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## Aktuelle Südostasienforschung / Current Research on South-East Asia

### **A Friend in Need. A Friend in Deed? ASEAN-EU Interregionalism in the Light of Non-Traditional Security Crises in South-East Asia**

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*The aim of this article is to assess the European Union's (EU) engagement with and within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states in the field of non-traditional security (NTS) between 1997 and 2009, prior to the Lisbon Treaty becoming effective. The analysis concentrates on the EU's response to five NTS crises and the interregional level of interaction from a sector-specific governance and social-constructivist approach. These crises are the avian influenza, the political conflict and the tsunami in Aceh, the Bali bombings and the Asian financial crisis (AFC) in South-East Asia. The case studies illustrate EU NTS action and gauge EU NTS actorness from a South-East Asian perspective to substantiate the EU's interregional interaction and external actorness quality in specific fields of governance in a region so far away.*

**Keywords:** European Union (EU), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Non-Traditional Security (NTS), Interregionalism, Actorness

*Dieser Artikel analysiert die Zusammenarbeit der Europäischen Union (EU) mit den Mitgliedsstaaten der Vereinigung südostasiatischer Nationen (ASEAN) im Bereich nicht-traditioneller Sicherheit (NTS) zwischen 1997 und 2009, also noch vor Inkrafttreten des Vertrages von Lissabon. Fünf NTS-Krisen (Vogelgrippe, politischer Konflikt und Tsunami in Aceh, Bombenanschläge auf Bali sowie Asien-Finanzkrise), die Reaktionen der EU auf diese, sowie die entsprechenden Interaktionen auf der interregionalen Kooperationsebene stehen im Mittelpunkt der Analyse, welche einen sozialkonstruktivistischen und sektorspezifischen Governance-Ansatz verfolgt. Die Fallstudien legen die NTS-Aktivitäten der EU dar und bieten eine Einschätzung ihrer Akteursqualität aus südostasiatischer Perspektive. Des Weiteren wird versucht, die Qualität der interregionalen europäisch-südostasiatischen Interaktionen und der EU-Akteursqualität in ausgewählten Governance-Bereichen in einer derart weit entfernten Region darzustellen.*

**Schlagworte:** Europäische Union (EU), Vereinigung Südostasiatischer Nationen (ASEAN), Nicht-Traditionelle Sicherheit (NTS), Interregionalismus, Akteursqualität



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## **Introduction**

*I believe that the EU and Asia, and ASEAN in particular, have continued to build upon a warm and enduring friendship, based on shared values and interests and common understanding. And I remain convinced, that over the longer term, the solid foundations of this lasting friendship may prove to have been a much better basis on which to construct a stronger future economic partnership, rather than a sudden whirlwind romance leading to a potentially equally quick and acrimonious divorce! (O'Sullivan, 2006, pp. 9-10)*

Solidarity, partnership and friendship are among the many terms in the European Union's (EU) rhetoric towards the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The question here is whether this rhetoric of amity translates into factual and tangible interaction of a true friendship<sup>2</sup>. Or are these merely flowery phrases that are actually not substantiated by EU agency beyond economically motivated action? Is the EU a friend in deed and not merely a friend in rhetoric?

To substantiate the EU's actorness<sup>3</sup> when South-East Asia is in need, the analysis will focus on a selection of distinctive cases of non-traditional security (NTS) crises in South-East Asia that have had a devastating impact prompting external assistance. The article will examine co-operation in the multilateral frameworks of the ASEAN-EU dialogue and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), and allude to other multilateral institutions where the two regional organisations and their member states meet, to draw conclusions on actual European NTS actorness and visibility and the interregional ASEAN-EU level of contribution to tackling the crises. The ASEAN member states constitute the sociological other of the EU's interregional interaction defining EU security actorness according to their security conceptualisation. This perspective is adopted by the article and serves as the reference point for measuring the EU's actorness. In this context, actorness is the EU's quality of having an impact on and shaping the ASEAN members' state of affairs. It goes beyond mere action and is linked to the visibility and general perceptions by the sociological other. The succeeding paragraphs will define other central concepts and provide the setting for the subsequent analysis.

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2 This term is to be understood as a rhetorical means and not as an ideal variable for gauging the relationship.

3 In this article the concept of 'actorness' is understood along the lines of Jürgen Rüländ's definition, which identifies an international entity as displaying actorness if it is identifiable and if it can aggregate and formulate its interests and implement these in its decision-making.

### *Interregionalism*

This article assumes Heiner Hänggi's definition of interregionalism as the classification of a group-to-group type of interaction associated with old interregionalism<sup>4</sup> (Hänggi, 2000, p. 4) and extends it to EU NTS interaction of today. This implies that the interregional actorship relates to both the EU as a political entity represented by either the member states in the intergovernmental Common Foreign and Security Policy or by the European Commission (EC) in conjunction with ASEAN member states. Interregionalism can be in the form of the intergovernmental European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) representing the EU in the case of the Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM) or on a supranational basis building on the EC's community competences such as in the shape of the Instrument for Stability or referring to the ASEAN-EU Joint Cooperation Committee. Since elaboration on the internal dimension of the EU's external policy-making in the following case studies would extend the scope of this paper, the author regards the interplay of the EU institutions and their involvement in the EU external policy-making procedures and the institutional problems associated with this process as given. In addition to the emphasis on the interregional dimension, the article will also take into account bilateral responses between the individual ASEAN and EU member states in order to contextualise the interregional activities.

### *Non-Traditional Security*

In South-East Asia, alongside the importance of traditional military security, NTS is playing an increasingly important role in the light of the vulnerabilities of ASEAN member states to unconventional threats (Acharya, Caballero-Anthony, & Emmers, 2006; Caballero-Anthony, 2009; Dosch, 2003). NTS is a relatively new security concept that has been introduced to capture the broadening and deepening of the security and threat agenda after the end of the Cold War (Buzan, Waever, & de Wilde, 1998). It describes security related to any form of threat perception that is short of the traditional state versus state pattern. Accordingly, NTS threats have a diverse nature. For instance, they can be ecological, terrorist and pandemic among others. In theory,

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4 In general, old interregionalism is correlated to the first wave of regionalism linked to the European Community's trade and aid activities with regional groupings starting in the 1970s. For a detailed discussion of this form of interregionalism see, for instance, Hänggi (2006) or Söderbaum & Langenhove (2006).

NTS redefines the security referent and thus necessitates new non-military security approaches.<sup>5</sup> In South-East Asia the redefinition of the individual as the security referent is less prominent and Paul Evans explains

*the resistance to connecting non-[t]raditional security to human security is declining, though some remain worried that at least the narrow conception of human security is either inappropriate to Asia or will slow progress in getting state action in addressing the non-traditional security agenda. What is distinctive about many of the approaches to non-[t]raditional security is (1) that they are ambiguous about whether the referent of security is the state or the individual and do not dwell on tensions between the two; and (2) that its advocates normally emphasise the state and state-centric means as the best ways of responding to these threats, normally preferring to address these issues within their own states rather than on a regional basis (Evans, 2004, p. 277).*

Despite the potential of NTS to shift the security referent focus away from the state towards the individual in society and to open possibilities of non-military or civil-military solutions, there still appears to be state- and military-centrism regarding NTS within ASEAN member states. Ongoing ASEAN member state rivalries and the “omni-enmeshment”<sup>6</sup> of external powers are among the prominent variables shaping a security environment in line with the realist paradigm of hard power and state centrality.

Given this security environment in South-East Asia that revolves around state-centrism and hard security, one may wonder what security role there is for the EU to play in a region so far from Europe.

### ***The Non-Traditional Security Opportunity***

NTS crises present an opportunity for the EU to play a stabilising role in the region. This role does not draw on hard power and strategic actorness in the narrow military sense. Instead, the EU assists, engages and achieves normalcy, security and stability predominantly through non-robust and civilian means that are not necessarily considered to be security instruments. Despite some EU scepticism towards the concept, NTS renders it possible for the EU to help ASEAN member states with its full panoply of assistance measures. These range from development and humanitarian assistance to military assistance and allow the EU to be perceived as a security actor by the other side, although the European perspective does not rate all ASEAN NTS

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5 This redefinition of the security referent and the general individualisation of post-Cold War security have been described in detail by Hoadley (2006).

6 A term coined by Evelyn Goh to characterise South-East Asia’s security order, e.g. in Goh (2005).

categories as security threats (EU High Representative Javier Solana, 2003). Hence, one may observe that from a South-East Asian perspective the EU already naturally behaves in an 'identity-guided' way; that is, it acts as an NTS crisis manager according to a pacifist and co-operative rationale that is guided by the founding values of the EU itself (European Union member states, 2007, title V, article 1.1.4).

### ***The Friends***

The interregional partnership between the European Economic Community and the ASEAN member states dates back to the 1970s. During the Cold War, ASEAN showed great interest in the then European Community's integrationist, economic and external trade qualities. Back then the European Community seemed less interested in ASEAN. However, since Hans-Dietrich Genscher's inauguration as West Germany's Foreign Minister in 1974, the European Political Co-operation's external dimension went beyond the Middle East and discovered Asia, and with it ASEAN. The Asia Strategy of 1994 marked the EU's post-Cold War rediscovery of Asia and ASEAN. It was a comprehensive document that ranged from economic to political and security to cultural co-operation reflected in the various dialogue fora in which both regional organisations meet.

In spite of the multitude of newly initiated dialogue fora and the expansion of the agenda, the quality of the specific ASEAN-EU relationship had changed and become sidelined or rather a small puzzle piece in a pan-Asian approach. In the European Commission's (EC) document on South-East Asia of 2003, the EC explicitly stated that the "[p]olitical dialogue should, to the extent possible, concentrate on region to region subjects of interest and concern, leaving global issues to ASEM" (European Commission, 2003, p. 13). In addition to this, another critical aspect is that despite the advancement of the EU's relationship with ASEAN and its member states to a multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional friendship that echoes traces of a common lifeworld<sup>7</sup>, one rightly wonders about the EU's true colours; not least, because of its

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7 Jürgen Habermas argues that the social actors who interact dialectically by seeking mutual understanding of the situation, intention, and action in order to agree to a reasoned consensus as the goal of the interaction must share a *Lebenswelt* (lifeworld). Habermas defines lifeworld as "the transcendental site where speaker and hearer meet, where they can reciprocally raise claims that their utterances fit the world (objective, social, or subjective), and where they can criticise and confirm those validity claims, settle their disagreements, and arrive at agreements... Speakers and hearers come to an understanding from out of their common lifeworld about something in the objective, social,

nebulous way of expressing its normative and material interests.

The squabbles over Myanmar, human rights, and EU double standards have contributed to an obscure picture of the EU as a value-lecturing economic actor in the region (ASEAN member state official, personal communication, 21 November 2008). Self-proclaimed role concepts ranging from soft power to civilian power sometimes appear incongruent with the EU's external actions. EU officials themselves admit that the EU is not clear in its external relations. It is explained, however, as a necessary aspect for the EU's external relations in maintaining its international competitiveness on the one hand while living up to its values and normative standards on the other (EU official, personal communication, 16 February 2009).

The current Partnership and Cooperation Agreement negotiations with individual ASEAN countries – after the EU's interregional approach failed – verifies that the EU is indeed to some extent consistent in projecting its core founding values (ASEAN member state official, personal communication, 15 December 2008). However, these negotiations have also displayed the failure of the interregional dimension with ASEAN and an alleged increasing flexibility in wording on the EU side. This alleged flexibility in wording does not signify the corruption of the EU's core values but can be, for example, a different nuance in the formulation of EU values and principles (EU official, personal communication, 16 February 2009). Interacting with the EU remains a confusing experience from time to time. In general, the EU's external relations are a balancing act between interests and values and norms depending on the counterpart's bargaining power, the issue-area of the dialogue, the type of dialogue forum (e.g. bilateral versus multilateral), and other elements the discussion of which would extend the scope of this article. Important for this paper are not the individual elements but the mere premise that the EU considers that these materialist and ideational factors and their interplay to be vital in the EU's decision-making process for the outside world.

It appears that the official EU rhetoric of friendship and its insistence on ideational commonalities with ASEAN are more forced than natural. In spite of the EU's long-standing and comprehensive interregional relationship with ASEAN that

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or subjective worlds" (1987, p. 126). When communicating, the actors make truth or validity claims and refer to the common lifeworld as their source of justification. Depending on the degree of divergence of the lifeworlds, international actors will find it easier or harder to come up with a shared normative pre-understanding in order to establish an arena for meaningful interaction and a deep and long-term co-operation.

has managed to survive the Myanmar and East Timor issues and other cases of ideational disagreements, ASEAN-EU interregionalism has not progressed to a deep dialogue and channel of co-operation of major priority to either side. ASEAN's post-Cold War orientation has shifted mainly to the regional powers in its neighbourhood. In particular, China has been increasingly engaged in various bilateral, regional and sub-regional dialogue structures and co-operative projects. From the EU perspective, ASEAN and its member states have always lived in the shadow of others, be it African countries when it comes to the EU's development policy or be it, formerly, Japan and currently, India and China when it comes to the EU's external trade policy with Asia.

In the last decade, some ASEAN member states have found it difficult to cope with the various forms of NTS crises that have struck the region. These crises and, in particular, the tsunami of December 2004 have raised the EU's awareness of ASEAN and have displayed a niche where the EU as a latecomer can gain ground in the region. In fact, Evans has already observed an increase in both European Track 1 and 2 involvements in the region since 1996 (Evans, 2000). The EU's accession to ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC), its non-strategic nature in South-East Asia, its emphasis on the soft security paradigm and its possession of humanitarian, civilian and crisis management capabilities with which it can face a broad spectrum of NTS threats make the EU, in theory, a suitable partner for ASEAN member states in this field. Moreover, NTS crises within ASEAN are ideal opportunities for the EU to provide assistance, display its multi-headed and -dimensional actorship, and exert influence as a new type of political and security actor and to demonstrate the real quality of this interregional friendship.

### ***True Colours of a Friend***

The EU is one of the most advanced regional organisations with regard to preparedness for transnational and NTS crisis scenarios. The following case studies will outline the EU's activities with and within ASEAN member states after NTS crises in South-East Asia and analyse whether the EU has managed to translate its NTS potential into tangible actorship.



### ***Avian Influenza***

In the case of a pandemic influenza or other communicable and pathogenic diseases the regional comparative studies on pandemic influenza preparedness suggest that the EU model of co-ordination with the individual national plans can be exemplary for other regions. Among others, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has been recommending the European model in terms of legislation, contingency planning, approaches to surveillance and veterinary services for the Asia-Pacific region (Coker & Mounier-Jack, 2006, p. 26). The WHO and others believe that the Asia-Pacific and other regions can learn from the European model and experience.

In 2003, an avian influenza outbreak threatened South-East Asia. The individual member states were affected differently and effective national responses were dependent on the degree of development of each member state. Regional co-ordination among the ASEAN member states was marginal in the immediate aftermath of the crisis. International organisations such as the WHO were vital in tackling the crisis. In 2006, the WHO established a Regional Pandemic Preparedness Plan to complement national poultry control plans as well as human epidemic plans. Until now, there are ASEAN member countries such as Vietnam which continue to experience this form of influenza (World Organisation for Animal Health, 2009). There are a variety of factors ranging from poverty to culture to political institutions that aggravate the containment of, fight against, and the development of preparedness for communicable diseases in the majority of ASEAN member states.

In the case of the avian influenza, the EU possessed the expertise and resources to provide assistance to affected ASEAN member states. In comparison to ASEAN member states' national activities that were mainly funded and supported by the international community, the EU's direct support to ASEAN member states in the form of EC and bilateral member state to member state assistance appeared to be more like a drop in the bucket (European Commission, 2008). Beyond the marginal amount of technical and financial assistance to affected ASEAN members (e.g. the study on gender aspects of the avian influenza crisis in Laos, Vietnam and Thailand; an EU experts' delegation and financial support to Vietnam etc.), the EU's main activities to support affected ASEAN member states were on the international level. The EC collaborated and continues to co-operate with various international partners

such as the WHO and other third parties on aid for South-East Asia concerning the avian influenza.

At the International Pledging Conference on Avian and Human Pandemic Influenza from 17-18 January 2006 in Beijing, the EU made available EUR80 million mainly to affected Asian countries. This amount was channelled through the Avian and Human Influenza Facility of the World Bank. So far, the EU has allocated approximately EUR413 million of the total international contribution of USD2.8 billion that is available for the international avian influenza crisis response (European Commission, 2008). Hence, the EU is the second largest donor.

This case shows that the EU has played a crucial financial role in increasing the level of preparedness within the ASEAN region and elsewhere in the world. The EU's involvement with helping South-East Asia predominantly takes place through the World Bank. This alleviates the EU's administrative burden and reinforces the EU's preference for multilateralism. However, being part of a bigger international coalition degrades the EU's actual visibility and actorness on site. Specific examples of EU actorness in the form of dialogue, the provision of expertise, bilateral financial assistance and research in the region has been limited. The EU's impact in combating the avian influenza has been virtually invisible for the South-East Asian counterpart.

Furthermore, this case shows that the EU did not take full advantage of its issue-specific expertise, financial capacity, and goodwill to project its level of regional preparedness into other regions. This is linked to many reasons such as the patchy nature of the crisis itself, which affected the ASEAN member states unevenly. In addition, the underdeveloped regional cohesion in the counterpart region also played an inhibiting role for interregional action and responses.

#### ***Development and Humanitarian Assistance***

The oldest form of European NTS assistance, which is implied in the above case, has been the EC's and the EU member states' development policies which indirectly target NTS threats. They pre-empt and defuse potential outbreaks of NTS crises via tackling core vulnerabilities. In spite of the EU's and its member states' increased efforts of mainstreaming the development-security nexus in development policies, this "appears to be more of a conceptual battleground pitching the development

and security communities against each other” (Young, 2008, p. 422). For the EC’s aid agency, EuropeAID, this linkage has not changed its primary objective, which is to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and not security (EU official, personal communication, 17 February 2009). Arguably, the EuropeAID official refers to state-centric forms of security since the MDGs coincide with the concept of human security, which is a recognised security concept in the EU (European Council, 2008). This shows that the EU is struggling to strike a balance between its commitments to comprehensive security and the securitisation of policy sectors that an efficient response in South-East Asia demands. The programmes financed by EuropeAID provide a long-term dimension concerned with sustainable development and attaining the basal requirements for human security, eliminating the breeding grounds that contribute to NTS crises.

In addition to the EC’s development assistance, there are also other communitarian non-security policy sectors that have specific external programmes and both indirectly and directly address the long-term dimension in the prevention of NTS crises. In accordance with the European Security Strategy (ESS) “in pursuing [its] strategic objectives[, the EU] applies ... the full spectrum of instruments for crisis management and conflict prevention at [its] disposal, including political, diplomatic, military and civilian, trade and development activities” (EU High Representative Javier Solana, 2003). In rhetoric, the EU’s development policy and other policy areas complement the goals of the ESS. This strategy paper and its follow-up document of December 2008 imply that the EU’s comprehensive understanding of and approach to security is linking it with other non-security policy fields beyond the development-security nexus. From a European perspective, this does not signify a factual securitisation of the non-security policy fields but the recognition of the interconnectedness of achieving stability and security via a cross-sectoral approach.

For instance, the contemporary securitised debate on climate change has led to a linkage of climate change and international security whereas a decade ago environmental issues were mainly associated with sustainable development. In the environmental field, ASEAN and the EU have been active dialogue partners on this on both informal and formal levels such as within the ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting (AEMM) framework. By 1996, the ASEM dialogue framework provided a second channel to the ASEAN-EU dialogue forum, in which this topic could be discussed in a

wider Asian context between both sides.

At ASEM 2 in London in 1998, the Chairman's statement said

*to take forward work in co-operation on environmental disaster preparedness including both short and long-term programmes, such as DIPECHO [Disaster Preparedness European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office], to strengthen environmental disaster management capacities in South-East Asia to enable countries to cope better with the threats posed by disasters affecting the natural environment including forest (ASEM member states, 1998, para. 22).*

This statement indicates the EU's view that South-East Asian states are having difficulties managing natural and environmental crises. It emphasises the importance of the EU's apolitical DIPECHO programme, launched by the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) in 1996, in increasing disaster preparedness in the region. Already since 1992, ECHO has been active in giving humanitarian assistance in South-East Asia and reducing the impact of earthquakes, floods typhoons, landslides, but, also of political conflicts in the region. The tsunami at the end of 2004 was such an event where within a week ECHO had its assistance mobilised and, seemingly, the EU has inverted its low interest in conflict-prone Aceh.

#### ***Tsunami and Political Conflict in Aceh***

ECHO distributed financial assistance to UN agencies but also to non-governmental organisations that were on site. On the day of the tsunami, the EC immediately granted financial support to the International Committee of the Red Cross and activated the Community Civil Protection Mechanism which co-ordinated experts from various EU member states. Within the first weeks after the catastrophe, the EC allocated humanitarian assistance to the WHO, the UN Children's Fund and other big agencies. The financial contribution was co-ordinated by the UN's Office of Humanitarian Affairs to alleviate the suffering caused by the tsunami. By February 2005, ECHO had given EUR103 million for humanitarian assistance (European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office, 2008). By April 2005, the EC had activated three Rapid Reaction Mechanisms (RRM) for post-tsunami recovery. Alongside the immediate humanitarian responses, the EC also aimed for long-term sustainable recovery responses. The EC and the EU member states were leading financial contributors to the multi-donor trust fund (MDF) of EUR440 million (85 percent of the total budget for Indonesia's post-tsunami recovery was donated by the EU and its member states) for Indonesia's recovery

and an important expertise provider for sustainable reconstruction and increasing the early-warning capacity and general preparedness of Aceh (Delegation of the European Commission to Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam, 2009). The Delegation of the European Commission to Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam states

*a total of €871.4 million has been provided and committed by the EC and EU Member States for relief efforts, reconstruction assistance and the peace process in Aceh. These contributions were provided through the MDF and direct bilateral aid through United Nations Agencies, Government of Indonesia and non-governmental organisations (Delegation of the European Commission to Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam, 2009).*

Here again, the EC's substantial financial contributions did not translate into the adequate proportional actorness visibility that one would expect given the amounts involved. Nevertheless, with regard to the EC's flanking projects and the establishment of the Europe House in Aceh, the EU was able to make its mark as a humanitarian and normative actor committed to the province. In fact, according to the perceptions study of the EU in Asia by the National Centre for Research on Europe in New Zealand, the Indonesian public was the only society in South-East Asia that perceived the EU as a normative actor and democracy promoter (National Centre for Research on Europe, 2006-ongoing).

Parallel to the tsunami recovery measures, the EC as well as Javier Solana were supportive of former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari and the Crisis Management Initiative who brokered the peace negotiations and mediated a peace agreement between the two conflicting parties in Aceh (Schulze, 2007, p. 5). The EC funded the mediation between the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and the Government of Indonesia (GoI) as well as the Initial Monitoring Presence of the ESDP in Aceh.

The tsunami compelled the GoI to welcome humanitarian aid from outside, which among other factors facilitated the mediation process between the GAM and the GoI leading to the AMM implemented by the ESDP and five ASEAN member states. The tsunami provided the opportunity for the EU to distinguish itself as a global NTS player in response to the natural and political crises in Aceh.

The political conflict in Aceh presents a different case to the previous examples of EU NTS crisis actorness in South-East Asia due to two distinct features. First, the AMM drew on the intergovernmental ESDP instrument. Second, it was launched in response to man-made violence, namely an ethno-political crisis of thirty years with

various impacts. Since the end of the Suharto administration there were two attempts at peace-talks and ceasefires prior to the EU's engagement and both failed. In 2000, the Switzerland-based Henri Dunant Centre negotiated a humanitarian ceasefire and in 2001, the Indonesian Parliament passed a Special Autonomy Law for the territory. This legislation allowed Aceh to manage a considerable extent of its own affairs and defined a greater share for Aceh of natural resources revenues. Despite these developments GAM and the security forces continued to make individual attacks. In a second attempt to stop the violence the Henri Dunant Centre mediated the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement between the GoI and GAM on December 9, 2002. Its implementation was monitored by delegates from Thailand and the Philippines. Both ceasefires negotiated by the Henri-Dunant Centre were brittle and did not work since they lacked the genuine support of the antagonists. On the GAM side, the ceasefires were only welcomed for the purpose of recovery. On the GoI side, the Indonesian military and the security forces did not have an interest in creating peace with the 'terrorists' and had managed to contain GAM activities over two decades.

In comparison to the previous peace processes, the advantage of the AMM was that it was based on an actual Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that had been agreed to by both parties to the conflict as the basis of action. The mandate was clear and designed to

*monitor the demobilisation of GAM and monitor and assist with the decommissioning and destruction of its weapons, ammunition and explosives; monitor the relocation of non-organic military forces and non-organic police troops; monitor the reintegration of active GAM members; monitor the human rights situation and provide assistance in this field in the context of the tasks set out in points (a), (b) and (c) above; monitor the process of legislation change; rule on disputed amnesty cases; investigate and rule on complaints and alleged violations of the MoU and establish and maintain liaison and good cooperation with the parties (Council of the European Union, 2006, para. 5.2).*

This then became the basis for the European Council's Joint Action. The mission has been completed and is considered to be a success since the mandate had been implemented in all its aspects to a more or less satisfying extent.<sup>8</sup> Most importantly, there is still peace in Aceh and the region is undergoing a democratic transformation with the first parliamentary elections in 2009.

The case of the AMM is different from the previous cases because it shows the EU as the essential actor in operationalising and implementing the MoU in an impartial

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<sup>8</sup> For a detailed assessment of the individual tasks please read Schulze (2009).

manner and thus effectively addressing an NTS crisis within an ASEAN country. The impact of the EU during the course of the crisis is clear and of high significance post-MoU. The AMM is the first case of the EU having drawn on its specific ESDP toolkit and sending civilian troops to South-East Asia whereas in the cases of the pandemic and environmental external co-operation, the EC has been the main force behind the EU's action. These previous NTS issue-specific cases show that the communitarian measures have been mainly in the form of verbal support through dialogue and financial and technical assistance. The AMM shows a different facet of EU actorness in South-East Asia because the EU deployed intergovernmental civil-military staff and capabilities to implement peace.

The success of the AMM and the clear contribution of EU NTS actorness would have been less likely had there not been several transnational and NTS crises in the South-East Asian region. These crises have paved the way for this engagement by contesting the utility of upholding the principle of non-interference so cherished by ASEAN states. In 1997, following the coup d'état in Cambodia, Acting Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim raised concerns about ASEAN's adherence to the non-interference principle. He argued that in a time where national problems can spill over onto the regional level there should be a change of principle towards constructive intervention (Haacke, 1999, p. 582). However, Anwar Ibrahim did not receive any support from other ASEAN members. In June 1998, Thai Foreign Minister Surin Pitsuwan received more support in his reassessment of the non-interference principle but could not weaken Suharto's influence and hard stance on this matter (Haacke, 1999, p. 582). Nevertheless, these instances show that prior to the tsunami a marginal, but nonetheless significant, erosive process of the principle of non-interference has set in.

### ***Asian Financial Crisis (AFC)***

The case of the AFC<sup>9</sup> was the key transnational and NTS crisis which had devastating economic and financial effects on ASEAN markets and led to the above critical self-reflection of some ASEAN member state officials on how the contagious effect of

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9 The AFC can be considered as an NTS crisis in the broadest sense with regard to the current global financial meltdown and the rising prominence of the concept of financial security. Since the incidence of the AFC, financial security has become an acceptable concept exhibiting the tight enmeshment of the socio-economic and security fields. Despite its socio-economic categorisation, the AFC and the international financial crisis (IFC) of 2009 illustrate that financial security is a concept linked to human security and the stability and security of a political entity.

the crisis could have been mitigated. This implied an increasingly critical view of the normative core of ASEAN's *modus operandi*. The ASEAN way of intra-mural co-operation and, in particular, the principle of non-interference were questioned in connection to the transnationalisation of stability issues and security threats.

The AFC broke out in Thailand and became a contagious implosion of the financial markets throughout the South-East Asian and the wider East Asian region. In response to the crisis and complementing national, regional and international efforts, the EC and its member states channelled USD154 billion through international financial institutions (IFI) to support the affected countries (Brittan, 1999, p. 492). This amount accounted for 18 percent of the total sum that was allocated to IFIs. Only Japan provided more financial help in this crisis (Brittan, 1999, p. 492). Another East Asian power that contributed to the recovery was China. Its assistance was less financial and it continued to threaten South-East Asia on territorial matters in the case of the Spratly Islands, but by not devaluating its currency it played a major role in upholding a certain degree of stability of the markets in the region (Bowles, 2002, p. 239).

Despite the EU's major financial contribution through the IMF, concrete EU or ASEAN-EU initiatives were scarce. The crisis occurred at a time when ASEAN-EU interregional dialogue and co-operation were at a low-point because of Myanmar's accession to ASEAN in 1997. Alternatively, ASEM provided a channel of communication for the two sides to meet. At ASEM 2, the EU came up with the ASEM Asia Financial Crisis Response Trust Fund, a European Financial Expertise Network and a trade and investment pledge (ASEM member states, 1998). Furthermore, the Kobe Research Project was initiated at the third ASEM Finance Ministers' Meeting on 13-14 January 2001 in Kobe. In spite of these European signs of solidarity with ASEAN countries and others in the region, these activities appear to be little more than a drop in the bucket. Indeed, the EU has provided considerable financial support, but the IMF and the World Bank have been the visible actors. These organisations' actorness is borne by the international community's financial contributions and thus also by the amount given by the EU and its member states. EU-associated assistance and impact was visible only in relation to the ASEM framework. However, in this connection, the Asian side considered the ASEM-related activities marginal because the EU's visibility was limited by the World Bank's administrative control over the ASEM Asia Financial Crisis Response Trust Fund I and II. 'Brand EU' as a financial security and stability



payer in the region cannot be shaped if the EU contributors are only marginally involved in Fund projects and are non-visible on site and only receive reporting.

Conclusively, the major visible actors which have influenced the recovery phase were the IMF, the East Asian neighbours, and the national authorities within ASEAN. The latter have played a very important role in creating post-AFC national financial preparedness and resilience. This post-crisis resilience in many affected ASEAN member states was facilitated and conditioned by the IMF. However, it was the protectionist measures of national authorities such as the Malaysian Government that among other reasons contributed to the relative low-key impact of the global financial crisis in 2008 within ASEAN countries (Asian Think Tank representative, personal communication, 10 November 2008). The AFC clearly displays, yet again, that in cases of regional crises in a specific sector of governance and of international concern the EU deems it appropriate to act within the issue-specific multilateral and international framework concerned.

So far, this paper has elaborated on the EU's post-crisis security impact on NTS cases in the broadest sense where, due to the policy sectors, the EC has been identified to be the major force behind EU actorness. This indicates that the EU and its member states are *de facto* on the right path in mainstreaming security and providing a comprehensive toolkit for NTS responses to South-East Asia.

In view of the European Council being the major body for external security and stability in the form of the EU's foreign and security policy, additional cases of an EU intergovernmental response to that of the AMM can shed more light on both the specific role competences as well as the interplay between communitarian and intergovernmental NTS instruments. In this paper, the AMM has been the only case elaborated, where the European Council played a crucial security role. The following and final case study will highlight another NTS case dealt with by national authorities and the intergovernmental mode of response. The next example is the impact of the Bali bombings on October 12, 2002.

### **Bali Bombings**

Terrorism and extremism have been brought to the top of the international and interregional security agenda since the September 11 terrorist attacks. In spite of

the USA having dubbed South-East Asia as its Second Front on its War on Terror, the ASEAN member states did not want to succumb to American pressure and face any intrusion upon their national prerogative to combat terrorism and extremism. Furthermore, the terrorist threat within individual ASEAN states has been regarded as an ethno-nationalist concern (Acharya & Acharya, 2007, p. 80). The Muslim-dominated societies of Malaysia and Indonesia were initially reluctant to be part of the Second Front:

*Notwithstanding their sensitivity about the US role in regional counterterrorism efforts, ASEAN members such as Malaysia and Indonesia have been receptive to US assistance that does not involve direct US military engagement. After Malaysia's initial misgivings about the RMSI [Regional Maritime Security Initiative], which it saw as a pretext for US enforcement operations in Southeast Asian waters, it expanded cooperation with the United States and others... (Acharya & Acharya, 2007, p. 88).*

The Bali bombings in 2002 and President Bush's visit to Indonesia in 2003 were decisive in mitigating the resentments. Since then, the USA, Australia and a number of affected ASEAN member states have been active in co-operating on the fight against terrorism and extremism. Australia's engagement is not least due to its proximity to Indonesia and the high death toll of Australians in the 2002 Bali bombings, which left 202 people dead and 209 injured (Australian Federal Police, 2008). The impact of this attack increased securitisation in ASEAN countries and stimulated various intra-ASEAN and ASEAN member states-USA counter-terrorist co-operation projects addressing the strategic and operational dimension of the jihadist trend. The Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand became the main addressees of international counter-terrorist co-operation in South-East Asia (US official, personal communication, 4 December 2009).

In contrast to the USA and Australia, the EC and the EU member states have taken a less direct approach in counter-terrorist-related activities with ASEAN member states, such as efforts to improve border management and document security, interfaith dialogues, anti-money-laundering, and intelligence sharing within the frameworks of ASEAN-EU and ASEM. Any regional responsive action or declaration regarding the Bali bombings would fall under the umbrella of the European Council. In fact, one must admit that given the national centrality of counter-terrorism, the EC can, according to its restricted competence, only contribute minimal relevant funding and expertise provision and thus a truly interregional approach to this highly sensitive matter is

impossible and, in the light of the varying degrees to which ASEAN member states are affected, inadequate. The majority of tangible European counter-terrorist assistance has been a patchwork from specific EU member states to specific ASEAN member states. It has been, in particular, the British, Dutch, French, Spanish, and Danish that have sponsored and provided expertise, for instance, for direct counter-terrorist training seminars and workshops.<sup>10</sup>

Immediately after the attacks, the EC offered anti-money-laundering assistance under the RRM to Indonesia. Javier Solana responded with a statement of condemnation of the bombings and on 18 October 2002, the European Council published its conclusions on the attacks, which recommended ways the EU could assist Indonesia but neglected human rights concerns.

*However, whilst the EU may well be correct in supporting the Indonesian efforts to implement measures in conformity with Security Council Resolution 1373, the EU should take account of the Indonesian government's very poor record in human rights and respect for the rule of law in the management of its internal affairs (Gregory, 2005, p. 113).*

The response was limited and remained declaratory. This is unsurprising in view of the EU's considering other regions such as the Middle East and Central Asia to be the areas of priority in connection to terrorism and extremism (EU official, personal communication, 13 February 2009).

ASEAN-EU counter-terrorist activities are mainly long-term oriented and have been initiated after the fire-fighting phase post-Bali bombings. They have been limited to specific niches that provide added value to other international counter-terrorist projects with ASEAN member states. Beside the ASEM and ASEAN-EU declarations on combating international terrorism, verbal commitments, and interfaith dialogues targeting the cultural and ideological basis of extremism and terrorism, the so-called other EU or European activities are not necessarily to be regarded as distinct interregional or EU initiatives. They complement the American and Australian Western counter-terrorist projects with supplementary efforts consisting of bilateral EU-ASEAN and bilateral member state-to-member state contributions. Noteworthy also is the co-operation that has been sparked in the policing sector by the Co-operation Agreement between the ASEAN Chiefs of Police (Aseanapol) and the International

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<sup>10</sup> For further details please view e.g. the course overview of the International Law Enforcement Academy (<http://www.ileabangkok.com>), Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Co-operation (<http://www.jeclec.com>) and the Southeast Asian Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (<http://www.searcct.gov.my>).

Criminal Police Organisation (Interpol). It provided for a database-sharing project between these two police intelligence agencies and other agencies such as the European Police Office (Europol).

### ***EU Non-Traditional Security Actorness and Implications for ASEAN-EU Interregionalism***

The discussion of the case studies to show the EU's true colours from an NTS perspective has revealed that the EU draws on a vast range of supranational and intergovernmental, short- and long-term, responsive and pre-emptive instruments. The conglomeration of different types of action illustrates seven central features of EU NTS actorness in South-East Asia.

First, the overall tenor of the case studies and other crises within the ASEAN region demonstrates that the EU has tended to recourse to ECHO's humanitarian assistance most frequently in response to these NTS crises, but also to conflict-related humanitarian crises. Furthermore, it emphasises the importance of long-term EU development assistance to defuse crises and pinpoints the different conceptions of security and development of the two regions.

Second, it becomes evident that the different interests and development stages of the various nation-states as well as the different degree of integration of the regional organisations limit co-operation. In general, one also has to consider that the logic behind EU actorness and co-operation follows a pattern of rationality which takes into account a number of action-inhibiting variables. For example, the EU policy-makers contemplate the variety of existing multilateral fora, the global distribution of power, existing crisis-response measures on various levels, national sensitivities, and other obstacles that could impair any form of ASEAN-EU interregional action. Following this process of contemplation the EU then decides if and how to respond to crises abroad.

Third, it reveals that the problems of shared competences within the EU structure are also reflected in the EU's external relations and that shared external representation minimises the collective actorness perception by the sociological other.

Fourth, since the EU is by definition multilateralist, the preferred framework of action appears to be within a multilateral framework on varying levels depending

on the issue and the spread of the negative impact. In most cases, the EU's crisis response was limited to financial and technical assistance under the aegis of an international organisation specifically concerned with the issue-area. On the one hand, this alleviates the EU's administrative burden and allows the EU to circumvent conflicts with the receiving country should the recipient disagree on the conditions of assistance. On the other hand, this weakens the visibility and actual impact of the EU's actorness in South-East Asia. The EU needs to re-evaluate its priorities regarding actorness and rebalance security and image-building costs and benefits. At the moment, it seems unable to translate its major share in technical and financial assistance into factual visibility, influence and power presence. It appears to be more a security payer than a security player, an assessment that applies to the EU's activities in other parts of the world such as in the Middle East peace process.

Fifth, the case of terrorism indicates the potential of the functional approach for EU NTS actorness as in the case of Aseanapol's international co-operation.

Sixth, alongside the various EU efforts to promote Indonesia's leadership role in ASEAN, the presence of the EU in Aceh probably also contributed to the Indonesian public's perception of the EU as a normative power and democracy promoter. Hence, increased on site engagement in South-East Asia and the establishment of a permanent presence such as the Europe House in Aceh may enhance and differentiate the EU's visibility and thus, its actorness.

Finally, the case studies suggest that ASEAN-EU interregionalism in the field of NTS is not an established layer in the pyramid of global governance, but rather a vaguely defined and blurry interface of the global and regional level. Depending on the nature of the NTS crisis the EU will choose its level of response. This has exposed the ASEAN-EU level as a weak and declaratory remedy. In fact, the only case in which the EU managed to make a significant impact on the crisis situation and contribute to the strengthening of the ASEAN-EU interregional level has been the AMM. In this case, it and the five ASEAN member states have managed to alter a situation of violence and high vulnerability to a situation of ongoing peace and reduced armament. Furthermore, it ignited an enhanced ASEAN-EU interest in deepening this interregional dialogue format. This was illustrated by the AEMM agenda in Nuremberg and the following Plan of Action in 2007 (ASEAN-EU member states, 2007).

The EU appears to have interest in the region and has become sporadically engaged

in direct activities that reveal its presence and solidarity. However, the EU and its member states have not made any visible substantial impact as a collective actor – whether interregional or in any other form – in tackling the previously mentioned crises and in assisting ASEAN member states to become more crisis-prepared and less vulnerable. As discussed above, in the majority of the cases, the EU is in a queue with other international helpers, and has not been able to set itself apart. It has distinguished itself as a major development player, which, from an Asian perspective, is part of NTS. However, with regard to NTS crises, when vulnerabilities become aggravated to the point of being matters of life and death, the EU has not established its role as either an NTS or general security actor in South-East Asia. Moreover, in most of the cases it took the role of a financial and flanking presence rather than an active shaper of the recovery. As partially listed above, there is a broad range from cultural to structural to materialist to systemic inhibitors that constitute this under-achievement. The EU's preference for international and multilateral frameworks when appropriate, the EU's strategic geographical areas of priority, the interests of other actors (e.g. US American power politics), and the normative sensitivities of the counterpart epitomised in the ASEAN Way are among the most prominent reasons in the case studies. In spite of its overall sporadic engagement, this patchwork of individual cases of EU actorness is interlocking with the EU's overall cross-sectoral external security strategy and does illustrate a specific, albeit restricted, type of EU NTS actorness within ASEAN after NTS crises.

The EU is an unconventional multi-headed actor whose concept of security is based on a comprehensive understanding of security and a soft security approach drawing on preferably holistic, multilateralist and non-robust instruments. The EU does not think in terms of power politics in South-East Asia and therefore it is not really perceived as a traditional security actor among the leaders of ASEAN member states. In their opinion, it possesses the security culture and means to become a recognised NTS actor in relation to human security (former Secretary General of ASEAN Rodolfo Severino, personal communication, 24 November 2008).

The DIPECHO programme, the EU's involvement in the first-ever ARF Voluntary Demonstration of Response on Disaster Relief from 4-8 May 2009, the various ARF seminars and workshops on NTS such as the ARF Seminar to Enhance Maritime Security from 5-6 March 2009, in Surabaya (EU-Indonesia), or the ARF Seminar on

International Security Implications of Climate-related Events and Trends in Phnom Penh from 19-20 March 2009 (EU-Cambodia), and numerous other NTS-related activities of the ASEAN-EU Indicative Lists of Activities 2007-2008 and 2009-2010 pursuant to the Nuremberg Declaration and Plan of Action suggest that the EU has recognised the potential of increased actorness in certain NTS niches. These niches are namely climate change and disaster management and emergency response. With particular regard to the ASEAN-EU level, the Nuremberg meeting has stimulated a dynamic that stresses interregional NTS activities in accordance with the ASEAN Community Blueprints. The Lists of Activities in the field of political and security co-operation indicate that both sides are building on the Nuremberg momentum and are aiming to develop the ASEAN-EU level to a meaningful dialogue sphere with tangible and not merely rhetorical outcomes that contribute to ASEAN's integration and, eventually, stimulate further co-operation and joint positions in other fora on the regional and global level:

***Exploit the potential of multilateral fora***

*1.1.4. Develop ASEAN-EU consultations/cooperation in multilateral fora, including in the United Nations and other bodies within the UN system as well as in Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), in order to strengthen the multilateral system and, where appropriate, to develop joint positions; and*

*1.1.5. Enhance the role of multilateral cooperation in Asia, including through the accession of the EU/EC to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) (ASEAN-EU member states, 2007).*

## **Conclusions**

In the light of the broad spectrum of responses to and cases of transnational and NTS crises, the EU's actorness manifests itself inconsistently, patchily, and on a case-by-case basis. In general, the vast and cluttered choice of prominent cases of NTS crises in this article emblematises and reflects the ephemeral and sporadic nature of the EU's NTS interregional actorness. There exists ambition for increased interregional dialogue and co-operation on specific NTS issues. Furthermore, it can be seen that a putative area for increased EU actorness may be more hypothetical than feasible. On the one hand, it may be evidence of a lack of, or the mere rudimentary existence of, a common lifeworld that impedes deeper interaction. On the other hand, there are a variety of internal and external variables that limit EU NTS actorness and these are more relevant than the ASEAN-EU interregional level. Internal and external

hurdles need to be overcome on both sides for a more tangible and meaningful ASEAN-EU interregional political and security partnership and friendship shaping global governance. Furthermore, this prospect appears to be confined to the future exploration of co-operation within small niches of NTS, on which the EU has already embarked. In the long term, the EU might then become more consistent and pronounced in its NTS actorness after crises in South-East Asia and be perceived as more than merely a regional model and fair-weather friend who in view of the success of the AMM indeed can be relied on as a friend in deed.

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