

Soka University Peace Research

Special Issue
2009 Spring

SYMPOSIUM

The Alliance of Civilisations:
Possible Pathways for Asia Pacific



Soka University Peace Research Institute

Contents

SUPRI / TIGPPR SYMPOSIUM The Alliance of Civilisations: Possible Pathways for Asia Pacific

Opening Address

- The Alliance of Civilisations: Possible Pathways for Asia Pacific
..... Professor Tadashige Takamura, Deputy Vice President of Soka
University 001

Keynote Address

- The Alliance of Civilisations: Possible Pathways for Asia Pacific
..... Professor Joseph Camilleri / Director, Centre for Dialogue, La Trobe
University 005

Presentations

- The Alliance of Civilizations, Global Governance, and Daisaku Ikeda's Philosophy
of Peace
..... Dr. Olivier Urbain / Director, Toda Institute for Global Peace and
Policy Research 015
- The Alliance of Civilisations: diversity and creativity of Southeast Asia
..... Professor Isao Takagi, Department of Economics, Soka University 033
- The Alliance of Civilizations: Political Perspective of Regional Integration
..... Mr. Yasukuni Enoki, Former ambassador to India 043

The Alliance of Civilisations: Possible Pathways for Asia Pacific

On the 23rd March, 2009, at Soka University

Sponsored by
Soka University Peace Research Institute
And
Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research

I. The conferral ceremony of the Soka University Honorary Award upon Professor Joseph Anthony Camilleri



II. Symposium

Opening Address



Professor Tadashige Takamura
Deputy Vice President, Soka University

Keynote



Professor Joseph Anthony Camilleri
Director, Centre for Dialogue, La Trobe University
**The Alliance of Civilisations:
Possible Pathways for Asia Pacific**

Presentations



Dr. Olivier Urbain
Director, Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy
Research

**The Alliance of Civilisations, Global
Governance, and Peace Philosophy**



Professor Isao Takagi
Department of Economics, Soka University

**The Alliance of Civilisations:
diversity and creativity of Southeast Asia**



Mr. Yasukuni Enoki, Former ambassador to India

**The Alliance of civilizations:
Political perspective of regional integration**

Panel Discussion

The Chair Associate Professor Hideki Tamai
(Director, Soka University Peace Research Institute)



Opening Address

SYMPOSIUM

The Alliance of Civilisations: Possible Pathways for Asia Pacific

Tadashige Takamura

Professor,
Deputy Vice President of Soka University

On behalf of the host organizations, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to this symposium, *The Alliance of Civilisations: Possible Pathways for Asia Pacific*, under the joint auspices of Soka University Peace Research Institute and the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research.

Today's keynote lecture is given by Professor Joseph Camilleri of La Trobe University, Australia, who was earlier awarded the Soka University Honorary Award. I would once again like to offer my congratulations to Professor Camilleri for being granted this award.

As a leading researcher in the field of International Relations, Professor Camilleri has sought to understand, particularly in the Asia Pacific region, what the requirements are for building a peaceful multicultural society in the modern world. Today, I hope he will share some of his insights with us.

It was in 1993 that Samuel Huntington published his article *The Clash of Civilizations* in *Foreign Affairs*. Francis Fukuyama had previously published *The End of History* as a response to the end of the Cold War, declaring the end of ideology as an axis of conflict. In response, Huntington argued that civilisation was the new-and moreover multidimensional-axis of conflict.

Although Huntington's article generated some considerable argument surrounding the vagueness of the concept of 'civilisation' and its political implications, the most important criticism was that Huntington's ideas might increase the risk of new conflicts. Many intellectuals have pointed out that this fear was expressed in US foreign policy in the 1990s.

It has also been argued that rather than being a clash or 'crisis', the 'encounter' with different value systems and cultures is an 'opportunity' that can create new culture and new values: rather than being an almost insurmountable barrier, civilisations bring diversity, the source of creativity. The large number of intellectuals

who share this idea agree that the most effective method of overcoming the barrier is dialogue.

Daisaku Ikeda, founder of this university, consistently advocates that dialogue is our greatest weapon for avoiding war and building peace, and has himself actively engaged in dialogue among civilisations, resulting in an expanded global network of 'dialogue experts,' which includes our guest today, Professor Camilleri.

The theme of today's symposium is the *Alliance of Civilisations*, a movement proposed by the Spanish Prime Minister José Luis Zapatero at the 59th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, 2004, to promote mutual understanding between the Muslim world and the West. It is a sign of the changed times that such an idea could be proposed by Spain, a country which in the Middle Ages purged the Muslim forces from the Iberian peninsula during the *reconquista* (reconquest). The Turkish government has also contributed positively to the movement, and activities look to be steadily progressing in Europe. The First Alliance of Civilizations Forum was held in 2008, and in his annual peace proposal in January the same year, our founder Daisaku Ikeda touched on the significance of this forum.

In the arena of international politics the word 'alliance' primarily meant a military alliance to achieve victory in war. The notion of an alliance of civilisations is thus clever in its application of the word to the concept of building mutually beneficial relationships of a non-military nature, and this notion perhaps goes hand in hand with the trend towards a widening penetration of the idea of 'human security', which goes beyond the narrow confines of 'national security'.

Professor Camilleri too has made a considerable contribution to the UN's *Alliance of Civilizations* initiative, and I hope he will share with us some of his knowledge on how peace in the Asia Pacific region can be created through this initiative.

Today, we are also honored to have a group of distinguished panelists with a wealth of knowledge and experience in a range of fields. Dr. Olivier Urbain, Director of the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research, was until two years ago a professor at this university, but has also been involved for several years in promoting the Dialogue Among Civilizations projects at the suggestion of the Toda Institute's founder. Dr. Urbain is to receive a doctorate in Peace Studies from the University of Bradford, UK, for research on the significance of Daisaku Ikeda's peace philosophy in the context of the history of ideas. I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to him on this achievement, and look forward to hearing about his research.

Professor Isao Takagi of Soka University's Faculty of Economics specializes in development economics, and has extensive experience of research in the field, from Southeast Asia to India. As a specialist with deep knowledge of the reality of Asia's diverse societies, Professor Takagi will be discussing the meaning and possibilities of a multicultural society.

Finally, we welcome Mr. Yasukuni Enoki, who has had many years of experience in the international community as a diplomat, first serving as Division Head and Bureau Director in Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, then Minister and Deputy

Chief of Mission, Embassy of Japan in Australia and Consul General in Detroit, the US, as well as serving in the Mission to the EU and as Japan's Ambassador in South Africa and in India. He is therefore familiar with civilisations across all the continents, and I am sure we all look forward to hearing his views, based on a rich and varied career, on the possibilities for regional integration in Asia.

The sponsors of this symposium are delighted to welcome these distinguished panelists, and I am sure we will learn a great deal from their contributions. Once again I would like to thank Professor Camilleri and the other panelists, and everyone here today for attending this symposium.

Keynote Address

The Alliance of Civilisations: Possible Pathways for Asia Pacific

Joseph A. Camilleri

Director, Centre for Dialogue
Professor of International Relations
La Trobe University, Melbourne

Dialogue across cultural and religious boundaries is not a new idea. Immensely rich and creative interactions have occurred at various times in places as far apart as the Hellenic world and South Asia, the Levant and North Africa, Italy and China.

Notwithstanding their periodic rivalries and tensions, the three Abrahamic faiths (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) have produced some of the most extraordinary encounters, of which perhaps Muslim Spain represents one of the noblest peaks of human achievement. Encounters between Islam on the one hand and Buddhism and Confucianism on the other have similarly enriched humanity's civilisational heritage.

What these continuing interactions demonstrate is that no culture, no religious tradition, no civilisation holds a monopoly on ethical discourse. This is what makes dialogue both possible and desirable.

In dialogue commonality and difference come together

Dialogue is possible because the world's major ethical traditions have much in common. They share a deep sense of the dignity of human life, a commitment to human fulfilment, and a concern for standards of 'rightness' in human conduct. Here we include not only Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, Christianity and other religious faiths but also Confucianism, western secular humanism, and the traditions of Indigenous peoples. There is enough common ground between these ethical worldviews to make possible an on-going conversation about human ethics in general and social ethics in particular.

Dialogue is desirable precisely because of the many differences that separate cultures, religions and civilisations. In dialogue these differences are acknowledged,

respected, and managed so as to limit, if not altogether eliminate, tensions and violent conflicts. More importantly, these differences can contribute to mutually enriching exchanges in art, philosophy, science, religion, education, trade and much else. Each tradition has its own distinctive ethos and symbolism, its own languages and customs, its own artistic and intellectual achievements, its own perspectives on ethical conduct, its own understanding of personal and social relationships—its own unique gifts to contribute to the dialogue.

There are, in any case, significant differences within as well as between major cultures and civilisations. This is not hard to explain. Societies experience over time the impact of diverse intellectual, cultural and religious currents, some of which are internal to the society, some external to it (most commonly through trade, war and migration as well as intellectual and artistic encounters). More often than not, these currents furiously interact with each other and in the process contribute to the slow but steady transformation of values, customs and practices. Cultures and civilisations are living entities. They change and diversify over time.

Differences, however, offer no cause for alarm. They need not stand in the way of effective dialogue either within or between the major civilisational traditions. As already noted, the emerging dialogue stands to gain at least as much from diversity as from commonality.

Cultural diversity is, indeed, an integral part of the human inheritance. All of us, though we belong to different religious, ethical and cultural formations, share the same civilisational inheritance. Each person, regardless of ethnic, national or religious background or philosophical viewpoint, shares something of the priceless gifts offered by other cultures and civilisations. As the world's libraries, museums and concert halls attest, humankind is the custodian of a single inheritance—rich, diverse, yet deeply interconnected.

Dialogue: an idea whose time has come

Dialogue is a recurring theme of human history. As Daisaku Ikeda remarked in his 2008 Peace Proposal:

The key to waging a successful struggle for the ideals of humanism lies in dialogue, a challenge as old (and as new) as humanity itself. It is part of the essential nature of human beings to be dialogical; to abandon dialogue is in effect to abandon our humanity. Without dialogue, society is wrapped in the silence of the grave.

Yet, as a philosophical current conscious of the global implications of both commonality and difference, as a movement with its own dedicated institutions and

full-time professionals, its networks of activists, the dialogue of religions and cultures is very much a recent development. Two world wars, the Holocaust, the advent of the nuclear age, and more recently such tragedies as those in the Middle East and the former Yugoslavia, have provided renewed impetus for the discourse and practice of dialogue.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), founded in November 1945 as a specialised UN agency, was set the task of fostering dialogue on the basis of respect for shared values and the dignity of each civilisation and culture. It is, however, only since the end of the Cold War that the dialogical agenda has gained the necessary momentum. One important sign of this trend has been the establishment of national and international centres and initiatives, each in its own way making civilisational dialogue a focal point of research, education and advocacy. These include the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions (CPWR), the International Interfaith Centre (Oxford), the Global Dialogue Institute, the International Centre for Dialogue among Civilisations (Tehran), the Toda Institute for Global Policy and Peace Research (Honolulu and Tokyo), and our own humble Centre for Dialogue at La Trobe University (Melbourne).

There, is however, a deeper intellectual and ethical current of which these organisational developments are but the outward manifestation. In a famous address delivered on 4 July 1994 in Philadelphia, then Czech President Vaclav Havel powerfully articulated the drift of that current:

The artificial world order of the past decades has collapsed, and a new more-just order has not yet emerged. The central political task of the final years of this century, then, is the creation of a new model of coexistence among the various cultures, peoples, races, and religious spheres within a single interconnected civilisation.

Another voice that has powerfully resonated on the world stage is that of Hojjatoleslam Seyed Mohammad Khatami. A scholar in his own right, he has written and spoken incisively and eloquently on the theme of dialogue. Soon after assuming office as the fifth president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Khatami successfully proposed the idea of 'dialogue among civilisations' first to the Organisation of Islamic conference in 1997, and a year later to the UN General Assembly. In November 1998 the General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming 2001 as the *Year of Dialogue among Civilisations*, a symbolic landmark of the current period of transition. It also adopted the *Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilisations*, which has since provided the impetus and legitimacy for a great many governmental and non-governmental initiatives.

The 'dialogue of civilisations', especially in its present context, is designed

specifically to address the fault line that separates the Western and non-Western worlds, the Occident and the Orient. This is a fault line with a long history, of which the present tensions between Islam and the West are but the most recent and perhaps most troublesome manifestation.

A window of opportunity for Asia Pacific

In response to the immense challenges that lie ahead, the international community is attempting for the first time to engage in a dialogue of global proportions. How can we address the global recession, the financial crisis, climate change, international terrorism, global epidemics, or nuclear proliferation, except through dialogue? We stand little chance of resolving these problems unless we call on the combined wisdom of the world's great cultures and civilizations.

The Asia-Pacific region is well placed to contribute to this global dialogue, for in its midst are represented many of the world's religious and cultural traditions. By virtue of history and geography, Asia Pacific has a unique opportunity to weave together the wisdom of diverse civilisational strands—evident in the multifaceted and sustained encounter between Orient and Occident, and between the major religious and ethical traditions, notably Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Islam and Christianity, not forgetting the indigenous cultures to be found in different parts of Asia and Oceania.

In his Peace Proposals and other writings, Daisaku Ikeda has consistently drawn attention to the potential for dialogue in the Asia-Pacific region. In January 1986, he proposed the establishment of an 'Asia-Pacific Organization for Peace and Culture' (APOPAC), which would promote cooperation between the countries of the region on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. He rightly warned:

Any plan that places disproportionate emphasis on politics (security or on economics, will easily break down, as it tends to produce friction and resistance.

He placed the stress instead on 'peace', 'disarmament', 'development' and 'culture'. In his 2005 Peace Proposal he returned yet again to the theme of Asian integration, highlighting the environment, development and disaster relief as particularly well suited to intra-regional cooperation. He also proposed the creation of an Asia-Pacific UN office that would promote human security in a regional context.

Several closely related questions arise: How can the peoples of Asia Pacific grasp the opportunities that exist to make intercultural dialogue an integral part of everyday life? How can the dialogical outlook infuse the programmes of our schools and universities, our media, our legal, political and religious institutions? How can

such dialogue inform and strengthen moves to develop an Asia-Pacific community? A recent and highly innovative international initiative may hold part of the answer.

The 'Alliance of Civilisations'

On 21 September 2004, Spanish Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero called for the creation of the 'Alliance of Civilisations' during the 59th Session of the UN General Assembly. Following consultations between Zapatero and Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the two governments agreed to co-sponsor the initiative, and invited UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to announce it to the Member States of the United Nations.

On 14 July 2005, Kofi Annan formally launched the Alliance of Civilisations (AoC). On 2 September 2005, he announced the establishment of a High-level Group of experts, which was asked to explore the roots of polarization between societies and cultures. The Group had as its Co-Chair Prof. Federico Mayor (Spain), former Director-General of UNESCO. Its other members included: Mohammad Khatami, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Hubert Védrine (former French foreign Minister), Karen Armstrong (UK historian of religion), John Esposito (founding Director, of the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, and Ali Alatas (former Indonesian Foreign Minister).

Its first report was presented at its fifth meeting in Istanbul in November 2006. The report's recommendations encompassed strategies for developing better cooperation frameworks and partnerships in line with the Alliance's objectives. It recommended practical steps to strengthen constructive voices and to engage mass media to shape public debates in productive ways. It proposed educational approaches and methods to facilitate the mobilization of young people in promoting the values of mutual respect, cooperation, and the appreciation of diversity.

In the meantime the Alliance of civilisations established the 'Group of Friends' made up of governments and multilateral organisations that support its objectives. Its first ministerial meeting took place in November 2006. To give the initiative still greater visibility and legitimacy, in June 2007, Kofi Annan appointed Jorge Sampaio, former President of Portugal, as High Representative for the Alliance.

Working in partnership with governments, international and regional organisations, civil society groups, foundations, and the private sector, the Alliance is supporting a range of projects and initiatives aimed healing divisions between cultures, religions and civilisations. Its brief is to perform a number of key functions (in collaboration with governmental and non-governmental bodies working in this domain):

Bridge building: connecting people and organisations devoted to promoting trust and understanding between diverse communities, particularly – but not exclusively – between Muslim and Western societies;

Facilitation: helping to give impetus to innovative projects aimed at reducing polarization between nations and cultures through joint initiatives and mutually beneficial partnerships;

Advocacy: building respect and understanding among cultures and amplifying voices calling for mutual respect and reconciliation which help calm cultural and religious tensions between states and peoples;

Promotion: giving greater visibility to initiatives devoted to building bridges between cultures; and

Resourcing: providing access to information and materials drawn from successful cooperative initiatives – in the expectation that these will be used by member states, institutions, organisations, or individuals seeking to initiate similar processes or projects.

On the occasion of the Alliance's second ministerial meeting held in September 2007 in New York, Jorge Sampaio presented the Alliance of Civilisations Implementation Plan to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

The Group of Friends convened its first Annual Forum in Spain in January 2008. In his keynote address, Spanish Prime Minister Zapatero, offered an unusually explicit statement of the anticipated role of inter-civilisational dialogue in the emerging system of governance:

. . . the Alliance of Civilisations . . . has come to fill up a void, a void that identifies a real problem: the management of diversity in a globalised world. This is a problem that has become more serious due to historical, deeply-rooted conflicts. . . In order to face the new challenges of the 21st century we must provide ourselves with new instruments.

The question is: Can the Alliance and the projects which it facilitates become such an instrument?

The brief history we have just sketched of the Alliance suggests that it offers intriguing though as yet little explored possibilities for fostering understanding and collaboration among cultures, religions and civilisations. Nowhere is the Alliance's

potential greater than in Asia Pacific, both within and between countries. If we define Asia Pacific narrowly to include only the countries of East Asia (ASEAN+3) and Australasia, 'Friends of the Alliance' in this region already include: China, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Australia and New Zealand. If we define it more broadly to include South Asia, we find that Bangladesh, India and Pakistan have also joined. This is a good beginning. On the other hand, few Asian multilateral organisations have as yet become Friends of the Alliance. ASEAN, the ASEAN Regional Forum, the East Asian Summit and the Asia-Europe Meeting are notable absentees. In any case, notional endorsement by governments has been followed by relatively little action.

To date the AoC has identified four priority areas of work: youth, media, education, and migration. These have been strategically selected because of their potential to influence public sentiment and shape public perceptions, but also to address key tensions that inevitably arise in multiethnic, multifaith societies around a range of complex and at times potentially divisive questions: the role of religion in the public sphere; the treatment of religion in public educational institutions; the recognition of the rights of indigenous and ethnic minorities, especially in relation to language; the rights of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers; and the role of media in the dissemination of information and the canvassing of opinion and analysis on some of the most contentious issues of the day.

To give effect to AoC objectives in these key areas, governments (as well as multilateral organisations) have been invited to formulate action plans. So far only a handful of governments have formally lodged their plans: Bulgaria, New Zealand, Spain, Turkey and the UK. The UK contribution is the least interesting, entailing little more than an outline of their counterterrorism programmes.

The Spanish Plan sets out a list of broadly stated actions designed to promote appreciation of diversity, civic values and a culture of peace, more effective integration of immigrants, and dissemination of AoC initiatives. More specific actions include promotion and financial support of the UNESCO–approved International Network on Religions and Mediation, and development of training programmes for police forces, healthcare personnel, prison workers and business managers.

The Turkish programme lists 76 projects operating under the auspices of several government ministries, including the Ministry of State, the Ministry of Interior Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry Education. The projects include a wide range of national and international conferences, publications, student projects and scholarships, media training programmes, youth and student exchange programmes, training programmes for educators and religious officers. It is not clear from these national plans how much of the activity outlined is directly the result of

the AoC's agenda, and how much is simply a redirection or reorganisation of existing projects and activities, bringing them more closely into line with AoC objectives.

Of the four Action Plans, the New Zealand effort is perhaps the most systematic to date, reflecting the strong leadership of Prime Minister Helen Clark in this area. She convened a major AoC Asia-Pacific Conference in May 2007. The National Action Plan, developed under the oversight of the Prime Minister's Office, sets out:

- a 'structural framework' (including relationship to the UN-based AoC secretariat, and oversight of and responsibility for the programme)
- a programme of action that runs from December 2007 to June 2009)
- a list of activities
- New Zealand's contribution to the Asia-Pacific region and internationally.

New Zealand has developed two key regional projects. One is a region-wide media programme that will bring journalists from the Asia-Pacific together to discuss reporting and commentary on critical issues, especially those where politics and religion intersect. The second project involves the development—with regional partners—of an educational resource for high school level students in the Asia-Pacific region that sets out common values held by people of differing religions and cultures. It is not yet clear how much attention or enthusiasm the newly elected Key government will devote to the AoC.

Developing the Asia-Pacific connection

Against this backdrop of international initiatives, statements of principle and purpose, reports and plans already under way, a great many possibilities suggest themselves for Asia Pacific. Notwithstanding the current economic recession which has abruptly dampened expectations, at least for the next two or three years, Asia Pacific remains a region of remarkable dynamism. Indeed, its cultural and political vitality may over time outshine its economic performance.

Here, the Alliance of Civilisations may have greater relevance to Asia Pacific than is generally understood. Three considerations point to this conclusion. First, most of the societies that make up the Asia-Pacific region are themselves extraordinarily diverse—culturally, linguistically religiously and politically. We need only think of Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Australia and New Zealand. In all these societies tensions abound. In China, the relationship between central authority and key ethnic minorities remains a sensitive and largely unresolved problem. The Alliance provides all multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies with a useful policy compass for managing that diversity, especially in conditions of internal conflict.

Secondly, as we have already observed, national diversity is reflected and multiplied many times over when we transpose it to the regional level. In Asia Pacific, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist and secular societies have to negotiate difference across a wide range of issues. In recent years the powerful emotions generated by international events, including September 11, the Israel-Palestine conflict, the US invasion of Iraq, the war in Afghanistan and tensions in South Asia have greatly taxed the capacities of governments to respond coherently, let alone cooperatively, not just to these conflicts, but to such related issues as terrorism, refugee flows and the role of great powers in the region.

A third consideration involves the slow but persistent attempts of Asia-Pacific countries to develop an adequately functioning regional architecture. The last twenty years have witnessed the creation of APEC, ASEAN Regional Forum, Europe-Asia Meeting, ASEAN+3, the East Asian Summit, and now the Australian Prime Minister Rudd's proposal for a new Asia-Pacific Community. Individually and collectively, these institutional arrangements have suffered from one common defect. As Daisaku Ikeda insightfully observed more than twenty years ago, regional arrangements that single-mindedly focus on the so-called 'hard' issues of economy and security at the expense of the 'soft' issues of culture, religion, education, 'people's diplomacy' and humanitarian intervention do so at their own peril. In the absence of institutionalised interaction across the cultural, religious and civilisational divide, the peoples of Asia Pacific will not be able to develop the levels of mutual trust and understanding needed to sustain an economic or security community.

What, then, might be a constructive first step? May I be so bold as to propose on this auspicious occasion a regional consultation that would bring together principally the 'Friends' of the Alliance in Asia Pacific. Invitations could also be extended to other countries as well as to regional organisations considered important to the success of the initiative. Although not an official inter-governmental conference, participants would include members of parliament and government officials from key ministries. Other participants would be scholars and experts in various fields, as well as representatives drawn from industry, philanthropy, media, education and religious and cultural organisations.

The purpose of the consultation would be to:

- a) develop an active AoC presence in the Asia-Pacific region, perhaps a permanent regional arm of the Alliance of Civilisations with the active support and involvement of national governments, multilateral organisations and civil society;
- b) encourage the formulation and implementation of national strategies and action plans, with periodic exchanges of information and joint projects;

- c) establish a new and critically important pillar in the construction of an Asia-Pacific Community.

The lead-up and the follow-up to such a consultation would be at least as important as the event itself. This would be an opportunity to generate a multi-dimensional region-wide dialogue across religious, cultural and political boundaries—a dialogue that encompasses states, markets, civil society as well as existing and emerging multilateral institutions.

Institutes and research centres, universities and other educational institutions have a crucial part to play, researching, crystallizing, publicising this idea, and gathering the necessary support of governments, philanthropic bodies and religious and community organisations.

Ours is a unique, transitional moment in history, when unprecedented dangers coincide with unparalleled opportunities. Our common purpose must be to proclaim an Asia-Pacific community that nurtures a new and transforming dialogue of cultures, religions, civilisations, and political systems. In this task our two countries, Japan and Australia, systems are uniquely placed. We are both modern societies closely linked to the United States and the West, but we are also inextricably linked by history and geography to Asia's future.

Our respective institutions, by philosophical outlook and humanistic commitment, can make a unique collaborative contribution to the Alliance of Civilizations in the Asia-Pacific region. Our shared responsibility is to seize this moment and widen the field of shared action.

The Alliance of Civilizations, Global Governance, and Daisaku Ikeda's Philosophy of Peace

Olivier Urbain

Director,
Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research

Introduction

On the occasion of the first forum of the Alliance of Civilizations, held in Madrid, Spain on 15 January 2008, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said the following:

Never in our lifetime has there been a more desperate need for constructive and committed dialogue, among individuals, among communities, among cultures, among and between nations. (...) We all know the terrible toll intolerance is taking in our world—attacks, killings and even mass atrocities committed in the name of religion. (...) Fostering dialogue will not produce change overnight. It is not the fast way. But it is the sure way. It is the enduring way. The careful plans of the Alliance—of you, our partners—will deliver in the long run (UNAOC 2008a).

Events in the Middle-East, South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere, at the beginning of 2009, have unfortunately validated Ban Ki-moon's words when he mentioned "attacks, killings and even mass atrocities," and these tragedies can indeed be linked to religious divides. However, it is important to recognize that religion is most often used as a smokescreen hiding less lofty endeavors such as territorial gain, political domination or control of natural resources.

It is highly significant that the Soka University Peace Research Institute has organized this symposium just before the second forum of the Alliance of Civilizations that will take place in Istanbul, Turkey on 6-7 April 2009.

The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) was established in 2005, based on an initiative of the Governments of Spain and Turkey. In this paper, some

principles of the Alliance are examined, and their links to the broader concept of dialogue of civilizations are explored. The Alliance is then placed in the context of global governance, with some examples pertaining to the Asia-Pacific region. Finally a model for improving world society based on Daisaku Ikeda's philosophy of peace will be proposed, and its potential contributions to the elaboration of an ethical and institutional framework that can support the Alliance and its goals will be introduced.

The Mission of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

The opening sentence of the UNAOC mission statement reads:

The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) is an initiative of the UN Secretary-General which aims to improve understanding and cooperative relations among nations and peoples across cultures and religions, and to help counter the forces that fuel polarization and extremism (UNAOC 2008b).

Here I would like to focus on two aspects, first "nations and peoples," and second, "polarization and extremism." This project relies not only on international and intergovernmental relations, but also on the links between peoples, and I would add, between people. It is important to include NGOs, transnational organizations, and the power of ordinary people in the process, if such a project is to succeed. Secondly, concerning a possible cure against "polarization and extremism," I would like to again emphasize the power of ordinary people. When human beings treat each other as people, and not as abstractions, polarization and extremism are less likely to take place. I argue for a strong emphasis on the utmost importance of each human being, in order to ensure the success of projects beyond intergovernmental achievements, and also as a cure against extremism.

The overall context of the Alliance of Civilizations is the proclamation by the UN of 2001 as the year of "Dialogue among Civilizations." As we all know, the events of September 11 provided a brutal wake-up call in this context: this dialogue will not be easy. Actually an incident that took place shortly before 9/11 was already symptomatic of the magnitude of the challenges to come. The World Conference against Racism (WCAR) was held in Durban, South Africa, under UN auspices, from 31 August to 8 September 2001. The delegations of two countries withdrew from the conference, failing to agree on the content of a common text with other countries. The representatives of these two nation-states felt that the conference had been hijacked by a disreputable lobby, and had therefore become "racist." A major conference against racism therefore failed because representatives of several countries accused some of the participants of racism, and vice-versa.

This very significant incident should have attracted worldwide attention, but it went virtually unnoticed because of the major tragedy that would soon gain planetary prominence. The attacks of 9/11 occurred just three days after that conference. What happened during the WCAR can be analyzed using the two points from the UNAOC mission statement highlighted above. First the delegations that stormed out did not represent ordinary people, but the national interests of two nation-states. Second, the accusations of racism on both sides can be labeled as symptoms of "polarization and extremism." One can always imagine what would have happened if those two points, the importance of ordinary people and the caution against extremism, had been kept in mind at all times during the WCAR conference. Perhaps there would have been no need for the delegates of the two countries to storm out. We will never know the answer to the following question: would 9/11 have happened if the conference had been successful?

In this short description of some of the major events of the year 2001, one can see a symbol of the ultimate struggle of the human spirit against its own weaknesses. First the UN, the world body, declared 2001 to be the year of Dialogue of Civilizations. Then a conference against racism was organized, but because of harsh criticism, the representatives of two countries stormed out, and this lack of sustained dialogue effectively destroyed the credibility of the whole event. Three days later, the murderous attacks of 9/11 occurred, followed by military retaliation against Afghanistan a few weeks afterwards. We know the rest of this story, including the invasion and occupation of Iraq, as well as numerous terrorist attacks throughout the world.

These tragic events seemed to confirm Samuel Huntington's warning that the world was heading towards a "clash of civilizations," the main theme of his now famous 1993 article in *Foreign Affairs* and of his 1996 book. However, Huntington's analysis was not entirely powerless to shape foreign policies and events, and instead of a warning, it could be called a prophecy, more exactly a self-fulfilling prophecy. Scholars of international relations and political science, among many others, bear a tremendous responsibility in shaping foreign policies and international climates through their research results and statements.

In this context, it is argued that the response of the UN, opposing the concept of a perpetual "clash of civilizations" with that of a "dialogue among civilizations," was very appropriate. It is to be noted that five years before the UN proclamation, and two years before the November 1998 decision of the General Assembly to address this issue, the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research, established by Japanese peace thinker and activist Daisaku Ikeda, had chosen "Dialogue of Civilizations for World Citizenship" as its motto. This was one of the earliest institutional responses to Huntington's warning. In 2008 one word of the motto was

modified and it became "Dialogue of Civilizations for *Global* Citizenship," in order to better reflect the inevitable challenges to peace and understanding presented by globalization.

The mission statement of the UNAOC also provides certain recommendations, for instance that the Alliance become:

A **bridge builder and convener**, connecting people and organizations devoted to promoting trust and understanding between diverse communities, particularly – but not exclusively – between Muslim and Western societies; (...) (UNAOC 2008b).

How does this recommendation apply to the countries of the Asia-Pacific Region? The definitions of its geographical boundaries vary, but it always includes at least China and Japan, as well as Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands, and all the countries in between. These are both Koreas, the 10 countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN: Brunei Darussalam, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines), for a total of more than 17 countries, but this number varies depending on the political map one uses. Concerning the relations between Muslim and Western societies mentioned in the recommendation, without going into details, there are both intra-national issues such as in the Philippines, and international ones such as the relationships between Indonesia and Australia, for instance.

Because of the pervading influence of globalization, and due to the overall interdependence characterizing our 21st century societies, the institutional mechanisms and ethical foundations which need to be put in place to allow for the development of an Asia-Pacific alliance will not fail to have an impact on the whole world. On the other hand, the global system will have a strong influence on the development of any attempts to establish more trust and understanding between the nations, peoples, and people of the Asia-Pacific region. As a result, it is necessary to examine what kind of global governance is available in the world nowadays, and to see how an Asia-Pacific alliance would interact with the whole framework.

Global Governance Today: a Brief Overview

Here I would like to introduce the UN-centered model presented by David Held and Anthony McGrew in their book entitled *Globalization/Anti-Globalization*," first published in 2002, recently updated in 2007. At the core of this model are the five permanent organs of the United Nations (UN), namely the Secretariat, ECOSOC, the General Assembly (UNGA), the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and the Security

Council (UNSC). If we look at these five institutions as the elements of a world government in the making, the legislative power is held by UNGA, the judiciary by the ICJ and the executive by the UNSC. In a first ring around these organs we find UN agencies such as UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP and UNEP. A second ring is made of UN specialized agencies such as IAEA, IMF, WHO and UNESCO. Finally outside of the ring we find Greenpeace, WTO, Oxfam, Amnesty International and the International Criminal Court (ICC), among many other organizations.

As mentioned above, this scheme depicts an ideal UN-centered model of the world, but it does not represent the reality of how hard power is distributed on our planet. A more accurate description of how global governance looked like between 2001 and 2009, is rather unfortunately, a world organized around the most militarily, economically and politically dominant nation-states, with the US in the center, the UK next to it, and everybody else trying to either keep up, or revolt, or adapt, with some countries being invaded and occupied in the process. On a more positive note, with the new US administration that took office at the beginning of 2009, everything is possible, and billions of people throughout the world are hoping that positive changes will soon become visible.

Only two global governance models have been presented here, one with the UN in the center, the other one based on US hegemony, but there are many other ones. There is therefore an array of world models competing to influence the organization and distribution of power in the world and what is called "global governance" is far from a well-organized or coherent affair.

One of the most promising concepts in post-cold war global governance thinking is that of "cosmopolitan democracy," as described by David Held, Mary Kaldor, Richard Falk, Daniele Archibugi and others. This concept is the topic of vigorous debates, and it is constantly being developed and refined.

For instance in the book entitled *Democratizing Global Governance*, published in 2002 in collaboration with the Toda Institute, Joseph Camilleri expressed reservations about the global legal framework defined by David Held in 1995, and he cautioned that it "would be one in which the duties and functions traditionally centered on the state would be shared across different political levels-local, nation, regional and international. Such a framework would require an overarching system of laws and institutions capable of sustaining the complex forms of interdependence in the era of globalization" (Camilleri 2002: 256, paraphrasing Held 1995). Camilleri then suggested a more flexible scheme: "A more feasible but also more desirable process would be one which encourages the democratic ethic simultaneously in all tiers of governance, remembering that democratic practice within and between tiers will always be subject to renegotiation and renewal" (Camilleri 2002: 256).

Here I would like to mention Huntington's book *The Clash of Civilization and Remaking of World Order* again, because one passage from this work illustrates the direct links between contemporary global governance and the potential achievements of the UNAO in Asia-Pacific. At the end of his book, Huntington describes a nightmarish scenario leading to a cataclysmic Third World War. He presents an imagined future sequence of events occurring in rapid succession, triggered by a giant geopolitical domino effect inevitably leading to global catastrophe.

Now I would like to highlight the first domino to fall in Huntington's example, because it is none other than the reunification of both Koreas. This small passage in his book becomes highly significant when it is placed in the context of the current relationships between North Korea, South Korea, their neighbors and the US. Two questions can be asked: firstly, what is the impact on public opinion in general and on US foreign policy in particular, of one of the major books on international relations stating that the reunification of both Koreas would lead to WW3? Secondly, what does this tell us about the general climate and pre-existing assumptions prevailing in our contemporary global governance circles?

There are many other examples in other works, but I would like to suggest that if we want to think deeply about the best ways to build an Alliance of Civilizations in the Asia-Pacific region, we need to simultaneously take into consideration constraining external factors. While designing the best integrative mechanisms at the regional level, we also need to find out what kind of global ethical and institutional framework would enable this specific Alliance to flourish. Moreover, ideally, such a global framework would need to enable countless other alliances of civilizations to develop throughout the world. Numerous regional and global plans for peace have been proposed by such figures as Erasmus, Emeric Cruc, William Penn, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the Abbé de Saint-Pierre, William Ladd, Baroness Suttner, Immanuel Kant, Victor Hugo and many others, and in the next section some elements of Daisaku Ikeda's Philosophy of Peace will be presented. It is argued that it contains recommendations that can be useful in our search for a more humane and effective global governance system.

Daisaku Ikeda's Philosophy of Peace: Self-Transformation, Dialogue, and Global Civilization

During two years, from 2006 to 2008, I had the opportunity of doing research about Daisaku Ikeda's philosophy of peace, trying to systematize the non-religious, secular works directly related to the development of world peace. There was therefore a deliberate focus on three types of writings, namely the annual Peace Proposals, the approximately fifty volumes of dialogues in book form, and the two

serial novels *The Human Revolution* and the *New Human Revolution*. The material available in English totals more than 10,000 pages, and what follows is the result of a textual analysis of that body of work.

To put it in its simplest form, Ikeda's philosophy of peace is a three-step approach that consists of Self-Transformation, Dialogue and Global Civilization. It offers useful suggestions for the development of an Asia-Pacific community, for local and global alliances of civilizations, and also for global governance, because it is the result of Ikeda's more than half a century long, strenuous and consistent efforts towards the implementation of universal and humanist principles that go beyond specific religions or cultures. Whereas Ikeda is first and foremost a religious leader, as well as a man of action who travelled the world to hold dialogues with people from all backgrounds, what I call "Daisaku Ikeda's Philosophy of Peace" (DIPP) is only the theoretical architecture behind those numerous actions.

The first element, Self-Transformation, implies that any journey towards peace starts within the individual. More specifically, when making daily decisions, each human being can choose between greed, hatred and foolishness on the one hand, and the qualities of courage, wisdom and compassion on the other. These three were not chosen at random, and they can be found in the writings of diverse philosophers, religious thinkers and psychologists. Ikeda mentioned these three qualities in a speech at Columbia University in 1996, entitled "Education for Global Citizenship:"

I think I can state with confidence that the following are essential elements of global citizenship[:]

- The wisdom to perceive the interconnectedness of all life and living.
- The courage not to fear or deny difference; but to respect and strive to understand people of different cultures, and to grow from encounters with them.
- The compassion to maintain an imaginative empathy that reaches beyond one's immediate surroundings and extends to those suffering in distant places.

The all-encompassing interrelatedness that forms the core of the Buddhist worldview can provide a basis, I feel, for the concrete realization of these qualities of wisdom, courage and compassion (Ikeda, 1996).

These three qualities are also mentioned in Ikeda's 2002 Peace Proposal, which was one of his responses to the events of September 11, 2001, and to the ensuing invasion of Afghanistan. In this text Ikeda highlights "dehumanization" as the main source of the destructive cycle of violence that was engulfing the world and then

recommends "the ideal way of life, one characterized by great compassion, courage and wisdom" (Ikeda 2002: 10) as the best antidote.

These three qualities are considered essential by many different religions, spiritual practices, philosophies and ways of life, as one of the founders of positive psychology, Martin Seligman, and his research team have found out:

(...) we read Aristotle and Plato, Aquinas and Augustine, the Old Testament and the Talmud, Confucius, Buddha, Lao-Tze, Bushido (the samurai code), the Koran, Benjamin Franklin, and the Upanishads-some two hundred virtue catalogues in all. To our surprise, almost every single one of these traditions flung across three thousand years and the entire face of the earth endorsed six virtues:

- Wisdom and Knowledge
- Courage
- Love and Humanity
- Justice
- Temperance
- Spirituality and transcendence (Seligman, 2002: 132-133)

It is easy to see the link between the first three of them and the three qualities of courage, wisdom and compassion highlighted here. The starting point of Ikeda's philosophy of peace is thus the capacity of each person to generate these qualities through a voluntary choice. This desire for constant self-improvement is at the core of what Carl Rogers calls the "actualizing tendency" (Rogers [1980] 1995: 118). This is the natural longing towards growth and self-development at the core of each human being, according to Rogers. Even more precisely, Victor Frankl has described the way people can voluntarily choose the best options, whatever may happen, in his book *Man's Search for Meaning*, an account of his struggles for survival in extermination camps during WW2. The following passage embodies very well what Ikeda means by the capacity for Self-Transformation:

(...) "Saying yes to life in spite of everything," (...) presupposes that life is potentially meaningful under any conditions, even those which are most miserable. And this in turn presupposes the human capacity to creatively turn life's negative aspects into something positive or constructive. In other words, what matters is to make the best of any given situation (Frankl [1959] 2006: 137).

However, even the loftiest self-transformation would not be very useful for world peace if it were not communicated. The second step in Ikeda's philosophy of peace is

therefore dialogue. German philosopher Jurgen Habermas comes very close to Ikeda's theory of dialogue with his concept of "communicative rationality." Simplified to the utmost, Habermas's concept can be described as a desire to meet people, to get to know them and to acknowledge their humanity using language and communication. The reverse is called "purposive (or instrumental) rationality," when we use words to manipulate, influence or otherwise make people fulfill our own needs.

A word of caution might be necessary here, since it might be impossible to survive by exclusively using communicative rationality. Indeed, to take a down-to-earth example, if one goes shopping for food, with an exclusive emphasis on communicative rationality through exchanges recognizing the humanity of the shopkeepers, one will end up bringing nothing home. Some amount of purposive rationality is necessary in our daily interactions if we want to accomplish anything. What matters, nevertheless, is to be aware of the difference between the two uses of language, and to try to always include some communicative rationality in one's exchanges. Martin Buber described the same dichotomy when he distinguished between "I-It" and "I-Thou" relationships (Buber 1996). It is worth noting that both Habermas and Buber appear in Ikeda's writings.

In *The Theory of Communicative Action* (1984) Habermas wrote in favor of "a wider concept of rationality connected with ancient conceptions of the logos. This concept of communicative rationality carries with it connotations based ultimately on the central experience of the unconstrained, unifying, consensus-bringing force of argumentative speech" (Habermas 1984: 10).

He further recommends the "consensus-bringing force of argumentative speech" in the same work, believing that the main motivation behind dialogue should always be a "cooperative search for the truth" (emphasis added):

Participants in argumentation have to presuppose in general that the structure of their communication (...) excludes all force (...) except the force of the better argument (and thus that it also excludes, on their part, all motives except that of a *cooperative search for the truth*). From this perspective argumentation can be conceived as a reflective continuation, with different means, of action oriented to reaching understanding (Habermas 1984: 25).

Remarkably, former Iranian President Mohammad Khatami has formulated a similar vision in his speech delivered at Florence University on 10 March 1999:

Seeing is done through the "I", and the "universe and mankind" arise from seeing and the subject of seeing. However, "speaking" and "listening" are a

two-dimensional -- or multidimensional -- effort aimed at coming closer to the truth and arriving at understanding.

It is for this reason that "dialogue" pertains neither to skeptics, nor does it belong to those who believe the truth to lie solely within their own claws and under their own domination. Rather, understanding reveals its beautiful, albeit veiled countenance, only to the wayfarers of the path whose followers travel hand in hand, and in step with each other (The Iranian 1999).

To sum up the account of Ikeda's philosophy offered so far, the journey towards peace starts with personal Self-Transformation sustained by efforts to generate courage, wisdom and compassion, then expands through Dialogue, characterized by genuine attempts to bring out the best in self and others, and as these dialogues spread throughout society, they can constitute the basis of a more humane global governance. To mention Habermas again, he clarified the concept of "deliberative democracy" which explains the articulation between localized dialogues and the development of better governance. It is essential to discuss, to deliberate and to have dialogues if one is to establish a political system where the voices of all people can be heard. In a dictatorship, there is no need for deliberative democracy.

For Ikeda, the third step, the construction of a humane Global Civilization, is based on the ideal of a flexible system with the UN at its center, that allows individuals, organizations, peoples, NGOs, state and non-state actors, and all other types of groups at all levels of governance to have a voice in the political process. In his 2009 Peace Proposal, Ikeda suggested the creation of a "Department of Global Visioning," and also of the post of "under-secretary general for relations between NGOs and the UN" (Ikeda 2009).

I would like to argue even further that besides the legislative, judiciary and executive powers, a fourth power should be added, namely the "consultative power," that could be institutionally represented by such a "department of global visioning," a concerted effort to collect the opinions of NGOs, non-state organizations, transnational bodies, and all actors of society. The closest description of this ideal Global Civilization I have found in Western writings is that provided by Daniele Archibugi who argues in favor of the concept of "Cosmopolitan Democracy." Here we must be careful not to confuse matters, because the 2001-2009 US administration has given a very bad name to the word "democracy" during the eight years that they were given by US voters. To put it graphically, countless Iraqi children, women and men, people like you and I, have been slaughtered since the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003, all this, according to official discourse, for the sake of *democracy* and freedom. The same words have been used to justify the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan and its subsequent occupation. I would like to argue that this is an inaccurate use of very

important words, and that what was actually meant was complete *domination and hegemony*, not *democracy*. It is therefore crucial to clarify what we mean by democracy.

Here I will use Archibugi's definition in his recent work entitled *The Global Commonwealth of Citizens: Toward Cosmopolitan Democracy*. For him democracy is characterized by three main features, nonviolence, popular control and political equality. Taking the liberty to simplify these three concepts, I would say they can be explained in the following way. *Nonviolence* means that in order to change our governments, we debate and we vote, but we do not hurt or kill each other. *Popular control* is linked to transparency, and it means that once our political representatives have been elected, we have the power to check what they are doing and we can make sure they fulfill their duties. Third, *political equality* means that every adult has the right to vote, without any discrimination based on gender, social status, ethnic background or other characteristics. Of course these three attributes are ideal, and even in the most prosperous democracies, political debates can turn verbally violent, elected politicians can betray the public's trust without being caught, and some people are denied the right to vote. In particular, one must ask why children and adolescents should not have any voice in the political process. It is perhaps more realistic to talk about different degrees of democracy, with the three ideals of nonviolence, popular control and political equality as points of reference.

To illustrate, let us take a look at the decisional and political processes leading to the invasion of Iraq. This constitutes a good example of what Archibugi calls "democratic schizophrenia," when a country applies one set of principles domestically, but acts in just the opposite way when it comes to its foreign policy.

In contrast, both Archibugi and Ikeda call for a strengthening and reform of the UN that would allow it to play its role of facilitator of a truly democratic, peaceful and harmonious global community. As public opinion was entertaining legitimate doubts concerning the capacity of the UN to fulfill its mission, due to failures in the former Yugoslavia, in Rwanda and elsewhere, Ikeda reaffirmed his enthusiasm for the world body in his 2004 Peace Proposal:

There are, in certain quarters, persistent questions about the effectiveness or even necessity of the UN. Some aspects of the organization as it stands may indeed be incompatible with the realities of today's world. But with 191 member states, there is no organization more universal than the UN; it is the only body that can truly serve as a foundation for and give legitimacy to international cooperation. In the absence of a realistic alternative, the best course is to strengthen it and make it more effective (2004 PP: 30).

In the same spirit, Archibugi expresses his conviction that the UN deserves our support:

An examination has been made [in this book] of the prospect of reforming the UN, an issue that has been on the agenda for all the sixty years of the organization's life without any significant change being introduced yet. However, the UN, the most ambitious and wide-ranging international organization, must be the pivot of a new multilateralism that is able more decisively to incorporate the basic principles of democracy that are encapsulated in the values of nonviolence, public control and political equality. Many actions can be undertaken to allow the UN and its specialized agencies to govern globalization in a more effective, participatory and transparent fashion (Archibugi 2008: 281).

To summarize, Ikeda's philosophy of peace can be described as a three-step approach that starts with the Self-Transformation of an individual (close to Roger's humanistic psychology, and Frankl's existential psychology), spreads through Dialogue (understood as a means to bring out the best in oneself and others, as described by Habermas and Buber), and is reflected in the development of a Global Civilization characterized by the type of cosmopolitan democracy Archibugi recommends as most conducive to peace.

Can this model be useful for the Alliance of Civilizations, in Asia-Pacific and beyond? Let us go back to an item described in the Alliance's mission statement, which was a recommendation to become: "A **bridge builder and convener**, (...) particularly - but not exclusively - between Muslim and Western societies; (...)." Let us take the examples of the EU, a typically Western construction, and Indonesia, the country with the largest Muslim population in the world. From data readily available, it appears that in both those political entities,

- People strive for self-transformation, bringing out courage, wisdom and compassion every day through their respective spiritual or philosophical traditions,
- People attempt to hold dialogues in order to bring out the best in themselves and others,
- The political system is geared towards creating as much well-being for its citizens as possible, and to take Archibugi's description, it is striving towards a maximum of nonviolence, popular control and political equality. Moreover both the EU countries and Indonesia has been active members and supporters of the UN, favoring a model of global governance very similar to Ikeda's concept of Global Civilization.

It seems that in the case of the EU and Indonesia, DIPP provides a humanistic framework that can be accepted by both. It would be interesting to research how this normative framework can be applied in the case of China, African countries, the Middle-East, and other parts of the world. It is argued that most elements of DIPP have universal validity and that it can constitute a useful and positive consensus-building theoretical framework.

Conclusion

The Report of the High-level Group of the Alliance of Civilizations of 13 November 2006 (HLG Report 2006) contains many useful suggestions, guiding principles and recommendations, as well as a contribution by Andre Azoulay (senior advisor to King Mohammed VI of Morocco) and Hubert Vedrine (French foreign minister 1997-2002) concerning the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

A brief textual analysis of this report shows that the members of the AOC are fully aware of the challenges brought by globalization, as well as of the crucial importance of a more effective and humane global governance in attempting to counter its most negative effects. It also reveals that the three steps of Daisaku Ikeda's philosophy of peace can be found throughout the proposals of the 2006 Report and do constitute a highly compatible framework.

The challenges brought by globalization are outlined in article 3.2:

In social, political and economic terms, the West is both driving globalization and yet seemingly threatened by some of its trends. Western powers maintain overwhelming political, economic, and military power in the world, including disproportionate influence in multilateral political and economic bodies. Porous borders, mounting population flows from poor to rich countries, un-integrated immigrant communities and cross-border spillovers of economic, environmental, health and even physical security factors have highlighted both the interdependence of societies and widening gaps between them.

The report emphasizes the necessity of improving global governance, in ways that point to the Global Civilization envisioned by Ikeda. For instance, article 2.2 says that "An increasingly interdependent and globalized world can be regulated only through the rule of law and an effective multilateral system with the United Nations system at its core." Moreover article 2.7 states the following:

Democratic governance that is representative of citizens and responsive to their needs and aspirations provides the most effective means for individuals to achieve their full potential. To be successful, democratic systems must emerge organically from within each society's culture, reflecting its shared values and adapted to the needs and interests of its citizens. This is only possible when people are free and feel in control of their destiny.

Article 5.11 mentions the necessity to strengthen and reform the UN system:

As noted throughout this report, many of the problems facing the international community can only be addressed effectively within a multilateral framework. It is therefore incumbent upon states to reinforce multilateral institutions—particularly the United Nations—and to support reform efforts that will strengthen the capacity and performance of these institutions.

As can be expected, the word "dialogue" appears frequently, as for instance in these key passages: "Establishing coherent integration strategies requires regular dialogue among representatives of government and immigrant communities, civil society representatives, religious organizations and employers, engaging at local, regional, national and international levels" (6.22). The following passage affirms the centrality of dialogue in the work of the UNAOC: "(...) the need to build bridges between societies, to promote dialogue and understanding and to forge the collective political will to address the world's imbalances has never been greater. This urgent task constitutes the *raison d'etre* of the Alliance of Civilizations" (1.4).

Of the three qualities recommended by Ikeda as essential for self-transformation (courage, wisdom and compassion), two appear in the report, namely compassion and courage. The first one can be found in the two following passages (emphasis added): "It is imperative to recognize that none of the world religions condones or approves the killing of innocents. All promote the ideals of *compassion*, justice and respect for the dignity of life (3.11)." Also "Not only citizens and religious leaders but the whole society needs a basic understanding of religious traditions other than their own and the core teachings of *compassion* that are common to all religions (6.8)."

Courage appears in the specific context of the protracted conflict in the Middle-East (emphasis added): "Achieving a just and sustainable solution to this conflict requires *courage* and a bold vision of the future on the part of Israelis, Palestinians and all countries capable of influencing the situation" (5.4).

The third quality, wisdom, does not appear as such, but its opposite, "ignorance," is denounced as one of the major factors preventing genuine dialogue, in article 6.1 (emphasis added):

(...) we recognize that mutual fear, suspicion, and *ignorance* across cultures has spread beyond the level of political leadership into the hearts and minds of populations-so much so that the notion that there are essential and irreconcilable differences between cultures and religions now arises regularly as an explanation for a range of cultural and political conflicts. This disturbing phenomenon must be addressed pragmatically.

This passage also confirms the importance of the first step in DIPP, namely Self-Transformation. If such destructive elements as "mutual fear, suspicion, and ignorance" have entered into "the hearts and minds of populations," that is to say in the deepest psychological recesses of countless ordinary people, it is only through personal self-reformation that those negative tendencies can be challenged and that courage, wisdom and compassion can prevail.

In this paper, I have tried to argue that any attempt to create a meaningful Alliance of Civilizations in Asia-Pacific will have to take into account the overall context of global governance. I have also attempted to show that Daisaku Ikeda's philosophy of peace offered a framework that can be appealing to people in all cultures and civilizations, and that it is highly compatible with the methods and goals of the UNAOC. It should be noted that Ikeda has promoted friendship and collaboration in a major part of the Asia-Pacific region, namely East Asia, at least since 1968 when he gave his famous declaration in favor of the inclusion of China in the UN, and for the normalization of the ties between China and Japan. As he mentioned in his 2008 Peace Proposal:

It has been four decades since I first called for the normalization of Sino-Japanese relations, and I welcome with deep gratification the significant steps that China and Japan have taken toward building a solid partnership for the peace, security and development of Asia and the world. (...) It is my conviction that if China, South Korea and Japan, together with ASEAN, continue to make tenacious efforts toward cooperation and coordination, it will be possible to consolidate the enduring infrastructures for peace in East Asia (2008 PP: 35-36).

In order to find effective solutions to the global issues that threaten the survival of humanity and of most of the biosphere today, I believe it is time for us to pool the great wisdom found in all civilizations, and to agree on a universal program towards the construction of a peaceful and harmonious global civilization. This would enable us to move towards a world where the Alliance of Civilizations, as well as the alliance and harmonious cooperation and mutual support between nations, between peoples, between people, and between humans and all other inhabitants of the Earth, will allow life on our planet to flourish.

Notes

Capital Letters

The three concepts of Self-Transformation, Dialogue and Global Civilization are capitalized when they refer to Ikeda's three main ideas at the basis of his three-step approach.

List of Abbreviations

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
HLG	High Level Group
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICJ	International Court of Justice
IMF	International Monetary Fund
UN	United Nations (also in all the following abbreviations)
UNAOC	UN Alliance of Civilizations
UNDP	UN Development Program
UNEP	UN Environmental Program
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGA	UN General Assembly
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

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The Alliance of Civilisations: diversity and creativity of Southeast Asia

Isao Takagi

Professor, Department of Economics
Vice-Director, the Center for Asian Economic Studies, Soka University

- I . Introduction
- II . Cultural diversity and complexity of Southeast Asia
- III . ASEAN formation and intra-regional and external threats and opportunities
- IV . ASEAN Community formation and its socio-cultural dimension
- V . Conclusion: the idea of "harmonized diversity"

I . Introduction

In the global age, we are exposed to economic, political and environmental threats as well as opportunities, regardless of the differences in nationality, language, and civilisation. Provided that the opportunities and risks of globalization are allocated unequally and unfairly, dynamic interactions in the world-wide struggle over wealth and powers are inclined to cause frictions or disputes among nations, classes, races, regional habitants and so on.

Those contradictions and frictions among peoples are often reduced into the difference in race, religion, and culture/civilisation. Such a cultural/civilisation reductionist approach to the international and domestic conflicts easily is applied to produce a divided world view of "We-self" and "They-other" with different identity of religion, race, and culture.

We have to go beyond separatism driven by a specific symbol such as religion, culture, and ethnicity/nation. In particular, the dichotomous separatism or reductionism takes a concrete example in the view on the divided world by Christianity and Islam. The concept of the "Dialogue of Civilisations" and the "Alliance of Civilisations" is a reflection of the effort to exceed the idea of the confrontation and friction among civilizations, races, and religions, and rather to construct a bridge of dialogue and mutual understanding between different

civilisations.

The paper will be focused on some lessons and suggestions which the experiences of Southeast Asia can provide for the "Alliance of Civilisations" in Asia-Pacific.

Why is Southeast Asia significant and relevant in considering the Alliance of Civilisations? Southeast Asia is a region of diversity and uniqueness, particularly in terms of culture, religion, ethnicity, language, and historical experience. Because of its coherent complexity and diversity, Southeast Asia has been keeping orientation and making efforts towards coexistence and coordination of different cultures, religions, ethnicities and languages in both national and region-wide level. Southeast Asia is regarded as an epitome of Asia-Pacific and the world characterized by resonance and friction of civilisations.

II. Cultural diversity and complexity of Southeast Asia

The region is geographically composed of the islands part and continent part, and just located between the two historical great powers and civilisations, China and India, and linking the two oceans, Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean. Before the Western colonization, in the period during from the 15th to 17th Century, Southeast Asia formed the nucleus in the Asian trading sphere, which was a most prosperous and active trading zone in the world economy (Reid 1988).

This geographical location and external civilisation environments naturally make Southeast Asia a place of encountering where various kinds of peoples, cultures and religions meet together. The region is continuously and ceaselessly exposed to external influences and impacts as well as intra-regional interactions, which leads Southeast Asia to the region with a unique mixture of colorful cultures and religions.

The region, where various kinds of animism basically has been developed, accepts most of world religions, that is, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity and the external ethnic religions like Hinduism and Confucianism. Southeast Asian cultural structure is a multi-layered and diversified one (see Table 1).

Base-layered cultures are characterized by religiously animism and a way of life adjusting to ecological and natural environments. Around the 2nd century Southeast Asia accepted Indian civilisation and partly Chinese civilisation, and since the 13th century Islamic civilization in the islands part of Southeast has started. From the 16th and intensely in the 19th century Western powers colonized the



Table 1 Cultural structure of Southeast Asia

region. In the latter half of the 20th century decolonization and the era of modern nation-states building are experienced.

The ten countries consist of the region. In the continent part, there are Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar. In the islands part, there are Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Brunei. All Southeast Asian countries except Thailand were colonized by the Western powers. Every Western colonial power carved each cultural and civilisation influence for each country of Southeast Asia.

Table 2 shows schematically diversity and complexity of Southeast Asian civilisation. Every Southeast Asian country has historically a complex and diverse civilisation/cultural background and experience of colonization by Western powers.

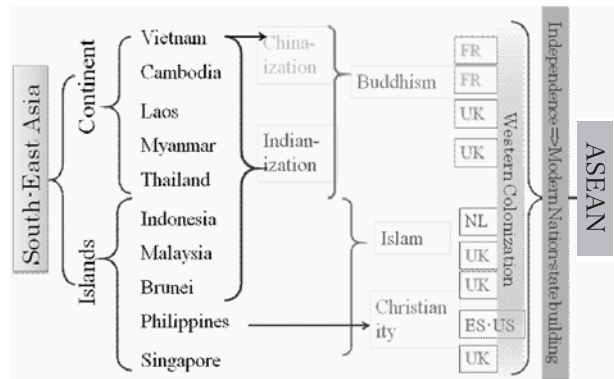


Table 2 External Civilisations, Colonization, and Modern nation-state building and ASEAN formation

*FR: France, UK: United Kingdom, NL: Netherlands, ES: Spain, US: United States of America

III. ASEAN formation and intra-regional and external threats and opportunities

Every developing country generally, since its independence from the colonized system, has been facing a difficulty of defining national borders and settling border conflicts, as well as a dilemma between achieving national integration and securing tolerance and coordination among different races, religions and languages. A process of modern nation-state building is apt to reinforce its exclusive tendency and forces to unify various cultures and languages into one nation and one culture forcefully, which consequently causes serious domestic frictions and conflicts with neighbor countries.

To form a western-style nation-state is to demarcate the national border, thereby making a "geo-body" of sovereign nation-state. Thus the region decides its own geographical territory, within which national sovereignty is effective and invasion will not be tolerated. However, this most concrete aspect of forming a national geo-body inevitably creates the concomitant task of delineating a cultural and racial border, or making a "We-self" and "They-other"(Winichakul 1996: 84-5). After World War II, in the decolonization and independence process, Southeast Asia was inevitably placed in the unstable and liquid political situation caused by nation-state building efforts. This came alongside the direct and indirect effect of the external political environment, including the antagonistic ideological and political regimes

represented by the superpowers, Europe, and China.

The formation process of the Federation of Malaysia sharply illustrates the above example. It is noteworthy that the birth of ASEAN was directly brought about in the controversial and settlement process of political reorganization in maritime Southeast Asia, which was triggered by the formation of the Federation of Malaysia (Yamakage 1991: 22-122; Anwar 1994: 17-58; Chalmers 1996: 18-9).

As being shown in the case of establishing process of Malaysia in the early 1960s, Southeast Asian countries also have been straggling with the difficulties of how to establish a modern nation-state while coordinating intra-regional relationships and coping with external threats. The region countries have forged out consequently a unique "regional nation-states system", that is, ASEAN.ⁱ ASEAN formation had given Southeast Asian countries an initial and indispensable condition for seeking to build a "nation-state" for the one hand and enabling to coexist with intra-regional neighbors for the other hand.

The intra-regional diplomatic negotiations and exchanges between the government leaders were frequently held to settle the conflicts and disputes around the new Federation formation, as well as the subsequent Indonesian confrontation policy. This established the ground to discuss and settle regional problems by the region's own efforts, and ultimately grouped government leaders for the new regional organization.ⁱⁱ These regional and diplomatic functional networks among governments can be regarded as a "proto-ASEAN regime" in terms of the ASEAN nation-states system (Takagi 1997:9-10).

ASEAN's function and system of avoiding armed conflict and adopting pacific settlement between member-states was realized gradually, bringing about ASEAN political and security cooperation as reflected in the Bangkok Declaration in 1967, the ZOPFAN Declaration in 1971 and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia in 1976.

Externally ASEAN formation had changed Southeast Asia as a geographical concept into as a political existence and enabled the region countries to make regional

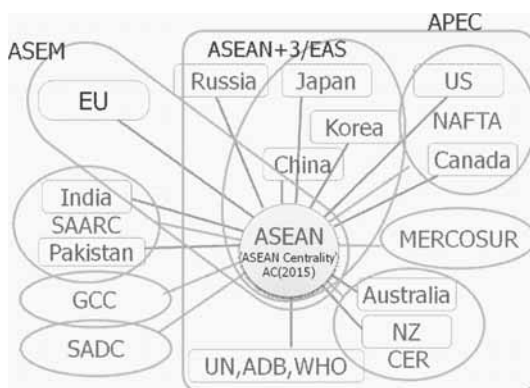


Table 3 ASEAN's Multi-regional and Institutional Dialogue networks

interests reflect in international arenas and negotiations. We should note that this most complex and diverse Southeast Asia is the most active in Asia in making an effort to coordinate and cooperate together. ASEAN has interwoven unique external dialogue and cooperation networks with Australia, New Zealand, the US, Canada, Japan, Korea and China, Russia, the EU, and, of course, India and Pakistan, and, moreover, International

organizations like UNDP, ADB, and so on (see Table 3).

Those international dialogue and cooperation networks enable ASEAN countries to create economically and politically favorable circumstances for ASEAN and to positive participation in world economic negotiations in the Global age.

"ASEANization" of Southeast Asia can be understood as an achievement from the desire and will for coexistence, independence and prosperity commonly shared by the diverse and relatively smaller region countries.

IV. ASEAN Community formation and its socio-cultural dimension

At the 12th ASEAN Summit in January 2007, the ASEAN leaders signed the Cebu Declaration on the Acceleration of the Establishment of an ASEAN Community by 2015.

ASEAN Community should be supported by the three integral pillars as shown in Table 4, that is, the ASEAN Economic Community, the ASEAN Security Community and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community.

ASEAN has also launched to work for the establishment of the ASEAN Charter, which would provide a solid legal and institutional foundation for ASEAN to be a more rules-based, effective and people-centered organization. The Charter would be indispensable for the realization of ASEAN Community among the member-countries and all the peoples in the region as well. ASEAN celebrated the entry into force of the ASEAN Charter at the 14th Summit meeting on 15 December 2008.

Facing the opportunities and risks of global political economy, ASEAN, comprising relatively small and medium scale countries, has no way but accelerating its economic integration process for economic prosperity, that is, the formation of ASEAN Economic Community, as well as securing regional peace and political stability, that is, the establishment of the ASEAN Security Community. Those economic integration and specifically security cooperation have been receiving a lot of efforts and interests of the member-countries. However, the dimension of socio-cultural cooperation, which was called as "functional cooperation" formerly,

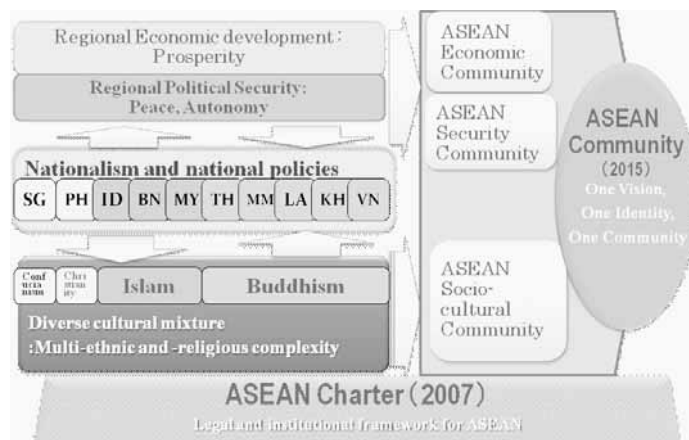


Table 4 ASEAN Community formation and ASEAN Diversity

*SG: Singapore, PH: the Philippines, ID: Indonesia, BN: Brunei, MY: Malaysia, TH: Thailand
MM: Myanmar, LA: Laos, KH: Cambodia, VN: Vietnam

has not been receiving a higher priority than the other two areas. It could be said that ASEAN still remains an organization not for the peoples but for the member-state governments and bureaucrats.

In the ASEAN Charter, ASEAN noted as its one of purposes to promote "a people-oriented ASEAN in which all sectors of society are encouraged to participate in, and benefit from" the ASEAN Community building, and to promote "ASEAN identity through the fostering of greater awareness of the diverse culture and heritage of the region" (ASEAN Secretariat 2007). The Charter also declares as one of the fundamental principles "respect for the different cultures, languages and religions of the people of ASEAN, while emphasizing their common values in the spirit of unity in diversity" (ASEAN Secretariat 2007). Moreover, ASEAN also takes as ASEAN Charter's motto "One Vision, One Identity, One Community" (ASEAN Secretariat 2007).

These purposes and principles of the ASEAN Charter would be ultimately realized by cooperative efforts in the socio-political dimension of ASEAN Community idea (see Table 4).

V. Conclusion: the idea of "harmonized diversity"

ASEAN should keep itself as a tolerant container in which various civilisations coexist like a mosaic and a unique mixture of civilizations is brought up. Otherwise, diversity ASEAN could not be effective and significant for the member-countries and peoples. ASEAN governments and peoples need to nurture and forge a philosophy and an attitude to enable them to accommodate ethnic identity, national identity, and ASEAN identity together.

Put it briefly, it is an idea of "harmonized diversity" or "harmony of diversity"

Let me introduce the following humanistic approach and attitude advocated by Dr. Daisaku Ikeda, SGI president and Soka University Founder (Ikeda 2005).

"Recognizing that all is change within a framework of interdependence, we of course see harmony and oneness as expressions of our interconnectedness. But we can even appreciate contradiction and conflict in the same way. Thus the struggle against evil—a struggle that issues from the inner effort to master our own contradictions and conflicts—should be seen as a difficult yet unavoidable trial that we must undergo in the effort to create a greater and deeper sense of connection."

His humanistic philosophy is characterized by the view on the world as a dynamic interconnected relationship which is created by every all existence and all phenomenon and simultaneously creates every all existence and all phenomenon. Even contradiction and conflict as well as unity and harmony could be seen "as

expressions of our interconnectedness", and should be understood as "a difficult yet unavoidable trial that we must undergo in the effort to create a greater and deeper sense of connection."

This philosophy of interdependence and interconnectedness will be helpful and indispensable for ASEAN leaders and peoples in working together for establishing ASEAN Community.

Lastly let me close this paper by sharing an excerpt of the poetry which Dr. Ikeda, World People's Poet, presented to the peoples of Malaysia, a multi-racial country and one of Southeast Asian countries (Ikeda 1988a)

The "harmony of diversity" —
This guideline of yours
Is the source of creative energy,
Whether in nature or in human society.

Imagine a seven-colored child's top
— red, blue, yellow, green ... even purple —
Spinning faster and faster;
These colors blend and merge,
Approaching one single,
Yet infinitely beautiful tone.

The colors of the spinning top
Are the diversity of nature and society,
And the final single tint
Is the mystic beauty
Of harmonized diversity.

And the top's rapid spin —
This, my dear Malaysian friends,
Is your spirit of construction;
Your resolve to win;
Your untiring, devoted effort;
Continuous from yesterday to today,
From today toward tomorrow.

Notes

- i) The emergence and development of European nation-states has been accompanied with the creation of a "European nation-states system", which enables them to coexist and balance one another. The European nation-state model, called "classical nationalism" by Murakami, is constituted by two indispensable factors, that is (1) nation-state itself and (2) nation-states system (Murakami 1992: 82-5; Murakami 1996: 31-3). These two requisites are

interdependent and indispensable to each other. The reason why European classical nation-states have been sustainable is that nation-states system has been operating as an international system which not only allowed but also restricted individual nation-states' claims to enable them to coexist. However, when the western nation-state model is transferred into non-western areas, the other crucial factor of "nation-states system" has been overlooked or ignored. Without a nation-states system, a nation-state could not be restricted or settled in a coexistent environment. Murakami calls the nationalism without nation-states system "ingenuous nationalism" (or "naïve nationalism"), while the nationalism with a nation-states system he calls "systematized nationalism" or "systemic nationalism." In the case of Southeast Asia, ASEAN can be regarded as a "Southeast Asian nation-states system"(Takagi 1997:2-5).

- ii) We should not take a view that ASEAN was formed as an anticommunist organization in the antagonistic power politics between capitalism and communism. It would be partially right that, as many studies pointed out, the threat of internal and external communist invasion was the main driving force bringing about ASEAN. However, this view overly-simplifies the regional and national political, economic and social situations under which the Southeast Asian countries were placed. At the same time by this viewpoint there is no consideration of the subjective and internal logic and ideas of Southeast Asian nationalism in and of itself.

The communist movement, effected and supported by Communist China, was, to be sure, one of the upheaval factors in the Southeast Asian nation-building process. However, in the same way or even in a more crucial one, the domestic fears of racial disputes, the uncertainty of governing legitimacy caused by political separatism and economic failures, and the conflicts over territorial disputes with emerging neighbor states were also pressing threats. Managerial capabilities over such difficulties were required for modern nationalist governments of all the regional states. Setting the communist threat in the above context of nation-state building, it is understandable why ASEAN governments cooperated together after the formation of ASEAN towards the elimination of the communist movement as one of the common threats all of them faced.

We should pay more attention to the historical relationships and background between Southeast Asian nationalisms and ASEAN formation. The most positive driving force and structure compelling the regional states to explore the formation of regional political frameworks stems from two trends. First were the intra-regional conflicts and territorial decisions among the nation-states, that is, deciding territoriality or "geo-body" of the state, which is an indispensable and inherent element of the western nation-state model. Second was the external vulnerability or domestic disintegration, both of which easily invited the possibility of neighbors' and extra-regional interventions (Takagi 1997:5-12).

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The Alliance of Civilizations: Political Perspective of Regional Integration

Yasukuni Enoki

Mar. 23 2009,

Former Ambassador to India / Counselor of Mitsui & Co. LTD

Diversity of APR

When we deliberate on today's topic, "The Alliance of Civilizations in the Asian and Pacific Region", we have to start with this region's outstanding feature, diversity.

The diversity means, first of all, a cultural diversity. The APR embraces five major civilizations, namely Hindu, Chinese, Islam, Japanese and Western Christianity, out of total eight civilizations of the world as listed by Prof. Samuel Huntington in his work, "The Clash of Civilizations". Quite different from Europe or North America, no single civilization is predominant in this region. Instead, in the APR several civilizations coexist basically in a harmonious manner.

In the second place, an absence of shared historical memories among countries in the region has intensified the diversity. There were, of course, some exceptions such as the expansion of Mongolian Empire in the 13th century or the invasion of western colonial powers in the 19th century which affected more or less almost every countries of the region. Otherwise we can very hardly recognize Asian-wide common historical background.

Thirdly, even during the Cold War period, political regimes of countries in the region were so diversified among the Democratic Camp, the Socialist Camp and also the Nonalignment. A sizable presence of non-alignment countries such as India and Indonesia features APR political scene, which is different from Europe and North America.

Latest developments toward the restructuring of a new Asian order

Despite such a vast diversity, the APR has been experiencing over last decade a couple of new developments which require the restructuring of a new regional order.

The first development is merger of socialist countries in the AP regional cooperation after the end of the cold war. China has transformed its economic policy into a market oriented economy, which lead an opening of its market to the world. Former Indochina socialist countries LCV have acceded to ASEAN, leading to ASEAN 10. A shift of Indian diplomacy from a leader of Non-alignment to more pragmatic and business oriented diplomacy has also accelerated a regional integration process.

Secondly, an emergence of China and India is changing a total picture of the region. This also contributes to the creation of new powerful engines toward a regional integration.

In the third place, we have witnessed remarkable development of de facto economic regional integration, starting from so-called flying wild geese development headed by Japan as well as the integration of former socialist countries into APR economy and now leading to very extensive networking of FTAs.

The architecture of APR in the 21th Century

Facing with such a rapid change of paradigm, what should we do now? Europe has been forging a new post-cold war order with EU as its core institution. A structure of North America is always rather simple, namely relations between one Super Power and two junior partners.

In contrast, APR has yet no clear picture for the 21th century order. Thus, the reality is that we have to start with very preliminary stage to form a common platform to architect a new APR blue print. A current state of affairs is that the following three major players are taking an initiative respectively to build a platform of consultation and dialogue. Though APEC is already well established forum, this forum will not be discussed here because of its Pan-Pacific wide geographic coverage rather than APR.

The first group is ASEAN which initiated "ASEAN plus 3", the "East Asia Summit" as well as ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). China is also initiating such fora as the "Shanghai Cooperation Organization" and the "Tripartite Foreign Ministers Dialogue" with India and Russia. Japan and US are taking an initiative to form the "Tripartite FMs' Dialogue" with Australia. PM Mr. Abe proposed a new Quadripartite FMs' Dialogue including US, Australia and India which is not yet realized. In the second truck other than G-to-G level, the Tripartite dialogue among Japan, US and India have been successfully undertaken more than twice.

Divergent stance on some core issues detected through architectural exercise

Thus several dialogue fora are already operating parallel. Through these exercises, certain numbers of obstacles for architectural work are identified. Likewise, divergence of respective country's stance upon principle matters for a regional integration is also interestingly manifested to the public. This may demonstrate again the cultural and philosophical diversity of the region.

As for obstacles for architectural work, three points should be underlined. First, uncertainty of China's future direction makes our work difficult. For instance, China's democratization scenario is still unpredictable. Her defense policy bolstered by huge increase of its defense budget, two digit percentage annual increase over last 21 years, is not transparent to the outside world.

Secondly, the legacy of the Cold War still remains in such hot spots as the Korean Peninsula, Taiwan and Kashmir. These unsettled conflicting issues constitute an obstacle for architecting the regional future picture.

In the third place, an absence of a consolidated regional security dialogue is delaying the future projection. Though ASEAN's initiative to host the ARF is highly appreciated as a place for an informal exchange of information, this forum is not institutionalized enough to create a security framework for confidence building.

Now I wish to turn to another topic, "Divergence of stance". First, regarding the human rights and democracy, there are two schools of thoughts among member countries. One group including Japan and Australia has a firm belief that these are universal values which everyone should respect and protect. Other is of the view that there should be some Asian way of democracy other than the "western style".

Secondly, as for a basic philosophy of the regional integration, one school supports the concept of an "Open Regionalism" extensive over the geographical boundary, while other has a strong preference to confine membership to the countries of the region. This difference of approach among countries concerned was manifestly observed in the preparatory stage for establishing the "East Asia Summit".

Thirdly, a thought how to keep a distance with US differs from one country to another. Those countries, which are US allies such as Japan, Australia and Korea, are of the firm view that US presence in the region is indispensable for the stability of the entire region. On the other hand, there exist countries which have some reservation with the US presence in the region and prefer to a multi-polar world rather than an uni-polar structure.

Regional cooperation

As shown in my rough sketch above, the process of the region's architecture is still going on. However, any attempts of regional cooperation should not wait for the

accomplishment of architecture exercise. Conversely, we have already a rich stock of fruits resulted from intensive regional cooperation. The most outstanding example may be various kind of cooperation within the "ASEAN plus 3" framework. Marking its first summit level meeting in 1997, this forum has 12 year history. The number of regional cooperation projects under this banner already reaches 48 across 17 fields. Chiang-Mai Initiative creating a regional financial safety network is one of its most visible achievements. The deepening of discussions about a proposed East Asia FTA idea can be considered as another example. It was also agreed at the 3rd EAS in 2007 to establish ERIA, the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia, which was proposed by Japan as an Asian version of OECD.

Soka University Peace Research Institute

Tangi-machi 1-236, Hachioji, Tokyo

192-8577 Japan

Tel/Fax: 042-691-5333

<http://www.supri.jp>