

ASEAN AND ITS LIMITATIONS OF SECURITY COOPERATION IN ASIA PACIFIC REGION

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Abstract. The reason of ASEAN's rising dominance in the regional order was the fact that the association had been enlarging its institutional activities within the region and expanding new policy areas. However, recent challenge that cast doubt on the association's status of a central player in the region of Asia-Pacific has come in the form of China's rise. There is no reverse logic to existing cooperation theories that explain the reasons why minor states want to pull together their powers.

In this article, the authors come to a conclusion that the specific form of the association's regionalism not only lacks some degree of capacity but also is a result of the weak countries' cooperation. A number of different studies show that the ASEAN's effectiveness is limited in the context of becoming a security organization. The analysis of the association's actions demonstrates that the powers of a single strong entity can easily push ASEAN to the second place.

Key words: ASEAN, Cooperation, International Security, Regionalism, Integration.

Basic provisions

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is aiming to become the main economic and security ensuring regional organization of the Southeast Asia, however, it faces a number of challenges and limitations to become one. The realism of weak countries has been analyzed in order to assess the ASEAN's influence in ensuring security in the region. The association's principle of conflict avoidance leads stronger players in the APR to take over the "ruling position" of the regional development.

To assess the association's impact in ensuring security in the region, the realism of a weak states has been reviewed. Next, the paper analyses the limits of the organization's steps in forming a broader multilateral security cooperation. ASEAN's conflict avoiding principle leads stronger players in the Asian Pacific region to take over the "leading seat" of the regional development.

Introduction

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations from the very beginning of its existence has been gradually appearing on the regional scene and gaining strength. The association's "evolution" over last several decades has been approved by both scientific circles and regional political figures. In the 90s, Frost has called the association one of the most successful regional associations among developing countries [1]. Smith, analyzing the region, argued that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations had no analogues among third world countries [2]. However, the

Asian Financial Crisis (AFC) that took place at the end of the 20th century has slightly violated this assumption, this in turn, prompted deeper integration of the member states of the organization.

Description of materials and methods

By means of a comparative method, the analysis of scientific sources of foreign authors investigating the security problems of the Asian-Pacific region is carried out, the concepts of “open region”, “weak state’s regionalism”, and others were characterized. Conceptual theories of foreign and domestic scientists were also used in the article.

As the main methods among general scientific methods, systemic and structural methods were broadly used.

Results

A very diverse composition of the members of the ASEAN and diverse national interests are the reasons for an unattainability of the deeper integration. Numerous scholars expressed skepticism on the effectiveness of the association’s regional diplomacy. Some of the criticism was focused on the superficial institutionalization of the regional project, and few directly questioned its supposed underlying sense of community [6]. Some of the scholars were questioning the essence of the association itself, and few claimed that the ASEAN really represents the security community. A final understanding of the regionalism driven by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations suggests that a community of weak countries has developed a set of norms that were previously adopted by powerful states, and has transformed states into more inclusive community.

Discussion

Although it is not quite clear whether another organization would represent same “open region” that encompasses almost all of the neighboring countries such as the US, Russia, Canada, New Zealand and Australia. The uncertainty about the geographical scope of the association represents deeper ambivalence of the organization itself, and it could be noticed from the very beginning of the existence of the organization that always had been promoting inclusiveness. It was more than enough for member states to just sign up to peaceful resolution and non-interference norms. Indeed, it remains unclear where the organization’s boundaries end.

Positive assessments of the expanded structure of the organization since the 2000s have welcomed the ASEAN’s initiatives to socialize the region [2]. However, political changes in the face of China’s rise have raised doubts on the association’s real influence in the Asian Pacific region. At the same time, a number of drastic changes were taking place within the framework of the organization. The more the association expanded, the more the problem of deepening integration exacerbated. By now, the association is comprised of Myanmar and Thailand, the military juntas, Laos and Vietnam which are the communist states, Cambodia which is an elected autocracy, Brunei which is an absolute monarchy, Indonesia a consolidating democracy as well as semi-democratic states as Singapore, Philippines and

Malaysia. Instead of contributing to deeper integration, very diverse types of political regimes of the member states made the process of integration even more unachievable.

The studies of Southeast Asia's regional security mechanisms that were made earlier sharply contrast with the recent studies on the prospects of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Scientists, in the middle of the 20th century were already predicting the failure of ASEAN both in its usefulness and scope. However, constructivist, liberal as well as normativist theories of international relations that were prevailing in the 90th of the previous century in academic studies, were confirmed during ASEAN process. The association's exit from confrontations era to dynamic association-forming beginnings simultaneously were deepening the integration processes within the organization, and has built a unique "ASEAN way" and expanded its mechanisms, formed common norms and shared identity [3]. According to Acharya, the association's indemnity to regionalism was perfect and social, and it had deterrent influence on conflicts between states.

ASEAN intended to become a complete organization as proposed at the association's summit in 2003, and the analysts were optimistic about the following years [4]. Annual meetings of the organization were recognized to contribute to deeper integration and strengthen regional identity. Moreover, the heads of association's member states intended to preserve ASEAN's "governing place" in forming regional security [5].

The ASEAN Charter, which is the main document of the organization demands non-interference in the internal affairs of the participating states. Consequently, all the states that submit to the association, recognize the indestructibility of the sovereignty of the members. ASEAN resolves conflicts by conducting peaceful dialogues, negotiations and by giving consultations, therefore the association refrains from using destructive force. Effective dispute resolving mechanisms were settled in all of the areas of cooperation of the association. Nevertheless, the ASEAN Charter has not agreed on a binding basis of its resolutions, and the peaceful settlement of the conflicts depends on the actions of the Chair or the Secretary-General of ASEAN [7].

The above-mentioned norms of peaceful conflict settlement and non-interference are not new. These norms were set by the UN Charter long before the Association of Southeast Asian Nations was formed. These documents reflect the post-colonial values that were formed by the end of the WWII. The distinguishing features of the ASEAN's norms lie in the realization of the norms not in their content. How Acharya says "ASEAN's way is a process that carries out the interactions", thus it needs development of some concrete habits and tendencies, in particular a cautious and informal style of diplomacy [3]. This what makes the association different from other "more formal" organizations of the west [8]. Unlike western institutions that focus on legitimate decision-making processes, ASEAN focuses on increasing "the level of comfort" for its members, which means that it tries to evade direct disputes. Thus, the consolation process was conducted by escaping bilateral conflicts between participating parties or by resolving them in non-binding dialogue form. "What does the association do when it cannot resolve the dispute? It can hide

the problem rather than drawing attention to it. A problem today, may not be a one in the future” – this is how the former Secretary General of ASEAN explains it.

The ASEAN’s “compromise diplomacy” was established to manage relations in the broader Asian Pacific region. The concept document of the organization provided that it would concentrate primarily on confidence-building, then on preventive diplomacy and finally on building conflict resolving mechanisms [9]. ASEAN has developed its own unique interstate framework of both formal and informal meetings of the heads of states since its fourth summit in 1992. There are official meetings every two years and several unofficial meetings in between them.

The meetings and summits are headed by the Secretary-General of the ASEAN and managed by the secretariat. The association’s policy making process was accelerated by the 1997-1998 financial crisis, and the very first milestone was the Bali Agreement II of 2003. Following that, the Kuala Lumpur Declaration was established in 2007, which gave the association the legal entity’s status. In addition, the framework that governs the association’s foreign trade with states like India, Japan and the strategic partnership with China was founded. The association had trade relations with states like South Korea and New Zealand by 2014. However, in the area of economic regionalism removal of trade barriers does not itself mean a deeper integration. On security issues, the association stayed strongly devoted to non-interference and cooperation norms. This means that close interstate relations and the relations between the heads of states and high-ranking statesmen are more important than official rules and bureaucratic procedures. The overall effect of regional process can be explained as “soft” institutionalism.

The association’s accent on non-interference, according to Buzan, represents weak state’s identity, therefore having no internal potential, weak states are anxious about their internal security, at the first place [10]. Consequently, most of the weak countries endure a number of disadvantages. Such disadvantages include: disability of ensuring internal order, disability of maintaining basic social values, and the gap in compliance of citizens. States that face such disadvantages, unable to cope with the issues, become highly dependent on strong powers, even if the main driver of the foreign course are internal.

Internal sources of general powerlessness were recognized as the main source of transborder cooperation both in “west” and “east” regionalism [11]. (Kelly, 2007) Yet, how it was noticed by Ayoob, the particular subordinate realism which is common among weak countries, is oriented to form not a regional identity, but a national one. Roberts claimed that lack of national potential was e major reason for a poor identity of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (2012).

The theory of community security, heavily focusing on promotion of transborder interdependence, has ignored rational-materialistic and national factors underlying the community agenda of ASEAN. Moreover, it is quite uneasy to understand the inherent ideas of “easy” regionalism, therefore the recognition that the association had from the very beginning was an organization of resolving internal relations, and not a balancer of external threats [12]. As an example the Cambodian War, when the association publicly opposed Vietnam for its actions, its intentions stayed decidedly domestic [13]. Even if the driving forces of the international affairs

have not changed, the states of East Asia have gained strength and became louder in expressing their intentions.

The political structure of Southeast Asia is mainly connected with the results of performances, which can be proven by the fact that ASEAN considers its movement towards deeper integration in economic sphere as its main achievement. The members of the association were no longer engaged in region forming, but in nation building. Thus, in order to contribute to these conditions, the inexpensive and safe diplomacy of unofficial meetings and non-binding contracts has worked to ensure quite stable relations within the association. Nevertheless, the essence of weak state regionalism is in the fact that it does not support the real aims and intentions of its participants, namely the strengthening of the national state. In the case of the absence of successful responses to cross-border threats and sustainable ways of solving interstate disputes, the countries become weak not only to internal risks, but additionally to external threats. While submitting to wider integration ASEAN officials argued that they would not give up their sovereignty. This serves as an evident obstacle for the process of association's gatherings and dialogue in unofficial atmosphere which is also believed to promote trust over time and build common principles and common identity. The mandate of the ASEAN under its charter lacks supranational potential, despite the fact that it was enlarged and improved. The same sources of distrust that hinder wider integration, hinder the development of common identity of ASEAN members. As a result, a "light regionalism" appears, overflowed with organizations and institutions that have small influence on the structure of regional security. However, even though the association has achieved several small objectives, the association couldn't reach the main goal of relieving internal and foreign security issues in Southeast Asia. The so-called non-traditional threats of global scale were reflected in the association's security agenda, especially after the 9/11 events and the end of the Cold War. The "rule-based association" was envisioned in order to take security cooperation to a higher level, without disturbing the independence of its participants.

ASEAN plus three and ASEAN's security dilemma

It is believed that the participation of three regional strong entities such as Japan, South Korea and China to ASEAN+3 will turn into integrated security and economic cooperation. However, such assumption raises questions on the possibility of functioning of such cooperation without the US. One of the greatest aspirations of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations was the strengthening the regional integrity without the intervention of powerful foreign entities, since the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality has been declared. The logical conclusion of the 2008 financial crisis was the elimination of the US from Southeast Asian community. It is noteworthy that among the participants of the Kuala Lumpur meeting in 2005, the US was not invited.

In terms of regional economic power, China presented itself as a successor of the US, this was seen as a strategic oversight [14]. However, the US, for several decades, served as a stabilizer for volatile competition between quite strong states of China and Japan. Some diplomats of the association have secretly recognized the significance of the United States role. Such trust on the presence of the United States

while upholding regional stability schemes, which over time, demanded a weakening of influence of the United States in Southeast Asia, became a discrepancy that none from scientists or diplomats could appropriately resolve. Until 2008 the exceptional only Asian viewpoint was used semi-formally, and this fact has reinforced the feeling that the association broader security courses in the region lacked consistency. China's support against the US has shattered the apparent goal for which the processes of APT and ARF were developed [15].

Conclusion

The association's movement towards an economic, political, security as well as cultural unity and its expansion in the Asian-Pacific region examines leading hypothesizes in the studies that the socialization among the member states of the association convert the interests of the states into common norms, and builds an ideological foundation for common identity. A nation talking to another nation would eventually turn into a supranational grouping. Such teleology, that has a great impact on the subject of international relations, found its embodiment in the ASEAN's development process and its supposed alteration into Southeast Asian congregation. However, it was found that weak states' regionalism in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations remains to be conservative. Those who believed that the association had turned into a rudimentary security organization, precisely followed the formal rhetoric of the association.

The most important norms of non-interference of the association and its non-binding consensus hinder broader integration both within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and in the broader Asian Pacific region. The durability of the institutional structure does not in any way imply progress, but rather an appeal to the process without solution. Prolonged conflicts and smoldering suspicions make the use of coercion an option that is not excluded in the association and hinders more effective ways of strengthening security. The association's role in encouraging regional well-being was limited even with the shift in from results to supposedly more important process parameters. If an intergovernmental conflict is indeed extremely unlikely to happen between any of the member states of the association, it is not due to a liberal or ideological gathering, but above everything due to the lack of significant potential.

Observing mainly the transnational security regimes' practice, countries adhere to bilateral or multilateral agreements, and do not build a supranational practice regarding internal security. Even though the dispute prevention strategies expanded to broader East Asia, the association's collective weakness has not changed. ASEAN, as a result, seems destined to stay a set of weak and unstable states, and what appeared to be a socialization of China and Japan, had unexpected effect, as they tried to manipulate the norms of the association in order to gain their own goals. Therefore, the member states of the association seek to bandwagon with the US in order to maintain the regional presence of a superpower, or tried to build ties with rising China. Does not matter which strategy the ASEAN ultimately adopts, it is only able to hide the fact that the less powerful states are not able influence the fate of more powerful states.

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АСЕАН ЖӘНЕ ОНЫҢ АЗИЯ-ТЫНЫҚ МҰХИТЫ АЙМАҒЫНДАҒЫ ҚАУІПСІЗДІК САЛАСЫНДАҒЫ ЫНТЫМАҚТАСТЫҚТАҒЫ ШЕКТЕУЛЕРІ

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Аңдатпа. Аймақтық тәртіпте АСЕАН үстемдігінің жоғарылауының себебі қауымдастықтың аймақтағы институционалдық қызметін кеңейтіп, саясаттың жаңа

бағыттарын кеңейтуі болды. Алайда, қауымдастықтың Азия-Тынық мұхиты аймағындағы орталық ойыншы ретіндегі мәртебесіне күмән келтіргені – Қытайдың өрлеуі болды. Қолданыстағы ынтымақтастық теорияларында шағын мемлекеттердің күш біріктіргісі келетін себептерін түсіндіретін кері логика жоқ.

Бұл мақалада авторлар қауымдастықтың регионализмінің белгілі бір әлеуетке ие емес, сонымен қатар қауымдастық әлсіз елдердің ынтымақтастығының нәтижесі деп тұжырымдайды. Бірқатар түрлі зерттеулер АСЕАН тиімділігі Қауіпсіздік Ұйымына айналу тұрғысынан шектеулі екенін көрсетеді. Қауымдастықтың іс-әрекеттерін талдау белгілі бір күшті субъектінің өкілеттіктері АСЕАН-ды екінші орынға оңай ығыстыра алатындағын көрсетеді.

Тірек сөздер: АСЕАН, ынтымақтастық, Халықаралық қауіпсіздік, регионализм, интеграция.

АСЕАН И ЕЕ ОГРАНИЧЕНИЯ В СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВЕ В ОБЛАСТИ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ В АЗИАТСКО-ТИХООКЕАНСКОМ РЕГИОНЕ

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Аннотация. Причиной растущего доминирования АСЕАН в региональном порядке был тот факт, что ассоциация расширяла свою институциональную деятельность в регионе и расширяла новые области политики. Однако недавний вызов, который поставил под сомнение статус ассоциации как центрального игрока в Азиатско-Тихоокеанском регионе, проявился в виде подъема Китая. В существующих теориях сотрудничества нет обратной логики, объясняющей причины, по которым малые государства хотят объединить свои силы.

В этой статье авторы приходят к выводу, что специфическая форма регионализма ассоциации не только не обладает определенной степенью потенциала, но и является результатом сотрудничества слабых стран. Ряд различных исследований показывает, что эффективность АСЕАН ограничена в контексте превращения в организацию безопасности. Анализ действий ассоциации показывает, что полномочия единого сильного субъекта могут легко отодвинуть АСЕАН на второе место.

Ключевые слова: АСЕАН, сотрудничество, международная безопасность, регионализм, интеграция.

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