

The Eurasian Space

The Eurasian Space: Far More Than Two Continents

In 2004, Paul van der Velde was one of the editors of a third book exploring issues concerning the promotion of Asia-Europe ties, particularly in this volume in regard to international co-operation.

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ASEM's scope of discussion and activity was multi-dimensional and encompassed politics, economics, and social, as well as cultural and intellectual exchange. In general the process was considered by all parties involved as a forum for enhancing the relations between Asia and Europe at all levels deemed necessary to achieve a more balanced multilateral world order. In the post 9-11 world and with the war and ongoing instability in Iraq there was ever more reason for Asia and Europe to deepen their co-operation to meet the common challenges of international terrorism, and maintain a just and stable world order.

This volume has been edited together with Yeo Lay Hwee, Executive Director and Senior Research Fellow of the Singapore Institute of International Affairs, and co-published with the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) in Singapore. This is a conscious move to increase academic co-operation between Asia and Europe. The contributors to this book consist of academics who can rightly be called specialists in the ASEM field of studies. They share a deep interest in how the relationship between Asia and Europe can be further enhanced. Their articles were written with the objective of examining the level of engagement between Asia and Europe, and highlighting how the ASEM process has been useful directly or indirectly not only in enhancing the ties between the various Asian and European countries, but also in contributing to the general development of new approaches to international co-operation. We have brought their contributions under four main headings: ASEMness and East Asianness; Inter-regionalism, trans-regionalism and extra-regionalism; Security and monetary co-operation; and East Asia and ASEM.

ASEMness and East Asianness

Against the backdrop of the issue of the enlargement of ASEM, Michael Reiterers' contribution, "ASEM: Value-Added to International Relations and to the Asia-Europe Relationship", addressed a key-question: what was ASEM all about and what function could it play in the area of international politics and the wider Asia-Europe relationship? He highlighted some of the discussion and debates on how ASEM conceptually contributed to multi-level governance in international politics through encouraging inter-regional and intraregional co-operation and by regional identity building and enhancing multilateralism. In more concrete terms, ASEM made a contribution to world governance in the fields of furthering cross-cultural understanding and mutual respect; overcoming narrow nationalism; regime building in specific issue areas; encouraging multi-dimensional dialogue and co-operation; the EU acting as a balancing and stabilising power in East Asia and enhancing the visibility and role of the EU. More generally, ASEM can be regarded as a valuable experiment of quasi-institutionalisation, bringing together different cultural approaches to international co-operation, that is, the legalistic formal European approach and the pragmatic informal Asian approach.

One of the issues in relation to the conceptual framework of the Asia-Europe relationship was the effects of inter-regional interactions on regional identity building or more concisely, fostering regionalism through inter-regionalism. This was taken up by Julie Gilson and Yeo Lay Hwee in their contribution "Collective Identity-Building through Trans-Regionalism: ASEM and the East Asian Regional Identity". In it a constructivist perspective was taken, focusing on the role of ideas and interests in the creation of regional identity and critical historical junctures from which new structural or institutional arrangements, norms and identities emerge and on interactions between existing cultures and institutions. The latter were defined as regularised channels of communication among state representatives acting in accordance with obligations set out in statements or declarations such as ASEM. While they do not overtly say that ASEM has been the impetus behind an East Asian regional identity, they conceive ASEM along the lines of lying within a process of increasing regional identification for the purpose of external affairs, which can ultimately lead to the development of a dominant discourse of East Asianness. Be that as it may, Gilson and Yeo did not hesitate to speak of an Asian identity in the context of ASEM that had become established by participation within a forum where a clear "other", that is, the European Union, exists. At the basis of this emerging Asian identity was the intensification of co-operation among Asian countries in which ASEM has functioned as a stepping-stone for other regional initiatives such as the ASEM+3 (South Korea, Japan, and China), a process established in 1997 which in turn reinforced ASEM.

Inter-regionalism, Trans-regionalism and Extra-regionalism

The EU-ASEAN relationship was one of the oldest group-to-group dialogues, having been in existence since 1972. Mathew Doidge's contribution "Inter-regionalism and Regional Actors: The EU-ASEAN Example" focused on the function such a dialogue might perform. He applied the concept of actorness, the capacity to act in the international system, to explain the performance or non-performance of this relationship. In addition to identity, actorness has three main components: action triggers (goals, interests, principles); policy structures and processes which involves the capacity to make decisions in relation to action triggers; and performance structures which includes all those structures and resources necessary for the performance of a given task once a decision has been made. Doidge concluded that despite its long existence almost all advanced functions of inter-regionalism such as alliance-style balancing, rationalising and agenda setting are hardly known in the EU-ASEAN context. Applying the concept of actorness to ASEM would create the possibility of assessing the qualitative levels of actorness, which could be used in targeting efforts towards areas where success was likely, instead of wasting them in areas where their actorness is insufficient.

In his article, "ASEM's Extra-Regionalism: Converging Europe's and East Asia's External Projections towards Other Regions", Cesar de Prado Yepes first focused on the commonalities of the regional processes of the EU and East Asia which were reflected in the ASEM. At the heart of this process lay the conviction from all members that multilateralism fed by regional and inter-regional processes should be the facilitator of international relations. De Prado Yepes continued with an overview of the many regionalisms outside Asia and Europe such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC), the African Union (AU) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). In a matrix, de Prado Yepes demonstrated that ASEM could potentially create extra-regional synergies with other world regions through the selective engagement of representatives of world regions in the ASEM process and through converging inter-regional processes that both Europe and East Asia had with other parts of the world.

David Milliot in his contribution, "ASEM: A Catalyst for Dialogue and Cooperation: The Case of FEALAC", studied the influence ASEM had had on the formation of the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Co-operation (FEALAC) which was founded in 1999. FEALAC brings together the ten ASEAN countries, China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand and seventeen countries from Latin America: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela. ASEM's influence was considerable because its framework was used as a blueprint,

thus offering FEALAC similar working processes and functionalities as ASEM. Although FEALAC had so far kept a low profile, it was nevertheless a clear example that ASEM had made its mark in international relations as a catalyst for dialogue and co-operation and that both processes marked the emergence of a multi-level governance and created a new trans-regional level between the regional and universal levels. It was up to the Asians and Europeans to turn trans-regionalism into a substantial and innovative component of international relations.

Security and Monetary Co-operation

Heiner Hänggi in his contribution, "ASEM's Security Agenda Revisited", took stock of the ASEM security agenda against the background of the process in general that started with a strong geo-economic agenda and gradually gave way to a more geo-political one culminating in the terrorist attacks of 9 / 11 and the outbreak of the war in Iraq, which once more gave security a central role in international relations. Those external factors led to an increasing securitisation of the ASEM agenda while internal factors relating to the political pillar of ASEM which has a political value (human rights and democratisation) and security dimension (covering a broad range of traditional and new security issues) also strengthened the latter because it held far more common ground than the political dimension. Therefore one can say that ASEM had in the previous eight years acquired a certain "security acquis". Hänggi was of the opinion that a further securitisation of ASEM would decrease the relevance of the process because it was built on a geo-economic rationale. Nevertheless, the ASEM partners should use their inter-regional framework as an instrument for keeping the United States engaged in a multilateral framework and to check and balance the United States' unilateralist strivings. The Declaration on Multilateralism agreed upon during the Sixth Foreign Ministers Meeting (2004) can be construed as a strong signal.

Whilst the influence of European and Asian influence on the world security agenda is limited, Xu Mingqi in his article, "The Euro and East Asia Monetary Co-operation", was of the opinion that the European Monetary Union and the euro would have a strong influence not only on the monetary situation in Asia but also worldwide. First of all the introduction of the euro lowered the transaction costs between Asia and Europe, which was beneficial for both parties. More and more transactions were in euros rather than dollars. At the same time the introduction of the European currency had clearly inspired ideas of East Asian monetary co-operation. Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), a precondition for monetary integration, were in the pipeline. Much would depend on the willingness of Japan and China to co-operate. Xu regarded the Chiang Mai Initiative (2000), a bilateral swap

agreement within the ASEAN+3 framework as its multilateral base, as the cornerstone of future East Asian monetary co-operation. For the time being Xu envisioned a bipolar euro-dollar international monetary system but with the strengthening of East Asian monetary co-operation a tripolar system would emerge which would further stabilise the international system.

East Asia and ASEM

China, Japan, and South Korea have all, albeit at different points in time, from different angles and with different degrees of intensity, become involved in the ASEM process. One of the *raisons d'être* for that process was to engage China further in world affairs and its interest in this dates from the turn of the century. Sebastian Bersick in his article, "China and ASEM: Strengthening Multilateralism through Inter-Regionalism", examines why China had increasingly come to regard ASEM as a vehicle to further its foreign policy, which is geared towards a tripolar world order. ASEM as such has at its heart multilateralism as an organising principle of the international system while at the same time this approach stimulates inter-regional and intra-regional co-operation. The ASEM regime then can be seen as a new way of balancing regions and nations in an evolving multipolar world order through increasing interdependencies which fits with present-day Chinese foreign policy.

Kazuhiko Togo in his article, "Japan and ASEM" first described Japan's post Second World War policy towards East Asia and Europe and the opportunity created by ASEM, with its comprehensive agenda including political, economic and security dialogue, to discuss its relationships with Asian countries in a multilateral context while at the same time offering the opportunity to reconsider its primarily bilateral relations with European countries. Togo then analyses how Japan's involvement in ASEM had changed its policies towards Asia and Europe from the angle of its desire to be actively involved in the East Asian Community and from the perspective of deepening its ties with member states of the EU. In his concluding remarks, Togo pleaded for what he calls a true Eurasian perspective that is to develop ASEM as an entity with a bigger geopolitical perspective, which includes the Russian Federation.

In their contribution, "Korea and ASEM", David Camroux and Sunghee Park first analysed ASEM in the context of EU-Korean relations and then focussed on South Korea's ASEM diplomacy. The ties between Korea and the EU were, in comparison to other Asian countries up to the mid-eighties, not very strong due to a lack of Western colonial presence and because of the European conception of Korea as a developing country. In the nineties however, economic and political ties between

Korea and the EU matured. In 1996 at the outset of ASEM, Korea's interest in it was based on the idea that it could counterbalance APEC. The active engagement of Korea in ASEM was triggered by its wish to obtain European support for its Sunshine Policy of engagement with North Korea, which the United States refused to give. It used the hosting of the ASEM 3 summit in Seoul as a platform to internationalise its North Korea policy as exemplified by the Seoul Declaration for Peace on the Korean Peninsula. Camroux and Park concluded that the ASEM process had been truly beneficial for South Korea because it strengthened the promotion of its national interest and improved its bargaining power with the EU.

Concluding Remarks

The Eurasian space is still far from being a continuum. While the enlargement of ASEM was already a complicated affair, the inclusion of India and the Russian Federation was the big challenge for the decade lying ahead. Only then would one be able to speak of a real geographical continuum. Leaving geography aside, ASEM has since its inception and because of its multilateralist organising principle of the international system, paved the way for the eradication of inter-regional and intra-regional barriers at practically all levels of human interaction, which is showing us the way to a multipolar world order in which unilateralist behaviour will be regarded as uncouth globally and regionally. This last sentence may be construed as an abstract definition of an avant-garde concept in global relations. While the future of the official ASEM process may look uncertain (as the cancellation of two ministerial meetings over Myanmar's participation in the process exemplified), ASEM had provided that impetus toward new approaches to international relations. If ASEM had not been launched in 1996, it would have been invented sooner or later. That it has travelled this far, and spawned a network of interested people, academic research institutions and civil society organisations, holds promise for the future. Those of us who have been following the ASEM process, and witnessing the increasing linkages developing between Asia and Europe, look forward to more research, more studies and more space in which we can all interact without unnecessary physical and mental barriers.

Multiregionalism and Multilateralism: Asian-European Relations in a Global Context

In 2006, ASEM held its 10th birthday celebrations in Finland, which had then the EU's Presidency. Helsinki geared up to host the largest meeting at the level of Heads of State and Government in the history of that country, with approximately two thousand delegates and one thousand media representatives gathered for the sixth ASEM summit. A new co-edited volume was published by IIAS which focused on the institutionalisation of intraregional and interregional cooperation in the international system. It included, for the first time contributions by North and South American colleagues, demonstrating that ASEM was increasingly becoming a topic of interest to researchers worldwide.

Original source: Bersick, Sebastian, Stokhof, Wim and Velde, Paul van der. 2006. "Multiregionalism and Multilateralism: Asian-European Relations in a Global Context". *Multiregionalism and Multilateralism: Asian-European Relations in a Global Context*, edited by Bersick, Sebastian, Stokhof, Wim and Velde, Paul van der. 7-11. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. ICAS Publications Series, Edited Volumes 1.

The Driving Force of Multiregionalism

Tânia Felício in her chapter "East Asia: The Missing Link in Multiregionalism", focused on how the crisis in multilateralism, especially at the security level, could be overcome through multiregionalism. She showed how multiregionalism was being encouraged by both regional-global and interregional processes pushing for region building in places previously dominated by state-to-state relations. Felício highlighted the interrelated phenomena of the developing regional-global security mechanism sponsored by the UN and the EU-Asia dialogue through ASEM. Felício furthermore contended that these asymmetries created a more positive attitude in East Asia towards closer cooperation while boosting their sense of region-hood.

Michael Postert in his chapter "ASEM and the EU-style Economic Integration in East Asia" traced the positions of the actors in the financial architecture arena back to the Asian financial crisis. Support extended to the affected states was not altruistic; nor were preventive measures proposed thereafter. Asia's financial architecture was a battleground between competing political agendas: integration into the IMF global regime or a more autonomous Asian regime loosely connected to the IMF. Asia under the de facto guardianship of Japan had tried to reach a solution with US/IMF interests that sufficiently safeguarded the needs of the region and its member states. In recent years, with the encouraging example of successful monetary integration in the EU, a more balanced and self-assertive approach towards monetary and economic policy has emerged in East Asia. Postert showed

how the process of inter-regional cooperation was leading to a more autonomous Asian policy approach in the field of economic and financial integration. Through interaction with the EU and other key actors, East Asia was shaping the contours of an emergent financial field in the multiregional world order.

Christian Wagner dealt with “India’s New Quest for Intra- and Inter-regional Politics”. Wagner took a neo-realist view of interstate cooperation focusing on national interests and the relative gains of the state actors involved. Wagner reflected on India’s policies in the Cold War and post-Cold War periods and concluded it had followed a multi-faceted strategy through the 1990s, aiming for closer intraregional cooperation by strengthening existing organisations like SAARC, and looking for new opportunities for regional cooperation by becoming more integrated in existing organisations like ASEAN and applying for membership in APEC and ASEM.

John Quigley in his chapter “Enhancing South-East Asia’s Security: The Aceh Monitoring Mission” highlighted a further important aspect of multi-regionalism. Quigley focused on the first-ever EU-ASEAN crisis management mission in Asia, which began in 2005. The implications for the security policies of both regional groupings could be significant. It was still early to tell, Quigley argued, but it might well have implications for EU external policy and ASEAN institutional structures.

The China Factor

Marc Lanteigne in his “ASEM and the Expanding China-European Union Relationship” analysed the increasingly important role ASEM was playing in the evolving China and EU relationship as well as China’s engagement in the developing process of inter-regional relations between Europe and Asia. As China expanded its post-Cold War foreign policy interests further beyond its periphery, the ASEM process became an important forum for the country to address its expanding political, social and economic ties with Europe. China’s interest in the ASEM process began to move beyond the expansion of trade ties to include complex security issues between the two regions. Lanteigne questioned whether ASEM could be useful in mitigating conflict around issues separating Brussels and Beijing, e.g. differences over Chinese monetary trade policies. Furthermore, China’s participation in ASEM would be a crucial variable in determining whether ASEM would be able to distinguish itself from other regional and inter-regional institutions which had proliferated in the Asia-Pacific region over the past two decades.

Marisela Connelly in her “China and Latin America: The Economic Dimension” gave a detailed overview of China’s increasing bilateral and multilateral involvement with Latin America over the preceding fifteen years, part of China’s search

for raw materials to keep its economy on steam. The Chinese leadership was also aware that the region included important countries like Mexico and Brazil which enjoyed considerable prestige in international organisations. Yet many countries in Latin America still held diplomatic ties with Taiwan.

Towards ASEM Awareness

Bart Gaens in his chapter “Beyond ASEM 6: Lessons for the Actors”, examined from a European point of view three key factors of ASEM cooperation: the informal approach; the achievement of tangible results and the non-institutionalised approach. ASEM’s open and informal character offered advantages for networking and for the free exchange of views, and allowed for a comprehensive approach to global issues. It also underlined ASEM’s specific *raison d’être* within the array of available legal instruments and bilateral frameworks aiming to strengthen overall Asia-Europe relations. Rather than striving for grand projects or binding treaties, Gaens held that the ASEM process needed to sharpen its focus with a view on attaining less spectacular but significant results, for example in the sphere of soft security through interfaith dialogue.

Yeo Lay Hwee in her contribution “Ten Years of ASEM – Changes and Challenges” began with a brief historical analysis of the genesis of ASEM. She then gave an overview of the key changes in the regional and global environment in which ASEM operated and examined how ASEM had and should respond to those changes. The chapter assessed the progress and achievements made so far and concluded with a look at the possible way forward for ASEM in the next decade.

Zhu Liqun’s “The Perception of ASEM in China” was based on research by the ASEM research team done at four Chinese universities where questionnaires were handed out at random. This research sponsored by the Japan Centre for International Exchanges (JCIE) was timely because it gave us an idea to what degree “ASEM – following the ‘EU’ and ‘ASEAN’” – has become part of colloquial language over the past ten years. It came as no surprise that awareness of ASEM within the Chinese academic world barely existed. If comparable research was executed in other ASEM countries, the question remains whether the findings would differ. Research on awareness of ASEM in all member countries would thus be telling.

Based on the outcome of such ASEM-wide research, a plan should be developed to devise ways to popularise ASEM. For in the final analysis, ASEM should be for, and of, the citizens. A policy of ASEM mainstreaming should guide the post-Helsinki summit decade.

The Asia-Europe Meeting: Contributing to a New Global Governance. The Eight ASEM Heads of State Meeting in Brussels

In an edited volume published by the IIAS in 2010 the first fifteen years of ASEM's existence were contextualised and its future directions and imperatives discussed.

Original source: Bersick, Sebastian and Velde, Paul van der. 2011. "The Asia-Europe meeting: Contributing to a New Global Governance. The Eight ASEM Heads of State Meeting in Brussels (2010)". *The Asia-Europe Meeting: Contributing to a New Global Governance. The Eight ASEM Heads of State Meeting in Brussels (2010)*, edited by Bersick, Sebastian and Velde, Paul van der, 15-22. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press 2011. ICAS Publications Series, Edited Volumes 15.

ASEM is an inter-regional process of cooperation and dialogue consisting of 48 members, in addition to which the European Commission (EC) and the ASEAN Secretariat also participate in their own right. In the first fifteen years of its existence, the ASEM process has successfully facilitated the strengthening of ties between Asia and Europe at all levels of society. At the same time, the increasing economic and political importance of Asia – in particular emerging economies such as China and India as well as regional organisations like ASEAN – indicated a paradigm shift and qualitative change that the end of systematic bipolarity had brought about in the international system.

The Brussels Summit

In particular Asia's quest for regional solutions to indigenous and external threats to development demonstrated the new dynamics in international relations and the ineffectiveness of those global governance institutions and organisations that predate the end of the Cold War. It became evident that, though the Cold War was not long over and the international political economy has become ever more interdependent, its actors had yet to establish a global governance architecture that allows for common policy choices and their effective implementation. Against this structural deficiency of the international system, European and Asian state and non-state actors have long pointed to the potential of ASEM for enhancing problem-solving capacities in the political, economic, security, social and cultural realms.

The contributions to this volume represent a selection from the main topics of the ASEM 8 summit in Brussels. The chapters focus on four policy areas that have been identified by ASEM members as pivotal to their task of contributing to the development of a new global governance architecture: the Brussels summit,

financial and economic governance, security governance and the enlargement of ASEM.

The Brussels summit section contains four articles. Three of them were written by Belgian diplomats who were actively involved in the framing and organisation of the summit. Their contributions provide us with important insiders' perspectives and analysis of ASEM summitry, its inherent logic, limits and comparative advantages. The head of the ASEM unit of the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bertrand de Crombrughe, brought us up to speed on the intricacies of organising an ASEM summit in his article on the "Negotiation History and the Summit Texts".

De Crombrughe started from the premise that leaders from Asia and Europe were keen to periodically confront their perceptions of world developments and assess the "state of the art of Asia-Europe relations". The Belgian Prime Minister, Yves Leterme, suggested that the real added value of gatherings like the ASEM 8 Summit was in the influence they could exert on future multilateral meetings such as the G20. It was the stated ambition of the Belgian government as host of ASEM 8 to reach for higher levels of cooperation and to ensure the relevance of the ASEM process for the daily life of citizens. De Crombrughe concluded with informed and detailed comments and reflections on the agreed summit texts, which made a welcome contribution to the development of a common ASEM vocabulary. The latter was seen by one of the founders of ASEM, former Singaporean Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong, as a precondition for the flowering of a Eurasian frame of mind.

Paul Lambert, deputy head of the above-mentioned ASEM unit, provided us in his chapter with a factual overview of both the Brussels summit and the events organised concomitantly. This did not preclude an insider's view regarding the substance and practical arrangements at the summit, of which the main event was of course the gathering of the heads of state and government at Brussels Royal Palace. In parallel, an ASEM Parliamentary Forum, People's Forum and Business Forum were held, as had become usual at ASEM summits.

In addition to these quasi-institutionalised ASEM events, a Connecting Civil Societies Conference was held just before the beginning of the summit in Brussels. The conference was organised by the Europe-Asia Policy Forum (EUforAsia) which was subsidised by the European Commission. EUforAsia was a collaborative effort of the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS, Leiden and Amsterdam), the European Policy Centre (EPC, Brussels), the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF, Singapore), and the Singapore Institute for International Affairs.

Tom Vandenkendelaere, who also worked at the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, focused in his chapter, "ASEM Working Methods Reform: An Identity Issue", not only on the working methods of ASEM but also on the discussions that took place in the run-up to and during the Brussels ASEM summit. Important stakes were at play. The issues focused on how to better organise ASEM and make practical use of

the wide array of initiatives; how to ensure progress and concrete results over time; how to address the long-standing perception that ASEM needed some kind of secretarial support; and how to ensure the improvement of the global visibility of ASEM.

This section of the book concluded with a chapter by Sebastian Bersick and Tanja Bauer entitled “Perception and ASEM Visibility in the European Media”. The chapter presented the first results of a still ongoing international research project (named “Asia in the Eyes of Europe”) on the perceptions that Europeans held of Asia and of ASEM affairs. It measured Europe’s cognitive outlook in eight EU member states by using, *inter alia*, a media analysis of major print and TV media outlets in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Romania and the United Kingdom. The research project was the European part of the broader Asia-Europe Perception Project and complemented the work that was being done in the framework of the “EU in the Eyes of Asia” research project. A conclusion drawn from the research was that ASEM was mainly perceived as a political actor. Its visibility varied considerably between the sample set of countries and the European level, which was also analysed. Hardly any attention was given to ASEM affairs as such. If the ASEM 8 summit had not taken place, ASEM would have been largely invisible to the European public.

Financial and Economic Governance

In his chapter “IMF: The Road from Rescue to Reform”, J. Thomas Lindblad sketched the historical background of the present search for reform at the International Monetary Fund (IMF). He stressed the lessons the IMF drew from the Asian financial crisis in the late 1990s. From it, the IMF learned that it had to account for its actions and mend its shortcomings. In the subsequent decade a wide range of reform measures, accompanied by a great deal of soul-searching at the IMF headquarters, had been put into place. Those measures, alongside new constructive IMF initiatives, were endorsed by the Asian and European leaders at ASEM 8 in Brussels.

Jörn-Carsten Gottwald focused in his chapter “In Search of a New Global Financial Architecture: China, the G20 and ASEM” on the role of China in reforming the global governance architecture. According to Gottwald, relations between Asia and Europe had matured enough for them to address the crucial issue of reforming the global financial architecture. Due to the emergence of China as one of the key actors in the policymaking framework, the playing field had changed considerably at the same time that China’s involvement in ASEM had gained the support of its members. China was aware that the rule-making that was going on would define the future global financial system. There were still no comprehensive proposals on the table, but according to Gottwald it was safe to infer that, with China embedded

in an inter-regional and global governance architecture, Beijing would have a strong influence on the development of the new global financial architecture.

In “Banking Regulations at a Crossroads”, Bram de Roos put into perspective the statement in the ASEM 8 declaration concerning the resolve to strengthen the resilience and transparency of the global financial system and to reform the financial sector. He pointed to what went well during financial crises and drew lessons from that. De Roos specifically pointed to the Asian crisis of 1997, which spurred a wave of regulatory reform aimed at protecting the affected countries against future external shocks. These new regulations contributed to the most recent crisis having had a less severe impact on Asian countries than other parts of the world. While European countries needed unprecedented bailouts to prop up their financial systems and were still coping with the fallout, many Asian countries were only affected by the crisis because of a decline in international trade. Using datasets on government intervention, economic growth, financial regulations and the stability of banks, De Roos explored new directions in the search for an improved regulatory framework. According to his analysis, ASEM was well positioned to facilitate an exchange of knowledge based on the experiences of its members in order to help develop guidelines that could contribute to a more stable financial system.

Security Governance

In “Asia and Europe: Meeting Future Energy Security Challenges”, Christopher M. Dent zoomed in on one of the major global challenges of the 21st century: namely energy security, which was directly linked to other key challenges such as global poverty and climate change. Dent examined how these relationships had developed on the inter-regional scale, paying particular attention to the ASEM process. There was much to be gained from this cooperation. While Europe was the birthplace of both the Industrial Revolution and many important developments in energy infrastructure and technologies, it had also played a key role in shaping the world’s energy systems and practices. Asia was having an increasingly profound impact on global energy security with its energy consumption levels having risen fivefold during the period 1970 to 2009, and it was estimated that Asia’s share of global energy consumption would rise to 40 percent by 2030. While competition over access to fuels was expected to intensify, there would be a concurrent realisation that more international cooperation was required due to the interdependent nature of many energy security predicaments. Energy security is also inextricably linked to climate change and global environmental security. Dent referred to this as the energy-environment-security nexus. This all lent greater imperative of ASEM members to collaboratively foster ways to mitigate their structural dependences on carbon fuel-based energy systems.

Susanne Kamerling and Frans-Paul van der Putten reflected on the ASEM 8 chair statement, listing piracy at sea as one of the global focus issues of ASEM, in their contribution “Enhancing Maritime Security Governance: European and Asian Naval Missions against Somali piracy”. The statement specifically mentioned piracy off the coast of Somalia as a contemporary threat to the freedom and security of the seas. The Gulf of Aden and the western Indian Ocean – the waters where Somali pirates roam – were major thoroughfares of maritime trade between Europe and Asia. From 2008, a large number of countries had contributed to naval missions against Somali piracy. The great majority of those countries were either European or Asian. The fact that so many nations were involved in addressing Somali piracy constituted an important opportunity to strengthen security governance on maritime piracy. However, even when facing a common threat, it is not easy for such a large number of countries to work together when they have little experience in doing so. This is particularly true when the military assets of competing great powers are involved in a maritime region that is of major strategic importance. Kamerling and Van der Putten addressed the question of how Asian and European countries that are active in naval operations against Somali piracy can contribute to more effective maritime security governance. They argued that the European Union, especially when supported by Asian governments, is in a strategic position to help overcome geopolitical impediments to greater international cooperation. In this, ASEM has an important role to play.

The Enlargement of ASEM

David Capie explored how Australia and New Zealand came to join ASEM in his chapter entitled “Bridging Asia and Europe? Australia and New Zealand Membership in ASEM”. In the 1970s, Australia had come to realise that its economic destiny lay more in the Asia-Pacific region and less in the Atlantic world. It had become a member of practically every regional and multilateral organisation in the Asian and Pacific theatre. When Kevin Rudd became prime minister, relations with Asia were further deepened while ties with Europe were rejuvenated. Rudd also pushed for Australian membership of the reinvented G20, the first meeting of which was discussed in detail at ASEM 7 (2008) in Beijing. In order to play a key role in the international response to the global financial crisis, it was clear that Australia would have to become an ASEM member. This had a direct impact on New Zealand which, similarly to Australia, had experienced an economic shift away from Europe and towards Asia as its main trading partner.

This was also reflected in the development of closer political ties with Asia. New Zealand also began participating in many regional institutions, whether organised

on an East Asian or Asia-Pacific basis. Membership or affiliation in all these organisations was already stretching the country's diplomatic resources, which was one of the reasons why New Zealand never actively lobbied for ASEM membership. Once Australia applied for membership, however, New Zealand was quick to follow because it would otherwise have become the only non-ASEM member of the East Asia Summit (EAS). This could have undermined Auckland's position as an active participant in the developing East Asian regional architecture. It is clear that both countries perceived ASEM first and foremost as a forum for dialogue with Asian and European leaders. Nevertheless, Australia's interest in ASEM seemed to be much greater than that of New Zealand, which was primarily focused on the political interactions around summits and ministerial meetings. The accession of Australia, New Zealand and the Russian Federation eventually triggered the creation of a so-called temporary third category within ASEM alongside the Asian and European ASEM groups.

In the closing chapter of this book "ASEM's Future Enlargement: The Way Forward", Bertrand De Crombrughe analysed the history of enlargement and its future. He recounted how the accession of the three new ASEM members was brought about with cautious diplomatic manoeuvring. He also argued for the use of the term "middle members" rather than "third category" members. According to De Crombrughe, all new members should be given the opportunity to partake fully and on an equal basis with the other ASEM members, because this would give new potential to the ASEM agenda. The ASEM coordinators were tasked with stimulating and coordinating the ASEM agenda, but they do so with few means. A technical support team or an ASEM secretariat would be more effective in ensuring neutral and objective service to all ASEM members.

Conclusion

The practical importance of international institutions that can contribute to regional, inter-regional and global governance is increasing. It comes as no surprise, then, that ASEM's agenda has continuously been enlarged since the first summit in 1996 took place. The chapters on security, economic and financial governance as well as the insiders' views on the advantages and limitations of contemporary ASEM affairs clearly demonstrate the contribution of the ASEM process, and of ASEM 8 in particular, to the development of a new global governance architecture.

ASEM affairs are, however, not only driven by issues but also by the need to reform. The question of ASEM membership and enlargement played an important role during the ASEM 8 summit in Brussels and continues to do so. More than anything else, the accession of Russia posed a challenge to ASEM's inter-regional

institutional and ideational structure. The accession of India and Pakistan in 2008 and Bangladesh in 2012, as well as the continued deepening of European integration (via the Lisbon Treaty), has furthermore contributed to an inter-regional asymmetry. As a result, ASEM-Europe has increased its unity while ASEM-Asia has increased its diversity. How Asians and Europeans react to and manage these changes as well as the challenges for governance they pose in their respective regions and inter-regionally will largely determine the problem-solving capacity of ASEM and the further impact that ASEM has on the development of a new global governance architecture.

We would argue that it is important for ASEM to enhance its inclusive and open style. There is a risk that the needed bidirectional and reflexive approach will be undermined by a potential inability of ASEM to integrate all its participants as full and equal members on either the European or the Asian side. The recent ASEM enlargement demonstrates how ASEM affairs and the development of a regional architecture in Asia also impact on Europe's regional architecture. Decisions taken among ASEM members highlight the issue of who is Europe and who belongs to Europe and to what extent the EU represents Europe. ASEM clearly adds to the dynamics of regional architectures not only with respect to Asia but also in relation to Europe. This is a new development, as the accession of Russia to ASEM requires a decision on whether Russia belongs to the European or the Asian region of ASEM. Whether the creation of a temporary third category would help to mitigate the identity crisis that ASEM is in remains to be seen. Apart from Bangladesh, European countries such as Norway and Switzerland are also keen to join the ASEM process. Its enlargement is indicative of ASEM's increasing role as a constituent of the developing new global governance architecture.

The Europe-Asia Policy Forum (EUforAsia)

Speech held at the launch of the Europe Asia Policy Forum at the European Parliament in 2009 outlining the aims, objectives and activities of this project funded by the European Commission.

Original source: Velde, Paul van der. 2009. "Speech on the Occasion of the Launch of the Europe-Asia Policy Forum (EUforAsia)". Brussels, European Parliament, 29 April 2009.

Partners in EUforAsia

Who are the partners in EUforAsia? First of all the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) is the only institutional manifestation of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) process, which includes all member states of the EU, the European Commission, the ASEAN Secretariat and almost all Asian countries. The second partner is the Singapore Institute for International Relations, established almost fifty years ago and which is increasingly devoting energy to the study of the Asia-Europe relations. The European input is given by the Leiden / Amsterdam based International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) which in the past fifteen years has grown into a facilitating hub for Asian Studies worldwide. The Brussels-based European Institute for Asian Studies has more than twenty years of experience in organising seminars and briefings on Asia primarily for a Brussels audience.

The aforementioned institutes have been working together intensively in the past so therefore it was no coincidence that they joined hands in tendering for the 2007 open call for proposals on "Promoting mutual awareness, understanding and cooperation between the EU and Asia, Latin America, the European neighborhood and Russia". At the end of last year we were granted the contract and since then we have been busy finalising the program for 2009 in close cooperation with the European Commission (EC), setting up the website and doing all other nitty-gritty in order to get the project moving.

Aims and Objectives

EUforAsia has been set up to improve Europe's understanding of Asia and vice versa, thus contributing to the growing rapport between the two regions. Nobody will doubt that this is a necessary approach and it is fortunate that the European Commission pushes it. The Director for Asia at the EuropeAid Cooperation Office, Dirk Meganck, welcomed our project as follows: "Asia's growing importance in the European Union is increasingly self-evident. In order to help improve



Figure 13. Logo of the Europe-Asia Policy Forum (EUforAsia). Design: Pharos, Monique van Hootegem. Photo Cindy Bakker.

mutual understanding between the two regions, the European Commission is funding the EUforAsia project, which will facilitate the exchange of information on Asia by non-state actors. It will contribute to EU policy formulation towards Asia and will strengthen our cooperation.”

EUforAsia is based on an extensive stakeholder network

of institutes, universities and think tanks in Asia and the European Union. Supported by the European Commission, EUforAsia will address policy issues of concern to both the EU and to Asia for a three year period, from this year to 2011. By strengthening knowledge and understanding of the EU-Asia relations, EUforAsia will contribute to EU policy formulation towards Asia. Using the extensive networks in both continents, decision-makers in the EU institutions and member states will be brought together with Asian diplomats, European and Asian business and trade union representatives, leading academics, representatives of civil society, the media and other stakeholders interested in Asian issues. EUforAsia also aims at enhancing Europe's awareness of Asian political, economic and social developments and regional processes and mechanisms.

EUforAsia's Activities

Building on their respective strengths, the participating institutes are each taking the lead in a part of the project but needless to say there will be continuous cross pollination going on under the umbrella of EUforAsia. The EUforAsia Brussels briefings on important topical issues will be organised by the European Institute for Asian Studies with its twenty years of experience in organising these sessions aimed at a Brussels audience. Actually this launch was preceded by the first EUforAsia Brussels briefing on the ASEAN Charter and the second one in May will be on EU-India FTA negotiations. There will be eight such briefings each year.

The EUforAsia workshops and roundtable conference will take place in various venues in Europe and Asia and will primarily be organised by ASEF and SIIA. The meetings have three themes. (1.) The Asia-Europe Environment Forum which is a multi-stakeholder debate on sustainable development issues in both Asia and Europe. (2.) The Regional Integration Series analysing developments in regional

integration in both regions. (3.) The Asia Roundtable on Conflict Management which is an expert policy dialogue on Europe-Asia cooperation on governance and conflict management.

The EUforAsia website will be kept up by IIAS. It builds on the ASEM Research Platform (ARP) which was operated by IIAS from 2002 to 2004 and was a multi-stakeholder dialogue on Asia-Europe relationships. The virtual library of articles on EU-Asia relations will be part of the new website and will be updated on a regular basis. It will be an Internet forum on academic research and exchanges on Asia and Europe related issues to enhance communication and dissemination of European and Asian expertise. It has the ambition of becoming the leading online provider of information on EU-Asia relations. It has the dashboard feature with which everybody can simply create their own Asia-Europe environment with easy access to all up-to-date information.

All these activities will be coordinated by the EUforAsia secretariat which is conveniently located in Rue de la Loi near virtually all European institutions where we also have a meeting space for the EUforAsia Brussels briefings. It will closely cooperate with the team members in Singapore. We hope that three years from now we will look back on this launch event as the beginning of a fruitful project in Europe-Asia relations, the continuation of which thereafter will be self-evident.

