

Peaceful Change in Southeast Asia: The Historical and Institutional Bases

Ralf Emmers and Mely Caballero-Anthony

Nanyang Technological University

Abstract

Southeast Asia was historically referred to as the Balkans of Asia during the 1960s and 70s. The region has however gone through significant transformations and seen peaceful change since the end of the Cold War despite ongoing great power interference, the rise of China as a military and economic power and a series of territorial disputes including the South China Sea issue. The chapter explores the historical and institutional bases that have contributed to the process of peaceful change in Southeast Asia. It argues that peaceful change has evolved and been maintained by the Southeast Asian states by adopting strategies that combine the Realist, Liberalist and Constructivist approaches. The chapter concludes by discussing the changing nature of security challenges and how the region has been responding to these threats.

Keywords: Peaceful change, Southeast Asia, ASEAN, Realism, Liberalism, Constructivism

Introduction

Southeast Asia has been regarded as one of the most peaceful regions in the world. Over the past 50 years of its post-colonial history, Southeast Asia has gone through significant periods of peaceful change, transforming its image from being the so-called “Balkans of the East” to becoming one of the “zones of peace” in the international arena (Ullman 1990). At its best, Southeast Asia has now become one of the fastest growing and competitive economic regions globally. More significantly, within the context of peaceful change, Southeast Asia through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), has been one of the first movers in building regional multilateral institutions in Asia that promote peace, cooperative security and economic prosperity.

The regional states of Southeast Asia have come a long way from dealing with their turbulent histories of nation-building and working toward regional reconciliation amidst inter-state conflicts to reaping the benefits of the peace dividend achieved over decades of managing intra-mural disputes. Against the dynamic changes in the global/regional security environment, how has Southeast Asia managed peaceful change? Further, amidst the slew of increasingly complex security challenges confronting the region today, how might ASEAN continue to keep and maintain sustainable peace? In addressing these questions, the chapter is structured as follows. Part one begins with a broad overview of the historical perspectives of how ASEAN and its member states have worked toward achieving peaceful change during periods of crises and uncertainties. The section then proceeds to provide theoretical insights that help explain how the region has managed peaceful change. It reviews how the discourse on peace and security in Southeast Asia have mostly been analyzed through Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism. Part two examines the changing nature of regional security challenges and how ASEAN has been responding to these threats. It analyzes some of the new modalities in attaining peaceful change and concludes by looking at the implications of

the evolving regional strategies in managing regional security and maintaining sustainable peace.

Historical Perspectives: From building a “zone of peace” to navigating great power competition

The history of peaceful change in Southeast Asia can be viewed from the consequential developments that took place at the regional and the international levels from the mid-1960s to the post-Cold War era. At the outset, a key observation about the region’s rich experience with peaceful change is the thoughtful calibration of approaches that ASEAN states have adopted in managing the dynamic confluence of endogenous and external factors that until today continue to define the security environment of Southeast Asia.

At the regional level, resolving regional inter-state conflicts notably between Malaysia and Indonesia and Malaysia and the Philippines was achieved with the establishment of ASEAN in 1967. Its member states had spent the first decade of peaceful transformation agreeing to end bilateral disputes and working toward regional reconciliation. As noted by scholars like Michael Leifer, the creation of ASEAN provided its member states with a regional mechanism to prevent and manage intra-mural conflicts (Leifer 1989). Through ASEAN, member states generated a set of regional norms and practices that defined the nature of inter-state relations initially within the grouping,¹ but was also extended to its neighboring states that were then, not members of ASEAN (Alagappa 1995; Acharya 2001; Caballero-Anthony 2006). ASEAN adopted the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation that encapsulated a set of regional norms to manage interstate relations and regional conflicts.² To enable ASEAN to also cope with the ideological divide of the Cold War strategic environment, ASEAN states also adopted the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) Declaration in 1971. ZOPFAN was essentially an iteration of the fundamental

ideals and aspirations of ASEAN, centred around the non-interference of external powers in the domestic and regional affairs of Southeast Asia (Hanggi 1991; Emmers 2018).

The inter-state peace that prevailed during the formative years of ASEAN was rudely interrupted with Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia in December 1978. Relations between Hanoi and the Khmer Rouge regime led by Pol Pot had worsened between 1975 and 1978 due to traditional feelings of animosity, border disputes and ideological competition. The Vietnamese invasion led to the collapse of the Khmer Rouge regime and revealed the full extent of its genocidal policies that is estimated to have killed between 1.5 and 2 million people. While putting an end to the Pol Pot regime, the Vietnamese invasion and later occupation of Cambodia were condemned internationally as a violation of Cambodian sovereignty. At that time, both states were not members of ASEAN. The Vietnamese intervention altered the strategic environment in mainland Southeast Asia and posed a diplomatic and security challenge to the ASEAN members. On the one hand, the occupation of Vietnam's forces in Cambodia violated ASEAN's sacrosanct norms of non-use of force and respect of state sovereignty. On the other hand, was the concern in ASEAN that the Cambodian conflict was another arena of major power competition between the Soviet Union and China given their respective support for Vietnam and Cambodia, and that the region would be drawn into the conflict and become once again a cockpit of major power rivalry.

While ASEAN had not reacted to the Pol Pot regime, its members actively worked to end the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia by adopting a two-pronged strategy. First was internationalizing the Cambodian conflict by sponsoring an annual resolution at the United Nations Security Council and the UN General Assembly to ask Vietnam to withdraw from Cambodia and end the conflict; and second was its "shuttle diplomacy" led by Indonesia bringing warring Cambodian factions together with Vietnam with the hope of reaching a comprehensive political settlement of the conflict. Notable events that took place during this

period of diplomatic engagement were the holding of the Jakarta Informal Meetings (JIM) 1 and 2 which took place between 1988-1989.

Despite the active role of ASEAN in finding a durable solution to the conflict, the resolution of the Cambodian Conflict (1978-1991) eventually came with the end of the Cold War that resulted in the transformations of power distribution at the international level. The coming to power of Mikhail Gorbachev led on to Soviet attempts to reach détente and the ending of the rivalries with the United States (US) and China. The restoration of diplomatic ties with Beijing was dependent, among other issues, on the cessation of Soviet support for Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia. No longer able to rely on external assistance, Vietnam withdrew its troops from Cambodia in September 1989. The peace settlement of the conflict was signed on October 23, 1991 at the International Conference on Cambodia held in Paris. The 1991 Paris Peace Accords formalized Vietnam's withdrawal from Cambodia, marking the end of a major interstate war in Southeast Asia and ushered in a long period of peaceful transition in interstate relations in the region. In 1995, Vietnam became a member of ASEAN, followed by Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia in 1997-1998.

Indonesia's invasion and annexation of East Timor in December 1975 was another case of interstate conflict in Southeast Asia during the Cold War (Leifer 1983; Dunn 1996). Jakarta intervened militarily due to the fear of an independent East Timor under the control of the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (Fretilin) and communist influence in the Territory. Most Western states, including the US and Australia, tacitly accepted the Indonesian action which was regarded to have eliminated a possible threat of communist intervention. Indonesia's annexation of East Timor was a denial of self-determination and a violation of international law. East Timor was formally incorporated in July 1976 as the twenty-seventh province of the Republic of Indonesia. The annexation had negative international repercussions for Indonesia, especially within the United Nations (UN). Endless

resistance in East Timor to Indonesia's occupation would also lead over the next 24 years to a constant policy of repression and severe violations of human rights. Indonesia only renounced its sovereignty over East Timor in 1999 after Indonesian President B.J. Habibie announced unexpectedly in January that year the holding of a referendum in East Timor on the future of the Territory. The UN organized a referendum in East Timor in August 1999 that led to an overwhelming vote in favor of independence. Following these results, anti-independence militias, orchestrated by the Indonesian military, perpetrated killings and massive destructions throughout East Timor. These dramatic events led to the formation of a humanitarian intervention, the International Force for East Timor (INTERFET) followed by the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) that managed the Territory until it gained its independence in May 2002.

Since the resolution of the Cambodian and Timor conflicts, there has been no major outbreaks of interstate war within the region aside from the border disputes between Cambodia and Thailand that turned violent in 2008 and 2011 (ALCED 2019). Even so, fighting was quickly contained each time clashes occurred. Occasionally, border tensions have contributed to strained bilateral ties between Southeast Asian states but they have not led to another open interstate conflict in the region.

Managing power vacuum

While the end of the Cold War provided the conducive environment in maintaining regional peace and stability, the Southeast Asian states nonetheless had to manage the impact of the structural changes that unfolded in the international strategic environment. Although the cessation of Soviet-US and Sino-Soviet rivalries contributed to a sense of relief and optimism, there was the sense of strategic uncertainty in Southeast Asia (Acharya 1993; Alagappa 1998). The disintegration of the Soviet Union in December 1991 dramatically

limited Russia's regional role and influence (Dibb 1995). The reduction in regional influence was less significant in the case of the United States but budgetary constraints still led to a significant reduction of US forces in the Asia-Pacific. In addition, the Philippine Senate denied a new base treaty with the United States in September 1991 leading to a complete American withdrawal by November 1992. Most ASEAN members still wanted the United States to remain militarily engaged in the region to promote peace and stability and contain China's rising power. China became the prime beneficiary of the changing strategic context (Vatikiotis 2003, 66). Some Southeast Asian states, Singapore being the prime example, feared that a US military disengagement in East Asia might encourage China or even Japan to fill "the power vacuum" left by retreating external powers (Buszynski 1996, 121). In the new strategic context, the problem of the overlapping claims in the South China Sea became a security issue that complicated relations between China and the Southeast Asian claimant states.³

The salient developments that occurred during the end of the Cold War period prompted ASEAN to re-think its security approaches and marked its significant turn to multilateralism. Post-1990, the region saw a remarkable increase in regional multilateralism efforts which extended beyond security cooperation. A renewed level of uncertainty led to the search for new security arrangements broader in scope and able to address a series of emerging challenges. For example, the ASEAN states took the diplomatic initiative and established the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1994 to expand to the wider Asia-Pacific region its own model of cooperative security, which focuses on confidence building, an informal process of dialogue, and a mode of conflict avoidance. The creation of the Forum was regarded by ASEAN as a diplomatic instrument to promote a continuing US involvement in the region, thus avoiding the need for an independent Japanese security role, and to encourage China in habits of good international behavior (Leifer 1996, 19). By concentrating

on security cooperation, the ARF was expected to complement the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, which had been created in Canberra in November 1989. Other ASEAN-led multilateral frameworks were further established: the ASEAN Plus Three (1999) that brought together the 10 ASEAN states with China, Japan and South Korea, and the East Asia Summit (2005) that comprises the 10 ASEAN states and its 8 dialogue partners namely, China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, India, the United States and Russia. The rise in regional multilateral institutions was not limited to the politico-security realm but also included economic and socio-cultural cooperation. These flurry of efforts resulted in the development of a dense web of ASEAN-led regional frameworks which now largely make up the regional security architecture.

Dealing with transnational security challenges

The post-Cold War period presented a new set of security challenges to Southeast Asia that had important bearing not only on interstate relations, but more significantly also on the nature of its domestic politics (Emmers 2008, 181-213). Among these were the 1997 Asian financial crises, the threat of terrorism post-9/11, the SARS health crisis in 2003 and more recently the growing number of catastrophic natural disasters brought on by climate change that come with its own set of challenges including massive population displacement, refugees and economic uncertainties.

The kinds of challenges that emerged in post-Cold War Southeast Asia were particularly noteworthy in that these threats did not stem from major power competition nor inter-state conflict. Instead, these threats are non-military in nature but their consequences threaten the survival and security of states and communities. They could emanate from human-induced disturbances to the environment, or as consequences of globalization's closer integration of economies and easier movement of people. Most distinctly, these have

transnational impact that defy unilateral actions/responses from states. These threats are now labeled as non-traditional security (NTS) threats and have since become part of the security agenda of states in the region and beyond (Caballero-Anthony et al. 2006; Caballero-Anthony 2016). The impact of these kinds of issues are described briefly below.

The Asian financial crisis that started in July 1997 did not threaten interstate peace in Southeast Asia but instead transformed domestic political systems in various regional states. Beyond its direct economic consequences, the crisis swiftly escalated into a political and security crisis which resulted in violent demonstrations and bloodshed in several cities in Indonesia. The spiralling crisis triggered demands for *Reformasi* and eventually led to the downfall of Indonesia's longest serving President Suharto in May 1998 (Anwar 2010). One of the severe consequences of the financial crisis was the massive job displacement that affected Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia who had to be sent back, resulting in bilateral tensions between the two states. In short, while not triggering cases of full-blown interstate conflict, the financial crisis triggered bilateral tensions, threatened ASEAN's unity and destabilized the peace and security of the region. To be sure, the financial crisis was a rude reminder to ASEAN states about what regional security entailed, underscoring the fact that the region's conception of comprehensive security had always regarded economic security as an integral component of national security (Alagappa 1986; Anwar 1994; Caballero-Anthony 2005).

The terror attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001 and the Bali bombings on October 12, 2002 were another shock that affected Southeast Asia's security relations but did not trigger new cases of interstate conflict. Instead, the attacks increased the fear of transnational terrorism in Southeast Asia, which was often associated with religious extremist groups, and overshadowed other sources of regional instability. The responses of the individual Southeast Asian countries to the terrorist threat varied according to their own

threat assessments, domestic political concerns and sensitivities. With regard to existing institutions, the aftermath of 9/11 saw a strategic re-engagement of the United States with its traditional allies and security partners in the region, as indicated by closer military ties with the Philippines and Thailand as well as Singapore. Thailand is one example where the terror attacks led to a watershed package of mutual cooperation with its formal ally. Thailand signed on to the Container Security Initiative (CSI) in June 2003 and was considered by the US Congress as a major non-NATO ally in October 2003 (Pongsudhirak 2016). At the multilateral level, ASEAN quickly adopted the ASEAN Declaration on Joint Action to Counter Terrorism, which aimed at enhancing intelligence sharing and developing regional capacity-building programs (Pushpanathan 2003).

Steering power rivalry

After nearly three decades of interstate peace in Southeast Asia, the escalating tension between the United States and China has once again caused rising concern in the region and narrowed room for diplomatic initiatives. The United States has become increasingly concerned about China's growing military capabilities, while Beijing has been critical of the US alliance system in the region. Great power competition is not, per se, a negative development for Southeast Asia, as it can provide the ASEAN states with room for maneuver and flexibility. For example, most Southeast Asian countries have traditionally relied on a hedging strategy by leveraging on Sino-US competition (Kausikan 2017). An engaged United States in Southeast Asia has been observed through deepening economic interdependence, a strong US military presence and its participation in ASEAN summits, while China's rising trading figures, its willingness to engage its neighbors and to participate in regional cooperative bodies have integrated China into the Southeast Asian community. Still, while

relations between the great powers have become more competitive, ASEAN has also found it harder to restrict their involvement and interference in Southeast Asian affairs.

This is perhaps most challenging in the context of the South China Sea dispute where China, Taiwan and five Southeast Asian states (Brunei, Malaysia, Philippines and Vietnam) have overlapping claims to the territorial waters and maritime boundaries. The South China Sea dispute is at the center of competing territorial, economic and strategic interests. The claimants expect that their control of disputed features may give them exclusive jurisdictional rights over the surrounding waters and seabed as well as over their living and non-living resources. Furthermore, the South China Sea dispute has a strategic dimension as control of the maritime communication routes that cross the disputed waters could endanger the interests of the United States, Japan and other user states. ASEAN, as a body, has sought to preserve its neutrality on the sovereignty dispute and to negotiate with China a binding Code of Conduct (CoC) for the South China Sea. Yet the negotiation of a CoC for the South China Sea with Beijing has, in part, been complicated by increasing Sino-US competition (Fravel 2011; Storey 2013; Valencia 2012). Furthermore, the Southeast Asian states have themselves been split over the South China Sea issue due to China's deepening economic and diplomatic ties with some individual member states, which have become more inclined to endorse Beijing's preferences.

In sum, efforts in dealing with intra-ASEAN disputes and major power competition and in addressing the wider regional security challenges brought on by the post-Cold War structural changes generated a set of regional strategies and multilateral cooperative frameworks established by ASEAN. One finds that the range and the mix of formal and informal frameworks developed by ASEAN were all geared not only to manage regional conflicts but also to facilitate peaceful change in a rapidly evolving security environment.

Theoretical Perspectives

The different schools of thought highlight various factors to explain the absence of interstate conflict in Southeast Asia since the end of the Cold War period. Most of the discourses on peace and security in the region since the 1990s have often been analyzed through the prism of the three major schools of thought in International Relations namely, Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism.

Realists focus on the great powers and the reliance on alliances and defence arrangements to promote peace and stability. Governments are expected to enter military alliances and defense arrangements so as to enhance their power positions and to react to rising hegemonies in the international system. Realists therefore view the San Francisco System that links the United States to its regional allies in the Asia-Pacific as the main source of stability in the wider region. Thailand and the Philippines have been the two traditional allies of the United States in Southeast Asia since the 1950s. Both countries signed the Manila Pact, a collective defence treaty, in 1954 and they have historically been dependent on their links with Washington to ensure their security in light of the threat of the Vietnam War during the Cold War period and a rising China since the early 1990s (Prasirtsuk 2017). That said, Thailand and the Philippines have recalibrated their relations with the great powers in recent years, moving relatively away from the United States and closer to China (Emmers 2019).

In addition, while not a formal ally of the United States, Singapore has considered continued US strategic involvement in Southeast Asia as essential to its security. The United States has been perceived as a benign hegemon and as an external balancer capable of preserving a stable distribution of power in Southeast Asia and the wider Asian region. The main function of the US security ties with Singapore has been to enhance the city-state's external defence in a changing regional security environment (Emmers 2015). To a lesser

degree, most Southeast Asian states have maintained some form of military ties with the United States and preferred for the United States to remain committed to regional peace and stability. The nexus between bilateral and multilateral ties should also be noted. For example, US efforts to enhance relations with ASEAN as a regional institution have been to some extent influenced by its bilateral relations with Southeast Asian states (Limaye 2010).

Realists view the significance of regional institutions to be limited and ultimately restricted to basic instruments available to states to take part in the play of power politics. The realist interpretation of regional multilateralism therefore focuses on power politics and tends to minimize the importance of norms and principles and the possible long-term convergence of interests. Cooperative arrangements between states are expected to survive only for as long as the great powers consider them to be in their interest (Mearsheimer 1995). Hence, realists who have studied Southeast Asian affairs view the role of ASEAN as a reflection of its members' calculations of their respective national interests and they remain therefore sceptical about ASEAN's role in formulating and sustaining peace in the region (Beeson 2009; Leifer 1999).⁴

Realists now observe a return of Cold War geopolitics in Asia driven by the rise of China and its ability to challenge American preponderance in the region. For realists, it seems inevitable that Chinese leaders will abandon Deng Xiao Ping's guiding principles to "bide time and shun international leadership" and seek a hegemonic position in Asia. The realists therefore predict that China will attempt to assert coercive influence on its Southeast Asian neighbors.

Furthermore, military and economic competition have mostly been separate policy areas in Southeast Asia since the end of the Cold War. Yet there is a growing concern in Southeast Asia that the Donald Trump-Xi Jinping era has given rise to a new paradigm where geopolitics and geo-economics can no longer be separated from each other. China is now an

established economic power, expanding its influence at the regional level. Since President Xi Jinping took office in 2012, China has presented Southeast Asia with a series of initiatives for multilateral cooperation such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). For example, Tow contends that “peace” will not be achieved in Southeast Asia, as China is challenging America’s economic presence in the region and replacing the US-led architecture with its BRI (Tow 2016; CNA 2019). Meanwhile, President Donald Trump’s administration has not only started a “trade war” with China, but also accused some of its Southeast Asian partners of unfair trade practices. With the rising uncertainties in the strategic landscape today, realists highlight the relevance of managing major power competition in Southeast Asia and its impact on peace and stability in the region.

While recognizing the realist emphasis on competition for material power and state interests, Liberalism offers a more positive view on how material factors that define interstate relations can be managed. Following the Kantian’s theory of peace, Liberalism is founded on three pillars that allow for a more optimistic view of international relations. First is the importance of international trade which generates economic interdependence among states and makes conflicts or wars costly. Second is the presence of liberal democratic political systems that minimize the incidence of conflicts given that democracies are much less likely to go to war against each other. And third is the development of international institutions and rules that constitute regulatory regimes that manage interstate disputes and allow for the peaceful settlement of conflicts (Rosecrance 1986; Keohane and Martin 1995; Russett and Oneal 2001).

Realists reject the democratic peace argument. They argue that the absence of war can best be explained through the forces of deterrence and balance of power politics rather than by liberal forces associated with democratic peace theory such as democracy,

interdependence and international institutions. Moreover, while realists acknowledge that some degree of peace may characterize relationships among mature democracies, they argue that the process of transition from authoritarian rule to democracy, known as democratization, engenders instability and disorder (Mansfield and Snyder 1995).

When applying Liberalism to Southeast Asia, the argument that liberal democracies never go to war or seldom fight has lent little credence given that even in the post-Cold War era, most of the governments in ASEAN are not liberal democracies. Yet, despite this, the incidence of interstate conflicts has been minimal. One could also argue that ASEAN's successful record in preventing conflicts since its inception in 1967 and the development of regional norms and structures to prevent conflict evolved despite the paucity of liberal democratic regimes in the region (Caballero-Anthony 2010).

However, compared with the realist perspective, the liberal emphasis on the importance of international institutions may offer a better approach to understanding peaceful change in Southeast Asia as it helps explain the politics of cooperation especially in the area of international trade. Analysts who study Southeast Asian regionalism note for example the benefits of increased economic cooperation through the development of the ASEAN Free Trade Arrangement (AFTA) and a push toward the creation of an ASEAN Economic Community (Nesadurai 2003; Chia and Plummer 2015). Yet the central liberal argument that economic incentives bring about deeper economic integration which eventually spills over to closer political cooperation seems rather unconvincing in the context of Southeast Asia. Indeed, Liberalism provide limited insights in explaining the slow implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community and its low level of institutionalization overall (Basu-Das et al. 2013). In spite of their official commitment to lowering trade and investment barriers, the ASEAN countries continue to impose high levels of non-tariff barriers and the regional body is still far from achieving its goals of establishing a single market and a common production

base. Moreover, the spill-over argument of economic interdependence leading to regulatory regimes, norms and institutions for peaceful change has not yet materialized in the ASEAN context. Instead, ASEAN's progress in developing strong structures for conflict management and peacebuilding continues to be hampered by its strong adherence to the principle of non-interference and the lack of enforceable mechanisms to enforce the implementation and compliance of regional commitments (Sukma 2014; Stubbs 2000).

In contrast to Realism and Liberalism and their primary focus on material factors, Constructivists argue that the distribution of power and other material factors like trade and investment figures have only had a minimal impact on Southeast Asian states and their ability to maintain peace and stability in the region (Wendt 1992; Hopf 1998).⁵ Instead, they credit the attainment of peace in Southeast Asia to rising state legitimacy, economic development and state capacity combined with the declining utility of war as an instrument of state policy (Alagappa 2014; Acharya 2019).

For constructivists, the absence of sustained interstate conflict is generally credited to ASEAN and its exercise of conflict avoidance. ASEAN is viewed as a successful instrument to avoid the recurrence of conflict and improve the climate of inter-state relations in Southeast Asia. Constructivists highlight ASEAN's reliance on dialogue and consultation, the practice of consensus and self-restraint, the peaceful resolution of disputes, as well as on the principles of national sovereignty and non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states to prevent inter-state disputes from escalating into open conflict. Although mistrust still exists between the ASEAN states, a significant number of meetings are held annually, with agendas ranging from economic to environmental issues in the region (ASEAN Secretariat 2018). Such a regular pattern of interaction brings greater stability and the removal of potential misperceptions that could otherwise generate conflicts. Constructivists have also discussed ASEAN's attempt at finding regional solutions to regional problems. Based on the so-called

“ASEAN way,” members have managed to build at least an informal agreement on the status quo, despite sources of bilateral tensions plaguing the region. For example, the peaceful settlement of the Malaysia-Indonesia territorial dispute over Sipadan and Ligitan in 2002 constitutes a success.

An ongoing debate among Constructivist scholars is whether ASEAN constitutes an example of a security community. For example, Acharya has noted repeatedly that ASEAN’s approach to community-building is markedly different from the path described by Karl Deutsch in *Political Community at the International Level* (1953). In the case of ASEAN, Acharya argues that “regional cooperation was undertaken in the absence of high levels of functional interdependence or interaction” and that the regional institution had evolved as “a sort of an ‘imagined community,’ despite low initial levels of interactions and transactions, and the existence of substantial political and situational differences among its members” (Acharya 2001). The idea of community is said therefore to have preceded rather than resulted from a process of interdependence. Others have disagreed with his overall assessment, however (Peou 2009).⁶ The academic debate over whether ASEAN is a constructivist security community continues although a consensus has emerged that it is not a security community in a Deutschian sense of the term (Adler and Barnett 1998; Bellamy 2004).⁷ Ba contends that there are different kinds of security communities, ranging from “looser” to “tighter” variations, and that they possess varying purposes and capacities (Ba 2005).

Overall, constructivists have provided insights in understanding the evolving peaceful order in Southeast Asia since the end of the Cold War period by focusing on how states have construed the issue of anarchy through regionalism and cooperation. Constructivism has helped explain the evolution of ASEAN since its establishment in 1967 by identifying and paying close attention to the role of norms such as non-interference in the affairs of other

states and collective identities of modern statehood (Acharya 2001). Constructivists have emphasized the positive aspects of the “ASEAN Way” and placed emphasis on its normative constraints on Southeast Asian states (Caballero-Anthony 2005; Glas 2017). Regional relations are regulated by the routine of cooperation and a policy of accommodation, engagement and consensus decision-making (Haacke 2003). In short, Tan See Seng notes that despite the disparity in geographical size, economic power and influence that have existed between ASEAN members, the ASEAN model of cooperation has worked till now to promote peace and stability in Southeast Asia (Tan 2011).

Nevertheless, shortcomings and limitations need to be highlighted as well. The constructivist literature on Southeast Asia is often criticized for underestimating the problem of anarchy and the importance of relative gains and the distribution of power when discussing ASEAN and the shared sense of belonging to a community. Insufficient attention is given to the role of the great powers and the risk of war in Southeast Asia, for example over the territorial disputes in the South China Sea. Constructivists provide limited insights into how to manage great power relations in the region and addressing the risk of power transition conflicts driven by the rise of China and its competing relations with the United States. Likewise, constructivists are said to pay insufficient attention to ongoing sources of mistrust and conflict that continue to linger between the ASEAN members and which may still lead to conflict, as well as the changing nature of politics in the region brought on by political transitions in the Southeast Asian states. Related to this point, Constructivists are often criticized for over-estimating the notion of regional identity in Southeast Asia while exploring ASEAN at the expense of enduring national identities and the notion of nationalism. The latter framed in opposition to other states can severely undermine the creation of a security community despite repeated attempts at inter-state cooperation. As a result, constructivist analysis may too often adopt a “glass half full” approach and fail to

demonstrate how much “the sense of community” has indeed been developed in Southeast Asia (Garofano 2002).

Dealing with Change

Two key observations can be made when further analyzing the history of peaceful change in Southeast Asia and the theoretical perspectives that explain regional approaches and practices. First, peaceful change has both been revolutionary and incremental. What was revolutionary was the decision by conflicting regional states in Southeast Asia to end bilateral disputes, establish ASEAN in 1967 as a mechanism for regional reconciliation and build from it a set of regional norms that would define interstate relations. Since then and despite intermittent episodes of bilateral tensions over 50 years, it is now almost unthinkable for Southeast Asian states to go to war. Yet peaceful change has also been incremental as, in spite of ASEAN’s goal since 2003 of building an ASEAN Political and Security Community, the big C project is still very much a work in progress and beset by a number of challenges including the changing nature of domestic politics in member states.

Second, peaceful change has evolved and been maintained by the Southeast Asian states by adopting strategies that combine the Realist, Liberalist and Constructivist approaches to international relations and security. Arguably, the regional states have thoughtfully adopted an eclectic approach in maintaining regional order and engendering peaceful change. As pointed by security analysts like Alagappa, it has not been easy to pin down which of the two strategies is preferred by the Southeast Asian states since both balancing and engagement behavior can and have co-existed. Hence, approaches to peaceful change in Southeast Asia can be depicted as somewhere between balance of power and regional community building with the relevant institutional and normative attributes.⁸ With regard to the former, it is important to note that most of the Southeast Asian states are not

members of the US-led military alliances, yet most, if not all the ASEAN states participate in US-led military training exercises related to counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), and maritime security (Caballero-Anthony 2018). Aside from stepping up efforts to advance its vision of an ASEAN Economic Community, the regional body is also increasing its trade relations with its dialogue partners in East Asia. This includes joining the China-led Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) that promises greater economic opportunities through deeper connectivity in trade, investments, infrastructure and people-to-people exchanges.

Furthermore, with the increasing number of trans-border NTS threats facing the region, as well as the emergence of new drivers of conflict like digital technology and artificial intelligence, it is not surprising that the policy choices of the Southeast Asian states in managing security are outside the theoretical paradigms often used by scholars in explaining state behavior. In this current environment, there are compelling reasons to expand our theoretical lenses and explore alternative and/or complementary ideas that explain peaceful change.

Within the context of ASEAN's ambitious goal in establishing a political and security community (APSC), one notes how the regional body has often used phrases like "inclusive, people-centred and resilient" community and where "people enjoy human rights, fundamental freedoms and social justice, live in a safe and secure environment with enhanced capacity to respond effectively to emerging challenges..."⁹ From this framing, one can argue that the current thinking on achieving peaceful change in Southeast Asia goes beyond the constructivist's notions of security community and regional identity that have largely been state-centric. Instead, it has become more expansive, and more comprehensive in approach. And while many states in Southeast Asia are non-democratic states (something almost *sine qua non* with Deutsch's security community), the idea of integrating inclusiveness, social

justice and resilience to regional security practices has gone beyond the realist's preoccupation with major power competition and anarchy and the constructivist's emphasis on identity and norms.

To be sure, ASEAN's strategies for peaceful change amidst new transnational challenges would necessarily be comprehensive and inclusive, requiring the participation not only of states but also of a range of non-state actors. Containing the spread of deadly pandemics like SARS and the Covid-19 virus, as well as other highly virulent diseases requires vigilance, timely reporting and rapid action. While regional and international cooperation is clearly important in generating coordinated approaches to stem the spread, equally critical is the involvement of civil society groups, expert groups and pharmaceutical companies working in tandem with state authorities to fight these infectious diseases and mitigate their impact. Similarly, while militaries in the region can work together in providing immediate assistance in disaster relief, and search-and-rescue operations in affected states, dealing with the aftermath of catastrophic disasters, like providing shelter to internally displaced populations and refugees, entails much more work and commitment from other sectors of societies as well as the assistance of the wider international community (Caballero-Anthony 2018; Cook and Yogendran 2019). This agenda is particularly critical to ASEAN since it is one of the most vulnerable regions in the world. Between 2004 and 2014, more than half of the total global disaster mortality was in Southeast Asia, that is, 354,000 of the 700,000 total death in disasters worldwide (Caballero-Anthony 2017). It is also estimated that about 191 million people have been displaced and rendered homeless (either temporarily or permanently) as a result of disasters, affecting a total of 193 million people. This meant that one in three to four people in the region had experienced different types of losses to property and life (ADB 2013).

Also imperative in ASEAN's strategies for peace change is the need to deal with domestic challenges of inclusiveness and social justice if member states that have had to deal with long-drawn internal conflicts were to keep the peace and find peaceful solutions to problems of separatism and religious/ethnic conflicts (Oishi 2016; Callahan 2003; Hsueh 2016). In spite of the peaceful inter-state environment in Southeast Asia, countries like Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia and Myanmar have been plagued with decades-long internal conflicts. In the Philippines, for example, some of the Muslim separatist groups have been reported to have links with terrorist groups like Al Qaeda and ISIS. Moreover, the Rohingya refugee crisis that unfolded in 2015 and 2017 after the military operations in Myanmar's Rakhine state illustrated how an internal conflict rooted in issues of discrimination, poverty and inequality fuel resentment that could rapidly escalate into a bigger issue that causes regional tensions and threatens regional security (Kramer 2010).

The consequences of these internal conflicts in Southeast Asia are constant reminders to regional states to adopt a comprehensive approach to security if peaceful change were to be achieved. The impact of internal conflicts also underscores the point that peaceful societies are integral to peaceful change (Fry and Kemp 2004). In this regard, the goal of peaceful change is as much about working toward the absence of violence (negative peace), as it is about achieving social justice (positive peace) (Galtung 1969).

Conclusion

Southeast Asia continues to be a region driven by external interference and geopolitical transformations which have in recent years intensified tensions, especially in the context of the South China Sea dispute. Military alliances and the changing distribution of power remain crucial features of security politics in Southeast Asia. Yet the goal of achieving peaceful change in Southeast Asia is no longer just about preventing the outbreak of inter-

state war and peacebuilding. While major power rivalry and hegemonic ambitions continue to be key security concerns in the region, so too are the threats from a wide range of non-traditional security challenges. In that sense, the Southeast Asian experience in working toward peaceful change is instructive, as it reflects multiple pathways to peace that include, but are not limited to, the approaches defined by the narrow confines of the traditional IR theories. For developing states in Southeast Asia, peaceful change must achieve sustainable peace. This thinking is illustrated by ASEAN's community-building approach that draws close linkages between peace, security and development to be achieved in tandem and not sequentially. Arguably, such an approach presents in itself a theory of peaceful change, reflecting a transformative framework that recognizes the foundations of sustainable peace: inclusive communities, economic progress, people-centred security, and social justice.¹⁰

While such an approach is more comprehensive and responsive to contemporary security threats, the goal of achieving sustainable peaceful change in Southeast Asia is fraught with challenges. Already ASEAN's record in dealing with the Rohingya crisis has been disappointing, particularly in its inability to persuade Myanmar to respond to protection issues and to craft a comprehensive political settlement to the problem. The lack of a decisive regional action to resolve this long drawn internal conflict will remain a major hindrance to sustainable peace in Southeast Asia. Moreover, the long-drawn internal conflicts in Thailand and Indonesia that need resolution, as well as the task of maintaining the fragile peace in the Philippines after the establishment of the autonomous Muslim region in the South continue to be formidable agendas for sustainable peace in the region.

In short, Southeast Asia's history of peaceful change reflects an interesting story of carefully crafted strategies of managing inter-state conflicts and navigating major power competition. Yet as regional states move toward fully realizing their goal of an ASEAN political and security community, peaceful transformations are no longer enough. Peace

attained must be sustainable if Southeast Asia is to continue to be a zone of peace, security and stability.

References

Acharya, Amitav. 1993. "A New Regional Order in South-East Asia: ASEAN in the Post-Cold War Era," *Adelphi Paper Series* 279.

Acharya, Amitav. 2001. *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia: ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Acharya, Amitav. 2019. "Doomed by Dialogue: Will ASEAN Survive Great Power Rivalry in Asia?" In *International relations and Asia's Southern Tier, ASEAN, Australia and India*, edited by Rozman, Gilbert and Liow Chinyong, 91-99. Singapore: ASAN-Palgrave Macmillan Book Series.

ADB. 2013. *Investing in Resilience: Ensuring a Disaster-Resistant Future*. Mandaluyong City, Philippines: Asian Development Bank,
<http://www.recoveryplatform.org/assets/publication/investing-in-resilience.pdf>.

Adler, Emanuel and Michael, Barnett. 1998, "A Framework for the Study of Security Communities." In *Security Communities*, 43-44. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Alagappa, Muthiah. 1986. *The National Security of Developing States: Lessons from Thailand*. Dover: Auburn house Publishing.

Alagappa, Muthiah. 1995. *Political Legitimacy in Southeast Asia*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Alagappa, Muthiah. 1998. *Asian Security Practice: Material and Ideational Influences*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Alagappa, Muthiah. 2014. "International Peace in Asia: Will it Endure?" *The ASAN Forum*. <http://www.theasanforum.org/international-peace-in-asia-will-it-endure/#1>.

ALCED. 2019. Asia Conflict Data. Southeast Asia Armed Clashes (Data until 05 October, 2019). <https://www.acleddata.com/data/>.

Anwar, Dewi. 1994. *Indonesia in ASEAN: Foreign Policy and Regionalism*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Anwar, Dewi. 2010. *The Impact of Domestic and Asian Regional Changes on Indonesian Foreign Policy*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Affairs.

ASEAN Secretariat. 2015. "ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together." The ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta. <https://www.asean.org/storage/2015/12/ASEAN-2025-Forging-Ahead-Together-final.pdf>

ASEAN Secretariat. 2016. "Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia Indonesia, 24 February 1976." The ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta. <https://asean.org/treaty-amity-cooperation-southeast-asia-indonesia-24-february-1976/>

ASEAN Secretariat. 2018. "ASEAN Notional Calendar for Official Meetings," The ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta. <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/AO06072018-2018-Notional-Calendar.pdf>.

Ba, Alice. 2005. "On Norms, Rule Breaking and Security Communities: a Constructivist response." *International Relations of the Asia Pacific* 5, no. 2: 255-266.

Basu Das, Sanchita, Menon Jayant, Shrestha, Omkar and Severino Rodolfo. 2013. *The ASEAN Economic Community: A work in progress*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Beeson, Mark. 2009. "ASEAN's Ways: Still fit for purpose?" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 22, no. 3: 333-343.

Bellamy, Alex. 2004. *Building Community from Confrontation: The Southeast Asian Experience in Security Communities and their Neighbors, Regional Fortresses or Global Integrators?* London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Buszynski, Leszek. 1996. "Post-Cold War Security in the ASEAN Region." In *Asia-Pacific Security: Less Uncertainty, New Opportunities?*, edited by Gary Klintworth, 120-131. New York: St Martin's Press.

Caballero-Anthony, Mely. 2005. *Regional Security in Southeast Asia: Beyond the ASEAN Way*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Caballero-Anthony, Mely. 2010. *Political Change, Democratic Transitions and Security in Southeast Asia*. London and New York: Routledge.

Caballero-Anthony, Mely. 2016. *An Introduction to Non-Traditional Security Studies: A Transnational Approach*. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Caballero-Anthony, Mely. 2017. "From Comprehensive Security to Regional Resilience: Coping with Nontraditional Security Challenges". In *Building ASEAN Community: Political-Security and Socio-cultural Reflections*, edited by Aileen Baviera and Larry Maramis, 123-125. Jakarta: Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia.

Caballero-Anthony, Mely. 2018. *Negotiating Governance on Non-Traditional Security in Southeast Asia and Beyond*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Caballero-Anthony, Mely, Emmers, Ralf and Acharya, Amitav. 2006. *Non-Traditional Security in Asia: Dilemmas in Securitization*. United States: Ashgate Publishing Ltd.

Callahan, Mary. 2003. *War and State Building in Burma*. New York: Cornell University Press.

Chia, Siow Yue and Plummer, Michael. 2015. *ASEAN Economic Cooperation and Integration: Progress, Challenges and Future Directions*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Cook, Alistar and Sangeeta, Yogendran. 2019. "Conceptualising humanitarian civil-military partnerships in the Asia-Pacific: (Re-)ordering cooperation", *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 74, no. 1: 35-53.

CNA. 2019. Chinese President Xi Jinping says "no clash" of civilisations amid US Trade War, *Channel News Asia*, 15 May. <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asia/china-xi-jinping-speech-us-trade-war-11535130>.

Dibb, Paul. 1995. "Towards a New Balance of Power in Asia," *Adelphi Paper Series* 295.

Deutsch, Karl W. 1953. *Political Community at the International Level: Problems of Definition and Measurement*, Foreign Policy Analysis Series No. 2. Princeton University: Organizational Behavior section, Foreign Policy Analysis Project.

Dunn, James. 1996. *Timor: A People Betrayed*. Australia: ABC Books.

Emmers, Ralf. 2008. "Southeast Asia's New Security Institutions." In *Asia's New Institutional Architecture: Evolving Structures for Managing Trade, Financial, and Security Relations*, edited by Vinod K. Aggarwal and Min Gyo Koo, 181-213. Berlin: Springer.

Emmers, Ralf. 2015. "Security and Power Balancing: Singapore's Response to the US Rebalance to Asia." In *The New US Strategy Towards Asia: Adapting to the American Pivot*, edited by William T. Tow and Douglas Stuart, 143-153. London: Routledge.

Emmers, Ralf. 2018. "Unpacking ASEAN Neutrality: The Quest for Autonomy and Impartiality in Southeast Asia," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 40, no. 3: 349-370.

Emmers, Ralf. 2019. "Power Transition and Traditional Allies in Southeast Asia." In *America's Allies and the Decline of US Hegemony*, edited by Justin Massie and Jonathan Paquin, Chapter 6. London: Routledge.

Fravel, Taylor. 2011. "China's Strategy in the South China Sea," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 33, no. 3: 292-319.

Fry, Douglas and Graham, Kemp. 2004. *Keeping the Peace: Conflict Resolution and Peaceful Societies Around the World*. United Kingdom: Routledge.

Galtung, Johan. 1969. "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research." *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3: 167-191.

Garofano, John. 2002. "Power Institutions and the ASEAN Regional Forum: A Security Community for Asia?" *Asian Survey* 42, no. 3: 502-521.

Glas, Aarie. 2017. "Habits of peace: Long-term Regional Cooperation in Southeast Asia." *European Journal of International Relations* 23, no. 4: 833-856.

Haacke, Jurgen. 2003. "ASEAN's Diplomatic and Security culture: a Constructivist Assessment." *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 3, no. 1: 57-87.

Hanggi, Heiner. 1991. *ASEAN and the ZOPFAN concept*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Hopf, Ted. 1998. "The promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory." *International Security* 23, no. 1:171-200.

Hsueh, Chienwu. 2016. "ASEAN and Southeast Asian peace: nation building, economic performance, and ASEAN's security management." *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 16 no. 1: 27–66.

Kausikan, Bilahari. 2017. "Dodging and Hedging in Southeast Asia," *The American Interest* 12, no. 5. <https://www.the-american-interest.com/2017/01/12/dodging-and-hedging-in-southeast-asia/>.

Keohane, Robert and Martin, Lisa. 1995. "The Promise of Institutional Theory" *International Security* 20, no. 1 : 39-51.

Kramer, Tom. 2010. "Ethnic Conflict in Burma: The Challenge of Unity in a Divided Country." In *Burma or Myanmar? The Struggle for National Identity*, edited by Dittmer, Lowell, 51-81. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing.

Leifer, Michael. 1983. *Indonesia's Foreign Policy*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983.

Leifer, Michael. 1989. *ASEAN and the Security of South-East Asia*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Leifer, Michael. 1996. "The ASEAN Regional Forum: Extending ASEAN's Model of Regional Security," *Adelphi Paper Series 302*.

Leifer, Michael. 1999. "The ASEAN Peace Process: A Category Mistake," *The Pacific Review* 12, no. 1: 25-38.

Limaye, Satu. 2010. "Introduction: America's Bilateral Relations with Southeast Asia-Constraints and Promise." *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 32, no. 3: 309-316.

Mansfield, Edward and Snyder, Jack. 1995. "Democratization and the Danger of War", *International Security* 20, no.1 : 5-38.

Mearsheimer, John. 1995. "The False Promise of International Institutions." *International Security* 19 no. 3: 5-49.

Nesadurai, Helen. 2003. "Attempting Developmental Regionalism through AFTA : The domestic sources of Regional Governance", *Third World Quarterly* 24, no. 2: 235-253.

Oishi, Mikio. 2016. *Contemporary Conflicts in Southeast Asia: Towards a New ASEAN Way of Conflict Management*. Singapore: Springer.

Peou, Sorpong. 2009. "Security Community-Building in the Asia-Pacific." In *Security politics in the Asia-Pacific: A regional-global nexus*, edited by William T. Tow, 144-166. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pongsudhirak, Thitinan. 2016. "An Unaligned Alliance: Thailand-US Relations in the Early 21st Century." *Asian Politics and Politics* 8, no. 1: 63-74.

Prasirtsuk, Kitti. 2017. "An Ally at the Crossroads: Thailand in the US Alliance System in Global Allies." In *Comparing US Alliances in the 21st Century*, edited by Michael Wesley, 115-132. Australia: ANU Press.

Pushpanathan. S. 2003. ASEAN Efforts to Combat Terrorism, Second APEC Counter-Terrorism Task Force Meeting, Phuket, Thailand, ASEAN Secretariat, 20 August.
https://asean.org/?static_post=asean-efforts-to-combat-terrorism-by-spushpanathan.

Rosecrance, Richard. 1986. *The rise of the Trading State: Commerce and Conquest in the Modern World*. New York: Basic Books.

Russett, Bruce and Oneal, John. 2001. *Triangulating Peace: Democracy, Interdependence, and International organizations*. New York: W. W. Norton.

Singh, Bilveer. 1993. "The Challenge of the Security environment in Southeast Asia in the post-cold war era." *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 47, no. 2: 263-277.

Storey, Ian. 2013. "China Runs Rings Around ASEAN," *The Wall Street Journal*, 02 October. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/china-runs-rings-around-asean-1380729414>.

Stubbs, Richard. 2000. "Signing On to Liberalization: AFTA and the Politics of Regional Economic Cooperation." *Pacific Review* 13, no. 2: 297–318.

Sukma, Rizal. 2014. "ASEAN Beyond 2015: The Imperatives for Further Institutional Changes." ERIA Working Paper no. PB-2014-05. Indonesia: Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA).

Tan, See Seng. 2008. "Do Institutions Matter? Regional Institutions and Regionalism in East Asia." *S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies Monograph* 13.

Tan, See Seng. 2011. "Is Asia-Pacific Regionalism Outgrowing ASEAN?" *The RUSI Journal* 156, no. 1: 58-62.

Tow, William. 2016. "Trends in Southeast Asia: Bipolarity and the Future of the Security Order in East Asia." *Institute of Southeast Asian Studies* 10: 1-33.

https://www.iseas.edu.sg/images/pdf/TRS10_16.pdf.

Ullman, Richard. 1990. "Enlarging the Zone of Peace." *Foreign Policy* 80, 102-120.

Valencia, Mark. 2012. "High-Stakes Drama: The South China Sea Disputes," *Global Asia* 7, no. 3: 56-73.

Vatikiotis, Michael. 2003. "Catching the Dragon's Tail and Southeast Asia in the 21st Century." *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 25, no. 1: 65-78.

Wendt, Alexander. 1992. "Anarchy is what states make of it: the Social Construction of Power and Politics." *International organization* 46, no. 2: 391-425.

Notes:

¹ The five original members of ASEAN when it was established in 1967 were the non-communist states of Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Brunei joined in 1984 after its independence and Vietnam in 1995 after the resolution of the Cambodian conflict in 1992. Laos and Myanmar were admitted in 1997 and Cambodia in 1998, which extended the membership of ASEAN to 10 states. Timor Leste which declared its independence from Indonesia in 1999 through a referendum holds observer status in ASEAN.

² The Treaty of Amity and Cooperation signed in 1976 outlined key regional norms of ASEAN such as respect for state sovereignty, non-interference in domestic affairs, non-use of force and peaceful resolution of disputes. See Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN Secretariat 2016).

³ (Singh 1993) provides an outline of the challenges faced by Southeast Asia in the post-cold war era.

⁴ (Beeson 2009) and (Leifer 1999) both account for their scepticisms based on ASEAN's limited achievements. (Beeson 2009) highlights the flaws of the "ASEAN Way", differences in priorities among ASEAN members and ASEAN's capacity to manage and adapt to changes. (Leifer 1999, 26) questions ASEAN's capability to sustain a peace process, indicating that "although ASEAN has acted as a diplomatic community with a collective voice... the association has never been effectively responsible for regional peace-making as opposed to helping keep the peace through exercising benign influence on the overall climate of regional relations."

⁵ See (Wendt 1992), also (Hopf 1998) illustrates "anarchy as an imagined community."

⁶ For a review see (Peou 2009).

⁷ See (Adler and Barnett 1998) for an overview of Realist and Constructivist debates. (Bellamy 2004) differentiates between "tightly and loosely coupled" security communities.

⁸ Cited in (Tan 2008).

⁹ See (ASEAN Secretariat 2015, 19), ASEAN Political-Security Blueprint 2025.

¹⁰ The USIP presents a theory of peaceful change that assumes that the absence of violent conflict alone is not sufficient to ensure peace. It highlights the need to work within a transformative framework that recognizes conditions necessary for sustainable peace: inclusive societies and political processes, economic opportunity, citizen security and access to justice. See <https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/USIP-Strategic-Plan-2020-2022.pdf>

Word count:

Total document: 9117

Main: document: 7264

References: 1696