

ASEAN

Association of Southeast Asian Nations

Study Guide

9th Session | York Model United Nations



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Introduction from the Chairs

Director: Elizabeth Ichiko

Welcome to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations committee in York Model United Nations 2019! It is my utmost pleasure to be your Director for this great and interesting committee. All of your directors have designed this study guide that will help you to have the basic understanding of the topics. If you are new to this committee, fear not as there is a description of the committee that you can familiarize yourself with. Unfortunately, your preparation for the conference is not enough if you only read the study guide. Thus, it is your responsibility to dig a little further and to understand more of your allocated country's position on both topics. The study guide addresses each issue separately with its own introduction, history and discussion of the topic. Moreover, it also includes questions that should be considered in the resolution(s), and lastly our suggested further readings. Without further ado, I wish you best of luck in your research and I certainly cannot wait to meet you, to witness fruitful and heated debates during the sessions. Should you have any questions regarding the study guide, do not hesitate to contact any of your directors.

Kind regards,

Elizabeth Ichiko

Assistant Director: Katharina Wodenitscharow

I am happy to welcome you to the ASEAN committee together with Ichiko and Eve! We have worked tirelessly to make sure to produce a study guide which discusses critical issues that are at the heart of ASEAN's policies and debates. Whilst we are hoping that you will have an exciting time debating about the different topics in the committee, we are also hoping you come to YorkMUN to immerse yourself in the historical city and meet like-minded individuals who are ready to learn about the opportunities and challenges that ASEAN are facing. MUN is all about developing your interpersonal skills such as public speaking, research and policy drafting as well as connecting with your peers and establishing a network spanning across countries and continents. We are very excited to share this experience with all of you and we are looking forward to meeting you inside and outside of the committee room! If you have any questions or doubts, feel free to reach out to any of us! We are here to help you and make this conference as enjoyable as possible for you! We are looking forward to meeting you all!

See you soon!

Katharina Wodenitscharow

Assistant Director: Eve Bradley

Us chairs are delighted to welcome you to YorkMUN 2019's ASEAN committee. For the past 6 months, we have been working together to create a comprehensive study guide which will properly introduce you to the topics in question. Both the topic on Indigenous people, and the topic on Indian defence deals have become issues close to all three of our hearts; we want you all to do the topics justice. As such, it's important you all understand that reading the guide alone simply won't be enough; we strongly encourage you to do research of your own, and to take a peek at the further reading sections. We will expect a lot from you all; we've posed you with two significant problems and expect you all to work together to solve them. ASEAN's working process is informal and personal in nature. Generally, delegates should prioritize values which will lead to compromise, consensus, and consultation above all, to create a consensus-based way of addressing the issues at hand. Diplomacy, in this committee, really is the key to success. We hope that you enjoy your time reading through this study guide and learn from the experience of working with ASEAN. If you have any questions whatsoever, feel free to get in touch with us!

Looking forward to meeting you all really soon!

Eve Bradley

Introduction to the Committee

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established in 1967 with its initial member being Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. Its primary objective after it was established was to fight the potential threat of communist-led insurgencies at the height of the U.S. war in Vietnam. Membership doubled by the early 1990s, boosted in part by changing conditions following the end of the Vietnam War in 1975 and the Cold War in 1991.

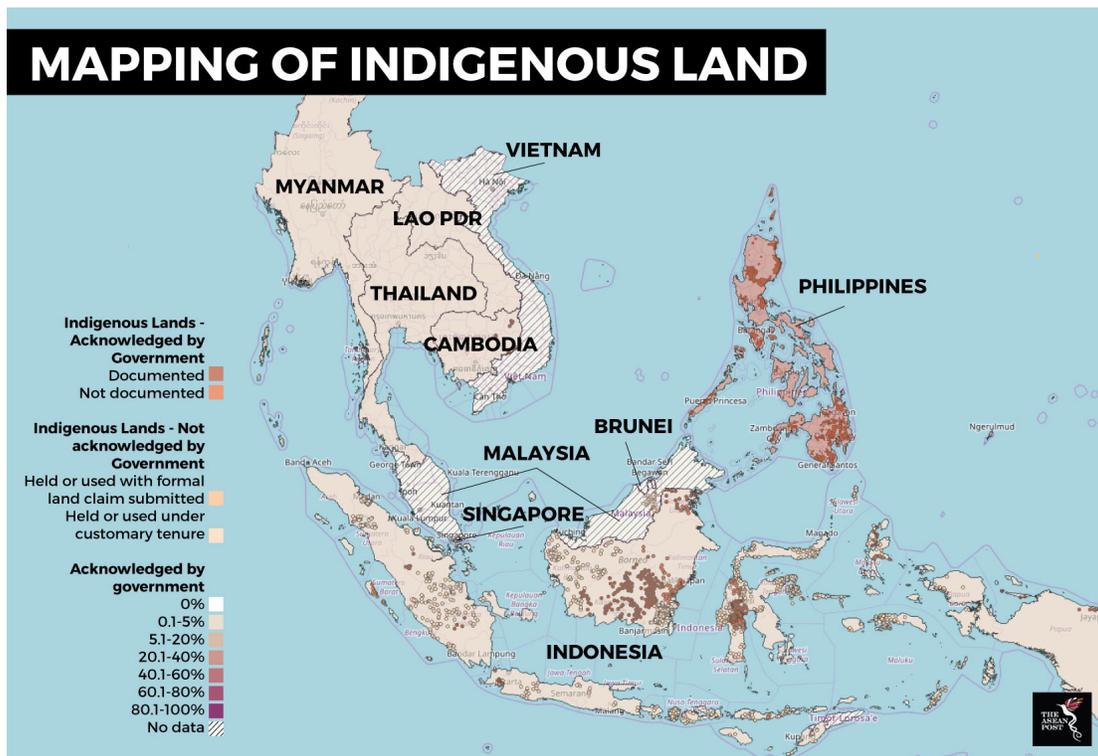
In 2007, the ten members adopted the ASEAN Charter, which clearly laid out core ASEAN principles. The charter set out a blueprint for a community built on three branches: the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), the ASEAN Political-Security Community, and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community. These three branches were achieved in 2015 and are also known as the ASEAN Communities.

Due to economic integration members of ASEAN have benefited strongly as part of the organisation. Since the start of the ASEAN free trade area in 1993, intra-ASEAN trade has grown from 19.2 percent to 25.9 percent in 2016 of total trade by ASEAN members. ASEAN members have made strong efforts to facilitate trade especially in industries such as rubber-based products, textiles and apparels, agro-based products and many others. Since its establishment, ASEAN has worked towards consistently towards promoting policies, which strengthen their economic, political, and security cooperation among its ten members: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Decisions are reached through consultation and consensus guided by the principles of non-interference in internal affairs and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

Topic A: The question of indigenous people for ASEAN’s identity

Introduction

Over the past decades the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states (AMS) have seen a stark increase in investments in development and infrastructure projects such as dams, railways, farmland. This has resulted in a substantial growth of GDP for the respective countries and the ASEAN community as a whole. However, whilst the development of these projects seems to generate revenue and growth for these economies, not everyone seems to be benefitting equally. For example, some agencies and governments such as the World Bank hail many of their projects as sustainably built after years and decades of careful consultation and planning, however different civil societies and environmentalist groups consider these projects to bring devastating and social costs to the community. Especially when the communities and villages such as those of the indigenous people, whose livelihood depends on having access to land and natural resources, need to be resettled as a result of these projects. The biggest concern that needs to be addressed by the ASEAN community in order to prevent the illegal resettlement of these communities by governments and private corporations is to address the lack of recognition of community rights over land and resources affecting the indigenous community (Figure 1 shows the map of Indigenous Land in Southeast Asia, Source - *The ASEAN Post*).



Indigenous people are defined as “Tribal peoples in independent countries whose social, cultural and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions or by special laws or regulations.” Whilst this is the main definition that was adopted by the UN there are several other definitions, which aim to describe indigenous people; however, the main point is self-identification. They have their own distinct languages, cultures, customary laws, and social and political institutions that contrast that vary from those of their dominant ethno-linguistic groups in the respective countries. Based on Article 3 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous (UNDRIP) particularly states that, “Indigenous Peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.” Article 4 elaborates that “in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs”. ASEAN’s charter states the upholding of the UN Charter and international law to which the ASEAN member states subscribed to. However, most AMS have a poor record of upholding human rights standard and seem to be in constant violation of the Peoples UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous.

Many examples prove that the lack of recognition is the leading cause threatening indigenous communities. For example, before the launch of the “One Map Policy” in the Philippines, the government decided not to include maps of indigenous territory. This resulted in devastating consequences for the indigenous community as the concept of land and territories has many dimensions, which are vital to their collective identity and is critical to the livelihood of the people. An attempt to protect their land and resources has only resulted in violent clashes between governments, private companies and the indigenous community. Most of the cost is absorbed by the indigenous community who is left to fight on their own because the government is supporting investors. Similar problems can be observed in Myanmar where the government has not recognised the territorial rights of indigenous people over customary land and forests. The Karen people have been uprooted from their indigenous land in order to make space for mining activities, infrastructure and development projects.

It is crucial for governments to recognise the rights of indigenous people as well as at risk communities, which are threatened by the development of infrastructure projects. Indigenous communities that are recognised by governments are statistically proven to have lower rates of illegal economic activity, less environmental degradation and an increase in economic development such as education, sanitation and health care facilities. It is crucial to recognise the rights of indigenous people on a national and international level. Now that the topic has been introduced, the rest of the study guide comprises of the following sections; history of the topic, general discussion of the topic, points a resolution should address and lastly, further readings. The bloc positions have been taken away in order to encourage the delegates to deepen their research further. But fear not, the study guide includes various sections in which the AMS positions are described respectively based on the topic of discussion. There will be two major subtopics that will be touched upon when talking about the problems of this topic. Firstly, a general discussion of the relationship between economic development and the effect of non-legal and/or neglect recognition of indigenous people by their government and its consequences will be presented. While, the second subtopic will be focused more on the rights of indigenous women in ASEAN.

History of the Topic

The region has become one of the most ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity of the world. Additionally, the region is rich in its natural resources as it becomes the instruments of what they trade with for their economic development. According to the Asia Indigenous People Pact (AIPP) publication of 2015, there is an estimation of 93 to 124 million self-identified indigenous people in Southeast Asia.¹ Thus, AMS are parties to various international human rights instruments and have, to a certain extent, tried to protect the indigenous people in their ‘own’ way.

United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples – UNDRIP

On 13th of September 2007, the General Assembly held its 107th plenary meeting, which resulted to the adoption of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The Declaration recognizes that the rights of the indigenous people are as equal to others despite considering themselves to be different but shall be respected as such. One of the most important perambulatory clauses of the UNDRIP affirms that “...all peoples contribute to the diversity and richness of civilizations and cultures, which constitute the common heritage of humankind” which answers the question to why it is important to recognize indigenous people.²

Noting that ASEAN comprises of different political systems, diverse culture and traditions, in either tangible or intangible heritages, it is important for these cultures to survive and be recognized as part of ASEAN’s identity. All of the member states of ASEAN have ratified the Declaration, therefore, are legally bound to it. The rights mentioned in UNDRIP are specified in various other international human rights instruments such as the International Labour Organization Convention number 169 – Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, International Covenant on Civil and

¹ Jade Tessier, *Indigenous Peoples and ASEAN Integration*, PDF, Chang Mai: AIPP, 2015.

² "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples For Indigenous Peoples," United Nations, accessed January 11, 2019, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.html>.

Political Rights (ICCPR), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD). All the conventions mentioned are of course, complimentary to the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Despite the articles mentioned in UNDRIP, it is still worth mentioning that a state has the right to grant and recognize indigenous people based on its constitution. This means that the recognition of indigenous people does vary from one country to another.

Having to recognize the indigenous people means that their collective and individual rights shall be fully enjoyed as well as their human rights and fundamental freedoms as recognized in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights law, as stated in Article 1 of the UNDRIP.³ This, however, is not always the case (more will be discussed in the Discussion of the topic). Despite having the legal recognition, there are still challenges which indigenous people still face. Legal recognition of indigenous people also means as simple as having the right for social and civil rights, land and territories as well as resources. These rights ensure the livelihood, the practise of customs and traditions as well as the indigenous knowledge that are intangible. Some AMS such as Indonesia, will only recognize them if they follow a certain conduct – societal development and principles of the state.⁴ Even so, the uncertainty of the government supporting the recognition does not always mean that their rights will be enjoyed by many. The following paragraphs will include the positions of each member states recognition of ‘indigenous people’ as accordingly to their respective constitutions.

AMS ways of recognising ‘indigenous people’ based on their respective constitutions

Malaysia considers three categories in which they omit different natives, Orang Ulu or Sabah, Anak Negeri or Sarawak and Orang Asli. But the treatment varies, while Sabah and Sarawak natives are spotted on by the government, the ones that claim to be Orang Asli need to verify their

³ Ibid.

⁴ AIPP, "About Us," Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, , accessed January 11, 2019, <https://aippnet.org/about-us/>.

existence. If ‘verified’, only then are they recognized as indigenous people, but the recognition does not give them the support they meant to receive from the government. These support and rights include the right of land and territories, and even proof of citizenship. There is a great difficulty for those who live in the rural and remote area to register their birth and citizenship, due to infrastructure or “poor access to the registration department”.⁵

The Philippines constitution does consider the rights of the indigenous people or as it called it “rights of indigenous cultural communities / indigenous people” of article 2 section 22. Furthermore, it was elaborated in the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA). However, when it comes to the implementation of the right to Free and Prior Informed Consent in terms of land/domain, problem still arises. (Ibid, p.3)

Cambodia coined a different term for those who are not Khmers, Chams, Chinese, Laos, Thais or Kinh (Vietnamese), the term, *chunceat daoem pheak tech*, is a literal translation of minority original ethnicity. Its legal recognition revolves around the rights of the land, which is also include in its Land and Forest Law of 2001 and 2002.

Thailand’s constitution does not openly include indigenous people but having signed and ratified the UNDRIP as well as respecting its constitution, the Royal Thai government does have an obligation to recognize those which they consider to be indigenous. One of the indigenous people that the Royal Thai government recognized is the Karen people, whether it is for their identity or their culture (more in the past action). However, one of the major problems that Thailand face is similar to Malaysia, which is the recognition of other indigenous people that resulted them as lacking citizenship rights, in other words they are stateless. While this majorly violates Article 6 of UNDRIP “every indigenous individual has the right to a nationality”, this brings out challenges such as the receiving basic rights and support in social services, and to a more serious extent, major violation of human rights.

⁵ Ibid.

Indonesia has its legal recognition of indigenous people in its constitution in Article 18 B-2, and also through the recognition of “Masyarakat adat / Masyarakat hukum adat” or custom law-based communities. However, in 2016 due to the amendment of the Village Law, the existence of Customary Villages and customary forests are recognized by the decision of the constitution court no. 35/2012.⁶

Myanmar/Burma constitution does mention ethnic minorities but does use ‘national races’ instead. However, there are seven nationals that are recognized under the Myanmar Citizenship Law of 1982, these include Shan, Karen, Rakhine, Karenni, Chin, Kachin, and Mon.⁷ The 2008 Constitution does not mention the collective rights or the use of customary land used for the practices of the indigenous people in their respective territories.⁸ However, after the release of the draft of National Land Use Policy in 2014, which included the Land Use Rights of Ethnic Nationalities, it gave “special privileges to business investors”.⁹

While in Vietnam, its constitution uses the term “ethnic minorities” that are recognized, their rights are described in its constitution to “have the right to use their own language and writing, to preserve their ethnic identity and to nurture their fine customs, traditions, and cultures”.¹⁰

Lastly, Laos’s constitution considers its society as multi-ethnic, therefore all ‘ethnic groups’ have ‘automatically’ the “right to protect, preserve and promote the fine customs and

⁶ "Masyarakat Adat, Kebinekaan Indonesia, Dan Utang Konstitusi," Program Peduli, , accessed January 11, 2019, <https://programpedulio.org/blog/masyarakat-adat-kebinekaan-indonesia-dan-utang-konstitusi/>.

⁷ "Masyarakat Adat, Kebinekaan Indonesia, Dan Utang Konstitusi," Program Peduli, , accessed January 11, 2019, <https://programpedulio.org/blog/masyarakat-adat-kebinekaan-indonesia-dan-utang-konstitusi/>.

⁸ "Indigenous Peoples in Burma," IWGIA, , accessed January 11, 2019, <https://www.iwgia.org/en/news-alerts/archive/143-uncategorised/745-indigenous-peoples-in-burma>.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ "Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam," Constitute, , accessed January 11, 2019, https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Socialist_Republic_of_Vietnam_2013?lang=en.

cultures of their own tribes and of the nation. All acts creating division and discrimination among ethnic groups are prohibited”.¹¹

ASEAN Charter and ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD)

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations had various attempts to include the recognition of the indigenous people in its legally binding instruments, mainly the ASEAN Charter and the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration. Before the creation of the Charter, ASEAN was bound to its fundamental principles adopted on 8th of August 1967 under the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC). TAC focused on the States affair and position in the international arena. During the 13th summit in November 2007, ASEAN adopted its Charter which focused mainly on the legal personality, objectives and principles of the organization, and structure, as well as the establishment of the ASEAN Community, however, it lacks the mentioning of the rights of individuals. It does however, call for tackling the issues by establishing the mechanism of the issues that the region faces such as human rights, migrant workers, and women and children.¹²

Lastly on November 2012, the regional organization adopted the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD) during its 21st summit. The AHRD did not shed light on the rights of the indigenous people, thus many have “expressed their disappointment with the AHRD”.¹³ Thus, it can be said that the AHRD is missing a very important aspect of UNDRIP, thus limiting the individual and people rights of indigenous people.

In summary, the term “indigenous people” are defined differently from one state to another, while others are reluctant to use the term, the other would have ways of proving that one is or belong to indigenous people. Hence, the understanding of the absence of a standard definition of Indigenous people. Nevertheless, the problems still occur to those who are not recognized or have

¹¹ "Constitution of the Lao People's Democratic Republic," Constitute, , accessed January 11, 2019, https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Laos_2003?lang=en.

¹² Tessier, *Indigenous Peoples and ASEAN Integration*

¹³ R. Gadit, "Indigenous Peoples Statement on the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration," Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, , accessed January 11, 2019, <https://aippnet.org/indigenous-peoples-statement-on-the-asean-human-rights-declaration/>.

difficulties to be recognized. These are problems revolving around their livelihoods, lands, territories, citizenship and many more. While ASEAN is known for its diversity and economic development, it envisions itself to have a common identity, this can also be seen from its regional vision “One Vision, One Identity and One Caring and Sharing Community”.¹⁴ But what is a common identity when the recognition and rights of man is limited to and only benefits the majority?

¹⁴ "ASEAN Charter," ASEAN | ONE VISION ONE IDENTITY ONE COMMUNITY, , accessed January 11, 2019, <https://asean.org/asean/asean-charter/>.

General Discussion of Topic

Economic activity/development vs recognition of the rights of indigenous people

During the 1990's many researchers, economists and governments have attempted to look beyond the Gross Domestic Products (GDP) numbers that indicate a countries economy is growing. It is because this number fails to encapsulate the development and progress that is being made in the social or political spheres of a country. Over the years „sustainable development” has become a keyword, which encourages countries not only to focus on their economic growth but also on economic development such as education, equality, sanitation, infrastructure etc. Despite trying to introduce indices such as the Human Development Index (HDI), GDP still remains the main indicator by which countries measure their countries' progress. This means that countries are trying to generate growth through infrastructure projects and extraction of natural resources.

As an example, two high profile examples include the Pak Mun Dam (1994) in Thailand and the Nam Theun 2 (2010) hydroelectric dam in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. The Pak Mun Dam 24 years later is still threatening the livelihood of thousands of people due to the lack of access to their resources such as fish. The government initially promised to build gates for the people so water from the dam can flow into the Mekong river to provide access to water and revive the fishing industry however not much has changed since this promise was made (Guardian, 2018). The Nam Theun 2 represents a similar threat for the people living near the site. Over the years the dam has flooded their farmland, which has made it impossible for farmers to cultivate, harvest or survive of their land.

In the Philippines during the 1970's governments would simply relocate citizens from the capital who lived in Manila to an area which is 30-50 km away from the capital. Often these areas do not have any basic services such as electricity, sanitation or education. Despite the government trying to improve the living situations for these individuals through initiatives such as the “People's plan approach” little has changed. The government under the rule of President Duterte is planning on resettling 522,000 people between 2017-2022 for his “Build, Build, Build” program.

These examples have illustrated that over the years the tactics to spur the development of infrastructure projects have largely remained the same. However, in recent years more and more private companies have started to invest into these development projects, including those going into cross-border investments as integration deepens in the ASEAN Community, which has made it harder for locals to fight for their property and human rights. The reason for this increased demand in land is because indigenous peoples live in areas, which are rich in natural resources and thus have become targets of resource extraction and development programs. As a result, their communities are faced with the devastating environment consequences of mining and logging, large-scale plantations and infrastructure programs as was seen in many AMS over the years.

In Cambodia, eighty-five companies were given a total land area of 956,690 hectares located in 16 provinces in 2010. This resulted in the eviction of indigenous communities and resulted in devastating social, economic, cultural and environmental consequences due to the construction of hydropower projects.

In Indonesia, over 7.5 million hectares of land are already covered by oil palm plantations. The establishment of oil palm plantations go along with serious abuses of the right of local communities, many of whom belong to indigenous people. Malaysia has an estimate of 4 million hectares of oil palm plantations, which were developed without the prior informed consent of indigenous communities and no due compensation was provided on their behalf. These projects are implemented without consultation and consent from the affected communities and cause massive displacement of indigenous communities and consequently to the loss of their livelihood, culture and identity.

In Malaysia, a group of indigenous people The Temiar people of Gua Musang who live within the boundaries of Gunung Stong Selatan forest reserve have been protesting against logging and durian plantations on their communal forested land. Many of their attempts to protect their land such as road blockades have proven to be unsuccessful as companies implement their own defence strategies and mechanism to get access to the land such as burning down hectares of land and thus making passage for their workers and machinery. The establishment and operation of logging and agricultural plantations in the area has devastated the forest, exacerbated soil erosion and degraded river water.

Some governments have launched large scale internal resettlement programs, which were implemented by the governments of Vietnam, Indonesia, Philippines have resulted in massive loss of land of indigenous communities and severely altered the demographic composition of the transmigration areas in favour of the non-indigenous settlers. Some of these resettlement projects have been abandoned, however still today many of the indigenous people are suffering the consequences of these projects. Resettlement programs have led to increased poverty, malnutrition, a higher mortality rate and a general deterioration in the health of affected villagers. Indigenous women in the rural areas are hardest hit by poverty. In general, poverty affects women more severely than men since the burden to provide for the family rests more heavily on women, while decisions affecting domestic economy and even most crucial issues directly affecting women like reproduction are taken by men. Poverty and the lack of access to basic services such as health and education for indigenous women are prevalent in almost all ASEAN countries but most pronounced in Laos and Vietnam. Poverty also results in migration among Indigenous Peoples within a country or abroad, which in return has a detrimental effect on their health and well-being as they struggle to integrate into modern society.

In this case international organisations seem to be favoured by countries to undertake and supervise infrastructure projects because many of them such as the World Bank have better monitoring systems and mechanism in place, which will in the long run reduce the economic and in particular the social costs of these development projects.

The Rights of Indigenous Women in ASEAN

The estimation of indigenous people living in more than 70 countries accounts to 370 million. In Southeast Asia alone, it has been estimated by AIPP that the number of indigenous people is between 94 million to 200 million; and fifty per cent of it are females.¹⁵ The livelihoods of both women and men are quite similar, both have tasks that would benefit their households, whether it

¹⁵ *Indigenous Women in Southeast Asia Challenges in Their Access to Justice*, PDF, AIPP, 2013.

is in natural resource management or the conservation system.¹⁶ In general, women have tasks that constitute them to have an “intimate and interconnected relationship with nature, lands, territories and the natural resources, including the sites of cultural and spiritual significance”, as stated by Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP).¹⁷ The tasks might include ‘collecting firework, wild foods and crops, seeds, harvests, fetching water etc.’. Through this ‘connection’, the loss and destruction of the ecosystem impacts their physical, social and psychological health, as it is perceived as a degradation to the source of food and health as well as environment security.¹⁸

Additionally, the UN Inter-Agency Support Group (IASG) created a set of Thematic Paper on Health of Indigenous Peoples in 2013, which delivered the issue of indigenous women in one of its key messages as “Indigenous women experience health problems with particular severity, as they are disproportionately affected by natural disasters and armed conflicts, and are often denied access to education, land, property, and other economic resources”.¹⁹

According to the 2017 AIPP briefing paper, the challenges that are faced by the indigenous women in Asia include discrimination, less access to education, health care, opportunities to employment and equitable pay and benefits, limited rights in managing their property and/or land as well as signing agreements or contracts. Domestic violence and discrimination acts committed are commonly practiced by their counterparts, communities or even families.

It is no doubt that Indigenous People are limited to their rights and taking into account that women are one of the most vulnerable groups of the society, they become easy targets of acts of violence and discrimination. These are in forms of kidnapping, trafficking, and sexual exploitation. It is also worth noting that the formal justice system is sometimes inapplicable to many indigenous people, thus they become marginalized community. There is still a barrier for women to report any

¹⁶ AIPP, "Briefing Paper on the Rights of Indigenous Women to Their Lands," , accessed January 11, 2019, <https://aippnet.org/briefing-paper-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-women-to-their-lands-territories-and-resources-in-asia/>.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ "Health of Indigenous Peoples," World Health Organization, February 03, 2016, , accessed January 11, 2019, <https://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs326/en/>.

discrimination or violence that they had experienced. The Centre for Women Resources reported that in 2012 in the Philippines, women and girls are abused, sexual harassed, raped and gang raped by military forces and the Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Unit (CAFGU). The cases which involved women that are indigenous were not recorded. The increase of military presence in areas such as Cordilleras, strengthen the number of cases of sexual discriminations against women.²⁰

In some countries, many women are illiterate to their own national language that they are deprived to use it. The formal justice system does not recognize customary legal system and is weak as well as inaccessible to indigenous people, hence only some cases are fairly adjudicated. Thus, by not recognizing their rights, collective rights, their representations in politics and the awareness of their fundamental freedoms they become one of the most vulnerable groups of the society.

In addition to the briefing paper, the AIPP also had laid out three key common challenges as described below:

- a) “The continuing loss of lands, territories and resources due to the establishment of conservation areas, commercial exploitation, land grabbing, forced eviction and displacement from ancestral lands, as well as criminalization of traditional livelihood practices;
- b) The non-implementation of constitutional, legislative and policy provisions concerning indigenous peoples and indigenous women’s rights;
- c) The political repression, militarization, persecution and extra judicial killings of indigenous women land rights activists”²¹

The definition of Violence Against Women (VAW) according to the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women is “any act of gender-based violence that results, in or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women,

²⁰ AIPP, "Briefing Paper on the Rights of Indigenous Women to Their Lands," accessed January 11, 2019, <https://aippnet.org/briefing-paper-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-women-to-their-lands-territories-and-resources-in-asia/>.

²¹ The elaboration and explanation of the challenges can be found under Further reading: Briefing paper.

including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life”.²²

ASEAN's efforts

In 2010, ASEAN had established the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and the Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) comprised of 20 representatives (two of each AMS). As a part of the ASEAN community building plan in 2009, it had recognized the importance of establishing a commission specifically on women and children’s rights. ACWC was created with the elements and respect to the Convention of the Elimination of Violence Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC). The mandate of ACWC is self-explanatory, however, it does not directly recall the protection of indigenous women and children, but it “Advocates on behalf of women and children, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized, and encourage ASEAN Member States to improve their situation”.²³

Despite the limitations of rights, many women (non and indigenous) activists are aware of the traditions and culture that would hinder them to have these basic rights. This can be due to the preservation of customary laws, which can be beneficial for them and the communities, however, it can also be “discriminatory and even oppressive to women” as JASS Southeast Asia Report stated.²⁴ Thus, it did not stop the women to become leaders of strong indigenous movement. In Malaysia, example, there is the Orang Asli of Peninsular Malaysia, followed by the Cordilleras of the Philippines, and a remote province of Ratanakri in Cambodia. While in Indonesia and Burma (Myanmar), the progress of the recognition of indigenous people have risen intensively.²⁵

²² A/RES.48/104

²³ "ASEAN Commission on the Rights of Women and Children," Human Rights in ASEAN, January 17, 2019, , accessed January 11, 2019, <https://humanrightsinasean.info/asean-commission-rights-women-and-children/about.html>.

²⁴ "Indigenous Women Workshop: An Analysis Report on the State of Indigenous Women in Southeast Asia," UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders Visits Honduras | JASS (Just Associates), , accessed January 11, 2019, <https://justassociates.org/en/resources/indigenous-women-workshop-analysis-report-state-indigenous-women-southeast-asia>.

²⁵ Ibid.

Though the explanation above is general, AMS face more or less the same common issues. Thus, for more detailed case studies, delegates are encouraged to read them under: Further Reading Case Study Indigenous Women. In summary, without taking into account women's indigenous rights and understanding the limits they face in social, economic and political matter, it is 'impossible' to appropriately establish an ASEAN identity.

Bloc Positions

Indonesia

The Indonesian government has not been as effective in protecting their indigenous women, despite having National Commission on Violence against Women, also called Komnas Perempuan.²⁶ Indonesia has ratified CEDAW, as mentioned above, but there is lack of political support in improving women's rights. One of the victims of indigenous women of Indonesia are the West Papuans, and based on the annual note of 2014, they have experienced various forms of violence as a result of protecting their natural resources from conflicts between state security forces and armed civilian groups.²⁷ But in March 2018, the president, Joko Widodo, has taken a first step on the protection of indigenous people's rights by signing a bill that will be discussed by the House of Representatives. Originally the bill was proposed in 2012 by the Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) but had been dropped in 2014.

Malaysia

The Malaysian government had adopted UNDRIP in 2007 but did not ratify the ILO Convention No. 169. Having recognized three Indigenous communities, Malays are still the dominant ethnicity that politically, economically and socially involved in the state. Regardless of the adoption of its Indigenous customary land rights, the government still chooses the interests of private companies and government agencies over the land rights of the indigenous people. Indigenous women face more discriminations than any other because they are indigenous and women. Preserving their cultural practices such as handicrafts and getting food from forest resources, had become a challenge to the Iban ethnicity (Sarawak). Politically, indigenous women in particular are underrepresented, e.g. There have been no Orang Asli women that became a candidate or elected to office.²⁸ One of the reasons is due to patriarchy interpreted in the Islamic law and public policies, as a result the rights of women and minorities are not much discussed or amended in the legislature.

²⁶ Rochelle Jones, "West Papuan Women Left Isolated and Beset by Violence under Indonesian Rule | Rochelle Jones," *The Guardian*, October 22, 2015, accessed January 11, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/oct/22/west-papua-women-indonesian-rule-violence>.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Cultural Survival, *Observations on the State of Indigenous Human Rights in Malaysia*, PDF, November 16, 2018.

The Philippines

In 1997, the Philippines adopted and enacted the Republic Law 8371, which supports cultural integrity of indigenous people, and their rights to their lands and to self-directed development of the lands. It has the same situation as Malaysia, where they had adopted UNDRIP but not yet ratify the ILO Convention no.169. With the population of 102.9 million, 10 - 20 per cent of its population are indigenous. Most of the indigenous people live in an isolated area where they rely on their natural resources such as minerals, forests and rivers. But, due to the developments presented by government projects or any other businesses, conflicts still exist between them and the government. Furthermore, the difficulty for them to be represented in the political sphere is appears - in 2016 the Sulong Katribu political party were refused to participate in elections by the Supreme Court and Election Commission, therefore they did not have any seats in Congress. During the presidency of Duterte, many indigenous leaders and activists have been put in the terrorist list, despite having lack of evidence.

Additionally, the consequence after implementing Martial Law in 2017 in Mindanao were the militarization of region. Many indigenous people who have lived there for generations have become internally displaced person.

Laos

Lao PDR is the most ethnically diverse country in Southeast Asia. Lao people comprise four main ethno-linguistic groups: Lao-Tai (62.4 percent), Mon-Khmer (23.7 percent), Hmong-Iu Mien (9.7 percent), and Chine-Tibetan (2.9 percent). The 49 ethnic groups in the country can be broken down into 200 ethnic subgroups. The most dominant ethnic group is the Lao-Tai, which is on average the least poor ethnic group in Laos compared to any other groups. Ethnic groups such as Mon-Khmer suffer many issues around poverty, education and health, due to lifestyle and geographical difficulties. This is because their survival depends on the slash and burn practice and deforestation rates in Laos has substantially increased over the years. The government of Laos and their policies severally harm the survival of the ethnic groups such as the Mon-Khmer. Current responses by the Lao government to issues with ethnic groups frequently involve developmental aid and international projects. One example is the Greater Mekong Region Health Security Project, backed by the Asian Development Bank (ABD). The project dedicated US\$12.6 million to capacity-building for health services. The project is centred on health issues most common among rural

ethnic groups, such as misuse of antibiotics, and centred in provinces where ethnic groups have a significant presence. The World Bank also undertook the Mobilizing Ethnic Communities for Improved Livelihoods and Wellbeing Project for Lao PDR, which allocated US\$2.86 million towards community-level development programs.

Thailand

The Thai Constitution does not recognize indigenous people because many government officials still view indigenous peoples as foreign and dangerous. As a result, their right to participate in the constitution drafting process, which would affect their rights, has not been respected while indigenous peoples and their rights are rendered invisible in the national laws and policies. This resulted in legislation by the Thai government such as the Issuance of Community Land Title Deeds 2010, which does not provide legal recognition to traditional land tenure and resource management systems by indigenous peoples. It only allows communities to collectively manage and use State-owned land for their living while the State still retains its claim to ownership of these lands. Indigenous peoples have also been struggling with expulsion from or restrictions of access to their ancestral lands and traditional knowledge of the indigenous peoples on the use of their lands and resources is being challenged with adverse laws. The Thai government is very strict with regards to land ownership and property and only recognises ownership of land to people with citizenship. Citizenship will help indigenous peoples ensure their rights to land, education, and freedom of movement. However, indigenous peoples have been struggling for decades to secure citizenship in Thailand due to their way of life.

Vietnam

Similarly, to other countries, which are part of ASEAN, indigenous people in Vietnam have poor infrastructure, little access to education and high poverty rates. Vietnam's ethnic groups struggle to integrate within the Vietnamese modern society due to the stereotypes and misconceptions that portray Vietnamese ethnic minority groups negatively as backward, superstitious, and conservative. However, the Vietnamese government has developed very progressive policies towards protecting the rights of indigenous people by implementing policies on socio-economic development for ethnic minority groups in mountainous and remote areas, infrastructure investment for impoverished families, as well as afforestation and environmental protection, among others. The Vietnamese delegation also underlined the preservation of ethnic groups'

languages as a priority in education policy, while sharing experience in piloting the cooperation between Vietnam's Ministry of Education and Training and UNESCO.

Past International Action

Cambodia – Vietnam – Thailand

Kidnappings, trafficking and Exploitation of Human Persons are threats that are faced by the indigenous women in Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand. Either countries become both origin and destination of place for these human rights abuse to happen. In 2003, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand on Bilateral Cooperation for Eliminating Trafficking in Children and Women and Assisting Victims of Trafficking, as well as between Cambodia and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam on the same bilateral agreement.

ASEAN Commission on the Rights of Women and Children

ACWC was established in 2010 and is an intergovernmental commission. Its first meeting was held in 2011. Despite having its mandate laid out in the Terms of References (TOR), it does not investigate further the complaints of human rights violations it receives. However, it still has to submit annual reports to ASEAN Ministers Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (AMMSWD). Therefore, the question remains if it does it truly protect the rights of indigenous women too or does it focus on only women that are ‘recognized’ legally by the respective states.

ASIA INDIGENOUS PEOPLES PACT (AIPP)

AIPP is a regional organization created by the indigenous peoples’ movements in 1988. It aims to implement the recognition of rights and promote the issues that indigenous people face, as well as defending their respective rights.

Just Associates

JASS as an international feminist organization aims to “strengthen and mobilize women’s voice, visibility, and collective organizing power for justice for all”.²⁹ It approaches the grassroots problems that women in Indonesia, Cambodia, Malaysia, Timor-Leste, Myanmar and the

²⁹ "Indigenous Women Workshop: An Analysis Report on the State of Indigenous Women in Southeast Asia,"

Philippines face. They challenge the norms, prejudices and taboos, while highlight the importance on land rights resources, and LGBTI, reproductive health and economic empowerment (Ibid).

ASEAN Summit

During the 31st ASEAN Summit and the 12th East Asia Summit held in Manila, 20 Heads of State and Government representatives attended it. The summit was joined by the indigenous people of various regions and areas of the Philippines, who raised their concerns on the economic development of ASEAN, especially on the liberalization of trade and investments, human rights issues, and the support of the US on the war on terror as well as war on drugs. This initiative to invite the indigenous group to a summit is also an important step to include them in the decision-making process and be more aware of the lack of rights they face. This will help to strengthen the ASEAN's identity.

Points the resolution should address

1. What are the other means for ASEAN to recognize the rights of the indigenous people?
2. How can your country improve the livelihoods of the indigenous communities, at least those who are recognized respectively to the country's constitution?
3. Can there be a balance between economic growth and sustainability in various ASEAN regions/countries?
4. Should there be an amendment for the recognition of rights of the indigenous people in the ASEAN Charter or at least the ASEAN Declaration of Human Rights or even the Terms of Reference in ACWC?
5. Is it possible to create and enforce a Task Force that would help to secure the rights of the indigenous people?
6. Perhaps there should be a creation of a committee that would oversee the implementation of securing the rights of the indigenous people in various sectors, including economic, social and political?

Further Readings

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2. [Case study2 : Indonesian House works on indigenous peoples bill](https://www.iwgia.org/en/indonesia/1761-indonesian-house-works-on-indigenous-peoples-bill) - <https://www.iwgia.org/en/indonesia/1761-indonesian-house-works-on-indigenous-peoples-bill>
3. Briefing paper page 7-12 : elaboration of key common challenges
4. [Bilateral agreements](https://www.iwgia.org/en/indonesia/1761-indonesian-house-works-on-indigenous-peoples-bill) - <https://www.iwgia.org/en/indonesia/1761-indonesian-house-works-on-indigenous-peoples-bill>
5. [Case study Indigenous Woman](https://iphndefenders.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/women_briefing.pdf) - https://iphndefenders.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/women_briefing.pdf

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Topic B: India and ASEAN: Defence and Security Cooperation Agreement

Introduction

Over the years, just as any intergovernmental organization, ASEAN's priorities have shifted to reflect nation state interests.³⁰ Nevertheless, one of the constant focuses ASEAN has stood by to this day is to cultivate dynamic economic growth domestically and internationally. It was through this focus that the ASEAN nation states first created ties with China; promises of economic investment in a region trying to compete on the international stage proved attractive to South East Asian states in the 80's. However, over the years, China has slowly become more and more of a thorn in ASEAN states side, rather than the ally it started out as; having made huge investments in infrastructure and the private sectors in a significant number of ASEAN nation states, its growing interest in diplomatic activity in the region is making ASEAN quietly uncomfortable.³¹ In turn, India's feelings towards China have always been soured by their initial interactions in the 50's and 60's; unresolved disputes about demarcation of their borders, the presence of the Dalai Lama and Tibetan refugees in India, and China's 'all-weather alliance' with Pakistan have hampered Sino-Indian relations for decades. Today, with India now willing and able to stand up and take on the international stage by becoming more involved in its neighbour's regional politics, it seems some member states' wishes to take a little distance from China have been answered.³²

Whilst the issue at hand in this committee considers the future of relations between India and ASEAN, it is important to consider how historical events affect decisions being made today. Specifically, when questioning the potential of future defence and security cooperation between

³⁰ "Joint Declaration of the ASEAN Defence Ministers on Strengthening Defence Cooperation of ASEAN in the Global Community to Face New Challenges Jakarta, 19 May 2011," ASEAN | ONE VISION ONE IDENTITY ONE COMMUNITY, , accessed January 11, 2019, https://asean.org/?static_post=joint-declaration-of-the-asean-defence-ministers-on-strengthening-defence-cooperation-of-asean-in-the-global-community-to-face-new-challenges-jakarta-19-may-2011.

³¹ Huong Le Thu, "Chinas Dual Strategy of Coercion and Inducement towards ASEAN," *The Pacific Review*, 2018, , doi:10.1080/09512748.2017.1417325.

³² Vanessa Lim, "First ASEAN-China Maritime Field Training Exercise to Be Held in October: MINDEF," Channel NewsAsia, August 03, 2018, , accessed January 11, 2019, <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asia/first-asean-china-maritime-exercise-training-navy-mindef-10586432>.

India and ASEAN, it is of vital importance to understand the history of tensions between India and China, to in turn fully comprehend the butterfly-effect impact on bilateral relations today. China and India have been competing for influence in South-East Asia since the early 70', and many scholars and country officials worldwide have stated that the encroaching power China has on the foreign policy of ASEAN member states could be construed as infringing on each States' sovereignty.³³ ASEAN, at the moment, sees no advantage in breaking from China, since the benefits of having the superpower investing in each nation state's infrastructure is worth the loss of certain diplomatic liberties, especially less wealthy ASEAN states.³⁴ Therefore, the question we pose, considering the quiet but fierce competition between modern India and China, is whether further deals with India in terms of Defence and Security would be wise; is India offering a more attractive offer to ASEAN states than China? Is this offer too risky for the states that hold close ties to China? Are India's motives solely based in trying to replace China at the top of its own sphere of influence in the region and if so, what are the implications and costs of a deal for ASEAN?³⁵ In short, can ASEAN create a healthy balance of multilateral cooperation, whilst bearing in mind self-interest, the organizations' mandate, and Sino-Indian tension?

³³ Le Thu, "Chinas Dual Strategy of Coercion and Inducement towards ASEAN,"

³⁴ "India, ASEAN Leaders Agree to Boost Maritime Cooperation," The Economic Times, January 26, 2018, , accessed January 11, 2019, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-asean-leaders-agree-to-boost-maritime-cooperation/articleshow/62654982.cms>.

³⁵ Alice D. Ba, "China and Asean: Renavigating Relations for a 21st-century Asia," *Asian Survey* 43, no. 4 (2003): , doi:10.1525/as.2003.43.4.622.

History of the Topic

India and China

India and China have been rivals ever since the birth of the Indian state. Post WW2, both states came out of the 40's shaken; for India, after independence from Britain and its partition with Pakistan, the nation underwent an unstable time of political innovation. Pioneers of the independence movement were shaping a new government for a new state, whilst trying to piece a disenfranchised and abused populous back together after years of violence.³⁶ Domestic policy tended towards protectionism, with a strong emphasis on a large government-run public sector, and somewhat harsh business regulations (Ibid, 2008). After an initial 15 years of tumultuous change, India settled into its policies, and set its agenda; the nation's isolationism started to slowly fade, to leave way to a free-market oriented economy which, for a markedly conservative nation, took a more liberal approach towards trade and foreign investment policies.³⁷

Conversely, China came out of the first half of the century recovering from the Chinese Civil War in 1949 which resulted in the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC), a unitary one-party state, led by the Communist Party of China. During this time, China relied on a degree of isolationism, just like India, focusing on internal change with Anti-Rightist Campaign of 1957–1958, the Great Leap Forward in 1958 and the Cultural Revolution; Maoism's deadly effects made China few friends in the West.

Until the early 70's, the Republic of China (RoC), then based in Taipei post-civil-war, was recognized diplomatically by most world powers as the true China, and it was only in 1971 that the Beijing government assumed the Chinese seat on the Security Council. Both the PRC and the RoC make it a prerequisite for diplomatic relations that a country does not recognize or conduct any official relations with the other party; as such, ASEAN states do not recognise nor hold any relations with Taiwan.

³⁶ Arvind Panagariya, *India: The Emerging Giant* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2018).

³⁷ Ibid.

On the first of January 1950, India recognised the PRC; almost immediately, a disagreement over borders began. In 1954, India and the PRC signed an eight-year agreement on Tibet and the Border, leading to 8 years of peaceful bilateral cooperation and coexistence between the two states. When the agreement expired, the dispute escalated, leading to the first Sino-Indian War. With the backdrop of the Cuban Missile Crisis and the globes superpowers busy, the conflict lasted one month, with active war ended in November 1962 when China declared a ceasefire, leaving significant bad blood between the two nations.³⁸

The USSR, India, and China

In 1962, the Soviet Union was the closest trading partner India had; having needed a new economic model, India had modelled their new economy on the Soviet's, focusing the nation on industrialization, and nationalising industries focused in steel, mining, machine tools, telecommunications, insurance, and power plants in the mid-1950'.

In terms of Sino-Indian tensions, the Soviet Union declared its neutrality during the earlier 1959 border dispute, despite strong Chinese objection. Going against their word, as the conflict went on, the Soviets gave India substantial economic and military assistance, and by 1960 India had received significantly more Soviet assistance than China. This disparity became another point of contention in Sino-Soviet relations, and by extension made Sino-Indian tensions worse.

The favouritism the USSR showed to India continued post-Sino-Indian war, and soured relations between India and China even further.³⁹ Whilst the conflict has never re-escalated to all-out war, China strived to create close economic and military ties to India's neighbours, to make diplomatic expansion difficult for the latter.⁴⁰ This, of course, was preceded by changes in policy to foreign relations, including a new focus on expansionism. For example, pre-1962, China and Pakistan had cordial bilateral ties, but Post Sino-Indian war, a 'Special Relationship' was born, with extensive military and economic projects being created, and with each State supporting the other on most

³⁸ Graham T. Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Longman, 2010).

³⁹ Odd Arne. Westad, *Brothers in Arms: The Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1945-1963* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2011).

⁴⁰ Ibid.

issues of importance to the latter. China competed in a similar fashion with India over influence in Bangladesh and Nepal, and to this day, the competition for influence in the two states continues. These provocations by China further soured relations between the two states.

India and ASEAN

Before the establishment of relations between India and East Asia, neither parties seemed to share any mutual interest. In the late 1960s, when ASEAN was established, India didn't see much economic or political benefit in re-establishing ties with the discredited South East Asian nations due to their extensive history. In the early 1980s, an attempt was made to renew relations between both blocks, but India's support of Vietnam in the conflict over Cambodia meant that those attempts fail. By the mid-1980s, due to India's political involvement in Cambodia and their economic policies, India seemed to distance itself from the South Asian region.

Around the same time, China began reducing and in turn cultivated extensive trade and economic relations with Asian nations.⁴¹ China became the closest partner and supporter of the military junta of Burma, which had been ostracised from the international community following the violent suppression of pro-democracy activities in 1988. In contrast, during the Cold War India had a relatively hesitant relationship with many states in Southeast Asia and diplomatic relations with Southeast Asia were given a relatively low priority.

Asserting India's expanding defence capabilities in the 1980s, especially that of its Navy, and India's willingness to assert itself within the Subcontinent—for example in Sri Lanka and the Maldives—and its strategic partnership with Soviet Russia came under much criticism in the final years of the Cold War further caused damage to any future cooperation between India and ASEAN.

The Look East Policy:

⁴¹ Tom Phillips, "Photos Show Beijing's Militarisation of South China Sea in New Detail," *The Guardian*, February 06, 2018, , accessed January 11, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/06/photos-beijings-militarisation-south-china-sea-philippines>.

Since the 1990's, India has been looking to strengthen its ties with members of the ASEAN association and thereby ending its isolation from the South East Asian region. Attempting to liberalize its economy and move away from Cold War-era policies, the "Look East" policy begun in 1993, with the goal of nurturing closer commercial ties, increasing strategic and security cooperation, and focusing more on historic cultural and ideological links.

This shift can be attributed to the economic growth of ASEAN countries, whose policies have become a benchmark for India's economic reforms. Since the early 1990s, India steadily expanded its defence cooperation with the Southeast Asian nations, both bilaterally and multilaterally. Whilst economic policies were at the forefront of the India-ASEAN relations, India simultaneously engaged Southeast Asia in the area of defence, with the prime focus of re-establishing ties with South East Asian countries after the Cold War and restoring high level exchanges to gently explore the prospects for deeper cooperation. India has, over time, pedalled many such deals, with free trade deals signed individually with most ASEAN nations and directly through ASEAN itself, but it should be noted by this committee that the state considers strategic and military cooperation the most important of its dealings with the region.

Discussion of the Topic

ASEAN values

As previously mentioned, ASEAN was founded on a specific set of values. Referred to as the “ASEAN Way”, the organization’s issue-solving methodology incorporates the cultural norms of Southeast Asia; by keeping the working and consultation process informal, quiet, and personal in nature, ASEAN succeeds in finding compromise and creating consensus, to resolve issues non-violently.⁴² It’s this quiet diplomacy which characterizes the organization as a whole and in a way, characterises its origins. One of the main criticisms of the ASEAN Way states that by creating an environment where positive outcomes rely on adherence to a working process which is unfamiliar to those outside the sphere of cultural influence of the region, ASEAN makes cooperation with such nations “unreasonably” difficult.⁴³ And, to be clear, this isn’t untrue; by incorporating these values to the working process of ASEAN, it is clear that, by nature, the organization was always meant to focus on the domestic. In effect, The ASEAN Declaration (or Bangkok Declaration) of 1967 made clear that the organization was founded to protect the region and the independence and sovereignty of Southeast Asian member-states against outside powers, focusing on accelerating economic growth, social progress, cultural development and peace in the region, and to promote Southeast Asian studies.⁴⁴

The “Look East Policy” was accordingly very much tailored by India specifically for ASEAN, taking into account the ‘ASEAN Way’ and adapting the characteristics of interactions to fit ASEAN. To further mesh with the ASEAN Way, India relied on shared values, history and culture. Today, some scholars believe that these initial foundations India created are fading as time goes by, leaving binding pragmatism, shared interests, resource interdependence and economic integration at the heart of the relationship. Whilst the reason of any deal between ASEAN and states outside of Southeast Asia would naturally be to develop shared interest, it is important to once again note ASEAN’s purpose of internal development and protection; many scholars believe

⁴² Prashanth Parameswaran, "What's in the New US-ASEAN Maritime Exercise?" *The Diplomat*, October 24, 2018, , accessed January 11, 2019, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/10/whats-in-the-new-us-asean-maritime-exercise/>.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ "The Asean Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) Bangkok, 8 August 1967," ASEAN | ONE VISION ONE IDENTITY ONE COMMUNITY, , accessed January 11, 2019, <https://asean.org/the-asean-declaration-bangkok-declaration-bangkok-8-august-1967/>.

that creating significant ties with ‘outside’ nations and subsequently getting too close would place ASEAN at a crossroads where it risks breaching its declaration of intent to respect and protect member states sovereignty and independence.⁴⁵ As such, any deals made with nations such as India have always been created under extreme scrutiny; this has sometimes lead to conflicts which ASEAN swears to avoid through consensus and calm debate.⁴⁶ The question for this topic is therefore, how much closer can ASEAN get to its ally, before a debate in the Bangkok Declaration itself is necessary, to adapt to today’s globalizing diplomacy?

The Look East Policy (continued):

Nevertheless, India’s relationship with ASEAN has yielded many positive deals and agreements. That being said, however beneficial to ASEAN these alliances may be, in general most of these deals can be tied to broader interests such as meeting India's energy, security and development needs, maritime security, and the ongoing rapprochement with the United States. India also holds many trade deals within the region, such as a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement with Singapore, and an Early Harvest Scheme with Thailand. Through ties with ASEAN, India has jumped from strength to strength; in 2003, it signed onto the ASEAN–India Free Trade Area (AIFTA), creating a free trade zone with all 10 ASEAN-member states and India which has boosted all eleven’s economies significantly. Overall, economic and commercial deals between ASEAN and India are straightforward in their nature, with both parties profiting from the agreements.

The best example of India’s push for closer multilateral and bilateral ties would be the 2016 ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity. The main goal of the plan is to further deepen and enhance political-security, economic and socio-cultural ties, as well as to realise the full potential of the ASEAN-India strategic partnership in all areas of common interests. This has, once again, raised some debate within ASEAN as to how much further Indo-ASEAN cooperation can be pushed without re-assessing the Bangkok Declaration. This same debate also exists in relation to ASEAN and India intentions to work towards supporting the ASEAN

⁴⁵ Tobias Ingo Nischalke, "Insights from ASEAN’s Foreign Policy Co Operation: The “ASEAN Way”, a Real Spirit or a Phantom?" Contemporary Southeast Asia 22, no. 1 (2000): , doi:10.1355/cs22_1d.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

Community building and integration process together, and more specifically their cooperation on the ASEAN Community's Post-2015 Vision, which aims to create a politically cohesive, economically integrated, socially responsible, people-oriented, and rules-based ASEAN, to narrow the development gap and enhancing ASEAN Connectivity. Both sides will also further promote cooperation in addressing common and emerging challenges and enhance coordination in other international fora on issues of common concern to contribute to overall peace, stability and prosperity.⁴⁷ With these goals and intentions in mind, and for the most part underway, many believe that if ASEAN are not careful with envisioned securitization and military cooperative agreements, they may unintentionally tip the scales of ASEAN's values out of balance. Therefore, the dichotomy between growing towards globalization whilst staying true to the original purpose of ASEAN should be considered throughout this topic and in all aspects of Indo-ASEAN cooperation.

Military and Maritime growth: India

India's rising military power, especially its naval power, was one of the key reasons ASEAN welcomed India as a partner to strengthen its security policies. India's objectives were steadily accommodated, and by 2005, India became a member of the first East Asian Summit. From there, India has been admitted into ASEAN led forums such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the East Asian Summit (EAS) and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) Plus, despite initial reluctance on the part of some ASEAN member states. Both players have engaged in joint military actions over the years such as coordinated patrols, naval port calls, training and education, defence dialogues, exchange of high-level visits, defence supplies, etc. Among all, India-Singapore defence relations are the closest. Since 1994 India and Singapore have held the annual Singapore Indian Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX). In 2012 they have renewed the Air Force Bilateral Agreement, which allows Singapore Air Forces to undertake training exercises and exchanges with Indian forces on Indian soil. India's defence agreements with Singapore, Vietnam,

⁴⁷ Joint Declaration of the ASEAN Defence Ministers on Strengthening Defence Cooperation of ASEAN in the Global Community to Face New Challenges Jakarta, 19 May 2011," ASEAN | ONE VISION ONE IDENTITY ONE COMMUNITY, , accessed January 11, 2019, https://asean.org/?static_post=joint-declaration-of-the-asean-defence-ministers-on-strengthening-defence-cooperation-of-asean-in-the-global-community-to-face-new-challenges-jakarta-19-may-2011.

Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Philippines have increased the scope of bilateral defence cooperation.

These exercises are considered by many as parts of a whole; individually, these maritime exercises seem like nothing more than what they are, maritime shows of power to cement defence and security agreements, but as a whole, they create the perfect environment for India to include its influence throughout the region. Maritime exercises like SIMBEX have never drawn protests from China since most nations India practises such exercises with are not claimants of the South China Sea; as such, India is posing no direct threat to China.

Most recently, the Indian government has focused on developing Maritime Transportation Agreement. At the ASEAN India Commemorative Summit in New Delhi, Modi highlighted the importance of placing ASEAN in the focus in their East Policies. The PM and ASEAN leaders sought to focus on creating a mechanism for maritime collaboration which would focus on greater maritime cooperation in both traditional and non-traditional domains, whilst also keeping a focus on old and new maritime trade routes between India and all ASEAN states. Delhi is of the view that maritime connectivity, which was the mainstay of India's ancient trade links with the South-East Asian nations, required "urgent modernisation in the context of current geopolitical realities". The proposed agreement would help eliminate barriers hindering maritime transport and establish regional maritime transport framework with the objective of maritime transport facilitation between India and South-East Asia and beyond, as India establishes itself as a power in the Indo-Pacific region. Whilst the yields from such a deal are objectively positive, the proposed Indo-ASEAN maritime transportation agreement is believed by many to be yet another move by India to expand its maritime connectivity with the ASEAN nations in response to China's hegemonic aspirations in the region furthered by Belt-and-Road Initiative (BRI). New Delhi views the Agreement as an instrument to respond to the BRI of China. India has been opposed to the BRI as it believes China has embarked on the cross-continental connectivity initiative to pursue its hegemonic aspirations.

China: Maritime conflict

During the 1980s, China started to invest huge amounts of capital into its Navy, with the force more than tripling in size and gaining naval nuclear status. Consequentially, the navy developed into a regional naval power; by the mid-80's, China was strong enough to extend its naval operations in the South China Sea, and by 1987, China was considered to have the third largest navy in the world. Today, China holds the second largest navy in the world; a significant bulk of its forces are currently within the Southeast Asian area, dotted around the South China Sea.⁴⁸ It is this threat that is the most relevant to this discussion. The South China Sea is important in that the conflict is often a catalyst for tensions between ASEAN and China. The region, recently found to be rich in oil and other natural resources, is disputed by Taiwan, China and ASEAN member states Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam, with China's presence in the region posing threat to the ASEAN claimants. China has, in attempts to cement its claims to the region, claimed Islands as their own (eg: Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute) and allegedly developed bases across the Spratly archipelago.⁴⁹ Its expanding naval presence in the region regardless of ASEAN's complaints or warnings has reminded nation states that China has the naval and political strength to take the South China Sea; as such, ASEAN states cannot entrust China with being one of the only nation states it holds security, military or naval partnerships with. ASEAN needs to create new security ties with other nation states, to ensure their safety from the Chinese naval threat in case if any future dispute; India, once again, proves useful in this sense. This being said, it is also important that ASEAN remain allied to China, to secure the region from outside threats; after all, ASEAN would find it difficult to defend their seas from possible outside threat without China's help.

ASEAN is still learning to walk this tightrope-like knife edge; in part, omitting the topic from discussion with China within the forum, and leaving it to bilateral diplomacy, has served ASEAN well enough. In 2018, ASEAN held its first ASEAN-China-Singapore maritime field training exercise. Initial table-top prep for the official October event took place in the beginning of August, with smaller scale games acting as the first steps "for navies from ASEAN countries and China to work together to deal with maritime incidents at sea". This kind of cooperation serves a number

⁴⁸ "How Uninhabited Islands Soured China-Japan Ties," BBC, November 10, 2014,, accessed January 11, 2019, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-11341139>.

⁴⁹ Tom Phillips, "Photos Show Beijing's Militarisation of South China Sea in New Detail," The Guardian, February 06, 2018, , accessed January 11, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/06/photos-beijings-militarisation-south-china-sea-philippines>.

of purposes for ASEAN; first, opportunities like these will help to curate better ties to Chinese Naval powers, and make negotiation and Naval operation in the South China Sea safer to conduct; hosting events such as maritime games together provides the middle ground from which to build partnerships.⁵⁰ Second, the event gives space for the Ministries of Defence of each state present to unofficially discuss issues, and build ties separate to conflict to ensure the stability of current relations.⁵¹ Thirdly, these kinds of games can serve as an assurance to China that ASEAN won't break nor diminish ties to them. To expand their naval alliances, ASEAN and its member states have been agreeing to an increasing number of offers from outside powers like India and the U.S. for Naval games, Military ties, and economic expansion plans; China, if they so choose, could see these as a threat to their influence in the region. By also spending time curating ties with China, ASEAN is careful not to be seen to choose a side, as offending China would cause an innate amount of problems for ASEAN, who cannot guarantee to have the resources to take on such issues.

US-India relationship

In today's World Order, India is distinctly not at the top of the metaphorical totem pole. That being said, the nation has faith in itself that it will eventually match China on the global stage. For this to occur, though, the nation needs the support of other so-called "superpowers"; India needs consistent and guaranteed military and economic support from the US and other powers like Russia to be able to strengthen itself and attain parity with China. As such, ever since its 1993 economic reform, the nation's actions have been in part taken with this goal in mind. Ties with the USA had been growing steadily and positively under previous administrations; with the Trump administration, India has prospered from the Sino-US trade war. As China has been feeling the brunt of a fallout with the US, the nation has been trying to mend bridges with India; in October, China sent a delegation to New Delhi to lobby for increased coordination on trade policy and a reduction in tensions between the two states. On the whole, India has been apprehensively receptive of China's offer; India knows its reliance on the US will not be able to last forever. Already, trump's administration has placed harsh tariffs on Indian goods. As such, India is receptive to the idea of closer ties to China; however, the nation is aware that its people, who view

⁵⁰ Huong Le Thu, "Chinas Dual Strategy of Coercion and Inducement towards ASEAN," The Pacific Review, 2018, doi:10.1080/09512748.2017.1417325.

⁵¹ Ibid.

India and China as competitor and rival, generally do not share these views. Furthermore, if the political climate in the US changes, and the nation leaves behind its populist agenda, the old Sino-Indian underlying structural contradictions would most likely re-emerge, and business would resume as usual; this is a fact China and India are both hyperaware of.

Future Defence and Security deals

The future for ASEAN and India seems bright. In July, comprehensive Defence deals were signed between Singapore and India, bolstering the previously mentioned SIMBEX and promising freedom of navigation to each other. That would, in effect, give India rights to operate in Singapore's waters. This is of note, because it sets a precedent; now that such a deal has been agreed, it can be used as a template for other deals, including any clauses on freedom of navigation. This becomes an issue, when one considers the conflict between China and some ASEAN states over the South China Sea. Obviously, Singapore has no claim to the South China Sea, but nations like Vietnam do. India went through talks in November with the state to talk through initial ideas on a Defence deal similar to the one between them and Singapore. This caused significant issue to China; Vietnam was quick to first seek suggestions from India to keep South China Sea stable and ensure Freedom of Navigation in the region, before then changing their minds, and declining any offer for military alliance, stating security concerns for the region. This situation has made on point very clear to ASEAN; India's push for a defence deal with Vietnam was a strong one, and whilst it didn't damage relations, it made it clear to all states in the region that India wants a voice on the Issue of the South China Sea.

Another discussion that has been taking place in the region has been the idea of India bolstering an ASEAN-wide defence deal, specifically including Freedom of Navigation within the expanded deal. In January 2018, Indian and ASEAN state representatives met to discuss Maritime Security and Cooperation. They agreed that Freedom of Navigation was key element to include to any Indo-ASEAN maritime partnership and noted that maritime security cooperation was the major focus of talks on expanding the Maritime Transportation Agreement. The talks included discussion on the creation of a whole new mechanism for maritime cooperation which would focus on greater maritime cooperation in both traditional and non-traditional domain, with explicit emphasis placed on the idea of expanding old and new trade maritime routes between India and all ASEAN states. This, once again, is a classic example of India negotiating with ASEAN to their ultimate

benefit. Overall, scholars and world leaders around the globe have agreed that expanding on defence deals which would include Freedom of navigation, especially in the South Chinese sea region, would cause a significant escalation of tensions within the region, and yet, India are pushing for the move, at their benefit of finding a new theatre in which to challenge China. Considering values upon which this organization was founded, can ASEAN sign off on such a defence deal in good conscience?

Bloc Positions

Whilst this topic does focus a significant amount of its energy on China, Russia, the USA and India, ASEAN nations play the most vital of roles in this narrative. The region over which China and India are competing is, after all, the sovereign nations of ASEAN's territory, and each of these territories will hold differing opinions, in terms of foreign policy towards China and India.

Brunei

Since 2008, Brunei has signed five Memorandums of Understanding (MoU), on topics ranging from Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreements (BIPA) to Information and Communications Technology (ICT). Indian businessmen have monopolized the textiles sector of Brunei, and the majority of doctors in Brunei are from India. The two states strongly promote practical co-operation in some areas, such as infrastructure, construction, agriculture and fishery. Import-Export yields and trade between the two have risen significantly in recent years, as India finds itself able to invest in Brunei thanks to good yields in petroleum investments. Conversely, China also holds interest in Brunei; Chinese companies have agreed to finance two projects agricultural projects in Brunei worth around US\$10 million. The Chinese-funded Brunei-Guangxi Economic Corridor was established in 2014, promising economic gain to the region. China is the largest foreign investor in Brunei. China also believes that Brunei is an important player in the creation of the Belt and Road initiative, willing to cooperate to further some of Brunei's domestic goals for their agreement to the initiative. Of course, it must be noted that Brunei and China have competing claims to the South China Sea area, which regularly causes tension between the two.

Cambodia

Historically, Cambodia has generally aligned itself with China; There has been a significant influx of Chinese investment and aid in recent years, leading to a very close relationship between the two states. In 2006, the two states signed several bilateral agreements and a treaty of "Comprehensive Partnership of Cooperation.". About \$200 million has also been invested by China for the construction of bridges spanning the Mekong and Tonle Sap rivers. China also draws oil from the Gulf of Tonkin. China has also cultivated military ties, by investing in military aid for Cambodia in the late 90's, and through investments in training programs for Cambodia. China considers

Cambodia one of its “closest friends”. Nevertheless, India’s influence in the nation is growing; Theravāda Buddhism is the official religion of Cambodia, and its intrinsic Indian culture has impacted Cambodian society and culture. Furthermore, in 2018 the two countries signed four key agreement to enhance bilateral cooperation, including an MoU on the prevention of human trafficking, a mutual legal assistance treaty in criminal matters, and a cultural exchange program. India and Cambodia also agreed on facilitating exchanges between senior-level defense personnel and capacity-building projects, and also jointly endorsed the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

Indonesia

Historically, the regions of Indonesia and India have had political ties for over 2000 years. More recently, India and Indonesia had signed business deals worth billions of dollars and have set ambitious targets for the future; they wish to double trade over the next five years, and achieve bilateral trade of \$25 billion by 2015, with a cumulative Indian investment of \$20 billion in Indonesia. On the other hand, Indonesia and China’s similarly ancient bilateral relations have improved over the years. Trade between China and Indonesia is on the rise, especially since 2010. China’s investments and businesses have thrived since the early 2000’s, bringing large amounts of revenue to both states, and China remains a major trading partner, serving as the country’s largest export and import market. However, the free trade with China has caused much anxiety in Indonesia, since inflows of cheap products from China are harming Indonesian industry. China has also financed and developed multiple infrastructure projects in the country to create more growth in its economy, particularly in the utility, transportation, industry and tourism, with surging inflows of aid in recent years. Of note, China is currently undertaking the construction of Indonesia’s Jakarta-Bandung high-speed railway project.

Laos

India considers Laos as strategically important, considering China's growing land-reclamation activities in South China Sea, and in recent years have tried to deepen ties, by holding a number of state visits and by signing onto “deep impact projects”. India has also proven supportive of

Laos's army, providing training support in 2008. India has also invested \$66.15 million into numerous hydro power projects throughout Laos. Laos has been supportive to India's efforts to become permanent member of UN Security Council. In contrast, Laos-China relations consist mainly of trade, aid and massive investments, largely in road construction in the northern provinces of Laos. China also gives military aid to Laos, who benefits greatly from Chinese intervention throughout the state. In effect, much of Laos's infrastructure can be traced to Chinese investment. In 2017, Laos and China held Defense deal talks.

Malaysia

Today, Malaysia is home to a strong concentration of Indian immigrants. Malaysia is a significant investor in India, with more than US\$6 billion staked on telecommunications, healthcare, banking and construction projects, with interests also laying in infrastructure programs around India. Indian industrial, IT and healthcare companies also invest significantly in Malaysian infrastructure.. In 2017, India and Malaysia signed onto 31 MoU's, the most signed in one sitting by two nations in the history of bilateral economic relations, with both nations agreeing to expand co-operation in infrastructures development. Within the structure of the Asia-Pacific region, Sino-Malaysian relations are of great importance. The two states have had Strategic Consultation meetings since the late 80's, with the goal of sharing and exchanging views on various bilateral and regional issues, and issues of mutual interest. The two states hold vast amounts of investments in each other's respective infrastructures. Malaysia is one of the few nations in the world t whom China have loaned a pair of Panda's. Both countries also exchange views on current developments happening in the South East Asia. Of note, Malaysia is also a claimant to the South China Sea, which, when tension flair in the region, does tend to be a point of contention for the two friends.

Myanmar

India is the largest market for Burmese exports, Myanmar's 4th largest trading partner, and second largest export market. India and Myanmar have set a target of achieving \$1 billion and bilateral trade reached USD 1.3 billion by 2019. India has also worked to extend air, land and sea routes to strengthen trade links with Myanmar and establish a gas pipeline. India's private sector is investing in agriculture, telecommunications, information technology, steel, oil, natural gas, hydrocarbons and food processing in Myanmar. In the past, India invested in Myanmar to build the Tamu-

Kalewa-Kalemyo highway and more recently the India–Myanmar–Thailand Trilateral Highway, both of which have linked India’s border territories with Myanmar’s harder to reach regions, allowing to develop better, stronger trade routes. These large investments by India into Myanmar are seen by many to be the manifestation of India’s desire to counter China’s influence in the region. India and Myanmar have also agreed to cooperate militarily in order to help modernize Myanmar's military.

China is the most important supplier of military aid for Myanmar, and extensive strategic and military cooperation exists between the two; in return for significant investment in their Military, China’s access to Myanmar's ports and naval installations provide the nation with strategic influence in the Bay of Bengal, in the wider Indian Ocean region and in Southeast Asia. On the security council, China has vetoed numerous resolutions designed to punish Myanmar. More recently, China has been uncharacteristically quiet in the face of the Rohingya crisis, and as Myanmar focuses more on Indian trade, China has been noticeably colder to the nation.

The Philippines

Overall, Philippines-India trade averages at around a 1.6 billion a year which, for the region, is considered to be quite weak; however, this trend is actively changing. In 2007, the two nations agreed to establish a Joint Commission on Bilateral Co-operation, aiming to further strengthen and develop the co-operation in the field of trade, economic, scientific, technological and other fields of co-operation. In 2018, the Philippines-India relationship was a focal bilateral discussions, with India is targeting billions of investments in Philippine markets, notably in the pharmaceutical, information technology, energy, and transportation which would lead to the creation of 10,000 jobs.

Conversely, ties between China and the Philippines are significantly stronger. The cooperation in the fields of culture, technology, judiciary and tourism between the two countries achieves continuous progress, with both sides having have signed 11 two-year action plans of cultural cooperation. In 2004, both sides established the mechanism of annual Defense and Security Consultations, a conference that has been held multiple times since its initial creation. That being said, it is of note that the Philippines does have a claim to the South China Sea; the tensions expanding from this have hindered further development of ties between the two.

Singapore

In 2003, India and Singapore signed a bilateral agreement on expanding military cooperation, conducting joint military training, developing military technology and achieving maritime security. The Singaporean Navy and the Indian Navy have conducted joint naval exercises and training since 1993, such as SIMBEX. India and Singapore have also expanded their cooperation in fighting terrorism. Over the last two decades, Singapore has positioned itself as the hub of India's economic, political and strategic relationships in Southeast Asia. When India announced its Look East policy in 1992, Singapore positioned itself as India's de facto regional sponsor. In 2016, India and Singapore signed the agreement for the "strategic relationship" across the board including defense and military, security and intelligence cooperation, political exchanges, enhancing trade and investment, improving financial linkages, improving air connectivity and cooperation in multilateral forums. In general, Singapore and India have close bilateral ties. The bilateral trade between China and Singapore developed rapidly in recent years and Singapore has maintained the first position among ASEAN countries in their trade with China. Singapore and China have always been close, with Singapore championing October 2018's joint ASEAN-China Naval games, and overall, China has always been able to rely on Singapore as a close ally. While relationship between the two countries still stands strong, differences experienced during numerous high-profile events, including Singapore's stance against China regarding the South China Sea dispute and Singapore's support for the United States' military presence in the region has soured their relationship.

Thailand

In 2011, Indo-Thai relations underwent a revival, with agreements to increase the cultural interaction, connectivity and enhancement of trade and economic through the bilateral and regional frameworks decided upon. In a major boost to bilateral security cooperation, in 2013 India and Thailand signed an Extradition Treaty, creating the first legal format for Bilateral security cooperation. An MoU on cooperation on anti-money laundering and terrorism financing was also signed. The two also agreed to continue strengthening defence relations, including exercises and joint patrolling, and later on to the framework of an Indo-Thai Free Trade Agreement. India also invested in Thailand's infrastructure for the creation of the India-Myanmar-Thailand highway project. Both states agree that their defence and security ties have room for more extensive

development. In contrast, China is Thailand's second largest export market and their largest import market. Having signed a Free Trade Agreement back in 2003 which covered agricultural products, an early harvest agreement has been in the works for years. More recently, China and Thailand plan to open a joint commercial arms factory, responsible for assembly, production and maintenance of land weapon systems for the Thai army. Chinese and Thai military cooperation has been ongoing since the cold war; much of Thailand's military power can be traced back to Chinese aid and investment.

Vietnam

India and Vietnam are both members of the Mekong–Ganga Cooperation, created to develop and enhance close ties between India and nations of Southeast Asia. Vietnam has supported India's bid to become a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council. In 2003, a joint declaration, India and Vietnam envisaged creating an "Arc of Advantage and Prosperity" in Southeast Asia; to this end, Vietnam has backed increasing the significance of the relationship between India and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its negotiation of an Indo-ASEAN free trade agreement. India and Vietnam have also built strategic partnerships, including extensive cooperation on developing nuclear power, enhancing regional security and fighting terrorism, transnational crime and drug trafficking. In general, India considers Vietnam a close ally in the region. In 2000, Vietnam and China successfully resolved longstanding disputes over their land border and maritime rights in the Gulf of Tonkin, and so followed the reparation of diplomatic ties. A joint agreement between China and ASEAN in 2002 marked out a process of peaceful resolution and guarantees against armed conflict. By 2011, trade volume had boomed with China forecast to become Vietnam's largest single trading partner by 2030. Joint ventures have furthermore been launched, such as the Thai Nguyen Steel Complex, which produces hundreds of thousands of tonnes of steel products. However, in 2011, Vietnam announced that its military would conduct new exercises in the South China Sea in keeping with the nations claim to the region. This has soured relations with China, and many small skirmishes in the region have followed, creating diplomatic tension between the two.

We further encourage delegates to research their respective nation's policies more in-depth, to apply each nations policy to the topic at hand.

Points a Resolution Should Address

A resolution from this committee should attempt to consider all of the information put forward within this guide; it should consider the temperament of relations between India, ASEAN states, China, Russia and any other related party, and should attempt to tackle the following questions:

- How do the ASEAN states view India as a strategic partner, and in terms of defence cooperation?
- Can ASEAN justify situations in which such close ties are held between the organization and non-Southeast Asian states as in accordance with its declaration? How close can ties in such situations be held in general, before the ties threaten ASEAN's values?
- What is the trajectory ASEAN nations want to pursue in terms of the relationship with India? More generally, based on this case and interactions with China, how does ASEAN want to move forward with any and all Multilateral relationships?
- Where is the line, for ASEAN nations, between beneficial relationships and infringement of national sovereignty?
- What are the implications for geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific region, and how would ASEAN nations protect themselves from potential future Indian threats?
- What safeguards could be put into place to prevent future abuse of power by a bilateral or multilateral partner?

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