

A yellow silhouette map of East Asia and Southeast Asia, including the Korean Peninsula, Japan, China, and the Southeast Asian archipelago, serving as a background for the text.

Who wants an East Asia Community (and who doesn't)?

Pasuk Phongpaichit

ISS Tokyo, 19 December 2006

A yellow silhouette map of East Africa, showing the continent's outline and major islands. The map is centered in the background of the slide.

agenda

- 1 Why regional integration
- 2 Evolution of EAC and stance of key players
- 3 Prospects

Why integration



- Happening anyway by market forces
- Competitive disadvantage against institutionalized blocs (NAFTA, EU)
- Management of cross-border flows and problems
- Security

Emergence of EAC: I



- 1990: Mahathir's EAEC as precursor
 - US and Japan oppose
- 1997 financial crisis
 - disappointment over US role
 - need for new regional mechanism
- Rise of China
 - new engine of growth/pillar of financial strength

Emergence of EAC: II

A yellow silhouette map of East Asia and Southeast Asia is positioned in the background of the slide. It covers the geographical area from the Korean peninsula and Japan in the north to the Indonesian archipelago in the south, and from the Chinese mainland in the west to the Philippines in the east.

- 1997 “ASEAN + 3”
 - add China, Japan, Korea
- 1999 Chiang Mai Initiative/swaps/Asian bond
- 2000 plan for East Asian Summit
- 2001 East Asian Vision Group: EAC

EAC: Stance of major players

- Korea: first to support
 - security
- Japan: second
 - pre-empt China leadership
 - sensitive to US feelings: “ASEAN+3+3”
- ASEAN
 - pre-empt sidelining by big powers: intermediary role
 - sensitive to US
- China: part of early 2000s south/east policy
 - FTAs with ASEAN, early harvest
 - Treaty of Amity signatory 2003
 - hopes to host EAS, then backs KL

Evaluation


A large, semi-transparent yellow map of the Asian continent is positioned in the background of the slide, centered behind the text.

- Just a framework for old conflict politics?
- 2005 EA Summit: lasts 3 hours
- Bureaucrats talking to bureaucrats
 - no role for civil society
 - no business enthusiasm



Barriers

- US opposition to any framework which China might dominate....
- Japan's reluctance to align *against* US on such an issue....
- ASEAN's inability to move if against both US and Japan....



“The future of Asia and the Pacific community will be defined around two great themes – openness and choice. Instead of closed societies or economies, instead of spheres of influence, we stand for an open world. **Instead of an exclusive club of powers, we stand for a community open to all.** But states must choose. They must choose whether to be a part of that community of openness, accepting the responsibilities that go with it. The United States and Japan have already made that choice , and we are honored to have a democratic Japan as a friend”

Condi Rice, Sophia University, 19 March 2005



Prospect

- Implications of deepening US instability
 - deficit, weakening dollar
 - absorbed, over-stretched in Middle East
- When is the point that US no longer plays role as 1) major market, and 2) policeman?
- Need to think beyond era of US dominance
 - there'll be a crisis some time: how will Asia manage it?
 - and what will be the framework afterwards?



Thank you