings held during July, ASEAN and China addressed the settlement of South China Sea issues and achieved some measure of agreement. The ASEAN-China Senior Officials' Meeting on July 20 agreed on the "Guidelines for the Implementation of the Declaration on Conduct." These Guidelines lay out specifics for cooperative activities under the Declaration on Conduct, and newly established requirements include that all parties concerned must agree; that experts will be consulted if necessary; and that progress in carrying out such cooperative activities will be reported annually at the China-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting. While the Guidelines do make specific reference to a "code of conduct," they do not lay out any substantive steps to create such a code, and reflecting Chinese opposition, the Guidelines omit any reference to multilateral consultations. The Guidelines were formally adopted at the China-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the 21st.

The ASEAN and Chinese agreement on the Guidelines was welcomed by government leaders from China and Vietnam, ASEAN Secretary-General Surin,

and the Indonesian foreign minister among others. In contrast, the Philippines' foreign secretary expressed dissatisfaction over the inadequacy of the contents of the Guidelines and the lack of a clear indication of when the Declaration on Conduct would be adopted. It is possible to speculate that those approving of the adoption of the Guidelines see this as an opportunity, for example, to show the international community that tensions between China and the ASEAN states over the South China Sea have been reduced; it would also be a good opportunity, they might well think, to avoid the involvement of the United States by demonstrating that China and ASEAN can solve any South China Sea issues by themselves. Vietnam's reaction may well result from the view that this sort of political commitment will make it possible to soften China's rigid positions to some extent and also that progress in ASEAN-China consultations can contribute to reducing Vietnam's bilateral tension with China. Positive comments from the ASEAN Secretariat and Indonesia as the ASEAN chair regarding agreement on the Guidelines may reflect the aim of using this progress in ASEAN-China consultations toward settlement of the South China Sea issues to make a positive impression on the international community.

From the Philippines' standpoint, however, such guidelines that only touch on the "cooperative activities" of the Declaration on Conduct are wholly inadequate as a foundation for a legally binding code of conduct capable of preventing aggressive or expansionistic actions in the South China Sea that could result in military conflict among the countries concerned. The fact in particular that there was no discussion of a mechanism to prevent disputes (at times accompanied by force) made it difficult for the Philippines to view formulation of these Guidelines as promoting the peaceful resolution of South China Sea issues.

The fait accompli of approval of the Guidelines may have provided some measure of dramatic effect as show of political compromise between China and ASEAN, but the road ahead to adoption of the kind of substantive code of conduct sought by ASEAN is still unclear. In reality, China remained opposed to references to "multilateral consultations" in the Guidelines, and refused any discussion of the code of conduct itself. As China increases its national power and expands its influence over ASEAN, it loses motivation to make concessions over the South China Sea. The situation in the South China Sea thus will remain unstable, and depending on China's future actions, the outbreak of sporadic tensions will remain possible. In informal talks on September 24 during the UN

General Assembly, the ASEAN foreign ministers agreed to establish a senior officials meeting to discuss producing a draft of the code of conduct, but a variety of diplomatic difficulties are expected in producing the code, from setting up a forum for discussion with China to achieving the final agreement with China on its contents. Later, in November, Premier Wen Jiabao spoke at the ASEAN Summit and indicated China's readiness to start discussion of producing the code of conduct, showing willingness to make some level of compromise with ASEAN. In the end, however, agreement between ASEAN and China to draw up

Guidelines for the Implementation of the "Declaration on Conduct"

Reaffirming that the Declaration on Conduct is a milestone document signed between the ASEAN Member States and China, embodying their collective commitment to promoting peace, stability and mutual trust and to ensuring the peaceful resolution of disputes in the South China Sea;

Recognizing also that the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on Conduct will contribute to the deepening of the ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity;

These Guidelines are to guide the implementation of possible joint cooperative activities, measures and projects as provided for in the Declaration on Conduct.

1. The implementation of the Declaration on Conduct should be carried out in a step-by-step approach in line with the provisions of the Declaration on Conduct.
2. The Parties to the Declaration on Conduct will continue to promote dialogue and consultations in accordance with the spirit of the Declaration on Conduct.
3. The implementation of activities or projects as provided for in the Declaration on Conduct should be clearly identified.
4. The participation in the activities or projects should be carried out on a voluntary basis.
5. Initial activities to be undertaken under the ambit of the Declaration on Conduct should be confidence-building measures.
6. The decision to implement concrete measures or activities of the Declaration on Conduct should be based on consensus among parties concerned, and lead to the eventual realization of a Code of Conduct.
7. In the implementation of the agreed projects under the Declaration on Conduct, the services of the Experts and Eminent Persons, if deemed necessary, will be sought to provide specific inputs on the projects concerned.
8. Progress of the implementation of the agreed activities and projects under the Declaration on Conduct shall be reported annually to the ASEAN-China Ministerial Meeting (PMC).

Source: Website of the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

a code of conduct is already clearly included in the Declaration on Conduct adopted in 2002 and in the July 2011 Guidelines. In that sense, it is difficult to tell whether China's assertion that it agrees to start discussion of the code is intended to mark the end of past efforts to put off actually producing a code, or whether making that assertion without setting any limits on the process from start of discussion to finalization of contents is nothing more than a new way of expressing the intention of continuing to delay. Thus even though ASEAN received a commitment from China, it will be necessary to see more substantive progress before concluding that the process toward adopting a code of conduct for South China Sea issues is now truly underway. It will also be very important in that respect to build on the new involvement of the United States and other countries outside the region as seen at the recent East Asian Summit to continue to address China within a multilateral consultation framework.

ASEAN member states that on the one hand do not have any territorial issues in the South China Sea and that are deepening their bilateral ties with China on the other can reasonably be expected to display understanding of the Chinese position. Actually, when Myanmar's President Thein Sein visited China in May 2011, he expressed support for China's position on the South China Sea, and at the East Asian Summit in November, Cambodia and Myanmar refrained from commenting on South China Sea issues. At various ASEAN meetings during 2010, Thailand also showed a readiness to understand China's position on those issues. In this sense, the positions of the ASEAN member countries toward the South China Sea, like their positions on other issues, are not identical; it will be far from simple for ASEAN to maintain uniform positions and create the necessary conditions for substantive negotiations with China. The ASEAN chair nation for 2012 is Cambodia, and it is possible that it will afford China more consideration and maintain a low profile for discussion of South China Sea issues in ASEAN meetings.

3. Progress in Nontraditional Security Cooperation through Multilateral Frameworks—Focus on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

While traditional security issues such as the South China Sea issue reignited in Southeast Asia, progress has also been made in recent years on security cooperation between ASEAN and countries outside the region, centering on support for HA/DR. The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in particular has compiled a record of

joint training exercises in disaster relief. The first exercise was conducted in the Philippines in 2010, followed by the second ARF Disaster Relief Exercise (DiREx) March 15–19, a joint undertaking by Japan and Indonesia. This DiREx took place in Manado on the island of Sulawesi and supposed that damage had been caused by a major earthquake and tsunami bring the president of Indonesia to request support from the other ASEAN countries. This exercise—which took place mere days after the Great East Japan Earthquake—still drew participation from some forty Japanese primarily from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the sponsoring countries Japan and Indonesia, the ASEAN member states and most of the major countries in the Asia-Pacific region participated, including the United States, China, Australia, South Korea, and India. In addition to search and rescue operations and tabletop exercises based on the above scenario, the training exercise also included civilian activities for medical care and recovery.

The expanded ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) inaugurated in 2010 also actively carried out similar undertakings. The First ADMM-Plus in October 2010 approved establishment of the ASEAN Defence Senior Officials' Meeting-Plus (ADSOM-Plus) and the ADSOM-Plus Working Group (ADSOM-Plus WG). Since ADMM-Plus meets only once every three years, ADSOM-Plus and the ADSOM-Plus WG were designed to conduct discussion in the interim on implementing matters approved at ADMM-Plus. The First ADSOM-Plus WG met in Dalat, Vietnam, in December 2010, followed by the Second ADSOM-Plus WG in February 2011 in Surabaya, Indonesia. Following the Second ADSOM-Plus WG, the First ADSOM-Plus met in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, in April 2011. The countries attending this meeting adopted a concept paper for the five Experts' Working Groups (EWGs) described below and formally inaugurated these EWGs. In addition, the meeting conducted an exchange of opinions on broad-ranging subjects including traditional security undertakings.

The First ADMM-Plus also confirmed that cooperation would be carried out in five areas of nontraditional security (maritime security, military medicine, peacekeeping operations, counterterrorism, and HA/DR), and five EWGs were set up to plan specific types of cooperation. The countries that would serve as joint chairs of the various EWGs were Malaysia and Australia for maritime security, Japan and Singapore for military medicine, the Philippines and New Zealand for peacekeeping, Indonesia and the United States for counterterrorism, and Vietnam and China for HA/DR. The first meetings of the EWGs were held

in July 2011 for maritime security and military medicine, September for counterterrorism, and November for HA/DR and peacekeeping. It is notable that Vietnam and China served as joint chairs of the EWG on the nontraditional security areas of humanitarian assistance/disaster relief and peacekeeping during a period when the traditional security issue of the South China Sea was active on the

one hand and on the other hand cooperation between ASEAN and countries outside the region, including China, was being strengthened in those nontraditional areas. It is hoped that the building of trust through security cooperation will prove effective in reducing somewhat the tensions raised by the territorial issues.

In the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake, interest in security cooperation between Japan and ASEAN has been naturally focused on HA/DR. The fact that following the earthquake all of the ASEAN countries sent personnel and material assistance to Japan reflects the amicable and cooperative relations built up between Japan and ASEAN over the decades. In addition to relief from the individual countries, ASEAN chair Indonesia made a call for support that was answered on April 9 by discussion of relief in the Special ASEAN-Japan Ministerial Meeting held in Jakarta. At the meeting Foreign Minister Takeaki Matsumoto expressed Japan's gratitude for aid from the ASEAN countries and expressed Japan's readiness to contribute both to international efforts to increase the safety of nuclear power generating plants and to ASEAN's further development. The ASEAN representatives expressed their gratitude for all the past support provided to ASEAN by Japan, and said that they were looking forward to further growth and strengthening of the Japan-ASEAN relationship. According to the Chair's Statement from the meeting, Japan and ASEAN share experience in dealing with natural disasters and the lessons learned through such experience, and they had agreed to further their cooperation in disaster relief through DiREx and similar channels. Japan and the various individual ASEAN member states are exploring a range of approaches to nontraditional security within their overall

bilateral security cooperation. For example, Japan's National Defense Program Guidelines state that Japan will seek to promote greater stability within the Asia-Pacific region by supporting capacity building by all the countries in the region, including the ASEAN states, regarding such nontraditional security concerns as disposal of mines and unexploded shells. At the end of September, the Third ASEAN-Japan Meeting of Senior Defense Officials on Common Security Challenges in the Asia-Pacific Region confirmed that security cooperation between Japan and ASEAN had progressed from discussion to carrying out such cooperation in concrete forms.

4. Military Trends in Southeast Asia

(1) The South China Sea Issue Influences Military Procurement Trends

The reoccurrence of issues in the South China Sea has significantly influenced the military procurement patterns of the countries of Southeast Asia, especially those that have territorial disputes there. Given such reoccurrence, recent military procurement by the Philippines seems designed to reinforce its defense of those areas in the South China Sea that are already under its effective control. The US Coast Guard Cutter *Hamilton* purchased by the Philippines arrived there in August 2011, and on November 9, the Philippine Navy announced that it was purchasing a second *Hamilton*-class cutter from the US Coast Guard, which would be delivered in 2012. The Chief of Staff of the Philippine Armed Forces stated on March 28 that there are plans to budget 8 billion Philippine pesos for procurement of patrol boats, patrol planes, and air defense radar systems. In addition, the Philippines Department of Budget and Management announced on September 7 that an additional 4.95 billion Philippine pesos would be budgeted for reinforcement of defense capabilities in the South China Sea. Furthermore, the Philippine Armed Forces has plans to install radar sites



US Coast Guard Cutter *Hamilton* sold to Philippine Navy, renamed *Gregorio del Pilar*
(US Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class (SW) Mark Logico)

on nine of the Spratly Islands, improve the airfield on Pag-asa Island, and purchase six fighters to deal with foreign aircraft intruding into Philippine airspace. Candidates for purchase are the South Korean TA-50 Golden Eagle and the Italian M-346. The Philippine Navy has also indicated its intention to purchase a submarine by 2020.

Vietnam has recently been pushing forward with the modernization of its equipment and facilities, seemingly for the primary purpose of strengthening defense of those parts of the South China Sea under its effective control. Russia is Vietnam's main source of procurement, and it contracted in 2007 to buy two *Gepard*-class frigates from Russia, receiving the first in March 2011 and the second the following July. Media reports indicate that Vietnam was negotiating with Russia for additional purchases of coastal defense systems, and in 2015 or 2016 it should receive the first of the six *Kilo*-class submarines it purchased from Russia in 2009. During the September 2011 Vietnamese-Indian Strategic Defence Dialogue at the deputy ministerial level India indicated its readiness to cooperate in the training of crews for those submarines.

In terms of procurement trends not related to the South China Sea, South Korea has seen remarkable growth in its weapons exports to Southeast Asia. In addition to the South Korean sales to the Philippines noted above, it is promoting its sales to Indonesia. In April 2011 the two countries signed a final contract for joint development of a next-generation fighter aircraft, and in May reached agreement on exporting South Korean T-50 training aircraft to Indonesia. On December 20, the Indonesian Ministry of Defense concluded a final contract with South Korea's Daewoo Shipbuilding & Marine Engineering Company for construction of three *Changbogo*-class submarines.

(2) Trends in Joint Military Exercises—A Mixture of Checking and Cooperating with China

The majority of bilateral and multilateral joint military exercises and military exchanges the United States conducted in Southeast Asia during 2011 give the impression of an expanding US involvement in the region against a backdrop of the issues in the South China Sea and growing Chinese influence. An annual bilateral exercise with the Philippines, Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) based on the US-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty, was conducted June 28 through July 8 on Palawan Island in the South China Sea. Palawan was

also the site for the October 17–28 annual Amphibious Landing Exercise by the two countries' marines, the first time for this exercise to take place in the South China Sea.

During 2011, the US Navy conducted military exchanges and joint exercises in the South China Sea with the Vietnamese Navy, following on similar activities in 2010. Three US naval vessels—two Aegis destroyers and a rescue vessel—called in the port of Da Nang in central Vietnam July 15–21 and participated in bilateral exercises. Referring to these exercises, the US commander, Adm. Thomas Carney, made clear they were a way of maintaining a US presence in the South China Sea, while Vietnamese reporting was much sparser than in 2010, suggesting Vietnamese concerns not to cause China any excessive irritation through such growth in its military exchanges with the United States. On August 13, the aircraft carrier USS *George Washington* visited Vietnam, repeating its visit of the previous year; Vietnamese government dignitaries were invited aboard. In late August, the high-speed combat support ship USNS *Richard E. Byrd* called in Cam Ranh Bay for a week of maintenance. Security assistance in 2011 other than port calls included the August signing of a statement of intent regarding cooperation on military medicine by the US Department of Defense and the Vietnamese Ministry of National Defense, as well as the signing of a memorandum on promotion of maritime security cooperation by those agencies that took place at the Second US-Vietnam Defense Policy Dialogue in September in Washington, DC.

As symbolized by the higher levels of activity in bilateral joint exercises and military exchanges by the United States with the Philippines and with Vietnam, one of the most obvious military trends among the countries of Southeast Asia during 2011 was drawing closer to the United States while seeking to check China. Still, it should not be overlooked that the cooperative relations between China and ASEAN that began in the last decade have progressed toward expansion and development of cooperation into the security sphere. Among the most notable activities of 2011 would be the Thai “Blue Assault” and Singaporean “Corporation” exercises, followed by the first bilateral joint exercise between Indonesia and China. “Sharp Knife 2011” was conducted June 6–17 and focused on hostage rescue operations by the two countries' marines. When considering the relations between ASEAN and China in terms of security affairs, it is all too simple to put the focus on recent years' sources of tension in the South China Sea; attention should also be given to how China is trying to build ties regarding

security cooperation through such means as joint training exercises with the ASEAN members, even with countries like Vietnam that are particularly subject to tension over the South China Sea. The ASEAN-China relationship thus is getting both closer and more complicated, encompassing not only a growing economic interdependence but also South China Sea tensions.