Southeast Asia in 2008: Challenges Within and Without

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In 2008 ASEAN intensified its longstanding search for identity. In the final quarter of the year the Association was transformed from a consultative group into a legal entity when the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand became the last member states to ratify the ASEAN Charter.\(^1\) However, the translation of the group’s new status into policies remains an open question. ASEAN continues to be the bedrock of Asian regional architecture, but signs are emerging that the Northeast Asia members of the ASEAN+3 may not need Southeast Asian training wheels much longer. At the same time, ASEAN was pulled closer into Northeast Asian conundrums — and potential conflicts — with new overtures from North Korea and Taiwan.

However, more tangible challenges to Southeast Asian unity in 2008 came from developments within and between the member states themselves. The protracted multi-party process to forge a peace agreement between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Philippine government failed, assuring continued instability in Mindanao and calling into question the efficacy of ad hoc regional diplomacy. A dispute over an historic border temple sparked a brief military clash between Thailand and Cambodia, with each side accusing the other of provoking conflict for domestic political gain. At the end of the year international attention was drawn to Thailand’s complicated political crisis when anti-government protestors seized the international airport in Bangkok, disrupting regional air routes and forcing Bangkok to postpone the annual ASEAN Summit.

But arguably the greatest challenge to ASEAN coherence posed by a member state in 2008 was the response — or lack of — by the government of Myanmar to Cyclone Nargis and to offers of humanitarian relief from the international...
community. Less than a year after the government’s crackdown of the “Saffron Revolution”, the disaster became a diagnostic for Myanmar’s regional relations. ASEAN emerged as the interlocutor of choice, but the limits of the Association’s influence on its isolated and isolationist member were obvious.

**ASEAN Charter: Back-and-Fill Institutional Development?**

The birth of ASEAN as a legal entity was marked at a special meeting of the Association’s Foreign Ministers in Jakarta on 15 December 2008. The ASEAN Charter was signed the year before in a game of brinksmanship with a handful of member governments that believed the Charter lacked sufficient mechanisms to handle the difficulties presented by Myanmar’s membership in the Association. Although doubts on this score continued into 2008 and made for a ragged ratification schedule, there was little sign of that drama at the Jakarta meeting.

The Charter institutionalizes the ASEAN meeting process by moving from a schedule of meetings to a structure of ministerial-level permanent councils, one for each of the three areas of ASEAN community building: economic; political-security, and sociocultural. The Charter also enables ASEAN members to post permanent representatives to the Association, and allows ASEAN’s external partners to do the same. The first such country to do so in 2008 was the United States, with several countries following in rapid fashion. Some external partners have based the ASEAN Ambassador position in their own capitals, while others have representatives in Jakarta. The Charter also provides for measures to strengthen the ASEAN Secretariat.

To date, the most developed of the ASEAN communities is the economic one. The Charter stipulates that the original six ASEAN members — Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei — will reduce tariffs on intra-regional trade by 2010, while the four newer members — Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar — will complete that process by 2015. Some analysts attribute the momentum toward economic integration to a desire on ASEAN’s part to present a solid bloc in negotiations with China. Others trace the origins of the ASEAN Economic Community to the early 1990s, and view it as a defense against the perceived division of the international market into trade blocs, with the rise of the European Union and the establishment of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Although the reorganization of ASEAN under the Charter provides for more permanent structures, it is not clear if it provides a sufficient foundation to make ASEAN truly a rules-based entity. This issue is likely to surface increasingly as
ASEAN moves closer to the 2010 and 2015 target dates for the ASEAN Economic Community. Liberalization does not prevent trade disputes; on the contrary, it often invites them. Over time, a permanent economic community will require that ASEAN develop a body of trade law and a central authority to hear and settle trade disputes. How far the ASEAN Economic Community can progress without attention to these tasks is a key question.

When the ASEAN Charter was signed, international attention was drawn to the Charter’s mission to promote the definition and development of regional norms. In particular, the stated intention to create a human rights body was regarded with interest in the United States and Europe. The precise form and function of this body remains undefined but the ASEAN process of consensus, which gives weight to the least common denominator, is likely to ensure that the body will remain consultative at best. This has disappointed some Western policy-makers, who had hoped the new human rights mechanism would include provisions to sanction members that violate regional norms — clearly they had Myanmar in mind. Some Southeast Asian analysts view this as putting the cart before the horse, and point out that ASEAN must first define regional norms before it can develop mechanisms to safeguard them.

However, the member states continue to disagree on the way forward to develop the human rights body, and some Southeast Asian analysts fear that the ASEAN principle of non-interference ensures that it will lack traction. In November Djoko Susilo, Indonesian Member of Parliament and Chair of the Parliament’s Myanmar Caucus, complained that “The human rights mechanism in the Charter … gives a warm blanket to the (Myanmar) military junta.” Critics of the Charter, both within and outside Southeast Asia, are often reminded that the Charter contains a provision for amendment after the first five years, and that it should be considered a work in progress.

**ASEAN’s Extra-Regional Stretch**

Despite perennial grumbling from some Western diplomats that ASEAN is primarily a “talk shop”, over the past two decades the Association has demonstrated that it is valued-added in building Asian regional institutions. ASEAN is the convening agent for the region’s most active security dialogue — the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) — and underpins major new groupings such as the ASEAN+3. ASEAN’s role as a regional fulcrum may be due not only to its own institutional structure but also to its promulgation of the “ASEAN Way” in the broader Asia-Pacific region. The traditional ASEAN principles of decision by consensus and
non-interference in the domestic affairs of member states have enabled disparate actors in the region to come together in consultative groups such as the East Asia Summit.

The non-interference principle has come under fire within ASEAN in the past decade. The Association has occasionally, if tacitly, set that rule aside to pursue a policy of ad hoc “flexible engagement”, such as in 1998 when ASEAN was instrumental in persuading Indonesia to accept international peacekeeping assistance in East Timor. There is little possibility that ASEAN will officially abandon these two founding tenets — a draft of the Charter that sought to remove them was ultimately rejected — but they will be quietly modified as ASEAN develops further as a legal entity. Ironically, the “ASEAN Way” may be kept alive in the broader Asia-Pacific region long after it has lost its luster in ASEAN itself.

For the time being, however, the entry ticket for new Asia-Pacific regional organizations remains accession to the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. The creation of the East Asia Summit, which required all members to be signatories to the TAC, sparked a flurry of activity from ASEAN’s external partners in that regard. To date fifteen countries have signed the TAC: China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Russia, France, Australia, India, Pakistan, East Timor, Papua New Guinea, New Zealand, Mongolia, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and, in July 2008, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea). In September the European Union indicated that it intended to sign the TAC in July 2009 at the ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting in Phnom Penh. The EU will thus become the first group of nations to sign the TAC, and intends to use that as the foundation for negotiation of an ASEAN-EU Free Trade Agreement.

Among ASEAN’s external partners, the notable holdout in signing the TAC is the United States. Objections in Washington to taking this action have traditionally been two-fold. First, the U.S. defense sector feared that provisions in the TAC on non-interference and renunciation of the use of force would disadvantage the United States as the sole superpower in the region. Security analysts also believed that ASEAN’s policy of promoting a nuclear free zone, which is not an explicit feature of the TAC but nevertheless figures into the ASEAN profile, would hamper the ability to deploy nuclear weapons on U.S. aircraft and ships in the region. A second and more general constraint was the belief that if the executive branch signed the TAC, the U.S. Senate would not ratify it. Some believe the latter reservation is based in the TAC’s broad language that suggested a non-aggression pact, while others perceive a more pointed objection to a treaty that includes Burma as a party. Both of these sets of objections
are believed to have dissipated in recent months. Although the administration has not made a decision with regard to signing the TAC, the perception in the Washington policy community is that doing so would be less controversial now than in the past.

Drawing all of the Asia-Pacific powers into the regional tent may bode well for the long term, but there are potential short-term downsides. Asian policymakers have expressed informal reservations about admitting both Russia and the United States into the East Asia Summit, should the U.S. sign the TAC and seek entry into the EAS. They fear that the two countries could import their recent bilateral flare-ups into the EAS; for the time being, they are holding both at bay with respect to EAS entry.

North Korea’s accession to the TAC points out both the advantages and disadvantages of the big tent approach. The DPRK has been a member of the ASEAN Regional Forum since 2000. In recent years, Asian policymakers have expressed quiet hopes that engagement with North Korea could reinforce attempts by the Six Party Process and other diplomatic initiatives to persuade Pyongyang to abandon its nuclear programme. Others, particularly some analysts in the United States, are doubtful that North Korea’s accession to the TAC and its possible entry into the EAS as a result will have an appreciable impact. However, the value of additional dialogue channels with Pyongyang over the long-run is self-evident.

In the coming year ASEAN could face a more delicate issue as Taiwan proclaimed its desire to join the ASEAN Regional Forum. When President Ma Ying-jeou was inaugurated in May, he announced a new turn in Taipei’s external relations, which he described as seeking a “diplomatic truce” with Beijing. Under this new policy, Taiwan would abandon its quest for diplomatic recognition in the international community and expand its participation in trade, cultural and regional organizations. Taiwan is a member of the World Trade Organization and APEC in its capacity as an “economy” rather than a state, and has long sought to be given observer status at the World Health Assembly, the decision-making body of the World Health Organization, a move that Beijing has heretofore blocked. Taipei’s entry into ARF may be interpreted as trying to cross political red lines. Taiwan figures prominently in Southeast Asia’s investment sector, but ASEAN will need to tread lightly to avoid being caught between Beijing and Taipei on this issue.

As ASEAN’s role in the Asia-Pacific region changes, it will appear at times to contract and at others to expand. On 13 December the leaders of China, Japan and South Korea met in Fukuoka, Japan for the first-ever trilateral summit of the
three countries. The trio had met eight times as a tripartite group on the margins of ASEAN+3 meetings, but the December meeting marked its first solo flight. The event was a quiet triumph for the three Northeast Asian countries but also for ASEAN, which had provided the basis for informal diplomatic dialogue among the three powers for a decade.

In 2008 ASEAN, collectively and through bilateral relations, deepened its engagement with key rising powers in the reason. The year held a number of first-ever developments with China. Beijing was active on the defense front early in the year: in January it signed a defense exchange and security cooperation pact with Singapore, formalizing the basket of visits, courses and port calls that had been developed in recent years. Soon after China signed an agreement with Indonesia to work together on military training and military vehicle production. In September Singapore and China concluded a free trade agreement, the first such bilateral FTA between China and an ASEAN nation.

But the year was also marked by heightened tensions between China and an ASEAN member state, Vietnam, over oil exploration and other issues in the South China Sea. Although Chinese-Vietnamese relations in this area have been on the edge since competition for the Spratly Islands intensified in the 1990s, tensions were ratcheted up when China warned ExxonMobil against working with PetroVietnam, the Vietnamese state oil firm, to explore areas in the South China Sea off the south and central coasts of Vietnam. In the ensuing media war, Beijing issued statements claiming sovereignty over the South China Sea, in which it managed to reiterate its threats against ExxonMobil. The deteriorating situation was enough to persuade officials in Beijing and Hanoi to introduce a hotline for communication between state leaders. Some analysts attributed the clash simply to rising energy prices but to Vietnamese officials, Beijing’s actions were part of a larger piece.

The hotline presumably saw use in September when a Chinese website published “invasion plans” for a Chinese military conquest of Vietnam. The unsourced material described five days of missile strikes from land, sea and air; a blockade of Hanoi; and a 300,000 troop force that would sweep into Vietnam from three points: Yunnan Province, Guangxi Province and the South China Sea. In response to Hanoi’s predictable protests, the Chinese government disavowed the website. Perhaps to draw attention away from maritime friction, China and Vietnam settled a land border dispute on the last day of the year. The land issue derived from the 1979 China-Vietnam border war and resolving it had both political and symbolic importance, but Vietnam continues to cast a wary eye on the South China Sea and its northern neighbour.
Conflict Restarts in Mindanao, Flares Up on the Thai-Cambodian Border

2008 saw the unhappy end — for the time being — of a longstanding attempt to forge a peace agreement between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the government of the Philippines. The talks foundered in August when the draft Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain was blocked by the Philippines Supreme Court, which eventually killed it altogether. The return of some ancestral lands lost by Mindanao’s Muslims in the transmigration of Christians into the southern province after Philippine independence was an economic and political issue, as well as a potent symbol. The Court ruled that granting territory to the MILF under the agreement could be in violation of Philippine sovereignty, although land had been granted to form an Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao under a previous agreement with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), a predecessor of the MILF. Some analysts attribute the agreement’s collapse to a failure on Manila’s part to consult adequately with Christian groups before agreeing to cede land to Philippine Muslims. After it was clear that the agreement had failed, both sides moved rapidly to hardline positions. Splinter MILF groups resumed attacks on the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) as well as civilians, while Manila demanded that the MILF disarm and demobilize before peace negotiations could resume. The possibility of restarting the talks in the near term appears remote.

The negotiation process had endured for nearly five years and was a regional as well as an internal effort. Malaysia had served as the mediator, in a role it has cultivated over several years as a sponsor of negotiations to resolve issues between Muslim and non-Muslim groups in the region. (Libya had played a similar role in Manila’s negotiations with the MNLF two decades prior.) Beyond its negotiating services, the Malaysian government had also encouraged Malaysian businesses to invest in Mindanao. Kuala Lumpur’s chagrin over the collapse of the process was palpable, not least because the Memorandum on the Ancestral Domains was scheduled to be signed in Kuala Lumpur just before the Supreme Court intervened.

So does the failure of the Manila-MILF process affect one of the Philippines’ most important external bilateral relations, with the United States? The joint U.S.-Philippine Balikatan exercises were designed in part to enable U.S. forces to train their Philippine counterparts in counter-insurgency. The United States has a particular interest in checking the violent fundamentalist Abu Sayyaf Group, but a key element to stabilizing Mindanao was a successful agreement with the
MILF. For several years the U.S. Congress had earmarked several million dollars for assistance to reintegrate MILF insurgents into Mindanao society with training and other support for demobilization. With violence in Mindanao now more likely in the short term, Washington and Manila are under new pressure to assess their cooperation and the nature of the bilateral military-to-military relationship.

But if conflict returned to Mindanao after a wearying effort to end it, it made a surprise appearance on the Thai-Cambodian border in 2008. In June Thailand and Cambodia renewed their dispute over the historic Preah Vihear temple, one of the landmarks of the ancient Khmer Empire. The temple sits atop a mountain in northern Cambodia close to the border with Thailand, but the primary access roads to it lie in Thai territory, a fact that is not insignificant at a time when tourism revenue is important to both Cambodia and Thailand. The territorial arrangement originated in an attempt in 1904 between Thailand (then Siam) and French colonial authorities in Cambodia, the results of which were ambiguous enough to restart the conflict at regular intervals in the century that followed. In 1962 the International Court of Justice awarded Preah Vihear to Cambodia, while much of the territory surrounding it remained in Thailand.

The conflict restarted with Cambodia’s application to have Preah Vihear declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Although Thailand originally had not objected, it began to fear that the designation, which UNESCO duly made, would endanger Thai sovereignty over the access roads and related territory. Such disputes are common on mainland Southeast Asia, where clear and uncontested border demarcations are a rarity. What is more unusual is that the conflict escalated rapidly through summer and into fall. In July Cambodia arrested Thai protestors at the site and in short order a combined 1,000 troops from both countries were positioned on the border. Small arms fire and exchanges with rocket-launched grenades resulted in injuries on both sides and a handful of casualties.

Although the historical dispute was doubtless a major factor in the conflict, analysts also suggested it served a short-term political purpose for both governments. Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen’s was facing re-election in July, which his party won with a larger-than-expected margin. Polls preceding the election indicated that the border conflict had raised nationalist hackles in Cambodia and placed Hun Sen in a more favourable light. In 2008 Thailand endured a revolving door of governments — three in the space of the year — each of them with a tenuous hold on power. Paradoxically, the conflict was a benefit to both the beleaguered People’s Power Party, as it distracted the public momentarily from the large-scale protests in Bangkok, and the anti-PPP (and anti-Thaksin) protesters themselves, since the border hostilities put additional pressure on the government.
The conflict dissipated gradually through bilateral talks and resulted in joint border patrols to help prevent future flare-ups. However, its more lasting impact is likely to be a renewal of debate over ASEAN’s role — or lack of — in helping to settle conflicts between member states. Proposals were mooted to have ASEAN mediate the conflict, but the ASEAN chair had passed to Bangkok over the summer, and the Thai government was resolute that the conflict would need to be addressed through bilateral dialogue. Suggestions that the United Nations or the ICJ attempt to mediate were similarly, and firmly, rejected. Hints that Indonesia, as the largest ASEAN state, might play a special role in helping to resolve the conflict proved to be equally unpopular in Bangkok and Phnom Penh.19 This proposal, which oddly came after the conflict had essentially subsided, was probably aimed more for domestic Indonesian consumption, harking back to the Soeharto era when Indonesia and its legendary Foreign Minister, Ali Alatas, were considered unofficial leaders in ASEAN. The fact that Alatas had died in early December strengthens the likelihood that the suggestion to intervene was probably intended in part to honour him.

But in terms of ASEAN’s institutional development, the conflict could not have been more unfortunately timed, just months before ratification of the ASEAN Charter was complete. Another ironic juxtaposition was a decision by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on disputes between Singapore and Malaysia over three maritime features in the Singapore Straits. In May the ICJ awarded sovereignty of Pedra Branca/Pulau Batu Puteh to Singapore; of Middle Rock to Malaysia; and of the South Ledge to both countries, according to their territorial waters.20 Although the acceptance of the ICJ decision by both parties was encouraging, the fact that they were forced to turn to an extra-regional body to settle the dispute was taken by some as an inherent criticism of ASEAN. This is a periodic complaint, both within ASEAN and in the international community, when conflicts erupt between or among member states.

ASEAN’s defenders in debates over the conflict resolution deficit point out that the Association has been successful at times in mediating conflicts outside its membership. In 1997 the ASEAN Troika helped to settle the violent conflict within the Cambodian ruling coalition, but Cambodia was not at that time a member of ASEAN. Some also insist that ASEAN’s consultative nature and its consensus process may have prevented or minimized numerous conflicts among members. However, proving a negative is difficult if not impossible, and attention is inevitably focused on ASEAN’s perceived failures in this regard, with accusatory fingers usually pointing to the principle of non-interference. Thus far, angry and even violent flare-ups between members have been short-lived and are often
settled between the concerned governments before ASEAN is able to mobilize for even a group discussion. However, as the Association moves more closely toward regional integration there is no assurance that conflicts of this nature can be so easily contained, and debate over ASEAN’s ability and responsibility to resolve disputes between member states is only likely to increase in the coming years.

Myanmar and ASEAN Humanitarian Response

The 2004 tsunami in the Indian Ocean was a tragedy of epic proportions but also a model of international cooperation for disaster relief. Moreover, the Indonesian government’s decision to open the troubled province of Aceh, which was heavily stricken by the tsunami, to the international relief effort helped to set the stage for a peace process in the province that would fare better than earlier attempts.

With this paradigm in mind, the international community was prepared to come to Myanmar’s assistance when Cyclone Nargis hit the Irawaddy Delta on 3 May. Although as many as 1.5 million Burmese were believed to be affected, directly or indirectly, the Myanmar government refused access to U.S. and European military in the region that had offered ships, helicopters and landing craft to ferry aid, and then denied entry to international aid workers. Analysts theorized that the junta feared that granting access to the international community — and particularly to Western militaries — was tantamount to inviting an invasion. This impression may have been reinforced when U.S. First Lady Laura Bush called for the regime to step aside on 5 May.

The Myanmar government’s reaction caused Washington and some European capitals to consider requesting UN authorization to enter Myanmar without the government’s permission to distribute aid, but China made clear it would block any such action in the Security Council. At the May Shangri-La Dialogue of Asia-Pacific Defense Ministers in Singapore, U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates charged the Myanmar government with “criminal neglect” for refusing to permit large-scale international aid in the country, but he allowed that it would be impossible to deliver aid without their cooperation.

Ultimately, the government of Myanmar permitted ASEAN to distribute limited aid on a case-by-case basis, in collaboration with the United Nations. These missions were assisted by military transportation from the United States and other countries, but the ASEAN/UN lead was clearly critical for the government. In recent years the West has tended to focus on China’s growing influence with Myanmar and India’s new relationship with it and has been inclined to underestimate ASEAN’s influence. Although Beijing may still be Myanmar’s most important external
partner, the Nargis crisis suggests that ASEAN’s leverage is greater than the West may have estimated. Several Southeast Asians were outspoken in their criticism of the military regime following the cyclone — in July Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) Director Ambassador K. Kesavapany wrote that its handling of the crisis was “breathtaking in its callousness” but ASEAN will likely retain an edge in relations with Myanmar for the foreseeable future.

One immediate response from ASEAN to the crisis, beyond its actions toward Myanmar, was to strengthen its disaster response capability. In August the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management conducted a joint humanitarian response simulation, hypothesizing that a major typhoon had struck the industrial and coastal province of Rayong, Thailand. Building on the affected state’s national response and working through the ASEAN Coordinating Center for Humanitarian Assistance, the other participating states (Brunei, Cambodia, Malaysia, Philippines and Singapore) mobilized their own fire-fighting and search and rescue teams to supplement the Thai response. Thailand will again be the site of a joint humanitarian exercise in 2009, this time when the ARF conducts its first joint disaster response exercise. This innovation had been suggested by the United States in March, two months before Cyclone Nargis struck Burma, and quickly proved to be all too timely. Increasing piracy around the world in 2008 underscored the need for stronger maritime cooperation, particularly when heavily armed pirates attacked a Thai oil tanker in Malaysian waters in April.

The Coming Economic Crisis

In the last quarter of 2008 Southeast Asia was pulled away from its regional and domestic problems to consider the economic crisis that began in the United States and quickly spread to Europe. The initial impact was muted in Asia, and Asian analysts expressed optimism that China would be able to sustain stable growth apart from financial turmoil in the West. If it can, Southeast Asia might be able to escape significant fallout from the crisis by virtue of its growing economic interdependence with China. That scenario may underestimate the degree to which Southeast Asia is still tied to trade with the West, and it assumes that China’s efforts to protect its own export sector — particularly in fiscal policy — would not disadvantage Southeast Asia. Toward the end of the year, Asian policy-makers and economists expressed some doubt that either of these assumptions will hold.

Even if Southeast Asia is able to escape major economic damage in the short term, the crisis is sure to have an impact on relations with the United States and the European Union, and most likely with China as well. Apart from the obvious
and monumental task of applying a tourniquet to the hemorrhaging American economy, the Obama administration will first need to address a backlog of free trade agreements — including the critical U.S.-Korea FTA — before turning to Southeast Asian agreements still under negotiation. It is unclear as a result whether negotiations on the U.S.-Malaysia and U.S.-Thailand FTAs will resume in 2009. Indeed, economic liberalization schemes with ASEAN’s other external trading partners may also be affected by the crisis, and it may slow ASEAN’s own plans to forge an economic free trade area of its own. Nor are the ASEAN member governments likely to avoid political pressure from their domestic populations as export sectors, particularly those dependent upon trade with the West, begin to lag. A severe economic downturn could affect the tenor, if not the outcome, of political transitions in Malaysia and Indonesia in 2009, and even in the Philippines in 2010.

Although it is impossible to know at this time how the current global economic crisis will end or how severely it will affect Southeast Asia, it clearly presents a significant challenge to the member states of ASEAN and ASEAN’s efforts to strengthen itself as an institution in the coming year. To some, however, the crisis could act as a spur to regional integration. At the ASEAN ratification ceremony in December, ASEAN Secretary General Surin Pitsuwan put this problem in a hopeful context, by asserting that the ratification could not be better timed, because tighter ASEAN economic integration is the best hedge against a global economic crisis. While this may make theoretical sense, the crisis has created a more difficult environment in which to pursue implementation.

Notes
4 See, for example, Brian McCartan, “ASEAN Tightens Up to Ride China’s Rise”, Asia Times Online, 17 December 2008 <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/JL17Ae01.html>.
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7 “EU to Sign ASEAN Amity, Cooperation”, *The Nation*, 13 September 2008.


13 *South China Morning Post*, 20 June 2008.


17 Ibid.


22 Ibid.

“ASEAN’s Regional Emergency Response and Humanitarian Assistance Capability Put to the Test in Simulated Typhoon Disaster Scenario”, Announcement by ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management, 22 August 2008 <http://acdm-online.net>.


McCartan, Asia Times Online.