

THE UNITED STATES AND THE EAST ASIA SUMMIT

By

Sayo Saruta

Submitted to the

Faculty of the School of International Service

of American University

in Partial Fulfillment of

the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

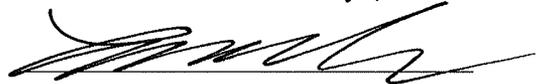
In

International Peace and Conflict Resolution

Chair:



Amitav Acharya, Ph.D.



Kwaku Nuamah, Ph.D.



Dean of the School of International Service

April 30

Date

2012

American University

Washington, D.C. 20016

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ABSTRACT

The thesis explores the reason why the US participates in the East Asia Summit (EAS). The US decided to join the EAS in 2010, while the US did not join at its inauguration in 2005. From the realist perspective, the EAS participation would be explained from balance of power. The US wants to maintain its presence in the region and to hedge against China. From the liberalist perspective, it would be explained that the US enters regional cooperation and uses the multinational organizations for the regional stability because regional cooperation helps to ensure the US interest. From the constructivist perspective, the US decision would be made because the US started to cooperate with regional countries from common security perspective and started to share ASEAN Ways with the regional countries. They would also mention the Obama administration's identity as a Pacific nation. The author takes an eclectic combination of theories. The US joined the EAS mainly to

maintain its presence in the region and to introduce norms and values in the region. In addition, the US decision was made as the US started sharing the interest of common security in the region and some ASEAN ways, although Asia-Pacific way has not been established.

ABBREVIATIONS

APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
APT	ASEAN Plus Three
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asia
ASEAN-PMC	ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conferences
ASEM	Asia Europe Meeting
CBM	Confidence-building Measures
CSCE	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Area
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic cooperation and Development
PMC	Post-Ministerial Conferences
PRC	People's Republic of China
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	i
ABBREVIATION.....	iii
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Hypothesis and Thesis Structure	
1.2 Methodology	
CHAPTER 2 THEORIES ON REGIONAL COOPERATION AND INSTITUTIONS FOR PEACE AND STABILITY	9
2.1 Realism	
2.2 Liberalism	
2.3 Constructivism	
CHAPTER 3 EAST ASIA SUMMIT BEFORE US PARTICIPATION	18
3.1 The Transformation of the Asia-Pacific Regionalism	
3.2 Summary on the East Asia Summit	
3.3 Diplomatic Battle around the EAS	
3.4 Evaluation of the EAS before US participation	

CHAPTER 4	TRANSFORMATION OF THE US POLICY TOWARDS EAST ASIAN REGIONALISM	43
4.1	The Post-Cold War Era	
4.2	Clinton Administration	
4.3	Bush Administration	
4.4	Obama Administration	
4.5	Active involvement in Multi-lateral Institutions	
CHAPTER 5	THE UNITED STATES PARTICIPATION IN THE EAST ASIA SUMMIT	73
5.1	US attitude toward the EAS at its inception	
5.2	Reasons for participation	
5.3	The US accession to the East Asia Summit	
5.4	The 6 th East Asia Summit with United States Participation	
CHAPTER 6	CONCLUSION: THEORIES ON US PARTICIPATION IN THE EAS	99
6.1	Realism	
6.2	Liberalism	
6.3	Criticism against realism and liberalism	
6.4	Constructivism	
6.5	Conclusion	

BIBLIOGRAPHY 126

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

US policy in the Asia-Pacific region has been based on bilateral relationships with allies and partners since the end of the WWII. The US has five allies in the region, Australia, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines and Thailand, and has partners such as Singapore. The United States did not try to get involved in the regional organizations actively in the Asia-Pacific until recently while it has maintained substantial multilateral relationships with Europe.

Also for East Asian countries, regional organizations have not been the main schemes for their international relationships for a long time. The majority of the countries have depended on bilateral relationships with the United States especially for their security almost exclusively. However, recently the paradigms in the region have been seen changing. Many regional organizations have been established and have been developing. After the Asian financial crises in 1997, when the region could not receive cooperation from the West including the US, the East Asian regionalism has accelerated. There are multiple regional institutions including Asia-only organizations and Asia-Pacific organizations; ASEAN

(Association of Southeast Asian Nations), ASEAN plus three (APT; Japan, Korea and China), ASEAN plus six (APT plus Australia, New Zealand and India), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), Six Party Talks (The US, China, Russia, North and South Korea and Japan), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and East Asia Summit (EAS). Although none of them have reached the integration level either of the EU or of NATO, they have been developing and their importance to each member country and to the international society has grown rapidly in recent years.

As of March 2012, the United States is a member of some institutions (ARF, Six Party Talks, APEC and EAS) and not a member of others (ASEAN, APT, ASEAN plus six and SCO). Although the US' bilateral relationships are still in the center of the region's geopolitics, some organizations, including the ones without the US membership, have been growing. Some scholars argue that the emergence of these new orders relies on close cooperation among regional nations without US leadership and that it is less influenced by the US than in the past.¹ Others also say that the regional powers, such as China, Japan, India and Russia, and other smaller Asian governments have been shifting to securing their interests by more diversified diplomacy, military preparations and other means than from

¹ Robert G. Sutter, *The United States in Asia*, 160.

solo reliance on the bilateral relationships with the US.² Although, in general, almost all Asian governments want positive relations with the US, some seek diversified relationships with other countries, especially in the context of rising China, to enhance their security.³

The US policies in dealing with Asian multilateralism and regionalism have been complicated and also gradually been changing. Although the priorities are still heavily on bilateral relationships and the US policy concerns focus on particular issues in individual countries through bilateral relationships, it has increased its involvement in those regional institutions. After the Obama administration's inauguration, the speed accelerated. In April 2008, the US appointed an Ambassador for ASEAN, which made the US the first dialogue partner of ASEAN to have appointed its Ambassador to ASEAN.⁴ The US signed the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in 2009. In 2010, the US decided to join the East Asia Summit (EAS) and it participated in the EAS since 2011.

The EAS is a regional consultative forum for discussion of leading political, security and economic issues.⁵ It started in 2005 with the 10 ASEAN countries plus China, South Korea, Japan, India, Australia and New Zealand. In 2010, in response to the US request,

² Ibid., 276.

³ Ibid., 276.

⁴ Secretary-General of ASEAN, "Welcomes Confirmation of First US Ambassador to ASEAN," *ASEAN Secretariat*, May 2, 2008, <http://www.aseansec.org/21496.htm>

⁵ Severino, "The East Asia Summit."

ASEAN agreed to invite the US to the EAS.⁶ The US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton declared at the ASEAN meeting in 2010,

*The East Asia Summit, where you bring other countries in addition to the core ASEAN countries together to discuss political and security matters, is a very important forum for the US to be part of. Where issues of a political, economic, and security consequence are being discussed in the region, the US wants to be there.*⁷

1.1 Hypothesis and Thesis Structure

What made the US join the EAS? This is the main research question of this thesis.

Around the core question, many questions rise. Why was the decision made in 2010, while the US did not join at its inauguration in 2005? Is it because of the US policy positive change in terms of the Asia Pacific regionalism in general? There seems to be multiple factors stimulating the US involvement, such as increasing Chinese influence in the region, growing Asian market and the US administration change. There seems to be economic and normative reasons as well as geopolitical security reasons.

This thesis examines these factors deeply in details from the facts and the theories.

This thesis will apply three international relations theories, realism, liberalism and constructivism, to the facts. From the realist perspective, the EAS participation would be

⁶ Chachavalpongpun, "How the US plays into the East Asia Summit for ASEAN."

⁷ Severino, "The East Asia Summit."

explained from balance of power. The US wants to maintain its presence in the region and to hedge against China. From the liberalist perspective, it would be explained that the US enters regional cooperation and uses the multinational organizations for the regional stability because regional cooperation helps to ensure the US interest. From the constructivist perspective, the US decision would be made because the US started to cooperate with regional countries from common security perspective and started to share ASEAN Ways with the regional countries. They would also mention the Obama administration's identity as a Pacific nation.

My hypothesis is that the US joined the EAS mainly to maintain its presence in the region and to introduce norms and values in the region. I also think the decision was made as the US started sharing the interest of common security in the region and some ASEAN ways. I would like to use an eclectic combination of theories.⁸ In order to prove this hypothesis, this thesis first explains the theoretical framework (Chapter 2), second, focuses on finding empirical facts (Chapter 3-5) and lastly applies the theories to the facts (Chapter 6).

⁸ Sil and Katzenstein, *Analytic Eclecticism*, 411-431.

1.2 Methodology

I chose mainly qualitative research because this method generally focuses on a smaller number of cases and investigates these cases in great depth. The main part of the examination was conducted through archival research and interviews. Past facts were collected and analyzed mainly based on literature review. In order to analyze those data, this research employed contents analysis method. "Contents analysis is a careful, detailed, systematic examination and interpretation of a particular body of material in an effort to identify patterns, themes, biases, meanings."⁹ As the method is used on various forms on human communications, contents analysis method is appropriate for my research, which dealt with many communication documents. Within the contents analysis method, I employed summative content analysis. The summative content analysis is the method in which the researcher expends his/her exploration to include latent meanings and themes that are apparent in the existing words or phrases.¹⁰ This method is needed because the surface wordings of the government documents or official statements are often different from what they really intend. The limitation of the contents analysis is especially about

⁹ Berg, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 338.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 341.

ineffective testing of causal relationships between variables.¹¹ I made an effort to find how each motivation is interrelated and how they are related with the outcomes. These efforts were made based on interviews and analysis from scholarly literature review.

Archival research also includes data from websites of regional organizations and governments, from libraries and academic and think tank databases. Although this research thesis focuses on the decision made by the United States, the data is collected from websites in English and Japanese. My Japanese language ability and Japanese background help add deep understanding of the issues.

Regarding the archival data, I especially focused on government official statements and speeches, such as the speech of US president Obama and the statement of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.¹²

In addition, due to focusing on the on-going events and limited data on the EAS, which is a relatively new organization, and given the study's exploratory nature to dig into the one specific issue deeper, information from interviews is very useful. The interview participants were chosen based either on their relationship with the region, on their position to influence the issue, or on their scholarly position. Thanks to my location, Washington

¹¹ Ibid., 365.

¹² Severino, "The East Asia Summit."

D.C., and interviewees' kind cooperation, I could conduct substantial interviews with many academic scholars, Congressional staffers and former governmental officials. I employed a semi-standardized Interview method, which is more or less structured and flexible. Questions were asked in a systematic and consistent order, but the research probed far beyond the answers to prepared standardized questions.¹³

Quantitative data is also used for examining some international relationships such as economic relationships between the US and Asian regional countries.

This research relied also on many existing theoretical works on international relations theories and conflict resolution.

¹³ Berg, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 107.

CHAPTER 2
THEORIES ON REGIONAL COOPERATION AND INSTITUTIONS
FOR PEACE AND STABILITY

The US decision to participate in the EAS can be explained differently from various International Relations theories. This chapter will explain how three International Relations theories: realism, liberalism and constructivism, view international cooperation and institutions. The following chapters will explore the facts and evidence by which these theories would explain the US decision to join the EAS.

2.1 Realism

Realism is to analyze the anarchical world from national interests and power of each country. In the neo-realist theories, decisions of each country are made on the goal to promote its security, and countries' power is a means to achieve their goal. Each country has to work for self-help in the anarchical world. The power competition resulting from the self-help effort brings a balance of power between states.¹⁴ In general, realism is not positive towards international cooperation between countries unless the relations are not for

¹⁴ Katsumata, *Establishment*, 183.

balancing powers. Fear of being cheated has a strong influence on their policy making. States still cooperate, but their cooperation is limited because realists think states don't trust each other.¹⁵ Cooperation is sometimes not well achieved and does not last for a long time.¹⁶ Balance of power often makes states form alliances against common enemies.^{17 18} But alliances are only temporary cooperation for each state's momentary interest. These states' cooperation is to deter or defeat threatening entities, but is "contingent, unstable, and the by-product of dangers posed by imbalances of power or serious threat."¹⁹ Realists even recognize that states sometimes work through institutions,²⁰ but for them, institutions are "arenas for acting out power relationships."²¹

There are some differences within realists.²² Defensive realism is relatively positive towards international cooperation. They argue that if countries can maintain their security, they don't seek further power. They view regional institutions positively since regional cooperation is useful for avoiding unnecessary arms races and unintended militarized disputes. If it helps their security, countries enter international cooperation such as regional

¹⁵ Mearsheimer, *The False Promise*, 9.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁸ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*.

¹⁹ Keohane and Martin, *The Promise of International Theory*, 4.

²⁰ Mearsheimer, *The False Promise*, 13.

²¹ Evans and Wilson, "Regime Theory," 330.

²² Yoshikawa and Noguchi, *Perspective*, 141-148.

security systems actively. On the other hand, an offensive realist argues that countries always try to strengthen their power unlimitedly and international cooperation is difficult to be seen.²³ Offensive realists think, “Daily life is essentially a struggle for power, where each state strives not only to be the most powerful actor in the system, but also to ensure that no other state achieves that lofty position.”²⁴ They simply explain the regional cooperation as a means to balance powers.

Although there are some differences between various realist schools, the fundamental position of realism is that anarchy decisively lets the states seek advantages over other countries, and makes them behave in a self-interested and self-help manner.²⁵ Regarding creating peace, realists believe institutions have no independent effect on state behavior and therefore believe that institutions themselves do not work for creating stability.²⁶ In other words, for them, institutions are simply mirrors of power distribution in the anarchic international system.²⁷ ²⁸

Thus, when a realist tries to find the reason why the US decided to join the EAS, they

²³ Mearsheimer, *The False Promise*, 11.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁵ Adler and Michael, *Security Communities*, 3.

²⁶ Mearsheimer, *The False Promise*, 7.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 7.

would focus on the power shift in the region and US motivation to enhance its own powers.

2.2 Liberalism

Liberalists would view international cooperation more positively. Liberalism argues that countries are not necessarily always fighting against each other even in the anarchical world, and that countries can cooperate with other countries for their prosperity. Liberalism views international institution and norms, democratic governance and economic interdependence as means by which the security dilemma in the anarchy can be reduced.²⁹

Neo-liberals hold that actors in the anarchic world may act rationally and seek cooperation, instead of pursuing immediate gains from defection. They argue states can cooperate to pursue common interests, because cooperative strategies under some circumstances produce benefits more than unilateral actions. Liberalists take a more optimistic view towards regional institutions than realists. They say that even in the security field, multiple states could share common interests. They pay attention to the conditions under which states might establish a stable set of rules and institutions to promote their shared interests. States want to deal with threats such as military attack, or control risks

²⁹ Russett and Oneal, *Triangulating Peace*, 90.

such as nuclear proliferation or regional conflict. Such common interests produce incentives for cooperative security strategy. They argue that likelihood to be cheated in the anarchic world can be minimized by increasing information about the actions and intentions of other states, by providing schemes for monitoring, by creating incentives for good behavior and by applying sanctions against the violators.³⁰

The main difference between realists and liberal institutionalists is on whether institutions significantly affect the prospects for international stability³¹ Liberal institutionalists believe that international norms and institutions are a powerful force for stability.³² They say, “Successful institutions develop norms and rules that regularize the behavior of states belonging to them, making it more predictable.”³³ Institutionalists also argue, “Institutions play a role in security relations by affecting states’ cost-benefit calculations; by shaping their strategies; by inducing conformity to established conventions and norms; and even in the long run, by altering how societies view their interests and the mandates that states have to act in world politics.”³⁴ They believe that institutions change state preference and therefore behavior. Institutions can discourage countries from

³⁰ Keohane and Martin, *The Promise of International Theory*, 3-49.

³¹ Mearsheimer, *The False Promise*, 7.

³² Ruggie, “Multilateralism,” 561.

³³ Keohane and Martin, *The Promise of International Theory*, 4.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.

calculating only from self-interest and they are capable of moving states away from war. Liberalists underline that once the international regime with rules and principles is established, even powerful countries have to abide by the regime, namely, norms and rules.³⁵ “These resources may be of immense importance if other states accept these norms and thereby alter their preferences in ways that are favorable to the norm-creating state.”³⁶ In this way, institutions can affect prevailing ideas and norms.³⁷

Liberalists also stress the meanings of economic interdependence for creating peace through global activities of international corporations, trade and investment and people’s ties. They argue that interdependence works for avoiding escalation of the armed conflict, even when serious issues exist between countries and negotiation does not solve the issues. States recognize consequences of conflicts on their economic relations.³⁸

Liberalists view democracy as a significant constraint on the use of force as well. The Democratic Peace theory argues that the likelihood of a dispute is much lower between democratic countries than the possibility between countries with other political systems.³⁹ They explain that a domestic democratic system such as an election prevents unintended

³⁵ Keohane, *International Institutions and State Power*, 172.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 10.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Russett and ONeal, *Triangulating Peace*, 154.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 145.

wars and policy makers need deep deliberation before their decision to enter wars. Under this theory, each actor in the international world tries to increase the number of stable democratic nations.

Thus, regarding the US decision on its EAS participation, a liberalist would first try to find the US interest for cooperation with the regional countries through the EAS. Under this theory, the US is supposed to share the same interest with other regional countries, which makes all countries enter regional cooperation. They would also examine whether the US expects to establish rules in the region through the EAS and whether the US expects the EAS shapes other countries' strategies and behavior. These examinations have to be conducted from a cost-benefit perspective as the US is also supposed to be forced to abide by these norms and rules under this theory. In addition, liberalists would try to find whether the US seeks deeper economic interdependence and democracy through the EAS for creating regional stability.

2.3 Constructivism

Constructivism criticizes the assumption in realism and liberalism that cooperation is understood mostly as separate collective action for direct gains.

Constructivism argues that the world politics is socially constructed. For Constructivists, international reality is a social construction driven by collective understandings including shared knowledge, ideational forces and a dense normative environment, which emerges from social interaction⁴⁰ rather than materials.⁴¹

⁴²Constructivism focuses the role of shared ideas and norms in shaping state identities and interests as well as their behavior.⁴³ They think that state interests are an important part constructed by systemic structures, not exogenous to them.⁴⁴⁴⁵ States' interests are a normative structure that emerges and evolves due to the actions and interactions of state and non-state actors.⁴⁶⁴⁷ Such interests and identities are central determinants of state behavior. They emphasize actors' identities and the sources of state interests, suggesting that the purposes for which power is deployed and is regarded as socially legitimate may be changing based on the identities and interests.⁴⁸

Constructivist explanations describe why diverse countries would pursue

⁴⁰ Adler and Michael, *Security Communities*, 12.

⁴¹ Wendt, "Constructing International Politics," 73.

⁴² Adler and Michael, *Security Communities*, 8-10.

⁴³ Wendt, "Constructing International Politics," 71.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 73.

⁴⁵ Adler and Michael, *Security Communities*, 8-10.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁴⁷ Katsumata, *Establishment*, 187.

⁴⁸ Adler and Michael, *Security Communities*, 12.

international cooperation or regionalism when there is no clear material incentive.⁴⁹ Constructivists underline cooperation as “dynamic, social ‘process of interactions’ by which actors negotiate not just specific interests but also new norms and thinking about relationships.”⁵⁰ Constructivists argue that international structures, even including anarchy, are not given, but constructed by social practice.⁵¹ They say shared knowledge determines their significance in deciding whether states choose balancing, cooperation, or war. Under the proper conditions, actors can generate shared identities and norms that are tied to a stable peace.⁵² They argue, “When states identify positively with one another, the security of each is perceived as the responsibility of all.”⁵³

Thus, regarding the US decision to participate in the EAS, a constructivist first would examine what kind of interests and identities the US has created through actions and interactions with other regional states, and if these interests and identities motivate the US for the EAS. In addition, they would look at whether there is a shared knowledge, which determines if the regional countries, including the US, opt for cooperation through the EAS.

⁴⁹ Ba, “The ASEAN Regional Forum,” 29.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 21.

⁵¹ Wendt, “Constructing International Politics,” 73.

⁵² Adler and Michael, *Security Communities*, 10.

⁵³ Wendt, “Anarchy is what States Make of it,” 400.

CHAPTER 3

EAST ASIA SUMMIT BEFORE US PARTICIPATION

3.1 The Transformation of the Asia-Pacific Regionalism

US involvement in the Asia-Pacific region has been based on its bilateral relationships with its allies and partners since the end of WWII until today. Australia, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines and Thailand are the treaty allies of the United States and Singapore has close security relationships with the United States.⁵⁴ The US organized the system and sustained it to manage the Cold War in Asia.⁵⁵ The US multiple bilateral relationships are called a “hub and spokes” system, which locates the US in the center as a hub and the US allies around the US as spokes. Although two decades passed since the end of the Cold War, this hub and spokes system is the main security structure in the Asia Pacific both for the US and the East Asian nations.⁵⁶ For the majority of Asia-Pacific non-communist countries, the United States is the most important partner, especially for security.

⁵⁴ Cook, “The United States and the East Asia Summit,” 297.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 297.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

However, multilateralism and regionalism in East Asia and the wider Asia-Pacific Region has grown gradually since 1980s, especially after the financial crisis in 1997. Multiple layers and various forms of the regional institutions have emerged,⁵⁷ although neither one is not institutionalized to the extent of the European regionalism.⁵⁸ It is still controversial and not clear if and how the trend of regionalism leads the more integrated East Asia or Asia Pacific grouping. It is also not certain that this trend could lead the region to become more cooperative in terms of security, while economic cooperation has been rapidly developing and has led to the community building in the region. The Asia-Pacific, which includes the United States, Japan, China, Russia and India, is the most crowded Great Power region in the world.⁵⁹ The Great Powers and the small countries like ASEAN 10 are all trying to be involved in the region as well as in the process of regionalism for their own interest in their own ways. Even the meaning of the region, the “East Asia” and/or “Asia-Pacific” is different to each actor and the members of the existing organizations are always extensively discussed to satisfy their own interests.

⁵⁷ Jimbo, “An Emerging East Asian Community?” 14.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Cook, “The United States and the East Asia Summit,” 296.

The termination of the Cold War helped the regional countries realize their need for regional cooperation. It is especially because regional countries had their deep concerns that the United States may not stay engaged in the Asia-Pacific region. US allies and even the United States itself started considering cooperative regional security arrangements necessary for complementing the hub and spokes system. The former communist countries also started seeking the new regional order.⁶⁰ The end of the Cold War also lifted divisions in the region and their constraints on regionalism. ASEAN's expansion in the 1990s to include the previously excluded countries of mainland Southeast Asia, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Burma, is a good example. The fears of regional countries due to the reduction of a US security presence and the uncertainties brought by the resurgence of China⁶¹ made the regional countries form the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1994 for discussing political and security issues and for creating cooperative relationships.^{62,63} The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC) was established in 1989 primarily for economic cooperation and became elevated in importance when APEC Leaders' Meetings

⁶⁰ Cook, "The United States and the East Asia Summit," 298-9.

⁶¹ Nanto, *East Asian Regional Architecture*, 22.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Today, the ARF has 26 members, the 10 ASEAN states plus the United States, China, Japan, Russia, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Korea, North Korea, India, Pakistan, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, and East Timor and European Union. The ARF is pursuing a gradual three-stage evolution from confidence building, to preventive diplomacy and eventual approaches to conflict resolution. The ARF does not have summit meetings but foreign ministers' meetings as the highest forum.

started in 1993.

The Asian financial crisis in 1997 made the nations in the region realize that they share interests and more regional cooperation was needed. All over East Asia, leaders realized that the region was already more closely linked as a kind of “unit of Asia” than they had thought. The universal financial system in which the US and the IMF have main roles did not respond to this crisis properly. The criticism against the system rose from the Asian nations strongly. When individual nations and existing universal systems could not protect themselves from such a crisis, the leaders realized that they must establish collective institutions to protect the region as a group. Facing the crisis, the region did not have any regional organization to rely on. The APEC, one of the oldest and most organized Asia-Pacific regional organizations, did not have enough capacity to react to the crisis. This series of the incidents had a psychological effect on the countries in the region.⁶⁴ Backed by the strong needs, ASEAN plus Three (China, Japan and South Korea) frameworks have established some financial cooperation systems, including the Asian Bond Funds and a series of currency swap arrangements (The Chiang Mai Initiative).⁶⁵ The APT framework has been developing not only in the field of financial cooperation, but also in political and

⁶⁴ Kurlantzick, “Pax Asia-Pacific?” 69.

⁶⁵ Jimbo, “An Emerging East Asian Community?” 20.

security cooperation.⁶⁶ It has been structurally developing as well, and there are 64 mechanisms in the APT cooperation; 1 summit, 16 ministerial, 23 Senior Officials, 1 Directors-General, 17 technical level meetings and 6 other tracks meetings.⁶⁷ The APT initiative covers a variety of areas.⁶⁸

Other regional communities' development such as EU and NAFTA also stimulated Asian countries and made the Asian country feel the need of greater East Asian cooperation. China's dynamic economic growth also revealed the importance of cooperation in trade.⁶⁹ The inauguration of the Asia-Europe Meetings (ASEM) in 1996, which provides a dialogue forum between Europe and an "Asia" as a group, also encourage Asian groupings. The Asian identity feeling among Asian people also plays a role as the Asian people get connected increasingly through trade, business and IT technology.⁷⁰

The foundation for the rapid Asian integration is the long-lasting strong economic tie

⁶⁶ Ibid., 19.

⁶⁷ This information is as of November 2010.

⁶⁸ Association of southeast Asian Nations, "ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation," *ASEAN Secretariat*, accessed April 15, 2012, <http://www.asean.org/16580.htm>

This cooperation includes food and energy security, financial cooperation, trade facilitation, disaster management, people-to-people contacts, narrowing the development gap, rural development and poverty alleviation, human trafficking, labor movement, communicable diseases, environment and sustainable development, and transnational crime and counter-terrorism.

⁶⁹ Frost and Rann, "The East Asia Summit, Kuala Lumpur, 14 December 2005."

⁷⁰ Kurlantzick, "Pax Asia-Pacific?" 68-69.

by the intraregional trade and investment since 1970s.⁷¹ The economic integration has kept growing. In 2003, when the EAS establishment was under discussion, the East Asian intraregional trade share reached 53.3 percent, while it was only 33.6 percent in 1980.⁷² The number exceeded the rate of the North American Free Trade Agreement (44.5 percent) and was getting closer to the rate of European Union (60.3 percent). In addition, having led by the fast Japanese economic development and investment, East Asia became the cross-border “integrated economic space,” where, for example, a final product is made with the parts produced in many other countries in East Asia.⁷³ Now, 21 nations and economies are the members of APEC.⁷⁴

As many regional organizations have been established in the Asia-Pacific region, it has been discussed and disputed which would become the foundation for the future East Asia community, if any. Some say one or a few will survive as the core for the regional

⁷¹ Jimbo, “An Emerging East Asian Community?” 15.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ In 1989, APEC started out as an informal dialogue group of an original 12 members (Australia, Brunei, Canada, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and the United States) and developed into the group with 15 members in 1991 (with the addition of China, Hong Kong, and “Chinese Taipei”) to its current members of 21, with the addition of Mexico and Papua New Guinea (1993), Chile (1994), Peru, Russia, and Vietnam (1997). The membership of Hong Kong and Taiwan is the unique characteristics of the APEC.

community. Some say it is good to have multiple regional institutions as each of them has different mandate, different system and different members.⁷⁵ The East Asia Summit was born for more integrated regional institution and has been involved in such complicated diplomatic discussions even before its establishment.

3.2 Summary on the East Asia Summit

The first East Asia Summit was held in Kuala Lumpur on 14 December 2005. Ten ASEAN member countries and China, Japan, the ROK, India, Australia and New Zealand participated in the first EAS. While the ASEAN summit involves a series of meetings among the ten ASEAN members and dialogues with major partners including the APT,⁷⁶ the first EAS was also held as a part of these overall ASEAN meetings during the 11th ASEAN Summit.⁷⁷

The EAS was decided to convene in the 10th ASEAN Summit on 29 November 2004. The 8th ASEAN Plus Three Summit supported it on the same day.⁷⁸ The idea of the EAS

⁷⁵ Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said these organizations should remain flexible and be refined on their missions. Clinton, *Intervention at the East Asia Summit*. October 30, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/10/150196.htm>

⁷⁶ Frost and Rann, "The East Asia Summit, Kuala Lumpur, 14 December 2005."

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ The East Asia Summit, "Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the East Asia Summit," 14 December 2005, <http://www.asean.org/23298.htm>

was born in the expectation for further integration of East Asian regional architecture. The EAS has been proposed particularly in the discussions and cooperation pursued by ASEAN and by the ASEAN Plus Three process.⁷⁹ In the report from the East Asia Vision Group (EAVG), which was established by APT on 2001 to examine ways of enhancing East Asian cooperation, the group recommended, “the revolution of annual summit meetings of ASEAN +3 into East Asia Summit.”⁸⁰ ⁸¹ The “Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the East Asia Summit,” the leaders' statement issued by the first Summit, indicated that it will be a “forum for dialogue on broad strategic, political and economic issues of common interest and concern, and with the aim of promoting peace, stability and economic prosperity in East Asia.”⁸²

Since the first EAS in 2005, six EAS meetings have been held; the second meeting was in Cebu City, Philippines in January 2007, the third meeting was in Singapore in November 2007, the fourth was in Cha Am and Hua Hin, Thailand in October 2009 and the fifth was in Hanoi, Vietnam, in October 2010. The sixth EAS, which the United States

⁷⁹ Frost and Rann, “The East Asia Summit, Kuala Lumpur, 14 December 2005.”

⁸⁰ East Asia Vision Group, *Towards an East Asian Community*,
<http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/report2001.pdf>

⁸¹ Park, “The US-led alliance in the Asia Pacific,” 149.

⁸² The East Asia Summit, “Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the East Asia Summit,” 14 December 2005,
<http://www.asean.org/23298.htm>

joined for the first time, was held in Bali, Indonesia in November 2011.⁸³

ASEAN determined requirements for participants before the EAS convened, and the EAS membership is considered by ASEAN on a case by case basis. These membership criteria are all ASEAN-related.⁸⁴ The participants must have signed the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (or be prepared to sign it), and must be full ASEAN Dialogue Partners, and have to hold substantial relations with ASEAN.⁸⁵ In this sense, compare to APT or ARF, some say that the EAS has more direct and treaty-based link to ASEAN.⁸⁶ From the first meeting in 2005 until the fifth meeting in 2010, the members did not change; ten ASEAN countries, China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand. As an observer, Russia has participated in the first EAS at the invitation while the US was not invited to the first meeting.⁸⁷ Russia requested to become a member of the EAS since its beginning. In 2010, ASEAN has agreed to invite the US and Russia to the EAS.⁸⁸ As this

⁸³ Association of Southeast Asian Nations, "East Asia Summit," accessed April 15, 2012, <http://www.asean.org/22765.htm>

⁸⁴ Cook, "The United States and the East Asia Summit," 303.

⁸⁵ Frost and Rann, "The East Asia Summit, Kuala Lumpur, 14 December 2005."

⁸⁶ Cook, "The United States and the East Asia Summit," 303.

⁸⁷ Nanto, *East Asian Regional Architecture*, 23.

⁸⁸ Chairman of the 16th ASEAN Summit, "Chairman's Statement of the 16th ASEAN Summit, Towards the Asean Community: from Vision to Action," <http://www.asean.org/24509.htm>

paper will mention in detail later, in 2010 the US announced to join the EAS with a full membership status from the sixth EAS in November 2011.

In addition to the membership requirements, as the convener of the Summit,⁸⁹ ASEAN located itself in the center of the EAS. The Kuala Lumpur Declaration at the first EAS ruled that the EAS will “be hosted and chaired by an ASEAN Member Country that assumes the ASEAN Chairmanship and held back-to-back with the annual ASEAN Summit.”⁹⁰ It also explicitly mentioned that ASEAN is “the driving force working in partnership with other participants of the East Asia Summit” in the EAS.⁹¹ The ASEAN Secretariat, as well as each country’s government officials, facilitates follow-up action and coordinates and implements the cooperation the Summit identified.⁹²

This membership and ASEAN-centered structure was established after a long severe diplomatic dispute. These issues have strong meanings even today and these discussions represent one of the most critical political situations in the Asia Pacific region. It is also highly related to the US participation in the EAS and will be examined later in this paper.

⁸⁹ Frost and Rann, “The East Asia Summit, Kuala Lumpur, 14 December 2005.”

⁹⁰ The East Asia Summit, “Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the East Asia Summit,” 14 December 2005,

<http://www.asean.org/23298.htm>

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Chairman of the First East Asia Summit, “Chairman’s Statement of the First East Asia Summit,” December 14, 2005, <http://www.asean.org/23310.htm>

The Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the East Asian Summit sets its principles and purposes, areas of cooperation and primary modalities.⁹³ ⁹⁴ It covers wide areas including security as well as economy.

- *Fostering strategic dialogue and promoting cooperation in political and security issues to ensure that our countries can live at peace with one another and with the world at large in a just, democratic and harmonious environment;*
- *Promoting development, financial stability, energy security, economic integration and growth, eradicating poverty and narrowing the development gap in East Asia, through technology transfer and infrastructure development, capacity building, good governance and humanitarian assistance and promoting financial links, trade and investment expansion and liberalisation; and*
- *Promoting deeper cultural understanding, people-to-people contact and enhanced cooperation in uplifting the lives and well-being of our peoples in order to foster mutual trust and solidarity as well as promoting fields such as environmental protection, prevention of infectious diseases and natural disaster mitigation.*⁹⁵

In the first summit in 2005, the emphasis was on developing communication among the members.⁹⁶ The chair of the meeting, Malaysia's Prime Minister Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, described in his Chairman's Statement "the Summit as a 'leaders-led' gathering that initiated confidence-building as a first step towards more substantial collaboration."⁹⁷

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ The East Asia Summit, "Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the East Asia Summit," 14 December 2005, <http://www.asean.org/23298.htm>

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Frost and Rann, "The East Asia Summit, Kuala Lumpur, 14 December 2005."

⁹⁷ Ibid., and Chairman of the First East Asia Summit, "Chairman's Statement of the First East Asia

A variety of issues were discussed in the Summit, including the Korean peninsula's nuclear crisis, terrorism, infectious diseases, sustainable development, and the need for progress in the Doha round of World Trade Organization negotiations. They also discussed the EAS role as a complement to existing cooperation dialogues for realizing regional community together with APT and ASEAN+1 processes.⁹⁸ The Kuala Lumpur Declaration was issued declaring that the Summit will be an "open, inclusive, transparent and outward-looking forum in which we strive to strengthen global norms and universally recognized values."⁹⁹ The Summit also issued a special declaration on avian influenza.¹⁰⁰

The second summit in January 2007 focused on the future purposes and operation of the EAS and also issued the "Cebu Declaration on East Asian Energy Security," a declaration on energy security and climate change abatement.¹⁰¹ The third summit in November 2007 adopted the Singapore Declaration on Climate Change, Energy and the Environment. The fourth summit in October 2009 adopted statements on disaster relief and the revival of Nalanda University.

Summit," December 14, 2005, <http://www.asean.org/23310.htm>

⁹⁸ Frost and Rann, "The East Asia Summit, Kuala Lumpur, 14 December 2005."

⁹⁹ The East Asia Summit, "Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the East Asia Summit," 14 December 2005, <http://www.asean.org/23298.htm>

¹⁰⁰ Association of Southeast Asian Nations, "East Asia Summit," accessed April 15, 2012, <http://www.asean.org/22765.htm>

¹⁰¹ Nanto, *East Asian Regional Architecture*, 23.

Ministry-level meetings in many fields are also held within the frame of the EAS, including the Ministers meeting of Energy, Foreign Affairs and Environment. Other high-ranking officials' meetings started to be held as well.¹⁰² Now and then, the EAS also issues statements at the time of crises or incidents, such as the case of South Korean hostages in Afghanistan in 2007 and the global economic and financial crisis in 2009. The EAS has emphasized energy security the most in its short history until the United States joined in 2011. Energy security is a very pressing regional concern and topics all nations in the region can discuss with other members.¹⁰³ Although the EAS was established to talk about traditional security issues as well, traditional security issues, especially the issues which EAS members are adversaries on, had hardly been discussed in the EAS until the US participation.

3.3 Diplomatic Battle around the EAS

Before the EAS inauguration, severe diplomatic disputes occurred.

The EAVG report, "Towards an East Asian Community: Region of Peace, Prosperity

¹⁰² Association of Southeast Asian Nations, "East Asia Summit," accessed April 15, 2012, <http://www.asean.org/22765.htm>, and Kim, "Politics of regionalism in East Asia," 131.

¹⁰³ Cook, "The United States and the East Asia Summit," 305.

and Progress,” which proposed the EAS, recommended to evolve the annual APT summit into the EAS. The aim of the proposal was to establish a path for the future East Asia Community.¹⁰⁴ From the very beginning, China strongly supported the idea for the APT transition and enthusiastically worked to promote it. At the APT foreign ministers meeting in 2004, Chinese foreign minister Li Zhaoxing declared that China supported “the initiative to hold an East Asia Summit to promote new steps toward East Asian cooperation.” China showed its intention to host the first EAS. China used the strong economic cooperation with ASEAN nations to motivate them to support China’s initiative. ASEAN countries also basically wanted to promote the transition. Malaysia was strongly in favor of the creation of East Asia-only institutions to revitalize the idea of the East Asia Economic Group (EAEG), which Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad proposed at the early 1990s.

China wanted to strengthen its role in the process of regional integration and planned to raise its influence in the region through the process. Recognizing the APT’s limitations including the lack of ASEAN’s leaderships and resources,¹⁰⁵ China wanted to replace the ASEAN-driven process with one in which all members would have equal roles, namely, in

¹⁰⁴ Kim, “Politics of regionalism in East Asia,” 114.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 115-116.

which China could obtain more power.¹⁰⁶ By participating in agenda setting and norm building as a great power, China wanted to become the core and engine of the regional community building process for its interests.¹⁰⁷ China also expected to manage regional rivalry with Japan through the early transition of the APT.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, China ultimately wanted to limit American dominance in the region.¹⁰⁹

Many issues had risen around the EAS inauguration over the leader's position and membership in the EAS. The EAS was caught up in power politics since its beginning.¹¹⁰ The US Congressional Research Service report stated, "The EAS is viewed as important... for its potential importance as an indicator of China's rising geopolitical importance."¹¹¹ China's sudden support for the EAS, which implied China's predominant role in the region, triggered competition from Japan, another regional great power, and fear from some ASEAN countries.¹¹² Japan also wanted to lead the EAS and had been trying to prevent

¹⁰⁶ Soesastro, "East Asia: Many Clubs," 50.

¹⁰⁷ Kim, "Politics of regionalism in East Asia," 119.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 118.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 119.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 121.

¹¹¹ Vaughn, "East Asian Summit," 2.

¹¹² Ibid.

China from dominating the process.¹¹³ Japan preferred to include more countries.¹¹⁴ Japan was even trying to involve the US in the EAS, but the US decided not to join in 2005. Japan sought to include Australia and New Zealand, claiming that a larger framework would be more viable for an East Asian community.¹¹⁵ The China-Japan battle began over the symbolic issue of whether or not the EAS should be formed only with APT countries or also with Australia, New Zealand and India.

At the beginning, many ASEAN countries believed they could simply transfer from the APT to the EAS. Malaysia and Thailand supported China's position on members.¹¹⁶ However, concern about China's dominance also worried some ASEAN countries. They did not want to lose their driver's seat position in the regionalism if the stronger Northeast Asian countries, China and/or Japan, had more controlling power in the EAS.¹¹⁷¹¹⁸ Some ASEAN countries started working to include non-APT countries. Indonesia supported Australia and New Zealand's participation to reduce the influence of China. Singapore also

¹¹³ Kim, "Politics of regionalism in East Asia," 118.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 122.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Cook, "The United States and the East Asia Summit," 301. "Malaysia has been the strongest advocate of the East Asian regional idea and the most wary of the wider Asia-Pacific one since the Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad until now. In 1990, Prime Minister Mahathir proposed the idea of an East Asian-only grouping, the East Asian Economic Group (EAEG). ... On the other hand, Indonesia and Singapore have been the strongest and most influential supporters within ASEAN for the idea of the Asia-Pacific regionalism."

¹¹⁷ Kim, "Politics of regionalism in East Asia," 123.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 122.

supported a wider geographic scope of members. Those ASEAN countries stated that it would also benefit the regional countries to strengthen relations with these neighboring countries.^{119 120}

At the end of the battle, Malaysia proposed a compromise, “APT should be maintained but the EAS developed in parallel.”¹²¹ When ASEAN countries decided to allow non-regional powers to join the EAS, China attempted to divide the participating countries into two groups; a core group and secondary group. It is because China wanted to include less US allies from the formation of an East Asian community.¹²² This two-tiered structure received support from South Korea, Burma, Thailand and Malaysia.¹²³ Due to strong opposition from Japan as well as Australia and India,^{124 125} China gave up on instituting the two categories.¹²⁶

The sequential battle over the membership created an image of the EAS as a kind of fence around China.¹²⁷ People’s Daily commentary criticized Japan for “trying to drag

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 123.

¹²⁰ Soesastro, “East Asia: Many Clubs,” 51.

¹²¹ Soesastro, “East Asia: Many Clubs,” 51.

¹²² Malik, “The East Asia Summit,” 209.

¹²³ Ibid., 210.

¹²⁴ Kim, “Politics of regionalism in East Asia,” 124.

¹²⁵ Malik, “The East Asia Summit,” 207.

¹²⁶ Kim, “Politics of regionalism in East Asia,” 124.

¹²⁷ Soesastro, “East Asia: Many Clubs,” 52.

countries outside this region... to counterbalance China.”¹²⁸ China viewed Japan, Australia and India as representing the US in the regional integration. In addition to the aspect of regional power politics, Beijing also did not like to be criticized about its human rights situation, which would weaken Chinese influence in the region.¹²⁹

The ASEAN was interested in balancing great powers, and refused to choose either side of China or Japan.^{130 131} ASEAN has always been trying to play a leading role in East Asian institutionalization.¹³² ASEAN was worried about being marginalized within the EAS.^{133 134} However, as China and Japan were competing, both countries had to give up a leading position and to allow ASEAN to take the driver’s seat.^{135 136} The ASEAN remained at the center of the EAS, and refused to share the summit chair with non-ASEAN countries.^{137 138}

China does not like the EAS, which includes non-regional countries and is led by

¹²⁸ Malik, “The East Asia Summit,” 209.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Kim, “Politics of regionalism in East Asia,” 125.

¹³¹ Cook, “The United States and the East Asia Summit,” 297.

¹³² Kurlantzick, “Pax Asia-Pacific?” 73.

¹³³ Kim, “Politics of regionalism in East Asia,” 122.

¹³⁴ Cook, “The United States and the East Asia Summit,” 303.

¹³⁵ Kim, “Politics of regionalism in East Asia,” 122.

¹³⁶ Cook, “The United States and the East Asia Summit,” 303.

¹³⁷ Kim, “Politics of regionalism in East Asia,” 125.

¹³⁸ Cook, “The United States and the East Asia Summit,” 303.

ASEAN. The outcome disappointed China and China's enthusiasm for the EAS faded away.¹³⁹ ¹⁴⁰ Beijing has been more willing to retreat to the APT, where it has a more central position.¹⁴¹ China started arguing that the EAS should co-exist within the APT and the APT should be the main vehicle for regional community building. The Chairman's statement at the first EAS declared, "We also agreed that the East Asian region had already advanced in its efforts to realise an East Asian community through the ASEAN+3 process. In this context we believed that the EAS together with the ASEAN+3 and the ASEAN+1 processes could play a significant role in community building in the region."¹⁴² The EAS was given only the third position after APT and ASEAN for community building. While Japan was successful in including India, Australia and New Zealand into the EAS, China countered by letting the Chair declare that the APT is the main institution for further integration. Some critiques said the EAS ceased its progress when China lost its interest in it.¹⁴³

While China started enhancing the APT and even tried to include security issues in the

¹³⁹ Malik, "The East Asia Summit," 210.

¹⁴⁰ Kim, "Politics of regionalism in East Asia," 126.

¹⁴¹ Nanto, *East Asian Regional Architecture*, 23.

¹⁴² Chairman of the First East Asia Summit, "Chairman's Statement of the First East Asia Summit,"

December 14, 2005, <http://www.asean.org/23310.htm>

¹⁴³ Kim, "Politics of regionalism in East Asia," 126-134.

APT agenda,¹⁴⁴ Japan began making its effort to bring the EAS into the mainstream of East Asian regionalism. The EAS has developed gradually, forming a series of functional frameworks for regional cooperation including ministerial meetings in foreign affairs, finance, economics, energy and the environment and other high-ranking officials.¹⁴⁵ Japan also uses the EAS to promote values such as human rights and democracy to limit China's influence.¹⁴⁶ Japan's attempt is mainly welcomed by, but not limited to, non-regional countries in the EAS.

3.4 Evaluation of the EAS before US participation

The EAS is a strategic forum run by leaders mandated to discuss a variety of issues from global security to building people-to-people contacts among EAS nations.¹⁴⁷ While economic issues have been discussed in APEC meetings, the EAS is the only regional forum for security issues attended by national leaders.¹⁴⁸ Many view "the EAS as a reformulation on the political and security side of the East Asian Economic Caucus

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 128.

¹⁴⁵ Association of Southeast Asian Nations, "East Asia Summit," accessed April 15, 2012, <http://www.asean.org/22765.htm> and Kim, "Politics of regionalism in East Asia," 131.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Cook, "The United States and the East Asia Summit," 303.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

(EAEC).”¹⁴⁹ Some see the EAS as an important further step toward dialogue in the region.¹⁵⁰ Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong stressed the importance of the EAS process of dialogue, saying, “step by step, each time you meet, you are cultivating ground, keeping it fertile, maintaining relationships and dealing with problems before they arise, before they become serious.”¹⁵¹ The EAS supporters appreciate this process as the further East Asia integration. Some say its mere creation, as well as the inclusion of Japan and China, like Germany and France in the EU, is a step forward for the regional building.¹⁵²

However, there are many criticisms of the EAS for a variety of reasons. Some say the EAS is still not even “a formal institution” but rather an informal forum of participating countries, or talk shop.¹⁵³ In 2006, Ong Keng Yong, the former secretary-general of ASEAN, told that the East Asia Summit was little more than a “brainstorming forum”.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁹ Nanto, *East Asian Regional Architecture*, 23.

¹⁵⁰ Frost and Rann, “The East Asia Summit, Kuala Lumpur, 14 December 2005,” and Lu and Hughes, “The East Asia model towards creating a regional community.”

¹⁵¹ Ibid. and Kuppusamy, “False dawn in East Asia,” *Asia Times*, 17 Dec 2005, http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/GL17Ae01.html

¹⁵² Kurlantzick, “Pax Asia-Pacifica?” 74.

¹⁵³ Cook, “The United States and the East Asia Summit,” 295.

¹⁵⁴ *9 News*, “Timor parliament to consider oil deal,” July 27, 2006, <http://news.ninemsn.com.au/article.aspx?id=117796>

Mohan Malik said “in the absence of a thaw in Sino-Japanese or Sino-Indian relations or great power cooperation, ... At the best, the EAS will be a talk shop like the APEC or the ARF where leaders meet, declarations are made, but little community building is achieved.”¹⁵⁵ Satu Limaye from East West Center even rejected calling the EAS an institution, but a grouping.¹⁵⁶ Another criticism is about issues dealt with in the EAS. Although the EAS was expected to provide a forum for discussion on security issues, no substantial steps had been taken in the area of security.¹⁵⁷

Some critiques say the further regional integration through the EAS is difficult because, as with other Asian regional organizations, the large disparity in economic development, for example, between Japan and Laos, is problematic.¹⁵⁸ It is seen as difficult also because the EAS’s central leadership remains politically distant especially between the two great regional powers.¹⁵⁹ The relationship with other existing regional bodies, particularly the APT is also viewed as very problematic for further integration.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁵ Malik, “The East Asia Summit,” 211.

¹⁵⁶ Limaye, Interview.

¹⁵⁷ Cook, “The United States and the East Asia Summit,” 295.

¹⁵⁸ Frost and Rann, “The East Asia Summit, Kuala Lumpur, 14 December 2005.”

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

Many criticisms against the EAS are concentrated on its potential to become a foundation or at least a driving force for the future regional community. Although the EAS was born with the expectation for promoting regional architecture,¹⁶¹ ¹⁶² ¹⁶³ and many Asian leaders tried to make the EAS play a significant role in Asian community building,¹⁶⁴ APT was declared the main vehicle towards East Asian community in the Chairman's Statement of the First East Asia Summit,¹⁶⁵ and the EAS received only tertiary position after ASEAN and the APT.¹⁶⁶ The EAS has to compete with other organizations, and does not seem to easily become a foundation for future integration.¹⁶⁷ Although some opinions claim that competition of multiple fora is not necessarily an obstacle for the regional integration and may well lead towards a positive direction,¹⁶⁸ other opinions oppose this idea. Many are concerned about EAS duplication of other institutions in the region.¹⁶⁹ They argue multiple regional organizations with almost the same mandates and systems

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Nanto, *East Asian Regional Architecture*, 23. and The East Asia Summit, "Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the East Asia Summit," 14 December 2005, <http://www.asean.org/23298.htm>

¹⁶³ Park, "The US-led alliance in the Asia Pacific," 149. and East Asia Vision Group, *Towards an East Asian Community*, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/report2001.pdf>

¹⁶⁴ Soesastro, "East Asia: Many Clubs," 50.

¹⁶⁵ Chairman of the First East Asia Summit, "Chairman's Statement of the First East Asia Summit," December 14, 2005, <http://www.asean.org/23310.htm>

¹⁶⁶ Cook, "The United States and the East Asia Summit," 303.

¹⁶⁷ Kim, "Politics of regionalism in East Asia," 113.

¹⁶⁸ Frost and Rann, "The East Asia Summit, Kuala Lumpur, 14 December 2005," Lu Hughes, "The East Asia model towards creating a regional community," and Limaye, Interview.

¹⁶⁹ Kim, "Politics of regionalism in East Asia," 132.

make regional cooperation more difficult.¹⁷⁰ The mandates of the EAS and APT overlap substantially because the EAS was expected to replace the APT.¹⁷¹ Some scholars even criticized that although the EAS could have cultivated East Asian identity, it has instead divided countries.¹⁷² Soesastro argued that the launching of the EAS was a bad accident.

173

The competition between China and Japan will also continue to have a negative impact for further building the regional architecture. Now, it seems the EAS is backed by Japan and APT is backed by China for the future regional integration.¹⁷⁴ Both have been busy working on gaining their own leadership position in East Asia and they cancel each other's initiative out. They use the regional framework as a foreign policy tool to increase their influence.¹⁷⁵ Many people hope one institution will remain and become a foundation for the East Asia Community, but it does not likely happen that either the APT or the EAS will prevail over the other soon.¹⁷⁶

In addition, some critiques say the expanded memberships, which include Australia,

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 115.

¹⁷² Ibid., 133.

¹⁷³ Soesastro, "East Asia: Many Clubs," 50.

¹⁷⁴ Cook, "The United States and the East Asia Summit," 295.

¹⁷⁵ Kim, "Politics of regionalism in East Asia," 134.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

New Zealand and India, have limited its future potential as an East Asian regional institution.¹⁷⁷ Australia, New Zealand and India are clearly more Asia-Pacific countries than East Asian ones.¹⁷⁸

After all, although the EAS was once seen as “a significant step forward in building a regional community in East Asia,”¹⁷⁹ ¹⁸⁰ some already see that the EAS cannot be the key architecture for community building.

¹⁷⁷ Cook, “The United States and the East Asia Summit,” 303.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 295.

¹⁷⁹ Kim, “Politics of regionalism in East Asia,” 113.

¹⁸⁰ Embassy of Japan, “General Information on the East Asia Summit,” December 7, 2005.

<http://www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/english/html/pressreleases/2005/120805a.htm>

“The EAS is a historic summit meeting to be held with a view to establishing a future East Asia community (EAC), and Japan intends to proactively contribute to achieving its success.”

CHAPTER 4
TRANSFORMATION OF THE US POLICY
TOWARDS EAST ASIAN REGIONALISM

Since the end of the Cold War, the US policy towards the Asia-Pacific multilateralism has been changing. Its policy towards the Asia-Pacific region has also been rapidly changing during the past twenty years. This chapter outlines the US policy shift towards East Asia-Pacific regionalism.

4.1 The Post-Cold War Era

Following the end of the Cold War, during the George H. W. Bush administration, the US attitude towards Asia-Pacific multilateralism was that it “was an idea whose time had not yet come”.¹⁸¹ US decision makers viewed the idea with apprehension and suspicion. In 1990, when Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad proposed the establishment of an East Asia Economic Caucus (EAEC), the United States reacted vehemently calling it the “caucus without Caucasians.” Secretary of State James Baker characterized it as a

¹⁸¹ Park, “The US-led alliance in the Asia Pacific,” 144. And Evans, Gareth. “The Second Annual Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop Asialink Lecture,” The Great Hall, national Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, October 14, 1994, http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/Sir_Edward_Weary_Dunlop_Asialink_Fellowship,_Awards_and_Lectures/dunlop_lecture/senator_evans_speech

dangerous idea that would draw a line down the Pacific and famously worked to kill the proposal.¹⁸² In 1991, when the Japanese government suggested at an ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference (PMC) gathering that a forum be established to discuss regional security issues, the US was very suspicious about the idea again. Having relied on a long time bi-lateral relationship since 1945, the US government hesitated to embrace multilateral approaches, especially to addressing security concerns.¹⁸³

4.2 Clinton Administration

The Clinton administration changed the US approach for the East Asian multilateralism positively.¹⁸⁴ ¹⁸⁵ East Asian multilateral institutions then became recognized as useful tools in pursuing US national interests in the field of security as well as economy ¹⁸⁶ unless it would replace US bi-lateral relationships or threaten the US presence in the region. President Clinton advocated the creation of “a new Pacific community” in 1993. He declared ten priority policy goals for Asia, one of which was “a

¹⁸² Gannon, “Engaging in Asia,” 17.

¹⁸³ Cossa, Tay and Chung-min, “The Emerging East Asian Community,” 3.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 3.

¹⁸⁵ US Department of Defense, “United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region (East Asia Strategy Report),” February 27, 1995, <http://www.defense.gov/Releases/Release.aspx?ReleaseID=380>

¹⁸⁶ Cossa, Tay and Chung-min, “The Emerging East Asian Community,” 4.

commitment to enhanced multilateral security dialogue.” The US shift was matched with the desire of the Asian countries, which prioritized United States involvement in the region after the end of the Cold War.¹⁸⁷ President Clinton proposed and hosted the APEC Leaders’ Meeting in 1993.¹⁸⁸ Establishment of the Leader’s meeting elevated APEC’s position. US support for the Asia Pacific regional institution was so strong that the Clinton administration attended all the meetings of the APEC and ARF.

It was also at the same moment that the weak multilateralism in the region started developing. The change also reached the security field. ASEAN started considering security-related issues in PMC deliberations. For example, on 1992, ASEAN PMC in Manila issued a joint statement calling for the peaceful settlement of territorial disputes involving the South China Sea issue. President Clinton accepted the concept of multilateral security dialogue in Asia, calling it one of the four pillars of the “new Pacific community,” he proposed.¹⁸⁹ Even APEC, which focuses on trade issues, holds a political and at least a quasi-security role just by its mere existence because it provides opportunities for leaders to

¹⁸⁷ Park, “The US-led alliance in the Asia Pacific,” 145. The Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating made it clear that “[o]ne of the main reasons behind Australia’s support for APEC has been our conviction that closer American economic engagement in Asia and the Pacific will reinforce the essential political underpinnings of its security relationships.”

¹⁸⁸ Cossa, Tay and Chung-min, “The Emerging East Asian Community,” 4.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

meet around the APEC summit.¹⁹⁰ President Clinton proposed US support for several potential areas of security dialogue including APEC.¹⁹¹ At the 1993 ASEAN PMC, the members of PMC and China, Russia, Vietnam and other PMC observers talked about security matters. This group decided that they would reconvene the following year in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), which was launched in Bangkok in 1994.¹⁹² The series of events clearly showed that the attitudes towards the multilateral security dialogue were changing in the US and Asian countries.¹⁹³

Throughout the 1990s, the United States was trying to make the regional institutions “Asia Pacific” ones rather than Asia-only ones. When Asian countries proposed Asian-only groupings, such as the Japanese plan to establish an Asian Monetary Fund during the Asian financial crisis in 1997, the US strongly opposed it and made its an effort to block the idea.¹⁹⁴

4.3 Bush Administration

The Bush administration is generally recognized as not stressing the importance of

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Tay, “An East Asia Community and the United States: An East Asian Perspective,” 25.

¹⁹² Cossa, Tay and Chung-min, “The Emerging East Asian Community,” 4.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 4.

¹⁹⁴ Gannon, “Engaging in Asia,” 17.

the multilateral regionalism.¹⁹⁵ The Bush administration's approach to East Asia regionalism is viewed as "benign neglect mixed with skepticism."¹⁹⁶ Most Asia experts in the US viewed the emerging efforts to build a regional community as just "talk shops," concluding that no substantial steps toward regional institution building were likely to be taken in the near future.¹⁹⁷ Moreover, the Bush administration was criticized that it lost its interest in Asia, focusing only on the Middle East.¹⁹⁸ Critics said it had interest in Asia only in the context of the war on terror.¹⁹⁹ East Asia, especially South East Asia, was considered the second front of the War on Terror.²⁰⁰ While the US was willing to develop a multilateral approach in combating global terrorism, trying to receive support from the Asian countries, the multilateral cooperation in the region did not deter the US from unilateral operation if necessary for its interests.²⁰¹ It is said that US preoccupation with Iraq and Afghanistan led to underestimation of the importance of evolving geopolitical dynamics in Asia including the development of regional institutions.²⁰² Secretary of State

¹⁹⁵ Vaughn, "East Asian Summit," 3.

¹⁹⁶ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 18.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.,

¹⁹⁸ Cossa, "East Asia Community Building," 11.

¹⁹⁹ Vaughn, "East Asian Summit," 3.

²⁰⁰ Cossa, "East Asia Community Building," 6.

²⁰¹ Cossa, Tay and Chung-min, "The Emerging East Asian Community," 5.

²⁰² Vaughn, "East Asian Summit," 6.

Condoleezza Rice did not participate in the ARF meetings twice in 2005 and 2007.²⁰³

ASEAN leaders raised questions about Washington's continued commitment to East Asian regionalism.²⁰⁴ ²⁰⁵ This US attitude brought the current rapid development of the East Asian regionalism where the US does not have a leading position.

Despite its reputation for unilateralism, some scholars emphasize that there is another aspect in which President Bush strenuously used multilateral forum in terms of policy for the war on terror.²⁰⁶ They argue that Bush administration reinvigorated US interest, especially in the ARF and APEC, and strongly supported them. The Bush administration tried to use APEC, which is originally solely for trade and economy, for security purposes. In the APEC leaders meeting in October 2001, immediately after the September 11 incident, President Bush explained the US war on terrorism and sought support from Asian countries. The Leaders' Meeting issued a Statement on Counter Terrorism, which was the first political document in APEC's 13-year history.²⁰⁷ While some evaluated this US action as a

²⁰³ Cossa, "East Asia Community Building," 1.

²⁰⁴ Cossa, Tay and Chung-min, "The Emerging East Asian Community," 5.

²⁰⁵ Vaughn, "East Asian Summit," 3.

²⁰⁶ Cossa, Tay and Chung-min, "The Emerging East Asian Community," 1.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.

victory of President Bush,²⁰⁸ some criticized the US for using APEC for its own purpose, distorting the organization's mandates. Since then, the APEC Leaders' Meeting continues discussing security matters such as proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.²⁰⁹

Although Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice did not attend some ARF meetings, the Bush administration showed its support for the ARF. Various ARF Inter-sessional Support Groups have provided meaningful opportunities for the US in many fields, such as maritime cooperation and fighting terrorism. Secretary of State Colin Powell attended all four ARF meetings held during his term. After his first ARF meeting, he even described it as, "very, very useful".²¹⁰

The Bush administration's September 2002 National Security Strategy for the United States of America expressed its appreciation of multilateral organizations, saying "multilateral institutions can multiply the strength of freedom-loving nations." The document further stated that ASEAN and APEC provide regional stability on which the US can develop a mix of regional and bilateral strategies in the region.²¹¹ The positive US attitude towards Asian multilateralism was also seen on the Korean nuclear crisis issue, the

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid., 4.

²¹¹ The White House, "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America," September, 2002, <http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/USnss2002.pdf>

Six-Party Talks. The US also utilized the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), which was a part of the US-led global efforts to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in Asia Pacific region.²¹²

After all, even under the Bush administration, East Asian multilateral organizations were useful tools for the US when they worked well for US national security interests.²¹³ This US attitude is called “ad hoc multilateralism.” The bilateral relationships were the center of US diplomacy in the region and nothing was comparable to this priority. The US 2006 National Security Strategy clearly spelled out, “Asian nations that share our values can join us in partnership to strengthen new democracies and promote democratic reforms throughout the region. This institutional framework, however, must be built upon a foundation of sound bilateral relations with key states in the region.”²¹⁴

While the Bush administration did not have active involvement in Asian regionalism, and did not have a strong commitment in the region itself, the Asian regional institutions continued developing. Some architecture which excludes the United States such as APT

²¹² Cossa, Tay and Chung-min, “The Emerging East Asian Community,” 4.

²¹³ Cossa, “East Asia Community Building,” 6.

²¹⁴ The White House, “The National Security Strategy of the United States of America,” March, 2006, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/nsc/nss/2006/>

²¹⁵ Gannon, “Engaging in Asia,” 18.

and SCO showed its impressive development. Some critiques said that the Asian regionalism including the East Asia Summit were stealth attempts by China to chip away at US influence in the region, when the US was busy dealing with the War on Terror.²¹⁵ The US was seen falling behind the rapid change of the East Asian regional organizations.²¹⁶

4.4 Obama Administration

From the beginning, the Obama Administration clearly declared that it would prioritize Asia. President Obama expressly mentioned that he would like to change the predecessor's Asian policy, and pledged more active involvement in Asia. In his speech in Tokyo on November 14, 2009, President Obama declared his approach to strengthen the relationships with Asian nations, calling the US an "Asia Pacific nation".²¹⁷

*The United States of America may have started as a series of ports and cities along the Atlantic Ocean, but for generations we have also been a nation of the Pacific. Asia and the United States are not separated by this great ocean; we are bound by it.*²¹⁸

He also declared, "As America's first Pacific President, I promise you that this Pacific

²¹⁵ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 18.

²¹⁶ See, Pemple, "How Bush bungled Asia", Green, "The United States and Asia after Bush," and Pemple, "A response to Michael Green."

²¹⁷ Obama, Remarks by President Barack Obama at Suntory Hall, November 14, 2009
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-barack-obama-suntory-hall>

²¹⁸ Ibid.

nation will strengthen and sustain our leadership in this vitally important part of the world.”

²¹⁹ Secretary of State Hillary Clinton develops the policy forward. In her speech in January 2010, she also declared, “the United States is back in Asia.” ²²⁰

The Obama administration intentionally tried to show how the US was making an effort to have a larger and deeper involvement in the region. The first foreign leader of state invited to the White House was Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso, and for the first time in nearly 50 years, the first overseas trip for a new US Secretary of State Clinton was to Asia. In her first year, Secretary Clinton scheduled four trips to the region, although the fourth trip was cancelled due to the Haiti earthquake in 2010.²²¹ Secretary of Defense Robert Gates visited Asia regularly as well.²²² Many Asian countries enthusiastically welcomed Obama’s proclamation to return to Asia.²²³ The general perceptions in the region on the United States have improved.²²⁴

This trend has been increasing until today. The Obama administration’s high officials repeatedly stated that the United States is a Pacific nation and the United States has shifted

²¹⁹ Obama, Remarks by President Barack Obama at Suntory Hall, November 14, 2009, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-barack-obama-suntory-hall>

²²⁰ Clinton, *Remarks on Regional Architecture in Asia*, January 12, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/01/135090.htm>

²²¹ Gannon, “Engaging in Asia,” 28.

²²² Bower, “Paradigm Shift” 2.

²²³ Gannon, “Engaging in Asia,” 15.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

its weight into Asia. For example, in 2011, at the Australian Parliament Obama again stressed that “the United States has been, and always will be, a Pacific nation,” “The United States is a Pacific power, and we are here to stay,” and “So let there be no doubt: In the Asia Pacific in the 21st century, the United States of America is all in.”²²⁵

Why has the United States shifted its weight to Asia? It has clear reasons. Asia’s rapid economic development has raised the region’s position as one of the major players in the international community. China’s emerging power, together with rapid economic development in other Asian countries, has been shifting the regional balance of power.²²⁶ Now Asia’s presence in the world is significant in terms of economy as well as politics and strategies.

East Asia, including the EAS 16 nations, constitutes half the world population. Its combined GDP is \$16.4 trillion, growing faster than either North America or Europe, while the US has a GDP of \$14.8 trillion (\$17.3 trillion for NAFTA).²²⁷ East Asian countries’ GDP has been growing rapidly. Besides China, there are many other rapidly growing

²²⁵ Obama, *Remarks By President Obama to the Australian Parliament*. November 17, 2011, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/17/remarks-president-obama-australian-parliament>

²²⁶ Gannon, “Engaging in Asia,” 15.

²²⁷ Nanto, *East Asian Regional Architecture*, 39.

economies in the region. The development rate of China's real GDP is 12.7% (2006), 14.2% (2007), 9.6% (2008), 9.2% (2009) and 10.3% (2010). India's development rate of real GDP is 9.3% (2006), 9.8% (2007), 4.9% (2008), 9.1% (2009) and 8.8% (2010).²²⁸ Indonesia's rate is 5.5% (2006), 6.3% (2007), 6.0% (2008), 4.6% (2009) and 6.1% (2010). Vietnam's rate is 8.2% (2006), 8.5% (2007), 6.3% (2008), 5.3% (2009) and 6.8% (2010). These rates are quite high compared to the Western countries' rate. The US Development rate of real GDP is 2.7% (2006), 1.9% (2007), -0.3% (2008), -3.5% (2009) and 3.0% (2010).²²⁹ The Euro area's rate is 3.0% (2007), 0.4% (2008), -4.3% (2009) and 1.9% (2010).²³⁰ Asian nations are now a driving force for the world economy. It is especially true when many Western states are suffering from the financial crisis and cannot find a way to get over it.

The United States' strong interest in Asia is based on economic benefit. The US wants to expand markets for US products in the region and create more jobs for American

²²⁸ Japan External Trade Organization. "Asian nation's (area's) economy statistics." Accessed April 13, 2012.

http://www.ide.go.jp/Japanese/Publish/Periodicals/W_trend/pdf/tokei_201202.pdf

²²⁹ US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, "National Income and Product Accounts Table," Accessed March 29, 2012,

<http://www.bea.gov/national/nipaweb/TableView.asp?SelectedTable=1&ViewSeries=NO&Java=no&Request3Place=N&3Place=N&FromView=YES&Freq=Year&FirstYear=2004&LastYear=2011&3Place=N&Update=Update&JavaBox=no>

²³⁰ Japan External Trade Organization, "Major economy statistics (European Union)," Accessed April 13, 2012, www.jetro.go.jp/world/europe/eu/basic_03/

people through its trade with Asian countries.²³¹ In 2010, 24.6 % of US trade was with East Asian countries (ASEAN 10 (5.5 %) and China (7.2 %), Japan (4.7 %) and Korea (3.0 %)) while trade with the 27 countries of the EU represents 18.7% of the total US trade amount. Although it is less than US trade with NAFTA at 32.3%,²³² the percentage has been increasing. In 2010, the largest exporter to the United States is China at 19.1% of total US imports, while the second largest is Canada at 14.5%. The US wanted its own economy stimulated by the rapidly growing Asian economy. The US economy depends on East Asia to a large extent.

In addition to the economy and trade, Asian nations are now significantly important in the world on a variety of political and strategic issues. As a result of the economic development, six out of twenty countries in the G-20 are from the East Asia region. The region also has major nuclear holders. The important issues such as counter terrorism, energy security and climate change have to be dealt with among these rising powers. The

²³¹ In his speech in Tokyo in November 2009, President Obama emphasized the reason why he wants to have strong partnership with the region that the Japanese economic miracle “would spread throughout the region, and in a single generation the lives and fortunes of millions were forever changed for the better.” Obama, Remarks by President Barack Obama at Suntory Hall, November 14, 2009,

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-barack-obama-suntory-hall>

²³² Japan External Trade Organization, “The United States, Import (country/region),” Last modified September 6, 2011, http://www.jetro.go.jp/world/n_america/us/stat_02/

Asian nations' political voices now have a strong impact on world politics.

Moreover, Chinese expansion of military power is one of the most critical elements for Asia, drawing the attention of many countries in the region as well as the US. China increased its military spending more than 10% year by year (12.7% increase in 2011 and 11% in 2012).²³³ As the US wants to prevent any nation from threatening its dominant power and hegemonic status; the only country with the potential to do so, China, is one of the biggest concerns to the US. This phenomenon also increases the importance of Asia to a large extent.

The Obama administration clearly recognizes Asia's rapid development and its increased influence in the international community. It clearly understands Asia is now very important for the United States. President Obama explained the reasons for the US policy shift in his speech in 2010.

...because what happens here has a direct effect on our lives at home. This is where we engage in much of our commerce and buy many of our goods. And this is where we can export more of our own products and create jobs back home in the process. This is a place where the risk of a nuclear arms race threatens the

²³³ Richburg, "China military spending to top \$100 billion in 2012, alarming neighbors," *The Washington Post*, March 4, 2012, website edition.
http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/china-military-spending-to-top-100-billion-this-year/2012/03/04/gIQAJRnypR_story.html

*security of the wider world, and where extremists who defile a great religion plan attacks on both our continents. And there can be no solution to our energy security and our climate challenge without the rising powers and developing nations of the Asia Pacific.*²³⁴

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton also mentions in her article why Asia is important for the US.

The Asia-Pacific has become a key driver of global politics. Stretching from the Indian subcontinent to the western shores of the Americas, the region spans two oceans -- the Pacific and the Indian -- that are increasingly linked by shipping and strategy. It boasts almost half the world's population. It includes many of the key engines of the global economy, as well as the largest emitters of greenhouse gases. It is home to several of our key allies and important emerging powers like China, India, and Indonesia.

The Obama administration would like to benefit economically from Asia's dynamic energy. Secretary Clinton continued,

Harnessing Asia's growth and dynamism is central to American economic and strategic interests and a key priority for President Obama. Open markets in Asia provide the United States with unprecedented opportunities for investment, trade, and access to cutting-edge technology. Our economic recovery at home will depend on exports and the ability of American firms to tap into the vast and growing consumer base of Asia. Strategically, maintaining peace and security across the Asia-Pacific is increasingly crucial to global progress, whether through defending freedom of navigation in the South China Sea, countering the proliferation efforts of North Korea, or ensuring transparency in the military activities of the region's key players.

She underscores how much the future of the United States is intimately intertwined with the

²³⁴ Obama, Remarks by President Barack Obama at Suntory Hall, November 14, 2009, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-barack-obama-suntory-hall>

future of the Asia-Pacific. And she concluded, “A strategic turn to the region fits logically into our overall global effort to secure and sustain America’s global leadership.”

4.5 Active involvement in Multi-lateral Institutions

It is globally recognized that the Obama administration has a multilateral policy and is active towards multilateral cooperation. This policy shift has been seen also in the context of Asian regional institutions, and this paper will analyze how and why the shift occurred in detail later. However, one thing that cannot be overlooked is that the US approach in East Asia is still firmly based on the foundation of its bilateral alliances and partnerships. Although it became active in the multilateral institutions, the Obama administration’s reservation for multilateral organizations as supplementary roles are called “bilateralism plus.”²³⁵ Having tried to combine the advantages of multilateralism and traditional bilateral relationships for its security strategy, the policy is referred to as ad hoc multilateralism.²³⁶

In Obama’s Tokyo speech in November 2009, he mentioned,

To meet these common challenges, the United States looks to strengthen old

²³⁵ Gannon, “Engaging in Asia,” 33.

²³⁶ Cossa, Tay and Chung-min, “The Emerging East Asian Community,” 8.

alliances and build new partnerships with the nations of this region. To do this, we look to America's treaty alliances with Japan, South Korea, Australia, Thailand and the Philippines -- alliances that are not historical documents from a bygone era, but abiding commitments to each other that are fundamental to our shared security. ²³⁷

These alliances continue to provide the bedrock of security and stability that has allowed the nations and peoples of this region to pursue opportunity and prosperity ... ²³⁸

Multilateral relationships with the regional architecture come after the bilateral relationships.

In addition to our bilateral relations, we also believe that the growth of multilateral organizations can advance the security and prosperity of this region. I know that the United States has been disengaged from many of these organizations in recent years. So let me be clear: Those days have passed. As an Asia Pacific nation, the United States expects to be involved in the discussions that shape the future of this region, and to participate fully in appropriate organizations as they are established and evolve. ²³⁹

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton also emphasized the US priority on relationships with alliances first as well as partner countries in the region in her “Remarks on Regional Architecture in Asia, Principles and Priorities.” ²⁴⁰ In the Obama administration, which

²³⁷ Obama, Remarks by President Barack Obama at Suntory Hall, November 14, 2009, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-barack-obama-suntory-hall>

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Clinton, *Remarks on Regional Architecture in Asia*, January 12, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/01/135090.htm>

“We start from a simple premise: America’s future is linked to the future of the Asia-Pacific region; and the future of this region depends on America. The United States has a strong interest in continuing its tradition of economic and strategic leadership, and Asia has a strong interest in the United States remaining a dynamic economic partner and a stabilizing military influence. Economically, we are inextricably linked. American

views multilateralism as important, President Obama as well as Secretary Hillary Clinton clearly stated, first alliance, second partner, and third multilateral cooperation.²⁴¹ Multilateral organizations are complements to bilateral relationships.²⁴² In the near future, the US will not likely allow such multilateral institutions to substitute for or threaten US bilateral alliances and other US security arrangements.²⁴³ It won't likely change under any administration either Democrat or Republican in near future.²⁴⁴ After all, there is a basic US perspective that the US does not have any reason to oppose regional organizations as far as they don't threaten or attempt to undermine US bilateral alliances, or its central role in East Asian security affairs.²⁴⁵

Although bilateral relationships are at the core of the US diplomacy, the Obama

companies export \$320 billion in goods and services to the Asia-Pacific countries every year, creating millions of good-paying jobs. Hundreds of thousands of our servicemen and women provide the region with security – a task that our military has shouldered for generations. As Secretary of Defense Robert Gates has noted, the United States is not a visiting power in Asia, but a resident power.”

²⁴¹ Clinton, *Remarks on Regional Architecture in Asia*, January 12, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/01/135090.htm>

“First, the United States' alliance relationships are the cornerstone of our regional involvement. ... We are working on strengthening our partnerships with newer partners like Vietnam and longstanding partners like Singapore. Strengthened multilateral cooperation should and must respect and build on our already proven bilateral partnerships.”

²⁴² Brandon, Hiebert, Limaye, Szechenyi and Wise, Interview.

²⁴³ Cossa, Tay and Chung-min, “The Emerging East Asian Community,” 4.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 11.

administration is clearly more positive towards multilateralism in general than its predecessor.²⁴⁶ The Obama administration took steps to engage in the East Asian regional organizations more. Participation in the EAS was decided under this US policy change.

In his remarks in 2009, President Obama explained the diverse reasons why Asia-Pacific multilateral architectures are important for the United States to participate more actively.²⁴⁷ He stressed that balanced economic growth and open markets in the Asian Pacific are important for job creation in the United States. He also mentions many issues should be covered in the multilateral institutions, including economy, trade, climate change, nuclear weapons, security of sea lanes, infectious disease, extreme poverty and traffickers, fundamental rights and dignity of all human beings.²⁴⁸

In Secretary Clinton's remarks in January 2010, two months after the President's address, she outlined the US approach to issues of multilateral cooperation and showed a strong interest in the multilateral organizations in the region.²⁴⁹ She said regional

²⁴⁶ Sutter, Interview.

²⁴⁷ Obama, Remarks by President Barack Obama at Suntory Hall, November 14, 2009, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-barack-obama-suntory-hall>

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²⁴⁹ In her speech on October 28, 2010, Secretary Clinton also mentioned about the priority order in the region, "these are the primary tools of our engagement —our alliances, our partnerships, and multilateral institutions." Clinton, *America's Engagement in the Asia-Pacific*. October 28, 2010,

institutions should work to advance the United States' shared objectives, such as security and stability, expanding economic opportunity and growth, and fostering democracy and human rights. The US eagerness on Asian regionalism was easily perceived in her statement of interest in participation even in the APT and Shanghai Cooperation Organization, of which the US is not a member.²⁵⁰

This Obama administration's shift is first found in his active engagement with existing institutions. They have been trying to strengthen these institutions and to create the culture of cooperation more.²⁵¹ The Obama administration took many steps to work more closely with ASEAN, including acceding to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, and opening a US mission with Ambassador to ASEAN. At the accession to the TAC, the US issued the statement, "the speed at which the United States worked together with ASEAN members to realize US accession to the Treaty highlights our re-energized involvement in Southeast Asia, as well as the close mutual ties sought by ASEAN and the United States."²⁵² Secretary of State Clinton visited Southeast Asia, including the ASEAN

<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/10/150141.htm>

²⁵⁰ Clinton, *Remarks on Regional Architecture in Asia*, January 12, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/01/135090.htm>

²⁵¹ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 15.

²⁵² US Department of State, "United States Accedes to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia," July 22, 2009, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/july/126294.htm>

Secretariat in Jakarta, as her first overseas trip as Secretary.²⁵³ In September 2010, the ASEAN and US summit was held for the first time.²⁵⁴ President Obama is the first American President to meet with all the leaders of ASEAN nations together.²⁵⁵ In his opening statement, President Obama said that ASEAN is a core to US economic and national security interests²⁵⁶. Both the United States and ASEAN rejected the idea that their relationship is defined by China.

The Obama administration clearly intends to push forward multilateralism even in the field of security. The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), published by the US Department of Defense, noted that one aim of the United States in Asia is “encouraging the continued development of multilateral institutions and other integrated approaches to regional security affairs.”²⁵⁷ The US Department of Defense has historically been strongly associated with a heavy reliance solely on bilateral relations in Asia, but for the first time since its inception in 1996, the Defense Department cited the promotion of

²⁵³ Carden, David L. “Testimony Submitted to the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Ambassador-designate to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).” December 9, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rm/2010/12/152606.htm>

²⁵⁴ Bower, “2nd U.S.-ASEAN Leaders Meeting.”

²⁵⁵ Carden, David L. “Testimony Submitted to the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Ambassador-designate to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).” December 9, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rm/2010/12/152606.htm>

²⁵⁶ Bower, “2nd U.S.-ASEAN Leaders Meeting.”

²⁵⁷ US Department of Defense, “The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR),” 59.

multilateral institutions in Asia as a priority in the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR).²⁵⁸ Secretary of Defense Bill Gates met with his ASEAN counterparts and others in the first ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting +8 (ADMM +8) in 2009. The formal Asian defense ministers' meeting is relatively new, and it was the first time to include the United States and Russia.²⁵⁹ The Obama administration also has strengthened its support for the ARF.²⁶⁰ Secretary of State Clinton is trying to push ARF forward beyond dialogue to action,²⁶¹ where the US first has focus on disaster relief.²⁶²

Why did the US change its policy towards multilateral institutions?

In one aspect, the United States strategically chose the new policy, but in another aspect the regional environment forced the United States take the policy shift.

The US chose the policy on its own. The US recognizes advantages and disadvantages of the current East Asian regional organizations. Some scholars argue that the US strategically tries to use the advantage only when it is useful for its interests. The

²⁵⁸ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 31.

²⁵⁹ Bower, "2nd U.S.-ASEAN Leaders Meeting."

²⁶⁰ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 32. and Clinton, *Remarks on Regional Architecture in Asia*, January 12, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/01/135090.htm>

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 33.

US clearly understands their limitations, especially in terms of traditional security. They are not comparable at all to NATO, which is a comprehensive security arrangement. East Asia multilateral security mechanisms are viewed more as confidence building measures for avoiding possibilities of crises or aggression. From the US perspective, their utility remains limited in the security arena for two main reasons. First, these organizations still largely remain dialogue mechanisms only for talking about emerging security challenges, rather than for responding to or dealing with them. In those Asian institutions, its process is viewed as important as the outcome, which originated from the ASEAN Way.²⁶³ Second, it is critical for the United States that Taiwan has been excluded from many of these mechanisms, and one of the region's greatest security challenges; China-Taiwan relations cannot be discussed in these organizations because of Beijing's insistence.²⁶⁴

However, the US also found many advantages in using Asian multilateral security mechanisms as vehicles for promoting long-term peace and stability.²⁶⁵ The Asian multilateral approach is useful for peacekeeping, disaster relief and nontraditional security issues. The frameworks provide opportunities for continuing direct involvement for the US

²⁶³ Jannuzi, Interview.

²⁶⁴ Cossa, Tay and Chung-min, "The Emerging East Asian Community," 8.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., and Wise, William. Interview.

in regional security matters. Not only for the US, but also Japan, China, and Russia, among others, can get more actively involved in regional security affairs through the frameworks in a manner nonthreatening to their neighbors. Regional security institutions are also good for mitigating the tension between China and Japan, while American officials realized that the US would be dragged into any conflict between the two countries, and they worked feverishly behind the scenes to encourage both countries to ratchet down tensions.²⁶⁶ Even North Korea could have a chance to see real international politics' situation in the multilateral dialogues. The regional frames also provide a mechanism for other regional actors' voices to be heard. By this process, member states build a sense of regional identity and a spirit of cooperation and confidence building.²⁶⁷ These opportunities for creating a long-term peace are considered advantages for the United States.

These multilateral organizations are also useful for the US to promote American values, such as democracy, a liberal market economy and human rights, to the regional countries. Recognizing China's potential for gaining a leadership position, the United States has enhanced its policy to promote these values, especially to China.²⁶⁸ If the US uses the

²⁶⁶ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 23.

²⁶⁷ Cossa, Tay and Chung-min, "The Emerging East Asian Community," 8.

²⁶⁸ Nanto, *East Asian Regional Architecture*, 38.

multilateral organizations, the US can introduce these values as the universal values, or at least regional values, while it would be recognized as pressure from the US to adopt American values in bi-lateral relationships.²⁶⁹ Many scholars and practitioners mentioned the importance of the role of the multilateral institutions to introduce norms. Frank S. Jannuzi, Policy Director on East Asia and Pacific Affairs, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, explained this well:

We joined it [the EAS] not only to maintain hegemonic position. It because we genuinely believe advancing norms is good for us. Advancing principles is good for us. You want to participate in an organization that can help you to create norms and to defend norms. If you look at South China Sea, ASEAN is a better defender, better than one country acting alone. And ASEAN, with the US, is even more able to defend the norm. If the US tries to be acting alone without ASEAN, our effectiveness would be less. Even though we are the super power, we still need friends. We need allies. We need partners. We need partners because of their capability to bring moral authority that brings. We are all defending the same norms and same principles. That gives the US more moral authority. We are working with other countries. Not unilaterally imposing our will unilaterally.

Regional architectures can serve as one important channel to promote principles and values and encourage in the region's nations the type of sustainable development, which is in favor of the interests of the United States.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁹ Jannuzi, Interview.

²⁷⁰ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 24.

Because of these positive reasons, the United States chose its multilateralism policy.

However, some critiques argue that the regional security and economy environment forced the US policy shift to occur. They say the United States did not have any other option other than becoming positive towards regional organizations.

First of all, the United States has to engage in the Asian multilateral organizations because Asia became very important, and US interest in the region is growing as formerly mentioned. Ellen Frost from the Institute for International Economics and National Defense University had stated that unless the United States changes its attitude towards Asia from one in which the US downplayed Asian regional architectures with ‘benign neglect’ and a preference for bilateral agreements only, the US would gradually lose influence, especially relative to China.²⁷¹ The need to engage more with Asia at any level of communication and diplomacy required more active US involvement in the Asian regional organization.

Second, the US has to use the regional institutions for fostering a better political environment with China. The US ultimate concern over East Asian regional arrangements

²⁷¹ Nanto, *East Asian Regional Architecture*, 29.

is simply about China.²⁷² While the US goals in the region are to prevent any nation from dominating Asia,²⁷³ China is viewed as aiming at gaining a leadership position in Asia, and is already displacing Japan and the US among ASEAN countries as the top trading partner and donor of economic aid.²⁷⁴ The 2008 US National Defense Strategy mentioned China as a potential country for competing with the US dominant position in the region. The US needs to interact with China with a long-term and multi-dimensional strategy for mitigating short-term risks while protecting US interests over time.²⁷⁵ Most Asian leaders also desire a larger US engagement in the region to counterbalance potential Chinese domination.²⁷⁶ Although some argue the United States needs to hedge against China's growing military,²⁷⁷ a containment policy is not viable.²⁷⁸ ²⁷⁹ Having been highly integrated economically and financially, the US cannot avoid maintaining cooperative relations with China.²⁸⁰ The Asian regional architectures are good fora for the US to form such relationships with China. The US also understands that it has to promote China's deeper integration into regional

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ Ibid., 30.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 29.

²⁷⁵ Nanto, *East Asian Regional Architecture*, 38.

²⁷⁶ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 36.

²⁷⁷ Nanto, *East Asian Regional Architecture*, 38.

²⁷⁸ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 22.

²⁷⁹ The White House, "Background Briefing by a Senior Administration Official on the President's Meetings at Asean and East Asia Summit," November 19, 2011,

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/19/background-briefing-senior-administration-official-presidents-meetings-a>

²⁸⁰ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 22.

communities as a ‘responsible stake holder.’ Engaging China in the regional mechanism is also expected to hedge against a more hostile and assertive Chinese foreign policy.²⁸¹ Many policy makers in the US as well as other countries recognize they need to use regional institutions for engaging China into a web of rules and interdependence.²⁸²

Lastly, for new transnational security challenges, such as climate change, WMD proliferation, natural disasters and societal destabilization, the United States needs to engage in the regional organizations.²⁸³ Security nowadays does not mean only traditional “balance of power” type of issues. The US pressing threat perceptions have been substantially shifting toward transnational problems in Asia recently.²⁸⁴ US Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell said, “The rapid emergence of transnational security challenges demands collective action,”²⁸⁵ although some critics view this US explanation as an effort to avoid showing its focus on tensions with China and North Korea.²⁸⁶

Some argue that the US cannot preserve those interests in the region solely by the traditional bilateral relations any more.²⁸⁷ They say the US is in need to use the multilateral

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² Ibid., 36.

²⁸³ Gannon, “Engaging in Asia,” 32. and Wise, Interview.

²⁸⁴ Gannon, “Engaging in Asia,” 32. and Brandon and Cronin, Interview,.

²⁸⁵ Gannon, “Engaging in Asia,” 32.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ Gannon, “Engaging in Asia,” 22. and Cronin, Interview.

organizations. Kent Calder said,

There is a dynamic which is driving us beyond the San Francisco system. Many people still think hub and spokes system is still fine. However, the reality has changed. Increasingly, we have broader economic integration and we have soft security issues like piracy, terrorism... In reality, they were forced by the realities of the world and particularly terrorism.

While countries such as China will continue to grow in the next several decades, the relative power of the United States in the region will be declining both economically and strategically. Although the US has been trying to maintain its presence in the region through bilateral relations, the United States may never have as large an influence in the region as it does now. Both the increased complexity of the nontraditional threats to security and the US fiscal strictness are also increasing the trend.²⁸⁸ In order to seek its increasing interest in the region, the US has to shift its reactive policy to a more proactive role in the regional community.²⁸⁹ ²⁹⁰ In addition, by the time of the Obama administration's inauguration, the competition among countries in the region had started shaping the regional order. Unless the US immediately gets more involved in the region, China would establish a regional leading position in forming the organizations.²⁹¹ If so, these regional organizations would

²⁸⁸ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 34.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., 36.

²⁹⁰ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 39.

²⁹¹ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 16.

not be structured in favor of US interests.²⁹² Even after Obama administration's clear declaration of prioritizing Asia in 2010, some critics still argue that Obama administration's attitude towards Asia is only symbolic rather than substantial, and they strongly suggest that the US take a more active approach toward the East Asian regionalism.²⁹³

²⁹² Nanto, *East Asian Regional Architecture*. 37.

²⁹³ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 34.

CHAPTER 5

THE UNITED STATES PARTICIPATION IN THE EAST ASIA SUMMIT

The US did not attend the first EAS meeting in 2005. The US was not invited because the EAS was created in the stream of the Asian regionalism accelerated after the Asian financial crisis, where Asian countries perceived a failure by the United States to effectively respond to it.²⁹⁴ While Russia did energetically ask EAS member states to invite them and attended the EAS as an observer,²⁹⁵ the US did not even make an effort for the invitation. It was during the Bush administration, which did not have a large interest in Asian regional organizations per se.

After President Obama took office, US policy towards the East Asian region as well as multilateralism in general has changed dramatically. The United States acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in July 2009, which was the mandatory requirement for US participation in the East Asia Summit.²⁹⁶ From 2010, the US officially started showing its interest in participating in the Asian regional organization and in October 2010,

²⁹⁴ Vaughn, "East Asian Summit," 4.

²⁹⁵ Soesastro, "East Asia: Many Clubs," 50.

²⁹⁶ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 28.

Secretary of State Clinton announced that the US will join the EAS. In November 2011,²⁹⁷

President Obama participated in the EAS with a full membership status for the first time.

5.1 US attitude toward the EAS at its inception

The US participation was not necessarily expected based on the former US policy. In 2005, right before the EAS inauguration, the US government's attitude toward multilateral cooperation and regionalism in East Asia remained "generally quiet or circumspect on the subject."²⁹⁸ It was not clear if Washington even wanted to participate in the EAS.²⁹⁹ In response to a congressional hearing, US Assistant Secretary of State Eric John stated that the US would not push for an invitation until the EAS began to take shape. The US had not as yet formulated a policy on the EAS because it was seen as a "black box."³⁰⁰ US Decision makers thought it was still premature to become too concerned about the emerging East Asian community and its "wait and see" approach was appropriate.³⁰¹ They

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ Cossa, Tay and Chung-min, "The Emerging East Asian Community," 3.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., 2.

³⁰⁰ US House of representatives, "Transcription of hearing: The United States and Southeast Asia: Developments, Trends and Policy Choices." Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific of the Committee on International relations, House of Representatives, One hundred ninth Congress, First session September 21, 2005,

http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/intlrel/hfa23608.000/hfa23608_0f.htm

³⁰¹ Cossa, Tay and Chung-min, "The Emerging East Asian Community," vii.

thought as long as many of the participants, such as Japan, Australia and New Zealand shared US values and concerns, and as long as a continued US presence and deep association with East Asia could be maintained, it was highly unlikely that this new community would develop in a direction threatening to US interests.”³⁰²

In the United States, many obstacles for EAS participation had been pointed out.

At the time of the EAS inauguration, the US satisfied the first two criteria of the EAS memberships: being a full ASEAN dialogue partner, and having “substantial relations” with ASEAN, but not the third criterion, signing on the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC).³⁰³ Ratification of TAC was the biggest challenge for the US. TAC required member countries to refrain from military operations. This was thought to undercut America’s Asian alliances.³⁰⁴ In addition, it is generally said that the United States has never signed an international treaty that it was not a party to negotiating.³⁰⁵

Other than the simple thought that the EAS is not more than a talk shop, it was the largest concern that the EAS would replace other existing regional organizations of which

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Cossa, “East Asia Community Building,” 9.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 1-12.

³⁰⁵ Cook, “The United States and the East Asia Summit,” 309.

the US was a member; APEC and ARF. APEC would lose its pre-eminent role as the only leaders' meeting in the Asia Pacific.³⁰⁶ The EAS would also threaten the ministerial level ARF.³⁰⁷ The United States did not oppose East Asia regionalism per se, and it carefully had tried not to show its objection or to discourage the EAS,³⁰⁸ but the US did not want to dilute the effectiveness of APEC and the ARF.³⁰⁹

In addition, US preference is clearly on Pan-Pacific institutions rather than Pan-Asian institutions.³¹⁰ Also for this reason, APEC and ARF have priority over Pan-Asian community building. Then Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Christopher Hill raised the issue of "inclusivity." He characterized the debate over "Pan-Asianism" vs. "Pan-Pacificism."³¹¹

Other concerns were also argued in the US, such that it was considered logistically difficult to get the US president to two Asian summits each year for the EAS and APEC leaders' meeting;³¹² that the EAS does not include Taiwan while APEC includes it,³¹³ and that the US would have direct contact with the junta government of Myanmar, which the

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Cossa, "East Asia Community Building," 7.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ Ibid., 11.

³¹¹ Ibid., 5.

³¹² Ibid.

³¹³ Vaughn, "East Asian Summit," 2.

US does not recognize as legitimate.³¹⁴

The US stance on the EAS in 2005 was more accurately described as “wait and see” than rejection. It clearly had an interest in learning more about the EAS, including its membership criteria, its mission, objectives and priorities.³¹⁵ The Bush Administration thought that the EAS agenda was unclear. The Bush administration continued to support APEC as “by far the most robust, multilateral grouping in Asia.”³¹⁶ The US is largely concerned about how the new regional community building affects the existing global norms, especially in the areas of counter-terrorism and counter-proliferation.³¹⁷ After monitoring regional architectures, Washington’s basic question was “Do their [APT, EAS] overlapping agendas make sense or do they duplicate or undermine existing fora such as APEC and ARF?”³¹⁸ Washington had been paying attention to the evolution of the EAS as well as APT.³¹⁹

The most important issue for the US was who would lead the EAS. When the EAS

³¹⁴ Cossa, “East Asia Community Building,” 1.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.

³¹⁶ Vaughn, “East Asian Summit,” 3, and see also, Senior Administration Official, Foreign Press Center, Department of State, Nov. 10, 2005. and Szechenyi, Interview.

³¹⁷ Cossa, Tay and Chung-min, “The Emerging East Asian Community,” vi, 2-3.

³¹⁸ Cossa, “East Asia Community Building,” 1.

³¹⁹ Cossa, Tay and Chung-min, “The Emerging East Asian Community,” v.

was launched, the issue of membership was fought over harshly by China, Japan and other EAS members. ASEAN was officially referred to as a driver of the EAS, but they are a group of small countries and it was not clear who actually leads the ASEAN nations.³²⁰ If China is the leader, the US could have perceived the EAS as being aimed at limiting or replacing Washington's influence in the region.³²¹ The Bush administration was watchful over the regional organizations to ensure that those institutions did not diminish US interest in the region.³²² The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is viewed by some in the US as challenging America's regional presence.³²³ If the EAS turned out to be a potential forum used by China to reduce the America presence and influence in the region, the US thought it had to take some steps to prevent that from happening.

The US hub-and-spoke alliance serves to hedge when newly emerging multilateral orders were to put the current US-led regional order at risk.³²⁴ In the EAS, the US believed

³²⁰ Cossa, "East Asia Community Building," 5.

³²¹ Cossa, Tay and Chung-min, "The Emerging East Asian Community," vi.

³²² Cossa, "East Asia Community Building," 6.

³²³ Vaughn, "East Asian Summit," 6.

³²⁴ While serving as a bridge to a new and broad-based multilateral order mechanism, the hub-and-spoke alliance system functions for the United States and its allies as a hedge against the development of an undesirable multilateral security order in at least two distinct aspects; First, the hub-and-spokes system works as a hedge against the regional multilateralism which the US does not favor. Second, the system serves as a hedge in the event that evolving multilateral gatherings were to become disadvantageous to the current US-led order or should they ultimately fail.³²⁴

that its interest was protected by US allies and partners in the EAS. Before EAS establishment, Singapore and Japan tried to keep membership positions for Australia and India. This effort was to ensure that US allies played a major role in the EAS, and that the EAS was formed on liberal democratic values.³²⁵ Richard Armitage, then United States Deputy Secretary of State, stated that Japan and Australia would represent the position of the United State in the EAS.³²⁶ This hedging system prevented the development of an Asia-only grouping in the region.³²⁷ Australia's entry into the EAS was clearly US' hedge against East Asian exclusivism in the Asian order building mechanism.³²⁸ Moreover, the inclusion of India, Australia, and New Zealand was a good balance against the emerging power of China. Not only the US, but also Singapore, Japan, Vietnam and Indonesia shared such a feeling.

A few scholars opposed US participation in the EAS, or additional new security institutions in East Asia. Gerald Curtis claimed that East Asia did not need a new security architecture. After he examined possible institutions in his article, he reached that

³²⁵ Kurlantzick, "Pax Asia-Pacific?" 74.

³²⁶ Park, "The US-led alliance in the Asia Pacific," 151.

³²⁷ Ibid., 148.

³²⁸ Ibid., 149.

conclusion because it seems difficult to have an effective and meaningful regional security mechanism. Although he did not specifically mention the EAS, emphasizing the bilateral relations, he argued that East Asia only needs an attentive US government that engages with the Asian countries with flexibility and imagination. He recommended that the relationships be advanced on institutions and policies in place and changed when the environment requires.³²⁹

Kurlantzick raised doubt about US participation. He said the United States should use other measures in order to maintain its position in the region, while he recognized the importance of Asia. He viewed Asian regionalism as a process of Asian identity building and argued that the US should not try to slow Asia's identity building. He saw the East Asian integration as inevitable and US participation in the EAS would stand in the way of Asian economic and cultural integration. He also stated that there is only a minimal negative effect on the US even if the East Asian free trade zone is realized. He appreciated the conflict resolution function of the regionalism. He said Asian regional economic integration and people's contacts could serve as a brake on conflict between Japan and China. He also claimed that if Asian regionalism could reach the level of EU-type

³²⁹ Curtis, "Obama and East Asia," 5.

organization, covering trade and other public policy, that organization would better solve regional conflicts. He said that the US could use its continuing presence in the region to support nascent democratization in Asia, consulting closely with the regional partners. He suggested the US give Asia the same priority as Europe. In order to improve its own image in Asia, he also said the US should reinvigorate its public diplomacy and closer interaction between Asia's leading powers, instead of joining the EAS. Then he suggested that the US develop its interactions through regional organizations in which it has a role, such as ASEAN and ARF, not through the EAS. By securing its role in Asia more with these commitments, he said the US would be better positioned to support the region's democratization, shaping the future of China and tolerating Asian institutions that do not include the United States.

5.2 Reasons for participation

Even in 2007, the United States' stance towards East Asian integration was still unclear. Some U.S. governmental officials started promoting the US participation and argued that Washington should try to forestall any further Asian-only integration.³³⁰ Some

³³⁰ Kurlantzick, "Pax Asia-Pacifica?" 74.

scholars strongly claimed that the US should join the EAS, or at least sign on the TAC in 2007.³³¹

The main reason for promoting participation was to maintain the current US presence in the region.³³² It was for looking after its economic and security interests as well as for promoting its values.³³³ The original “wait and see” stance was taken because the US wanted to know how the EAS would work in terms of potential impact to diminish US influence in Asia. Some US scholars said that the US should not be concerned, as the EAS did not seem to threaten American influence in Asia, while others argue that it would reduce US influence in the region.³³⁴ However, while Washington continued to stay away from the East Asian regionalism, the environment changed to a large extent. The Asian economy kept developing while the financial crisis hit the US economy. Two US wars in the Middle East almost ended. Chinese military action became more active. ASEAN increased its presence in regional politics. Asian regionalism had accelerated rapidly.³³⁵ Some said the centrality of the United States is now being challenged by renewed

³³¹ Cossa, “East Asia Community Building,” 1-18.

³³² Jannuzi and Ott, Interview.

³³³ Vaughn, “East Asian Summit,” 6.

³³⁴ Ibid., 6.

³³⁵ Hiebert, Interview.

regionalism in Asia and by China's rising influence.³³⁶ Almost all interviewees for this thesis said that the US needed to join the EAS in order to prevent China from dominating it. US allies also called for the US to join.³³⁷

For the United States, the largest diplomatic issue in Asia, or even possibly in the world for decades from now is how to grow a constructive relationship with China.³³⁸ The US stance on the EAS is also related to China's rising geopolitical importance. In this context, the EAS is also important in terms of the positions of other regional nations relative to China and the United States. Many countries in the world including the US feel that an approach to foster the peaceful rise of China is necessary.³³⁹ The US approach to engagement in the Asian region has not been the one that would be interpreted as containment against China. It should be the one to demonstrate that the US seeks to hold an active and constructive engagement in Asian multilateral affairs and that it supports China's constructive integration into the existing regional and world affairs.³⁴⁰ US entry into the EAS was expected to create a forum where both China and the US gathered with other

³³⁶ Ibid., 1.

³³⁷ Cronin, Green, Jannuzi, Ott and Sutter, Interview.

³³⁸ Vaughn, "East Asian Summit," 6.

³³⁹ Ibid., 2.

³⁴⁰ Ibid., 6.

countries with interests substantially affected by US-China relations.³⁴¹ It is considered meaningful to have an annual meeting which would bring the leaders of the United States, China, Japan and India together in an informal forum that is mandated to discuss both economic and security issues. There is no such institution other than the EAS in the world.³⁴²

Priority on the APEC had been one of the strong reasons to oppose the US participation in the EAS.³⁴³ The US was watching to see if EAS would replace APEC as the main multilateral forum in Asia on trade and investment liberalization and economic integration.³⁴⁴ However, while the US did not show any concrete interest in joining the EAS, APEC was considered gradually losing its momentum.³⁴⁵ Even in 2005, there was already an increasing perception that APEC did not have the leadership enough to meet future issues.³⁴⁶ It is also said that APEC's expansion to include faraway and structurally less significant economies from both sides of the Pacific Ocean had weakened APEC.³⁴⁷ While the US tried to find what the objective and mission of the EAS was, the Asian

³⁴¹ Cook, "The United States and the East Asia Summit," 307.

³⁴² Ibid.

³⁴³ Park, "The US-led alliance in the Asia Pacific," 151.

³⁴⁴ Nanto, *East Asian Regional Architecture*, 24.

³⁴⁵ Vaughn, "East Asian Summit," 6.

³⁴⁶ Vaughn, "East Asian Summit," 6.

³⁴⁷ Cook, "The United States and the East Asia Summit," 304.

countries including the US allies had indicated a clear preference and priority toward APT and the EAS.³⁴⁸ The US found that it needed to join the EAS; nevertheless, it prefers APEC. The majority of my interviewees who are American decision makers and scholars said that the EAS is expected to work for security more than economy.³⁴⁹ It is because the US still tries to use APEC as priority forum for its original economy and trade purpose. After a long time commitment, it is difficult for the US to give up APEC at least as the economic forum.³⁵⁰

Many opinion leaders said that the EAS is useful for cultivating a long term peace on traditional security as well as non-traditional security. Frank Jannuzi said, “The EAS is good for dialogue on traditional security, arms race and transparency. It is too big to respond effectively to insurgency, say, in Burma or North Korea.” He claimed that relying only on bi-lateral security relationships is not adequate any more. He said, “Nature of challenges is not cold war [style], but transnational, multinational and nontraditional.” He continued, “There is a value of dialogue in the EAS... Dialogue itself is helping to build community.”³⁵¹ William Wise argued that the EAS is not useful for the short term peace

³⁴⁸ Cossa, “East Asia Community Building,” 7.

³⁴⁹ Hiebert and Szechenyi, Interview.

³⁵⁰ Szechenyi, Interview.

³⁵¹ Jannuzi, Interview.

creating, but a long time goal.³⁵²

Many also believed that the EAS could become the basis of a future East Asian Community. The EAS is viewed as strategically important for many countries. That is why regional states such as Australia and India sought to be included in the EAS so that they will not be excluded from any future East Asian Community.³⁵³ Not only ASEAN countries, but also the US allies such as Japan, South Korea, and Australia feel the magnetic force of a new geopolitical pole.³⁵⁴ If the US wants to get involved in the future East Asian Community, entry into the EAS had been viewed as one of the steps to ensure its position.³⁵⁵

Although the US hesitated to join the Asia-only organizations, the US participation in to the East Asia Summit seems to drastically shift the characteristics of the EAS from the East Asian architecture to the Asia Pacific one.³⁵⁶ Alan Romberg from the Stimson Center said, “It is self-evident that any organization in which the United States plays an important

³⁵² Wise, Interview.

³⁵³ Vaughn, “East Asian Summit,” 2.

³⁵⁴ Vaughn, “East Asian Summit,” 5.

³⁵⁵ It is only after the U.S. decided to participate, but Alan Romberg from the Stimson Center said in February 2012, “It is quite likely that if the American President participates on a regular basis in the EAS, the weight of that organization will naturally grow substantially, and it is likely to become more important for the overall region than APT. That is all speculation at this point, but I am quite sure that if the EAS does not acquire such weight, the President will not continue to participate.” Romberg, Email interview.

³⁵⁶ Cook, “The United States and the East Asia Summit,” 307.

role with Asian countries is, by definition, more ‘Pan-Pacific’.”³⁵⁷ Critiques said the EAS had lain uncomfortably in between the broader Asia Pacific region and the narrower East Asia. Ralph Cossa claimed that not only showing simple opposition against the Asian-only body, but also providing an active US commitment and preference on pan-Pacific institutions was necessary for the US to change the current situation where the US had been left behind in the quick regionalism in East Asia.³⁵⁸

Another issue for the US was if the emerging East Asian regionalism would adopt global norms and values in many fields such as counter-terrorism, counter-proliferation, free and open markets, human rights and democracy.³⁵⁹ The US was not sure if the APT and EAS, of which the US was not a member, would be willing to adopt global norms in these areas.³⁶⁰ The US wanted to use US allies to continue having influence on these regional institutions. Within ASEAN, the US views Indonesia as the preferable driver as the largest member and its current commitment to promoting democratic values, seen Indonesia started to stresses democracy and human rights.³⁶¹ However, these impacts were still indirect. In fact, regional institutions are useful for the US to put pressure on the region

³⁵⁷ Romberg, Email interview.

³⁵⁸ Cossa, “East Asia Community Building,” 1.

³⁵⁹ Ibid., 7.

³⁶⁰ Ibid., 1.

³⁶¹ Ibid., 11.

regarding human rights issues and other issues. The US wanted to shape the normative feature of the region.³⁶² On this aspect, focusing on the relationships between China and the EAS, Satu Limaye said, “It is important to have China embedded in dialogue to shape regional rules of the law, [it is important] for China to understand that they are not dealing with a small power in the region. They have to understand what people are saying.”³⁶³

US participation in the EAS was strongly proposed also from the mere fact that East Asia became very important to the US. Asia increased its presence in international politics at every level year by year.³⁶⁴ Alan Romberg from the Stimson Center said, “The United States views participation in the EAS as an important part of its reemphasis on East Asia as an area of the world critical to American interests – economic, political and security.”³⁶⁵ Given Asia’s rapidly growing importance and need to demonstrate America’s continuing commitment to the region, it is claimed that the United States needs to more clearly articulate its support for the East Asian regionalism in general and particularly the EAS.³⁶⁶

These proponents stated that US participation in the EAS would show the US had adopted a

³⁶² Szechenyi, Interview.

³⁶³ Limaye, Interview.

³⁶⁴ Cronin, Interview.

³⁶⁵ Romberg, Email interview.

³⁶⁶ Cossa, “East Asia Community Building,” 1. “Reluctance to do so is broadly interpreted as U.S. indifference toward Southeast Asia or as additional evidence that preoccupation elsewhere (Iraq, DPRK) has caused Southeast Asia to increasingly be overlooked.”

policy recognizing Asia as an important partner.³⁶⁷ It was also said that while the Bush administration was seen to have neglected Asia, participation into the EAS would send a powerful signal of US reengagement to Asia.³⁶⁸

In addition to many reasons above, many interviewees said, “When compared, which is worse? Participating in the EAS or not, non-participation is worse”.³⁶⁹ Satu Limaye said the problem is “we are not there,” explaining that when important discussions are held in the region, the US needs to attend the discussion.³⁷⁰ Michael Green also said that the EAS is not useful, but if there were such an organization, the US should better attend.

Gradually, the support for EAS participation had increased in the US during the term toward the end of the Bush administration. For promoting the intervention, the obstacles mentioned above have to be overcome.

The US policy makers found that East Asia community building does not likely bring any threat to US bilateral relations with allies and partners, and would be able to co-exist

³⁶⁷ Cook, “The United States and the East Asia Summit,” 306.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., 307.

³⁶⁹ Green and Limaye, Interview.

³⁷⁰ Limaye, Interview.

with the existing US-led Asian structure. The US found that it could use the EAS simply as the way to promote its purpose and enhance its presence in the region.

When the US declared its participation in the EAS, US Secretary of State Clinton stressed ASEAN's central role. Key criteria supporting the United States' decision to join the EAS included three important points: "Recognition that ASEAN would be the core of these new structures; Understanding that structures would be ineffective unless ASEAN is strengthened; and, Commitment to substantively deepen and strengthen ties with ASEAN and its key members."³⁷¹ There was hope that ASEAN would become a more powerful driver, which could lead the way for substantial regional community building.³⁷²

Another US obstacle to join the EAS was accession to the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC). Some feared that the treaty disputed US (and allies') operations in the region, including military operations and sanctions.³⁷³ However, the US understood it as not affecting the operations since all five of Washington's Asia allies have signed with no perceptible impact on the alliance network. In addition, as a member of the ASEAN

³⁷¹ Bower, "Paradigm Shift," 2.

³⁷² Cossa, "East Asia Community Building," 1.

³⁷³ Jannuzi, Interview.

Regional Forum, the US had already agreed with the purpose and principles of the TAC as a code of conduct of ARF.³⁷⁴ The US signed the TAC in 2009.

It was also claimed logistically difficult for the US President to visit Asia twice per year for the APEC Leaders' meeting and the EAS. However, not all APEC Meetings are held in Asia and if the APEC meeting is held in Asia, the EAS could be arranged within the same trip to Asia as APEC.³⁷⁵ Furthermore, participation in the EAS would guarantee at least one presidential trip to Asia per a year, which now is even considered necessary concerning the importance of Asia.³⁷⁶

5.3 The US accession to the East Asia Summit

At the beginning of 2010, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated that they started considering US participation in the Asian regional organization by consulting with Asian partners on how the US might play a role in the EAS, and how the EAS fits into the broader institutional landscape.³⁷⁷ In July 2010, the Obama administration expressed its intention

³⁷⁴ Cossa, "East Asia Community Building," 1-12.

³⁷⁵ Ibid., 1.

³⁷⁶ Ibid., 11.

³⁷⁷ Clinton, *Remarks on Regional Architecture in Asia*, January 12, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/01/135090.htm>

to participate in the summit starting in 2011.³⁷⁸

At the 5th EAS in October 2010, Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton announced the United States' participation in the East Asia Summit. Secretary Clinton explained the five key principles of the US regarding the EAS.³⁷⁹ First, the US expected to work closely with the EAS members on wider issue in the EAS not only on its existing agenda and initiatives, but on wider potential areas for cooperation.³⁸⁰ Second, the US believed that ASEAN should continue to play a central role and the EAS should go beyond mere dialogue into results. Third, the "EAS should pursue an active agenda that involves the most consequential security issues." She mentions nuclear proliferation, the increase in conventional arms, maritime security, climate change, and the promotion of shared values and civil society.³⁸¹ Fourth, "the EAS should complement and reinforce the work being done in other forums." Lastly, the importance of bilateral relationships with alliances and partners in the region was emphasized again in the speech.³⁸² Regarding other regional organizations, Secretary Clinton said these organizations should remain flexible and their

³⁷⁸ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 28.

³⁷⁹ Clinton, *Intervention at the East Asia Summit*, October 30, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/10/150196.htm>

³⁸⁰ Ibid.

³⁸¹ Ibid.

³⁸² Ibid.

missions should be refined.³⁸³

5.4 The 6th East Asia Summit with United States Participation

In November 2011, the US as well as Russia formally joined the EAS with a full membership status at the 6th meeting in Bali, Indonesia. The EAS changed its characteristics and increased its importance with the participation of the United States.

President Obama attended the 6th EAS as a part of nine-day Asia-Pacific trip from November 11 to November 19, 2011. He first attended the APEC summit and Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) meeting in Hawaii, then visited Australia and attended ASEAN related meetings including the EAS. Later, the United States reflected this Asia-Pacific trip as “the implementation of a substantial and important reorientation in American global strategy” for “strategic rebalancing” in Asia.³⁸⁴ In Hawaii, he energetically promoted the TPP, the wider Pacific regional free trade agreement with nine countries, which excludes China. At the Australia visit, he announced that the US will deploy the Marines in Darwin, Australia,

³⁸³ Ibid.

³⁸⁴ Tom Donilon from The White House, “Press Briefing by Press Secretary Jay Carney, National Security Advisor Tom Donilon, and Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communications Ben Rhodes,” Bali, Indonesia. November 19, 2011, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/19/press-briefing-press-secretary-jay-carney-national-security-advisor-tom->

from 2012. He used this series of meetings with the Asia-Pacific nations including the EAS “to restore the influence of the US in the Asia-pacific region after years of preoccupation in Iraq and Afghanistan.”³⁸⁵ In response to the US announcement of the Marine deployment in Australia, China had issued a series of warnings that claimed the US is seeking to destabilize the region. Liu Weimin, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said, “it may not be quite appropriate to intensify and expand military alliance and may not be in the interest of countries within this region.”³⁸⁶ For China, the US military expansion in the region as well as the TPP is viewed as encirclement for China.

The US broadened the EAS agenda, raising a traditional security issue. Before the summit the United States made an effort to bring the South China Sea issue to the EAS table while China strongly opposed it. At the China-ASEAN summit right before the EAS, China said that an outsider should not intervene into the South China Sea issue with any kind of excuse.³⁸⁷ China has long insisted that the issues should not be discussed in multinational forums, but bilateral negotiations.³⁸⁸ At the EAS summit, 16 of 18 leaders, other than Cambodia and Myanmar, addressed maritime security and most of them

³⁸⁵ Calmes, “Obama and Asian Leaders Confront China’s Premier.” New York Times, November 19, 2011.

³⁸⁶ Calmes, “A U.S. Marine Base for Australia Irritates China.” New York Times, November 16, 2011.

³⁸⁷ Kyodo News, “China is enhancing its naval power,” November 18, 2011.

³⁸⁸ Calmes, “Obama and Asian Leaders Confront China’s Premier.” New York Times, November 19, 2011.

specifically mentioned the South China Sea.³⁸⁹ ³⁹⁰ Chinese Premier Wen had to defend China in the long-festering dispute.³⁹¹ He countered, “I did not think that the EAS was an appropriate forum for a discussion of this issue,”³⁹² and “China goes to great pains to ensure that the shipping lanes are safe and free.”³⁹³ Several leaders including the Chairman of the EAS from Indonesia and the Russian Foreign Minister “said that maritime security issues were appropriate and important issues for the EAS to discuss.”³⁹⁴ China changed its attitude and agreed to make progress on “code of conduct” on the South China Sea, which China had rejected for years.³⁹⁵ The Obama administration’s senior government official

³⁸⁹ The White House, “Background Briefing by a Senior Administration Official on the President's Meetings at Asean and East Asia Summit,” November 19, 2011, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/19/background-briefing-senior-administration-official-pr-essidents-meetings-a>

³⁹⁰ Ibid.

³⁹¹ Calmes, “Obama and Asian Leaders Confront China’s Premier.” New York Times, November 19, 2011, and The White House, “Background Briefing by a Senior Administration Official on the President's Meetings at Asean and East Asia Summit,” November 19, 2011, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/19/background-briefing-senior-administration-official-pr-essidents-meetings-a>

³⁹² The White House, “Background Briefing by a Senior Administration Official on the President's Meetings at Asean and East Asia Summit,” November 19, 2011, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/19/background-briefing-senior-administration-official-pr-essidents-meetings-a>

³⁹³ Calmes, “Obama and Asian Leaders Confront China’s Premier.” New York Times, November 19, 2011.

³⁹⁴ The White House, “Background Briefing by a Senior Administration Official on the President's Meetings at Asean and East Asia Summit,” November 19, 2011, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/19/background-briefing-senior-administration-official-pr-essidents-meetings-a>

³⁹⁵ Asahi Shimbun, “Chinese ‘Smile diplomacy’ towards ASEAN, to counter US containment,” November 18, 2011, and The White House, “Background Briefing by a Senior Administration Official on the President's Meetings at Asean and East Asia Summit,” November 19, 2011, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/19/background-briefing-senior-administration-official-pr-essidents-meetings-a>

explained, “There was clearly widespread consensus on a number of principles,”³⁹⁶ “Freedom of navigation, the importance of adherence to the rule of law in approaching and settling disputes, applicability of the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea and the importance for all nations to abide by its terms.”³⁹⁷ The EAS became a diplomatic forum for the US-China relationship. The US announcement about the Marines and discussion in the EAS appeared to startle China.³⁹⁸

At the EAS, other issues such as non-proliferation, and disaster response were also discussed.³⁹⁹ The summit adopted the Declaration of the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations, which is recognized as an action guideline for the expanded EAS.⁴⁰⁰ It includes “the international law of the sea contains crucial norms that contribute to the maintenance of peace and stability in the region.” Although before the summit, the ASEAN countries had a concern that great powers would take the position to lead the EAS, Indonesian government official, the host of the summit, concluded, “ASEAN

³⁹⁶ The White House, “Background Briefing by a Senior Administration Official on the President's Meetings at Asean and East Asia Summit,” November 19, 2011, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/19/background-briefing-senior-administration-official-presidents-meetings-a>

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

³⁹⁸ Calmes, “Obama and Asian Leaders Confront China’s Premier,” New York Times, November 19, 2011.

³⁹⁹ The White House, “The White House Fact Sheet: East Asia Summit,” November 19, 2011, <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/texttrans/2011/11/20111119151041su0.2769434.html#axzz1mnrEj23W>

⁴⁰⁰ The East Asia Summit, “Declaration of the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations,” Bali, November 19, 2011, <http://www.aseansec.org/documents/19th%20summit/EAS%20Principles.pdf>

could show its presence and deepened its confidence.”⁴⁰¹ The declaration stated again ASEAN as the driving force in the EAS.

During the nine days’ trip to Asia, President Obama constantly repeated that the United States prioritizes the Asia-Pacific as a Pacific Nation. At the Australian Parliament, Obama said he had “made a deliberate and strategic decision – as a Pacific nation, the United States will play a larger and long-term role in shaping this region and its future.”⁴⁰²

According to the White House,

*President Obama’s participation in the EAS ... underscored that Administration’s commitment to deepening engagement in the Asia-pacific region and playing a leadership role in its emerging institutions. The President has made clear that full and active US engagement in the region’s multilateral architecture helps to reinforce the system of rules, responsibilities, and norms that underlines regional peace, stability, and prosperity.*⁴⁰³

*The President underscored the shared interest of EAS member states in reaffirming international rules and norms in these areas; enhancing partner capacity to address existing and emerging challenges; and promoting regional cooperation.*⁴⁰⁴

⁴⁰¹ Asahi Shimbun, “Declare ‘International law should be the principle’ for the South China Sea Issue: The East Asia Summit,” November 20, 2011.

⁴⁰² Calmes, “A U.S. Marine Base for Australia Irritates China,” New York Times, November 16, 2011, and Obama, *Remarks By President Obama to the Australian Parliament*, November 17, 2011, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/17/remarks-president-obama-australian-parliament>

⁴⁰³ The White House, “The White House Fact Sheet: East Asia Summit,” November 19, 2011, <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/texttrans/2011/11/20111119151041su0.2769434.html#axzz1mnrEj23W>

⁴⁰⁴ The White House, “The White House Fact Sheet: East Asia Summit,” November 19, 2011, <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/texttrans/2011/11/20111119151041su0.2769434.html#axzz1mnrEj23W>

This was a great opportunity for the United States to ensure its presence in the region.

The US used this opportunity for strengthening relationships with ASEAN countries and other EAS members for competing with China in the name of international rules. President Obama's trip for Asian strategic rebalancing was recognized as successful by the United States. Due to the efforts of the US, the EAS, which in practice had not treated any traditional security issues, became a discussion forum for highly political traditional security issues.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION: THEORIES ON US PARTICIPATION IN THE EAS

This chapter will apply each theory explained in the Chapter 2 to the facts we found in the previous chapters. First, it will explain how the three theories would explain the reasons why the US participates in the EAS. Then it will examine which theory offers the best explanation.

6.1 Realism

Realists understand international relationships to be substantially based on balance of power. If there is a power shift, countries try to balance powers. Countries' decisions about international politics are made based on self-help efforts for enhancing countries' security. Power is the means to achieve the security goal. Realists think countries cooperate only for balancing powers or ensuring strengths. Countries may work through institutions, but it is just one form for balancing power.⁴⁰⁵

They would explain US participation in the EAS from balance of powers. While

⁴⁰⁵ Evans and Wilson, "Regime Theory and the English School of International Relations," 330.

China and other middle-size nations are rising, the relative power of the US is declining. It is especially so in the Asia-Pacific region, and its hegemonic status seems to be unstable there.⁴⁰⁶ Realists would argue that the US wanted to use the EAS to prevent any power from dominating Asia, and that the US wanted to maintain the current US security presence in the region especially to hedge against China. Marvin Ott explained two principles for the US joining the EAS: “1. The US demonstrates it is a permanent presence in the region; 2. The US perceives that China is becoming a truly serious security challenge in the region. It is a threat to the core US interest, specifically, Sea lines in South China Sea.”⁴⁰⁷ He continued, “The US knows that the EAS is an opportunity to raise strategic and security concerns about China and to gather the support of Japan, Korea and many other South East Asia countries in that forum, in the EAS, to put breaks on China’s ambition.”⁴⁰⁸ Robert Sutter also argues the US needed to “hedge against China, because it is a rising power, or could dominate Asia. The record is negative in the past. Countries around China are worried about it.”⁴⁰⁹

The United States did not seek its participation in the EAS in 2005 but in 2010. From

⁴⁰⁶ See, Beckley, “China’s Century?”

⁴⁰⁷ Ott, Interview.

⁴⁰⁸ Ott, Interview.

⁴⁰⁹ Sutter, Interview.

a realist perspective, this fact tells how quickly the regional environment is changing. A rapidly growing China and other regional countries, and the increased complexity of threats to regional security combined with the current US' fiscal strictness, had raised the necessity for the US to get involved in multilateralism in East Asia more.⁴¹⁰ In 2010, the US realized interests in the region cannot be protected solely through bilateral relations and it must engage in greater regional cooperation. To hedge against emerging China, from the realist perspective, the United States has to work together with the other small and middle-sized Asian countries to balance the regional power structure. The need to engage in regional organizations was especially perceived when the US saw China trying to get closer to ASEAN countries using aid and other economic ties. The US decision to join the EAS was made also because the US allies and partners in the region such as Japan and Singapore enthusiastically called for US participation.⁴¹¹ Realism would also explain that these requests from the allies and partners were made also for balancing powers in the region.

Within realists, offensive realists simply think that power balance is at the core of decision-making and that nations seek further strength without limitation. They would argue that the United States is playing the role of balancer and trying to improve or recover

⁴¹⁰ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 34.

⁴¹¹ Green, Hiebert, Jannuzi and Sutter, Interview.

its strength in the region under recent regional power circumstances. For them, the EAS is purely a means for these US goals in the region. Thus, offensive realists would argue that the US aims to create an alliance with ASEAN countries as well as Japan and South Korea through the EAS to hedge against China. Richard Cronin claimed that a multilateral frame is useful to strengthen East Asian countries around China. He said the US needs to strengthen these countries when the US can not necessarily rely on the bilateral relationships such as the US-Japan or US-Korea alliance under the current unstable situation.⁴¹² On the other hand, defensive realists, who are relatively positive towards international cooperation, would argue that, in addition to balancing powers, the US joined the EAS to avoid unnecessary incidents such as arms races and unintended wars with China. They would argue the EAS is a discussion forum with China as well as other countries. The US can receive more information through the EAS. This position is close to liberalism.

Realists would also recognize that the rapid emergence of transnational security challenges also demands collective action in order to ensure US security. Regional multilateral systems are good for dealing with the tensions from complicated conflicts such as the North Korean nuclear crisis and South China Sea dispute. For realists who focus on

⁴¹² Cronin, Interview.

enhancing states' security, all of these recent security situation changes required the US to join the EAS. Furthermore, having seen China establishing a regional leading position and existing Asian regional organizations being formed not for the US interest,⁴¹³ US' imminent interest is to get involved in the region more.⁴¹⁴ From realist perspective, this is also a process for the US to balance powers in the region.

In addition to military power, from many speeches and government announcements about the US shift towards Asia, it is also found that the US wants to gain economic opportunity from the region through multilateral organizations.⁴¹⁵ The developing East Asian economy is also a key for the US since East Asia is a huge and rapidly growing market.⁴¹⁶ They are one of the largest trade partners of the US. From a realist perspective, economic power is also important for the US to maintain its hegemon status.⁴¹⁷ Economic power is a foundation for its military power. The US certainly had the clear intention to get engaged in the regional economy more through the EAS.

Thus, realists would say that the US participation in the EAS is to balance regional

⁴¹³ Nanto, *East Asian Regional Architecture*, 37.

⁴¹⁴ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 16.

⁴¹⁵ Sutter, Interview.

⁴¹⁶ Clinton, America's Engagement in the Asia-Pacific, October 28, 2010,

<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/10/150141.htm>

⁴¹⁷ Mearsheimer, *The False Promise*, 5-49.

power and enhance its security in the world of the power politics.

6.2 Liberalism

Neo-liberalists who view cooperation more positively would try to determine what the US motive is to enter regional cooperation through the EAS. They argue that states act rationally and seek cooperation under certain conditions. They explain that institutions and norms work for creating peace and stability. From their perspective, it is because these institutions increase information about the actions and intentions of other states. It is also because these institutions provide incentives for good behavior and sanctions against the violators.⁴¹⁸ Liberal institutionalists also argue that institutions affect states' cost-benefit calculations, preference and therefore behavior. Liberalists cite rules and principles by which even powerful countries have to abide.⁴¹⁹

Liberalists would explain that the US tactically joined the EAS in order to maintain cooperative relationships in the region for security and stability.⁴²⁰ The United States' largest security concern is China.⁴²¹ The US needs a forum to interact with China for its

⁴¹⁸ Keohane, *International Institutions and State Power*, 3.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 172.

⁴²⁰ See Katsumata, *Establishment*, 181-198.

⁴²¹ Nanto, *East Asian Regional Architecture*, 29.

long-term and multi-dimensional interest in the region. From a liberalist perspective, the United States would use the EAS to mitigate short-term risks by receiving information about the actions and intentions of China and to preserve and enhance US national advantages over time.⁴²² Containment does not work when the US and China, as well as other Asian countries, are highly integrated economically.⁴²³ The US has to maintain cooperative relations with China.⁴²⁴ Maintaining regional stability is the shared interest of all states, including the US and China. This interest has made all countries in the region seek cooperation within the region. Moreover, to promote its own interests in the region, the US has to shape the regional security environment to integrate a rising China into regional communities and the global system as a ‘responsible stake holder’ while hedging against the possibility of a more hostile and assertive China.⁴²⁵ Many policy makers in the US as well as elsewhere in the region increasingly and strategically tend to consider the regional community as a measure to embed China into a web of rules and

⁴²² Nanto, *East Asian Regional Architecture*, 38.

⁴²³ The White House, “Background Briefing by a Senior Administration Official on the President's Meetings at Asean and East Asia Summit,” November 19, 2011, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/19/background-briefing-senior-administration-official-pr-essidents-meetings-a>

⁴²⁴ Gannon, “Engaging in Asia,” 22.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*

interdependence.⁴²⁶

In addition, characteristics of security issues have been changing. Complicated issues involving multiple countries need multilateral cooperation as a solution. For example, the United States wants to use the EAS framework for a territorial dispute over the South China Sea issue, as they did at the first EAS meeting in 2011. This issue includes multiple parties. There are many other issues the US wants to bring to the multilateral forum, rather than to bilateral negotiations, such as the expansion of the Chinese navy into the west Pacific as well as the North Korean nuclear crisis. The US recognized that the multilateral regional institution frameworks provide opportunities of continuing direct involvement for the US in regional security matters and regional security issues can be discussed in a cooperative manner. The rapid emergence of transnational security challenges demands that the US accept collective action. The US realized that its own interests in the region cannot be protected solely by bilateral relations and requires greater regional cooperation for a long-term peace. Although the expected concrete results on each issue would be different between countries, solving these issues without armed conflicts or regional instability are shared interests of all nations in the region. The US would expect China to have incentives

⁴²⁶ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 36.

for good behavior, being affected by the EAS. In November 2009, President Obama said, “Multilateral organizations can advance the security and prosperity of this region.”⁴²⁷

Liberalists would argue that the US found the EAS useful for maintaining US interests through regional cooperation from a long-term perspective.

When it comes to rules and principles, the United States has been promoting its values such as democracy and free markets worldwide. Countries that accept these values then become favored by the US.⁴²⁸ One purpose of its EAS participation is to inject its rules and values into the region, such as democracy, a liberal market economy and human rights as well as international laws.⁴²⁹ At the EAS in 2011, President Obama has made it clear that full and active US engagement in the region’s multilateral architecture helps to reinforce the system of international rules, responsibilities, and norms that underlie regional peace, stability, and prosperity.⁴³⁰ The South China Sea issue was brought to the EAS meeting by 16 of 18 member countries, although China did not want to discuss it at the

⁴²⁷ Obama, Remarks by President Barack Obama at Suntory Hall, November 14, 2009,

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-barack-obama-suntory-hall>

⁴²⁸ Keohane, *International Institutions and State Power*, 10.

⁴²⁹ The US want to support democratic institutions and spread of universal human value through the EAS.

See, Clinton, *America's Engagement in the Asia-Pacific*, October 28, 2010,

<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/10/150141.htm>

⁴³⁰ The White House, “The White House Fact Sheet: East Asia Summit,” November 19, 2011,

<http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/texttrans/2011/11/20111119151041su0.2769434.html#axzz1mnrEj23W>

“The President underscored the shared interest of EAS member states in reaffirming international rules and norms in these areas; enhancing partner capacity to address existing and emerging challenges.”

EAS.⁴³¹ The Obama administration's senior official appreciated this result with the following comment: "... the Chinese premier will go back to Beijing with the sense that the center of gravity in the Asia Pacific area is around the adherence to the principle of the rule of law, peaceful resolution, and a constructive, rules-based approach to the resolution of territorial disputes."⁴³² By putting the international laws on the table of the EAS, the United States wanted to ingrain rule of law in the region, especially for dealing with the issues with China. Recognizing China's high potential to hold a leadership position, the United States accelerated its policy to promote these values to China through communications at all levels, including multilateral institutions.⁴³³ Regional architectures can serve as one channel to promote rules and values and encourage in regional nations the type of sustainable development that is in favor of the interests of the United States.⁴³⁴ From the liberalist perspective, once the international or regional rules are established, China has to abide by the rules.

⁴³¹ The White House, "Background Briefing by a Senior Administration Official on the President's Meetings at Asean and East Asia Summit," November 19, 2011, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/19/background-briefing-senior-administration-official-pr-essidents-meetings-a>

⁴³² The White House, "Background Briefing by a Senior Administration Official on the President's Meetings at Asean and East Asia Summit," November 19, 2011, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/19/background-briefing-senior-administration-official-pr-essidents-meetings-a>

⁴³³ Nanto, *East Asian Regional Architecture*, 38.

⁴³⁴ Gannon, "Engaging in Asia," 24.

Regarding the economic interdependence theory, liberalists would argue that the US wants to seek a more stable region by increasing the economic interdependence with regional countries through the EAS. There is a great deal of evidence that the economic interdependence between the US and the Asian countries gets dramatically deepened year by year. President Obama repeatedly talks about how the Asian economy is important for the US. The first economic goal the US wants to achieve through the EAS is direct benefit from trade and investment with the rapidly growing Asian market; namely, monetary gain and job creation. In addition, the US has been trying to introduce open markets into the region, and the US wants to have more economic, mutually interdependent relationships with the EAS member countries for regional stability and peace.⁴³⁵

The liberal Democratic Peace theory argues that democracy works for stabilizing the region. The US has promoted democracy all over the world. That is not primarily for the people in each country, but for US interests—to create political systems favorable for the US. The US wants to change other countries' political systems to maintain peace in the region in accordance with the US preference. The US wants to ingrain democracy in the Asian countries more through the EAS for further regional stability and peace. It also can

⁴³⁵ Russett and ONeal, *Triangulating Peace*, 282.

not be forgotten that, not all, but many EAS member nations in Asia gradually have been shifting themselves into democratic countries. In 2007, the ASEAN Charter declared the ASEAN nations respect democracy. From the liberal democratic peace perspective, the current situation around democracy in the East Asian countries makes it easier for the US to have better cooperative relationships with these countries.

6.3 Criticism of realism and liberalism

From the interviews and literature reviews, facts which endorse these realist and liberalist analyses were found. However, constructivists would say that some aspects of the US decision for EAS participation are not fully explained by the two theories.

Despite realism's emphasis on military power and balance of power, the EAS does not strengthen the US military presence in Asia. At best, the political balance could be maintained. Many opinion leaders stated that the EAS can deal with traditional security issues at stake,⁴³⁶ but it is not by their military power, but by consultation. Then, the question to realists is: Why did the United States decide to join a forum that does not function for maintaining or strengthening its power? Realists for whom military power and

⁴³⁶ Ott and Wise, Interview.

balance of power are keys to security would be dubious about the EAS.⁴³⁷ In addition, the power balance shift in the region due to China's rise was already apparent in 2005, but the US did not show any interest in joining the EAS then. How does realism explain it?

Liberalism does not explain why the US joined such a vague group either, while it prefers more institutionalized organizations.⁴³⁸ The EAS is based on ASEAN style of diplomacy, i.e. informal consensus-seeking regionalism and prohibition of entering internal affairs of each member country. The ASEAN Way rejects rigid rules and rapid institutionalization. For example, the EAS is not designed to seek concrete and solid solutions for disputes like the South China Sea issue. It aims neither at reaching a formal legal agreement, nor at creating a formal mechanism to regulate concerned states' actions. Rather, it is organized to bring about long-term peace by fostering a sense of mutual trust.⁴³⁹ Asian confidence-building mechanisms such as the EAS are, for liberalists, too vague or too insignificant to join. Better-organized regional institutions APEC and ARF have existed for a decade. They already had a history and the US had used these multilateral forums actively. Liberalists would not be able to explain why the US joined an

⁴³⁷ See, Ba, *(Re)Negotiating East and Southeast Asia*, 18.

⁴³⁸ Ba, *(Re)Negotiating East and Southeast Asia*, 15.

⁴³⁹ Katsumata, *Establishment*, 194.

organization of vague purpose like the EAS.

The absence of formal mechanisms of cooperation in ASEAN and ASEAN-related organizations like the EAS is problematic for realism and liberalism. From their views, the EAS does not function enough to the extent they expect. They call the EAS a weak, inconsequential “talk shop.” However, if the EAS is merely a talk shop without any meaning, why did the US join? Although some aspects of the US decision are explained from these traditional IR theories, constructivists would say some points are missing.

6.4 Constructivism

Constructivists would explain that the US shares some values with Asian countries. In addition, they would also claim that the value made the US identity and interest, which led to US participation in the EAS. Constructivists focus on the role of shared ideas and norms in shaping state identities and interests.⁴⁴⁰ They say these interests and identities determine state behavior. They say even if there is no material incentive, countries may pursue cooperation based on these interests and identities. Their shared knowledge decides whether states opt for cooperation or confrontation. They say with proper conditions, states

⁴⁴⁰ Wendt, “Constructing International Politics,” 71.

can generate shared identities and norms that work for creating stable peace.⁴⁴¹

Regarding the US decision to participate in the EAS, a constructivist would say that the US shares the ideational factors with other Asian countries, such as “security cooperation” or “multinational cooperation for security.” The ASEAN countries’ interests and policies which led them to initiate the regional organizations would be defined by a set of norms concerning security cooperation. This thinking process would emphasize efforts to achieve the security of the whole region through multilateral security cooperation, on the basis of the view that regional security is indivisible (common security).⁴⁴² Many US opinion leaders stated that the US does not expect the EAS to work for short-term security issues, but for broad regional stability as a long-term goal.⁴⁴³ The US now shares the idea that many security issues need to be discussed in the multilateral organizations including some traditional security issues such as the South China Sea dispute. As President Obama stated, the US feels multilateral organizations can advance the security and prosperity of this region.⁴⁴⁴ Some interviewees pointed out that even if the US had a Republican

⁴⁴¹ Adler and Barnett, eds, *Security Communities*, 10.

⁴⁴² Katsumata, *Establishment*, 183.

⁴⁴³ Jannuzi and Wise, Interview.

⁴⁴⁴ Obama, Remarks by President Barack Obama at Suntory Hall, November 14, 2009, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-barack-obama-suntory-hall>

administration after 2008, the US would have joined the EAS.⁴⁴⁵ The US, as a country, recognizes the advantages of security cooperation as a necessary framework for promoting long-term peace and stability, even if there is no concrete mechanism such as sanctions. Thomas E. Donilon, the national security adviser said, “The multilateral mechanisms are meaningful for the US goal in the region, to have a stable, peaceful, economically prosperous region, and that’s in the interest of everyone in the region...”⁴⁴⁶

The United States understands countries should seek stability as a region. And it also recognizes that regional organizations such as the EAS are useful for regional stability. To this extent, a constructivist would say the concept of common security and multilateral cooperation for security has become a shared norm between the US and East Asian countries. According to some scholars, one of the main reasons for the US participation is because the US did not want to miss out on the future East Asia Community. That US interest was built in social context where the current East Asian regional organizations have been rapidly developing. Having interacted with them from outside and inside, the US started to share the values and interests which made the United States participate in the

⁴⁴⁵ Green and Ott, Interview.

⁴⁴⁶ Tom Donilon from The White House, “Press Briefing by Press Secretary Jay Carney, National Security Advisor Tom Donilon, and Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communications Ben Rhodes,” Bali, Indonesia. November 19, 2011.

EAS. Some critiques might mention that bilateral relationships with the allies are by far the main tools for US security in the region; it is the same for the ASEAN countries.

Constructivists would also argue that the US shares a part of diplomatic norms associated with the ASEAN Way with other EAS Asian members. The US understands that dialogue and consultation through the regional organizations are meaningful tools for long-term stability and peace in the region. Having pressed the ASEAN to be a center of the EAS, ratified the TAC and accepted all ASEAN-centered criteria for the membership status, the US has started accepting the ASEAN Way. Even if the EAS is not aimed at bringing concrete legal solutions for international conflict, the US tried its best to use the EAS as a dialogue and consultation forum for the South China Sea issue at its first attendance. The US emphasizes the Southeast Asian countries' commitment to the habit of dialogue and consultation.⁴⁴⁷

Constructivists would also point out the Asia-Pacific characteristics of the Obama administration as a shared identity. The Obama administration stressed its Asia-Pacific characteristics. Although it is intentionally stressed as a US strategy, it is also because President Obama was born in Hawaii and brought up in Indonesia. Robert Sutter said, "He

⁴⁴⁷ Katsumata, *Establishment*, 188.

is a wonderful symbol. He represents Asia.”⁴⁴⁸ The Obama Administration declared the US as a Pacific country and emphasized the US shift “towards [becoming an] Asia-Pacific Nation.”⁴⁴⁹

Also from the ASEAN side, the identity change has also been seen. Despite the diverse situation in each country, ASEAN countries have changed themselves gradually into democratic societies with human rights awareness, which the US has been pressing them towards for years. Although the shift did not occur in every ASEAN country and the degree was not the same, these democratic and human rights values are starting to be shared between the US and several ASEAN countries. Strong connections through economic interdependence have also brought the feeling of partnership between the US and other EAS countries.

6.5 Conclusion

I would like to conclude with an eclectic combination of theories. The eclectic combination is an effort to complement, engage and selectively utilize diverse theoretical

⁴⁴⁸ Sutter, Interview.

⁴⁴⁹ Obama, Remarks by President Barack Obama at Suntory Hall, November 14, 2009, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-barack-obama-suntory-hall>

perspectives. Traditional theories insist on “a strong consensus on enduring and irreconcilable foundational issues” by ignoring some realities. Traditional theories simplify real world phenomena to generate a clear knowledge claim about particular aspects of reality, but they are not independently capable of generating a more comprehensive understanding of complex, multi-faceted problems. Eclecticism could solve the issues generated from excessive simplifications.⁴⁵⁰ Based on the traditional theories, the eclecticism tries to utilize outcomes from various traditional theories in order to understand the complicated realities more precisely.⁴⁵¹

I think the motivations of the US to participate in the EAS include the material incentives. The US joined it for maintaining a regional power balance and tactically engaging with China. The US policy makers have these realist and liberalist perspectives. From my interviews, it was found in a majority of opinions that the US joined the EAS to maintain its presence to prevent China from dominating the region. It does not matter whether they consider if US power is declining or not. Even if they think the US power is not declining, all admitted that the Chinese power in the region has been significantly growing and its influence in the region has started challenging US interests in the region.

⁴⁵⁰ Sil and Katzenstein, *Analytic Eclecticism*, 412-413.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 413.

Many interviewees do not believe US participation was for creating a de-facto alliance with ASEAN countries, but the US has been trying to engage with ASEAN countries more in order to prevent them from leaning toward China. Combined with the US financial difficulty and regional environmental change, it is natural to think that the United States changed its policy because the US uses the multilateral institutions for balancing power and for stabilizing the region. Realism explains these aspects well. But it is also true that the US participation in the EAS does not change the military power balance and does not bring any direct gain to the US, which a realist perspective substantially requires. Realism has to view economic benefits and political strength as a power to be balanced for which the United States decided to join the EAS. Economic power and political power are bases for military strength. Considering that the US tries to shift ASEAN countries politically from the Chinese side to the American side, and the US tries to enhance its own political influence in the region, realist explanations make sense for balancing power in the region.

The liberalist perspective also explains some aspects of the US decision well. The United States wants fora with leaders of rising Asian countries. For long-term regional stability, the US needs to cooperate with Asian countries. It is especially so with China. The US and the regional countries clearly have a shared interest in cooperation. No country in

the region wants to provoke militarized disputes that would damage further economic development. Regional countries as well as the US are too integrated to contain each other. Also, solving transnational issues such as non-proliferation of WMD, avian flu, energy security and disaster relief are shared interests in the region. The US has incentives for cooperation with the region's countries. Above all, introducing US values would change the Asian countries' attitudes favorable to the US. The US interest was to embed China in the web of rule of law for regional stability and also for maintaining its hegemony in the region. The US intention became clear at the 6th EAS, which the US joined for the first time. Having known that almost all EAS member countries' positions are the same on the South China Sea issue except China, the US wanted to establish the culture in the EAS that every country has to abide by the rules and principles. The US wants the EAS be a forum which could change the Chinese preference and policy in the region. The US also wanted to introduce and enhance democracy and economic openness in the region. Although the primary US economic purpose through these Asian regional organizations is gaining direct economic benefit from trade with Asian markets, there is a significant impact that once these countries accept and implement these concepts, they tend to become more favorable to the US. The US understands these goals will not be achieved in a short time period, but

the US is seeking long-term regional stability through the EAS.⁴⁵²

I also think the US started to share the idea of “security cooperation” or “multinational cooperation for security” with Asian countries. Security cooperation in the constructivist sense does not mean military allies or blocks for deterrence and containment, but regional cooperation for fostering long-term peace. Constructivists argue that mutual identification, transnational values, inter-subjective understandings, and shared identities could mitigate and even eliminate violent conflict.⁴⁵³ Through these factors, a constructivist proposes that countries could even create “security community,” a real assurance that the members of that community do not fight each other physically, but settle their disputes in some other way.⁴⁵⁴

Many US opinion leaders understand the EAS does not provide a direct or concrete solution for traditional security issues. They think it takes a long time for the EAS to start having a positive impact for cultivating regional peace. Even under such a vague situation, the US appreciates such a dialogue forum and wanted to join the relaxed institution seeking the soft influence for the regional stability which might be created by the EAS. The US has

⁴⁵² Jannuzi and Wise, Interview.

⁴⁵³ Puchala, “Integration Theory and the Study of International Relations,” 151. And Adler and Barnett, eds, *Security Communities*, 59.

⁴⁵⁴ Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia*, 18., Deutsch, *Political community in the North Atlantic Area*, 5. See, Adler and Barnett, *Security Communities*, 29-65.

interest in common security from a long-term perspective. This interest is shared with other EAS members. I think this US interest has been created through social interaction with other countries in the regional society. The Asian countries have developed these organizations and many important issues for the US have been discussed there. The US shared interest has been made from the interaction with the Asian countries inside and outside of the existing regional organizations.

I think the US decided to participate in the EAS also because the US shares some of the ASEAN Way; consultation and dialogue, which contributes to building trust and confidence in the region. Although the step is slow and the United States wants to change the process, the US unintentionally accepted such a slow and vague process, dialogue and consultation by joining the EAS and other regional organizations. Opinion leaders said in my interview that dialogue itself is valuable.⁴⁵⁵

However, it is a question if the US and other EAS nations are really in the same region in terms of the “common” security concept. It is also a question of how much the US shares the ASEAN way with the other East Asian countries. The US wanted to change the

⁴⁵⁵ Jannuzi, Interview.

EAS into an Asia-Pacific institution from an Asia-only organization by its participation. It is doubtful that there is a clear Asia-Pacific community concept, identity or norms shared by the US and other EAS members. Although the concept of “region” has been seen expanding from ASEAN to East Asia since the 1990s, the US does not seem to share the identity and interest with Asian countries more than minimum level which was described above.

The concept of “East Asia” has been discussed intensively. ASEAN countries try to unite as one entity to strengthen their presence in the international community. They share the norm, “the ASEAN countries need a regional unity, one Southeast Asia.”⁴⁵⁶ Since the 1990s, especially after the financial crisis in 1997, the trend of Asian regionalism has spread into the wider East Asia including China, Korea and Japan.⁴⁵⁷ While the formal settings under the APEC and Western criticisms against human rights and other issues have frustrated the ASEAN countries, the financial crisis in the late 1990s created the feeling in the region that East Asia needs to work together on many issues. The ASEAN plus three structure was established and its members started having many Minister level meetings and other functions, such as the Chiang Mai Initiative. Supported by confidence in its economic

⁴⁵⁶ Ba, *(Re)Negotiating East and Southeast Asia*, 17-41.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 233.

growth, the East Asian regionalist narrative has grown.⁴⁵⁸ The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), the leaders meeting with European and Asian countries, also contributed to create the concept of East Asia.⁴⁵⁹ T. J. Pempel wrote, “as linkages deepen across East Asia, ever stronger pulls exist for defining certain problems, such as financial cooperation, trade, investment, or the Korean nuclear threat, in ways that are distinctly ‘East Asian.’”⁴⁶⁰ He pointed out that strong connections through government and corporations such as production networks and investment flow as well as people generates “East Asia.”⁴⁶¹ He argues that the APT countries provide the core of “East Asia.”⁴⁶² Although the ASEAN Way and the East Asian Way are different, due to many reasons including the China-Japan rivalry, many concepts from ASEAN Way have been introduced into the greater East Asian region, and ASEAN is located in the center of the forum. However, the outer boundary of “East Asia” is still controversial and it shifts from issue to issue.⁴⁶³ It does not depend on common agreement among Asians on any underlying values or norms, but on each country’s effort to maintain national choices.⁴⁶⁴ While the concept of “East Asia” is still

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid., 198-199.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid., 200.

⁴⁶⁰ Pempel, “Conclusion: Tentativeness and Tensions in the Construction of an Asian Region,” 273.

⁴⁶¹ Pempel, “Introduction: Emerging Webs of Regional Connectedness,” 1-28.

⁴⁶² Ibid., 25.

⁴⁶³ Pempel 271.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid.

vague, it is difficult to say that the United States and East Asian countries share the concept of the Asia-Pacific Way for cooperation.⁴⁶⁵ The US is described as lukewarm toward new regional arrangements. The US has denied many Asian regional organizations. As the East Asian regionalism trend was a reflection of questions about US power, even if the regionalism trend in Asia-Pacific has started, it is still at its very beginning.⁴⁶⁶ In addition, the US in practice seems to have not accepted much of the ASEAN Way. At the intervention in 2010, the US required that the EAS be effective and focused on delivering results with effective governance, efficient decision-making processes, differentiated roles and responsibilities and burden sharing. Although at the 6th summit in 2011, the US stressed “the shared interest of EAS member states in reaffirming international rules and norms in these areas; enhancing partner capacity to address existing and emerging challenges,”⁴⁶⁷ these concepts including rigid solutions based on international laws are not yet the shared values within ASEAN nations according to history.

ASEAN’s consensus-driven regionalism works because of members’ shared interpretations of their history of conflict. Without that context of meaning, informal

⁴⁶⁵ Ba, *(Re)Negotiating East and Southeast Asia*, 220.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 237.

⁴⁶⁷ The White House. “The White House Fact Sheet: East Asia Summit” November 19, 2011, <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/texttrans/2011/11/20111119151041su0.2769434.html#axzz1mnrEj23W>

regionalism may not work the same way with different members. The progress of the East Asian way has been influenced by the ASEAN way, but the Asian Pacific Way does not yet exist.⁴⁶⁸ Constructivists emphasize an institution's function as "norm builders" or "norm brewery."⁴⁶⁹ "Institutions are also social environments where actors negotiate their different identities, where they debate ideas, and where they arrive at 'collective interpretations of the external world' and how best to respond to it."⁴⁷⁰ Alice Ba said conceiving regionalism is a cumulative series of negotiations and exchanges.⁴⁷¹ Increasing interactions through regional institutions such as the EAS could create a new shared identity and norms of Asia-Pacific in the long-term. I hope this process, which is slow but now apparent, will create a shared Asia-Pacific identity and a shared Asia-Pacific Way that will eventually lead the region to become a "security community."

⁴⁶⁸ Ba, *(Re)Negotiating East and Southeast Asia*, 242.

⁴⁶⁹ Katsumata, *Establishment*, 181-198.

⁴⁷⁰ Ba, *(Re)Negotiating East and Southeast Asia*, 21.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 237.

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