



ASEAN Centrality and the Evolving US Indo-Pacific Strategy

A Conference Report
of the U.S.-ASEAN Partnership Forum

By
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The views expressed here represent personal impressions and reflections of the program participants as interpreted by the rapporteurs; they do not necessarily represent the views of the relevant governments, or the co-sponsoring or parent organizations and institutes. Comments regarding specific presentations reflect the rapporteurs' interpretations of actual comments made. As such, they should not be directly attributed to the individual presenters.

KEY FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

UNITED STATES-ASEAN PARTNERSHIP FORUM
JAKARTA, INDONESIA

Pacific Forum, in cooperation with The Habibie Center, conducted a track II dialogue on US-ASEAN relations in Jakarta, Indonesia on Feb. 11-13, 2019. Titled the “United States-ASEAN Partnership Forum,” the dialogue brought together some 70 US and Southeast Asian foreign policy specialists, subject-matter experts, and other thought leaders to discuss key issues in the Indo-Pacific related to enhancing US-ASEAN relations. The dialogue included a cohort of young scholars and policy analysts drawn from the US State Department’s Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) and the Pacific Forum’s Young Leaders Program.

Together, they examined ASEAN centrality, the US approach to the region – in particular, the role of the 10-nation association in the Trump administration’s Indo-Pacific strategy – and the role of the United States in supporting the ASEAN Community vision. Participants exchanged views on issues related to regional security and stability, sustainable economic growth and development, and closer people-to-people ties. The following are the key findings from the dialogue’s nine sessions.

ASEAN matters for America. The important role of ASEAN in the US Indo-Pacific strategy cannot be overstated. As the convener of the region, ASEAN has an indispensable role as a platform for Washington to clearly articulate its vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific. ASEAN institutions also ensure that US engagements in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), security sector capacity-building, and governance reforms are effective and

complementary to national and regional initiatives.

ASEAN is a dynamic, diverse and high-growth region that is important to the US economy. The potential for growth in US trade is promising, contingent upon a willingness to explore opportunities for bilateral and multilateral trade agreements and investment with the region.

America matters for ASEAN. Washington’s expressed support for ASEAN centrality is vital for ensuring ASEAN continues to play a leading role in shaping the region’s security agenda. US presence, including security sector capacity-building initiatives, means that no one power can dominate Southeast Asia and dictate on regional matters, and that the multifaceted security challenges are addressed.

The United States plays an important role in ASEAN’s economic landscape. Cumulatively, US companies have invested over \$270 billion in ASEAN, greater than directed to the four largest Asian economies – China, Japan, India, and South Korea – combined. These private sector-led investments support ASEAN growth and provide jobs and opportunities to millions in Southeast Asia.

Specific issue areas identified that are important for enhancing the strategic US-ASEAN partnership include non-traditional security issues, maritime security, US security cooperation with Japan and Australia in ASEAN, promoting rule of law and good governance in Southeast Asia, and enhancing US-ASEAN economic relations.

The United States has a long history helping Southeast Asia address humanitarian crises, including those resulting from natural disasters. With recent improvements in ASEAN’s institutional capacities, for instance, the establishment of the ASEAN

Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) the US has incorporated ASEAN mechanisms into its response efforts.

Countering violent-extremism remains a top priority for both the United States and ASEAN. Several US-ASEAN cooperation mechanisms to address CVE issues need continued support, including the Southeast Asia Regional Center for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCTT) in Malaysia, the International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA), and the Joint Special Operation Task Force Philippines (JSOTFP).

There are four shared cyber security priorities and challenges that are critical for ASEAN and the United States: cybercrime, protection of critical infrastructure, content control, and connectivity. A holistic approach will help ASEAN countries develop connectivity while mitigating the impact of espionage from infrastructure investments in the future, especially those funded by authoritarian states.

Difficulty in dealing with gray-zone tensions in the South China Sea is compounded by ASEAN countries' differing threat perceptions, lack of resources and capacity, and weak interagency coordination.

While ASEAN member-states welcome US presence and reassurance, the value of unilateral freedom of navigation operations by the US Navy remain underappreciated in the region since many view it as primarily focused on freedom of navigation for US Navy ships. ASEAN littoral states' major maritime concern is access to coastal state entitlements (i.e. rights to access oil, gas and fishery resources in their exclusive economic zones and continental shelves free from coercion), as provided for under international law.

Since priorities do not align in Southeast Asia, it is important for ASEAN and the United States to develop a common conception of, and complementary priorities on, the rule of law in the context of maritime security.

Information sharing is key to helping the United States and concerned ASEAN countries respond appropriately to China's activities in the South China Sea, especially those coercive and unilateral maneuvers that violate international law, run contrary to Beijing's regional commitments, and disrupt the status quo.

US cooperation with Japan and Australia in ASEAN is important. Through well-coordinated aid policies, the US and Japan can present a viable alternative to China's high interest loans and infrastructure projects that weaken the sovereignty and policy independence of ASEAN member-states.

The US-Japan alliance remains an underutilized mechanism in promoting stability in Southeast Asia. Coordinated efforts to build ASEAN's capacity in non-traditional security and promoting rule of law would help strengthen ASEAN's role.

Some Southeast Asian states face rising illiberalism and populism. Southeast Asians are also cognizant of the increasing political polarization in the United States. Promoting values related to human rights and good governance is not antithetical to US interests in Asia. Given the variety of political systems in Southeast Asia, the meaning of good governance should be explored.

Southeast Asia's infrastructure investment needs present major challenges, including gaps in funding (public and private) and the wide disparities in economic development. There is no "one size fits all strategy." The United States and the Asian Development Bank can complement each other, with the

former focusing on capacity-building and the latter on providing long-term, low-cost funding mechanisms.

With the emphasis on physical infrastructure, the socio-cultural aspect of development is at risk of being sidelined. The United States can help promote inclusive development in Southeast Asia by engaging civil society, hearing the needs of marginalized groups, and tailoring some development aid to empower them to be productive members of society.

The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) are two important mechanisms shaping regional trade standards in ASEAN. Since both initiatives exclude the United States, it will have to decide soon on the approach – bilateral, multilateral or both – it intends to use to economically engage ASEAN and the wider region or risk being left out of the evolving regional economic architecture.

ASEAN member-states could benefit from the changing trade dynamics in the region, but preparing to absorb businesses and supply-chains relocating out of China is required to realize those benefits. To facilitate this process, Washington could help ASEAN develop a conducive environment for these investments. The Better Utilization of Investment Leading to Development (or BUILD Act) is a step in the right direction.

People-to-people exchanges are important in sustaining the US-ASEAN strategic partnership. While US programs that bring Southeast Asians to the US for cultural exchanges, technical training, and academic degrees should continue, initiatives that bring young Americans to ASEAN should also be established.

There is broad agreement that Southeast Asian states should maintain policy autonomy and build their own national resilience to avoid being overwhelmed by US-China strategic competition.

ASEAN's consensus-based approach to decision-making remains a challenge that often renders the regional organization ineffective. Allowing ASEAN members to abstain would enable ASEAN's ability to reach crucial decisions without fear of retribution from outside powers.

ASEAN should become a platform for substantive cooperation. This would require allocating resources to increase and strengthen cooperative mechanisms by both the ASEAN member-states and its partners.

As the United States pursues a “whole-of-nation” approach to ASEAN, it is important to re-evaluate the unsustainable model where the US was the exclusive provider of regional security while China (and Japan) was the driver of regional economic growth and development.

The US preference for bilateralism is no longer as effective in dealing with Southeast Asia. New thinking is needed on how to accommodate the United States in the economic sphere and China in the security sphere, while developing more appropriate multilateral approaches that maintain ASEAN centrality and ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific.

For more information, please contact Carl Baker [carl@pacforum.org], executive director, Pacific Forum. These preliminary findings provide a general summary of the discussions. This is not a consensus document. The views expressed are those of the forum chair and do not necessarily reflect the views of all participants.

ASEAN CENTRALITY AND THE EVOLVING US INDO-PACIFIC STRATEGY

CONFERENCE REPORT

Pacific Forum, in cooperation with The Habibie Center, conducted a track II dialogue on US-ASEAN relations in Jakarta, Indonesia on Feb. 11-13, 2019. Titled the “United States-ASEAN Partnership Forum,” the dialogue brought together some 70 US and Southeast Asian foreign policy specialists, subject-matter experts, and other thought leaders to discuss key issues in the Indo-Pacific related to enhancing US-ASEAN relations. The dialogue included a cohort of young scholars and policy analysts drawn from the US State Department’s Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) and the Pacific Forum’s Young Leaders Program.

Together, they examined ASEAN centrality, US approach to the region – in particular, the role of the 10-nation association in the Trump administration’s Indo-Pacific strategy – and the role of the United States in supporting the ASEAN Community vision. Participants exchanged views on issues related to regional security and stability, sustainable economic growth and development, and people-to-people ties.

The current US policy toward Asia known as the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) Strategy focuses on three vital areas: enhancing shared prosperity, championing good governance and civil society, and ensuring a peaceful and secure regional order. ASEAN has established itself as the convener of the Indo-Pacific, a region that has grown more multilateral, with the increasing presence of regional economic, security and dialogue institutions, since the end of the Cold War.

While regional stability and prosperity may be a shared goal, ASEAN and its member-states do not necessarily see eye-to-eye with the United States on key issues, like good governance, the meaning of the rule of law, and the means through which to pursue regional security. To successfully engage this vast, diverse, and dynamic region, Washington needs to integrate ASEAN centrality into its strategy. Meanwhile, ASEAN needs to articulate its expectations toward the United States to ensure regional efforts are complementary, trust and confidence are increased, and effective cooperative mechanisms are developed. In this context, the strategic partnership between the United States and ASEAN plays a linchpin role in the rapidly changing economic, political and security architecture of the Indo-Pacific Region.

US-ASEAN Relations at 42: Looking back and looking forward

The opening session provided an overview of the US-ASEAN relations, reviewed its evolution, examined its current status, and discussed requisites for moving the relationship forward.

Charles Edel (United States Studies Center, the University of Sydney) reviewed the long history of US-ASEAN ties, highlighting several milestones. Washington began to recognize ASEAN’s potential as early as 1977 with the establishment of a dialogue partnership. Cooperation has increased dramatically since then. By 2008, the United States became the first non-ASEAN country to name an ambassador to ASEAN. Since, 2009, the US-ASEAN Leaders’ Summit has been held annually. In June 2010, the United States launched a dedicated Mission to ASEAN in Jakarta, another first. In 2015, the relationship was elevated to a strategic partnership.

The drivers behind the growing US engagement with ASEAN revolve around the increasing economic, geopolitical, and security importance of Southeast Asia to US national interests. These include the rapidly growing ASEAN markets that are increasingly becoming ripe for investments and trade; the potential for ASEAN to drive regional integration, not just in Southeast Asia but also the wider Indo-Pacific; and ASEAN's role in shaping the security landscape of the region. Despite the growing importance of ASEAN, maintaining its centrality and relevance remain a challenge. Addressing both would enable the bloc to adapt to the current geopolitical shifts and to have a role in the US Indo-Pacific strategy.

Understanding why the United States and ASEAN matter to each other is important if the goal is to deepen cooperation on strategic issues. **Satu Limaye** (East-West Center) provided data that show the importance of each side to the other in multiple areas, emphasizing that more than just coping with the China challenge, the United States and ASEAN share many common interests.

First, ASEAN matters for America. ASEAN has an important part in the US Indo-Pacific strategy. As the convener of the region, ASEAN has an indispensable role as a platform for Washington to clearly articulate its national interest in the region and its vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific. High-level mechanisms include the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM+), the East Asia Summit (EAS), and the US-ASEAN Leaders' Summit. These ASEAN-based institutions, when fully utilized by Washington, ensure that US engagements in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), security sector capacity-building, and governance reforms, among others, are effective and complementary to national and regional initiatives.

Beyond being just a platform for political and security dialogues, ASEAN is a dynamic, diverse and high-growth region that is important to the US economy. The United States receives more investments from ASEAN, than from China and India combined. At least 42,000 US companies export over \$100 billion annually in goods and services to ASEAN member-states. Those exports support over half a million jobs in the United States. Still, the potential for growth in US trade is promising given that ASEAN has some of the world's fastest growing national economies, and that the 10-nation bloc is at the heart of regional economic integration efforts. Successfully tapping this potential will depend on the interest and willingness of the United States to explore bilateral and multilateral trade and investment agreements with Southeast Asia.

“...understanding why the United States and ASEAN matter to each other is important to deepening meaningful cooperation on strategic issues.”

Second, America matters for ASEAN. The 10-nation bloc values its centrality in regional affairs. Washington's expressed support for that centrality is vital for ASEAN to continue to play a leading role in shaping the region's geopolitical and security agenda. US presence, including its various initiatives for ASEAN member-states' security-sector capacity building also means that no one power can dominate Southeast Asia and dictate on regional matters, and that the multifaceted security challenges, including humanitarian crises, natural disasters, terrorism and cybercrime are addressed.

The United States also plays an important role in ASEAN's economic landscape. US companies have invested over \$270 billion in cumulative investment to ASEAN, greater than directed to the four largest Asian economies – China, Japan, India and South Korea – combined. These are private sector-led investments that support ASEAN economic growth and provide jobs and opportunities to millions in Southeast Asia. Attracting more US companies is contingent upon ASEAN-member states' willingness to accelerate their reforms on intellectual property rights, and ease of doing business, among other barriers.

Moving beyond the statistics, Limaye cited several reasons that underpin America's relations with ASEAN: (1) the bloc has enduring utility in maintaining the strategic autonomy and stability in the region; (2) Washington's intention to "pivot" to Asia is real; (3) there is simply no alternative more sustainable than ASEAN; (4) ASEAN is central to the strategic discourses in Asia; (5) ASEAN is important to US allies and partners; and (6) ASEAN is more than just a "rule-taker," but more importantly, an agenda-setter essential for US regional engagements.

Dewi Fortuna Anwar (The Habibie Center) emphasized that ASEAN centrality has enabled the region to engage all major powers. Important to that centrality is ASEAN's unity and strategic autonomy, which, in turn, are determined by stability within the member-states. A divided ASEAN cannot possibly be central to regional affairs. The association would likely turn into a battleground for US-China contestation if it did not maintain a sense of unity. Washington therefore should be able to identify these contours in ASEAN centrality, and work to promote internal stability within ASEAN member-states, and ensure unity among them on critical issues. Broadly, Anwar also stressed that in partnering with ASEAN, the

United States should adhere to the various codes of conduct and norms in the region and avoid asking the group to take sides in its strategic competition with China. Beyond security issues, US-ASEAN engagements should include more initiatives on economic development and other sectors.

Specific issue areas identified that are important for enhancing the strategic US-ASEAN partnership include non-traditional security issues, maritime security, US security cooperation with Japan and Australia in ASEAN, promoting rule of law and good governance in Southeast Asia, and enhancing economic relations.

Addressing Non-Traditional Security Issues

In the second session, the panel addressed the importance of non-traditional security issues as focal point for US-ASEAN security cooperation. Intra-state and trans-state security challenges, namely HADR, violent extremism and cyber-security were explored, to shed light on what the United States and ASEAN can do to address them.

Blake Herzinger (Center for International Maritime Security) noted that the United States has a long history helping Southeast Asia address humanitarian crises, including those resulting from natural disasters. In the past, Washington's disaster response efforts were mainly coordinated on a bilateral basis. Such arrangements worked as it allowed Washington, through its 10 embassies in ASEAN capitals, to stay abreast of local needs and host government priorities. The US military presence in the region has been critical in delivering much needed search and rescue equipment and urgent relief supplies to hard-to-reach disaster zones. Providing support to ASEAN countries in times of disaster has improved perceptions of the United States in the region.

With recent improvements in ASEAN's institutional capacities, for instance, the establishment of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre), the United States has been incorporating ASEAN mechanisms into its response efforts. To ensure the continued effectiveness of the partnership, it is important to pay attention to how Washington can help further strengthen regional capacities to respond to disasters and urgent humanitarian crises.

Countering violent-extremism remains an important priority for both the United States and ASEAN. **Rommel Banlaoi** (Philippine Institute for Peace, Violence and Terrorism Research) talked about developing mechanisms to help stop the movement of foreign terrorist fighters (TFT) into the region and to limit the flow of financial transactions in support of local radical groups. Washington should help ASEAN member-states implement the ASEAN Plan of Action in Combating Transnational Crime (2016-2025) and the revised ASEAN Comprehensive Plan of Action on Counter-Terrorism, to include those mechanisms and adapt to new realities in the region vis-à-vis violent extremism. Several existing US-ASEAN cooperation mechanisms to address CVE issues need continued support, including the Southeast Asia Regional Center for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCTT) in Malaysia, the International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA), and the Joint Special Operation Task Force Philippines (JSOTFP).

Elina Noor (DKI Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies) discussed the four shared cyber security challenges that are critical for ASEAN and the United States: cybercrime, protection of critical infrastructure, connectivity, and content control. While consensus for cooperation may be reached with the first three issues, the case for content control is more complicated. For many Southeast Asian policymakers, giving the

state control over online contents is a means to preserve stability, order, and national harmony. But, the United States sees state-directed control of content as a potential violation of freedom of expression. Indeed, the goal may be the preservation of the regime and the perpetuation of certain leaders in power.

A holistic approach to cybersecurity would help ASEAN countries improve connectivity, fight cybercrime, and protect critical infrastructure, while mitigating the impact of espionage from information and communications technology (ICT) projects in the future, especially those funded by authoritarian states.

Maritime Security Cooperation

Southeast Asia is a maritime region. It makes maritime security a natural area for cooperation between the United States and ASEAN. In session three, the panel addressed specific maritime challenges such as dealing with gray-zone tensions and Chinese buildup in the South China Sea, and preserving freedom of navigation – issues identified as important to both the United States and Southeast Asian countries.

Swee Lean Collin Koh (S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies) described gray-zone strategy as a “short-of-war” strategy that employs instruments of power – often asymmetric and ambiguous in character – outside of the acknowledged regular military means. Gray zone tensions can alter the status quo without provoking war or outright conflict. For Southeast Asian littoral states and for ASEAN as a group, coping with gray zones is a tall order. This is mainly because ASEAN countries have differing threat perceptions, lack of resources and capacity, and suffer from weak interagency coordination. According to Koh, compounding these challenges are several immutable internal realities: a tendency for

ASEAN member-states to continue to balance relations with external powers, including China, in line with their national interests; sociopolitical stability predicated on ruling elites' domestic legitimacy, which in turn hinges heavily on delivering "visible" socioeconomic achievements – something that China can easily provide; and the lack of a united ASEAN stance to Beijing's gray zone activities.

Freedom of navigation is among the most important global maritime security priorities of the United States. **Jeffrey Ordaniel** (Pacific Forum) observed that while most ASEAN member-states welcome US presence and reassurance, the value of unilateral freedom of navigation operations (FONOPs) by the US Navy remains underappreciated in the region. Many in ASEAN view FONOPs as primarily focused on the operations and movements of US Navy ships that have little to do with their countries' interests. When lawful commerce remains unimpeded, and when the Chinese economy is seen as dependent on a secure South China Sea, Washington's FONOPs lose appeal. ASEAN littoral states' major maritime concern is access to coastal state entitlements (i.e. rights to access oil, gas and fishery resources in their exclusive economic zones and continental shelves free from coercion), as provided for under international law. In essence, freedom of movements for US Navy vessels in the South China Sea would not necessarily mean that a rules-based maritime order has been achieved – not when littoral ASEAN states are unable to exercise their maritime rights spelled out in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

Another key challenge for Washington in promoting freedom of navigation in Southeast Asian waters is the varying interpretations of UNCLOS between and among ASEAN states and the United States. Some ASEAN littoral states continue to

maintain excessive maritime claims. For instance, the domestic maritime regimes of Myanmar and Malaysia require foreign warships to seek prior permission before entering their territorial seas, a position that mirrors China's 1992 Territorial Sea law. Most if not all of these excessive claims have been challenged by US FONOPs in the past.

Since maritime priorities do not align, it is important for ASEAN and the United States to bridge the gaps and develop a common conception of, and complementary priorities on, the rule of law in the context of maritime security. Recommendations put forward include: establishing a US-ASEAN dialogue on maritime issues to bridge the gaps in legal interpretations, reforming ASEAN states' domestic maritime regimes to align them with UNCLOS, conducting bilateral or multilateral FONOP patrols that include ASEAN or ASEAN partners, and the US Senate ratifying UNCLOS.

“Since maritime priorities do not align, it is important for ASEAN and the United States to bridge the gaps and develop a common conception of the rule of law in the context of maritime security.”

Overall, both the United States and ASEAN should continue to acknowledge and insist on the primary role of UNCLOS in ordering rule of law at sea.

In the past several years, Beijing's physical buildup in the South China Sea has accelerated. From reclaiming low-tide elevations (LTEs) to stationing fighter jets

and installing powerful radar systems on artificial islands, China has significantly increased its ability to project power in maritime Southeast Asia and control vital sea-lines of communications (SLOCs) that intimidate smaller ASEAN claimants. **Patrick Cronin** (Hudson Institute) described information as key to helping the United States and concerned ASEAN countries respond appropriately to China's activities, especially those coercive and unilateral maneuvers that violate international law, run contrary to Beijing's regional commitments, and disrupt the status quo.

Exposing misbehavior and sharing information are important steps to ensure that activities in the South China Sea are on the record and ASEAN members are sensitized to dangers and threats. Cronin also highlighted the importance for ASEAN littoral states to build capacity, protect their maritime resources, improve operational readiness, provide high-end deterrence, and internationalize support for a rules-based maritime order, adding that Washington's South China Sea strategy and emphasis on the rule of law should be seen more as pro-ASEAN rather than an anti-China policy.

US Cooperation with Japan and Australia in ASEAN

The panel in session four focused on the role of key US allies in promoting the US-ASEAN strategic partnership. Indeed, the United States has an opportunity to cooperate and coordinate strategies with two key Indo-Pacific treaty-allies – Japan and Australia. The two countries have been among the most active in supporting ASEAN, from helping address development and humanitarian crises, to providing much needed funding for security-sector capacity-building. Often, Japanese and Australian efforts complement US priorities.

In providing rationale for Washington and Tokyo to coordinate on providing strategic aid to ASEAN countries, **Akitoshi Miyashita** (Tokyo International University) distinguished overseas development assistance (ODA) from other official flows (OOF), the two broad mechanisms used by major powers to channel aid to developing countries. On the one hand, ODA is intended for economic development and improvements in the welfare of the population of the recipient country. ODA must have at least 25 percent grant component. On the other hand, OOFs are a form of finance in which the grant component is less than 25 percent, making it closer to a commercial loan and is primarily intended for commercial purposes such as promoting the economic or business interests of the donor country. Distinguishing the two highlights the fact that Washington's ODA spending is far larger than China's, though the latter usually has fewer strings attached. But, in terms of OOF, China outspends the United States and Japan combined.

Miyashita argued that through division of labor and well-coordinated aid policies, the United States and Japan can cut transaction costs and stretch limited resource to present a viable alternative to China's high interest loans and infrastructure projects that weaken the sovereignty and policy independence of ASEAN member-states.

US-Japan aid coordination could be readily increased in soft-security issues like jointly addressing emergency humanitarian crises and responding to disasters, as Southeast Asia is among the most disaster-prone areas in the world. The United States can focus mainly on urgent emergency relief, which includes military participation, while Japan can devote its limited resources to technical expertise and post-disaster reconstruction.

Brad Glosserman (Pacific Forum/Tama University) noted that the US-Japan Alliance

remains an underutilized mechanism in promoting stability in Southeast Asia. Some of the reasons include ASEAN's inability to discuss hard security challenges in the region that touch upon Chinese and/or US interests, Japan's constitutional restrictions that have limited its international engagements, and the tendency for ASEAN member-states to avoid being seen as taking sides in major-power rivalries. For the alliance to have an effective and durable impact on the stability of Southeast Asia, Tokyo and Washington need to agree on how they see China. Overall, both countries should consider utilizing the alliance relationship to coordinate on building ASEAN's capacity in maritime security, violent-extremism, and cybersecurity, as well as on enhancing multilateral institutions and the rule of law.

While noting that ASEAN matters for Australia, **John Lee** (Hudson Institute) argued that the regional bloc should choose, not between the United States and China, but between which sets of principles should prevail in the region. This is particularly important in relation to the various security issues that also involve China. Lee stressed that while ASEAN countries are interested in preventing any single power from becoming a hegemon in the region, their inability to defend certain principles have allowed Beijing a free-hand in disrupting stability with impunity. He emphasized that it is crucial for ASEAN to side with certain principles in dealing with security issues in the region. Otherwise partners such as Australia will find it difficult to trust ASEAN and to continue deferring to the association on setting the regional security agenda. ASEAN centrality has been better appreciated by Canberra when ASEAN's approach to issues is principled.

Tang Siew Mun (ISEAS -Yusof Ishak Institute) based his observations on the relationship between ASEAN and US and its allies on the recently completed ISEAS-

ASEAN Studies Centre survey on the "State of Southeast Asia: 2019." He noted that majority of Southeast Asians (59.1 percent) think that US global power and influence have deteriorated compared to a year ago. 68 percent believe that under the Trump administration, US engagement with Southeast Asia has decreased. Meanwhile, Japan is the most trusted with 65.9 percent of the respondents having confidence that Tokyo will "do the right thing in global affairs."

While those numbers are bad news for US diplomacy in ASEAN (and good news for Japan), China remains the least trusted major power in the region. Tang stated that Southeast Asians would still prefer Western values and to align with Washington and its allies on many issues. The United States, Japan, and Australia, which share similar values, principles, and interests, have an opportunity to coordinate their partnerships with and in ASEAN on a multitude of issues. Working together can help them better deal with China's expanding economic and political influence.

Understanding 'Good Governance' and Promoting the Rule of Law in ASEAN

The fifth session focused on governance issues. Good governance and rule of law are seen by the United States as barometers of democracy. For a developing region as diverse as Southeast Asia, promoting those values has been a top US priority. But, if the goal is to constructively strengthen the institutions of democracy in the region, understanding ASEAN member-states' conception of good governance and the rule of law is critical.

Reviewing recent literature on democratization, **Julio Teehankee** (De La Salle University) underscored the diversity of political regimes in the region, and highlighted democratic regression and rising

illiberalism in some ASEAN member-states. This means that US engagements with countries in the region are further constrained by a dilemma. On the one hand, Washington wants ASEAN member-states to embrace democracy – safeguard free markets, free press and free expressions, hold free and fair elections, and respect basic human rights, while also resisting Chinese influence. On the other hand, ASEAN member-states are hostile to any statements and efforts, especially coming from former colonial powers, that they see as interference in their domestic affairs. The risk is that, some ASEAN member-states may be further pushed toward illiberalism and embrace China’s regional policy preferences even more strongly. This raised an important point of discussion on the US approach to Southeast Asia. Does Washington have to choose between promoting values and promoting US interests? Are they mutually exclusive?

Olivia Enos (The Heritage Foundation) argued that promoting values should not be seen as antithetical to advancing US interests in ASEAN, and that they are not mutually exclusive. The US commitment to promoting human rights distinguishes it from any other major actor in Asia. Enos described China’s BRI as a means of exporting a value-less form of foreign policy, as it does not include the promotion of human rights or the strengthening of institutions.

FOIP is value-based as it advocates for the rule of law, free and fair trade and investments, freedom from coercion, and upholding human rights. But, it is unclear how the Trump administration plans to promote those values, suggesting that Washington needs a better ASEAN approach, one that clearly articulates a human rights component. Washington has an opportunity, through ASEAN to encourage leaders in the region to voice opposition to human rights violations and to champion

democracy by engaging with civil society organizations.

Where should the United States focus its attention? Enos highlighted the situation in Myanmar’s Rakhine State where close to 800,000 Rohingyas are continuously displaced and denied basic human rights; and in Cambodia, where Hun Sen is determined to perpetuate himself in power for another ten years by ensuring elections are not held free and fair.

Steven Rood (Social Weather Stations) continued the conversation by looking at populism and electoral politics in ASEAN. He stressed that what threatens democracy and facilitates the rise of strongmen in ASEAN is the weak party system in the region, characterized by clientelism, where votes are exchanged for favors/payments, a biddable electorate due to poor socio-economic development, and centralized power. While noting that “Right” populism (particularly penal populism – “law and order”) seems more common in ASEAN, populist leaders in the region all want to dismantle constraints, such as elections by trying to influence the electoral bodies; independent judiciary by attempting to influence legal decisions; and the media, by controlling content and/or intimidating the press.

Development Challenges in Southeast Asia

While among the fastest growing regions in the world, Southeast Asia still faces numerous development challenges – weak economic institutions, poor infrastructure, underutilized human capital, and significant barriers to investments, to name a few. A panel of experts discussed how US-ASEAN cooperation can lead to unlocking the region’s development potential in the sixth session.

Andrew Jeffries (Asian Development Bank) highlighted the huge infrastructure needs of the region, with the entire Asia Pacific needing at least \$26 trillions of infrastructure investments, a bulk of which is in Southeast Asia. Addressing this challenge is proving to be an enormous task as there is a wide divide in development among ASEAN-member states. There is no “one size fits all” approach to developing infrastructure and mobilizing financial resources for development. Often, fiscal reforms such as tax reforms, spending reorientation, and prudent borrowing are required. Governments need to create a conducive investment climate to make greater use of public-private partnerships (PPP). Other needs include developing capital markets, and better planning, preparation, design and execution, which requires bureaucratic efficiency and technical knowledge.

In the context of ASEAN, Jeffries emphasized that infrastructure projects should be made more resilient to include adaptation and mitigation mechanisms for climate change. Energy and transportation sectors are the two areas that need the most investments. Jeffries suggested that the United States could complement Asian Development Bank’s strength by providing long-term, low-cost funding mechanisms with a focus on capacity building related to enhancing technical expertise, improving institutional absorption capacity, and policy reforms to facilitate private participation.

Prashanth Parameswaran (The Diplomat) observed that it is difficult for Washington to tap into regional agreements, such as the ASEAN-led Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), as the negotiation began without any US participation. This lack of integration is compounded by Trump’s protectionist rhetoric, which can obscure some of the positive developments that are being

advanced by his economic team towards ASEAN member-states.

In Southeast Asia, infrastructure development gets stuck in this image of “big roads and bridges.” In that sense, the competition is more between Beijing and Tokyo. The United States’ strength is in capacity-building, in which the private sector has an immense role. Washington is best suited to play a coordinator role in the region, partnering with key allies through agreements such as the Quad.

“In Southeast Asia, infrastructure development gets stuck in this image of “big roads and bridges.” In that sense, the competition is more between Beijing and Tokyo. Washington’s strength is in capacity-building, through which the private sector has an immense role.”

While some of what China is doing with its financing and infrastructure development is worrying, the United States should clarify its specific concerns about Chinese practices. US-ASEAN dialogue mechanisms should discuss the security aspects of telecommunications infrastructure, port development, dams, and railways. Engaging with the world’s second largest economy to promote regional development should not be a problem, but insulating Southeast Asian countries from security threats brought about

by Beijing-funded infrastructure projects can be a challenge, especially since they have a broader relationship with China that encompass other areas.

With the emphasis on physical infrastructure, the socio-cultural aspect of development is often sidelined. **Ima Abdulrahim** (The Habibie Center) argued that the United States can help promote inclusive development in Southeast Asia by engaging with civil societies, hearing the needs of marginalized groups, and tailoring some development aid to empower them to be productive members of society. ASEAN already has a platform for civil societies to talk about socio-cultural and economic issues - the ASEAN People's Forum. However, their recommendations for issues related to the welfare of marginalized sectors, climate justice, the plight of urban poor and minority rights, among others often do not get the attention of policymakers and political leaders. Washington can directly engage ASEAN civil societies, through grants, dialogues, and other initiatives, and can start with the ASEAN People's Forum, without necessarily having to go through government bureaucracies.

Enhancing US-ASEAN Economic Relations

ASEAN is the fifth largest economy in the world. With average growth rate of 5 percent in the past decade, a population of over 600 million people whose median age is 28 years old, and a strategic location, being in the middle of China and India, ASEAN is likely to remain as among the key drivers of the global economy. The seventh panel underscored the importance of US-ASEAN economic relations, and discussed policy recommendations on how the United States can play a role in the unfolding growth story of Southeast Asia.

Deborah Elms (Asian Trade Centre) noted that in thinking about US-ASEAN economic

relations, it is important to contextualize the relations within the broader Asian region, not just ASEAN. RCEP and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), though involving non-Southeast Asian countries, are the two most important mechanisms shaping regional trade standards in ASEAN. While the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) is important, RCEP negotiation, now on its 25th round, is being prioritized. Elms sees the latter as providing the necessary pressure that compels ASEAN to act on standards and existing barriers to the free flow of goods, services, and investments in the region. ASEAN, as it pursues its long term economic integration plans, can pick up ideas from RCEP negotiations.

However, since all major trade agreements in the region now exclude the United States, Washington will have to decide soon on the approach – bilateral, multilateral or both – it intends to economically engage ASEAN and the wider region or risk being left out of the evolving regional economic architecture. For ASEAN, backward policies that are not business-friendly are proving to be the biggest barriers to trade and investments.

Discussing ASEAN's connectivity and ease of doing business, **Poltak Hotradero** (Indonesia Stock Exchange) highlighted the scope of economic diversity in the region. While Singapore already has a highly developed and efficient system for doing business, larger economies such as Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand still struggle to ease administrative, legal and bureaucratic burdens for businesses. He suggested laying out institutional and technical foundations for adopting digital technologies like Cloud, big data analyses, and block chain for ASEAN member-states to quickly improve the ease of doing business in the region. The United States can help provide technical capacity through its aid assistance programs, while also helping US businesses navigate the

complexities of investing in a region as diverse as Southeast Asia. The US-ASEAN Business Council is already doing some of this work.

A good first step is focusing on the three largest ASEAN economies – Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam – which account for over 80 percent of ASEAN’s economic output. These three also have the largest populations and the highest level of social, political and business complexities. Any improvement in these countries would significantly lift the overall ASEAN business environment, and favorably impact smaller economic players like Myanmar, Cambodia, and Laos, especially as the economic community vision continues to move forward and ASEAN becomes more integrated.

Fauziah Zen (Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia) discussed ASEAN’s economic development through the years and highlighted the region’s achievements in reducing poverty and unemployment numbers, improving the people’s levels of education and skills, and maintaining a stable regional macro-economic environment. Progress has also been seen in the development of intra-ASEAN trade liberalization; intra-ASEAN trade has now exceeded extra-ASEAN trade. Key recommendations include US support to boost private sector investments in key drivers of growth in ASEAN: digital economy, manufacturing, big data technology, and infrastructure projects. Initiatives to help ASEAN’s economic growth and development such as the BRI and the economic aspects of the US Indo-Pacific strategy should pay attention to these key growth drivers if the goal is to sustain growth and realize the promise of ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) 2025.

Christopher Balding (Fulbright University of Vietnam), an expert on the Chinese economy, discussed the implications of the

US-China trade friction for Southeast Asian countries. First, he set the context by emphasizing that the current situation has more to do with the general discontent in the West related to China’s behavior – theft of intellectual property, mandatory technology-transfer for foreign investments in China, unfair subsidies to its state-owned enterprises and nominally private companies, to help them compete overseas, and restrictions to market access for certain industries.

“...since all major trade agreements in the region now exclude the United States, Washington will have to decide soon on the approach – bilateral, multilateral or both – it intends to engage ASEAN and the wider region or risk being left out of the evolving regional economic architecture.”

One of the most important consequences of the so-called “trade war” is that it has accelerated the trend of manufacturing businesses transferring out of China to other parts of the world. Hence, the trade friction between the world’s two largest economies is impacting Southeast Asia more than what is discussed in public. For ASEAN to benefit, member-countries will have to develop their regulatory and institutional framework as well as their physical infrastructure to absorb businesses relocating out of China. Some participants noted that Washington could

help ASEAN develop a conducive environment for these investments through initiatives such as the Better Utilization of Investment Leading to Development (or BUILD Act), recently passed by the US Congress.

Balding added that if the Trump administration is intent on shifting supply chains away from what it considers a strategic adversary, it should accelerate plans to grant allied and partner countries, such as those in ASEAN, special access to US markets. Also, helping ASEAN improve governance and legal systems will make it more appealing for US firms to move out of China into Southeast Asia. That could mean revisiting the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or fast-tracking bilateral deals.

Commenting on Chinese infrastructure investments in Southeast Asia, Balding observed that there tends to be too simplistic assessments of BRI's impact. He predicted that the lack of due diligence and feasibility studies for BRI projects will mean many are likely to fail.

Conclusion: US-ASEAN Strategic Partnership in the Indo-Pacific

The concluding session shifted the discussions back to broad assessments of US-ASEAN relations, with a special focus on policy recommendations. Key questions explored include:

- How can ASEAN cope with the emerging US-China strategic competition?
- What role does ASEAN have in the US Indo-Pacific Strategy?
- How do Southeast Asians perceive the US approach to the region?
- How can the United States develop a “whole-of-nation” approach to Southeast Asia and the wider Indo-Pacific?

- How can Washington play a constructive role in ASEAN and maintain the association's centrality in regional affairs amidst growing Chinese influence?

Nguyen Hung Son (Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam) emphasized that Southeast Asian countries are not necessarily averse to China's growing influence. However, ASEAN does need US presence to maintain regional security and stability, and to prevent Chinese influence from turning into domination. Likewise, ASEAN welcomes the United States' growing interest in the region, but US engagement should revolve around preserving ASEAN centrality and promoting a rules-based order based on ASEAN norms and the other widely accepted principles of international law (e.g. UN conventions and treaties), and not use its policy towards ASEAN as a bargaining chip in any of its negotiations with the Chinese. Nguyen suggested that the strategic partnership should expand to go beyond military cooperation to include other aspects security, particularly knowledge-sharing and capacity-building related to emerging issues such as cybersecurity.

ASEAN is cognizant of the multifaceted US-China strategic competition, and that it is not only about economics, but also about creating new rules for the region and pursuing two different views. Rather than taking part in this competition, Nguyen suggested that ASEAN should stand by its own principles and protect the institutions and norms that the group has been fostering since its establishment in 1967.

The US Indo-Pacific strategy seems to be discounting the strategic importance of continental ASEAN, specifically the Mekong Sub-Region. To remedy this perception, Washington should complement existing initiatives by partner countries and allies, such as Japan's Mekong Region Partnership

Program. Nguyen noted that Beijing has the strongest influence in countries bordering the Mekong River. That fact is important if the United States is interested in preserving ASEAN unity.

ASEAN's consensus-based approach to decision making remains a challenge that creates an opening for external powers to divide the 10 member-states, and renders the regional organization ineffective. Allowing individual members to abstain would enable ASEAN to reach crucial decisions without fear of retribution from outside powers. This should be considered by political leaders within ASEAN.

Southeast Asian states should maintain policy autonomy and build their own national resilience to avoid being overwhelmed by the US-China strategic competition. This suggestion was emphasized by **Lindsey Ford** (Asia Society Policy Institute) in her discussion of the US Indo-Pacific strategy. In viewing the US approach, Ford encouraged ASEAN to think more about strategic autonomy rather than neutrality, as consolidating the former will yield ASEAN economic independence and protection against future interference.

Ford stressed that for the US to effectively partner with ASEAN in the Indo-Pacific, important questions need to be answered:

- What is the scope of the FOIP strategy? Is it regional or also global?
- What is the scale of the competition? Is it military, economic, ideological, or all of the above?
- Where to draw the line between cooperative and competitive areas?
- Are the United States and its partners and allies aligned in their assessments of key Indo-Pacific challenges? If there are areas of disagreements, what can be done to bridge the gaps?

But these questions cannot be answered by the United States alone. There needs to be more honest, inclusive and open conversations between Washington and its partners and allies.

In talking about ASEAN's role in the US Indo-Pacific strategy, **John Brandon** (The Asia Foundation) underscored some of Washington's most notable policy priorities, and their shortcomings. While the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act (ARIA) of 2018, which authorizes \$1.5 billion in spending for a range of security-related programs in Northeast and Southeast Asia, is a positive development, the amount is relatively small compared to other funding issued for other regions of the world, such as the Middle East. Washington needs to consider a significant increase in funding for the Indo-Pacific if it wants to send a message that the region matters and that FOIP was more than just a talking point.

Relevant to ASEAN is ARIA's call for the US president to "develop a diplomatic strategy that includes working with United States allies and partners to conduct joint maritime training and freedom of navigation operations in the Indo-Pacific region, including the East China Sea and the South China Sea, in support of a rules-based international system benefiting all countries."

Brandon sees an opportunity to further enhance US-ASEAN cooperation in Thailand's 2019 ASEAN chairmanship. Given that environmental security is one of the main concerns of ARIA, Washington can complement Bangkok's priorities, which center on promoting sustainable development. By doing so, the United States can communicate to the region that indeed, it recognizes ASEAN centrality.

The creation of the United States International Development Finance Corporation (USIDFC) is a positive step

undertaken by the United States, as part of the BUILD Act, which can have dramatic impact for Southeast Asia. In particular, Washington can make use of the USIDFC to facilitate private sector investment in ASEAN for both national security consideration and for Southeast Asia's economic development. USIDFC can provide funding or loan guarantees (including in local currency), and acquire equity or financial interests in ASEAN entities as a minority investor. It can also provide technical assistance, and administer special projects in developing countries in ASEAN.

Kitti Prasirtsuk (Thammasat University) argued that for ASEAN, the US Indo-Pacific strategy is a double-edged sword. Some in Southeast Asia view the US approach as a self-serving effort to balance, if not to contain the rise of China; as a mere continuation of Obama's "pivot to Asia"; or as pressure for ASEAN member-states to take sides in the US-China strategic competition. While still unclear in as far as the ultimate goals were concerned, Southeast Asians are also concerned that ASEAN centrality is being usurped in favor of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue – the United States, Japan, Australia, and India. Others in the region see the US strategy as countervailing Beijing's influence and preventing the Chinese from dominating Southeast Asia; as constructive since it can provide better alternatives for meeting ASEAN's vast infrastructure needs; and as complementary to ASEAN's objective to socialize all major powers.

ASEAN has started responding to the US overtures. Indonesia proposed to have an ASEAN Indo-Pacific approach based on key principles such as ASEAN centrality, openness, transparency, inclusivity, and a rules-based regional order – a broad vision welcomed by member-states as a good starting point for further discussions. This suggests that Jakarta, and others in Southeast Asia want to ensure an ASEAN-centric and

cooperation-based Indo-Pacific. Indeed, the ASEAN Indo-Pacific "Outlook" concept paper, drafted by Indonesia and circulated to other members, is emphasizing ASEAN centrality by encouraging major powers to make use of existing ASEAN-led mechanisms, not create new ones.

Prasirtsuk proposed that Washington work through ASEAN-led mechanisms and emphasize "common interests," rather than values in engaging Southeast Asia. The United States should not pressure any member-states to take sides, and instead make ASEAN a platform for substantive cooperation. This would require allocating resources to increase and strengthen cooperative mechanisms.

In conclusion, there was a widely shared recognition of the critical role of the US-ASEAN relations in promoting peace, stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific. There was also an observation that the United States' long-held preference for bilateralism is no longer as effective in dealing with Southeast Asia. This does not mean that Washington should downgrade bilateral engagements. But, it is critical to develop a more appropriate multilateral approach, one that recognizes ASEAN's important roles, and strengthens ASEAN institutions.

As Washington pursues a "whole-of-nation" approach to ASEAN, it is important to re-evaluate the unsustainable model where the United States is expected to be the exclusive provider of regional security while China (and Japan) the main driver of regional economic growth and development. New thinking on how to accommodate the United States in the economic sphere and China in the security sphere is needed, while maintaining ASEAN centrality and still ensuring a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Next-Generation Views on US-ASEAN Relations

In addition to senior experts, the forum included a cohort of carefully selected young scholars and policy analysts drawn from the US State Department's Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) and the Pacific Forum's own Young Leaders Program. In addition to participating in the forum, next-generation participants interacted with key officials of the US Mission to ASEAN and the ASEAN Secretariat. They also discussed important Indo-Pacific issues during the specially arranged US-ASEAN Next-Generation Leaders' Roundtable at the ASEAN Hall. The young leaders emphasized that people-to-people exchanges, and

drawing ideas from the next-generation are important in sustaining the strategic partnership. A separate report on the next-generation leaders' participation during the US-ASEAN Partnership Forum will be released in April 2019.

For more information, please contact Carl Baker [carl@pacforum.org], executive director, Pacific Forum. This report provides a general summary of the discussions. The views expressed are those of the speakers and the forum chair and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of all participants nor their organizations. This is not a consensus document.

Jeffrey Ordaniel is resident fellow
and **Carl Baker** is executive director
at the Pacific Forum.

APPENDIX A

United States-ASEAN Partnership Forum
Mandarin Oriental Jakarta
Jakarta, Indonesia
February 11-13, 2019

AGENDA

Day 1:	February 11, 2019
18:00	Cocktail Hour <i>Ballroom Foyer, 3rd Floor</i>
19:00 – 20:30	Opening Dinner <i>The Grand Ballroom, 3rd Floor</i> <i>Keynote Address</i> Ms. Jane Bocklage, Chargé d'affaires, US Mission to ASEAN His Excellency Hoang Anh Tuan, Deputy Secretary-General, ASEAN Cultural Performance
Day 2:	February 12, 2019
8:15 – 8:50	Registration
9:00 – 9:15	Opening Remarks
9:15-10:30	Panel I: US-ASEAN Relations at 42: Looking Back and Looking Forward Chair: Carl Baker, Pacific Forum <i>US-ASEAN Relations through the Years</i> Charles Edel, University of Sydney <i>ASEAN Matters for America Matters for ASEAN</i> Satu Limaye, East West Center <i>Moving the US-ASEAN Relations Forward</i> Dewi Fortuna Anwar, Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI)/Habibie Center
<i>15-min coffee break</i>	
10:45 – 12:00	Panel II: US-ASEAN Non-Traditional Security Cooperation Chair: Steven Rood, Social Weather Stations <i>HADR in ASEAN: US-Southeast Asia Relations in Times of Disasters</i> Blake Herzinger, Center for International Maritime Security <i>ISIS, Radicalism in Southeast Asia and US-ASEAN Relations</i> Rommel Banlaoi, Philippine Institute for Peace, Violence & Terrorism Research <i>Cybersecurity Challenges in ASEAN and the United States</i> Elina Noor, DKI Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies

12:00 – 13:30

Lunch

13.45 – 15:15

Panel III: US-ASEAN Maritime Security Cooperation

Chair: Robert Girrier, Pacific Forum

Dealing with Gray Zone Tensions in the South China Sea

Collin Koh Swee Lean, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

Freedom of Navigation Issues in Maritime Southeast Asia

Jeffrey Ordaniel, Pacific Forum

China's Buildup in the South China Sea: Options for ASEAN and the US

Patrick Cronin, Hudson Institute

15-min coffee break

15:30 – 17:10

Panel IV: US-Japan-Australia Cooperation in ASEAN

Chair: Dewi Fortuna Anwar, The Habibie Center

The United States and Japan in Southeast Asia: Potential for Strategic Aid Coordination

Akitoshi Miyashita, Tokyo International University

US-Japan Alliance and Security in Southeast Asia

Brad Glosserman, Tama University/Pacific Forum

US-Australia Cooperation in ASEAN

John Lee, Hudson Institute

ASEAN Views on US-Japan-Australia Regional Cooperation

Tang Siew Mun, ISEAS ASEAN Studies Centre

19:00 – 20:30

Fellowship Dinner

Day 3:

February 13, 2019

9:00 – 10:15

**Panel V: Good Governance & the Rule of Law in Southeast Asia:
The Role of the United States**

Chair: Ravi Velloor, The Straits Times

Democracy in Southeast Asia: Implications for US-ASEAN Relations

Julio Teehankee, DLSU Southeast Asian Research Center and Hub

Understanding Populism, Authoritarianism and Electoral Politics in ASEAN

Steven Rood, Social Weather Stations/Australian National University

US Approach to Human Rights and Good Governance in Southeast Asia

Olivia Enos, The Heritage Foundation

15-min coffee break

10:30 – 11:45

**Panel VI: Development Challenges in Southeast Asia –
The Role of the United States**

Chair: Kwa Chong Guan, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

Infrastructure Development in ASEAN: The Role and Interest of the United States

Andrew Jeffries, Asian Development Bank

Minding the Strategic Lenses in Southeast Asia's Development Challenges
Prashanth Parameswaran, The Diplomat

Promoting Inclusive Development through Women and Civil Society Empowerment
Rahimah Abdulrahim, The Habibie Center

11:50 – 13:00

Lunch

13:10 – 14:30

Panel VII: US-ASEAN Economic Relations

Chair: Michael Michalak, US-ASEAN Business Council

Regional Economic Integration Initiatives and Implications for the US-ASEAN Relations
Deborah Elms, Asian Trade Centre

Promoting ASEAN Connectivity and Ease of Doing Business in Southeast Asia
Poltak Hotradero, Indonesian Stock Exchange

The ASEAN Community 2025: Implications for the US
ASEAN View: Fauziah Zen, Economic Research Institute for ASEAN & East Asia
US View: Christopher Balding, Fulbright University of Vietnam

15-min coffee break

14:45 – 15:45

**Panel VIII: Next-Generation Views–
Over the Horizon Issues for the US-ASEAN Relations**

Chair: Robert Girrier, Pacific Forum
Speakers: Next-Generation Participants

15:50 – 17:15

Panel IX: Concluding Panel - the US and ASEAN in the Indo-Pacific Region

Chair: Carl Baker, Pacific Forum

ASEAN and the US-China Strategic Competition in the Indo-Pacific Region
Nguyen Hung Son, Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam
Lindsey Ford, Asia Society Policy Institute

*ASEAN in the US Indo-Pacific Strategy: Policy Recommendations for a “Whole of Nation”
Approach to Regional Engagement*
John Brandon, The Asia Foundation

ASEAN Perspective on the US Indo-Pacific Strategy: Policy Recommendations from the Region
Kitti Prasirtsuk, Thammasat University

17:15 – 17:30

Closing Remarks

Forum Ends

APPENDIX B

United States-ASEAN Partnership Forum

Mandarin Oriental Jakarta

Jakarta, Indonesia

February 11-13, 2019

PARTICIPANT LIST

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 22. Brad Glosserman
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 23. Blake Herzinger
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 24. Poltak Hotradero
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 25. U Khin Maung Lynn
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