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**Research Report**

## Security cooperation in East Asia: Structures, trends and limitations

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# SWP Research Paper

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and Security Affairs

*Guidrun Wacker*

## Security Cooperation in East Asia

Structures, Trends and Limitations

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**Security Cooperation in East Asia:  
Structures, Trends and Limitations**

The region of East Asia, encompassing Northeast and Southeast Asia as well as China, is currently confronted with a plethora of traditional and nontraditional security problems: conventional and nuclear armament, territorial disputes, historically determined animosities, resource conflicts, major power rivalries, natural catastrophes, piracy and more. China's economic rise, its military modernization and its foreign policy stance have led various countries in the Asia-Pacific region to perceive it as a threat. Some of them are therefore pursuing a strategy of "hedging" vis-à-vis China, usually by seeking closer ties with the US.

East Asia is home to a complex web of partially overlapping multilateral forums, the most important of which – the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the East Asia Summit (EAS) – are formed around the ten Southeast Asian countries that have united in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). But the focus of these platforms lies on nontraditional, "soft" security issues. If solely for this reason, the US tends to view the regional formats as complementary to their own bilateral defense alliances, which continue to be the real backbone of US security policy in the Asia-Pacific region. The EU and its member states, in contrast, have so far played only a marginal role in the regional mix of alliances, bilateral and trilateral security cooperation and multilateral organizations.

The present study comes to the following conclusions and recommendations:

- ▶ Although they are active in multilateral forums, the central actors – the US, China and Japan – prefer bilateral forms of security cooperation. In the early 2000s, China initiated military exchange with countries in and beyond the region, primarily on a bilateral level. Under President Obama the US announced that it was shifting its focus to Asia and would become more involved in regional forums, but it has remained committed to its bilateral alliances. At the same time, the "allies and friends" of the US have intensified their security cooperation with each other. Japan is particularly active in this regard. Military contacts between the US and China are also being expanded, which can at least help to reduce the risk of miscalculation on both sides.

- ▶ China does not automatically perceive bilateral and trilateral security cooperation as anti-Chinese alliance-building, particularly since China itself actively pursues defense diplomacy (albeit without alliances). However, Beijing criticizes US alliances as an obsolete relic of the Cold War.
- ▶ The US and its partners in the region – above all Japan, South Korea and Australia – share an interest in supporting the regional cohesion of the ten South-east Asian countries and the formats affiliated with them. By doing so, they hope to prevent those ASEAN countries that have territorial disputes with China from becoming isolated. The ASEAN member states, for their part, are trying to keep both China and the US involved in the region in order to avoid having to decide between the two.
- ▶ There are signs that Washington's bilateral alliances and security partnerships are being strengthened. If the complex conflict situation in the Asia-Pacific region narrows down to a struggle between China and the US for regional dominance, there is a risk that the already relatively weak consensus-based security forums of the region could become "hostages" of the major power conflict and continue to lose influence.
- ▶ The EU and European countries play virtually no role in the hard security issues of the region or in the bilateral and trilateral formats. There is, however, military exchange between individual member states – and increasingly the EU itself – and partners in East Asia. European countries influence the security situation by increasing weapons exports to the region, albeit without any discernable coordination within Europe.
- ▶ The EU should continue to support ASEAN and its affiliated organizations – but it should be aware of the limitations of these formats when it comes to addressing traditional security issues. If the EU aspires to be accepted as a member of the East Asia Summit, as it has declared, then it must at the very least demonstrate continuous high-level political commitment, which so far has not been consistently the case.
- ▶ While the EU and member states should make clear what interests they share with the US (such as freedom of navigation), they should also enhance their own profile. Particularly, they must credibly campaign for solutions based on international law. If the EU sides with Washington too vigorously or even unreservedly, it will reach only parts of the region. As unlikely as a violent escalation of conflict in the

East or South China Seas may seem – nevertheless, the EU and its member states must be prepared for it. They should therefore run through possible responses to such a situation. In general, while the countries of the Asia-Pacific region resent being lectured by the EU, offers of practical cooperation are welcomed.

# (In)Security in East Asia

## Security Challenges

The territorial conflicts in the South and East China Seas, which have flared up again since 2008, constitute only one small part of the security challenges facing East Asia.<sup>1</sup> The whole spectrum of traditional and nontraditional security problems can be found here: nuclear proliferation (North Korea), conventional arms build-up (nearly all regional countries), cross-border crime, terrorism, pandemics, natural catastrophes and others. World War II and later military conflicts in the region continue to have an effect on relations today; some countries have yet to conclude peace treaties. This is the case for Russia and Japan (World War II) as well as North Korea and the US (Korean War). The historical roots of discord between China and Japan go further back (Chinese-Japanese War of 1895); tensions between Japan and South Korea stem from Japan's occupation of Korea following the Russo-Japanese War of 1905.

The current territorial disputes are focused mainly on maritime areas or islands, islets and reefs. In the past few years, of the region's acute hot spots – North Korea's nuclear and missile program, territorial conflicts in the East and South China Seas, and the dispute between Beijing and Taipei over the status of Taiwan –, tensions have eased only in the Taiwan question. But even here, the progress made is not irreversible as long as the People's Republic of China and Taiwan continue to pursue fundamentally divergent goals. China is committed to unification with the island, while Taiwan wants to maintain its status quo as a de facto independent country.

<sup>1</sup> The term "East Asia" will be hereafter used to comprise the sub-region of Northeast Asia (consisting of North and South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan Island) and Southeast Asia (the ten ASEAN member states) as well as China. The study will also include to some extent those countries that participate in the East Asia Summit, i.e. Australia, New Zealand and India, as well as – since 2011 – Russia and the US.

## Security Cooperation: Alliances, Organizations and Forums

While the region is facing a broad range of security challenges, it is at the same time home to a complex web of bilateral and multilateral security arrangements. In place of *one* regional mechanism, several partially overlapping organizations have emerged in East Asia. Some of them deal exclusively with security issues; others address additional issues as well. In contrast to (Western-)Europe, all of them are characterized by weak institutionalization.

However, the hard "backbone" of security in Pacific Asia is provided not by these diverse regional forums but by the five bilateral security alliances of the US ("hubs and spokes"). In view of the fact that China has been growing stronger in the last ten years, including in military terms, these alliances seem indispensable, which is why they have become closer and more intensive.

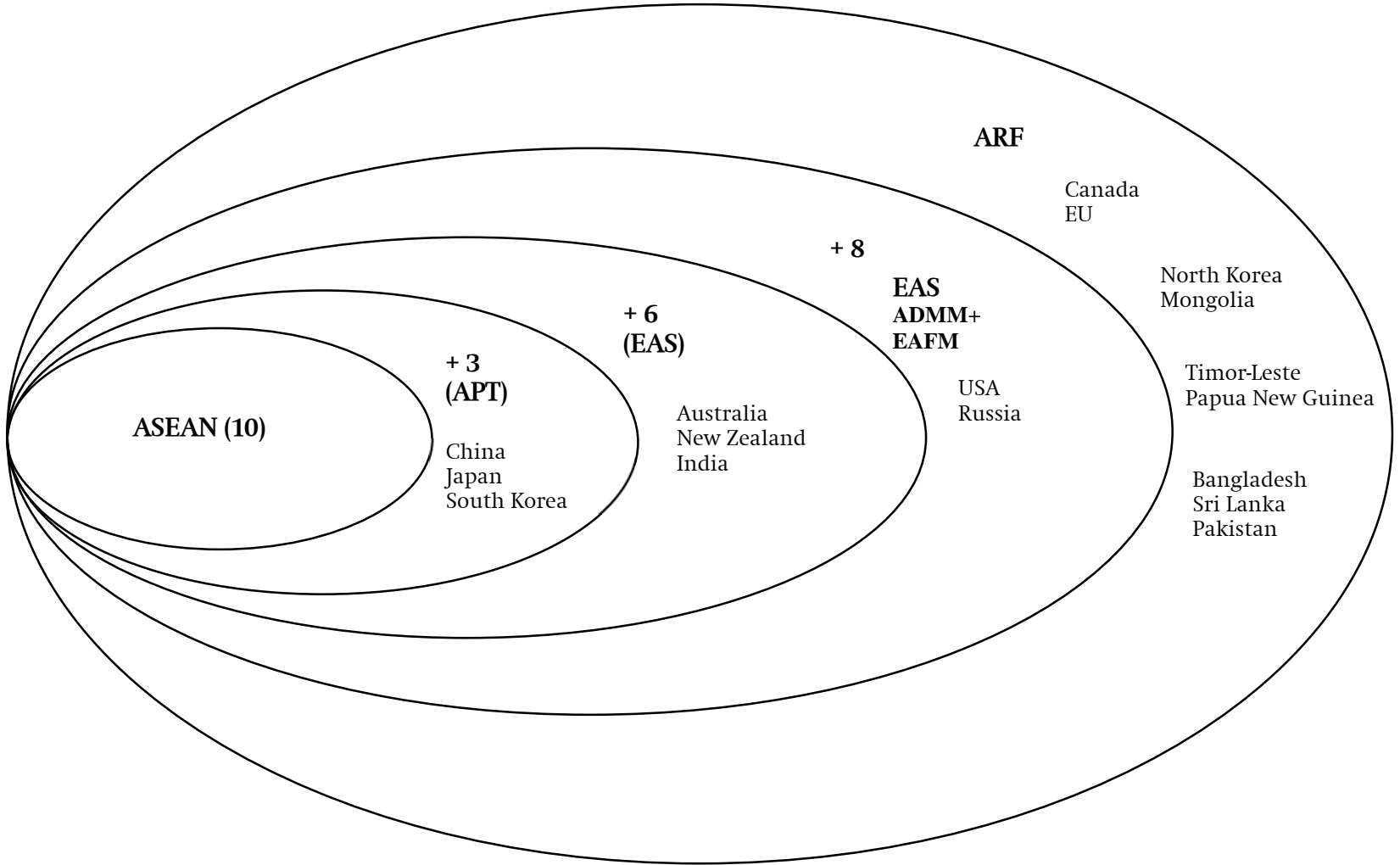
Thanks to its growing economic significance for the neighboring countries, which was accompanied by a diplomatic "charm offensive",<sup>2</sup> China had initially improved its standing in the region after the late 1990s. Since 2009, however, Beijing seems to have squandered a large part of this political capital again by assuming a stance that is perceived as aggressive.<sup>3</sup> Up until the mid-2000s it was widely hoped – particularly in Southeast Asia – that by integrating it in regional organizations, one could gradually "socialize" China. But this optimism has largely vanished due to Beijing's behavior – primarily towards smaller neighbors, but also towards Japan.

<sup>2</sup> The term "charm offensive" was first used by Joshua Kurlantzick to describe China's policy towards Southeast Asia in "China's Charm Offensive in Southeast Asia", *Current History* (September 2006): 270–76. The same author later published the book *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007).

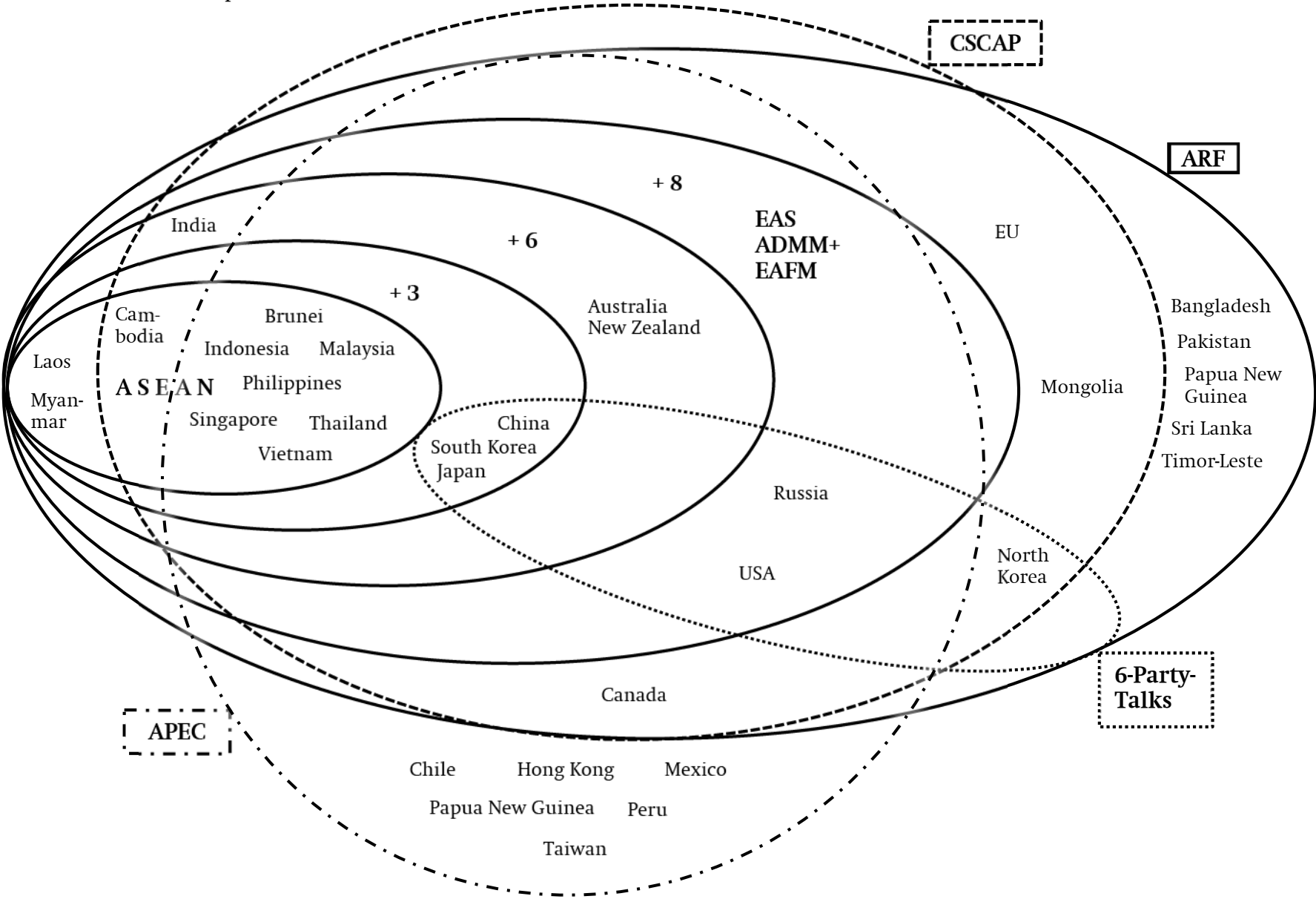
<sup>3</sup> Western and Chinese attempts to explain Beijing's behavior – the latter based on interviews conducted in China – are presented in Andrew Scobell and Scott Harold, "An 'Assertive' China? Insights from Interviews", *Asian Security* 9, no. 2 (2013): 111–31, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14799855.2013.795549> (accessed 28 September 2014).



Graph 1: Regional Organizations and Forums in East Asia  
Built Around ASEAN



Graph 2: Regional Formats in East Asia and Their Overlaps



Although China acceded to nearly all regional organizations between the early 1990s and the mid-2000s, it remained strictly opposed to any multilateralization or internationalization of existing territorial disputes. Beijing's position is that solutions can only be brokered bilaterally. That is why those countries that have frictions with China – above all Japan and the Philippines – are increasingly seeking the backup of the US and support of other partners in and beyond the region.

The US also participates in the regional forums that emerged in the 1990s. But compared with its military alliances, it attaches far less significance to these forums as they wield little authority. Immediately following the inauguration of President Obama in 2009, however, the US government resumed and increased its activity in the regional forums. Since 2011 there is no regional format in East Asia in which the US is not represented. Thus, the agenda of the regional organizations may be eclipsed by the power rivalry between the major actors, Washington and Beijing. Smaller countries of the region may also be more prepared to openly address their conflicts with China.

## Regional Implications of the Chinese-US Major Power Rivalry

Under President Obama, the US has announced a policy of *pivoting* or *rebalancing* towards Asia. Washington has been supporting this pivot through diplomatic and economic initiatives. Security issues in Asia – from Northeast Asia to Southeast Asia to South Asia – are increasingly seen as part of a competition between, on the one hand, the US as the traditionally predominant military power; on the other hand, China, which is on the rise both economically and militarily.

In China's view, the US is the actor that stands in the way of its ability to sustainably improve and enhance its own position, because the US backing of small neighboring countries such as Vietnam or the Philippines provides them with room for maneuver that they otherwise would not have. The US emphasizes its neutrality in maritime territorial disputes such as that between China and Japan over the Senkaku Islands (Jap.) or Diaoyu/Diaoyutai Islands (Chin./Taiw.) in the East China Sea. At the same time, however, Washington has declared that the disputed islands fall under the Japan-US Security Treaty, as they are de facto controlled by Japan. China's vast maritime claims are perceived by the US as a challenge to the

freedom of navigation, while China's military and paramilitary activities in the East and South China Seas are seen as aggression towards its neighbors. China, through its military modernization programs, is in the American view pursuing the goal of limiting US access to the region and its room for maneuver (termed by Washington as "anti-access/area denial" or "A2/AD").

The ten ASEAN countries<sup>4</sup> have a prime interest in avoiding having to decide between the US and China. But the aggravation of the maritime and territorial disputes in the South China Sea makes this difficult. As the regional conflicts do not affect all the ASEAN countries, it is not an easy task for the organization to formulate a unified position on China – a problem that goes all the way back to the 1990s. And Beijing has absolutely no interest in ASEAN coming to such a common position. The recent developments in the security situation add to the challenge the regional organizations are facing – and above all to ASEAN's "centrality": Enhanced US involvement in the regional formats under Obama and the context of the *pivot* are viewed by Beijing primarily as components of a containment policy directed against China.

There are signs that US bilateral alliances and security partnerships are being strengthened. If the complex conflict situation in the Asia-Pacific region narrows down to a struggle between China and the US for regional dominance, there is a risk that the already relatively weak consensus-based security forums of the region could become "hostages" of the major power conflict and continue to lose influence. This would particularly be true if the ten Southeast Asian countries united in ASEAN, around which the majority of the regional organizations have formed, allow themselves to be divided, thereby losing cohesion and solidarity.

In the following, the existing security arrangements in the Asia-Pacific region will be presented<sup>5</sup> and their

4 Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Brunei, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar.

5 The present study thus complements various SWP research papers. On Russia as an actor in the Asia-Pacific region see Margarete Klein, *Russland als euro-pazifische Macht. Ziele, Strategien und Perspektiven russischer Ostasienpolitik*, SWP-Studie 12/2014 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, July 2014). On security cooperation in South Asia see Christian Wagner, *Security Cooperation in South Asia: Overview, Reasons, Prospects*, SWP Research Paper 2014/RP 06 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, June 2014). And on Japan's security strategy under Abe see Alexandra Sakaki, *Japan's Security Policy: A Shift in Direc-*

capacities and prospects examined, focusing on developments since 2008 (when the global financial crisis began and Barack Obama was elected US President). The first part addresses the US, Japan and China; the second on regional organizations and the respective roles played by China and the US. Security relations among the countries originally represented in the East Asia Summit,<sup>6</sup> the agenda of the regional organizations, and new trends such as linkages among the “spokes”, increased bilateral, trilateral and minilateral cooperation, and the intensification of military diplomacy will be investigated. To date, there has been no such systematic overview of security cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, though numerous studies address individual formats. The limited role played by Europe in the security arrangements is also discussed.

*tion under Abe?*, SWP Research Paper 2015/RP 02 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, March 2015).

<sup>6</sup> These include the ten ASEAN countries plus China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand and India. These countries came together in 2005 for a first summit. In 2011 the US and Russia also officially became members of the EAS. For a chronology and principal EAS documents see <http://www.asean.org/asean/external-relations/east-asia-summit-eas> (accessed 25 July 2014).

## Bilateralism (plus): US, Japan and China

Unlike in Europe, in the Asia-Pacific region there was no serious attempt after World War II to forge a collective security architecture like NATO<sup>7</sup> or establish a process comparable with the CSCE/OSCE – though countries such as Japan and South Korea, which have the status of OSCE partners, would doubtless welcome such a mechanism in the region, or at least in North-east Asia. The existing regional organizations, which have for the most part formed around the Southeast Asian conglomerate of countries, ASEAN, serve as discussion forums. Like ASEAN itself, they are based on the consensus principle and wield little authority. So far initiatives aimed at establishing a deeper East Asian community have not been particularly well received in the region.

### The US and Its “Allies and Friends”

For the past six decades, US bilateral partnerships have constituted the hard security infrastructure in East Asia. Washington maintains formal alliances with five Asian countries, though these vary in scope and intensity. The system of these bilateral alliances is termed “hub and spokes” – with the US as the central element and its connections to Japan, South Korea, Australia, the Philippines and Thailand radiating outwards. The US also maintains a military bases in the Asia-Pacific region, including on the island of Guam (one of the unincorporated territories of the US), and security relations with regional countries such as Taiwan or Singapore that are tantamount to alliances.

Since 2005 there has been a series of initiatives aimed at building or intensifying security cooperation among the “spokes” (called “cross-struts”) or with other partners of Washington – commonly referred

<sup>7</sup> With the anti-Communist Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) of 1954, an equivalent to NATO in Southeast Asia was founded. But SEATO did not provide for collective defense and consisted partially of countries from outside the region, while important regional countries were missing. In addition to Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan (including East Pakistan, today Bangladesh), the Philippines and Thailand, France, the UK and the US were also members. The organization was dissolved in 1977 due to dwindling interest.

to as “US allies and friends”. Two motives can be discerned behind these efforts. First, the US expects its allies to assume greater responsibility, particularly in the wake of the financial crisis. Second, in light of the fiscal and domestic situation in the US, there is some degree of uncertainty among the latter as to how sustainable and reliable US commitment to the region will be in future. At the core of the US security architecture in East Asia are Washington’s alliances with Japan, South Korea and Australia. (Regarding these three central alliances, see also the overview in Table 1 of the Appendix, p. **Fehler! Textmarke nicht definiert.** et seq.).

### US-Japan

Down to the present day, the security alliance with Japan remains the declared “cornerstone” of US alliances in the Asia-Pacific region. In the eyes of those countries of the region that see themselves as victims of Japanese aggression during World War II – including China – this alliance has undoubtedly contributed to stabilizing East Asia by preventing Japan from potentially remilitarizing or even acquiring nuclear weapons. As Japan has restricted its military activities to pure self-defense in Article 9 of its constitution, the security agreement was asymmetric from the very start: The US committed itself to the defense of its alliance partner and incorporated it under its nuclear umbrella (*extended nuclear deterrence*), while Japan was in effect forced to circumvent an article of its own constitution in order to support the US militarily in their wars.

In the past two decades, however, the situation has gradually changed. While Japan’s involvement in the first Gulf War of 1991 was limited to financial contributions,<sup>8</sup> in the war in Afghanistan (from 2002) and the second Gulf War in 2003 it at least provided logistical and technical support (*non-combat and humanitar-*

<sup>8</sup> See, e.g., Jonathan Watts, “Japan Revisits the Gulf War”, *theguardian.com*, 20 September 2001, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/sep/20/worlddispatch.afghanistan> (accessed 11 December 2014).

ian support). This more active security role was made possible in each case by a parliamentary decision. Since Shinzo Abe reassumed the office of Prime Minister in 2012 – after a first term of office in 2006/2007 – the push to “normalize” Japanese defense policy has once again gained momentum.<sup>9</sup>

Military cooperation between Japan and the US is extensive and comprises not only joint maneuvers and the exchange of technology and information. Japan also plays an integral role in the development of US missile defense systems.<sup>10</sup>

During Prime Minister Abe’s visit to the US in April 2015, new guidelines for defense cooperation between the two countries were released.<sup>11</sup> The guidelines are designed to guarantee “seamless, robust, flexible, and effective” bilateral responses. For this purpose, a standing Alliance Coordination Mechanism was established. Areas in which cooperation will be expanded include maritime security, cyberspace and outer space.<sup>12</sup> For the first time, the guidelines include cooperation in the case of an armed attack against a third country – though Japan would not participate in combat or offensive operations. Moreover, the two allies plan to work together closely in regional and global affairs.<sup>13</sup> In order to implement the new guidelines, Japan must amend several domestic laws in accordance with the changes to Article 9 of the Japanese constitution enacted by Japan’s Cabinet in July 2014.<sup>14</sup> (This is the

article prohibiting Japan from maintaining armed forces or exercising collective self-defense.)

Until a few years ago, Japan consistently cited North Korea and its nuclear program as the main threat to its own security in its official security documents.<sup>15</sup> China’s armament efforts, in contrast, were primarily criticized as lacking in transparency.<sup>16</sup> But since 2011, China’s military build-up has been explicitly addressed as a reason for concern in Japan’s National Defense Program Guidelines<sup>17</sup> and Ministry of Defense White Papers. The aggravation of the territorial conflict with China in the East China Sea since 2010/2011 is very likely to have contributed substantially to this development.

That is why Japan has recently redoubled its efforts to establish security cooperation with other countries in the region. (For details see p. 18 et seq.)

## US-South Korea

Given the division of Korea, the primary purpose of the US-South Korean alliance is to protect South Korea from North Korea. Political frictions between South Korea and the US intermittently arise due to the divergent strategies for dealing with North Korea.

In contrast to other alliance partners in the Pacific, Japan and South Korea have in effect had their sovereignty curtailed as a result of World War II and the Korean War, respectively. In the event of war, South Korea’s armed forces remain under US operational

available to repel the attack, ensure Japan’s survival and protect its people”. See full text of the Cabinet decision: “Cabinet Decision on Development of Seamless Security Legislation to Ensure Japan’s Survival and Protect its People” (Provisional Translation), July 1, 2014, [http://japan.kantei.go.jp/96\\_abe/decisions/2014/\\_icsFiles/afieldfile/2014/07/03/anpohosei\\_eng.pdf](http://japan.kantei.go.jp/96_abe/decisions/2014/_icsFiles/afieldfile/2014/07/03/anpohosei_eng.pdf) (accessed 8 May 2015). For a short analysis of the decision see Kazuhiko Togo, “Revision of Article 9 and Its Implications”, *PacNet* no. 70 (2 September 2014), <http://csis.org/publication/pacnet-70-revision-article-9-and-its-implications> (accessed 8 May 2015).

<sup>15</sup> Sakaki, *Japan’s Security Policy* (see note 5).

<sup>16</sup> See, e.g., the section on China in *Defense of Japan 2008 (Annual White Paper)*, [http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w\\_paper/2008.html](http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w_paper/2008.html) (accessed 22 August 2013). Japan’s defense white papers have been published in full online since 2005 under [http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w\\_paper/index.html](http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w_paper/index.html).

<sup>17</sup> For the complete text, see: [Japan Ministry of Defense], *National Defense Program Guidelines for FY 2011 and Beyond*, approved by the Security Council and the Cabinet on December 17, 2010, [http://www.mod.go.jp/e/d\\_act/d\\_policy/pdf/guidelines FY2011.pdf](http://www.mod.go.jp/e/d_act/d_policy/pdf/guidelines FY2011.pdf) (accessed 22 August 2013).

<sup>9</sup> Regarding the most recent developments in Japanese security policy, see Sakaki, *Japan’s Security Policy* (see note 5).

<sup>10</sup> For an in-depth study of this issue, see Ian I. Rinehart, Steven A. Hildreth and Susan V. Lawrence, *Ballistic Missile Defense in the Asia-Pacific Region: Cooperation and Opposition*, CRS Report for Congress R43116 (Washington, D.C., June 2013), <http://fas.org/sgp/crs/nuke/R43116.pdf> (accessed 31 October 2014).

<sup>11</sup> Full text: “The Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation”, 27 April 2015, [http://www.defense.gov/pubs/20150427\\_-\\_GUIDELINES\\_FOR\\_US-JAPAN\\_DEFENSE\\_COOPERATION\\_FINAL&CLEAN.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/pubs/20150427_-_GUIDELINES_FOR_US-JAPAN_DEFENSE_COOPERATION_FINAL&CLEAN.pdf) (accessed 8 May 2015).

<sup>12</sup> See Yuki Tatsumi, “4 Takeaways From the New US-Japan Defense Guidelines”, *The Diplomat*, 29 April 2015, <http://thediplomat.com/2015/04/4-takeaways-from-the-new-us-japan-defense-guidelines/> (accessed 8 May 2015).

<sup>13</sup> See Jeffrey W. Hornung, “U.S.-Japan: A Pacific Alliance Transformed”, *The Diplomat*, 4 May 2015, <http://thediplomat.com/2015/05/u-s-japan-a-pacific-alliance-transformed/> (accessed 8 May 2015).

<sup>14</sup> The Cabinet decided that Japan could exercise the right of collective self-defense, but only if the threat caused by an attack on another country with close relations to Japan “threatens Japan’s survival and poses a clear danger to fundamentally overturn people’s right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, and when there is no other appropriate means

control. During his visit to South Korea in April 2014, President Obama agreed to continue this arrangement instead of allowing it to expire in December 2015 as originally planned.<sup>18</sup>

The frosty relations between Tokyo and Seoul constitute a problem for the US. Washington would prefer the two alliance partners to find common ground and increase their bilateral security cooperation.<sup>19</sup> There are two main obstacles to improved Japanese-Korean relations. On the one hand, Tokyo and Seoul are engaged in a territorial dispute over the small island of Dokdo (Kor.) or Takeshima (Jap.), which is controlled by South Korea. At the same time, Japan's perceived failure to conduct a critical assessment of its role in World War II (in the eyes of South Korea as well as China) regularly leads to political tensions.<sup>20</sup> Closer security cooperation between South Korea and Japan was already underway. But in 2012, an already negotiated agreement on the exchange of military information met with domestic resistance in South Korea and in the end was not signed.<sup>21</sup> As a result of their political frictions, Japan and South Korea do not conduct military maneuvers bilaterally but only trilaterally, together with the US.

When US Vice President Joe Biden visited South Korea in December 2013, he expressed to President Park Geun Hye his hope that Japanese-Korean relations would take a turn for the better.<sup>22</sup> But in late December 2013 Prime Minister Abe visited the Yasukuni Shrine, a memorial to the country's fallen troops, including several convicted war criminals. He was the first Japanese prime minister to visit the shrine since

2006. The incident caused new outrage in Seoul.<sup>23</sup> The US, which wants Japan to play a larger security role, is faced here with a twofold dilemma. On the one hand, the US supports Japan's military "normalization" but opposes Abe's nationalist agenda. At the same time, Washington must distance itself from this agenda without creating a division with Japan that China could use to its own advantage.<sup>24</sup>

## US-Australia

In contrast to Japan and South Korea, where the alliance with the US and the stationing of US troops have often met with domestic opposition, in Australia the close relationship with the US has never been seriously called into question. As far as the security situation is concerned, the end of the Cold War did not constitute a decisive turning point as it did for Europe. Australia has sent troops to every war waged by the US in recent decades, from the Korean War (1950–1953)<sup>25</sup> to the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Australia also actively supported the US-led air strikes against the "Islamic State" in 2014.<sup>26</sup>

Since US foreign policy under President Obama shifted its focus to the Asia-Pacific region, relations with Australia have also intensified. When Obama visited the country in 2011, he announced that he would increase the number of US marines stationed in

<sup>18</sup> See "Asians Got More from the American President Than He Got from Them", *The Economist*, 3 May 2014.

<sup>19</sup> See Martin Fackler and Choe Sang-Hun, "A Growing Chill between South Korea and Japan Creates Problems for the U.S.", *The New York Times*, 23 November 2013, [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/24/world/asia/a-growing-chill-between-south-korea-and-japan-creates-problems-for-the-us.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/24/world/asia/a-growing-chill-between-south-korea-and-japan-creates-problems-for-the-us.html?_r=0) (accessed 6 February 2014).

<sup>20</sup> This is above all linked to remarks made by Japanese politicians on the "comfort women", who – most of them from Korea – were forced into prostitution during the war, euphemistic depictions of World War II in Japanese schoolbooks, and visits by Japanese politicians to the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo.

<sup>21</sup> See Choe Sang-Hun, "South Korea Postpones Military Pact with Japan", *The New York Times*, 29 June 2012.

<sup>22</sup> See "Biden Hopes for Improvement in S. Korea-Japan Relations", *GlobalPost*, 6 December 2013, <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/kyodo-news-international/131206/biden-hopes-improvement-s-korea-japan-relations> (accessed 6 February 2014).

<sup>23</sup> See, e.g., "Abe's Yasukuni Visit to Have Diplomatic Repercussions: Seoul", *Yonhap News Agency*, 26 December 2014, <http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2013/12/26/11/0301000000AEN20131226004700315F.html> (accessed 4 February 2014). During his visit to Tokyo in early December 2013, US Vice President Biden apparently understood the Japanese Prime Minister to have said that he did not intend to visit the Yasukuni Shrine and subsequently conveyed this to President Park in Seoul. See Peter Ennis, "Kerry, Kishida Emphasize Alliance, Sidestep Simmering Tensions", *The Dispatch* (Japan), 9 February 2014, <http://www.dispatchjapan.com/blog/2014/02/kerry-kishida-emphasize-alliance-sidestep-simmering-tensions.html> (accessed 11 February 2014).

<sup>24</sup> Ennis, "Kerry, Kishida Emphasize Alliance" (see note 23).

<sup>25</sup> On Australia's participation in the Korean War, see: "Australia's Involvement in the Korean War", <http://koreanwar.commemoration.gov.au/> (accessed 15 August 2013).

<sup>26</sup> See "Australian Government Approves Air Strikes Targeting Islamic State in Iraq", *theguardian.com*, 3 October 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2014/oct/03/australian-government-approves-air-strikes-targeting-islamic-state-in-iraq> (accessed 30 October 2014).

Darwin for training purposes from 250 to 2,500 men.<sup>27</sup>

### US-Philippines / US-Thailand

Washington’s alliances with the Philippines and Thailand are less significant than the alliances with Japan, South Korea and Australia. The Philippines granted the US the right to station troops as early as 1947 (with two main military bases: Subic Bay Naval Base and Clark Air Base). A bilateral defense treaty was concluded in 1951. In 1992, however, the US was forced to abandon the bases when the negotiated extension of US presence foundered on domestic resistance in the Philippines. After the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the security cooperation between the two countries was revitalized, initially focusing on fighting terrorism in the Philippines.

Manila’s cooperation with the US was given a boost in 2011, when the Chinese-Philippine conflict in the South China Sea, which had already flared up in the 1990s,<sup>28</sup> again became virulent. During a visit to the Philippines in 2011, then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and her Philippine counterpart signed the “Manila Declaration”, affirming the two countries’ commitment to the security alliance.<sup>29</sup> In response to China’s actions in the South China Sea, the US expanded its weapons deliveries to the Philippines and reinforced its military presence in the region.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> See, e.g., Ben Packham, “2500 Marines on Australian Soil to Increase Defence Ties”, *The Australian*, 17 November 2011, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/obama-in-australia/us-president-touches-down-at-fairbairn-airforce-base/story-fnb0o39u-1226197111255> (accessed 15 August 2013).

<sup>28</sup> See, e.g., Ian James Storey, “Creeping Assertiveness: China, the Philippines and the South China Sea Dispute”, *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 21, no. 1 (1999): 95–118.

<sup>29</sup> Full text of the declaration: US Department of State, “Signing of the Manila Declaration on Board the USS Fitzgerald in Manila Bay, Manila, Philippines”, 16 November 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2011/11/177226.htm> (accessed 22 August 2013). On cooperation with the Philippines, see also “The U.S.-Philippines Alliance: Deepening the Security and Trade Partnership”, Kurt M. Campbell, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Testimony Before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Trade (Washington, D.C., 7 February 2012), <http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rm/2012/02/183494.htm> (accessed 22 August 2013).

<sup>30</sup> See Luke Hunt, “U.S. Increasing Military Presence in the Philippines”, *The Diplomat*, 18 December 2012.

Furthermore, the US at least considered installing part of its regional missile defense system in the Philippines.<sup>31</sup> During Obama’s visit to Manila in April 2014 a ten-year defense agreement was concluded, making it possible to rotate US ships and aircraft, store equipment and munitions, and conduct joint military exercises.<sup>32</sup> A few days after Obama’s departure, the US and the Philippines conducted such a joint maneuver. Nevertheless, Washington has so far avoided providing direct support to the Philippines in the territorial disputes with China (most recently over the Scarborough Shoal).<sup>33</sup>

The US alliance with Thailand was established in 1954 by the subsequently dissolved SEATO. In the last decade, it tended to be only marginally active, partially due to the domestic upheaval in Thailand. In 2004 the US had declared the country an “important non-NATO ally”. But there is no common perceived threat to drive the alliance. In any case, Thailand also maintains very robust political and economic relations with China.<sup>34</sup>

US cooperation with Thailand is centered primarily on disaster relief.<sup>35</sup> This cooperation is also highlighted in the “2012 Joint Vision Statement for the Thai-US Defense Alliance”.<sup>36</sup> After the devastating tsunami in 2004 and the cyclone in Myanmar in 2008, Thailand served the US, among other things, as a base for its air and sea relief operations.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>31</sup> See Li Bin, “China and the New U.S. Missile Defense in East Asia”, *Proliferation Analysis* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie, 6 September 2012).

<sup>32</sup> “Manila, U.S. Impact [sic] on Defense”, *The Washington Post*, 28 April 2014, A10.

<sup>33</sup> See on the vagueness of US support for the Philippines in the South China Sea: Renato Cruz De Castro, “Future Challenges in the US-Philippines Alliance”, *International Relations and Security Network (ISN)*, 3 July 2012, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Articles/Detail/?id=144535> (accessed 22 August 2013).

<sup>34</sup> See Julius Cesar I. Trajano, “US Alliances with the Philippines and Thailand: Partnerships of Interests? – Analysis”, *RSIS Eurasia Newsletter*, 22 August 2013.

<sup>35</sup> “US President Barack Obama’s Speech to Parliament”, *The Australian*, 17 November 2011, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/obama-in-australia/obamas-speech-to-parliament/story-fnb0o39u-1226197973237> (accessed 15 August 2013).

<sup>36</sup> Full text: US Department of Defense, “2012 Joint Vision Statement for the Thai-U.S. Defense Alliance: A 21st Century Security Partnership”, 15 November 2012 (no. 904-12), <http://www.defense.gov/releases/release.aspx?releaseid=15685> (accessed 21 November 2013).

<sup>37</sup> See Emma Chanlett-Avery and Ben Dolven, *Thailand: Background and U.S. Relations*, CRS Report for Congress, RL32593



### Other US Bilateral Security Cooperation

The five formal US alliances are complemented by a series of other military relationships with regional countries and security arrangements below the threshold of alliances. They comprise, for example, conducting joint exercises, sharing military bases, or supplying and repairing combat vessels. Though they are not formal alliances, some of these partnerships – Taiwan and Singapore deserve special mention – are more important and of greater consequence than, for example, the US alliance with Thailand.

Taiwan is in effect an ally of Washington, although there have been no official diplomatic relations between the two since 1979. After the US had diplomatically recognized the People's Republic of China, it committed itself in the "Taiwan Relations Act" to helping Taiwan (or the Republic of China) defend itself.<sup>38</sup> This is accomplished primarily by delivering weapons to the island state – a practice which is sharply criticized by China. In the US publication *Foreign Affairs*, a debate was initiated in 2011 over whether the US should give up its support of Taiwan in order to sustainably improve relations with China. But there was little support for the idea among China experts and politicians in the US.<sup>39</sup>

The US has maintained close security and military cooperation with Singapore since the 1960s. In 2003 Washington offered to classify the city-state as an "important non-NATO ally", but Singapore declined. Nevertheless, the security cooperation is extensive. It comprises, inter alia, the provision of US ships in Singapore and – since 1975 – joint maneuvers. In 1990/1991, the city-state expanded the possibilities for US armed forces to use its territory as a base. In 2000 the defense ministries of the two countries concluded a first "Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement", which governs mutual support in areas such as food, fuel, transport, munitions, and equipment. In 2005 the US and Singapore signed an (unpublished) "Strategic Framework Agreement for a Closer Cooperation Partnership in Defence and Security" (SFA), which

(Washington, D.C., 5 June 2012), 12, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL32593.pdf> (accessed 21 November 2013).

<sup>38</sup> Full text under *Taiwan Relations Act*, 1 January 1979, Public Law 96–8 96th Congress, <http://www.ait.org.tw/en/taiwan-relations-act.html> (accessed 15 August 2013).

<sup>39</sup> The controversial debate was sparked by an Article by Charles Glaser, "Will China's Rise Lead to War? Why Realism Does not Mean Pessimism", *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 2 (2011): 81–91.

enhanced their cooperation in this field.<sup>40</sup> Since then they have also been conducting a "strategic security dialogue."<sup>41</sup>

In the 1990s, India<sup>42</sup> was "discovered" by the US as a "natural" (in view of its democratic system of government) strategic partner. After the end of the Cold War, cooperation was intensified; the first joint maneuvers took place in 1992 and 1994. In 1995 the US and India signed a document on security cooperation.<sup>43</sup> When India conducted a nuclear test in June 1998, Washington initially responded with sanctions. But under the presidency of George W. Bush, the partnership begun during the Clinton era was taken up again and became closer. Eventually, they renewed their security relations in a ten-year framework agreement in June 2005.<sup>44</sup> With the bilateral nuclear agreement of 2006, India's status as a nuclear power was effectively accepted internationally. After Barack Obama assumed office in 2009, relations between the US and India went through a dry spell but were then revived, including the dimension of security cooperation<sup>45</sup> – although a closing of ranks with the US continues to meet with domestic resistance in India. Delhi will continue to pursue its own independent foreign policy

<sup>40</sup> See Tim Huxley, "Singapore and the US: Not Quite Allies", *The Strategist*, July 2012, <http://www.aspistrategist.org.au/singapore-and-the-us-not-quite-allies/> (accessed 25 July 2014); [IISS], "Singapore and the US: Security Partners, Not Allies", *The International Relations and Security Network (ISN)*, 27 August 2013, <http://isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Articles/Detail/?lng=en&id=168339> (accessed 6 February 2014).

<sup>41</sup> See Ministry of Defence (MINDEF) Singapore, "Factsheet – The Strategic Framework Agreement", [http://www.mindef.gov.sg/imindef/press\\_room/official\\_releases/nr/2005/jul/12jul05\\_nr/12jul05\\_fs.html#U9IpCj3wBFo](http://www.mindef.gov.sg/imindef/press_room/official_releases/nr/2005/jul/12jul05_nr/12jul05_fs.html#U9IpCj3wBFo) (accessed 25 July 2014).

<sup>42</sup> As India is also a member of the East Asia Summit, it is taken into consideration here (in contrast to Pakistan).

<sup>43</sup> "Agreed Minutes on Defence Relations between the United States and India"; see also Ashok Sharma, *Indo-US Strategic Convergence: An Overview of Defence and Military Cooperation*, Kartikeya Paper no. 2, 2008 (Delhi: Centre for Land Warfare Studies [CLAWS], 2008), 11 et seq., [http://www.claws.in/images/publication\\_pdf/CLAWS%20Papers%20No%5B1%5D.2.%202008.pdf](http://www.claws.in/images/publication_pdf/CLAWS%20Papers%20No%5B1%5D.2.%202008.pdf) (accessed 11 December 2014).

<sup>44</sup> Full text under "New Framework for the U.S.-India Defense Relationship", 6 July 2005, <http://intellibriefs.blogspot.de/2005/07/new-framework-for-us-india-defense.html> (accessed 25 July 2014).

<sup>45</sup> See Ashok Sharma, "The U.S.-India Strategic Partnership: An Overview of Defense and Nuclear Courtship", *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, 4 July 2013, <http://journal.georgetown.edu/the-u-s-india-strategic-partnership-an-overview-of-defense-and-nuclear-courtship-by-ashok-sharma/> (accessed 25 July 2014).

and will strive to avoid siding too closely with the US against China.<sup>46</sup>

Vietnam is in a situation similar to that of the Philippines. It claims part of the South China Sea (more precisely, the Paracel Islands), over which it is engaged in a dispute with China. The rapprochement between Vietnam and the US since 2010 – which at first glance is surprising given the two countries’ history – must also be seen in the context of the resurfacing of disputes between Hanoi and Beijing over maritime areas and resource exploration. US-Vietnamese economic and security cooperation has increased considerably. For example, there are joint search and rescue exercises, and the US has relaxed its weapons embargo for non-lethal armaments. But the political system and human rights violations in Vietnam continue to hinder cooperation.<sup>47</sup>

The year 2013 saw a revival of military cooperation between the US and New Zealand, which had been severed 30 years earlier.<sup>48</sup> Washington has also renewed or intensified military and security cooperation with other countries in the region such as Malaysia, Indonesia<sup>49</sup> and Brunei. The US conducts security dialogues with these countries and/or receives support from them, for instance in maintaining US combat vessels. The US has also begun expanding airstrips on various small Pacific islands, which provide an alternative to the larger, more vulnerable military bases on Guam or Okinawa.<sup>50</sup>

For the respective countries, security cooperation with Washington means that they obtain their armaments almost exclusively from the US. This is true not only for the formal alliance partners (with the excep-

tion of Thailand) but also, for example, for Singapore and Taiwan.<sup>51</sup>

Virtually none of the US partners listed above, with the possible exception of Japan, is prepared to openly pursue a strategy of containment against China. In the last decade China has in effect become the largest trading partner for all the countries of the region. The economic interrelations in the form of regional production chains are highly developed, which is why no country wishes to be forced to choose between China and the US. But a robust US presence continues to be welcomed – also as a guarantee or deterrent against a potentially belligerent turn in the rise of China. China’s increasingly assertive stance, which is often perceived as aggressive, has prompted the countries of the region to seek Washington’s protection while at the same time endeavoring to avoid endangering their political and economic relations with China.

### Security Cooperation between the US and Multiple Partners

The US regularly conducts joint military maneuvers with various “allies and friends”. One of the largest formats is the RIMPAC (Rim of the Pacific Exercise), to which the US has been inviting Pacific Rim and other countries since 1971.<sup>52</sup> In 2012, India and Russia participated in the format for the first time, to China’s disgruntlement.<sup>53</sup> A further multinational military exercise – the largest in the world – takes place annually under the name of Cobra Gold; in addition to the US, participants include Thailand, Singapore, Japan, South Korea, Indonesia and Malaysia.<sup>54</sup> China itself has begun participating in both formats. (For further details, see p. 23 et seq.)

<sup>46</sup> See Christian Wagner, “Forging a New Alliance? Die Beziehungen zu Indien und die Zukunft der amerikanischen Weltführungs politik”, in *Weltmacht vor neuen Herausforderungen: Die Außenpolitik in der Ära Obama*, ed. by Steffen Hagemann, Wolfgang Tönnesmann and Jürgen Wilzewski (Trier, 2014): 267–86.

<sup>47</sup> See Joseph Yun, “U.S. Relations with Vietnam”, Testimony, House Committee on Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, 5 June 2013, <http://www.state.gov/p/ear/rls/rm/2013/06/210297.htm> (accessed 6 February 2014).

<sup>48</sup> See Reissa Su, “New Zealand, U.S. Resume Military Relations amid China’s Growing Strength in Asia-Pacific”, *International Business Times*, 29 October 2013.

<sup>49</sup> On the renewed partnerships of the US with Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia and New Zealand under Obama see also: Prashanth Parameswaran, “Explaining US Strategic Partnerships in the Asia-Pacific Region: Origins, Developments and Prospects”, *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 36, no. 2 (2014): 262–89.

<sup>50</sup> Geoff Dyer, “US Eyes Pacific Islands as Part of Military Strategy”, *Financial Times*, 29 April 2014.

<sup>51</sup> On the arms imports of the countries of the Asia-Pacific region, see the statistics of the SIPRI Arms Transfers Database under <http://www.sipri.org/databases/armstransfers>.

<sup>52</sup> On RIMPAC 2014 see <http://www.cpf.navy.mil/rimpac/2012/about/> (accessed 22 May 2015).

<sup>53</sup> See Miles Yu, “Inside China: China upset over RIMPAC snub”, *The Washington Times*, 4 July 2012, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/jul/4/inside-china-china-upset-over-rimpac-snub/?page=all> (accessed 7 February 2014).

<sup>54</sup> On Cobra Gold 2013 see U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific, “Multinational Exercise Cobra Gold Set to Begin in Thailand”, 18 January 2013, <http://www.marforpac.marines.mil/News/NewsArticleDisplay/tabid/919/Article/136965/multinational-exercise-cobra-gold-set-to-begin-in-thailand.aspx> (accessed 12 November 2013).

Furthermore, decades ago the US initiated two further formats, namely the Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS), which has brought together the commanders of the regional naval forces since 1988, and the Pacific Armies Management Seminar (PAMS), in which commanding army officers of the Asia-Pacific region have been participating since 1978.<sup>55</sup> At the 2014 WPNS in Chinese Qingdao, the participants agreed on a – legally nonbinding – maritime agreement (Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea, CUES) designed to regulate communication in unforeseen maritime encounters.<sup>56</sup>

In 2007 the so-called quadrilateral format was established, in the framework of which the US, Japan, Australia and India met for a security policy dialogue and conducted joint military maneuvers.<sup>57</sup> Beijing suspected that the security cooperation among the four countries was directed against China and submitted formal protests to that effect. The formation was quietly dissolved when Australia withdrew from the dialogue and the other three countries began to debate whether the quadrilateral dialogue provoked China unnecessarily.<sup>58</sup>

Security cooperation also takes place in a trilateral framework. The US, Japan and South Korea regularly conduct joint military exercises despite the tense rela-

tions between Seoul and Tokyo.<sup>59</sup> The same is true for the US, India and Japan<sup>60</sup> as well as the US, Japan and Australia.<sup>61</sup> In addition, the foreign ministers of the latter three states have been meeting regularly in a Trilateral Security Dialogue (TSD) since 2006.<sup>62</sup> Exercises in Northeast Asia, in particular, are criticized by China (and North Korea).

At the initiative of the US, in April 2014 then Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel met with his counterparts from all ten ASEAN member states – a first for this format (termed US-ASEAN Defense Forum). Topics discussed at the informal meetings included humanitarian and disaster relief as well as regional security.<sup>63</sup> It remains to be seen whether the forum will become a regular event.

## Japanese Initiatives

In recent years Japan, for its part, has forged ahead in intensifying its security cooperation with other US partners, building “struts” between the “spokes”. It has concluded agreements in military cooperation with Australia (2007, 2008, 2010), India (2008 – on the exchange of troops, JIMEX joint maneuvers and a defense dialogue),<sup>64</sup> and most recently the Philippines

<sup>55</sup> See David Capie, “Structures, Shocks and Norm Change: Explaining the Late Rise of Asia’s Defence Diplomacy”, *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 35, no. 1 (2013): 1–26 (8).

<sup>56</sup> See Shannon Tiezzi, “Small But Positive Signs at Western Pacific Naval Symposium”, *The Diplomat*, 24 April 2014, <http://thediplomat.com/2014/04/small-but-positive-signs-at-western-pacific-naval-symposium/> (accessed 4 August 2014). In 2012 China had still opposed such an arrangement. Nevertheless, representatives of the Chinese navy also made clear immediately following the 2014 agreement that it was voluntary and not valid in territorial waters, and that its application was to be negotiated bilaterally. See Sarabjeet Singh Parmar, *Naval Symposium in China: Decoding the Outcome*, IDSA Comment (29 April 2014).

<sup>57</sup> See, e.g., Brahma Chellany, “The Quad: Australia-India-Japan-U.S. Strategic Cooperation”, *Asian Age*, 3 July 2007, <http://chellaney.net/2007/07/02/the-quad-australia-india-japan-u-s-strategic-cooperation/> (accessed 12 November 2013); Brahma Chellany, “The U.S.-India-Australia-Japan Quadrilateral Initiative”, *Asian Age*, 2 July 2007, <http://chellaney.net/2007/06/01/the-u-s-india-japan-australia-quadrilateral-initiative/> (accessed 12 November 2013).

<sup>58</sup> On the positions of the individual countries see David Brewster, “The Australia-India Security Declaration: The Quadrilateral Redux?”, *Security Challenges* 6, no. 1 (2010): 1–9 (3 et seq.), <http://www.securitychallenges.org.au/ArticlePDFs/vol6no1Brewster.pdf> (accessed 31 October 2014).

<sup>59</sup> See, e.g., Kirk Spitzer, “Double-Secret Training for America’s Feuding Asian Allies”, *Time*, 17 May 2013, <http://nation.time.com/2013/05/17/double-secret-training-for-americas-feuding-asian-allies/> (accessed 4 August 2014); Matthew Pennington, “Uneasy Partners Japan, S. Korea Join U.S. Air Drills”, *Military Times*, 22 August 2013, <http://www.militarytimes.com/article/20130822/NEWS/308220015/Uneasy-partners-Japan-S-Korea-join-U-S-air-drills> (accessed 4 August 2014).

<sup>60</sup> See Niharika Manthana, “Japan to Join U.S.-India Military Exercises”, *The Wall Street Journal*, 22 July 2014, <http://online.wsj.com/articles/japan-to-join-u-s-india-military-exercises-1406043468> (accessed 4 August 2014).

<sup>61</sup> “Jets Roar over Pacific as US, Japan, Australia Conduct Military Drills”, *Fox News* (online), 7 February 2013, <http://www.foxnews.com/us/2013/02/07/jets-roar-over-pacific-skies-as-us-military-gathers-allies-in-drills-to-keep/> (accessed 4 August 2014).

<sup>62</sup> TSD was founded in 2002; since 2006 meetings have taken place at the level of foreign ministers. See J. Berkshire Miller, “U.S.-Japan-Australia: A Trilateral with Purpose?”, *The Diplomat*, 25 October 2013, <http://thediplomat.com/2013/10/u-s-japan-australia-a-trilateral-with-purpose/> (accessed 5 August 2014).

<sup>63</sup> See Carl Thayer, “US-ASEAN Defense Ministers Meet in Hawaii”, *The Diplomat*, 11 April 2014, <http://thediplomat.com/2014/04/us-asean-defense-ministers-meet-in-hawaii/> (accessed 14 April 2014).

<sup>64</sup> On Japanese-Indian cooperation see Rajan Menon, “An India-Japan Alliance Brewing?”, *The National Interest*, 22 Jan-

(2013). Furthermore, Tokyo has announced plans to increase military cooperation with Vietnam (2011) and in the area of maritime security in general (2013).<sup>65</sup>

After assuming office in December 2012, Shinzo Abe notably stepped up his country's diplomatic activities. His first journey abroad after the change of government took him to Vietnam, Thailand and Indonesia in January 2013.<sup>66</sup> Within his first year in office, he travelled to all ten ASEAN member states as well as India – also with the goal of strengthening the respective relations in the field of security. This high-ranking diplomatic exchange was flanked by Japan's foreign minister and minister of defense. Under Abe, Japan has carried out a reorientation of its policy in the region – refocusing its attention on security issues rather than economic activities. Since 2011, China's territorial disputes with Japan over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea and with Vietnam and the Philippines in the South China Sea have once again intensified. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Abe, Japan has responded by relaxing its weapons export laws and announcing plans to deliver patrol boats to Vietnam and the Philippines.<sup>67</sup>

Japan's "strategic partnership" with the Philippines, which has existed since 2011, was originally focused on economic exchange. As a result of the two countries' conflicts with China, however, since 2012/2013 the primary focus has shifted to security cooperation, especially in maritime affairs.<sup>68</sup> The Philippines has offered not only the US but also Japan access to the Subic Bay base. The Philippine foreign minister

has expressed his government's support for Japan's plans to amend its pacifist-oriented constitution and its efforts towards military "normalization".<sup>69</sup>

It even seems possible that Japan might deliver weapons to India. In 2008 the two countries issued a joint declaration on bilateral security cooperation. The defense ministers met (2011) and joint coastguard and naval exercises took place (2012). When the newly elected Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Japan in 2014, the two countries agreed to intensify their security cooperation. A memorandum of understanding on defense cooperation and exchange was signed. Furthermore, the two sides emphasized the significance of so-called 2+2 meetings (between the respective foreign and defense ministers) and dialogue among national security advisors.<sup>70</sup> However, India's outsider status in the nuclear non-proliferation regime continues to be an irritant between Tokyo and Delhi.

There are indications that Abe would also like to breathe new life into the quadrilateral format comprising the US, Japan Australia and India – he refers to this configuration as a "security diamond".<sup>71</sup> But it remains to be seen whether the other three countries are indeed prepared to form such a diamond with Japan.

## Enhanced Cooperation among Other Countries of the Region

Japan is not the only country actively pursuing security cooperation with partners in the region. Others countries, too, are endeavoring to diversify their security relations.<sup>72</sup> Over the past few years South

uary 2014, <http://nationalinterest.org/print/commentary/india-japan-alliance-brewing-9748> (accessed 24 January 2014); Harsh V. Pant, "China's Rise Leads India and Japan to Wary Embrace", *YaleGlobal online*, 30 January 2014.

<sup>65</sup> See Bhubindhar Singh, "The ADMM-Plus: A View from Japan", in *Strategic Engagement in the Asia Pacific: The Future of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus)*, ed. by Sarah Teo and Mushahid Ali, Policy Report (August 2013), 19 et seq. (20), [http://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/PR\\_Strategic-Engagement-in-the-Asia-Pacific.pdf](http://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/PR_Strategic-Engagement-in-the-Asia-Pacific.pdf) (accessed 25 August 2013).

<sup>66</sup> See "Japan Rebalances Its Strategies with Asean Nations", *The Nation*, 14 January 2013.

<sup>67</sup> See Amando Doronila, "Kishida Visit Shot in the Arm for PH", *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 14 January 2013, <http://opinion.inquirer.net/44847/kishida-visit-shot-in-the-arm-for-ph>. On Vietnam see Rajaram Panda, "ARF Summit Meeting at Naypyidaw: An Assessment", IPRIS Viewpoints, no. 151 (August 2014), 4.

<sup>68</sup> See Julius Cesar I. Trajano, *Japan-Philippines Strategic Partnership: Converging Threat Perceptions*, RSIS Commentary, no. 146/2013 (5 August 2013).

<sup>69</sup> See David Pilling, Roel Landingin and Jonathan Soble, "Philippines Backs Rearming of Japan", *Financial Times*, 9 December 2012; Trajano, *Japan-Philippines Strategic Partnership* (see note 68).

<sup>70</sup> "Modi's Japan Visit 2014: India, Japan to 'Upgrade' Defence Cooperation", *The Economic Times*, 1 September 2014, [http://articles.economicstimes.indiatimes.com/2014-09-01/news/53441851\\_1\\_defence-cooperation-defence-equipment-defence-ministers](http://articles.economicstimes.indiatimes.com/2014-09-01/news/53441851_1_defence-cooperation-defence-equipment-defence-ministers) (accessed 9 September 2014).

<sup>71</sup> See the article by the Japanese Prime Minister: Shinzo Abe, "Asia's Democratic Security Diamond", *Project Syndicate*, 16 January 2013. In this context he also speaks of the "confluence" of the Pacific and Indian Oceans. The "Indo-Pacific" concept is also used by Indonesia and Australia.

<sup>72</sup> For an in-depth analysis of the bilateral relationships within Asia see Patrick M. Cronin et al., *The Emerging Asia Power Web. The Rise of Bilateral Intra-Asian Security Ties* (Washington, D.C.: Center for a New American Security, July 2013),

Korea has started to establish such cooperation. Recently it has (again) begun pursuing “middle-power” diplomacy towards countries such as India, Australia and Canada.<sup>73</sup> Seoul was disappointed by China’s “neutral” reaction to two incidents involving North Korea in 2010 – the sinking of the corvette “Cheonan”, allegedly after having been struck by a North Korean torpedo, and the bombing of the island of Yeonpyeong off the coast of Seoul by the North Korean military. These events led to a temporary rapprochement between South Korea and Japan. But South Korea does not seem to feel threatened by China to the same extent that Japan does.<sup>74</sup> South Korea’s main concern is the (conventional) threat posed by North Korea as well as its nuclear program. And the solution to this problem is only conceivable with the support and participation of both the US and China.

Since the 1990s, India has increasingly been turning its attention to Southeast Asia. It has also recently shown an interest in developing a more robust maritime presence in the Pacific. Its “Look East” policy (more recently dubbed “Act East”)<sup>75</sup> is aimed at establishing closer ties with the countries of Southeast Asia – also in the realm of security. India’s active role in regional formats can be attributed to this goal. The Philippines, for its part, offered a strategic partnership not only to Japan but also to Australia in 2013.

But all these security cooperation formats remain significantly below the threshold of constituting defense alliances. The countries are primarily interested in strengthening their own position and securing backing for their position,<sup>76</sup> preferably without giving Beijing the impression of forming a united front against China. A second factor motivating regional countries is doubtless their awareness that the US military will be subject to fiscal constraints in the coming years. Thirdly, it is still unclear how sustain-

able the US policy of *pivoting* or *rebalancing* to Asia will be and how substantially the US will back up its rhetoric. In Obama’s second term in office, *pivot* and *rebalancing* seem to play a much smaller role than before,<sup>77</sup> and US diplomacy has – by necessity – turned its attention once more to developments in the European neighborhood (Syria/Iraq, Middle East conflict, Ukraine).

## China’s Defense Diplomacy

Until the 1970s, the People’s Republic of China had supported Communist organizations and rebel movements in other Asian countries, above all in Southeast Asia (Indochina, Burma, Thailand) by providing material assistance and training. As its relations with the countries of the region increasingly opened and normalized, Beijing abandoned this policy.

China has only one formal alliance partner – North Korea. The friendship and defense pact concluded in 1961 was never abrogated and continues to be in force.<sup>78</sup> In addition, China maintains very close relations with Pakistan, which also includes a military dimension.<sup>79</sup> But relations with North Korea and Pakistan are not free of problems. North Korea is almost entirely dependent on Chinese energy and food deliveries but has over the past several decades proved resistant to Beijing’s attempts to exert influence over the country, for instance with respect to conducting nuclear tests. China’s traditional friendship with Pakistan is strained by the instability of its South Asian neighbor and by terrorist activities in the Chinese region of Xinjiang, which borders on Central Asia and Pakistan.

[http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/CNAS\\_AsiaPowerWeb.pdf](http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/CNAS_AsiaPowerWeb.pdf) (accessed 18 August 2014).

<sup>73</sup> See, e.g., Sukjoon Yoon, “Middle-Power Cooperation between South Korea and India: Hedging the Dominance of the Great Powers”, *PacNet* no. 10 (28 January 2014).

<sup>74</sup> For a detailed analysis see Sheryn Lee, “Burying the Hatchet? The Sources and Limits of Japan-South Korea Security Cooperation”, *Asian Security* 9, no. 2 (2013): 93–110.

<sup>75</sup> “Sushma Tells Indian Envoys to ‘Act East’ and Not Just ‘Look East’”, *The Times of India*, 26 August 2014, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Sushma-tells-Indian-envoys-to-act-east-and-not-just-look-east/articleshow/40931866.cms> (accessed 30 October 2014).

<sup>76</sup> See Julio Amador III, “The Philippines’ Search for Strategic Partners”, *The Diplomat*, 23 July 2013.

<sup>77</sup> See, e.g., Shannon Tiezzi, “Has Obama Abandoned the Pivot to Asia?”, *The Diplomat*, 30 January 2014, <http://thediplomat.com/2014/01/has-obama-abandoned-the-pivot-to-asia/> (accessed 4 February 2014).

<sup>78</sup> Full text of the treaty: *Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance between the People’s Republic of China and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea*, 11 July 1961, [http://www.marxists.org/subject/china/documents/china\\_dprk.htm](http://www.marxists.org/subject/china/documents/china_dprk.htm). Article II contains the clause on mutual military assistance in case of attack.

<sup>79</sup> On China–Pakistan see, e.g., Raffaello Pantucci, “China in Pakistan: An Awkward Relationship beneath the Surface”, *RUSI Newsbrief*, 15 January 2014, [https://www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/201401\\_NB\\_Pantucci.pdf](https://www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/201401_NB_Pantucci.pdf) (accessed 4 August 2014); Andrew Small, *The China-Pakistan Axis: Asia’s New Geopolitics* (London, 2015).

Officially, China pursues a policy of eschewing alliances (the treaty with North Korea is usually not mentioned). It always emphasizes that its cooperation with other countries is not directed against third countries. This applies, for example, to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), whose members include China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Military alliances, such as those of the US, are officially attributed to a "Cold War mentality" and thus rejected.<sup>80</sup>

In the past two decades, however, China has also begun to expand military contacts with other countries, including countries in the Asia-Pacific region. Since 1995 Beijing has published white papers on defense,<sup>81</sup> which also include a section on "international security cooperation". China's leadership apparently came to the realization in the early 2000s that the positive aspects of closer military exchange with other countries outweigh the negative effects. These advantages include trust-building, an increase in operative experience, and the opportunity to demonstrate transparency – and thus to counter criticism leveled at China in this domain.

### China's Bilateral Military Diplomacy in the Region

As early as the end of the Cold War, China improved its military relations with several neighboring countries. Initially Chinese support was directed mainly at Myanmar and Cambodia in the form of equipment and training. Toward the end of the 1990s, Beijing put out feelers to other Southeast Asian countries, among them US allies. A series of joint declarations ensued, aimed at promoting closer security contacts – with Thailand, Malaysia, Brunei and Indonesia in 1999; and with Singapore, the Philippines, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam in 2000.<sup>82</sup>

The concretization of these arrangements, however, has been slow to materialize. In any case, security co-

operation between China and the countries of Southeast Asia varies in intensity. China regularly exchanges military delegations with all the ASEAN member states; in addition, Thailand, the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia and Singapore conduct security dialogues with Beijing.<sup>83</sup>

As a weapons exporter, so far China has largely restricted its weapons deliveries to those neighbors that – over an extended period of time or temporarily – were barred from other supply sources, such as Myanmar under the military regime, Cambodia, Timor-Leste, Thailand (following the coup d'état in 2006), and for a time even the Philippines (2004).

China did not start conducting joint military maneuvers until 2002, initially with Kyrgyzstan. This same year marked the beginning of annual maneuvers under the aegis of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, in which Russia and Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan) took part in varying constellations. In the maritime sector, too, China has begun carrying out joint military exercises with some of its neighbors (including even Taiwan), above all in the field of disaster relief and "search and rescue" missions. At the same time, China has intensified the travel diplomacy of its military representatives,<sup>84</sup> port calls by combat vessels, etc., with the aim of building trust. Such measures do not dispel regional concerns over Beijing's long-term ambitions, but they at least serve to create greater transparency and establish patterns of cooperation.

Joint maneuvers are also conducted with selected ASEAN member states, such as Thailand (2005 – mine sweeping, counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, HADR) and Singapore (2009 and 2010 – counter-terrorism). However, the fact that Thailand and Singapore cooperate closely with the US in the security sector limits their cooperation with China.<sup>85</sup> In 2011 and 2012, joint counter-terrorism exercises with Indonesia also took place.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>80</sup> See, e.g., Li Xiaokun and Li Lianxing, "US Military Base in Australia Shows 'Cold War Mentality'", *People's Daily Online*, 1 December 2011, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90883/7662091.html> (accessed 12 December 2014).

<sup>81</sup> The English versions can be found on the official website of the Chinese Defense Ministry, <http://eng.mod.gov.cn/Database/WhitePapers/index.htm>. The first White Paper was published in 1995; between 1998 and 2010 it was published bi-annually, the latest edition came out in 2013.

<sup>82</sup> For more details on China's military contacts in the region, see Ian Storey: "China's Bilateral Defense Diplomacy in Southeast Asia", *Asian Security* 8, no. 3 (2012): 287–310.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*: 307.

<sup>84</sup> For example, China's defense minister traveled to India in September 2012; around the same time, the deputy chief of general staff visited Vietnam, Burma/Myanmar, Malaysia and Singapore. See Zhan Shengnan and Wang Chenyan, "PLA Diplomacy to Ease Tensions", *China Daily*, 4 September 2012.

<sup>85</sup> See Storey, "China's Bilateral Defense Diplomacy" (see note 82): 302–05.

<sup>86</sup> Ristian Atriandi Supriyanto, "The U.S. Rebalancing and Indonesia's Strategic Engagement", in *Strategic Engagement in the Asia Pacific*, ed. by Teo and Ali (see note 65): 17 et seq. (18).

Since 2011 China has maintained a Defense Strategic Dialogue with South Korea. In 2014 the two states set up a military hotline, shortly after an official visit by China's new head of state and party leader, Xi Jinping, in South Korea.<sup>87</sup>

China and Australia also maintain a Defence Strategic Dialogue. During the 16<sup>th</sup> round of these talks in January 2014, the two countries concluded an action plan (Australia-China Defence Engagement Action Plan) that maps out further cooperation in maritime issues, a strategic policy dialogue, training exchange and joint exercises.<sup>88</sup> Annual summit meetings have been held since 2003, accompanied by a foreign policy and strategy dialogue between the two countries' foreign ministers.<sup>89</sup> Joint bilateral and trilateral military maneuvers in the region are planned (together with the US).<sup>90</sup>

In 2008 China and Japan had agreed to pursue joint oil and gas exploration in the East China Sea,<sup>91</sup> but there was no follow-up to this political agreement. The establishment of a direct communication line for emergency situations, over which Tokyo and Beijing have repeatedly negotiated (most recently in 2012), has yet to materialize.<sup>92</sup> In late 2011 the two countries agreed to establish a high-level dialogue on maritime affairs involving the foreign and defense ministers as

well as various other authorities. An initial meeting took place in May 2012,<sup>93</sup> but due to the ensuing tensions the format was suspended (the Japanese government had bought three of the five disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, which had previously been privately owned). In September 2014 maritime talks were resumed, which could indicate that both sides are interested in a de-escalation of the territorial conflict.<sup>94</sup> And in official statements published by Tokyo and Beijing shortly before the APEC summit in November 2014, both parties at least admitted that they had differences.<sup>95</sup> It remains to be seen whether these developments lead to rapprochement and sustainable crisis management.

Relations between China and India also remain ambivalent. In 1962 the two countries fought a war, which was resolved in China's favor. While China sorted out its national land borders with all other immediately neighboring countries in the 1990s, the border issue with India has yet to be resolved. In 1993 the two countries only agreed to maintain peace along the so-called Line of Actual Control (LAC) and to implement confidence-building measures aimed at implementing this agreement. Indeed, there has been no escalation along the border, although Chinese armed forces repeatedly encroached on Indian territory.<sup>96</sup> Since 2007 the two sides have been meeting regularly to conduct a defense dialogue, and several joint maneuvers have been conducted.<sup>97</sup> China and Taiwan, too,

<sup>87</sup> See Ankit Panda, "China, South Korea Establish Military Hotline", *The Diplomat*, 25 July 2014.

<sup>88</sup> "China, Australia Strike Agreement on Defence Action Plan", *SBS News*, 15 January 2014, <http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2014/01/15/china-australia-strike-agreement-defence-action-plan> (accessed 5 February 2014).

<sup>89</sup> Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, "People's Republic of China Country Brief", [http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/china/china\\_brief.html](http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/china/china_brief.html) (accessed 22 August 2014).

<sup>90</sup> See Rory Medcalf, "Can Military Diplomacy Keep the Peace in 2013?", *The Diplomat*, 5 January 2013. After the transition of power in Australia 2013, the new government under Tony Abbott took up these ideas, see Philip Wen and Mark Kenny, "Chinese Troops Could Train in Australia", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 April 2014, <http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/chinese-troops-could-train-in-australia-20140412-36jsx.html> (accessed 22 August 2014).

<sup>91</sup> For the contents of the agreement, see "China, Japan Reach Principled Consensus on East China Sea Issue", *Xinhua-wang*, 18 June 2008, [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-06/18/content\\_8394206.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-06/18/content_8394206.htm) (accessed 30 September 2014).

<sup>92</sup> On the issue of a hotline see also the report of the International Crisis Group *Dangerous Waters: China-Japan Relations on the Rocks*, Asia Report no. 245 (Brussels, 8 April 2013), 31 et seq., <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/north-east-asia/245-dangerous-waters-china-japan-relations-on-the-rocks.pdf> (accessed 30 September 2014).

<sup>93</sup> See Taylor Fravel, "Japan, China's Maritime Step", *The Diplomat*, 19 May 2012, <http://thediplomat.com/2012/05/japan-chinas-maritime-step/> (accessed 30 September 2014).

<sup>94</sup> See Shannon Tiezzi, "The Latest Sign of a China-Japan Thaw", *The Diplomat*, 25 September 2014, <http://thediplomat.com/2014/09/the-latest-sign-of-a-china-japan-thaw/> (accessed 30 September 2014).

<sup>95</sup> See Yuka Hayashi, "Who Gave Ground? China, Japan Tweak Translations to Claim Victory", *The Wall Street Journal*, 9 November 2014. The text of the two declarations differs in the originals (Chinese and Japanese) as well as in the English translation.

<sup>96</sup> See Bhartendu Kumar Singh, "Sino-Indian Defense Dialogue: A Panacea for the Sino-Indian Security Dilemma?", *China Brief* (Jamestown Foundation) 13, no. 6 (2013): 10–13. Such a border incident also overshadowed the first visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to India's new Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, in September 2014. See Abhaya Srivastava, "China Troops Withdraw from India Border", *BusinessInsider*, 19 September 2014, <http://www.businessinsider.com/afp-china-troops-withdraw-from-india-border-as-xi-visit-ends-2014-9> (accessed 30 October 2014).

<sup>97</sup> See Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress: Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2009*, 29,

have carried out joint maneuvers in recent years, though they have been limited to search and rescue operations.<sup>98</sup> China would like to engage in more military exchange with the island, but there are reservations on the side of Taiwan.

### China's Military-to-Military Contacts with the US

Despite their mutual “strategic distrust”,<sup>99</sup> the US and China have resumed contacts and exchange in the military sector in 1993, after Washington had put a stop to such relations in 1989 in reaction to the Tiananmen massacre.<sup>100</sup> But this area of US-Chinese cooperation has been relatively limited in scope, at least compared with their close economic and financial relations. Incidents have also regularly caused setbacks. In 1995/1996 there was a crisis in the Taiwan Strait – China reacted to Taiwan's first free elections by staging missile tests near the island. The US responded by deploying two aircraft carrier battle groups to the Strait. In 1999, during the Kosovo War, the Chinese embassy in Belgrade was bombed by NATO forces. Two years later a Chinese fighter plane collided with a US reconnaissance aircraft. The Chinese plane crashed, and the US plane was forced to make an emergency landing on the island of Hainan. These events and a series of incidents at sea demonstrate how crisis-prone the military relationship between the two countries is.<sup>101</sup> Mutual recriminations of cyber espionage and preparing for cyber warfare are a further source of friction.

In the past Beijing promptly reacted to every crisis in US-Chinese relations by suspending military dia-

[http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/china\\_military\\_power\\_report\\_2009.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/china_military_power_report_2009.pdf) (accessed 11 August 2014).

**98** For example in August 2014, see “Taiwan, China Conduct Joint Maritime Rescue Drill in Taiwan Strait”, *CAN* (online), 7 August 2014, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip/201408070025.aspx> (accessed 12 December 2014).

**99** This expression describes the distrust the US and China have of each other with respect to long-term intentions. See in detail Kenneth Lieberthal and Wang Jisi, *Addressing U.S.-China Strategic Distrust*, John L. Thornton China Center Monograph Series 4 (2012), [http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2012/3/30%20us%20china%20lieberthal/0330\\_china\\_lieberthal.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2012/3/30%20us%20china%20lieberthal/0330_china_lieberthal.pdf) (accessed 19 January 2015).

**100** In the 1980s the US even sold weapons to China.

**101** For details on the military contacts see Shirley A. Kan, *U.S.-China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress*, CRS Report for Congress RL 32496 (Washington, D.C., 20 November 2011), <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL32496.pdf> (accessed 4 February 2014).

logues and scheduled visits, for example when the US – as in 2010 – announced arms sales to Taiwan.<sup>102</sup> In January 2012, China's then head of state and party leader, Hu Jintao, ultimately agreed to invigorate and bolster military exchange with the US.<sup>103</sup> His successor, Xi Jinping, also underscored China's willingness to more robust cooperation in this area. Such declarations of intent at the highest political level have in fact helped to stabilize exchange. Since 2012 there has been a noticeably high frequency of visits and return visits by high-ranking military staff on both sides.

Various dialogue formats facilitate a relatively regular exchange of ideas between military representatives of the two sides. Three of these forums were given particular mention in the joint declaration that followed the meeting between Barack Obama and Hu Jintao in 2012: the Defense Consultative Talks (which have existed since as early as 1997 and which took place for the fourteenth time in 2013), the Defense Policy Coordination Talks (since 2006), and the Military Maritime Consultative Agreement, which focuses on safety at sea (since 1989 with interruptions).<sup>104</sup> Since 2011 the US and China have also been engaged in a Strategic Security Dialogue (SSD), which brings together high-ranking civilian and military officials within the framework of the US-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue.<sup>105</sup> In early 2014 the two countries agreed to establish a dialogue between the land forces;

**102** A list of US weapons deliveries to Taiwan can be found under “U.S. Conventional Arms Sales to Taiwan”, updated October 2012, <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/taiwanarms> (accessed 5 August 2014).

**103** See Point 9 in The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, “U.S.-China Joint Statement”, 19 January 2011, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/01/19/us-china-joint-statement> (accessed 12 August 2014).

**104** For details see Carlyle A. Thayer, “Enhancing Transparency? U.S.-China Military-to-Military Contacts and Dialogues”, Paper held at the 6th Berlin Conference on Asian Security, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Berlin, 18/19 June 2012, [http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/projekt\\_papiere/BCAS2012\\_Carlyle\\_Thayer\\_web\\_final\\_ks.pdf](http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/projekt_papiere/BCAS2012_Carlyle_Thayer_web_final_ks.pdf) (accessed 12 August 2014).

**105** See “China, U.S. to Launch Strategic Security Dialogue”, *Xinhua English News*, 6 May 2011, [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2011-05/06/c\\_13862137.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2011-05/06/c_13862137.htm) (accessed 12 August 2014); Bonnie Glaser and Brittany Billingsley, “US-China Relations: Creating a New Type of Major Power Relations”, *Comparative Connections*, September 2012, [http://csis.org/files/publication/1202qus\\_china.pdf](http://csis.org/files/publication/1202qus_china.pdf) (accessed 5 September 2013).



the remaining branches of the military services could follow.<sup>106</sup>

Though Chinese media frequently voice criticism of military exercises taking place in the Asia-Pacific region under US command, Beijing has been accepting Thailand's invitations to send observers to Cobra Gold since 2002.<sup>107</sup> In 2014 China for the first time sent a small contingent to participate in the part of the exercise dedicated to "humanitarian and civil assistance".<sup>108</sup> Other firsts include China's November 2013 participation in a US disaster relief exercise in Hawaii and its taking part in RIMPAC in the summer of 2014 (in which the Chinese contingent comprised a destroyer, a guided missile frigate, a supply vessel and the hospital ship "Peace Ark").<sup>109</sup>

When Xi Jinping and Barack Obama met at the APEC summit in November 2014, they signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Air and Maritime Encounters – a document that according to first analyses leaves some key questions open.<sup>110</sup>

Despite these increased activities and positive signals, China's military leaders cite "three obstacles" standing in the way of better military-to-military contacts between the two countries: US weapons deliveries to Taiwan, reconnaissance operations conducted

by US ships and aircraft in China's vicinity, and legal restrictions on such contacts imposed by the US Congress.<sup>111</sup>

The intensification of military exchange has certainly not been able to dispel the mutual "strategic distrust". Chinese politicians, military officials and researchers remain convinced that the US is pursuing a policy of containment towards China and enabling those regional countries with whom the US maintains military alliances to adopt a less pliant stance vis-à-vis China. Washington, for its part, assumes that the mid to long-term goal of China's military modernization is to impede US access to the Asia-Pacific region and to challenge its dominance in the Western Pacific.

**106** "China and US Slowly Building Trust between Militaries", *South China Morning Post*, 3 March 2014.

**107** See Minnie Chan and Darren Wee, "Chinese Troops Join US-Thailand Cobra Gold Military Exercises", *South China Morning Post*, 12 February 2014, <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1425918/chinese-troops-join-asia-us-drills-positive-step-amid-regional-tensions> (accessed 17 November 2014).

**108** See Nicole Yeo, "China's Participation in Cobra Gold 2014: A Golden Opportunity for the United States?", *China-US Focus*, 11 March 2014, <http://www.chinausfocus.com/foreign-policy/chinas-participation-in-cobra-gold-2014-a-golden-opportunity-for-the-united-states/> (accessed 1 August 2014).

**109** See Karon Snowden, "RIMPAC 2014: China Joins World's Biggest Naval Exercise in Waters off Hawaii for First Time", *Australian Network News* (online), 27 June 2014, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-06-27/rimpac-china/5554904> (accessed 1 August 2014). Nevertheless, China also sent a vessel to monitor RIMPAC. See Zachary Keck, "US Welcomes China's RIMPAC Spying", *The Diplomat*, 30 July 2014, <http://thediplomat.com/2014/07/us-welcomes-chinas-rimpac-spying/> (accessed 18 August 2014).

**110** See Mark J. Valencia, "The US-China MOU on Air and Maritime Encounters", *The Diplomat*, 17 November 2014, <http://thediplomat.com/2014/11/the-us-china-mou-on-air-and-maritime-encounters/> (accessed 18 November 2014). Full text of the memorandum of understanding: [http://www.defense.gov/pubs/141112\\_MemorandumOfUnderstandingRegardingRules.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/pubs/141112_MemorandumOfUnderstandingRegardingRules.pdf) (accessed 18 November 2014).

**111** See Karen Parrish, "Dempsey Urges More Strategic Dialogue between China, U.S.", *U.S. Department of Defense News*, 22 April 2012, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=119839> (accessed 12 August 2014).

## Bilateralism (plus): The Role of the Europeans

European countries and the EU play a marginal role in the security arrangements outlined above. There are, however, security dialogues and cooperation – mainly on the part of France, the UK, Germany and, increasingly, the EU itself – with several East Asian countries. In addition, Paris and London continue to maintain small military contingents in the region. France has military and civilian staff (approximately 2,500 personnel) stationed in the Southern Pacific.<sup>112</sup> The UK maintains – since the devolution of Hong Kong to China in 1997 – only one garrison in Brunei with approximately 900 personnel, several helicopters and a training center, as well as a large fuel depot and shipping piers in Singapore.<sup>113</sup> Furthermore, France and the UK, as well as Germany, maintain security dialogues and military exchange with various countries in the region such as Singapore and Australia.

In his efforts to intensify security cooperation with other countries, Japan's Prime Minister Abe has turned his attention also to Europe. In 2013/2014 Japan initiated closer cooperation with the UK as well as with France. Tokyo and London signed a framework agreement on defense cooperation (UK-Japan Defence Equipment Cooperation Framework) and an agreement on information security.<sup>114</sup> In January 2014 Japan hosted the first Japan-France 2+2 meeting between the two countries' foreign and defense ministers, in which defense cooperation was discussed, among other issues.<sup>115</sup> Abe is also making an effort

to intensify contacts with NATO (for more on this point see the next section, p. 26 et seq.).

But EU member states also conduct regular military exchange with China<sup>116</sup> – the arms embargo in place since 1989 has had no noticeable effect on relations. At their intergovernmental consultations in October 2014 Germany and China signed a “Framework for Action”. The following areas of security cooperation are identified: bilateral coordination in the framework of European-Chinese defense cooperation; cooperation in UN peace missions; training, logistical and humanitarian assistance; anti-piracy operations; practical law enforcement cooperation in the fight against cross-border crime and illegal immigration; counter-terrorism; and cyber security.<sup>117</sup>

At the EU level, then High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Lady Ashton initiated a dialogue with China on defense and security, meeting former Chinese defense minister General Liang Guanglie in Beijing in July 2012 to discuss crisis management and the fight against piracy. At the meeting, the two sides pledged to further develop their cooperation in the area of defense. Both sides want to sound out the possibilities of joint training and promote meetings between Chinese and European officers.<sup>118</sup> The first EU-China dialogue on security and defense was held in October 2014, headed by the chair-

**112** See Ministère de la Défense, *France and Security in the Asia-Pacific* [November 2013], 10, <http://www.defense.gouv.fr/content/download/261113/3194598/file/PlaquetteAsiePacifique2014ENDB.pdf> (accessed 14 November 2014).

**113** See Sir Humphrey, “On Strategy – East of East of Suez, the UK Military Presence in the Asia Pacific Region”, *THINK-Defence* (online), 25 June 2012, <http://www.thinkdefence.co.uk/2012/06/east-of-east-of-suez-the-uk-military-presence-in-the-asia-pacific-region/> (accessed 14 November 2014). The garrison in Brunei is financed by the Sultanate.

**114** See GOV.UK, “Foreign Secretary Signs Groundbreaking Defence and Security Agreements with Japan”, 4 July 2013, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-secretary-signs-groundbreaking-defence-and-security-agreements-with-japan> (accessed 12 November 2014).

**115** Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, “Japan-France Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting (Overview of the Results)”,

16 January 2014, [http://www.mofa.go.jp/erp/we/fr/page18e\\_000049.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/erp/we/fr/page18e_000049.html) (accessed 12 November 2014).

**116** See Christian Le Mière, “Enhancing Transparency: Military to Military Cooperation and Strategic Dialogues”, Paper presented at the 6th Berlin Conference on Asian Security, 18/19 June 2012, [http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/projekt\\_papiere/BCAS2012\\_Christian\\_LeMierel\\_web\\_final\\_ks.pdf](http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/projekt_papiere/BCAS2012_Christian_LeMierel_web_final_ks.pdf) (accessed 19 August 2014).

**117** See Press and Information Office of the Federal Government, *Aktionsrahmen für die deutsch-chinesische Zusammenarbeit: “Innovation gemeinsam gestalten!”*, 10 October 2014, 4, [http://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/\\_Anlagen/2014/10/2014-10-10-aktionsrahmen-dt-chin.pdf](http://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/_Anlagen/2014/10/2014-10-10-aktionsrahmen-dt-chin.pdf) (accessed 13 November 2014).

**118** Daniel Fiott, “China and the Common Security and Defence Policy”, *European Geostrategy*, 28 November 2013, <http://www.europeangeostrategy.org/2013/11/china-csdp/> (accessed 19 August 2014).

man of the EU Military Committee.<sup>119</sup> China already cooperates with the UN-mandated and EU-led anti-piracy mission Atalanta off the coast of Somalia; this serves as a concrete starting point for further exchange.

In May 2014 the EU and South Korea signed a Framework Participation Agreement, thus making Seoul the first EU security partner in the region. Once it is ratified, the agreement will enable the country to participate in CSDP missions.<sup>120</sup> A similar partnership was established with Australia in April 2015.<sup>121</sup> Other countries in the region could follow this example.

In general, military and security exchange between the EU or European countries and Asian partners serves mainly to build trust. The thematic focus is almost entirely on non-traditional security cooperation – such as disaster relief and the fight against piracy and, more recently, cyber security.

In one way, however, EU member states also have an effect on the “hard” security situation in the region. Together, they constitute the largest weapons supplier for maritime Southeast Asia<sup>122</sup> – an inexplicable situation given the seven refusal criteria listed in the Code of Conduct on Arms Exports, a “Common Position” of the EU on arms transfers to countries outside the EU.<sup>123</sup> Coordination among European weapons exporters is negligible; the exports are governed by economic, not security considerations.<sup>124</sup>

**119** See “EU, China to Hold First Dialogue on Security, Defence”, *China Daily (online)*, 9 October 2014, [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2014-10/09/content\\_18711938.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2014-10/09/content_18711938.htm) (accessed 13 November 2014).

**120** See Pierre Minard and Eva Pejsova, “CSDP’s New Partners: East Asia”, *EUISS Issue Alert* 39 (September 2014), [http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/Alert\\_39\\_CSDP\\_partners\\_in\\_East\\_Asia.pdf](http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/Alert_39_CSDP_partners_in_East_Asia.pdf) (accessed 10 November 2014).

**121** See Pierre Minard, “Partners from a Large Island: Australia and CSDP”, *EUISS Issue Alert* 24 (April 2015), [http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/Alert\\_24\\_Australia\\_CSDP.pdf](http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/Alert_24_Australia_CSDP.pdf) (accessed 22 May 2015).

**122** See Oliver Bräuner, “Rüstungstransfers ins maritime Südostasien”, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* 64, no. 40/41 (2014): 22–27.

**123** The *EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports* was first decided by the Council in 1998. In 2008, it was elevated to a “Common Position”. This does not make it legally binding, but politically stronger. Full text of the document: “Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of 8 December 2008 Defining Common Rules Governing Control of Exports of Military Technology and Equipment”, *Official Journal of the European Union* 51, no. L 335 (2008): 99–103.

**124** See Bräuner, “Rüstungstransfers ins maritime Südostasien” (see note 122): 27.

## NATO Partnerships in East Asia

For those EU member states that belong to NATO, there is another connection to the Asia-Pacific region. Since the end of the 1990s, the alliance has also maintained a range of partnerships in the region. In the 2000s, exchange intensified with those partners that cooperated with NATO in the context of the ISAF mission. The partners were initially designated “contact countries”; later, at the 2008 NATO summit, they were called “partners Across the Globe”. NATO has published tailor-made cooperation programs to this end (“Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programmes”, IPCP).<sup>125</sup> Such individual relationships exist with Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea, as well as with Afghanistan, Pakistan and Mongolia.<sup>126</sup>

The end of the ISAF mission in 2014 marked the end of NATO’s coordination of external partners, but cooperative relationships continue to exist through the individual IPCPs. Australia, South Korea and Japan (as well as China) participate in the anti-piracy mission in the Gulf of Aden. NATO cooperation with Asian-Pacific countries applies – similar to those of the EU – mainly to non-traditional security sectors.

In April 2013 then NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen made the first official NATO visit to Korea. During his subsequent stay in Tokyo, a joint political declaration between NATO and Japan was signed.<sup>127</sup> A few months earlier, in January 2013, Prime Minister Abe had called on NATO in a letter to play a more active role in East Asia and drew attention to China’s growing naval power and North Korea’s behavior.<sup>128</sup> Although the joint declaration emphasized common strategic interests and values, China received no mention. The Secretary General officially underscored that China was not perceived as a threat and called for increased dialogue.<sup>129</sup>

**125** See Miha Hribernik, “The Path Ahead for NATO Partnerships in the Asia-Pacific”, *Atlantic Voices* 3, no. 8 (2013): 2–9.

**126** See the survey “NATO’s Relations with Partners across the Globe”, 31 March 2014, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_49188.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49188.htm) (accessed 14 November 2014).

**127** Full text: “Joint Political Declaration between Japan and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation”, 12 April 2013, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-0552C2C0-9D1E17A8/natolive/official\\_texts\\_99562.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-0552C2C0-9D1E17A8/natolive/official_texts_99562.htm?selectedLocale=en) (accessed 14 November 2014).

**128** See Hribernik, “The Path Ahead” (see note 125): 6.

**129** See “NATO Hopes to Strengthen Dialogue with China: NATO Chief”, *Xinhua News*, 17 September 2011, <http://news.xinhuanet.com>

In fact, since 2002 there have been several contacts between NATO and China. But the Atlantic alliance is seen by the Chinese side as an instrument of the US; the reservations regarding closer exchange are therefore substantial. In other countries of the region, too, attempts to strengthen NATO's role could meet with refusal.<sup>130</sup> The EU, in contrast, is less handicapped in this regard, and countries in the Asia-Pacific region are therefore more willing to engage in dialogue.

xinhuanet.com/english2010/indepth/2011-09/17/c\_131143960.htm; Hribernik, "The Path Ahead" (see note 125): 7.

**130** See Benjamin Schreer, "NATO's Partnerships: Asia Pacific", Statement prepared for the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Defence and Security Committee (DSC), 57th Annual Session, Prague, 11 November 2012, 3, <http://www.google.de/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=4&ved=0CDcQFjAD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nato-pa.int%2FDocdownload.asp%3FID%3D1BFFAD049306000402E0&ei=dBxmVLLrLMzsO5bTgOAM&usg=AFQjCNFSh4cQJ5u-hRsdGehrHsrnbeKC-w> (accessed 14 November 2014).

## Regional Security Organizations and Forums

### The US and China in the Regional Organizations

At the center of most of the organizations and forums in East Asia that deal exclusively or partially with security issues is the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, ASEAN. This organization has dedicated itself to becoming a community built on the three pillars of economics, society/culture and politics/security.<sup>131</sup>

Some of the regional forums deal with a broad agenda (such as the East Asia Summit – EAS); others specifically address security issues (ASEAN Regional Forum – ARF; ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting plus – ADMM+; Extended ASEAN Maritime Forum – EAMF).<sup>132</sup> The forums have often been criticized for their failure to take binding decisions and their notorious tendency to fall short of their own goals. But they have proved quite robust and at least provide a platform for regular meetings and exchange. Both the US and China are active in the various regional organizations and forums.

For the US, its own alliances and alliance-like partnerships have always been at the forefront of security cooperation. Although the US participates in the regional formats, it does not attach great importance to them due to their non-binding nature. Among the regional organizations, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), with its focus on economic and trade cooperation, was at the top of Washington's list for many years. Not until Obama's assumption of the presidency did the US renew its multilateral engagement in the region.<sup>133</sup> Then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton paid the ASEAN secretariat in Jakarta a visit

during her first official trip to Asia in 2009. In the same year the US acceded to the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC),<sup>134</sup> thereby taking a crucial step towards membership in the East Asia Summit (EAS). In November 2009 the first ever US-ASEAN summit took place.<sup>135</sup>

Thus, the “pivot to Asia” announced by Obama has also implied a stronger US presence in the multilateral formats of the region. But despite the renewed interest in organizations such as ARF, EAS and ADMM+, Washington remains skeptical about their effectiveness – above all because cooperation within the framework of such mechanisms is restricted to “soft” security areas.<sup>136</sup>

Obama had announced his intention to attend the EAS summits in person. But in October 2013 he had to cancel his participation in both the APEC summit and EAS due to the government shutdown in the US at the time. His absence must have nourished doubts in the region as to how durable and reliable the US *rebalancing* would be. At the summits in November 2014 (first the APEC in Beijing, then the EAS in Myanmar), Obama was again present.

China has been participating in the regional forums consistently since the mid-1990s. It acceded to the ARF in the same year of its founding, 1994. From the very beginning, Beijing was also part of the ASEAN+3 format which was formed in 1997 in response to the Asian financial crisis. And China was the first non-Southeast Asian country to sign the friendship treaty of the ASEAN member states (TAC), in late 2003.<sup>137</sup> Further-

<sup>131</sup> See Association of Southeast Asian Nations, *Roadmap for an ASEAN Community (2009–2015)*, Jakarta, April 2009, [http://www.meti.go.jp/policy/trade\\_policy/east\\_asia/dl/ASEANblueprint.pdf](http://www.meti.go.jp/policy/trade_policy/east_asia/dl/ASEANblueprint.pdf) (accessed 12 August 2014).

<sup>132</sup> On the multitude of regional organizations, forums and formats and their respective content emphasis see Table 2 in the Appendix, p. 38 et seq.

<sup>133</sup> For a detailed analysis of US relations with ASEAN see Thomas Lum et al., *United States Relations with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)*, CRS Reports for Congress R40933 (Washington, D.C., 16 November 2009), <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/133919.pdf> (accessed 23 November 2014).

<sup>134</sup> See, e.g., John J. Brandon, “ASEAN Summit Promises First-Ever Full U.S. Engagement”, *In Asia* (online), 11 November 2009, <http://asiafoundation.org/in-asia/2009/11/11/asean-summit-promises-first-ever-full-u-s-engagement/> (accessed 13 November 2014).

<sup>135</sup> See Ernest Z. Bower, “U.S.-ASEAN Summit: President Obama Engages Southeast Asia”, 9 November 2009, <http://csis.org/publication/us-asean-summit-president-obama-engages-southeast-asia> (accessed 13 November 2014).

<sup>136</sup> Brad Glosserman, “The U.S. Rebalance, Multilateralism and the Dilemma of Asia Pacific Security”, in *Strategic Engagement in the Asia Pacific*, ed. by Teo and Ali (see note 65), 5 et seq. (6).

<sup>137</sup> See Lyall Breckon, “China-Southeast Asia Relations: A New Strategic Partnership Is Declared”, *Comparative Connections* (CSIS) 5, no. 4 (2004), <http://csis.org/files/media/csisis/>

more, Beijing functioned as co-initiator and host of the Six-Party Talks on the North Korean nuclear weapons program, which began in 2003. But China has not always been able to push through its ideas regarding membership in regional organizations. For example, China had favored the ASEAN+3 (namely ASEAN plus China, Japan and South Korea) constellation as the core of the EAS at its inception but finally had to accept its expansion to include the three additional (democratic) countries India, Australia and New Zealand – which was supported by Japan, among others.<sup>138</sup>

In the past, China has largely failed to constructively shape the agenda of the regional organizations. Beijing has generally worked to keep “hard” security issues and current conflicts off the agenda. And despite China’s continuous involvement, Beijing invariably stresses that the regional organizations are not a suitable forum for resolving territorial disputes.<sup>139</sup>

On the other hand, China makes use of those forums in which the US is either not represented at all or not “adequately”. In 2014 China’s leadership hosted the “Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building in Asia” (CICA), which had been initiated in the early 1990s by President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan. Until recently this format – which brings together 23 countries from South Korea to Iran to Egypt, but not the US<sup>140</sup> – existed on the fringes. But the speech that Xi Jinping gave at the meeting in Shanghai made international headlines. He declared that security and peace in Asia could and should be safe-

guarded by the Asian countries themselves<sup>141</sup> – a thinly veiled criticism of US military presence and US alliances in the region. It is doubtful, however, whether China’s initiative will be able to transform CICA into an organization with the power to act and take regional security into its own hands. For one, central actors such as Japan are either not present or are relegated to observer status; second, the member states constitute a very heterogeneous mixture, both geographically and in terms of interests.

Although traditional security issues are not on the agenda of the ASEAN-plus forums, the issue of Chinese territorial claims has been addressed there regularly since 2010 – by the US but also by the Philippines and Vietnam. These forums were often the scene of heated exchanges – usually between China and the US. At the assembly of the ARF in summer 2010 in Hanoi, the Chinese foreign minister left the room following then Secretary of State Clinton’s statement that freedom of navigation in the South China Sea constituted a “national interest” of the US. In 2012 the ASEAN foreign ministers meeting ended without a joint communiqué for the first time because Cambodia, which chaired the meeting, refused to include the positions of Vietnam and the Philippines on the South China Sea in the document.

Time after time, such verbal clashes are triggered by simmering maritime and territorial disputes as well as by Beijing’s perception that the US and its allies intend to form a coalition against China to prevent its rise. Regarding the disputes in the South China Sea, China remains opposed to any internationalization in resolving the conflict as well as to any regionalization in the framework of ASEAN or ARF – although it has signed respective international treaties (UNCLOS, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea) or agreements (TAC, Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea). At an ASEAN meeting in August 2014, China’s Foreign Minister Wang Yi proposed a “dual track” approach, whereby all South China Sea rim countries should jointly maintain peace and stability, while conflicts were addressed through bilateral negotiations between partners.<sup>142</sup>

pubs/0304qchina\_seasia.pdf (accessed 13 November 2014).

**138** See, e.g., Mohan Malik, *China and the East Asian Summit: More Discord Than Accord* (Honolulu: Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, February 2006), <http://www.apcss.org/Publications/APSSS/ChinaandEastAsiaSummit.pdf> (accessed 18 August 2014); Chien-peng Chung, “China and Japan in ‘ASEAN Plus’ Multilateral Arrangements: Raining on the Other Guy’s Parade”, *Asian Survey* 53, no. 5 (2013): 801–24 (812 et seq.).

**139** See, e.g., “ADMM-Plus Not Appropriate Forum for Resolving Maritime Disputes”, *Global Times*, 28 August 2013; Ding Gang, “China Can Help Guide Critical COC Talks”, *Global Times*, 28 August 2013.

**140** Members are Afghanistan, Egypt, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, China, India, Iraq, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Cambodia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Palestinian Territories, Russia, South Korea, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, Uzbekistan, United Arab Emirates and Vietnam. There are nine observer countries (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Japan, Qatar, Malaysia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Ukraine, US) and three international organizations (United Nations, OSCE und Arab League).

**141** See “President Xi Addresses CICA Summit”, *Xinhua News*, 21 May 2014, <http://www.chinausfocus.com/china-news/president-xi-addresses-cica-summit/> (accessed 28 September 2014).

**142** “China Supports ‘Dual-track’ Approach to Resolve Dispute”, *China Daily* (online), 10 August 2014, [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2014-08/10/content\\_18280181.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2014-08/10/content_18280181.htm) (accessed 9 September 2014).

Wang Yi's proposal merely reaffirms the long-held Chinese position.

As partners of ASEAN, the US, Japan, Australia, India and – to the extent that it is represented – the EU all have an interest in the organizations finding a common position on the territorial issues and negotiating a robust Code of Conduct for the South China Sea. By supporting such efforts by ASEAN as a community, the above-mentioned actors hope to prevent China from isolating individual members of the organization by using a “divide et impera” tactic.

### Effectiveness and Limitations of the Regional Formats

The regional organizations in Asia are often referred to – first and foremost in Western publications – as “talkshops” in which nothing is really decided. The principles of consensus and non-intervention, in particular, are cited as the primary obstacles to the effectiveness of the formats. However, as mentioned previously, the restriction to non-sensitive security issues as well as the lack of coordination and division of labor among the individual forums also play a role. Here the term “patchwork regionalism” remains apt. In effect, the same is true for all the above-mentioned formats. They may be important for defense cooperation in Asia, but their effectiveness is questionable for several reasons: the “strategic distrust” in the region and the tensions resulting from territorial disputes; the lack of political will to expand cooperation to sensitive issues (i.e. those affecting questions of national sovereignty); and the lack of resources necessary to guarantee regional security.<sup>143</sup>

With the exception of the Six-Party Talks on North Korea's nuclear weapons program, all the security forums have almost exclusively non-traditional risks on their agenda. Many observers, including those in the region, believe that sooner or later one of the organizations is going to have to address traditional security issues.<sup>144</sup>

With regard to “classical” security problems, the activities of the regional organizations have so far been limited to conflict management; there are very

few discernable approaches or strategies aimed at conflict prevention, let alone conflict resolution. But the focus on non-traditional security issues in ARF and ADMM+ at least facilitates long-term communication, exchange and cooperation. And the issues of territorial and sovereignty claims continue to crop up in the debates of the regional meetings, as outlined above.

The lack of delimitation and the topical overlaps that exist – for example between ARF and ADMM+ – are increasingly being discussed in the region itself. The question of how the forums can better coordinate their respective functions is an issue being debated. Another is whether one of them may be obsolete. At least to the security experts of the region (if not to the politicians), it is clear that this issue is urgent. In light of the intensified strategic competition between China and the US (and between China and Japan), the CSCAP Track 2 forum issued a memorandum in 2014 that puts forward a series of proposals aimed at improving coordination among the various mechanisms (with respect to ASEAN, ARF, EAS, ADMM+ and EAMF).<sup>145</sup>

While a clearer delimitation of tasks and a better division of labor seem achievable, in the medium term it does not seem likely that one of the regional formats will prevail over the others, i.e. replace them. On the contrary, the co-existence and cooperation among formats is largely perceived as adequate – in a region that is characterized by extremely divergent political systems and development levels as well as diverse cultural and religious traditions.

One positive side-effect of the many multilateral forums that should not be neglected is that – be they formal like ARF or informal like the Shangri-La Dialogue – they provide opportunities for bilateral meetings in the margins, and this often despite a difficult political climate between the respective partners. This was the case when Japan's foreign minister met with his Chinese counterpart at the ARF in Myanmar in August 2014 (a first after Abe's assumption of office in 2012), and also with the South Korean foreign minister.<sup>146</sup>

<sup>143</sup> See Seng Tan, “Asia's Growing Defense Engagements”, in *Strategic Engagement in the Asia Pacific*, ed. by Teo and Ali (see note 65), p. 3. The assessment made here refers only to ADMM+, but in reality it applies to all formats.

<sup>144</sup> See, e.g., Muthiah Alagappa, “Building Peace and Security in the Asia-Pacific”, *PacNet* no. 85 (2 December 2013).

<sup>145</sup> See *Towards an Effective Regional Security Architecture for the Asia Pacific. A Memorandum of the Council for Cooperation and Security in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP)*, June 2014, <http://www.cscap.org/uploads/docs/Memorandums/CSCAP%20Memorandum%20No.26%20-%20Towards%20an%20Effective%20Regional%20Security%20Architecture%20for%20the%20AP.pdf> (accessed 18 August 2014).

<sup>146</sup> See Rajaram Panda, “ARF Summit Meeting at Naypyidaw: An Assessment”, *IPRIS Viewpoints*, 151 (August 2014), 4.

Nevertheless, the significant increase in bilateral and trilateral security cooperation in parallel and apart from the regional organizations is a clear sign that many countries in the region do not consider them sufficient guarantors of security.<sup>147</sup> Out of this arise two questions regarding the spread of bilateral and minilateral forms of security cooperation – first, whether and how these formats can actually contribute to maintaining peace in the region; and second, whether and how they affect the regional forums. If more and more countries seek refuge outside of the organizations, it could become even more difficult to come to an agreement on improving the coordination and effectiveness of the organizations.

**147** See, e.g., Rory Medcalf, “Shinzo Abe’s Strategic Diamond”, *The Diplomat*, 15 January 2013. Medcalf writes of the increase in bilateral and trilateral security cooperation: “This has been a growth industry in Asia over the past decade, driven partly by frustrations with the slow pace of inclusive multilateral institutions like the ASEAN Regional Forum.”



## Regional Formats: The Role of the Europeans

Peace and stability in East Asia are of paramount interest to Europe, given the intensive trade and economic relations between the two regions. But European countries and the EU, as demonstrated, have thus far played no significant role in addressing the traditional security problems in the Asia-Pacific region. Europe's record is decidedly better when it comes to tackling the "soft" security issues<sup>148</sup> – i.e. precisely the area focused on by the regional organizations. But this has not earned the EU the reputation of a serious security actor in the region. To some extent this is due (ironically) to a lack of military presence; it is also attributable to the fact that the EU did not consistently send high-ranking representatives to the forums until 2012.

From the very beginning, the EU was a member of the ARF (meetings of the foreign ministers). In addition, it engages in dialogue in the framework of ASEAN post-ministerial meetings. But the EU or European countries also maintain two independent formats of their own with the region. First, since 1980 an EU-ASEAN meeting has been taking place every two years at the level of foreign ministers, complemented by dialogue formats. In 2012 an action plan was decided aimed at intensifying exchange between the two sides –including in the area of security.<sup>149</sup> The envisaged areas of security cooperation announced in the plan are extensive, though it is unclear how much has actually been put into practice. In July 2014 the 20<sup>th</sup> EU-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting issued a joint statement identifying the priorities of future cooperation:

**148** See the list in Axel Berkofsky, "The European Union's Involvement in Asian Security: Not Enough or Just about Right?", *Panorama (Insights into Asian and European Affairs)* 2/ 2014, Special Issue "Europe – Surging Ahead": 21–33 (27 et seq.). Special attention is given here to Europe's participation in stabilization measures in East Timor, Aceh, the Philippines (Mindanao) and Myanmar.

**149** *Bandar Seri Begawan Plan of Action to Strengthen the ASEAN-EU Enhanced Partnership (2013–2017)*, April 2012, <http://www.asean.org/images/archive/document/BSB%20Plan%20of%20Action%20to%20Strengthen%20the%20ASEAN-EU%20Enhanced%20Partnership%202013-2017.pdf> (accessed 19 August 2014). An overview of the dialogue formats between the EU and ASEAN from July 2014 can be found at: <http://www.asean.org/news/item/overview-of-asean-eu-dialogue-relations> (accessed 19 August 2014).

enhancing cooperation in the area of maritime security, doubling European fiscal support for the institutional development of ASEAN, and upgrading bilateral relations to a strategic partnership.<sup>150</sup> In addition, the EU will appoint an ambassador to ASEAN based in Jakarta (at the ASEAN secretariat). By taking this step, the EU fulfills a longstanding request of the Southeast Asian countries.

Second, in 1996 Europe and Asia established the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), thus creating a counterpart to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). The EU, its member states and other European countries participate in the ASEM summits. As in the other forums, the agenda is broad; security issues play only a minor role. In fact, of all the above-mentioned formats in which the EU is represented, only the ARF deals specifically with security issues.

At the annual Shangri-La Conference in Singapore – which is organized by the IISS, a British think tank – the UK and France regularly send high-level representatives. Former EU High Representative Lady Ashton first travelled to the meeting in May 2013, where, accompanied by an EU military delegation, she spoke on the role of the European Union in Asian security issues.<sup>151</sup>

The EU actively promotes regional integration in East Asia, financially supporting (as does Washington) the ASEAN secretariat, and it would like to become a member of the EAS. Though the EU fulfilled a central prerequisite by signing the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in 2012 – the result of a six-year

**150** "Co-Chairs' Statement of the 20th EU-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting", Brussels, 23 July 2014, 120723/03, [http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2014/140723\\_03\\_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2014/140723_03_en.pdf) (accessed 10 November 2014).

**151** See "Europeans at Shangri-La Dialogue Achieve Woody Allen's 80%", *Europe-Asia Security Forum*, 7 June 2013, <http://euroasiasecurityforum.com/2013/06/07/europeans-at-shangri-la-dialogue-achieve-woody-allens-80/> (accessed 22 August 2013). The speech by Catherine Ashton can be found here: "Defending National Interests, Preventing Conflict", Speech delivered by High Representative Catherine Ashton at the Shangri-La Dialogue, Singapore, 1 June 2013 (A 291/13), [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/137368.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/137368.pdf) (accessed 19 August 2014).

long effort<sup>152</sup> – the majority of ASEAN member states (still) do not seem to support the EU's bid for admittance. The reason often given is that the accession of the US and Russia in 2011 must first be “digested”. At the same time, however – and this is arguably an even more important reason –, the EU itself has in fact not consistently demonstrated that it attaches importance to participation in regional forums.

In 2012 EU, represented by then High Representative Lady Ashton, was present at both the ASEAN post-ministerial meeting and the ARF in Phnom Penh, a move which can be seen as a reaction to criticism expressed in the region. In the following two years, Ashton attended both meetings. Since the end of 2013, the EU has also resumed its participation in the CSCAP Track 2 format following several years of “suspended” membership.<sup>153</sup> The EU has thus taken a series of positive steps that should be continued under the new leadership team in Brussels.

## Cooperation with the US in the Region?

The EU is confronted with the question of whether and to what extent it should stand shoulder to shoulder with the US in the field of security in Asia. There are certainly many common interests shared by the US and Europeans, such as the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

In late 2005 the EU agreed on a document entitled “Guidelines on the EU's Foreign and Security Policy in East Asia”. This occurred in the wake of a 2003/2004 debate in the EU over whether to lift the arms embargo against China, an idea that was subsequently rejected. Originally the “Guidelines” were not made public; in the meantime, however, they have been

<sup>152</sup> The EU had applied to accede the TAC in late 2006. As the TAC does not provide for the admittance of regional organizations, it first had to be amended in an additional protocol (2010) that then came into force on 12 June 2012. See European Commission, “The EU Accedes to Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia”, Phnom Penh, 12 July 2012, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-12-781\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-781_en.htm) (accessed 19 August 2014). France joined the TAC in 2011, followed by the United Kingdom in 2012.

<sup>153</sup> The European Union joined CSCAP in 1994 initially as an associated member and became a full member in 1998. Membership was subsequently suspended due to failure to pay membership dues. Since 2013 the EU is again a full-fledged member. On CSCAP-EU see: European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS), CSCAP-EU, <http://www.iss.europa.eu/de/regionen/asien/cscap-eu/> (accessed 18 August 2014).

revised twice (2007, 2012) and also published. From the first version on, it was explicitly stated in this document that the EU takes the role and interests of the US and its regional alliance partners into consideration when taking actions in the Asia-Pacific region:

“The US's security commitments to Japan, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan as well as certain ASEAN countries, and the associated presence of US forces in the region, give the US a distinct perspective on the region's security challenges, and makes the US an important contributor to regional stability. It is important that the EU remains sensitive to this. Given the great importance of transatlantic relations, the EU has a strong interest in partnership and cooperation with the US on foreign and security policy challenges related to East Asia.”<sup>154</sup>

At the ARF in Phnom Penh in the summer of 2012, then Secretary of State Clinton and Lady Ashton signed a joint declaration stating that the interests of the US and the EU in the Asia-Pacific region are to a large extent identical. At the same time, the two sides declared their willingness to cooperate in the region.<sup>155</sup> The fact that Ashton used her first appearance at the ARF to seal such a document met with a mixed response, not only in Asia. Though one can surely debate the sense or nonsense of the declaration, so far there has been no follow-up.

It is right and important for the EU and European countries to clearly identify what concrete interests they share with the US in the Asia-Pacific region, such as, for example, freedom of navigation. But the EU should also not hesitate to make clear the differences between US and European positions – for instance, in the case of UNCLOS, which has been signed and ratified by all the EU member states and the EU itself, while the US has yet to accede to the convention. At the same time, a mere commitment to “peace and stability” in the region is too abstract without some indication of what the EU intends and is capable to contribute in concrete terms. The alliances and other security cooperation of the US are as unlikely to disappear as the

<sup>154</sup> Council of the European Union, *Guidelines on the EU's Foreign and Security Policy in East Asia*, Brussels, 20 June 2012 (11492/12), 8, [http://eeas.europa.eu/asia/docs/guidelines\\_eu\\_foreign\\_sec\\_pol\\_east\\_asia\\_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/asia/docs/guidelines_eu_foreign_sec_pol_east_asia_en.pdf) (accessed 20 August 2014).

<sup>155</sup> *Joint EU-US Statement on the Asia-Pacific Region*, Phnom Penh, 12 June 2012, A 328/12, [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131709.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131709.pdf) (accessed 19 August 2014).

regional organizations. And in East Asia the Europeans play an entirely different role than the US – their military capabilities are extremely limited, and it can be safely presumed that their willingness to intervene militarily in the case of a conflict escalation is even more limited.

Concerning relations with China, the EU and Germany find themselves in a situation not entirely unlike that of the East Asian countries. There is little worry here in Europe that a rising China is a direct threat to our own security. Despite all the causes for complaint, China is an attractive economic partner for the EU – above all Germany – and is increasingly considered an important partner on global issues as well. Thus, it cannot be in the EU's interest to be perceived as part of US containment efforts. Nevertheless, the EU must respond to destabilizing events in the region and take a clear stance – as it did when China unilaterally declared an air defense identification zone above the East China Sea in November 2013.<sup>156</sup>

## Recommendations for the EU and Europe

Within the EU (both the Union and member states), a discussion should take place regarding how one would react to a military conflict escalation in East Asia, even if such a crisis may be unlikely. To this end, it would be helpful to simulate the phases of a potential conflict – for instance in the South China Sea or in case of a confrontation between China and Japan – in scenarios or policy games.

At the very least, the EU should demonstrate its continuous commitment to East Asia by ensuring that high-level EU representatives are regularly present at regional forums and summit meetings. It is also important to make offers of cooperation that are as concrete as possible. Strategy papers and action plans are worthless unless they are followed by deeds. Therefore, if such documents are published, follow-up measures should also be planned, implemented and subsequently evaluated. The formats in which the EU is already engaged (ASEAN-EU, ARF, CSCAP) provide sufficient starting points for substantial cooperation.

Increasingly, countries of the Asia-Pacific region bristle when the EU offers guidance or presents itself as a model for regional integration. Undoubtedly, the attractiveness of the EU has diminished – due to the euro crisis, the growth of Euro-skeptic groups and Europe's current problems in dealing with crises in their immediate neighborhood (Ukraine, Syria/Iraq). Instead of referring to oneself as a model, it would be more useful to take up positive examples and *best practices* from the region in specialized seminars and practical training courses, including cases of successful conflict resolution. Maritime security would lend itself as a suitable focal point. It involves both non-traditional and traditional security, and an escalation of the territorial conflicts in the South and East China Seas would not only severely damage European economic interests but also conflict with Europe's conception of regional and global order.

Within the broad-ranging ASEM process, security issues can also be placed on the agenda, for example by organizing retreats for leading political figures, as was already done at the Milan ASEM summit in October 2014. It would also be useful to conduct a systematic inventory and evaluation of the security cooperation already maintained by the EU and member states with individual Asian countries as well as in the framework of ASEAN-EU and ARF. These European projects and activities should then be “marketed” better, i.e. made public to a greater extent. At the same time, maintaining relations at the highest level remains important. Here the new leadership team in Brussels should not allow any further time lapses, despite the crises in Europe's neighborhood.

<sup>156</sup> “Declaration by the High Representative Catherine Ashton on behalf of the European Union on the establishment by China of an ‘East China Sea Air Defence Identification Zone’”, 28 November 2013 (17082/1/13 REV 1), [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/139752.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/139752.pdf) (accessed 18 November 2014).

# Appendix

## Abbreviations

A2/AD	Anti-Access/Area Denial	RSIS	S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies
ADMM	ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting	SCC	Security Consultative Committee
ADMM+	ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting plus	SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
AMF	ASEAN Maritime Forum	SDF	Self-Defense Forces (Japan)
ANZUS	Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty	SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation	SFA	Strategic Framework Agreement for a Closer Cooperation Partnership in Defence and Security
APT	ASEAN Plus Three	SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum	SOFA	Status of Forces Agreement
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations	SSD	Strategic Security Dialogue
ASEM	Asia-Europe Meeting	TAC	Treaty of Amity and Cooperation
ASPC	ARF Security Policy Conference	TCS	Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat
AUSMIN	Australia-United States Ministerial Consultation	TSD	Trilateral Security Dialogue
CFC	Combined Force Command	UN	United Nations
CICA	Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia	UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
COC	Code of Conduct	WPNS	Western Pacific Naval Symposium
CSCAP	Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific		
CSCE	Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe		
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy		
CSIS	Center for Strategic and International Studies (Washington, D.C.)		
CUES	Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea		
EAMF	Extended ASEAN Maritime Forum		
EAS	East Asia Summit		
EUISS	European Union Institute for Security Studies		
FY	Fiscal year		
HACGAM	Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting		
HADR	Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief		
IDS	Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (New Delhi)		
IIS	International Institute for Strategic Studies (London)		
IPCP	Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programmes		
IPRIS	Portuguese Institute of International Relations and Security (Lisbon)		
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force		
JIMEX	Japan India Maritime Exercise		
LAC	Line of Actual Control		
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding		
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization		
NBR	National Bureau of Asian Research (Washington, D.C.)		
NPCGF	North Pacific Coast Guard Forum		
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe		
PAMS	Pacific Armies Managements Seminar		
PLA	People's Liberation Army (China)		
RIMPAC	Rim of the Pacific Exercise		
ROK	Republic of Korea		

## Further Reading

*Alexandra Sakaki*

### **Japan's Security Policy.**

#### **A Shift in Direction under Abe?**

SWP Research paper 2/2015, March 2015,  
[http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/research\\_papers/2015\\_RP02\\_skk.pdf](http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/research_papers/2015_RP02_skk.pdf)

Table 1: Key Data on US Alliances with Japan, South Korea and Australia

	US-Japan	US-ROK (South Korea)	US-Australia
<b>Institutional framework</b>	Peace Treaty and Security Treaty September 1951; revised Security Treaty 19 Jan., 1960 <sup>a</sup> and Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA); US is granted facilities and areas in Japan for use of its land, air and naval forces Japan: individual self-defense (Art. 9 Constitution)	Defense Treaty 1953 <sup>b</sup> (also Korean Armistice Agreement); Protection of South Korea from the North	September 1951: trilateral ANZUS Treaty (US-Australia-New Zealand); after 1986 bilateral between the US and Australia and bilateral between Australia and New Zealand <sup>c</sup>
	Guidelines 1978: <sup>d</sup> Response to Cold War tensions and possibility of a Soviet Invasion of Japan, <sup>e</sup> first guidelines on operational cooperation between Japan and US in case of a crisis <sup>f</sup>	Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), 1966 <sup>g</sup>	Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) 1963 <sup>h</sup>
	Revised Guidelines 1997: <sup>i</sup> Response to the end of the Cold War, nuclear program of North Korea and Taiwan crisis; direct mutual support “in situations surrounding Japan”	Joint Vision for the Alliance of the United States of America and the Republic of Korea, June 2009; <sup>j</sup> US-ROK Defense Cooperation Guidelines, 2010	Australia-US Joint Statement of Principles on Interoperability, 2004
	New Guidelines 2015: <sup>k</sup> Response to China’s assertive international posture (especially maritime/territorial conflicts), to continuing North Korean provocations and to the growing threat of cyber attacks	Joint Declaration in Commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the Alliance between the Republic of Korea and the United States of America, May 2013; <sup>l</sup> Strategic Alliance 2015	Defense Trade Treaty, 2007 <sup>m</sup>
<b>Political formats</b>		Security Consultative Meeting (defense ministers), since 1969	
		Military Committee Meeting, since 1979	
	Security Consultative Committee (SCC) (2+2), from 1994 <sup>n</sup>	Foreign and Defense Ministers’ Meeting (2+2), since 2010	Ministerial Consultations (AUSMIN) (2+2), since 1985 (annually since 2008) <sup>o</sup>

	US–Japan	US–ROK (South Korea)	US–Australia
<b>Military cooperation</b>	Joint command in Yokota for data exchange and coordination of air and missile defense, from 2006 <sup>p</sup>	Combined Forces Command <sup>1978</sup> ; 1994: peacetime operational control of South Korean forces transferred to ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff <sup>q</sup>	
	US nuclear umbrella	US nuclear umbrella	US nuclear umbrella
	joint training and exercises	joint training and exercises	joint training and exercises
<b>Troop deployment</b>	currently ca. 50,000: Navy ca. 19,500, Marines 15,500, Air Force ca. 20,500	until 2004: 37,000, since 2008: 28,500 <sup>r</sup> Army 19,000, Air Force 8,000	ca. 200 Marines, announced in 2011: 2,500 Marines

**a** *Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between Japan and the United States of America*, [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Treaty\\_of\\_Mutual\\_Cooperation\\_and\\_Security\\_between\\_Japan\\_and\\_the\\_United\\_States\\_of\\_America](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Mutual_Cooperation_and_Security_between_Japan_and_the_United_States_of_America) (accessed 28 January 2015).

**b** Full text: *Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea*, 1 October 1953, [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/kor001.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/kor001.asp) (accessed 12 February 2014). The Korean War ended with an armistice, not a peace treaty.

**c** Full text: *Security Treaty between Australia, New Zealand and the United States of America – ANZUS* (San Francisco, 1 September 1951), Entry into force generally: 29 April 1952, <http://australianpolitics.com/topics/foreign-policy/anzus-treaty-text> (accessed 15 August 2013). After 1986 the treaty was no longer trilateral, but applied separately between Australia and the US on the one hand and between Australia and New Zealand on the other hand, since New Zealand banned port calls of nuclear armed ships of the US in 1985.

**d** *Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation*, 27 November 1978, <http://www.fas.org/news/japan/sisin1e.htm> (accessed 28 January 2015).

**e** “Talks start with US on new defense plan. Greater SDF role sought as China grows more assertive”, in: *Japan Times*, 18 January 2013, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2013/01/18/national/politics-diplomacy/talks-start-with-u-s-on-new-defense-plan/#.VCAuXGNQRxi> (accessed 28 January 2015).

**f** Full text: [http://project2049.net/documents/japan\\_us\\_defense\\_guidelines\\_takahashi.pdf](http://project2049.net/documents/japan_us_defense_guidelines_takahashi.pdf).

**g** Full text: [http://www.usfk.mil/usfk/Uploads/130/US-ROKStatusoffForcesAgreement\\_1966-67.pdf](http://www.usfk.mil/usfk/Uploads/130/US-ROKStatusoffForcesAgreement_1966-67.pdf).

**h** Full text: <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/dfat/treaties/1963/10.html>.

**i** “Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security: Alliance for the 21st Century”, 17 April 1996, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/security/security.html> (accessed 18 August 2013); full text: of guidelines: “The Guidelines for US-Japan Defense Cooperation”, 23 September 1997, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/security/guideline2.html> (accessed 5 August 2014).

**j** Full text: [http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/Joint-vision-for-the-alliance-of-the-United-States-of-America-and-the-Republic-of-Korea](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Joint-vision-for-the-alliance-of-the-United-States-of-America-and-the-Republic-of-Korea) (accessed 28 January 2015).

**k** Full text: [http://www.defense.gov/pubs/20150427\\_-\\_GUIDELINES\\_FOR\\_US-JAPAN\\_DEFENSE\\_COOPERATION\\_FINAL&CLEAN.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/pubs/20150427_-_GUIDELINES_FOR_US-JAPAN_DEFENSE_COOPERATION_FINAL&CLEAN.pdf) (accessed 8 May 2015).

**l** Full text: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/05/07/joint-declaration-commemoration-60th-anniversary-alliance-between-republ> (accessed 28 January 2015).

**m** Full text: <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/dfat/treaties/ATS/2013/17.html> (accessed 28 January 2015).

**n** Full text: <http://fas.org/news/japan/33690492-33695664.htm> (accessed 28 January 2015).

**o** Joint declarations of these meetings: Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, “Australia-United States Ministerial Consultations”, <http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/us/ausmin/> (accessed 28 January 2015).

**p** Emma Chanlett-Avery and Ian E. Rinehart, *The US-Japan Alliance* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 12 December 2013), 13, <http://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33740.pdf>.

**q** A joint (bi-national) command (Combined Force Command, CFC) was established in 1978 commanded by a US general. In 1994 operational control of South Korean military in peacetime was transferred to the Republic of Korea Joint Chiefs of Staff; wartime control remained under US command. In 2007 it was agreed between the US and the ROK to dissolve the CFC and transfer operational control completely to South Korea by 2012. However, this step has been postponed due to the sustained military threat from North Korea and domestic debates in South Korea. Cf. Shelley Su, “The OPCON Transfer Debate”, in *US-Korean 2001 Yearbook*, ed. US-Korean Institute at SAIS (2012): 159–74, [http://uskoreainstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Su\\_YB2011.pdf](http://uskoreainstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Su_YB2011.pdf) (accessed 11 February 2014).

**r** Ashley Rowland, “Fewer Bases, Same Number of Troops in South Korea, US Ambassador Says”, in: *Stars and Stripes*, 15 February 2012. American troops are gradually transferred from the capital Seoul to the south of the country.

**Table 2: Overview of Regional Organizations in East Asia**

Organisation	Founded	Members	Enlargement	Focus and formats
<b>1. ASEAN-centered</b>				
ASEAN	1967	originally Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand (= 5)	Brunei (1984), Vietnam (1995), Laos, Myanmar (1997), Cambodia (1999) (+ 5 = 10)	comprehensive agenda, Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) 1976, <sup>a</sup> goal: community with the three pillars economy, society/culture, politics/security <sup>b</sup>
ASEAN Post-Ministerial Meeting	1977	10 ASEAN member states + 10 dialogue partners (Australia, China, EU, India, Japan, Canada, New Zealand, Russia, South Korea, US) (= 20)		international economy and politics, transnational topics like organized crime, drug smuggling, human trafficking, environment and health; additional format: ASEAN+1 with every dialogue partner
ASEAN-Regionalforum (ARF) <sup>c</sup>	1994	10 ASEAN member states + 10 dialogue partners + Bangladesh, Mongolia, North Korea, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste (= 27)		regional security, non-traditional security (disaster relief, confidence-building, preventive diplomacy), meeting of foreign ministers, meeting of representatives from defense ministries (ARF Defence Officials' Dialogue, DOD), conferences on security policy (ARF Security Policy Conference, ASPC)
ASEAN+3 (APT)	1997	10 ASEAN member states + China, Japan, South Korea		economy/finances, response to Asian financial crisis, Chiang-Mai-Initiative
Plus 3	2004	China, Japan, South Korea		separate summits since 2008, Tri-lateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS) 2011, <sup>d</sup> political relations, global economy, disaster relief
East Asia Summit (EAS)	2005	originally ASEAN + 3 + 3 (Australia, India, New Zealand)	2011: + Russia and US	comprehensive agenda, <sup>e</sup> priorities: environment and energy, education, finances, global health and pandemics, managing natural disasters, ASEAN connectivity

Organisation	Founded	Members	Enlargement	Focus and formats
<b>1. ASEAN-centered</b>				
ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting (ADMM)	2006	10 ASEAN member states		non-traditional security, meeting of defense ministers
ADMM+	2010	= EAS 2011 (ASEAN+8)		meeting of defense ministers, confidence building and capacity building (areas: counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, maritime security, military medicine, peacekeeping; new: humanitarian mine action) <sup>f</sup>
ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF)	2010	10 ASEAN member states		maritime cooperation (environment, illegal fishing, piracy, eco-tourism, freedom of navigation), Track 1.5 <sup>g</sup>
Expanded AMF (EAMF)	2012	= EAS 2011 (ASEAN+8)		maritime cooperation (like AMF) <sup>h</sup>
Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) <sup>i</sup>	1993	ASEAN member states (minus Laos and Myanmar) + 8 + EU, Canada, Mongolia, North Korea, Papua New Guinea (= 21) + associated: Secretariat of the Pacific Island Forum		security topics, Track 2 (informal, experts), working groups on changing topics

**a** Full text of the treaty: <http://www.asean.org/news/item/treaty-of-amity-and-cooperation-in-southeast-asia-indonesia-24-february-1976-3> (accessed 12 November 2014).

**b** Cf. ASEAN, *Roadmap for an ASEAN Community (2009–2015)*, Jakarta, April 2009, [http://www.meti.go.jp/policy/trade\\_policy/east\\_asia/dl/ASEANblueprint.pdf](http://www.meti.go.jp/policy/trade_policy/east_asia/dl/ASEANblueprint.pdf) (accessed 12 August 2014).

**c** See ARF website: <http://aseanregionalforum.asean.org> (accessed 11 December 2014).

**d** Website of the Secretariat: <http://www.tcs-asia.org/dnb/main/index.php> (accessed 12 November 2014).

**e** “Chairman’s Statement of the 8th East Asia Summit”, 10 October 2013, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, <http://www.asean.org/images/archive/23rdASEANSummit/chairmans%20statement%20-%208th%20east%20asia%20summit%20-%20final.pdf> (accessed 12 November 2014).

**f** Cf. Seng Tan, “A Farewell to Grandiosity? Practical Cooperation and the ADMM-Plus”, *PacNet*, no. 65 (13 August 2013), <http://csis.org/files/publication/Pac1365.pdf> (accessed 21 August 2013); Michito Tsuruoka, “An Era of the ADMM-Plus? Unique Achievements and Challenges”, *PacNet*, Nr. 69 (5 September 2013), <http://csis.org/files/publication/Pac1369.pdf>

(accessed 28 January 2015).

**g** “Track 1” meetings are official talks between government representatives. “Track 2” meetings are informal exchanges mostly between persons from academic or religious circles or from non-government organizations. In “track 1.5” meetings, both groups come together for informal talks.

**h** “First ASEAN Maritime Forum Held in Surabaya”, *Antara News* (online), 31 July 2010, <http://www.antaraneews.com/en/news/1280584402/first-asean-maritime-forum-held-in-surabaya> (accessed 11 August 2014).

**i** Cf. CSCAP website: <http://www.cscap.org>.



Organization	Founded	Members	Enlargement	Focus and formats
<b>2. Additional formats in East Asia</b>				
Five Powers Defence Arrangements <sup>a</sup>	1971	Australia, UK, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore		joint military exercises, meeting of defense ministers
Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) <sup>b</sup>	1987	originally Australia, Brunei, Indonesia, Japan, Canada, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, US	China, Hong Kong, Taiwan (“Chinese Taipei”) (1991); Mexico, Papua New Guinea (1993); Chile (1994); Peru, Russia, Vietnam (1998) (= 21)	economy and trade
Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) <sup>c</sup>	1996	originally 15 EU + 7 ASEAN + China, Japan, South Korea + EU Commission	+ 13 EU member states + 2 European countries + 11 Asian states + ASEAN Secretariat	comprehensive agenda
North Pacific Coast Guard Forum (NPCGF) <sup>d</sup>	2000	originally Japan, Russia, South Korea, US	China, Canada	cooperation of coast guards
Shangri-La Dialogue <sup>e</sup>	2002	organized by IISS (London)		security
Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting (HACGAM) <sup>f</sup>	2004	ASEAN + 3 + Bangladesh, Hong Kong, Pakistan, Sri Lanka		cooperation of coast guards
Six-Party Talks (6PT)	2004	both Koreas, China, Japan, Russia, US		ad hoc grouping, nuclear program of North Korea (no meeting after 2009)

**a** For details see Carlyle A. Thayer, “The Five Power Defence Arrangements: The Quiet Achiever”, *Security Challenges* 3, no. 1 (2007): 79–96.

**b** Cf. APEC website: <http://www.apec.org/About-Us/About-APEC/History.aspx> (accessed 12 November 2014).

**c** Cf. ASEM website: <http://www.aseminfoboard.org> (accessed 12 November 2014).

**d** Cf. Canadian Coast Guard, “North Pacific Coast Guard Forum”, <http://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/e0007869> (accessed 20 August 2014).

**e** IISS, “About Shangri-La”, <http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri-la-s-dialogue/about-shangri-la> (accessed 28 January 2015).

**f** Cf. Rajeev Sharma, “Policing the High Seas”, *The Diplomat*, 3 October 2012, <http://thediplomat.com/2012/10/policing-the-high-seas/> (accessed 20 August 2014).