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**When Southeast Asia met Latin America**

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**Abstract:**

This paper addresses the unexplored linkage between the Nuclear Weapons Free Zones (NWFZ) of Southeast Asia and Latin America. In 1995, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) adopted the nuclear weapons free zone model (Treaty of Bangkok) established 30 years earlier by Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco). It is puzzling why ASEAN incorporated a model created in a context and circumstances that were seemingly different. Consequently, the main questions to be formulated here are: why has the Latin American nuclear weapons free zone been perceived as a model by Southeast Asia? What are the underlying conditions that help to support the creation of NWFZs? Among the possible conditions, I refer to realist conditions such as security concerns regarding nuclear weapons due to intra-regional dynamics or extra regional nuclear threats; liberal conditions present in the region including democratic peace, regional institutions, and economic interdependence; the role of regional actors and the relevance of regional norms.

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## **When Southeast Asia met Latin America**

### *Introduction*

In this paper I analyse the unexplored linkage between the Nuclear Weapons Free Zones (NWFZs) of Southeast Asia and Latin America. The former was established in 1995 through the Bangkok Treaty building upon the Latin American Tlatelolco Treaty established 30 years earlier. Mainly, NWFZs prohibit the development, testing, manufacturing, production, possession, acquisition, stockpiling, and transportation of nuclear weapons in a certain region along with the use or threatened use of nuclear weapons against states within the zone by Nuclear Weapons States. All the regions that established NWFZs did so by following the Latin American model of the Tlatelolco Treaty and by implementing its core features. Southeast Asia was not the exception. In this sense, it is puzzling why Southeast Asia, which seems to have little similarities with Latin America, decided to “import” a model from that region. While some scholars tend to stress that the regions in which they specialize are in some way special and indeed, unique, at prima facie, the existence of NWFZs in different settings makes a strong case for suggesting that common elements and conditions may exist in different regions of the world. In this regard, Amitav Acharya (2012:13) rightly asks, “Can we have agreement on a set of theories and concepts that can be meaningfully employed across regions for systematic comparison and coherent explanations?” Drawing upon Acharya's inquiry, this paper is based on a broader doctoral project aimed at comparing the five existing NWFZs, Latin America, the South Pacific, Southeast Asia, Africa and Central Asia. My goal is to assess the existence of common conditions across regions for establishing these security frameworks. As single case studies cannot create compelling generalizations or invalidate existing ones comparative analysis is useful to avoid regional biases and to corroborate, refute, or improve initial hypotheses. As such, in this paper I focus on the Southeast Asia case.

Hence, the question to be formulated here is why has the Latin American Nuclear Weapons Free Zone been perceived as a model by Southeast Asian nations? What are the underlying conditions that help to support the creation of NWFZs?

In the first section I trace how the Latin American Tlatelolco Treaty and the Southeast Asian Bangkok Treaty intersected. Later on, I test a set of hypotheses I formulated to study the conditions for establishing NWFZs. I will analyse these hypotheses in the Southeast Asia NWFZ case. Finally, in the conclusion I will answer the questions formulated along with the hypothesis assessment.

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## **The Latin American and Southeast Asian nexus**

### *The Tlatelolco Treaty*

The Cuban Missile Crisis was one of the riskiest episodes of the whole Cold War Era. Due to the fact that it took place in Cuba, it had a large impact on the whole Latin America region, which realized the potential danger of a nuclear conflict between the two superpowers. The crisis could have generated unforeseen consequences and thus implied an unacceptable risk for Latin America. Shortly after, Latin American nations began dealing with some of those consequences. In this sense, on the 29th of April 1963, the presidents of Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador and Mexico signed the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of Latin America, which was endorsed the same year by UN General Assembly Resolution 1911 XVIII (November 27, 1963). Immediately afterwards, the Mexican President Adolfo Lopez Mateos hosted a meeting of representatives of seventeen Latin American states that put in motion a commission charged with drafting and working on the would-be treaty of the NWFZ. The COPREDAL (The Commission for the Denuclearization of Latin America in its Spanish acronym) was convened for the first time in March 1965 in Mexico City under the chairmanship of the Mexican diplomat Alfonso Garcia Robles (he was awarded with the Nobel Peace Prize in 1982). Throughout the negotiation process Garcia Robles displayed skillful diplomacy and mastery not only in negotiation, but also in articulating a normative conception of the entire nuclear field. Furthermore, Garcia Robles led the negotiations with the nuclear powers regarding their future support for the Latin American denuclearization enterprise. After two years of intense work and four sessions, the COPREDAL produced the final draft of the treaty in February 1967. The treaty entered into force on the 22nd of April 1968. All the 33 Latin American nations are parties to the Tlatelolco Treaty and all the five nuclear powers ratified the binding protocols of the treaty.

Rapidly, the Tlatelolco Treaty became a source of attraction for other regions gaining a broad international recognition. After the entry into force of Tlatelolco, other regions began looking at the precedent set by Latin America in order to adopt it.

The Committee for Disarmament at the UN conducted research on such nuclear free zones in the 1970s and in the 1990s, and in both instances, it promulgated guidelines for the establishment of NWFZs. Simultaneously to the UN study on NWFZ, in 1974 and 1975, the United Nations General Assembly passed resolutions on the prospects of NWFZs in South Asia, the South Pacific and the

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Middle East. Later on in 1985 the South Pacific established a NWFZ, Southeast Asia followed suit in 1995, Africa 1996 and Central Asia in 2006.

### *The Bangkok Treaty*

The Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty (SEANWFZ), also known as the Bangkok Treaty, was opened for signature on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 1995 and entered into force on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 1997. The parties to the treaty included Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. The SEANWFZ was established at the Fifth Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit by all ten Southeast Asian countries, though Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar were not yet members of ASEAN. The SEANWFZ marked a major breakthrough for the region, as it was the first agreement signed by all ten of the Southeast Asian countries (Acharya and Boutin, 1998:224).

Though this project was finalized in 1995, this marked the end of a long journey. Southeast Asian experts (Natalegawa, 1993; Hernandez, 1998) agree that the Bangkok Declaration, which is the constitutive document of ASEAN, contains the seed of the NWFZ. Hence, the ASEAN founding document contains principles behind the idea of a NWFZ in Southeast Asia, such as non-intervention, self-reliance and the aspiration to end the military presence of extra-regional actors.

In 1971, ASEAN produced another document, the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) Declaration. The ZOPFAN “was aimed at limiting the scope for great power intervention in Southeast Asia by calling upon them to refrain from forging alliances with Southeast Asian countries, establishing military bases in their territories and interfering in their domestic affairs”. It is interesting to note that the ZOPFAN Declaration also directly acknowledged the precedent of the Treaty of Tlatelolco:

(the parties who issued the declaration acknowledged that they were) *cognizant of the significant trend towards establishing nuclear-free zones, as in the "Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America" and the Lusaka Declaration proclaiming Africa as a nuclear-free zone, for the purpose of promoting world peace and security by reducing the areas of international conflicts and tension.*

Consequently, the ZOPFAN Declaration set the foundation for a regional discussion on establishing a NWFZ. One year after the ZOPFAN Declaration was issued; ASEAN nations presented a set of fourteen guidelines for making the principles of the ZOPFAN operational. In other words, the guidelines were a codification of the principles behind the ZOPFAN Declaration and a code of

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conduct on how to manage relations among the states inside and outside the zone. As a matter of fact, non-proliferation was one of the main themes. The 11th principle reads as follows:

*Prohibition of the use, storage, passage, or testing of nuclear weapons and their components within the Zone.*

A few years later, the then Indonesian foreign minister Mochtar KusumaAtmadja (1978-1988), considered as the chief architect of the SEANWFZ proposal set forth in the 1980s, praised the Tlatelolco Treaty at the UN General Assembly Special Session on Disarmament in 1978

*In this respect the results achieved so far by the countries of Latin America with the Treaty of Tlatelolco is a notable achievement worthy of emulation*

Notwithstanding the references to a potential NWFZ in Southeast Asia, just in 1984 the concept was raised as a real possibility and gained momentum. At that time, Indonesia presented a proposal for a NWFZ at the ASEAN Summit and formally endorsed it. Immediately, teams were established to prepare a draft outlining the parameters of the would-be treaty. From 1984 until 1988, progress was made at the technical level but political conditions had not yet ripened enough to produce a breakthrough. Two factors held back the progress at this time. First, the exclusion of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia meant the treaty could not include all of the Southeast nations. The parties agreed that the treaty must encompass all the Southeast Asia nations. Second, the opposition of the US, its military facilities in the region, and the bases owned by the USSR added other elements that worked against efforts to advance the NWFZ.

In the early 1990s, both international and regional dynamics sparked a radical change in the environment of Southeast Asia: the end of the Cold War and the end of the Cambodia-Vietnam conflict, with the signature of the Paris Peace Accords in 1991, paved the way for a new era in interregional affairs. Against this backdrop, the more peaceful environment laid the foundation for the creation of the SEANWFZ in 1995. The NWFZ was brought to the table at the ASEAN ministerial meeting in 1993, where region's policymakers agreed that the moment had come to move forward with the delayed project. Between 1993 and 1995, negotiations took place, although the bulk of the work had already been done in the drafting sessions of the 1980s.

### **The Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SEANWFZ)**

Having established the link between the Tlatelolco Treaty and the Bangkok Treaty I test the hypothesis developed. It is important to note that studying the underlying conditions for NWFZs does not necessarily mean that these conditions are necessary or sufficient, but rather that they are

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likely conditions under which NWFZs may or may not be established. Among the possible conditions, I refer to realist conditions, such as security concerns regarding nuclear weapons due to intra-regional dynamics or extra regional nuclear threats; liberal conditions present in the region including democratic peace, regional institutions, and economic interdependence; the role of regional actors and the relevance of regional norms. These hypotheses are somewhat aligned with Buzan and Waever's four levels of analysis and its interplay: domestic levels, state-to-state relations, the region's interactions with neighbouring regions and the role of global powers in the regions (2003:51).

*H1. A NWFZ is more likely to be achieved when security concerns regarding nuclear weapons are present in the region due to intra-regional dynamics or due to the role played by external regional actors and threats.*

Intra-regional (horizontal) proliferation was never a critical issue within the confines of Southeast Asia for the simple reason that countries in the region showed little interest in pursuing nuclear energy programs. When the Bangkok Treaty was negotiated, no country was even close to reaching the status of a nuclear threshold state. Dreams of nuclear weapons were not really factor into the plans of most Southeast Asian leaders, seeing as the countries in the region had limited nuclear capabilities. The Philippines acquired a first research reactor in 1958 as part of the Atoms for Peace Program. Later on, the Philippines built a 620 (MW) nuclear power plant in cooperation with the Westinghouse Corporation. The project began in the 1970s, during Ferdinand Marcos' government, but it suffered from mismanagement, which delayed its finalization. When the plant was almost ready to produce nuclear energy in 1986, the ousting of Marcos due to political turmoil and the impact of the Chernobyl accident buried the project. Moreover, Marcos faced claims of corruption, after he allegedly received bribes from Westinghouse (Singh, 2000:14-16), and this contributed to the public's lack of support for the nuclear program.

Indonesia had three research reactors, including one multipurpose reactor, but no nuclear power plants. The country acquired its first nuclear reactor from the US under the Atoms for Peace Program and inaugurated it in 1964. In 1965, President Sukarno threatened to detonate a nuclear bomb following the first nuclear test conducted by China in 1964. However, the threat proved to be a bluff because Indonesia lacked the technical ability to act on it. After the ousting of Sukarno, Indonesia signed a safeguards agreement with the IAEA and set the country on a new course, namely, the support of the peaceful use of energy and opposition to nuclear proliferation (Malley and Ogilve-White, 2009:30). Along with its research reactors, Indonesia pursued certain areas of

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nuclear research such as nuclear engineering, radiation and isotope applications (Singh, 2000:16-21).

Both Malaysia and Thailand had one research reactor. Vietnam also had a research reactor, which was built with US assistance in the early 1960s. After the American withdrawal of forces from South Vietnam, the US removed the core of the reactor, and this was eventually replaced by the Soviet Union.

While regional nuclear threats were not a deep concern, external nuclear threats were a constant reality in Southeast Asia. This makes sense, given the fact that the region is surrounded with nuclear armed states. Within the Asian continent, there are three nuclear weapons states: China, India, Pakistan and North Korea. The Indian and Pakistani nuclear programs are aimed at each other, and seem to pose little risk to other countries in Southeast Asia. However, China's nuclear programs put Southeast Asian states at risk. China's claims and aspirations in the South China Sea are viewed with suspicion by most of the Southeast Asian states. Even today, there are several disputes between ASEAN and China regarding the maritime territory of islands and reefs, and fishing rights in the South China Sea.

Furthermore, after several nuclear tests conducted in the Korean Peninsula over the past few years, the reality of a nuclear Korea threatens the entire region. The unpredictable behaviour of the communist state has raised concerns not only about this country, but about others as well, such as Japan. North Korean nuclearization may trigger a Japanese response in the form of retaliation in kind. Japan is a nuclear threshold state capable of assembling a nuclear device within a six-month period due to its large nuclear energy infrastructure.

Notwithstanding current threats, historically the danger of nuclear menace has come from different sources. After Indonesia gained independence, Australia was seen as its main rival in the broader Pacific area. While nuclear weapons have never been part of this rivalry, until the late 1960s, Indonesia guarded Australia's nuclear program with suspicion. Indonesia feared the nuclearization of Australia more than any other country (Ironically, the South Pacific NWFZ in mid-1980s encouraged Indonesian efforts in that direction).

Among the Southeast Asia nations, only Vietnam seemed to be a real potential target of nuclear weapons as part of nuclear war planning. In 1954, France asked the US for assistance in its war against Indochina (Natalegawa, 1993: 138) and the governments discussed nuclear weapons as part of the aid. The use of nuclear weapons was also considered when the US fought against the republic of Indochina for almost 10 years as part of the Vietnam War (see Tannenwald, 2007: 190-240).

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Furthermore, security links between nuclear-weapons states and Southeast Asian nations led to the establishment of formal and informal alliances, although this did not lead to granting nuclear umbrellas to individual countries. However, alliances presume a link with nuclear weapons, at least in terms of transit or military bases. Indonesia was the only country who did not have an explicit alliance with an external power. Thailand leased bases to the US in 1954 and 1961; the Philippines signed an agreement regarding military bases with the US in 1947; both Malaysia and Singapore signed security agreements with Great Britain in 1971 and communist Vietnam formalized its ties with the Soviet Union through the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in 1978 (Natalegawa, 1993:167).

The cooperation between Southeast Asian nations and extra-regional nuclear armed states increased the chances that nuclear weapons could be used and misused as part of the Cold War. There were cases in which the US and the Soviet Union threatened the use of these weapons against each other in Southeast Asia. According to Natalegawa, former Indonesian foreign minister (2009-2014), when the proposal for a NWFZ in Southeast Asia was raised in 1984, it was within the context of the deployment of SS-20 intercontinental ballistic missiles by the Soviet Union on the Far East side of its landmass. By doing this, the Soviet Union placed the whole Southeast Asian region as a potential target which falls within the range of Soviet nuclear weapons. (Natalegawa, 1993: 109).

Although, as mentioned, horizontal proliferation was not an issue in Southeast Asia, the regional legacy of intervention by foreign powers increased the likelihood of employing nuclear powers, at least in the minds of Southeast Asian leaders. In this regard, the main ASEAN documents such as the Bangkok Declaration in 1968, the ZOPFAN in 1971 and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in 1976 explicitly refer to the foreign intervention and military bases in the region. Taken as a whole, the ASEAN case shows an increasing desire to eliminate military foreign presence in the region. Nuclear weapons were part of the broader equation of what ASEAN countries considered as a foreign presence. The fact is that the SEANWFZ is still disputed by nuclear powers, who have yet to sign all the additional protocols of the Bangkok Treaty. In turn, this reinforces the Southeast Asian leaders' belief that such a treaty is necessary. One can also look at the fact that the treaty was signed in 1995, and see that there were reasons why this timing makes sense. While some ASEAN countries such as Singapore, the Philippines and Thailand were not necessarily opposed to the NWFZ concept, per se, they feared the diplomatic implications such a treaty would have on their relationship with the US. These fears were assuaged when the US and the Soviet Union withdrew in the early 1990s and when the rapprochement between the two Southeast Asian blocks was finally achieved. In addition, a strategic change occurred when both the US and the Soviet Union decided to remove most of their non-strategic (tactical and short-range) nuclear weapons from their vessels,

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submarines and aircrafts in 1991 (Natalegawa, 1993:127 ). At this point, seeing as the regional environment had evolved and changed in this way, Southeast Asian nations could feel more confident that there would be no reason for nuclear powers to oppose the forming of a nuclear-free zone.

In sum, Hypothesis I can be corroborated based on the evidence presented here. Some Southeast Asian nations, in particular Indonesia and Malaysia, favoured a NWFZ during the Cold War for security reasons, namely, to shield the region against the superpower nuclear rivalry. Despite the fact that the Cold War limited the progress in furthering a NWFZ treaty, it does not invalidate the claim that the nations aimed to use the treaty to cope with the nuclear presence in the region. With the end of the Cold War, the rise of China posed a threat to most Southeast Asian countries. Therefore the unsolved claims around the South China Sea further support this rationale for a NWFZ in this region.

H2. A NWFZ is more likely to be achieved when liberal conditions are present in the region including democratic peace, regional institutions, and economic interdependence

### *Economic Interdependence*

One of the ideas that supported the establishment of ASEAN was the desire to create better regional conditions that would allow countries to invest resources in domestic economic development and create cooperation between them. Cooperation included economic ties aimed at accelerating economic growth, as stated in the Bangkok Declaration.

In terms of economic integration, the states decided to follow a loose model of open regionalism. This model seemed to suit the ASEAN nations as it favours economic ties with extra-regional actors over an intramural strategy. The region had little choice but to choose this model because most of the individual ASEAN countries had adopted an outward-looking strategy of economic insertion into the global economy, especially since the 1970s (Ariff, 1994). Hence, in Southeast Asia, there exists a shared belief in the free market and global capitalism. As a result, the hallmark of ASEAN countries has been a successful model of an export-oriented economy, and this led to a big leap in economic growth between the 1970s and 1980s. Furthermore, ASEAN states became a major recipient of foreign direct investment, although intra-regional investment remained comparatively small. ASEAN also benefited from the outsourcing process, which specifically began in Asia. By outsourcing, international companies divert part of their functions and facilities from their home countries towards other destinations where they find larger benefits, such as lower labor costs.

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Starting in the 1970s, Asian countries have been absorbing this kind of investment from more developed economies. (Acharya, 2013:202).

Moreover, since the 1980s, free market policies have been adopted almost unanimously throughout the region: Southeast Asian states privatized public assets, employed financial deregulation and prudent fiscal policies. Even Vietnam retracted its communist orientation and adopted a Chinese-like capitalism headed by the Communist Party. Vietnam showed an impressive economic performance as a result of implementing these policies in 1986, and this in turn led to a high rate of growth and reduction of poverty (see Beresford, 2008).

In parallel to the individual trajectories of specific states, starting in the 1970's, the ASEAN agenda began to cautiously promote more and more economic cooperation. The ASEAN summit of 1976, along with the formulation of the TAC, can be seen as a critical moment, as this was the start of a more economically-oriented regional approach. ASEAN nations agreed to implement Preference Trade Agreements (PTA) at least on an individual basis, namely, item by item. While the increase in intraregional trade has been seen as the result of the liberalization policies carried out by individual states, PTAs also helped to support this trend (Tan, 2004: 937)

To sum up, the record of economic interdependence and regional trade is a mixed one. The ASEAN case shows that economic interdependence was achieved not because of, but despite, a gradual and steady process of economic liberalization carried out by individual countries. In this regard, interdependence is considered to be a by-product of national policies (Ojendal, 2001:156). ASEAN strategies that suggest forging economic ties among the Southeast Asian nations should not be disregarded nor underestimated, but should be taken into perspective.

### *Democratic Peace*

Southeast Asian countries are postcolonial states, and this means they share some common characteristics. Most of them gained independence after the Second World War, and thus they share a colonial legacy and the burden of their war efforts. The transition from the status of colony to independence was carried out by strong leaders, many of them military officers who later on became the highest authority in their countries. This point was very significant for Southeast Asian states, as democracy hardly took root in the region and has not been internalized as a value. As put by Acharya, regional institutional building in Southeast Asia lacked a commitment to liberal democracy (Acharya, 2003:375). Instead, the main goal was regime survival within an unstable context typical of the decolonization process.

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The postcolonial period created several problems, such as territorial disagreements and conflict among the recently born states around “real and imagined conflicts” (Ojendal, 2001:149). Southeast Asia was a conflict-driven region for most of the 1960s. There were conflicts between Malaysia and Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia, and Malaysia and the Philippines. In addition, Thailand had a problematic relationship with Cambodia, Laos and Malaysia (Ojendal, 2001:151). Vietnam was born after a civil war and a decolonization war against France. Against this backdrop, democracy was not regarded as having inherent value for the newly established countries. The case of Indonesia is, perhaps, the most meaningful: up until the financial crisis of 1997, only two leaders had governed the country. The first, Sukarno, served as president between 1945 and 1967, and he established the so-called “guided democracy” in 1957, limiting the role of the parliament and governing by decrees (Acharya, 2003: 376). His successor, Suharto, was a military officer who led a coup against Sukarno in 1967 and remained in power for the next 31 years. Suharto's policies combined authoritarianism with economic growth motivated by the desire to achieve political stability.

Malaysia could be described as a semi-authoritarian country, whose domestic status falls somewhere between authoritarianism and democracy. Malaysia's communal settlement between the Malay and Chinese communities paved the way for a kind of accommodation amongst themselves (Bertrand, 1998: 363). The result has been a country governed by the National Alliance, led by the Malay majority grouped around the United Malays National Organization (Sidel, 2008:138). In sum, Malaysia has been a one-party regime for many decades.

Singapore was established in 1965, after splitting from Malaysia. The People's Action Party (PAP) monopolized the power in this country, and the country has enjoyed economic success thanks to its small size and export-oriented industrialization (Sidel, 2008:134)

Thailand followed a similar path. It was governed by a military dictatorship from 1932 until 1973. From 1957 to 1973, Thailand was ruled by Field Marshall Sarit Thanarat, who combined centralization of power with economic growth (Bertrand, 1998: 366). However, the transition to democracy was hardly smooth and consistent. After a brief period of democratization initiated in 1973, the military performed a *coup d'état* in 1976. In 1988, Thailand again attempted a transition toward a democratic process, which was interrupted in 1991 and reinstated shortly after (Sidel: 2008:137). In sum, Thailand was always affected by the military, which intervened several times in the early 1990s as well in the 2000s.

Both Cambodia and Vietnam went through a communist phase, which was at odds with any notion of democracy. In the case of Vietnam, the end of French rule in the mid-1950s was followed by a

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split, dividing the country into two halves, the pro-western South Vietnam and the communist North Vietnam. This protracted conflict continued for two decades, including the period of the long American war against the Vietnamese communists. In 1975, two years after the US ended its war in Indochina, Vietnam was reunited after the fall of South Vietnam to the hands of its northern fellow state. Later on, Vietnam invaded Cambodia and initiated a conflict that left a death toll of millions. In the late 1980s, Vietnam introduced economic and foreign policy changes, but to this day, Vietnam is ruled by the communist party, which was able to bring about economic progress, while continuing to forgo domestic political reform.

Cambodia initiated its way to democratization in 1993 under the auspices of the international community, although it had to overcome many hurdles along the way such as the military coup and clashes that occurred in 1997.

Ever since 1975, Laos has followed a similar path to that of Vietnam and Cambodia. Laos was a constitutional monarchy from 1953 to 1975, when Soviet-backed forces established a communist republic in the country. The communist party established its rule and imposed a socialist-type economy, with no political liberties. From that point forward, Laos entered a period of bloody civil war and also suffered from the invasion of Vietnam, who occupied the country throughout the 1980s.

Brunei, in contrast to other countries, became an independent state relatively late. It fully gained independence from Great Britain in 1984 and has always been ruled by a monarchy. Its dependence on oil exports resembles a rentier state, similar to that of the Persian Gulf countries (Sidel, 2008:134)

The Philippines, another founding member of ASEAN, fluctuated between periods of authoritarianism and fragile periods of democratic rule. The infamous Ferdinand Marcos established a dictatorship in the 1960s, which ended abruptly in the mid-1980s after massive protests and riots that spread across the country. However, democracy never took root in the Philippines due to political instability, endemic corruption and financial crisis. Having said this, the democratic spring after Marcos' regime ended unleashed democratic and nationalist forces that raised new questions about extra-regional intervention in the country's affairs. The protesters questioned the special relationship between the Philippines and the US, in particular around the hot topic of the latter's military bases on Philippine soil. Within this context, it is not surprising that Corazon Aquino, Marcos' successor, was eager to negotiate over the leasing of American military bases in her country. Eventually, by the end of her term in office in 1992, the Aquino administration had put an end to American presence in the country.

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Final, Myanmar (the former Burma) has been governed by military rulers, except during short periods of democratic upheaval ever since the 1960s.

### *Regional Institutions*

As aforementioned, Southeast Asia was “constructed” as a sub-region after the end of the Second World War and as the decolonization process drew to a close. Both intraregional and extra-regional dynamics set Southeast Asian nations on a path toward regionalism and regional institutions.

The main external dynamic that pushed Southeast Asia toward regionalism were forces unleashed by the Cold War. In less than 15 years, American foreign policy towards Southeast Asia had shifted from the Domino Theory to the Nixon Doctrine, which will be discussed below. The former, coined by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1954 against the backdrop of the Indochina events, was based on the assumption that if Indochina fell to communism, other states would follow suit in a domino-like effect. Therefore, the only policy option for the US, under the domino theory, was to prevent the rise of a communist state in Southeast Asia. In hindsight, the anti-communist mood in Washington paved the way for the rise of regionalism in the area. The domino theory led to the creation of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), a collective security organization aimed at blocking the spread of communism in the region. Established in 1955, SEATO included two Southeast Asian nations (the Philippines and Thailand) along with Australia, France, the United States, Great Britain and New Zealand. It is no coincidence that the split within ASEAN countries was between states with a more western orientation, such as the Philippines and Thailand, and those with a more neutralist stance such as Indonesia and Malaysia. This powerful divide, nurtured in the 1950s, easily lasted until the end of the Cold War, despite the fact that SEATO was diluted in the 1970s. This divide also presented an obstacle which limited progress toward the establishment of a NWFZ in the region.

Conversely, the Nixon Doctrine, set forth by President Richard Nixon in 1969 in Guam, pursued an opposite objective: it was designed to extricate the US from the conflict in Vietnam. To attain that goal, the US set forth the position that though it would continue to support its allies, they should share the burden of defense manpower. This apparent retreat of the US from the region was to be filled, albeit not completely, by an incipient Southeast Asian-led regionalism, which was meant to address international trends as well as regional events. The Nixon Doctrine was received with concern by Southeast Asian nations and they responded by strengthening their regional ties. To some extent, the ZOPFAN Declaration was also a regional answer to these events. From this point forward, ASEAN began to gain more support and status in the regional context.

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It is worth recalling that there were other previous regionalism initiatives promoted in the early 1960s, but these were short-lived. These initiatives included: the Association of Southeast Asia (ASA) and MAPHILINDO in 1961 and 1963 and the Asian-Pacific Council, established in 1966 (Tavares, 2009:85).

In the 1990s, which saw the ASEAN enlargement, Southeast Asia also diversified its links with extra-regional organizations and nations. For instance, the “ASEAN plus Three” includes China, South Korea and Japan along with ASEAN members. This grouping functions as a forum linking the ASEAN countries to the main countries of the greater Asian continent. Similarly, the ASEAN-Europe Meeting (ASEM) established a political space for formal meetings between the European Union and ASEAN countries (Tavares, 2009:89).

In addition, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) was envisioned as a forum, rather than a formal organization, of like-minded states of the entire Asian sphere, who wish to promote regional economic cooperation. APEC recognized the precedents of similar but short-lived initiatives such as the Pacific Trade and Development Conference and the Pacific Basin Economic Council that took place in the 1990s. By the early 1980s, the conditions ripened for a Pan-Asian initiative. This time, regional forces promoted the establishment of the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC). The latter, which was established under the auspices of the Australian government, evolved from a soft forum to a format similar to that of APEC in 1989. In addition to Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Korea and ASEAN countries, the formation of APEC achieved a goal that seemed unlikely at the time, namely, including the three Chinas: The Popular Republic of China, Hong Kong (at the time a British colony) and Taiwan. Moreover, APEC encompasses (or intended to include) the entire Pacific sphere in addition to the ASEAN area.

The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), established in 1994, proved that the handling of security affairs had aroused greater attention in the region at the time. This forum encompasses all ASEAN members, as well as the following parties: Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, the People's Republic of China, the European Union, India, Japan, North Korea, South Korea, Mongolia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Russia, East Timor, the United States, and Sri Lanka. Like APEC, ARF aimed to include the entire Pacific sphere, but in this case the goal was to create a common security architecture in the post-Cold War years (Tavares, 2009:90). The early 1990s found ASEAN facing many changes in the regional environment such as the end of Soviet threats to the region, the Cambodian peace process and the US withdrawal of its military facilities from the Philippines. While relations between ASEAN and China notably improved in the aftermath of the Cold War, China's rising status began to be seen as a threat by ASEAN countries. Perhaps for all the

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aforementioned reasons, ARF was more needed than ever. In this regard, ARF's platform served to bind together the Asian mainland and the Pacific surroundings.

To summarize, among the liberal conditions, in particular the role of international organizations and economic interdependence, facilitated Southeast Asia's path to a NWFZ. However, regarding democracy, Southeast Asia experienced long periods of authoritarian rule with some attempts at democratization. Democratic peace does not seem to have played a critical role in the ASEAN case. All the regional building projects, including the NWFZ, were promoted by authoritarian and semi-authoritarian rulers. Consequently, democracy can be ruled out as a condition which aided the establishment of the SEANWFZ. Perhaps the exception is Philippines where the Corazon Aquino administration was least inclined to accept the presence of foreign bases because it was more guarded and vulnerable to public opinion than Marcos longtime regime.

The ASEAN case is a clear example that the pursuit of regional peace and economic development are mutually intertwined. Economic interdependence seems more likely as a condition that supported the NWFZ, as a peaceful environment among neighbours leads to deeper economic ties. It is no coincidence that the TAC was approved simultaneously with the PTAs. Both processes of expected peaceful relations and economic integration were seen as supporting each other. For example, the case of Vietnam is illustrative. The opening to free market reforms coincided with the change in its approach towards its neighbours. The economic reforms envisioned by Vietnamese leaders necessarily went hand in hand with a more peaceful environment. It is no coincidence that this is when Vietnam finally withdrew from Cambodia and engaged with other regional countries. Last but not least, regional institutions played a facilitating role in advancing a NWFZ. As I have showed, Southeast Asia had a rich regional tradition dating back to the 1950s. Institutions bind nations together in the long term, reduce uncertainty regarding the potential behaviour of the states and provide a platform for holding negotiations. The SEANWFZ benefited from the aforementioned attributes because Southeast Asia had been “training” in shared regional negotiations for many decades. As I have illustrated, the SEANWFZ was not achieved in a vacuum, and it took almost 25 years for the idea to ripen within the ASEAN before it was finally realized. Moreover, there was a symbiosis between SEANWFZ and the ASEAN. The Bangkok Treaty was drafted within the ASEAN framework and its success was attached to the joining of Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar.

H3. A NWFZ is more likely to be established when regional powers exercise regional leadership and take the risk of creating this framework.

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Indonesia is the leading country in Southeast Asia and the engine that drove the regionalization process (Anwar, 2006). It is also the most populated country in the region, with 250 million people, which accounts for 40% of the population of Southeast Asia.

Indonesia is the only ASEAN nation that is a member of the G20 and as of 2016, Indonesia was ranked 16<sup>th</sup> in the GDP World Bank ranking.

Indonesia gained independence in the aftermath of the Second World War, on August 1945. Before this, the country had first been a Dutch colony up until 1942, and then was occupied by Japan. During the Second World War, Indonesia was subjected to egregious atrocities committed by the Japanese Empire. Around four million people in Indonesia (By the time Dutch East Indies) perished as a result of the Japanese occupation.

The transition from a colonial territory to an independent polity was headed by Sukarno, who maintained his status as leader until his deposition in 1967. His long-lived term as leader was shaped by a policy of confrontation (*Konfrontasi*) toward his neighbours, in particular, the Federation of Malaysia, which was seen as a British puppet in Southeast Asia. This policy led to coercive diplomatic actions and small-scale military activity. Eventually, this course of action weakened Indonesia and led to the fall of Sukarno. *Konfrontasi* burdened the Indonesian domestic economy and antagonized its neighbours. In addition, Sukarno was a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement and pursued a nationalist foreign policy, which excluded any potential military alliance with the Great Powers.

The fall of Sukarno allowed its new leaders to reconsider the country's priorities. Sukarno's successor, General Suharto, opted to set Indonesian politics on a new path, which was known as the "New Order" (Emmers, 2005:649). Among the pillars set forth in the "New Order", two elements stood out and shaped the policy of contemporary Indonesia. First, Indonesia sought a rapprochement with Malaysia, in order to clear up any lingering apprehensions regarding the relationship between these countries. Cooperation between the countries was a pivotal step, which laid the foundation for the establishment of ASEAN in 1967. Second, Indonesia decided to focus on advancing its economic development. Both pillars were aimed at generating conditions that would allow Indonesia to become a leading force in regional affairs. If *Konfrontasi* did not provide Indonesia with any significant success, the new policy of cooperation was aimed at reverting this trend. By being a good neighbour, Indonesia aimed to obtain regional recognition as a leader.

Furthermore, Suharto abandoned the radical anti-western stance of his predecessor and dedicated his work to improving ties with western countries. In addition, Suharto's anti-Communist

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credentials helped support his push for regional convergence, because there was a growing fear in the region that other Southeast Asian countries might lean towards China.

Though there was a definite shift in Indonesia's foreign orientation, Suharto's position did share some common traits with that of his predecessor, namely, a commitment to a nonaligned and neutralist policy. In practical terms, this policy was translated into rejecting the intervention of foreign powers in regional affairs. Opposition to the presence of foreign military bases in Southeast Asia became a *leitmotiv* of Indonesia's approach to regional affairs.

In addition, Indonesia set forth foreign policy goals aimed at preserving ASEAN's autonomy and Indonesia's role as a regional leader. To implement these goals, Indonesia introduced the motto "regional solutions to regional problems," a position meant to reduce external influence in the regional arena; this model encouraged internal conflict management and mediation in regional crises and it has decisively contributed to several institutional developments in ASEAN (Emmers, 2014:544)

However, in order to assert its position as a regional leader, Indonesia needed to do more than put forth an intention to shield the region from outside domination. Therefore, in order to gain legitimacy, Indonesia needed to establish an autonomous regional order, where regional members enjoy equal status. In this regard, the alliances of ASEAN states with external powers have been regarded as a test for the success of the Indonesian position. Despite all the declarations made by ASEAN, the organization was not able to prevent individual countries from reaching security understandings with great powers. Nevertheless, Indonesia carefully avoided conflicts with other states over this issue. From an Indonesian perspective, the cohesion of the Southeast Asian block was much more important than short-term disputes or disagreements. In brief, while Indonesia did not display assertiveness towards its neighbours during Suharto's era, this does not mean that it did not exercise leadership. To some extent Indonesia has held the position of a *primus inter pares* within Southeast Asia.

One important milestone in Indonesian leadership was the country's involvement in the Vietnam-Cambodian peace process. Indonesia was assigned as the ASEAN intermediary in negotiations with Vietnam aimed at ending the bloody war in Indochina. Indonesia hosted the first diplomatic meetings between the parties in 1988 and 1989. The outcome of this first attempt was not definitive, but it laid the groundwork for the solution of the conflict, which allowed the ASEAN to welcome Vietnam as a partner into the ASEAN "family".

Regarding the SEANWFZ, Indonesia played a key role throughout the whole process (See Natalegawa, 1993: 109-127). In 1984, at the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting in Jakarta, Indonesia introduced the proposal for a NWFZ in the region for the first time, and this proposal received immediate support from Malaysia. Furthermore, ASEAN countries agreed to establish a working group whose main objective was studying the prospect of establishing the SEANWFZ (Nalategawa, 1993:110). The next year, the working group convened in Kuala Lumpur and Indonesia outlined the principles of the zone.

In 1985, the working group embarked on a comprehensive study of the SEANWFZ concept and encouraged a comparative study, comparing the Southeast Asian region with the Latin American and South Pacific zones. In 1987, Indonesia submitted another paper on the organizational format and additional protocols for a would-be treaty. Throughout 1987, the working group drafted and revised the treaty several times. However, though the initiative continued to gain support within ASEAN meetings, there was no breakthrough in 1987. Despite the advances achieved at the technical level, political consensus could not be reached to support a final draft. There were still points of contention among ASEAN members, and Washington explicitly opposed the zone. In the meantime, the Cambodia-Vietnam conflict gained prominence and when Vietnam accepted Indonesia's mediation, this opened a window of opportunity for solving the conflict. For the years to come, finding a solution to Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia took precedence over other ASEAN issues, including the NWFZ. However, the SEANWFZ concept continued to come up at ASEAN meetings and other forums such as the NPT Review Conference. In 1992, the idea gained momentum again and the ASEAN Summit decided to reinstate the working group to complete the process.

In conclusion, Hypothesis III can be corroborated. Indonesia serves as a regional power in the Southeast Asian region due to its specific attributes: the country's large population, economic performance, and regional and international acknowledgment as a leader contributed to this status. As a leader, Indonesia has served the region well in many ways. Regarding the topic of our research, Indonesia was the main driving force behind the NWFZ, creating a regional barrier against both the outbreak of nuclear war among nuclear powers and horizontal proliferation. In addition, as Natalegawa pointed out that the SEANWFZ fulfilled both symbolic and national objectives for Indonesia (1993:381). But beyond these national objectives, Indonesia's endorsement of the SEANWFZ had a regional impact, as no other Southeast Asian country opposed the proposal, despite their reservations during the 1980s. After the changes that occurred in the region in the early 1990s, potential reservations were left behind. Hence, Indonesia made the final attempt to establish a NWFZ in Southeast Asia and achieved it in 1995.

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H4. A NWFZ is more likely to be achieved when states in the region seek to shape themselves as an autonomous regional actor through the creation of regional norms, and when norms are diffused across regions.

Historically, Southeast Asia's normative culture has shaped both its identity and its policy responses to specific issues. This normative tradition was at the heart of Southeast Asia's quest for regional autonomy. As part of this desire for autonomy, the leaders of ASEAN have seen one of the roles of the organization as providing "regional solutions for regional problems". This concept was introduced by Indonesian Foreign Minister Adam Malik in 1974 as follows:

*Regional problems, ie. Those having a direct bearing upon the region concerned should be accepted as being of primary concern to than region itself. Mutual consultations and cooperation among the countries of the region in facing these problems may...lead to the point where the views of the region are accorded the primacy they deserve in the search for solution (Acharya, 2013:173)*

This quest for regional autonomy can be traced back even to the period before the founding of ASEAN in 1967. In fact, it may be traced to the Bandung conference, held in Indonesia in 1955. During the Bandung Conference, representatives of African, Asian and Middle Eastern countries met for the first time and this conference led to the constitution of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) a decade later. In analysing the main tenets of Bandung, Amitav Acharya found that the non-intervention principle emerged as the main theme within the conference. Accordingly, (Acharya, 2014: 410) sovereignty and non-intervention were related to (1) foreign interference causing domestic stability in countries, (2) communism and colonialism and (3) membership in US-organized military pacts. Interestingly for this research, Acharya points out the direct connection made by Indonesia between Latin America and the idea of non-intervention as a general norm in terms of coexistence: (2014:412) "the principles could be found in the Convention of Rights of Montevideo (1933); in the Ideal Protocol Relating to Non-Intervention (Buenos Aires, 1936) and the Bogota Charter adopted by the Organization of America States in 1948".

Later on, the creation of ASEAN itself reflected a new move toward building a regional identity (Acharya, 2014:71). Norms also played a central role, as Southeast Asian nations began to create their own nascent regional identity. Amitav Acharya (2014: 47) argues that regional institutions may learn their norms from global organisations or other regional groups while assuming, at the same time, the content of their local social, cultural and political environment. Accordingly, ASEAN's norms came from a mix of these two sources. Among the norms ASEAN borrowed from other sources, the following are the most relevant: those dealing with the non-use of force and the

peaceful settlement of disputes; those concerning regional autonomy and collective self-reliance; the doctrine of non-interference in the internal affairs of states; and, last but not the least, the rejection of ASEAN military pacts with external actors and the preference for bilateral defense cooperation. The aforementioned norms are intertwined with local norms. Within this context, Amitav Acharya (1988: 56) pointed out the existence of a strategic culture for resolving regional problems, which is known as the ASEAN way. Acharya highlights four sources for this strategic culture: 1) the close and personal ties among ASEAN's founding leaders 2) expression of cultural similarities 3) the regulatory norms of ASEAN 4) the process of interaction and socialization. In other words, the ASEAN way is a way of doing (regional) business, following certain shared regional patterns: informality, a non-confrontational bargaining style and consensus building. These principles guided the approach towards international organizations: ASEAN states are not inclined to share sovereignty with multilateral bodies. By contrast, the soft regionalism tradition of small bureaucratization and low legalism can be seen as part of these shared principles.

The aforementioned ASEAN principles, which combined norms borrowed from external sources and local culture, also shaped the rationale behind the SEANWFZ. As expressed by Acharya and Boutin, the Bangkok Treaty has served global non-proliferation objectives ever since it was signed and along with similar treaties, it enhances the global non-proliferation regime and bolsters NWFZs around the world (Acharya and Boutin, 1998:229). However, the main normative achievement of the Bangkok Treaty was “moral pressure” on other sub-regions of the Asian Pacific to adopt similar initiatives. Hence, the treaty can be used as a model to “explore and encourage nuclear restraint in South Asia, the Korean Peninsula and other parts of the world” (Acharya and Boutin, 1998:229).

It should be noted that the SEANWFZ took the form of a legal instrument, which was unusual within the context of the soft regionalism of ASEAN (Acharya, 2013:207). Nevertheless, when drafting the NWFZ, the parties took into account certain “local conditions” that affect the region. In other words, the localization of the NWFZ norms was a critical component of the SEANWFZ. This localization was implemented through three original elements, embedded in the SEANWFZ. First, ASEAN countries decided to define the limits of the zone in a way that would include the continental shelves and exclusive economic zones (EEZ) established by the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. The third innovation lies in the “Request for a Fact-Finding Mission”. This provision was aimed at solving problematic issues in a fast and informal way through political dialogue. Another element which was "localized" in the Southeast Asian treaty was the environmental provisions of not dumping or discharging any radioactive material or waste anywhere within the Zone.

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## Conclusion

After studying the SEANWFZ case, we may draw a few conclusions. First, this case shows that Indonesia went above and beyond other Southeast Asian nations in efforts to achieve a denuclearization zone. However, this is not unusual, as Indonesia has historically been the major actor in the region. The confrontational (and contested) leadership style Indonesia maintained until 1967 was replaced by another, more subtle form of leadership later on. Borrowing the terminology of Ikenberry (2001), one can say that binding itself in institutions, Indonesia achieved the status of leader of the Southeast Asian region. While Indonesia kept the idea of a NWFZ alive, it never dared to impose this concept on its ASEAN partners. However, when the conditions were ripe, Indonesia made the final push to establish the NWFZ.

Second, a change in regional conditions, which occurred in the 1990s, meant it was easier to establish a NWFZ at this time than it would have been ten years earlier. The end of the Cold War reduced both the superpower presence in Southeast Asia and their nuclear weapons arsenals. The end of superpower rivalry in the region ended the Southeast Asian nations' alignment in blocks based on their alignment to the superpowers. Consequently, the fears that troubled certain countries in the region were assuaged, since their security was no longer linked to an alliance with an external power. In addition, the increasing Chinese maritime profile in the Pacific turned into a security concern for the entire region, regardless of the nations' individual ties with China. A NWFZ became a legal tool to cope with the rising position of China and its presence around the South China Sea.

Third, the SEANWFZ should be seen as part of a Southeast Asian normative tradition, including the Bangkok Declaration, the Bandung Conference, the ZOPFAN and the TAC. All of these can be seen as efforts to react to the interference of major powers in Southeast Asia (Abad, 2005:180).

Fourth, as I have shown, the Latin American connection appeared in several instances: this precedent was mentioned at the Bandung Conference, in the ZOPFAN Declaration, and in speeches delivered by the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. What can we learn from this? "Going regional" necessarily entails a process of learning how to manage affairs in a "regional way". In this sense, Southeast Asia is a latecomer to regionalism. Most of the nations in the region did not gain independence until after the end of the Second World War. Moreover, they did not begin regional building projects until the 1960s; by this time, Latin America had already gained over 150 years of regional experience. Therefore, it should not come as a surprise that there are references to Latin America as a regional model. It made sense for ASEAN states to look at the experiences of other regions as part of their own learning process. The Southeast Asian region needed some basic tools which would allow it to devise "regional solutions for regional problems". If Latin America had

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developed a readymade “toolkit”, there is no reason why Southeast Asian nations should not adopt these tools, provided they suit the region’s interests. Latin America also served as the model by default. It’s colonial past and the superpower competition of the Cold War made Latin America a region free of the apprehensions which burdened Southeast Asian nations.

Last but not least, among the hypotheses analysed, regional institutions and a regionalist tradition, helped facilitate the establishment of the NWFZ. To some extent, the SEANWFZ was facilitated by the regional experience of ASEAN. This regional tradition proved to be a compelling reason for the ASEAN latecomers to join, because they found clear advantages in hopping on the regional bandwagon. As put by Kai He (He, 2006:189) in her *institutional realism* prism, ASEAN is a “balancing tool that provides its members with a means of coping with internal and external security threats. At the regional level, ASEAN contributes to the balance of power and provides order, and on the external level, ASEAN is a tool which deals with external pressures and threats” (He, 2006:207). As a matter of fact, He’s argument applies to the SEANWFZ as well, which to some extent is the heart of ASEAN.

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