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Bilateralism in the Changing Asia-Pacific Environment

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The security structure of the Asia-Pacific during the Cold War is characterized by a web of interlocking bilateral alliances woven by the United States. Through this 'hub and spokes' mechanism, American influence in the region was guaranteed as states dealt with one another by means of their respective bilateral linkages with Washington. This arrangement effectively prevented regional states and actors from challenging the hegemony of the United States over the conduct of regional security affairs.

The end of the Cold War, the consequent decline of American military presence in the region, and the emergence of new geostrategic players have made this network of bilateral alliances inadequate, if not outdated, for the complex and uncertain post-Cold War international system. This, in turn, necessitates a rethinking of bilateralism and its place in the new regional security environment. With Philippine-United States Relations as backdrop, it is argued that until multilateral mechanisms are designed to help diffuse crises and, in conditions of conflict, actually enforced, the uneven distribution of power among states will continue to provide the reason for small states to seek the assistance of stronger states through bilateral security arrangements. Bilateral alliances with neighbors and other regional actors should, therefore, be enhanced with the view of complementing multilateral efforts towards security cooperation. In the last analysis, however, while bilateralism remains an important aspect of Asia-Pacific security, a collective effort is indispensable for ensuring regional stability.

Introduction

The end of the Cold War is today the most significant factor affecting the state of security relations in the international system. This significance is reflected by the paradox it created. While the collapse of the bipolar international system brought an end to the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union and, in the process, minimized the possibility of a global nuclear conflict, it led, however, to the emergence of a very complex and unpredictable security environment.

The consequences of the end of the Cold War are no less significant for the Asia-Pacific than they are for Europe. First, the thawing of the Cold War has led to the relative decline of the influence and military presence of both the Soviet Union and the United States in East Asia. Second, it has contributed to the greater complexity of the region's security situation,

challenging the adequacy of current policies and approaches, as well as existing institutional machineries for addressing the current general uncertainty in the system.[1] Finally, new geostrategic players have emerged in the region — ASEAN and its individual member-states, China, Japan, India and Australia. It cannot be denied that the future security of the region will largely depend upon the interrelationships that will develop among these players.

Asia-Pacific security until 1991 had always been a patchwork of rivalries subsumed within the global framework of the Cold War. Direct involvement in China, Korea, Vietnam and Cambodia, and its establishment of a network of bilateral alliances in the region illustrated the United States' attempts to contain the expansion of revolutionary socialism in East Asia. Unlike in Europe, however, no region-wide anti-communist alliance was established under the leadership of the United States. Historical antecedents involving Korea and Japan, and the unwillingness of Taiwan to antagonize China at such a vulnerable period in its existence, gave little incentive to the formation of a region-wide security arrangement in Northeast Asia. In Southeast Asia, *konfrontasi* and the many territorial disputes which colored relations among Southeast Asian states made difficult the organization of a regional security grouping. The only multilateral security arrangements that involved Southeast Asian states were the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) established in 1954 through the Manila Pact and the Five Power Defense Agreement (FPDA). SEATO eventually folded up in 1977. The heterogeneity of the membership, with the Philippines and Thailand being the only members from Southeast Asia, practically ensured that it would never be a major player in the security calculus of Southeast Asia.[2] Although the FPDA remains an active organization, it has not attained a major regional status due primarily to the fact that the United States never became a member of the alliance.

The security structure that emerged in the Asia-Pacific during the Cold War was characterized by a network of bilateral alliances interlinked through the United States. This structure was described as a web of interlocking alliances or, more popularly, as a "hub and spokes" pattern. Through this mechanism, American influence in the region was guaranteed as regional states dealt with one another on security matters largely through their respective linkages with Washington. This arrangement also made it difficult for regional states to combine together and challenge the

leadership of the United States, as in the case of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Most importantly, bilateralism made it practically impossible for the Soviet Union to gain influence over the conduct of regional security affairs.[3]

For these reasons, the United States never encouraged the emergence of a multilateral security arrangement in the Asia-Pacific region even long before SEATO had finally been terminated as an active alliance. Throughout the early 1990s, Washington rebuffed Australian, Canadian and Soviet proposals for a new Asian security arrangement that would replace the system of bilateral alliances, with United States officials arguing that proven bilateral mechanisms should be continued to meet the specific challenges the region faced in the growing uncertainty of the post-Cold War world.

By 1993, however, even the United States had to concede that the unraveling of the Cold War structure of values, threats and allies made the network of bilateral alliances inadequate for addressing the emerging uncertainty of the international system. Within this emerging international and regional security calculus, the pervading question is what kind of security structure is required to maintain the stability of the Asia-Pacific region? Is there a role for bilateralism within this security structure? How will bilateralism be accommodated in an increasingly interdependent world?

Security in the Asia-Pacific and Multilateralism

The post-Cold War situation in the Asia-Pacific has been described as having "set the stage for a new phase in regional security relations and regional security studies."[4] This new phase has so far been distinguished from the old by changes in the security environment which have significant theoretical and policy implications. In particular, two closely related developments have been central to the changes occurring in the region's security environment: the conceptualization of security itself; and the expansion of multilateral channels for regional security dialogue and cooperation.

Security in the context of the Cold War era had largely been construed as unidimensional, with a primary focus on military power and its use in achieving political ends. Although the advent of nuclear

deterrence had challenged the theoretical basis of this Clausewitzian view of security, it was only in the aftermath of the Soviet Union's collapse in 1991 that its limitations as a conceptual tool was finally recognized. Economic and fiscal considerations — the impact of the World Trade Organization (WTO) on national economies, national indebtedness and the issue of property rights — have since been at the top of the agenda of policy debates on threats to the well-being of nations and the stability of states. New issues have also emerged, with the environment, migration, drugs and AIDS infringing upon what had for long been the sole domain of defense and the military. Consequently, specialists in the field of security have been confronted by the need to reassess the conceptual tools and methodology currently in vogue.

Within East Asia, security has always been understood in comprehensive terms. Although their points of emphasis differ, East Asian states generally approach security beyond the purely military and defense orientation, treating the political, economic and social well-being of society and the state as equally significant aspects thereof.[5]

The very concept of comprehensive security, however, is multi-faceted. Not only does it consider security in terms of its end goals, it also considers the processes by which these endgoals may be attained. As one scholar had put it, "the purpose of considering security comprehensively is to ensure that all issues receive due attention in appropriate forums, and that disputes and problem areas can be solved for the general benefit using the collective wisdom of all the participants."[6] The combination of these three different factors — the broadening of the scope of security, the emergence of new geostrategic players in the region, and the tradition of seeking solutions to security issues comprehensively — has been responsible for the rapid growth of multilateral dialogue and cooperation arrangements in the Asia-Pacific.

Multilateral dialogues have been one of the most startling phenomena associated with the end of the Cold War in the Asia-Pacific. It has practically become a growth industry in the last five years.[7] The idea of a multilateral dialogue on regional security issues or multilateral security cooperation is not a new concept. Initiatives from the United States to establish a trans-Pacific security dialogue mechanism went as far back as 1925. Various efforts were also made during the Cold

War era, ranging from broad fora for exchanges like the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) to specific intra-alliance exchanges among the members of the now defunct SEATO and the ANZUS. What makes current developments different is the scope of security concerns (i.e., it includes more than just purely military and defense issues), and the fact that it is being initiated by many different countries and institutes rather than an alliance leader or hegemonic power.[8]

The development of dialogue mechanisms is noticeably taking place in different layers of structures.[9] The first layer is bilateral, which includes bilateral diplomatic relations and bilateral security arrangements in accordance with the "hub and spokes" pattern. The second includes situation-specific instruments for multilateral cooperation that are borne out of existing disputes, such as the workshops on the South China Sea dispute. A third level encompasses the many efforts to establish channels for dialogue and consultation on a regional, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and subregional, like the ASEAN, basis. Finally, there is the attempt to interconnect regional processes and global institutions, particularly in areas such as nuclear weapons proliferation, usually through the United Nations. Even with this cursory glance at the way dialogue mechanisms are developing, it can be seen that it is the underlying strong bilateral base that has eased the way for the emergence of multilateralism.

The growth of multilateralism has spawned new hopes for peace and cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. This perspective is most strongly argued by the school of thought referred to in academic circles as "liberals." They argue that with the likelihood of a nuclear conflict between the two superpowers all but gone, there will be more opportunities for cooperation in the pursuit of common goals towards greater economic prosperity. Economic cooperation will then pave the way for the spread of liberal democratic ideals and, eventually, respect for liberal human values. The emergence of multilateral mechanisms for economic and security cooperation, and the work of international institutions like the United Nations, it is argued, can only lead to a more peaceful and stable world.

This optimistic view of the future can be contrasted with the view of the "realists" who argue that wars are naturally occurring phenomena. They occur because states would rather defend their interests than relinquish them to preserve harmonious relations. (Realists tend to call this alternative course of action as appeasement — which only

emboldens the aggressor). In the anarchic structure of the international system, state power largely determines whose interests will prevail. Peace results only from a distribution of power that would deter potential aggressors.[10] Barry Buzan and Gerald Segal contest the liberal argument about economic and political interdependence in the Asia-Pacific stating that: (a) the levels of interdependence between states in the region vary drastically; (b) the level of interdependence in the Asia-Pacific has not kept pace with developments in Europe; (c) economic interdependence is not necessarily a protection against conflict; and (d) not all market economies are democracies, and although it may be true that democracies do not fight each other, countries with market economies do abide by the same rule.[11]

The significance of the realist perspective lies in the fact that the multilateralism that has been emerging in the Asia-Pacific region consists chiefly of dialogue mechanisms intended for building confidence and greater understanding throughout the region, and cooperative mechanisms for purposes of preventive diplomacy. They are supposed to provide vehicles for discussing potential problems or cooperating in specific issue-areas with the view of lessening, if not completely preventing, the occurrence of conflict. They are not intended, however, to resolve crises once these have broken out, much less stop conflicts when crisis management fails.[12] This is at present the strongest argument for maintaining the structure of bilateral alliances alongside multilateral mechanisms for security cooperation. Until multilateral mechanisms are designed to help diffuse crises and, in conditions of conflict, actually given teeth in the form of enforcement capabilities, disparities in state power will continue to give small states the incentive to seek the assistance of stronger states through bilateral security arrangements.

The case of the Philippines, in the aftermath of the withdrawal of the United States, illustrates this point well.

Philippine-United States Relations in the Post-Bases Era

On December 31, 1992, the Military Bases Agreement (MBA) between the Philippines and the United States ended. Since its inception in 1947, the MBA had been the centerpiece of Philippine relations with the United States and, in general, of Philippine foreign policy as well. After

the agreement's termination, the bilateral relationship has been given a new direction.

The initial concern about the consequences of a United States withdrawal from the Philippines on the economy has now been proven to be largely without basis. A more central concern of the Philippine government today, in its continuing security relations with the United States, is the question of national defense and the capacity of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to protect the country from external threats.

Under the MBA, the United States was deemed responsible for much of the national defense needs of the Philippines. This laid the groundwork for Philippine dependence on United States security guarantees and, consequently, the eventual underdevelopment of the external defense capability of the AFP.[13] The purchase of modern weapons systems was given a low priority in the budgetary appropriations for the AFP. Until 1991, the Philippines consistently had one of the lowest defense-expenditure-to-GNP ratios among the ASEAN states. Philippine Department of Defense officials and AFP officers have repeatedly called attention to the weakened capacity of the AFP to protect the country from external threats, including low-level contingencies such as incursions by smugglers and illegal fishermen. This lack of capability is shown by Philippine Navy statistics that recorded 819 incidents of illegal incursions involving 1,617 Taiwanese vessels between 1986 and October 1990, of which only a few were apprehended. In the same period, 231 incursions into the Philippine Air Defense Identification Zone (PADIZ) were made by non-friendly aircraft. The neglect of the external defense capability of the AFP has also created political repercussions. A fact-finding commission report showed that it was one of the major reasons for demoralization within the AFP and, indirectly, part of the reason for the series of *coup d' état* that beleaguered the Presidency of Corazon Aquino.[14]

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This dependency structure, however, had another aspect to it. The Philippines relied on the United States

not only for external security, but also for assistance in the development of the AFP's capabilities in dealing with internal threats. Communism and the Muslim separatist movement in Mindanao have dominated the country's security discourse since 1969.[15]

The Philippine government has entered into negotiations with both the Communist Party and the MNLF to put an end to the decades-long conflict. The non-inclusion of the MILF in the peace talks and the terrorist campaign of the Abu Sayaff [16], however, do not bode well for lasting peace in the country, particularly in Mindanao. At present, it is widely feared that the inability of the AFP to destroy the Abu Sayaff could lead to the re-emergence of Christian vigilante groups and a return to sectarian violence in Mindanao.

Even as the domestic situation continued to remain fluid, it is in relation to the external environment that the AFP is completely weak. The Philippine Navy maintains 21 patrol ships, 22 transport and service vessels and around 64 small craft to protect the country's territorial waters (1.29 million square kilometers) and exclusive economic zone (1.69 million square kilometers). Averaging 41 years in service, many of these ships have limited patrol radius and are, in fact, no longer considered seaworthy. The termination of the MBA placed the Navy on uncertain footing since 28 percent of its operational requirements was provided by United States assistance.[17] The Philippine Air Force (PAF) is in an even worse state, having relied on the United States for as much as 61 percent of its operational needs.[18] The PAF has an ageing fleet of front-line fighters no more than five of which are serviceable, barely at that.

The plan to modernize the AFP was first brought up publicly in 1989 when there were more than equal prospects that the United States would reduce its presence in the Philippines after the MBA expired in 1991. It was not until 1993, however, after the complete withdrawal of the United States Navy from Subic, that serious discussions took place. Still, it was not until a few weeks after the discovery of Chinese patrol ships in Panganiban Reef that the AFP Modernization Act was finally enacted by the Philippine Congress.

When the Modernization Act was passed in its final form on February 20, 1995, it included five components: force restructuring

and organizational development; capability, material and technology development; bases/support systems development; human resources development; and doctrines development. The Act provided for P50 billion for the first five years of the projected 15-year program, with provisions for increased appropriations commensurate to increases in the country's GNP. The AFP was supposed to submit the details of the Modernization Program itself a few months after the Act's passage. The problem, however, of where to get the funds for the program still confronts the AFP.

With the removal of the United States bases and its effects on the Philippine psyche and society, questions on the future of Philippine-American security relations now arise primarily from shared perceptions of threats or the lack thereof. The perceptions of leading policy-makers regarding basic security concerns and interests of the Philippines will be decisive in molding the country's attitudes towards our bilateral security ties with the United States.

Defense Relations and Philippine Security

With the termination of the MBA, Philippine-American security relations is now anchored on the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT). The regular Mutual Defense Board (MDB) meeting in November 1992 affirmed that there would be no radical change in the bilateral defense and security relationship between the Philippines and the United States.[19] Without the bases, bilateral security ties are expected to be less a political problem since much of the controversy had arisen from the extraterritoriality enjoyed by the United States inside the military facilities. However, the MDT is still expected to face stiff opposition from Philippine political forces.

In October 1992, Senator Wigberto Tañada filed Senate Resolution No. 196 which called on the Philippine Senate to study and review the MDT and the Military Assistance Agreement (MAA) with a view towards their abrogation. He argued that these two agreements no longer conformed with the political and military realities that have emerged after the end of the Cold War. He warned further that due to the MDT, the Philippines may find itself involved in hostilities with a third country in conflict with the United States but with whom the Philippines itself has no quarrel.

The most serious concern about the MDT, however, stems not from Philippine fears of unwanted entanglements but its converse — the perceived uncertainty of American security commitments to the Philippines. The MDT is largely seen by the Philippine public as a United States guarantee of Philippine security. Since its beginnings in 1951, the MDT has been criticized as being inadequate for this purpose because it stipulates that each party "would act to meet the common dangers in accordance with its constitutional processes."[20] It was feared that this clause could allow the United States to opt out of its commitments to the Philippines. Philippine concerns were never relieved by assurances made by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in the first meeting of the Philippine-United States Council on September 4, 1954, and by the Eisenhower-Garcia communiqué of 1958, that American response to an attack on the Philippines would be automatic.

On August 5, 1990, discussions on security issues affecting the Philippines sponsored by then Senate President Jovito Salonga were held in the town of Pansol. The Secretary of Foreign Affairs at that time, Raul Manglapus, presented issues relating to potential threats to the stability of the region and the Philippines. He specifically noted the power potential of both Japan and India which could be directed towards developing formidable military capabilities with the continued purchase of new and more sophisticated weapons systems and C3I capabilities. Manglapus also pointed out that Indonesia had the "population and resources to just wait for a vacuum in the region, and step into the vacuum."[21] While military and naval developments in Japan and India are certainly worthy of careful scrutiny, China and the Spratlys issue are the security concerns currently shaping Philippine external defense policies. It has also become the litmus test of the MDT's importance to Philippine defense needs.

Although largely uninhabitable, the Spratlys, covering some 38 percent (800,000 square kilometers) of the South China Sea, is rich in marine resources, minerals and hydrocarbon deposits. The island chain is also believed to contain significant oil reserves. The Philippines claims 93,000 square kilometers of the archipelago's area which it collectively calls the Kalayaan (Freedom) Islands. The Spratlys are also claimed wholly or partly by Brunei, China, Malaysia, Taiwan and Vietnam.

On February 25, 1992, China enacted a law which declared a major section of the South China Sea its territorial waters, and the islands

encompassed within, part of China. Still, China assured the Philippines that it had no "warlike intentions" in the area. Yet they were willing to support these claims with force if necessary. China has been building a military capability which would make them the strongest conventional military power in the region with the exception of the United States. Chinese officials, however, explained that the February 1992 legislation was just a reaffirmation of the long-standing position of Beijing. In February 1995, however, Chinese structures were discovered on Panganiban Reef, a formerly unoccupied reef within the Kalayaan Group of Islands.

The incident emphasized the inadequacy of military alternatives available to the Philippines in responding to international crises. Certainly, this development should not have come as a surprise since the AFP has been repeatedly saying that it does not have the ability to sustain a conflict in the South China Sea should it become necessary to support Philippine claims to the Kalayaan Group of Islands with force. The withdrawal of the United States Navy and Air Force from the Philippines deprived the AFP of its most important assets for long-range patrol and surveillance operations, as well as its strongest instruments for deterrence.

The main question being asked in the Philippines is: what obligations does the United States have in the event of a conflict in the Spratlys? The Philippines and the United States hold contrasting views on the issue. The United States believes that the Spratlys and any conflict arising from it fall outside the jurisdiction of the MDT. The United States Embassy in the Philippines said in July 1992 that the Kalayaan Islands are excluded from the scope of the treaty because they were not part of the country's territory when the MDT was signed.[22] The fact that the United States refuses to take any side on the issue nor recognize the claim of any country on the disputed island chain is even more telling. The United States, by not recognizing Philippine claims, feels no obligation to come to the aid of the Philippines in the event of an armed conflict in the area.

Philippine officials, however, believe that the United States is beholden under the MDT to come to the defense of the Philippines in case of an attack on the territory it claims as its own in the South China Sea, especially when its own armed forces cannot protect such territory. Before the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, then Secretary of Foreign Affairs Roberto Romulo said that the United States was

treaty-bound to support the Philippines in the event of an attack on Philippine-claimed territory in the South China Sea. This assertion is based on a 1979 memorandum by the then United States Secretary of State Cyrus Vance which states that:

> [As] provided in Article V, an attack on Philippine armed forces, public vessels or aircraft in the Pacific would not have to occur within the metropolitan territory of the Philippines or island territories under its jurisdiction in the Pacific in order to come within the definition of Pacific area in Article V.[23]

The same memorandum defines the metropolitan territory of the Philippines as the area delineated by the Treaty of Paris on December 10, 1898, and the Treaty of Washington on January 2, 1930. Neither of these documents recognize that the Spratlys (or Sabah for that matter) is part of the sovereign territory of the Philippines. It all comes down to the definition of the *Pacific area* referred to in the memorandum. Philippine forces garrison eight of the islands claimed by the country. Regardless of United States recognition or the lack of it, an attack on these islands should make the MDT operative if the Pacific area denoted in the Treaty is construed as including the South China Sea.

The American position on the issue has been severely criticized in the Philippine Senate. Rather than support Senator Tañada's call for the MDT's abrogation, however, most of the Senators feel that the situation demands a strengthening of the security guarantees under the Treaty. President Ramos himself believes that strengthening the existing bilateral security ties with the United States is the best means of protecting Philippine security interests. The question is: how should the Philippines go about in strengthening these ties?

Strengthening Bilateral Ties

From the discussion presented above of Philippine views on our bilateral security relations with the United States, it is evident that Philippine attitudes make a distinction between the bilateral security relationship and the MDT. A clear sense of the desire to maintain our bilateral security ties with the United States is evident among Philippine officials, even within the Senate. There are, however, misgivings about anchoring these ties on the MDT because of the uncertainty of the

guarantees stipulated in the Treaty. This shows that Philippine interests in its security ties with the United States continue to be focused on what the United States can provide in terms of protecting the Philippines from external threats. In view of the termination of the MBA, this view is immediately outmoded, if not one-sided.

Three things should be made clear about the MDT and the security relationship between the Philippines and the United States. First, the defense of what is considered to be Philippine territory is ultimately the responsibility of the Philippines, not the United States. The MDT is there to facilitate bilateral responses to *mutual concerns*, such as the safety of navigation through the sealanes around Southeast Asia. It should not be seen as an absolute guarantee of American protection.

Second, if creatively implemented, the MDT can provide much of what the Philippines needs for its security. For instance, the introduction of more bilateral exercises (land, air and naval) held regularly and more frequently would help improve the tactical capabilities of the AFP. Eventually, such exercises could move on to multilateral ones involving the other ASEAN states. This would not only improve the basis for military cooperation in the region, but also form part of the confidence-building mechanisms that are needed in Southeast Asia. There is no stronger guarantee of American commitment than the continued active engagement of the United States in the country and the region.

Finally, the MDT should not be viewed solely in terms of bilateral relations but as part of a regional network of security ties. Strengthening security ties with the United States and establishing security ties with other ASEAN countries is not an either-or question. To paraphrase the favored American analogy, they are spokes in the same wheel. As such, they are complementary and should be considered as such.

With the termination of the MBA, permanent basing arrangements are a thing of the past. Instead, port calls should be increased in frequency. In the Mutual Defense Board (MDB) meeting of November 1992, it was agreed that United States ships would be allowed to call on Philippine ports. Some problems may arise over nuclear-powered and -armed warships. In this case, the Philippine and United States governments may agree on an arrangement which would prevent a

confrontation over visits by nuclear-powered and -armed warships. This may mean the use of diplomatic channels to give prior notice (on the part of the United States) and give or withhold permission (on the part of the Philippines) on particular visits. What this should not entail is the Philippines demanding a public confirmation from the United States that a visiting warship does not carry nuclear arms (which the United States will not agree to anyway). This is only proper courtesy between treaty-partners.

The MDT should remain the basis of security ties between the Philippines and the United States. Having the MDT is better in the short-term than nothing. Given the experience of the MBA and the bases negotiations of 1990-91, it is unlikely that the United States will accede to negotiations on a treaty to replace the MDT. Should the Philippines seek to abrogate the MDT, then it is likely that the United States will pull out from its security relations with the Philippines completely.

One important fact Philippine officials must come to terms with is that while the Philippine-United States security relationship remains part of the regional security network of the United States, the importance of the Philippines as a treaty ally has been greatly diminished by the termination of the MBA. To offset the loss of its Philippine facilities, the United States has expanded its security relationships in Southeast Asia. From the anchor of the United States security network in Southeast Asia, the Philippines has become just one of the components. This attitude is evident in the rebuff by American officials of Philippine proposals to amend the MDT to include the *Kalayaan* Islands within its scope.

Strengthening Multilateral Arrangements

In view of the vast challenges facing the region, multilateral security cooperation must be seen as complementary to the existing network of bilateral alliances. The Philippines' own policy (despite the rhetoric from members of the Philippine Senate) has shown that it adheres to a parallel track of maintaining its bilateral alliance with the United States, while enhancing other bilateral arrangements with its neighbors. It is currently conducting annual joint training exercises with Singapore, and joint border patrols with Indonesia and Malaysia. At the

same time, multilateral mechanisms must be strengthened to hasten the establishment of what in ASEAN is referred to as a "community of security interests" in the Asia-Pacific region.[24] This can be done even without the outright formation of a multilateral defense alliance. Examples of this course of action are:

1. the participation of representatives from the defense establishment in the ARF-SOM;
2. an intensive sharing of non-sensitive information, such as military procurement of major weapons systems, doctrines and force structures;
3. the joint publication of defense policies of individual countries in the region;
4. the enhancement of military exchanges in training and the promotion of new venues for joint defense training;
5. the notification of and attendance by observers in military exercises conducted by countries in the region;
6. the notification of other countries of exercises that are conducted in their vicinity;
7. the establishment of a Joint Peacekeeping Training Center, which could eventually lead to the establishment of a regional peacekeeping force;
8. the establishment of cooperative measures in the maintenance and production of spare parts and components of commonly utilized systems;
9. the continuance of the practice of holding informal meetings, workshops, studies and publications, with active involvement from representatives of defense establishments in their private capacity;
10. the organization of regular meetings to discuss security matters concerning the Asia-Pacific with the participation of representatives from foreign defense establishments; and
11. the creation of a documentation center on security affairs, which would serve as the repository of publications such as an Asia-Pacific Defense Industry Register, as well as an arms registry. (Countries in the region must produce defense white papers as their collective contribution to increasing transparency in security affairs in the region. Only through these efforts will tensions be alleviated and the possibility of military conflict reduced.)

While the significance of bilateralism remains an important aspect of Asia-Pacific security, regional stability should no longer hinge on the efforts of any one great power to guarantee it. The world has become too complex for that. Only through a collective effort can countries in the region ensure harmonious relations. Only through security cooperation can the region be certain about peace. ⚬

Notes

1 Desmond Ball, "Building Blocks for Regional Security: An Australian Perspective on Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs) in the Asia/Pacific Region," *Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No. 83* (1991), p. 7.

2 For a detailed study on the failure of SEATO as an alliance, see Leszek Buszynski. *SEATO: The Failure of an Alliance Strategy*. (Singapore: University of Singapore Press, 1983).

3 Andrew Mack and John Ravenhill, "Economic and Security Regimes in the Asia-Pacific Region," in Andrew Mack and John Ravenhill, eds. *Pacific Cooperation: Building Economies and Security Regimes in the Asia-Pacific Region*. (St. Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin Australia Pty. Ltd., 1994), p. 3.

4 See Preface by Paul Evans and Jusuf Wanandi in Paul M. Evans, ed. *Studying Asia Pacific Security: The Future of Research, Training, and Dialogue Activities*. (Toronto: University of Toronto-York University Joint Centre for Asia Pacific Studies, 1994), p. 1.

5 For a fuller discussion on the concept of comprehensive security, see David B. Dewitt, "Concepts of Security for the Asia-Pacific Region in the Post-Cold War Era: Common Security, Cooperative Security, Comprehensive Security." Paper presented at the Seventh Asia Pacific Roundtable, 6-9 June 1993, pp. 5-10; and Muthiah Alagappa, "Comprehensive Security: Interpretation in ASEAN Countries," in Robert A. Scalapino *et al.*, eds. *Asian Security Issues: Regional and Global*. (Berkeley, Ca.: Institute of East Asian Studies, 1988), pp. 50-78.

6 Jim Rolfe, "Regional Comprehensive Security: Some Problems of Definition and Application," a paper prepared for the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) Working Group on Comprehensive and Cooperative Security, presented on 21-22 March 1995 in Wellington, New Zealand, p. 13.

7 In 1994 alone, at least 112 multilateral fora were convened to discuss security issues or areas across the Asia Pacific. What is startling is that at least 93 of these were "track-two" meetings — informal, non-government dialogues which involved officials only in their private capacities. For details on these meetings, see University of Toronto-York University Joint Centre for Asia Pacific Studies. "Dialogue Monitor: Inventory of Multilateral Meetings on Asia Pacific Security Studies," No. 1 (July 1995).

8 Paul Evans, "The Dialogue Process on Asia Pacific Security Issues: Inventory and Analysis," in Paul M. Evans, ed. *Studying Asia Pacific Security*, *op. cit*, pp. 297-298.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 298.

10 See Paul Dibb, "The Political and Strategic Outlook, 1994-2003: Global, Regional, and Australian Perspectives," *SDSC Working Paper No. 282* (July 1994), pp. 2-3.

11 Barry Buzan and Gerald Segal, "Rethinking East Asian Security," *Survival*, Vol. 36, no. 2 (Summer 1994), pp. 12-14.

12 Ralph A. Cossa, "Multilateral Dialogue in Asia: Building on a Strong Bilateral Base," *Pacific Forum CSIS Occasional Papers* (November 1994), p. 9.

13 This was particularly evident in intelligence (both collection and training) and in air defense. U.S. radar stations provided the Philippine air defense system with early detection capability while the U.S. 3rd Tactical Fighter Wing (with the support of the PAF's 5th Fighter Wing) had largely been responsible for the protection of Philippine airspace.

14 See Final Report of the Fact Finding [Davide] Commission pursuant to R.A. No. 6832. (Manila: October 1990), p. 568.

15 The Communist movement, however, has suffered from political and military setbacks since 1986 which it has so far been unable to recover from. The numbers of the Communist Party of the Philippines' New People's Army (NPA) and holdings of firearms have been drastically reduced, and the factional split which has divided its leadership has only served to disillusion much of the movement's mass base. The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), the organization which spearheaded the separatist war against the Philippine government which caused over 50,000 deaths in the past 20 years, is now split into three groups. According to estimates given by the military, the MNLF still constitutes the largest group. The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) is officially estimated to have less than a third of the numbers of the MNLF though some reports have indicated that they are actually even stronger than the MNLF. It's forces extend a greater area of operations and is considered by many to constitute a greater long-term threat to the government than the MNLF.

16 For the past two years, the Abu Sayaff group has waged a terrorist campaign which culminated in the raid on Ipil town in April 1995 which resulted in 53 deaths and the destruction of a large part of the town. Though estimated to have only 558 regulars, a small number of whom are veterans of the war in Afghanistan, the Abu Sayaff is believed to draw forces from other Muslim rebel groups. The most significant threat that it poses to the Philippines, however, is its possible links with international terrorist groups. Ramzi Ahmed Yousef, recently extradited from Pakistan to the United States to face charges of complicity in the World Trade Center bombing, was believed to have been helped by the Abu Sayaff to move in and out of the Philippines. This possible tie-up with international terrorism adds a completely different dimension to the struggle for peace in the Philippines.

17 Foreign Broadcasts Information Service (East Asia) 91-160 (19 August 1991), p.48.

18 *Ibid*.

19 *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 6 November 1992, p. 1.

20 Article IV, "Mutual Defense Treaty between the Republic of the Philippines and the United States of America," in Castro, ed., op. cit., p. 176.

21 Belinda A. Aquino, ed., "Reflections on the U.S. Bases in the Philippines," in *Pansol Reflection Series* (Manila: University of the Philippines, 1990), p. 11-15.

22 *Manila Standard*, 18 July 1992, p. 5.

23 See "Letter of State Secretary Cyrus Vance to Minister Carlos P. Romulo," in Castro, ed., p. 162.

24 See "Enhancing ASEAN Security Cooperation." *ASEAN-ISIS Memorandum No. 3*, p. 3.