

A decorative graphic consisting of a grid of grey dots of varying sizes, with several dots highlighted in red. The dots are arranged in a pattern that roughly outlines the shape of Europe and Asia.

Common Security with Asia

Changing Europe's Role from »Model« to »Partner«

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- Asia's security architecture is undergoing a major change, from primarily bilateral alliances to a more complex architecture, featuring both bilateral alliances and multilateral common security (better known in Asia as cooperative security) institutions.
- These forums have helped to spread cooperative security norms, engage all the major powers of the region with those from the outside (e. g., the US, China, EU, Russia, and India), exercise a degree of restraint on great power policy and behaviour, and promote cooperation in non-traditional security areas. Both China and the US have strengthened their participation in multilateral forums.
- Overall, however, cooperative security in Asia remains underdeveloped, lacking collective security, regional peacekeeping, and conflict resolution functions. This is explained by differing threat perceptions among Asian states, mutual distrust, territorial disputes, concerns over sovereignty, and a weak capacity for security operations activities.
- Despite some obvious parallels between the rise of Germany in the 19th and early 20th centuries and that of China today, comparing Asia's future with Europe's past is inappropriate because of the major differences between the two historical contexts.
- European institutions such as the OSCE and the EU do provide some examples of how to promote security cooperation in Asia, but Asia is much more diverse and its approach to cooperation much more informal and constrained by sovereignty and non-intervention norms for the EU model to work in Asia. Europe is better seen as a partner, rather than a model, helping with critical areas of capacity building for Asian cooperative security institutions – especially in the areas of peacekeeping, humanitarian aid, human rights, and conflict resolution.



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Asia is steadily rising in power and influence in world affairs, but its common security institutions and mechanisms remain underdeveloped and untested. Europe is facing one of the most severe crises of its post-World War II history, but retains significant resources and normative appeal in its practice of common security. What can Europe contribute to Asia's evolving common security institutions? Current events in Europe, which though economic in nature, could have significant political and security implications for Europe and its role in the world, including Asia. If the crisis in Europe undermines the EU, it could diminish the attractiveness of the EU as a model for Asia. But even if the EU emerges stronger and more unified, it may need to rethink its approach to Asia. While there is much Europe can do to enhance Asian common security institutions, this is best done as a *partner*, not as a *model*. Such a partnership is both timely and important to Europe's interests, in view of Asia's rise amidst growing security challenges, America's decline, and the increasing gap between European and American security engagements brought about by the US »rebalancing« policy.

Against this backdrop, this paper has two main objectives. The first is to offer an assessment of the common security regimes in Asia with a view to ascertain their contributions, limitations, and future potential. The second is to make some preliminary observations about what role Europe might play in strengthening the Asian common security framework *in partnership with* Asian governments and institutions.

1. Cooperative Security Regimes and Security Governance

At the outset, two key concepts for the paper need to be clarified: »cooperative security regimes« and »security governance«. A security regime, a term that may be used interchangeably with »security institution«, is a formal or informal arrangement designed to achieve shared security goals of its members. Most security regimes/institutions fall into three broad categories. The first is collective security in which *all* member states pledge to defend *any* member/s against aggression by other member/s inside the group. The second is collective defence in which all member states pledge to defend any member/s against attacks from *outside* the group. Collective defence regimes of such a kind are also known as

alliances. The third category is common or cooperative security frameworks that are inclusive in the sense that they include adversaries or potential adversaries in their membership; there is no distinction between inside and outside. While the aim of collective defence is »security against« the adversary, the purpose of common/cooperative security is »security with« the adversary.

2. The Historical Context

During the Cold War, Asia did not have much in the way of regional security regimes of any of the three varieties. There was no collective security organisation, a regional version of the UN Security Council, or even a more limited version like the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (the »Rio Pact«, 1947). Asia did have a collective defence organisation, the South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO), yet it was in some respects stillborn: opposed not just by communist China, its main target, but also by the region's other key states, such as India and Indonesia. A lesser entity was the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) comprising the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, and Singapore, but this was certainly no Asian NATO. Asia's defence architecture was primarily bilateral, structured around US defence treaties with Japan, Thailand, Philippines, South Korea, Republic of China (which ended after the US recognition of the People's Republic of China), and the trilateral ANZUS (Australia-New Zealand-US) Pact, which dropped New Zealand in the 1980s following the latter's ban on US warships carrying nuclear weapons. Moreover, there was no serious attempt to create a cooperative security regime that could engage in confidence building and conflict resolution. Only ASEAN, established in 1967, did this to some extent, but it is important to bear in mind that ASEAN was a sub-regional (initially only five members) and multi-purpose grouping, whose goals included economic, social, and political security (known as ASEAN's doctrine of »comprehensive security«). Multi-lateral defence cooperation did not enter into ASEAN's agenda during the Cold War period.

Since the end of the Cold War, there has been a proliferation of regional institutions in Asia (Acharya 2001, 2009b; Katsumata 2010; Ba 2009, Stubbs 2002; Pembel 2005). Some of them are security oriented, others are multi-purpose, while others – created for economic cooperation – have embraced limited security functions (see Table 1).



Table 1: Major Asian Common Security Institutions

Name	Established	Purpose and Role
ASEAN Regional Forum	1994	A cooperative security organisation, partly inspired by the OSCE, but with Asian characteristics. Its primary goals are confidence building, preventive diplomacy, and conflict resolution, but political differences and sovereignty concerns have kept it from undertaking the latter two functions. Lately, it has shifted focus towards transnational security issues, especially disaster management and terrorist financing.
The ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC)	2003 (to be realised in 2015)	A broad framework that covers conflict resolution, counter-terrorism, anti-piracy measures, intelligence sharing, and disaster management. Internal disagreements within ASEAN diluted an original Indonesian proposal for a very ambitious agenda, which included peacekeeping, but it could re-emerge.
Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Leaders' Meeting	1993	Although APEC was established in 1989 at the ministerial level to promote trade liberalisation, its leaders' conclave, held annually since 1993, has discussed a range of security issues – such as the East Timor violence in 1999 and the 9/11 attacks in 2001. Some say that the summit and its focus on security have become the main rationale for APEC; and if so, its future may be clouded by the emergence of the East Asian Summit, which has a smaller membership (including India, which is not a APEC member)
East Asia Summit	2005	A leader's forum comprising eighteen members, including the ten ASEAN members, China, Japan, South Korea, US, Russia, India, Australia, and New Zealand. Its expansion to include non-East Asian countries, especially the US, was the result of a fear by some ASEAN members that China might otherwise dominate the forum. The summit level meeting is not limited to discussion of security issues: its agenda includes energy, environmental issues, Avian Flu, poverty eradication, natural disaster mitigation, and finance. But in recent years, it has attracted attention for its discussion of the South China Sea conflict, despite China's effort to keep this issue off of the agenda.
The ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus	2010	It grew out of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting, which has been in existence since 2006. Originally slated to meet once every three years (now reduced to once every two years), its membership is the same as the EAS. Its initial scope of cooperation includes humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, maritime security, military medicine, counter-terrorism, and peacekeeping operations (PKO). In essence, however, it is a forum for the exchange of views on regional and international security issues and is primarily a confidence-building exercise.
Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)	2001	An outgrowth of the Shanghai Five (China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan), which was created in 1995 to demilitarise the border between China and the former Soviet Union. The SCO was created in 2001 with the addition of Uzbekistan. Although a multi-purpose grouping, it has focused on confidence-building measures and measures to combat the »three evils«: terrorism, extremism, and separatism. It has undertaken joint military exercises, as well as intelligence sharing and other forms of counter-insurgency cooperation.
Shangri-La Dialogue	2001	Brings together annually in Singapore the defence ministers from Asia-Pacific countries. Organised by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies, it serves as a forum for a public exchange of views, as well as private consultations among senior regional defence officials on security issues of common interest. It has been especially important in debating the rise of China, maritime security, and the US military presence in the region.
South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)	1985	SAARC's constitution excludes contentious issues from its agenda, although this has not prevented discussion of such issues on the margins of SAARC summits. SAARC has also undertaken cooperation on non-traditional security issues, such as terrorism, transnational crime, and energy security.
Six Party Talks		Initiated in 2003, the SPT is an example of ad hoc multilateralism in Asia. The SPT process envisaged the creation of a security framework for Northeast Asia, but this has lagged because the breakdown of the SPT process in 2007.

* In addition, Asia has a multitude of semi-official and second track security dialogues, some performing important functions as sounding boards for new ideas about security, including the ASEAN-Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS), the Asia-Pacific Round Table (APRT, held in Kuala Lumpur annually), and the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP).

3. Contributions of Asian Regional Security Institutions

The main contributions (Acharya 2009a, 2009c, 2010a) by Asian institutions include the spread of cooperative security norms, the leading example being ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC), which has now been signed by all the major world powers, and the Declaration of Principles signed at the East Asia Summit in November 2011. A second contribution by Asian institutions is their success in engaging former adversaries – such as ASEAN and Vietnam, China and the former Soviet Union/Russia, India and Pakistan (both are AFR members), and China and the US – under the same institutional umbrella.

A third achievement of Asian regional institutions, including ASEAN and the ASEAN-led groups like the ARF and EAS and the Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM), is that they engage practically all the major powers of the world today: the US, China, India, the EU, and Russia. No other regional organisation in the world can claim as much a global profile and engagement. This not only allows ASEAN to balance the influence of any single great power, but also creates a parallel forum of global dialogue and community building that usefully complements the multilateral order in world politics.

Fourth, and related to the above but deserving special emphasis, is the simultaneous engagement of the US and China. Both powers have overcome their initial unwillingness, and even suspicion of Asian security multilateralism to share membership in the ARF, EAS, the APEC Leaders' Meeting, and the ADMM Plus. Although the tangible results of this engagement are hard to gauge, these multilateral forums do exercise a degree of restraint on great power policy and behaviour, making confrontational policies (like »containment« of China) more costly and less likely.

Fifth, more progress has been made in non-traditional security areas such as anti-piracy, counter-terrorism, and disaster management – including the Tsunami Early Warning System set up in response to the devastating Indian Ocean Tsunami in December 2004.

Sixth, even though human rights and democracy have not been a priority area for Asian regional bodies, they affect regional security and stability, including relations

between the regional actors and the international community. Here, some advances have been made, especially with the establishment of the ASEAN Inter-Governmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), and ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC). In addition, the political opening in Burma/Myanmar is at least partly due to ASEAN's efforts.

Asia's leaders, from countries large and small, have repeatedly shown a willingness to act cooperatively both among themselves and with outside powers when disaster strikes. This happened in the wake of the Bali terrorist bombings in 2001 and 2002, the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) pandemic in 2003, the Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004, the financial crises of 1997, and Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar in 2008.

It is also important to view the rationale and progress of multilateral institutions in Asia in the context of the US military presence and its system of bilateral alliances in the region (sometimes called the San Francisco System). These alliances have endured, and in some cases (US-Japan) strengthened. While the US reinforces its security presence in the region with the redeployment of forces (known as »pivoting« and »rebalancing«), the Obama administration has also considerably strengthened its participation in multilateral forums. At the very least, this suggests that the US military presence and the San Francisco system are no longer viewed as a substitute for multilateral engagement by the region's principal security guarantor.

4. Limitations of Asian Security Institutions

Despite the proliferation of security organisations in recent years, Asia's security architecture remains underdeveloped and weak (Leifer 1996; Beeson 2009; Ravenhill 2010). None of the security institutions have collective security or collective defence roles, with the possible exception of the SCO. Some argue that an Asian NATO is imperative in view of China's rise, but any such move would not be feasible in view of disagreements over a common threat and would be highly divisive if attempted by the US and its allies on a formal basis.

There is no regional Asian peacekeeping force, and there is no single instance of an Asian regional group

undertaking an intervention similar to those by the African Union or ECOWAS. Not even the softer common/cooperative security regimes in Asia are fully developed, especially when it comes to dispute settlement. As noted, the ARF is yet to move beyond confidence building to preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution. ASEAN provides for formal dispute settlement mechanisms, such as its High Council, but has thus far not invoked them in actual cases – such as the Thai-Cambodia border – relying instead on informal peer pressure and good offices.

The South China Sea dispute, which has been frequently in the news, has proved to be especially difficult for Asian security institutions. ASEAN has tried a normative approach, by negotiating a Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in 2002, but this was not binding. Thanks to recent US efforts, the ARF and EAS has taken up the issue – over Chinese objections – but agreement on a binding Code of Conduct has been delayed time and again, due to issues of timing and scope.

Overall, much of the security cooperation undertaken by Asian regional bodies is geared to dialogue and building confidence. Operational activities have been undertaken primarily on a bilateral or trilateral basis (e. g., anti-piracy patrols in the Malacca Straits) or multilaterally (e. g., disaster management simulations). Several reasons explain this state of affairs: differing threat perceptions (especially over China); mutual distrust (as between China and Japan, India and China, and among some of the ASEAN members themselves); territorial disputes; and concerns over sovereignty. Another factor is a weak capacity of countries for peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities, although this can be addressed if the political will is mustered.

5. European Parallels and Asian Security Scenarios

Europe, both its past and its present, figures prominently in any discussion of scenarios about Asia's emerging security order. On the one hand, Europe's past is seen as a point of reference for Asia's conflicts; on the other hand, Europe's present is seen as a model for Asia's progress towards a lasting common security regime. Both views are flawed.

On Europe's role as a point of reference for Asia's instability, Realist scholars such as Aaron Friedberg (2000, 2011) and *The Economist* magazine (2012)¹ compare the rise of China with Germany in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and anticipate a spiral of great power competition leading to a major war. They argue that like Germany then, a rising China would be a revisionist and expansionist power that would threaten the sovereignty of its members and get into a conflict with the US, currently the world's leading power. They also claim that Asia's economic interdependence would not prevent such conflict, just as Europe's economic interdependence failed to do so in the early 20th century. In this sense, Europe's past could become Asia's future.

But this view could be challenged on the basis of some important and positive developments, such as the drivers of Asian security (Alagappa 2003). Over the past decades, Asia has seen a major growth in economic internationalism, multilateral institutions, and democratisation. Since the mid-1950s, intra-Asian trade has nearly doubled to over 50 per cent of the region's total trade. Multi-purpose regional institutions have proliferated. Cooperative institutions in Asia now outnumber its formal military alliances, reversing the Cold War pattern. Moreover, in Asia today, democracies outnumber autocracies. Some analysts claim that democratic transitions tend to produce aggressively nationalistic regimes (Snyder 2000). Yet, no newly democratic regime in Asia has behaved this way, as the cases of South Korea, Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia attest – Burma/Myanmar could become another example. In the early 20th century, while the major European economies were linked mainly by trade, production networks in Asia at present span national boundaries making them more costly to break. No scramble for overseas colonies, a major factor behind World War I, currently exists in Asia. This makes the German parallel for China's rise unconvincing.

Another European parallel that has crept into the debate over Asian security is the 19th century European Concert of Powers, with some analysts such as Australia's Hugh White (2010) proposing an Asian Concert of Powers to manage the region's security. But this view is unrealistic (Acharya 2010b). The successful functioning of a concert requires a degree of ideological convergence among the

1. The magazine was referring to the dispute between China and Japan over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands.

major powers. The formation of the European Concert was partially motivated by a desire to preserve conservative political institutions, including the monarchy, from the forces of revolution and republicanism unleashed by the French Revolution. Such an ideological convergence among the great powers does not exist in Asia. Normatively, a concert is a dangerous idea because it would purposely marginalise the region's weaker states (e.g., South Korea and ASEAN members).

A more optimistic scenario of Asian security drawing upon Europe's may be termed as *Europe's present, Asia's future*. To discuss this aspect, however, one needs to clarify which Europe one is talking about, and at which point of time. There are various European frameworks – some of which compete with each other – whose relevance might be assessed for Asia. For example, NATO and OSCE represent two different and competing doctrines of security, the former being an alliance («security against»), while the latter is «security with». This gap might have narrowed somewhat in the post-Cold War era in view of NATO's expansion and adoption of various «partnership» agreements with non-member states, including Russia. Nonetheless, this does not alter the fundamental character of NATO. Moreover, as noted, there is scant chance that NATO will be replicated in Asia.

The CSCE/OSCE has been frequently invoked as a model for Asia, especially in the 1990s. But this is no longer the case, in keeping the relative reputational decline of the OSCE. The ARF is partially based on the OSCE model, although this should not be overstated. But for the most part, «Europe's present» of course refers to the example of the EU, assuming that the current crisis in Europe will not lead to a fatal crippling of the EU.

The idea of Europe as a model for Asia, or for that matter for other regions of the world, emerged during the heyday of European multilateral institutions; for the EU this holds true especially for the 1990s, and for the CSCE/OSCE during the 1980s and 1990s. This had to do with the end of the Cold War giving a powerful window to doctrines like common security, the strengthening (deepening and broadening) of European institutions, and the relatively newness of Asian institutions, which were fledgling and still searching for a mission and mandate. In recent years, the EU has invested considerable material and intellectual resources in promot-

ing its brand of regional integration around the world, especially through conferences as well as financial and technical support (Börzel and Risse, 2009).

What does being a model mean in practice? It means an expectation that European institutions provide a template, both normative and institutional, on which other regional groups can base their own development. It means emulating the values and principles of the EU, OSCE, and other European institutions as well as their institutional mechanisms and modes of operation. In the case of the EU, these values may include democracy, rule of law, and good governance; while the institutional mechanisms may include economic integration, such as adopting an incremental trajectory for a free trade area to a currency union. Being a model also means the development of a shared political culture and system that prevails in the EU, founded on liberal democracy; and it implies teaching these values to the «pupils» in other parts of the world.

The problem with the «model» concept is that the ground realities in Asia are quite different. These differences are too well known to warrant repeating here. Briefly, they include the far greater attraction of sovereignty in Asia after centuries of European colonial rule, the resilience of the non-intervention doctrine, and the historical animosities that still divide major Asian powers. Thus, a Franco-German style reconciliation that was (probably the) foundation to the EU, is missing in Asia and unlikely to materialize for a long time. It is also important to bear in mind that no regional body in Asia aspires to develop EU-style supranational institutions; Asian institutions do not speak the language of union, but of an Asian Community.

Some European analysts have viewed recent developments in Asian institutions, especially ASEAN, as suggesting a desire to emulate the EU. A EU-type preference for stronger legalization and formalization may be seen in the adoption of the ASEAN Charter in 2008, as a constitutional document of ASEAN providing for rule of law, good governance, democracy and constitutional government; the creation of new dispute settlement mechanisms in the ASEAN Economic Community and the ASEAN Political Security Community, including a good offices role of the ASEAN Chair and the ASEAN Secretary General; an ASEAN Human rights mechanism; and greater steps to monitor compliance with agreements.

While this marks a shift from the traditional ASEAN way of »soft regionalism«, based on informality, consensus, and avoidance of legalism, it may be stretching the reality a bit too far. Democracy, good governance, rule of law, economic integration, and peaceful conflict resolution are hardly unique to the EU, but are common to most regional organisations. The EU is not the only transnational actor promoting these goals. ASEAN still operates strictly by consensus, not decision-making by majority voting, which the EU is moving towards, and the ASEAN human rights body has no enforcement mandate. The ASEAN secretariat still operates with less than 200 staff and about USD 15 million operating budget. The much-vaunted ASEAN Economic Community does not include a common currency. Even its provisions for a customs union freer flow of goods, capital, and labour are far from being fully realised by the official deadline of 2015.

Against this backdrop, the EU can hardly claim to serve as a model for Asian regional institutions to emulate. Such talk may even be counterproductive. In the security sphere, there is no plan in Asia to create an Asian NATO because there is no political will for such an alliance. Despite rising concern with Chinese assertiveness in the region, Asian countries believe that a NATO-like structure would amount to being a self-fulfilling reality, angering and provoking China, whereas the strategy of engagement is likely to induce restraint because it raises the political costs of Chinese expansionism considerably. With its own problems and declining prestige in Europe, the OSCE no longer serves as a model for Asia. The ARF is a far cry from the OSCE.

The fact remains that Asia and Europe represent two different models of regionalism: one more integrated, institutionalised, supranational and post-modern (in the sense of moving beyond Westphalian sovereignty); the other informal, non-legalistic, and sovereignty-bound (Katzenstein 2005). The EU model is implausible in a highly sovereignty-conscious Asia.

Being a credible model also requires a consistency of purpose and role, which the EU has yet to develop. Moreover, the attractiveness of models can rise and wane, depending on their performance on their home ground. The on-going economic and political crisis in the EU may deal a decisive blow to the EU's claim or aspiration to be a model for other regionalisms and regional institutions in the world. Even if the EU does emerge from the

current crisis strengthened, with a fiscal union to add to the currency union, it will have moved too far up the integration ladder to serve as a realistic model for other regions not contemplating monetary union. Furthermore, the crisis comes at a time when other regionalisms – e.g., in Asia and Africa – have achieved some degree of credibility in managing their regional affairs in their own ways. We therefore need to rethink existing views on what constitutes exportable and effective regionalism, and take into consideration diversity and variation among regional groupings.

The EU should take advantage of its recent signing of ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (being the last major world power to do so) by pressing on with deeper engagement with ASEAN and other related regional bodies. Burma/Myanmar presents a major new opportunity for the EU to play a positive role in helping support the forces of democracy and economic openness. The country needs capacity building in many areas, particularly governance and security sector reform. It is in Europe's interests to change the perception of its Asia policy as serving US interests in Asia. While the US rebalancing strategy is mainly about military (and diplomatic?) redeployment, Europe should have its own *diplomatic rebalancing* by engaging more vigorously with Asian regional institutions.

Hence, it is promising that Catherine Ashton, the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, said in April 2012 that »the EU and ASEAN are natural partners«. Partnership entails engagement and assistance with key identified and on-going programmes for security cooperation. ASEAN and the EU have developed a Plan of Action for 2013–2017, which aims to increase political, security, and economic cooperation. Of particular relevance here are the new mechanisms created by ASEAN for conflict resolution and peacebuilding, including the ASEAN Peacebuilding Institute. Another regional body that the EU should support is the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights.

In the final analysis, Asia and Europe have much to learn from each other. Asia shows greater tolerance of diversity (there are no issues like Turkey's membership in the EU), and represents an area of dynamism in the world economy from which Europe can benefit. In contrast to the EU's more *intrusive* regionalism, Asia's more *inclusive*

regionalism allows it to benefit more from its engagement with other regions and powers. At the same time, the EU's achievements in demonstrating how historical enemies can become durable friends will always remain an inspiration for Asia and the world at large. The EU's exercise of normative power, and its expertise in soft security operations – such as humanitarian assistance, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding – are areas where it can provide meaningful advice and assistance to Asian regional groups. In these areas, European countries individually and the EU collectively can be partners with Asia for the advancement of regional and global security.

6. Conclusion

Asia's security architecture is undergoing a major change. It is no longer made up mainly of bilateral alliances and relationships geared to deterrence and balance of power approaches. Multilateral cooperative security regimes and institutions have also joined the fray. These forums have helped to spread cooperative security norms, engage all the major powers of the region with those from the outside (e.g. the US, China, EU, Russia, and India), thereby creating a regional and global dialogue and community-building process that usefully compliments the multilateral order in world politics.

Asian multilateral forums do exercise a degree of restraint on great power policy and behaviour, making confrontational policies (like »containment« of China) more costly and less likely. They have also contributed to cooperation in non-traditional security areas such as

anti-piracy, counter-terrorism, and disaster management. While reinforcing its security presence in the region with the redeployment of forces, the US has also considerably strengthened its participation in multilateral forums. Viewed against this background, the history of US bilateralism in Asia is no longer viewed as a substitute for its multilateral engagement.

Overall, cooperative security in Asia still remains underdeveloped. The region lacks a collective security or collective defence role (with the possible exception of the SCO), a regional peacekeeping force, formal dispute-settlement, or a conflict resolution function. Hence, disputes like the South China Sea persist. To a large extent, much of the security cooperation undertaken by Asian regional bodies is geared to dialogue and building confidence, rather than peace operations. Differing threat perceptions (especially over China), mutual distrust (as between China and Japan, India and China, and among some of the ASEAN members themselves), territorial disputes, concerns over sovereignty, and a weak capacity of countries for peacekeeping and peace-building activities are some of the reasons for their underdevelopment.

European institutions such as the OSCE and the EU provide some examples of pathways to common and cooperative security. But Europe is better seen as a partner, rather than a model for Asia. Asia is much more diverse and its approach to cooperation much more informal and constrained by sovereignty and non-intervention norms for the EU model to work in Asia. Nevertheless, Europe can help with critical areas of capacity building for Asian cooperative security institutions.



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