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**ASEAN-JAPAN SECURITY COOPERATION:
SPECIFIC FOCUS ON VIETNAM AND INDONESIA CASES**

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This thesis titled: **"ASEAN-JAPAN SECURITY COOPERATION: SPECIFIC FOCUS ON VIETNAM AND INDONESIA CASES"** is hereby accepted by the Faculty of Management and Development Studies, U.P. Open University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of ASEAN Studies.

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Biographical Sketch

My undergraduate education and research experience had a strong background in political science and international relations. I was honored as the top student at my university.

As a security expert in the South Caucasus, Caspian Sea, and West Asia, I collaborated with several think tanks in Canada and England to conduct research on threats to regional security and methods for regional security cooperation. This resulted in the publication of over 80 articles in the *Kayhan London Journal*, as well as multiple invitations by the Voice of America for interviews about regional challenges.

Later, I focused my graduate studies on South East Asia, pursuing ASEAN Studies at UPOU. My long-term research interests in ASEAN and regional security cooperation are focused on acquiring a comprehensive understanding of the fundamental mechanisms for security cooperation implemented by ASEAN and ASEAN states, as well as how rivalry between the United States and China affects security cooperation among ASEAN members and Japan.

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My special appreciation cannot go to anyone else other than my family who had been endlessly supportive and consoling throughout my journey.

Finally, I express my gratitude to my late mother for always convincing me of the value of knowledge and a positive attitude. This prompts me to pursue a lifelong learning and attempt to be of value to myself, my family, my community.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my wife and children who have supported me throughout my education. Thank you for making me see this adventure through the end.

Abstract

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has emerged as a significant, successful regional organization that aims to promote peace and stability in Southeast Asia since its formation on August 8, 1967 (Mahiwo, 2013). After the ASEAN Charter was adopted in 2007, "One Vision, One Identity, One Community" became the organization's official motto. This study examines the cases of Japan-Vietnam and Japan-Indonesia cooperation within the context of ASEAN's security cooperation for the purpose of illustration.

From the 1950s through the 1980s, Southeast Asians worried that Japan was attempting to dominate the region and saw Japan's defense capabilities as a sign of the resurgence of militarism. However, the majority of ASEAN countries today appear to support Japan's contributions to regional and global security. As a result, enhancing their strategic and security cooperation with Japan in the new period will be extremely beneficial to both the ASEAN and Japan (ASEAN Secretariat, 2019). Japan is particularly interested in enhancing security cooperation with ASEAN, and its strategy is multi-layered and multi-dimensional, with its bilateral and multilateral engagements increasingly diversified.

The overseeing of security cooperation between its members and with outside major powers, especially Japan, is the responsibility of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Japan is stepping up security cooperation with ASEAN and member countries to counter China's behaviour. The literature on Japan and ASEAN also provides credence to the notion that Japan is becoming recognized for its objectives by other

nations through cooperation with regional organizations and bilateral relations. It is further supported by original source documents from ASEAN, ASEAN forums, Indonesia, and Vietnam, all of which identify North Korean missile and nuclear activity as a source of instability in the region. This study emphasizes that due to the changing international balance of power, enhancing ASEAN-Japan collective security cooperation will safeguard their mutual benefits. Also, this study proposes that Japan is an ideal candidate for ASEAN to strengthen its security cooperation. Thus, it is essential to understand how Vietnam and Indonesia strengthen their security collaboration with Japan. This study attempts to find answers to three questions that are viewed from a qualitative perspective. How do Vietnam and Indonesia cooperate with Japan with respect to security matters? What, if any, factors shape the security mechanisms between Vietnam and Indonesia, and Japan? How may security cooperation between Vietnam and Indonesia, on the one hand, and Japan, on the other hand, be enhanced?

The subject position in this study is qualitative in nature. This study collects and analyzes non-numerical data, including text, video, or audio, in order to better comprehend the research topic. As a result, the study utilizes qualitative and comparative analysis methodologies. These techniques enable us to identify specific characteristics by comparing similar and dissimilar features. The study collects data via desk review.

The finding of this study is that security cooperation with Japan significantly enhances the security and economic growth of Indonesia and Vietnam and will also result in enhanced security and economic growth for the ASEAN member states.

Keywords: ASEAN, Japan, Security Cooperation, Vietnam, Indonesia

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADMM – ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting

ADMM-Plus – ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting Plus

AEC – ASEAN Economic Community

AMS – ASEAN Member States

APT – ASEAN Plus Three

ARF – ASEAN Regional Forum

APSC – ASEAN Political-Security Community

ASCC – ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community

ASDF – Air Self-Defense Forces

ASEAN – Association of Southeast Asian Nations

CBA – Capacity Building Assistance

CPC – Communist Party of China

CPTPP – Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership

DPRK – Democratic People’s Republic of Korea

EAS – East Asia Summit

EEZ – Exclusive Economic Zone

EPA – Economic Partnership Agreement

HA/DR – Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

JAIF – Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund

JMT – JAIF Management Team

JICA – Japan International Cooperation Agency

JASDF– Japanese Air Self-Defense Forces

JCG – Japanese Coast Guard

JMSDF – Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Forces

JSDF – Japanese Self-Defense Forces

GOJ – Government of Japan

MOD – Ministry of Defense

MSDF – Maritime Self-Defense Forces

MSP – Malacca Straits Patrol

MTDP – Midterm Defense Program

NDS – National Defense Strategy

NDPG – National Defense Program Guidelines

NPT – Non-Proliferation Treaty

NSC – National Security Council

NSS – National Security Strategy

ODA – Official Development Assistance

PCO – Peace Keeping Operations

ReCAAP – Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery
against Ships in Asia

RIMPAC – Rim of the Pacific Exercise

SAR – Search and Rescue

SCS – South China Sea

SDF – Self-Defense Forces

SLOC – Sea Line of Communication

TPP – Trans-Pacific Partnership

UNCLOS – United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

WWII – World War Two

ZOPFAN – Asian Zone of Peace, Freedoms and Neutrality

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

As a result of the constantly changing international situation in the world, each country must adjust its own security and foreign policy in order to maintain its current power status in the increasingly diverse world. We are in the midst of a major global transition toward a multipolar world, during which many changes could occur as the new world takes the place of the old. However, there are a number of dangers throughout this transition.

The dangers throughout this transition include increased competition between nations, the potential for increased risk of interstate conflict, the potential for an escalating arms race between states, the emergence of regional powers that could challenge the global order, and the risk of economic and political instability. Increased competition between nations can lead to conflict as nations strive to gain an advantage over one another. This can lead to economic and political instability as nations struggle to maintain their power and influence.

For example, according to Bruce Jones (2021) “the United States should regard distrust - not cooperation - as a baseline condition for starting negotiations around shared global threats and challenges with other major powers, such as China and Russia”.

This study argues that the main focus of the current ASEAN-Japan security cooperation is on mutual security benefits. For instance, Shoji (2015, p. 97) argues that

Japan's goals are primarily divided into two categories: first, it aims to establish a comprehensive partnership with ASEAN by establishing security relations in addition to its long-standing economic and political cooperation; and second, it peruses to cooperate with ASEAN to counter China's increasing aggressiveness in the East and South China Seas. Shoji adds the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM)-Plus displays Japan's strategic initiatives to enhance and promote ASEAN Centrality and multilateralism. Shoji further adds Japan's main strategy in multilateral forums is to prioritize maritime security while emphasizing the importance of peacefully addressing territorial disputes and protecting freedom of navigation based on the rule of law" (p.97).

But, even in current times, the balance of power plays a significant role on regional and international levels. It continues to be a fundamental element in creating and implementing foreign policy. Even now, it still affects how nations in a region relate to one another in terms of power. It is not difficult to see how the balance of power on the global and regional stage is shifting after Russia invaded Ukraine. Furthermore, Russia and China have increased joint naval exercises demonstrating the determination and capability of the two countries to jointly react to what they consider maritime security threats. The Southeast Asia region is increasingly facing security challenges as a result of the Ukraine crisis, the threat of nuclear weapons deployment, China-US competition, and North Korea's nuclear and long-range ballistic missiles.

It is illustrated by Japan's New National Security Policy for 2022, the focus of relations between Japan and ASEAN appears to be shifting from economics to enhanced security cooperation since 2014. Japan is actively pursuing to elevate its security cooperation with ASEAN to a strategic level. In fact, a new era has begun in Japan's

relations with ASEAN. The main argument in this study is that although in the past ten years, regional conflicts and other conventional security challenges in Southeast Asia, such as territorial disputes and arms races, had decreased, but several ASEAN member nations, such as Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines, are facing new divergent threats and Japan is most probably the best candidate for them to form strategic security cooperation with.

The progress report released on Japan's collaboration for the ASEAN outlook on the Indo-Pacific in November 2022 states that Japan is stepping up security cooperation with ASEAN and member countries to obtain support against North Korean missile and nuclear tests, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (2022). Furthermore, the progress report shows that Japan desires a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. The literature on Japan and ASEAN also supports the notion that Japan is accumulating the necessary international support for its ambitions through bilateral engagement and cooperation with regional organizations. Also, primary source documents from ASEAN, ASEAN forums, Indonesia, and Vietnam have all characterized North Korean missile and nuclear programs as a source of regional instability.

This study emphasizes that due to the "changing international balance of power" enhancing ASEAN-Japan security cooperation will safeguard their mutual benefits.

According to the ASEAN Secretariat, at the 37th ASEAN-Japan Forum on 21 June 2022, the two sides acknowledged the remarkable progress that ASEAN-Japan cooperation has made over the previous year in the four pillars of peace and stability, prosperity, quality of life, and heart-to-heart partnerships (Association of Southeast Asian

Nations, 2022). In this event, ASEAN and Japan stressed the necessity of enhancing cooperation in the fields of security, digital transformation, smart cities, trade and connectivity, health security, resilient and sustainable development, protection of the environment, and intercultural interaction. In accordance with the Joint Statement of the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit on Collaboration on the AOIP, both parties also decided to deepen their practical cooperation in the crucial areas of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP). According to the ASEAN Secretariat, the two parties also agreed on the designation of 2023 as the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, and both parties will hold a number of events throughout the year (Association of Southeast Asian Nations, 2023).

The Bangkok Declaration, which is regarded as the founding document of ASEAN, establishes the notion that the Association was primarily established to promote social and economic advancement. This seems to be a paradox when considering the early years of ASEAN. In fact, the five founding members of ASEAN had security as their top priority in 1967. According to Floristella (2015) since its formation, ASEAN's main objective has been to serve as a security provider for its members, although not in a traditional military sense. The ASEAN initiative has consistently and fundamentally aimed to establish and maintain regional peace and neutrality in the face of outside interference (p. 1).

During the Cold War, when there was a bipolar world order in effect, the need to preserve the East-West political and military balance of power resulted in a significant degree of security concerns. According to Ali Atlas, the former Prime Minister of

Indonesia: “regional security requires an equilibrium between the major powers, and between them and Southeast Asia” (Floristell, 2015, p.2).

However, as Mearsheimer (2019) says, the bipolar view of the balance of power, which was based on the notion that the two great powers would balance each other out through internal military build-up, was put to rest with the end of the Cold War. Also, the unipolar perspective of the balance of power, which was founded on the idea that the United States as the only superpower would maintain the global balance of power, is also no longer valid in the wake of Russia's war on Ukraine, according to President Putin (SPIEF, 2022). Mearsheimer (2019) posits that states in multipolar distributions would establish counterbalancing partnerships in order to offset and open up new prospects for enhancing regional security cooperation. At ASEAN's fourth summit in 1992, security was officially added to the agenda to fill the gap left by the fall of the Soviet Union and the decrease in US military presence in the region (Association of Southeast Asian Nations, 1992).

As a result, the ASEAN created a number of multilateral institutions, including the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the establishment of the ASEAN Plus Three (which includes the People's Republic of China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea), and the addition of Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Myanmar to the ASEAN Economic Community. These new multilateral institutions have become essential instruments for safeguarding security by developing mutual standards and mechanisms.

Floristella (2015, p.18) assumes that ASEAN now has the ability to independently pursue economic and security goals and play a crucial role in East Asian regionalism as

a result of the shifting balance of power and the increased fluidity created by the new international environment.

However, according to some experts, China's rise as the second-greatest power in the world may result in destabilization and conflict. John Mearsheimer who is known as an opponent of China's "peaceful rise" argues that it is likely to or will inevitably cause instability and conflict. Mearsheimer argues that from the year 2014, we have witnessed a transition in the global system from a unipolar to a multipolar system, with the United States as the strongest great power, China as the second, and Russia as the third (CIS, 2019).

Mearsheimer (2019), speaking for the Centre for Independent Studies, argues that it is hard to predict whether China will have good or negative intentions. Furthermore, it is impossible to anticipate who will be in authority in China or the US in ten or fifteen years. Above all, the defense budgets of these great countries make forecasting their actions impossible. Due to the ongoing discussion of the security challenges in international politics, the security situation is likely to get worse. The security dilemma is widely discussed in international politics, which is likely to worsen the problem. The security dilemma states that every action one side takes to defend itself would be seen as aggressive by the other.

Also, Tang (2009, 588) defines a security dilemma as "when a state's efforts to strengthen its security provoke reactions from other states, resulting in a loss in the state's security rather than an improvement." In this situation, both sides may decide that pursuing aggression is necessary for their security. As a result, one or both sides'

objectives shift from defensive and friendly to offensive and hostile, according to Tang (2009, 618).

As a result, China claims its new nuclear submarines and nuclear cruise missiles are defensive weapons while the US regards them as offensive weapons and declares its **own** missile systems defensive. Mearsheimer (2019) in his article also added that:

What we have here is a situation where two great powers, the Chinese and the Americans are going to go head-to-head in an intense security competition, and there is going to be a serious chance that they end up shooting at each other and that you have a real war between them. I'm not saying that's likely (to happen) I'm just saying that is a serious possibility (p.28).

There are several possibilities and scenarios for ASEAN to safeguard and enhance its security. One of these possibilities is collaborating with Japan on matters of security and peace. It can be advantageous for ASEAN and Japan to enhance their collaboration on security because they have similar security concerns. There is a convergence of new types of security challenges in Southeast Asia. According to Storey and Choong (2022), the invasion of Ukraine has established a gross disregard for an important principle of international law, which is the respect for the sovereignty of an independent state as guaranteed by the United Nations Charter. More significantly, Russia and China are also beginning to share similar geopolitical viewpoints. They also add that the use of invented history to support territorial claims, the use of hybrid warfare and grey zone tactics, and a disregard for international law are some of the similarities between China's approach and Russia's in Ukraine, even if China is unlikely to adopt the same approach.

The entire region is continuously experiencing security challenges in the South China Sea and Indo-Pacific region as a result of the Ukraine crisis, the threat of nuclear weapons deployment, China-US competition, and North Korea's nuclear and long-range ballistic missiles. The Russia-Ukraine conflict is expected to endanger the region's ability to recover economically from the COVID-19 pandemic through factors such as escalating supply chain disruptions, rising energy and food prices, and stock market volatility, imposing a significant negative impact on Southeast Asia's economy (Storey & Choong, 2022).

According to Mirna Galic (2022), Japan just published a new, comprehensive National Security Strategy (NSS) and related Defense Planning Documents (DPD) on December 16, 2022. The plan is the second ever for Japan and the first in nearly ten years. The plan outlines how Japan will react to important changes in the regional and global security environment, such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and highlights Japan's increased vulnerability in relation to its neighbors the new NSS is revolutionary because it emphasizes counter-strike capability and massively increased defense budget. Undoubtedly, the new NSS plan displays Japan is departing from its pacifist constitution. Japan aims to prevent Chinese hegemony from establishing itself in the region by employing this technique. As a result, Japan will intensify its attempts to develop comprehensive and multilateral strategic partnerships in Southeast Asia. This will provide a significant opportunity for ASEAN and its member states to enhance their cooperation with Japan on security and peace.

Statement of the Problem

This thesis explores the reasons ASEAN and ASEAN member states should enhance their cooperation with Japan even more closely on security with a specific focus on the Vietnam and Indonesia cases. This thesis also explores whether or not security cooperation between Vietnam and Indonesia, has increased with Japan over the last 10 years.

This study attempts to find answers to the following questions:

1. How do Vietnam and Indonesia cooperate with Japan with respect to security matters?
2. What, if any, factors shape the security mechanisms between Vietnam and Indonesia, and Japan?
3. How may security cooperation between Vietnam and Indonesia, on the one hand, and Japan, on the other hand, be enhanced?

Objectives of the Study

This study aims:

1. To describe how Vietnam and Indonesia cooperate with Japan with respect to security matters;
2. To determine factors that shape the security mechanisms in the context of Vietnam-Japan and Indonesia-Japan arrangements, and;

3. To recommend some measures as to how Vietnam and Indonesia-Japan security cooperation may be enhanced,

This study examines Japan's security strategies in relations with ASEAN countries. This study intends to explore the answers to the above questions through case studies of Indonesian and Vietnamese cooperation with Japan.

Scope and Limitations

The world as we knew it has changed as a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This war has compelled nations, not just in the EU but also in the rest of the world, to modify their perspectives and approaches to maintaining regional peace and security. Furthermore, the current Israel-Hamas war could cause security concerns for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). This has sparked questions about whether the US would become less committed to Southeast Asia.

There is a clear trend that ASEAN and its member states are working with Japan to strengthen their security cooperation. Although it is well known that Japan and ASEAN are stepping up their security cooperation, but the specific mechanisms by which this has occurred are not documented. This study intends to document the mechanisms by which this is taking place. It is critical to explore why Vietnam and Indonesia are keen to cooperate with Japan on security issues because this could provide insight into the reasons why other ASEAN countries may potentially cooperate with Japan in similar areas.

Also, there is a significant gap in the literature regarding different spheres of security cooperation between Japan and ASEAN countries. This study intends to study where Japan invests most heavily in security, what actions Japan takes, and why Japan cooperates with certain ASEAN states.

Moreover, there is a significant gap in the literature on peace and security in the region based on the balance of powers and the reality that the unipolar era is over. Almost all of the available literature on security and political cooperation in Southeast Asia especially the ASEAN-Japan security cooperation was produced before the Ukraine war. These works of literature were mostly produced by utilizing liberal theory and the notion of globalization. ASEAN and its member states should not overlook the critical need to preserve a balance of influence and power among the great powers in order to guarantee their own independence. This study aims to fill a gap in the literature by investigating how Japan can assist ASEAN in maintaining a balance of influence and power in the region.

The focus of the literature that is now available is also based on the assumption that ASEAN member states can utilize the principles of ASEAN Centrality and the ASEAN Way in order to enhance their roles in the region. Furthermore, the available pieces of literature promote financial gains over the development of a strong security coalition in the region. For example, Wattanapruttipaisan (2001) says that trade and financial cooperation with China are essential to maintaining regional security and stability.

The belief by some scholars, such as Kun (2022), that ASEAN member states could and should capitalize on the rivalry between the US and China in order to continuously increase their trade and investment is firmly ingrained in the literature of the

time. For instance, the ways that the ASEAN members have responded to China in the South China Sea disputes have demonstrated that maintaining their current commercial relationships has priority over resolving their territorial disputes with China.

This assumption would have been accurate and advantageous in the unipolar world system, but in the new multipolar world system, we need new ideas and research to explore innovative possibilities to preserve peace and security along with economic enhancement in the region. By utilizing neo-realism theory and placing a strong emphasis on security, this research paper will provide a new perspective on the challenges facing the region and fill a vacuum in the body of literature.

Tang (2009, 588) defines a security dilemma as "when a state's efforts to strengthen its security provoke reactions from other states, resulting in a loss in the state's security rather than an improvement." Both sides may decide that pursuing aggression is necessary for their security in this situation. As a result, one or both sides' objectives shift from defensive and friendly to offensive and hostile (Tang, 2009, 618).

The result of this change is the replacement of the security dilemma with a new type of security issue known as a spiral. At this point, the spiral manifests as either an "imperialist or expansionist threat," when only one side is hostile, or a "mutual threat or deadlock," when both sides are hostile (Tang, 2009, 618). The situation returns to a security dilemma when the expansionist state decides to halt its expansion. (Tang, 2009, 618). The interaction between the security dilemma theory and the spiral model produces an effective explanation of war and peace.

Significance of the Study

The ASEAN's responsibility for handling security cooperation between its members and with outside major powers, specifically Japan, is extremely beneficial to both the ASEAN and Japan. As a result, enhancing ASEAN's strategic and security cooperation with Japan in the new period will be extremely crucial for the future of ASEAN's centrality in the Southeast Asia region.

Likewise, Japan is very keen on strengthening security cooperation with ASEAN, and its strategy is multi-layered and multi-dimensional, with increasingly diverse bilateral and multilateral engagements. As Japan continues to engage with ASEAN countries, it provides major support for partners through capacity building. It is necessary to examine recent security cooperation developments between Japan and the ASEAN nations. Furthermore, developing security cooperation with Japan can be challenging, and ASEAN countries may find it challenging to cooperate and be motivated. This thesis attempts to clarify these new developments.

This study emphasizes that due to the "changing international balance of power", enhancing ASEAN-Japan collective security cooperation will safeguard their mutual benefits. This study aims to examine the cases of Japan-Vietnam and Japan-Indonesia cooperation within the framework of ASEAN's security cooperation.

Furthermore, this study investigates the impact of ASEAN and Japan strengthening their security cooperation and how this will benefit both ASEAN and Japan. As a result, this study contributes new information to the body of knowledge already available on ASEAN-Japan security cooperation while also introducing fresh viewpoints

and concepts, such as enhancing bilateral cooperation to multilateral security cooperation among ASEAN states and Japan.

Bilateral security cooperation between Indonesia and Vietnam with Japan has emerged as a promising strategy for increasing their engagement and motivation in enhancing their security cooperation, but its effects on forming or shaping future regional security cooperation between ASEAN and Japan are not yet fully understood. This study is important as it can provide valuable insights into the potential benefits of bilateral security cooperation in enhancing ASEAN security, as well as the development of effective security cooperation strategies that will improve ASEAN security in collaboration with Japan.

This study is also significant because of the changes in the balance of power from a unipolar to a multipolar world brought about by recent events like the Russia-Ukraine war, NATO expansion, China's expansionist behavior in the region, the escalating conflict between China and Taiwan, and the growing rivalry between China and the United States. The findings may assist ASEAN and its member states in better structuring their security and political objectives, as well as provide significant insights on how to improve ASEAN security and peace.

This study has the potential to have an impact on academics and decision-makers in ASEAN countries as well as countries in the Indo-Pacific region. A more efficient and effective security cooperation system can reduce security threats and territorial disputes, as well as improve ASEAN countries' overall security and peace, allowing them to enact stronger, more productive policies based on ASEAN centrality and the ASEAN way.

This study may provide important insights into the viability and advantages of enhancing security cooperation among ASEAN countries, as the world is increasingly moving toward the formation of multilateral security cooperation. This may potentially encourage security development, reduce reliance on non-regional major powers, and contribute to global security initiatives.

Scott (2021) stresses that policymakers use research results to support the credibility of their decisions as reliable sources of knowledge. Tseng (2012) describes that the research leads to evidence-based policy-making by the authorities, thus this study may help build stronger security cooperation between ASEAN and Japan, raising the level of security and quality of life in all South East Asia.

In order to further its foreign policy objectives in Southeast Asia and to support regional peace and security, Canada offers security assistance to ASEAN member nations as they work toward their integration objectives (Government of Canada, 2023). For instance, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) supports and finances research and innovation in developing nations and in collaboration with them to promote global change, as part of Canada's foreign policy and development initiatives. The findings of IDRC research in ASEAN countries are shared with relevant decision-makers in order to shape development policies and translate evidence-based policy into concrete actions (IDRC News, 2022).

This study also has the potential to have a significant impact on the field of security education. By better assessing the effectiveness of new security measures, academics and policymakers may improve their curriculum to better serve the needs of ASEAN

countries facing security challenges. The research could contribute to the development of enhanced security cooperation between ASEAN and Japan, raising the level of security and quality of life in all of South East Asia.

The findings of this study, similar to those of Martel (2020), will help in shaping ASEAN's strategy for enhancing security cooperation with Japan, which is highly sensitive to the current changes in the international balance of power in the region. Also, the study's benefits for future research include providing answers to unanswered questions, and insights into newly raised issues and potential strategies. It could also increase our awareness of the security challenges and fill research gaps on this subject, point to better solutions to the region's security challenges, and lead to improvements in ASEAN-Japan security cooperation.

This study emphasizes that due to the "changing international balance of power" enhancing ASEAN-Japan collective security cooperation will safeguard their mutual benefits. This study increases the empirical findings reported in the literature about ASEAN security. The findings of the study demonstrate how an established model can be used in a different setting. In this particular instance, more ASEAN member states can collaborate with Japan by using the same model of security cooperation that has already been established between Indonesia, Vietnam, and Japan.

Moreover, this study contributes to the empirical evidence reported in the literature about the ASEAN security relations studies. For example, consider the ASEAN Security Outlook (ASO) which is an initiative of the region's collective efforts to contribute to security studies among its member states. ASO covers the regional security landscape,

national defense and security strategies, and contributions to regional security literature. Furthermore, the ASO assesses ASEAN's overall contribution to regional peace, security, and stability, which is focused on two particular areas: developing concrete security cooperation and promoting beneficial values, norms, and principles.

The existing security literature tends to focus on inter-relation among ASEAN member states, as well as Japan's security cooperation with the United States, Britain, Canada, and Australia. It is recent Chinese activities in the region that are fueling the need for newly conducted studies on Japan-ASEAN security cooperation. This study contributes to ASEAN security literature in two ways: it contributes to the body of knowledge on ASEAN and assists in evaluating benefits, hence establishing bilateral security cooperation between ASEAN member states and Japan.

ASEAN Studies seeks to advance, acquire, and share knowledge about ASEAN countries and people, as well as their relations with one another and the rest of the world. The University of Philippines is the leading institution in ASEAN studies. However, they do not yet have a course specifically on ASEAN and Japan security cooperation. Clearly, there is simply not enough literature on this specific topic yet. This Study specifically seeks to contribute to the scope of cooperation with Japan, assisting scholars in the creation of policy papers and scholarly publications, as well as providing curriculum resources.

On September 6, 2023, ASEAN and Japan formally agreed to establish a comprehensive strategic partnership. This agreement was achieved at the 26th ASEAN-Japan Summit, which was held at the Jakarta Convention Centre. This study adds to and

strengthens the substantive work on the Japan-ASEAN comprehensive strategic partnership.

Personal Interest in the Study

As a Canadian, my interest in ASEAN stems from both security and economic factors. According to data from the Government of Canada, the Canadian economy contracted during COVID-19, and for the past two years, the cost of living has been rising (Government of Canada). The year 2023 was defined by a historically consistent combination of rising interest rates and steadily rising prices. As 2024 approached, attention shifted from inflation to the potential for a recession, according to Armstrong (2023).

The aforementioned concerns have sparked my interest as a Canadian in ASEAN and the prospects it presents as a viable alternative for the Canadian economy. Furthermore, I believe pursuing ASEAN studies is essential to accurately understanding the concept of ASEAN because it allows you to obtain in-depth knowledge about ASEAN and any other related subjects.

ASEAN has the potential to assist Canada achieve its long-term goal of improved trade diversification. ASEAN could represent a viable choice for Canada in addressing its current economic challenges. Canada is one of 11 nations that has the designation of ASEAN dialogue partner, and it received it in 1977. In order to address transnational crime and counterterrorism, political and security concerns, regional integration, economic interests, catastrophe risk reduction, and other matters, dialogue partners work

alongside ASEAN. Given that there is not much room for expanding trade with the US or Europe, ASEAN could prove to be Canada's best bet at addressing these economic challenges. In 2022, the value of goods traded between Canada and ASEAN was \$40.7 billion. However, there is still room to improve their cooperation in all areas.

I selected this topic because I have a particular interest in security cooperation in Southeast Asia. I find this matter to be significant since it has a direct impact on Canadian security in the Asia-Pacific region. In addition, I believe that this topic is not only relevant to Canada, but also to other countries who might face similar security concerns. By writing about ASEAN-Japan security cooperation, I intend to promote awareness and introduce a new perspective to the study of ASEAN member states' security and political strategies. If the study can advance this perspective, it will make a substantial contribution to the study of ASEAN member states' security and politics. This research provides insight into a new perspective. Lastly, I choose this topic because I believe that this study can spark a conversation that will lead to outcomes that are beneficial for everyone. This issue has impacted many countries, and it is important that we remember the lessons of the past in order to create a better future for all.

Organization of the Study

The structure of this research contains six chapters. This thesis will focus on two case studies: Indonesia and Vietnam.

The first chapter defines the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, and research literature gap. The second chapter consists of the

methodology, design, and structure of the study, proposals for propositions and data collection, and the limitations.

The third chapter consists of a review of related literature and analyzes ASEAN-Japan relations, manifested not just in agreements, but in the real achievements, and ASEAN's role in Japan's security strategy. Chapter three studies the security cooperation among ASEAN and Japan. Given that ASEAN is the main regional organization for Southeast Asia and is the home of the ARF and ADMM+, two significant security forums, it will be taken into consideration. This chapter analyses Japan's participation in ASEAN and forums led by ASEAN. It also examines the principles of Japan's ASEAN diplomacy and the security challenges they face. Lastly, it examines the significance of ASEAN - Japan security cooperation

The fourth chapter focuses on the ASEAN-Japan security cooperation through Vietnam-Japan and Indonesia-Japan security relations. It considers how their strategic alliance is growing, how Japan has helped Vietnam and Indonesia, and the kinds of security drills and collaborations they are engaged in. It argues that Japan, Vietnam, and Indonesia are collaborating to protect their shared SLOCs and because they have security concerns regarding China's behavior in the South China Sea. The study will look into the joint statements that established and extended the strategic alliance between Japan and Vietnam to see if the nature and extent of security cooperation have changed. In addition, the study will discuss Vietnam's concerns on security in the South China Sea as well as Japan's assistance to the nation in enhancing its maritime capabilities. It contends that, like Vietnam, Japan is interacting with Indonesia for similar reasons.

In chapter five, the study concludes that Vietnam and Indonesia have emerged as crucial partners for Japan's initiatives to improve marine capacity in Southeast Asian states. It considers that Indonesia and Vietnam's security cooperation with Japan will not remain an isolated matter but it will encourage other ASEAN countries to form a close cooperation with Japan.

In chapter six, the study provides several recommendations. The study implies the strategic framework of the security cooperation between Japan and ASEAN is often unpredictable. It argues the 50th anniversary of Japan-ASEAN relations represents a great opportunity for ASEAN to expand its comprehensive security cooperation with Japan. this study recommends that ASEAN and member states should encourage academics, business leaders, and government officials to enhance relations with Japan.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Concepts and Theories Informing ASEAN Relations

ASEAN is a regional organization that seeks to promote cooperation and stability in Southeast Asia. It has developed various institutional innovations, such as the ASEAN Regional Security Partnership (ARSP), which are designed to address security challenges such as terrorism, interstate disputes, and natural disasters. These initiatives have been formed based on different theories of international relations. We explore liberalism, realism, and constructivism as the three main theories on ASEAN international relations in this chapter. Every one of them comprises a variety of viewpoints and variations, some of which overlap with those of the others. In terms of ASEAN specifically, these theories have been used to explain why it has managed to remain relatively successful regardless of internal divisions over issues like human rights protection or external competition from great powers vying for influence within Southeast Asia.

Floristella (2015, p.31), in her book "The ASEAN Regional Security Partnership," explained that according to the liberalism theory of ASEAN security, countries in the region are motivated by a desire for shared prosperity and benefit. This means they form mechanisms for cooperation to guarantee their safety and stability, such as forming alliances or participating in confidence-building initiatives with one another. Also, some liberals such as Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs Retno Marsudi, argue that because Southeast Asia lacks a centralized authority that can enforce collective action among

members, any advancement must be based on an open dialogue between them, which could lead to a greater understanding of issues such as human rights protection or security and defense initiatives, according to Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Indonesia (2023). Liberalism theory promotes ASEAN-Japan security cooperation by emphasizing the importance of cooperation for mutual benefit. Initiatives such as intelligence sharing or joint military exercises could help both sides enhance their defense capabilities while deterring potential threats from other countries. Liberals believe that rather than relying solely on self-interest, which can lead to conflict, states should work together to promote peace and stability.

Realists perceive international politics as a power struggle between states, with each trying to maximize its own security through self-interest or balance of power strategies. Floristella (2015, p.21) argues that according to realist theory, ASEAN countries are primarily motivated by self-interest and security concerns. This means they will pursue strategies such as forming alliances or balancing against external threats, to ensure their own safety and stability. Realists also argue that because Southeast Asia lacks a centralized authority that can enforce collective action among members, any cooperation between them must be based on a shared understanding of mutual interests rather than shared values or norms that could potentially lead to conflict divisions over issues such as human rights protection or intelligence and security initiatives.

Floristella (2015, p.21), also argues that according to realism theory, security cooperation between ASEAN and Japan is likely to be based on mutual benefits for both parties. Both countries may, for example, cooperate in areas such as intelligence sharing or military exercises to enhance their own defense capabilities while also deterring

potential threats from other countries. Realists argue that such cooperative behavior should not be viewed as selflessness, but rather as the result of rational calculations about what will best serve each state's interests in terms of preserving sovereignty and regional stability. As a result, realism emphasizes self-interest while liberalism encourages collaboration for mutual benefit, but what works best in each situation is determined by the specific context, according to Floristella (2015, p.22).

Floristella (2015, p.27) explains, that according to the constructivist theory, states in the region are motivated by shared norms and values rather than self-interest. This indicates they will pursue cooperative mechanisms to ensure their security and stability, such as forming alliances or engaging in mutual confidence-building measures. Constructivists also make an argument that because Southeast Asia lacks a centralized authority capable of enforcing collective action among its members, any progress made must be based on mutual understanding, which could lead to greater unity on issues such as human rights protection or intelligence and security initiatives, according to Floristella (2015, p.28).

For instance, Floristella (2015, p.23) argues that when regarded as a whole, these institutional developments display, divergent to other regulations, that when it comes to crisis management, ASEAN collaborates more than it competes in Southeast Asia. It is the ninth-largest economy in the world, has more than 600 million inhabitants, faces many security challenges, including domestic conflicts, interstate disputes, terrorism, increasing exposure to natural disasters, and so on, emphasizing the necessity of their close coordination and increased cooperative capacity development. This allows enhanced

partnership with Japan as a regional great power without risking competition among themselves.

It is difficult to conclude which theory improves ASEAN security the most, as each has advantages and disadvantages. Liberalism promotes cooperation for mutual benefit, but it may be incapable of effectively addressing issues such as power imbalances or conflict resolution. On the other hand, realism highlights the importance of self-interest in international relations, whereas constructivism concentrates on shared norms and values that can indirectly contribute to state cooperation. Finally, it depends on the particular context of a situation; what works well in one situation may not work so well in another, according to Floristella (2015, p.47).

In regards to new diverse threats, it may appear that the war in Ukraine has had limited direct impact on ASEAN security because the two regions are geographically distant and have few economic or political ties. However, it does highlight some of the potential risks that could arise from other regional conflicts, such as increased military tensions between the great powers, which could lead to an arms race or proxy wars fought by their allies. This serves as a reminder to ASEAN member states to be wary of external threats and to maintain strong defense capabilities in order to protect themselves if needed.

1. Major Geopolitical Theories Informing ASEAN Relations and China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

Over the past century, geo-politicians have proposed three theories explaining how to dominate the globe from a geographical perspective. According to Teng Jianqun (2018), the following are the geopolitical theories:

1. The "Sea Power" theory was proposed by U.S. admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan in 1890. Mahan believed whoever controlled the sea would control the world.
2. The "Heartland" theory proposed by the British Halford John Mackinder in 1904 asserts that whoever controlled Eurasia would control the world.
3. The "Rimland" theory proposed by the American scholar Nicholas John Spykman in 1942 states whoever controlled the Rimland would control the world.

In the context of the Rimland Theory, we must emphasize the significance of Taiwan as one of the islands in the long chain of islands including Japan, the Philippines, and down to Malaysia, and Singapore, the naval control of which would let the United States to ensure an "anaconda ring" around China and block China's naval access to the Pacific and Indian Oceans. The significance of Taiwan in this regard is rarely discussed by political analysts in the media.

ASEAN is currently confronted with a number of unprecedented threats. The growing institutional, economic, and strategic rivalry between China and the United States is the most significant of these emerging challenges. The ASEAN response to this geopolitical rivalry has been to "diversify" and avoid choosing between the two great powers. Although this strategy appears to be reasonable, it could jeopardize ASEAN's core principle of "centrality," as well as the organization's geopolitical and diplomatic importance, according to Mark Beeson (2019, p.1).

Former White House chief strategist Steve Bannon, in his December 2017 conference in Tokyo, argued that China's BRI incorporated three geopolitical elements to serve as the basis for Beijing's "hegemonic" ambitions of "dominating" the world economy. Bannon said that One Belt One Road was ingenious in that it incorporated all three geopolitical elements into one strategy, according to Gao (2017).

Moreover, Hillman (2019) argued that Chinese businesses benefit from less external supervision in uncertain markets, and Beijing is able to leverage major investments to impose political influence. The new strategic competition is likely to last for decades, and it will not be just a war over tariffs on trade; but it will likely develop into an economic-technological, and ultimately an ideological, confrontation.

Consequently, the BRI strategy has an impact on ASEAN countries. On one hand, launching large projects in the region and significant financial transactions increase political influence. China, for example, may agree to inflate the cost of the project in order to transfer funds to powerful allies. For instance, Malaysian former Prime Minister Najib Razak has been charged with corruption in relation to 1Malaysia Development Berhad which is an insolvent Malaysian strategic development company, for misrepresenting the cost of building projects, according to Reuters (2022).

2. China's Geopolitical Framework for Southeast Asia

According to Zhou and Liu (2018), China's foreign policy in Southeast Asia is primarily focused on political-strategic and economic dimensions. They explain that China utilizes two strategies in the region. On the one hand, it asserts an aggressive foreign policy on maritime sovereignty security, such as territorial disputes in the South China

Sea, and on the other, it employs economic and trade cooperation based on interdependence and multilateralism within the frameworks of ASEAN + 3, the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area, and the Belt and Road Initiative. As Zhou and Liu (2018, p. 618) point out, throughout the past forty years, territorial conflicts over the South China Sea have changed from being a China-Vietnam issue to a regional and possibly global security issue. Although China's claim on the South China Sea deviates from the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), China considers the return of territory taken during its prolonged "century of humiliation" by the Japanese and Western nations to be its natural right.

As a result, the possibility of inter-state wars in Southeast Asia has greatly increased in recent years. It is crucial to acknowledge that the ideological foundations of inter-state conflict remain alive in the region, as China continues to adhere to a socialist political system. Economic liberalization policies in China have pushed ideological issues to the sidelines for a while. However, as Mock and Homer-Dixon (2015) argue, Regime Theory reminds us that ideological conflict is the most resistant to mediation and resolution, and actions taken by a state to increase its own security can trigger response reactions from other states, which could also lead to conflict.

According to the U.S. National Intelligence Council's report "Global Trend 2040" (2021, p.90), the United States and China will have the most impact on global dynamics over the next two decades. This rivalry will strain and reshape existing alliances, international organizations, and the norms and rules that have underscored the international order.

History of ASEAN-Japan Relationship

The ASEAN member states are geographically close to Japan. In order to promote economic growth and prosperity, the Japanese government and business community have forged successful alliances and partnerships with these countries through the creation of social infrastructure, free trade agreements, and other initiatives carried out through bilateral, regional, ASEAN-wide, and other frameworks.

According to the Japan Business Federation research study (2021, p.7), ASEAN is increasingly essential for Japan's manufacturing sectors, since it serves as the focal point of their overseas industrial bases. This is at least partially attributable to the network of Environmental Protection Agencies (EPAs) centered on ASEAN that the regional organization actively supports. A vast network of international supply chains also extends across the region, supporting its steady growth and giving Japanese enterprises a competitive edge worldwide. In ASEAN, the areas other than manufacturing sectors are likewise growing quickly, assisting the manufacturing sectors with logistics, banking, insurance, and other services while also fulfilling the region's expanding domestic demand.

For more than 30 years, ASEAN (the Association of South East Asian Nations), which is made up of ten Southeast Asian countries, and Japan have developed a cooperative relationship for the region's peace, stability, development, and prosperity. In addition, ASEAN and Japan have developed significant economic ties. Japan actively supports the ASEAN's attempts to enhance its connectivity because it believes that a

more tightly connected ASEAN acting as a center of regional cooperation is crucial for the stability and prosperity of Japan, ASEAN, and all of “East Asia”.

In the first chapter of “ASEAN-Japan Relations”, Shiraishi and Katzenstein (2014) explored the past course of ASEAN-Japan cooperation since the inception of ASEAN. They explain that since ASEAN's formation in 1967, there has been a close cooperation between ASEAN and Japan. In 1977, under the leadership of then Prime Minister Fukuda Takeo, who formulated the Fukuda Doctrine, Japan became the first ASEAN dialogue partner. For a long time, Japan was also ASEAN's largest provider of development aid. Japanese companies made significant investments in the ASEAN region, setting up large supply chains and industrial networks both within and outside of the ASEAN region. Japan actively participated in the peace effort in Cambodia with ASEAN in the early years after the Cold War. Japan has also been a key partner in the creation of the framework for regional security, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and more recently the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting (ADMM)-Plus process. Despite remaining memories of war and the atrocities committed by the Japanese during World War Two, fears of a rise in militarism have substantially diminished. Instead, many people today acknowledge Japan's contribution to stability and peacekeeping operations in East Asia and the Asia-Pacific region.

Shiraishi and Kojima in their book "ASEAN-Japan Relations" (2014, p.2-4) explain the Fukuda Doctrine is one example of an initiative that helped to build relations between Japan and ASEAN. The doctrine provided development aid for many years after it was implemented in an effort to start a discussion between the opposing parties. It also outlined cooperative ideals like respect for one another, refraining from interfering in

others' internal affairs, resolving conflicts amicably, and economic cooperation through trade liberalization policies (Shiraishi and Kojima, 2014).

Japanese companies have also made significant investments in Southeast Asian supply chains and industrial networks to assist economic expansion on both sides of the region. Finally, Japan also collaborated closely with ASEAN to maintain stability across the area during the post-Cold War peace negotiations including in Cambodia, according to Shiraishi and Kojima (2014).

Later, Shinzo Abe, the Japanese prime minister, introduced the Abe Doctrine in 2006 as a statement of Japan's commitment to fostering peace and stability throughout the Asia-Pacific region. Through initiatives like increased economic cooperation, security consultations with ASEAN nations, support for Southeast Asian countries working to promote democracy, and participation in multilateral forums such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), the doctrine aimed to fortify ties between Japan and its regional allies. It also urged other states not to meddle with or disturb the regionally prevailing international order, according to Katzenstein and Shiraishi, (2014, p.2-4).

Prime Minister Abe had a significant impact on ASEAN. After a summit meeting with Indonesia, he declared the "Five Principles of Japan's ASEAN Diplomacy," which included safeguarding and advancing values like freedom, democracy, and human rights; ensuring that the open seas are governed by law rather than force; promoting trade through networks of economic partnerships for the prosperity of ASEAN member states and Japan; and welcoming newcomers to Asia, according to Katzenstein and Shiraishi, (2014, p.5-6).

Additionally, he also sought to strengthen ties between Japan and its regional partners through initiatives such as increased economic cooperation, security dialogues with ASEAN countries, support for democracy promotion efforts in Southeast Asian nations, and participation in multilateral forums such as the East Asia Summit (EAS). Also, ASEAN sees Japan's cooperation as a crucial pillar of its regional security framework. ASEAN has tried to develop this relationship with programs like the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ASEAN Defense Minister's Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) process, which have been created to improve links between member states in order to maintain a secure environment for economic growth and development. Furthermore, ASEAN acknowledges that Japanese investment is critical for Southeast Asia's continuing progress, emphasizing the crucial need for both sides to maintain strong relations going forward (ASEAN, 2012).

1. ASEAN-Japan Cooperation Timelines:

Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro (1996–1998) hosted the first ASEAN-Japan summit in 1997 and made a commitment to collaborate actively with ASEAN to preserve strong Asian currencies and the stability of the Asian financial system. The Chiang Mai Initiative was founded in 1999 as a result of a program that was launched in 1998 by Finance Minister Miyazawa Kiichi to grant funds to revive the economies devastated by the Asian economic crisis of 1997. As part of the institutionalization of the ASEAN-Plus Three (APT) in 1999, the ASEAN-Japan Summit has been conducted annually ever since.

In order to begin the process of establishing an East Asia community, Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro (2001-06) advocated for a Japan-ASEAN economic partnership agreement in 2002. After Japan ratified the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation

(TAC) in 2003, the Japan-ASEAN Commemorative Summit was held in Tokyo. Japan was a key player in the formation of the East Asia Summit (EAS) in 2005, which included India, Australia, and New Zealand in its membership in addition to APT. Hence, ASEAN Plus initiatives emerged as a framework for regional cooperation in the wake of the 1997–1998 financial crisis, with ASEAN acting as the hub.

But after 2006, collaboration between Japan and ASEAN stalled, and Japan's standing in the region declined. The standstill was due to regional as well as national factors. After Koizumi's resignation in 2006, the prime minister changed almost every year until 2012. As a result, Japan hardly made any significant ASEAN-related diplomatic moves. The reduction in Japan's foreign direct investment (FDI) and official development assistance (ODA) to ASEAN was also a result of the country's depressed economy. On the other hand, China's economy has developed, which has increased its influence and stature within ASEAN. In addition, it has independently pursued measures to impact the region, such as the South China Sea Declaration, membership in TAC, and the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) project.

Upon the inauguration of Prime Minister Abe Shinzo in December 2012, the decline of Japan's influence in the region was reversed. The fact that Abe visited Vietnam, Thailand, and Indonesia during his first overseas trip in January, as well as Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines in July 2013 indicates that once more, Japan is seeing ASEAN as a regional power with a distinct identity and significance.

The foundation of the Japan-ASEAN relationship, and the factor that has had the greatest effect on ASEAN nations, is undoubtedly Japan's economic cooperation. As far

as development aid is concerned, Japan has given ASEAN top priority. Also, it helped to improve the atmosphere for business investment and trade promotion. With the 1985 Plaza Accord, which resulted in the yen's quick and significant appreciation, Japan's FDI skyrocketed. Malaysia and Thailand, two ASEAN nations, made notable advancements in the growth of manufacturing: exports increased, jobs were generated, the middle class grew, and domestic markets greatly expanded. Additionally, Japan provided emergency humanitarian assistance such as medical services and food supplies.

As Nemoto and Nakagawa (2014) demonstrate in *ASEAN-Japan Relations* the Chiang Mai Initiative (CMI) and the APT were institutionalized during those crucial years. Since then, the CMI has been modified and expanded. The CMI Multilateralization Agreement went into effect in 2010, and the total amount of funds made accessible has risen to US\$240 billion.

As Otsuji and Shinoda (2014) point out, with the signing of the Japan-Singapore Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) in 2002, Japan also changed course and began to support trade liberalization. Negotiations took place in 2000–2001; it was ratified in December 2002 after being signed.

In 2002, Prime Minister Koizumi also asked for an EPA between Japan and ASEAN. The Japan-Singapore EPA gave EPAs and FTAs in East Asia a boost. Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia signed EPAs with Japan in 2005; Brunei signed one with Japan in 2007. Furthermore, a framework agreement was reached in 2007 between ASEAN and Japan. Also founded in Jakarta in 2007, the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) was mostly supported by Japanese investment.

Recently, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and the head of ASEAN states attended the 25th ASEAN-Japan Summit in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on November 12, 2022. The ASEAN leaders greeted Prime Minister Kishida before and after the meeting and managed to form friendly dialogues, during which they expressed their gratitude for Japan's support of ASEAN. Prime Minister Kishida said that “he would like to hold a Commemorative Summit in Tokyo” on December 2023 since “it would mark the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation”, according to Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2022). In order to prepare for the 50th Year, Prime Minister Kishida also said that he wanted to hear the opinions and interests of every nation, according to Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) (2022).

As stated in MOFA's report (2022), ASEAN-Japan Cooperation will concentrate on the operations that follow;

1- Economic Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic:

- a) Japan continues supporting the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED) including through the dispatch of Japanese health experts.
- b) Japan stated concern over the rising food and energy costs triggered by Russia's aggression against Ukraine.
- c) Japan provides financial support loans of about 295 billion JPY in total to ASEAN countries as part of Japan's support to the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF).

2- ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP):

- a) The Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) and the AOIP share core ideals, and Japan is among the first to endorse ASEAN unity and centrality. There have been 89 cooperation projects since the 2020 Joint Declaration of the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit on Cooperation on AOIP was adopted.
- b) As we approach the 50th anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, Japan plans to strengthen ties in the maritime sector, such as maritime traffic safety, assistance for connectivity such as “quality infrastructure investment, healthcare including universal health coverage, measures to address climate change and disaster prevention”, and also “cooperation in a wide range of economic areas such as supply chain resilience, digital technology, and food security”.
- c) Japan would like to realize the Asia Zero Emissions Community by fully mobilizing its know-how and experience.

3- Regional and International Issues:

- a) Prime Minister Kishida stated concerns over the deterioration of the situation in Myanmar and urging the army of Myanmar to adapt the "Five-Point Consensus", according to MOFA's report (2022).
- b) Prime Minister Kishida stated concerns over the Russian invasion of Ukraine, or the use of tactical “nuclear weapons” in this conflict, and “it would be an act of hostility against humanity if nuclear weapons were to be used this time”, according to MOFA's report (2022). He added that “the international community as a whole

should send out a clear message to prevent this from happening”, according to MOFA’s report (2022).

- c) He stated concerns over China's aggressive policies on the East and South China Seas, and “the importance of the freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea and of the respect for international law, in particular, UNCLOS”, according to MOFA’s report (2022).
- d) He stated concerns over North Korea launching ballistic missiles with high frequency, and urging everyone “to come together and fully implement the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions (UNSCRs) for achieving the CVID (complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement) of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges of North Korea”, according to MOFA’s report (2022).

In summarising his remarks, Prime Minister Kishida stated that he would like “to utilize the Golden Jubilee of ASEAN-Japan relations” as a golden chance to show that ASEAN and Japan truly do have a “golden friendship,” as represented by the organization's motto, according to MOFA (2022).

2. ASEAN-Japan Security Cooperation

The fact that over 80% of Japan's oil imports come from the Middle East through Southeast Asia indicates how strategically important the region is to Japan's security. According to Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2022), Japan values stability in the region based on the "Rule of Law" of the sea because it is a maritime nation. Japan has been

consistently providing both soft and hard ODA help to nations bordering sea channels in the interests of maritime security, according to Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2022).

Shiraishi and Kojima (2014, p.3) explain that while Southeast Asia's worries about the development of Japanese militarism have diminished, memories of the Second World War and the atrocities done by the Japanese in the 1940s still linger, and a few people are skeptical of Japan's security role in East Asia and the Asia-Pacific. Japan sent civilians and military personnel to the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) in close collaboration with ASEAN nations, particularly Indonesia and Thailand, according to Shiraishi and Kojima (2014, p.4). Moreover, Japan sent military to East Timor to convey humanitarian aid and also offered other logistical assistance to UNHCR and United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) for peacekeeping operations (PKO). Japan also contributed financially to ASEAN's PKO missions in East Timor.

By actions including the donation of ships and equipment, collaborative research, joint patrolling exercises, and law enforcement official training, Japan improved anti-piracy cooperation. Moreover, Japan provided financial support to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the Antipiracy Center in Kuala Lumpur. Prime Minister Koizumi appealed for collaboration between the Japanese coast guard and its ASEAN counterparts in his speech in Singapore in 2002, according to Shiraishi and Kojima (2014, p.4). Consequently, the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) was completed; however, due to Indonesia and Malaysia's dissatisfaction with the choice of Singapore as the location for the ReCAAP Information Sharing Center, it has had limited effectiveness.

The East Asian Regional System

The organization of the East Asian regional system, which was similar to the Western European regional system, was formed by two strategic decisions made during American dominance in the early Cold War. The first strategy involved confining both Communist China and the Soviet Union simultaneously, as well as Japan. The U.S.'s dominance over Japan's energy supply and the incorporation of Japan's military power into the regional security structure under American leadership allowed for this to happen. This tactical choice served as the foundation for the regional "hub-and-spoke" security system. The second strategy was the creation of a commercial triangle between the United States, Japan, and Southeast Asia (and later Taiwan and South Korea). In the end, a system of three-legged trade between the U.S., Japan, and Free Asia was established as a result of the U.S. urging Japan to focus on Southeast Asia.

However, two complex security challenges between China and its East Asian neighbors began to surface in the 1990s. With the first Taiwanese presidential election in the middle of the 1990s, tensions between China and Taiwan grew. Territorial conflicts between China's neighboring states also became a threat. China took over the Paracel Islands in 1974, but until its navy captured South Johnson Reef in 1988, it had no real foothold further south. China's "territorial land" was defined in the 1992 Law on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone to include "the mainland and its offshore islands, Taiwan and the various affiliated islands including Diaoyu Island, Penghu Islands, Dongsha Islands, Xisha Islands, Nansha (Spratly) Islands and other islands", according to Shiraishi and Kojima (2014, p.7). The PLA's mission was redefined by China as the preservation of the maritime environment and the defense of maritime interests as part of

its military modernization program. Territorial disputes between China and Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia, and the Philippines were immediately brought about by the passage of the Law on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone.

1. China's Influence on ASEAN-Japan Cooperation

In order to include China in a multilateral framework, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) was consequently founded in 1994. According to Shiraishi and Kojima (2014, p.8), initially, China refrained from taking part because it did not want the Taiwanese issue to be brought up there. Instead, China chose to resolve territorial issues in the South China Sea bilaterally and did not want its freedom of action to be restricted by multilateral agreements, according to Shiraishi and Kojima (2014, p.8).

As a result, China embraced a new security paradigm around the end of the 1990s, which prompted multilateral engagement with its East Asian neighbors. The Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and the Joint Declaration on Cooperation in the Field of Non-Traditional Security Problems were signed by China and ASEAN in 2002. China and ASEAN also adopted the South China Sea Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in 2002 to serve as a framework for international conduct until a more formal code of conduct could be agreed upon. Later, a collaborative marine seismic initiative to search the waters of the Philippines for three years was signed by the national oil firms of China, the Philippines, and Vietnam in 2005. In the meanwhile, China ratified the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in Southeast Asia in 2003, according to

Shiraishi and Kojima (2014, p.8). Ultimately, China and ASEAN enhanced their ties to a stronger strategic partnership in 2004.

2. From East Asia to Asia-Pacific

In the past few years, tensions between China and Japan in the East China Sea have increased due to territorial disputes. China started to assert itself in the South and East China Seas, moving from East Asia to the Asia-Pacific. In 2010, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the president of Indonesia, described it as a "major worry."

ARF and, more recently, the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting (ADMM)-Plus process are examples of how ASEAN has attempted to create a framework for regional security. In response to the geopolitical change currently taking place in the Asia-Pacific, important Southeast Asian states have reacted by implementing self-help measures to strengthen their defense capabilities and coordinating themselves with the U.S. and its allies to seek hedging strategies. Japan has also reinforced its commitment to the US as an ally. For instance, in his policy speech at the beginning of 2013, Prime Minister Abe emphasized the significance of the Japan-U.S. alliance, stating, "of course, the Japan-U.S. alliance serves as the cornerstone of Japan's diplomacy" (MOFA, 2013).

Abe also reaffirmed that Japan and the U.S. share a similar strategic goal and struggle with the same issues outside of the Asia-Pacific. Many of these changes have recently caused the region's cooperation framework to change back from East Asia to the Asia-Pacific. This describes the creation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), ASEAN Plus Six FTA, and Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) as two

pathways to the Free Trade Area of the Asia Pacific (FTAAP) and ASEAN Plus DMM and EAS processes for security dialogues. However, there is no indication that China's stance has changed; rather, as the incident at the ASEAN foreign ministers' conference in Cambodia in July 2012 showed, China does not hesitate to diminish ASEAN unity in order to maintain its territorial advantage. Nevertheless, this action of China backfired as a result of the importance placed on the hub position, they serve when it comes to making choices about security cooperation or the development of an economic community within the region.

The aforementioned regional dynamics and the development of Japan-ASEAN relations have been interconnected. Japan decided to concentrate on building East Asian communities with ASEAN as their hub. Afterward, it joined ASEAN as an essential contributor in regional collaboration with East Asia and the Asia-Pacific in a framework that was both highly tensioned and somewhat overlapping.

3. The Five Principles of Japan's ASEAN Diplomacy

Following Prime Minister Abe's election in December 2012, he declared “five principles of diplomacy towards ASEAN” in a visit to Vietnam, Thailand, and Indonesia, according to Shiraishi and Kojima (2014, p.12). He declared "Strengthening Japan's relations with ASEAN will be indispensable for the peace and prosperity of the region while also being in Japan's interest" (MOFA, 2013).

On January 16, 2013, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe talked with the Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam Nguyen Tan Dung. The two leaders acknowledged that

they will strengthen their "Strategic Partnership," expand their mutual collaboration, and collaborate to promote "peace, stability, and prosperity" in the Asia-Pacific region (Government of Japan).

On January 17, Prime Minister Abe had a meeting with Yingluck Shinawatra, the prime minister of Thailand. The two leaders agreed that their nations should work closely together to secure the efficient operation of the Japan-Thailand Economic Partnership Agreement, the development of Thailand's infrastructure, and the advancement of their "Strategic Partnership" in order to maintain peace and stability (Japan Public Relation Office, 2013).

On January 18, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe traveled to the Republic of Indonesia and met with President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono at a summit, according to Japan Public Relations Office (2013). The two leaders agreed that their nations would advance collaboration in three areas: (a) the economy; (b) politics and security; and (c) intercultural exchanges, according to Japan Public Relations Office (2013).

According to the fact sheet from Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2013), during the Japan-Indonesia conference, the late Prime Minister Abe declared the following "Five Principles of Japan's ASEAN Diplomacy" on January 18:

(1) First, to protect and promote together with ASEAN member states universal values, such as freedom, democracy, and basic human rights.

(2) Second, to ensure in cooperation with ASEAN member states that the free and open seas, which are the most vital common asset, are governed by laws and rules

and not by force, and to welcome the United States rebalancing to the Asia-Pacific region.

(3) Third, to further promote trade and investment, including flows of goods, money, people, and services, through various economic partnership networks, for Japan's economic revitalization and prosperity of both Japan and ASEAN member states.

(4) Fourth, to protect and nurture Asia's diverse cultural heritages and traditions.

(5) And fifth, to promote exchanges among the young generations to further foster mutual understanding.

4. Security Challenges Faced by Japan and ASEAN

The question of how to interact with a rising China while reducing the risk that it presents is perhaps the region's most crucial strategic dilemma at this time. Both Japan and ASEAN are up against this obstacle. Shiraishi and Kojima (2014) explain that Japan and ASEAN have “mutual concerns and interests in ensuring safe and unrestricted maritime navigation” and peacefully resolving territorial and sovereignty disputes, “in accordance with international law”, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and TAC, as well as the UN Charter and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) Statutes” (p.14).

In addition to bringing together 600 million people in a shared market and manufacturing hub, more ASEAN integration also promises to strengthen ties between the region and the rest of the world as well as East Asia and the Asia-Pacific. Japan undoubtedly has a significant stake because it is one of the main trading partners and

investors. This is due to the fact that improving infrastructure is essential if Japanese businesses are to strengthen and grow their supply chains and production networks.

The hub status of ASEAN became more obvious as China and Japan competed for dominance in the region. China is explicitly acknowledging the significance of ASEAN as a regional hub by working to weaken ASEAN unity. ASEAN is in a difficult position since China is committed to expanding its territorial claims in the South China Sea and keeping the conflict from going global. The inability to come to a consensus on the South China Sea issue may prevent it from serving as a center for security cooperation and instead direct its attention towards focusing on the economic community.

Ensuring the peaceful and steady development of the regional order is vital for Japan's strategic interests, in addition to supporting the ASEAN economic and security community. Enhancing ASEAN is a way to make the ASEAN-Plus procedure the primary mechanism for establishing rules and norms in the region. Making sure that ASEAN remains strong is an effective way of preventing any superpower from controlling the relationships among its members, including the choice of regional structure and development. Superpower rivalry tends to require regional cooperation.

For instance, Japan's Ambassador to ASEAN, Sunaga (2017, p. 38), outlines that Japan's defense capacity-building assistance and maritime security cooperation with Viet-Nam includes:

- a) Non-Project Grant Aid (Grant, FY2014, JPY 500 million): Providing 6 used vessels (completed in November 2015) and equipment related to maritime safety.

- b) The Economic and Social Development Programme: (Grant, FY2015, JPY 200 million).
- c) Providing several used vessels and equipment related to maritime safety (in addition to the above).
- d) Maritime Security and Safety Capacity Improvement Project (Loan, JPY 38,482 million): Pledging to Provide 6 new patrol vessels.
- e) Training for maritime safety.

Also, Sunaga (2017, p. 38), outlines that Japan's maritime security cooperation with Indonesia includes:

- a) For anti-terrorism and anti-piracy in Malacca/Singapore Straits: The Project for Construction of Patrol Vessels for the Prevention of Piracy, Maritime Terrorism and Proliferation of Weapons (Grant, FY2006, JPY1,921 million),
- b) Providing 3 new patrol vessels for Marine Police.
- c) The Project for Improvement of Port Security System (Grant, FY2008, JPY 545 million).
- d) Providing X-ray baggage inspection equipment, metal detectors, etc. for major Indonesian ports.
- e) The Project for Enhancement of Vessel Traffic System in Malacca and Singapore Straits (Grant,
- f) FY2008/FY2010, JPY3,005 million).

- g) Introducing the Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) system.
- h) Experts to Directorate General of Sea Transportation since 2006 (started new phase in March 2015).
- i) Experts to BAKORKAMLA (Indonesian Maritime Security Coordination Body) from 2008 to 2011.

According to a report “Keidanren” by Japan Business Federation (2021), the economies of the ASEAN countries are expanding gradually as they give their full attention to their strengths in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, mining, logistics, banking, finance and insurance, and other sectors. The ASEAN Community, comprising the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC), was established in December 2015, according to the Keidanren report (2021). Later, the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 has encouraged further integration. The ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) was established in January 2010 when the first group of ASEAN countries eliminated tariffs, and in January 2018 when the second group did the same under the conditions of the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA), according to the Keidanren report (2021). The Keidanren report (2021) indicates that ASEAN is also pursuing additional growth for ASEAN as a community by fully embracing ASEAN centrality, which aims to protect ASEAN's interests and presence in regional institutional frameworks that are populated by major powers outside of ASEAN. In order to establish free trade agreements (FTAs) with nations outside of the region, including those with Australia, New Zealand, China, Japan, South Korea, India, and others, ASEAN is proceeding in a similar manner. In light of the Keidanren report (2021), despite the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy

and society, ASEAN still has great potential to become a key growth hub of the world. As a result, it is more important than ever for ASEAN and ASEAN countries to assume a greater part in addressing regional and global issues.

5. ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) and Japan

The establishment of the ASEAN Political-Security Community has been authorized by the ASEAN Leaders (APSC). The core principles of ASEAN's approach to political and security concerns and developments have been safeguarding regional peace and stability, taking a comprehensive approach to security challenges, and establishing friendly and mutually beneficial relations with external parties. According to the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Blueprint (2009, p.2), the APSC anticipates the following three crucial features:

1. A Rules-based Community of shared values and norms;
2. A Cohesive, Peaceful, Stable and Resilient Region with shared responsibility for comprehensive security; and
3. A Region that is dynamic and outward-looking.

Also, according to the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Fact Sheet on the ASEAN Secretariat website (2018, p.2), The ASEAN Political-Security Community's primary goal was to boost economic growth and, as a result, social and cultural development, while the secondary goal was to promote regional peace and stability based on the rule of law and the principles of the UN Charter's principles. Therefore, the APSC shall take steps to guarantee that nations in the region coexist peacefully in a just,

democratic, and harmonious environment with one another and the rest of the world, according to the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint (2009, p.5).

6. Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF)

The Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) was formally formed in March 2006, according to the commitment made by the then-prime minister of Japan, Junichiro Koizumi, during the ninth ASEAN-Japan Summit held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in December 2005. ASEAN and the Government of Japan decided to establish the JAIF Management Team (JMT) within the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta to improve the efficient use of the fund in assisting ASEAN Community-building and integration initiatives (ASEAN Secretariat website).

According to the fact sheet presented by JAIF management team (2024), Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) aims to provide the following services:

- a) To assist the ASEAN Member States (AMS) in pursuing the full integration of ASEAN in order to achieve the open, dynamic, and resilient ASEAN Community as envisioned in the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II, by assisting the efficient implementation of the ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together, and by enhancing the operation of the ASEAN National Secretariats of the new AMS and ASEC.
- b) To assist in executing the ASEAN 2025 Blueprints of the ASEAN Political Security Community (APSC), ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC), with a focus on reducing the development gaps between Members and addressing emerging regional problems.

- c) To promote cooperation between Japan and ASEAN (as well as between Japan and the individual AMS), including technology transfer and investment from Japan into AMS, trade and employee exchanges, Japanese awareness of and understanding of ASEAN, ASEAN regional studies and research, as well as other areas of cooperation as mentioned in the 2017 revised Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation and its Implementation Plan.
- d) To assist regional and sub-regional organizations in their missions.
- e) To assist additional initiatives that the Government of Japan (GOJ) and ASEAN consider necessary (including its Member States).

7. The Need for Enhancing ASEAN Security Cooperation

In recent decades, the necessity of improving ASEAN security relations has been recognized. This is largely a result of the increasing global interdependence and the need to address common security issues. The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and other institutions for interaction have been established in an effort by ASEAN member nations to enhance regional security. The goals and drivers behind ASEAN's initiatives to advance regional security have been the subject of numerous studies. These studies highlight the need for ASEAN to pursue a “comprehensive security agenda” that includes the promotion of regional economic integration, political and military cooperation, and the resolution of regional conflicts (Dalton, 2014; Nay, 2017; Suryadinata, 2017).

The growing number of threats and challenges Southeast Asia encounters is what drives the need to strengthen ASEAN security cooperation. They include ongoing

international conflicts, terrorism, increasing exposure to natural disasters, and most recently, the conflict in Ukraine. ASEAN member states can better address these concerns while also fostering mutual prosperity among all interested parties by enhancing their engagement with Japan as a regional power through cooperation. Additionally, this could help deter rising threats from competition between China and the West while maintaining peace within Southeast Asia at the same time.

In the past 20 years, we have seen China and the United States competing in the region. Yet, the conflict in Ukraine has altered the global balance of power. The general rivalry between the US and China in the Indo-Pacific has now escalated to the point where it is nearly a ferocious campaign. One of the most important regions in the Indo-Pacific is Southeast Asia. The Strait of Malacca and international waterways play a significant strategic role in the Indo-Pacific area that will also directly impact ASEAN member states. For instance, the Strait of Malacca, which connects Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore, has historically been a significant gateway for trade into and out of Asia. Consequently, control of the strait is crucial for the West.

Most likely, the days of playing the great powers against each other in order to increase direct investment in ASEAN member states are definitely passed. In the emerging multipolar world system, it is quite likely that the local or foreign great powers will not accept the two concepts of ASEAN Centrality and ASEAN Way, which were utilized during the globalization era and unipolar world system. In 2022, the United States, Japan, England, and Canada all released their new Indo-Pacific strategies. But, their strategies are designed based on the best interest of the US, the international Group of Seven (G7), and Europe. The ASEAN or its member states were not consulted by the

West on whether they would like to have a voice. They were only briefed about the West's plans and strategies for the region.

China and Russia also developed their Indo-Pacific Strategies but did not disclose them to others. While the ASEAN members would prefer to avoid having to choose between the two rivals, the reality is that the transition from a unipolar to a multipolar world system is imposing an entirely new situation. Under these circumstances, the West's worldview is that you are either with us or against us. All of the aforementioned reasons make enhancing ASEAN security cooperation vital.

ASEAN Way and ASEAN Centrality

According to Menon (2021) the "ASEAN Way" is a globalization strategy based on regionalism. The ASEAN Way supports an informal, non-confrontational, and non-interference approach between member states to promote consensus building and consultation in order to enhance confidence between member nations. The ASEAN Way is based on three principles; informal diplomacy, non-interference, and consensus decision-making, according to Menon (2021). The guiding principles of continuing to respect one another's territorial integrity and sovereignty enhanced regional integration.

Also, the ASEAN Way is a regional structure built on a framework of mutual support and reinforcement, with ASEAN as the major driving force. The concept of "ASEAN Centrality" is the result of ASEAN's significant role in developing regional partnerships. The formation of the ASEAN Regional Forum, ASEAN Plus 3, and the East Asia Summit (EAS) and East Asian Community indicates that ASEAN centrality is the driving force for

greater regional integration. ASEAN centrality has been facing serious challenges recently. For instance, as Caballero-Anthony (2014, p.566) points out, the main challenge to ASEAN centrality is “its ability to maintain consensus, carry out collective action and achieve its stated goals”.

McDonald (2017) argues the regional security framework has changed, and existing institutions' concepts, like ASEAN, have undergone some modification, and there appears to have been a major change in Japan's and Indonesia's perceptions of and plans for security since 2007. Furthermore, McDonald (2017, p.242) points out that ASEAN has traditionally been perceived as an organization hesitant of significant political integration and defined by its commitment to non-intervention in the affairs of other member states.

However, ASEAN deviated from its firm definition of the "non-interference" norms when the Burmese military brutally put down protestors during the so-called Saffron Revolution in 2007–2008, according to McDonald (2017, p.242). Also, regarding the issue of integration, we observed the 2008 adoption of the ASEAN Charter, the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015, which indicated future regional integration, and a commitment to the 2025 fulfillment of the ASEAN Political Security Community Blueprint, according to McDonald (2017, p.242).

The Significance of ASEAN-Japan Security Cooperation

The ASEAN countries cannot match the Chinese diplomatic offensive just through the use of conventional diplomacy since they lack access to high tech and the necessary

"know-how." China's cutting-edge military capabilities pose a clear and present threat to ASEAN security. These types of weapon demonstrations always have political significance.

Focusing on Japan's security cooperation with ASEAN members, there is a growing amount of literature. The official documents and agreements published by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense, and the National Security Council of Japan are analyzed here in order to look into the official security goals, statements, and pertinent parts of the Japanese government. The National Security Strategy (NSS), National Defense Strategy (NDS), and Mid-Term Defense Program (MTDP) are some of these publications and agreements.

Indonesia and Vietnam, two members of ASEAN, have independently expanded their strategic alliances with Japan to a significant degree. In response to Chinese development in the South China Sea, both Indonesia and Vietnam have been forced to take action. These nations are the highest-ranked military powers in ASEAN, according to Global Firepower's ranking of Southeast Asian militaries in 2022.

Japan is demonstrating its commitment to enhance its security cooperation with ASEAN nations. The study by Stephen R. Nagy looks at the elements that affect Southeast Asian nations' favorable opinions of Japanese security cooperation. He draws attention to the fact that Vietnam and Indonesia view China similarly as a threat and have engaged in open conflict with China over the South China Sea. Both nations "have actively courted Japanese assistance and voiced a wish to have more security talks," according to Nagy (Nagy, 2018, p.122).

In the meantime, Japan is enhancing its ties with countries in Southeast Asia and with ASEAN in general as part of its own Indo-Pacific strategy. Japan is discussing utilizing its military capabilities and technology advances with ASEAN countries such as Indonesia and Vietnam to counter China's expansion in the South China Sea. This cooperation has evolved in recent years, with Prime Minister Suga Yoshihide visiting Vietnam in October 2020. Speaking to Viet Nam News, Lê Thị Thu Hằng, a spokesman for the Vietnamese foreign ministry, said "we strongly believe that the visit will be a great success, actively contributing to fostering the Viet Nam – Japan extensive strategic partnership and to restoring the post-COVID 19 socio-economic developments of the two countries", (Viet Nam News, 2020).

According to Strangio (2020), Prime Minister Yoshihide was committed to continuing the late Prime Minister Abe's foreign policy that established a "delicate balance" between economic collaboration and strategic competitiveness with China, with a special emphasis on ASEAN. From Japan's strategic perspective, these visits constitute a commitment from both parties to strengthen the defense element of their relationship and cooperation to maintain peace and security in the region, according to Strangio (2020).

For instance, on September 13, 2021, the government of Japan and the government of Vietnam endorsed a contract for the "Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology" (MOFA, 2021). According to the statement from MOFA (2021), this agreement:

Establishes a legal framework for the Governments of Japan and Vietnam regarding the transfer and handling of defense equipment and technology between the two governments in order to implement projects to be jointly determined including those contributing to international peace and stability. (p. 2)

Evidently, both countries desire to further strengthen the extensive strategic partnership for peace and security in the region. Prime Minister of Japan, Kishida visited Southeast Asia before going to Europe from April 29 to May 6, 2022.

Prime Minister Kishida first visited Indonesia on April 29 and held a Japan-Indonesia summit meeting with Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia. Based on a MOFA (2022) press release on the summit conference between Indonesia and Japan, Kishida stated that “Russia's aggression against Ukraine is a clear violation of international law and shakes the foundation of the international order, including that of Asia”. He also expressed his strong opposition to “any unilateral attempt to change the status quo by force in the East and South China Seas” (MOFA, 2022).

Also, the two leaders agreed to cooperate in addressing a number of regional and global issues, including Myanmar, disarmament and non-proliferation, and the reform of the U.N. Security Council. Moreover, they reaffirmed their commitment to working together in dealing with North Korea, including responding to the nuclear and missile issues as well as the kidnappings of young Japanese by North Korea issue, according to the press release on the summit conference (MOFA, 2022).

Later, on May 1, Prime Minister Kishida visited Vietnam and met with PHAM Minh Chinh, Prime Minister of Vietnam. Based on a MOFA (2022) press release on the summit

conference between Vietnam and Japan, Kishida stated that "Japan would strengthen defense cooperation through capacity building assistance to the Vietnamese military in the area of cyber security, and cooperation to improve maritime security and safety capabilities" (MOFA, 2022).

The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) was another topic of discussion between the two leaders, confirming to maximization of their strategic perspectives (MOFA, 2022). CPTPP is a free trade agreement (FTA) between 11 countries that entered into force on December 30, 2018. The Agreement contains robust marketing promises in goods trade, services trade, investment, labor mobility, protection of the environment and labor rights, customs administration, transparency, and government procurement (MOFA, 2022).

Another factor that threatens to destabilize the region is North Korea's nuclear program. On October 4th, 2022, nuclear-armed North Korea launched another ballistic missile over Japan. The last time North Korea launched a ballistic missile over Japan was in 2017. According to Johnson (2022). "It forced Japan to issue evacuation notices and suspend trains during the flight of the nuclear-capable missile over Japanese airspace".

According to Jesse Johnson (2022) the Japanese defense chief, Hamada, during talks with U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin said that Japan would consider "every option" to "drastically strengthen" the country's defense capabilities, including the possibility of acquiring a controversial "counter-strike capability" (2022). I believe cooperation with ASEAN would be part of this strategy.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

In order to explain the larger scope of actions taken by Vietnam, Indonesia, and Japan to form a close security cooperation, the study will use qualitative and comparative methods for the analysis. By contrasting similar and dissimilar features, these techniques enable us to identify specific characteristics.

The subject position in this study is qualitative in nature. This study collects and analyzes non-numerical data, including text, video, or audio, in order to better comprehend the research topic. As a result, the study utilizes qualitative and comparative analysis methodologies. These techniques enable us to identify specific characteristics by comparing similar and dissimilar features. Moreover, the study collects data via desk review.

As the name suggests, desk research is a research approach that is primarily learned while sitting at a desk. It is also another term for secondary research. Secondary research is a method of using previously collected and openly available data. It contains information published in research papers and other similar sources. Desk research is a highly efficient and cost-effective method to collect data that can be utilized as a foundation for further study. It can be done quickly and cheaply, making it an effective choice for conducting market research initially, according to Juneja (2015).

The main goals of a desk review are to find relevant information sources, evaluate the accuracy of the information, and find any gaps that would require further research,

according to Shanthasiri Thero (2023). Moreover, the purpose of desk research is not data collection. Instead, your job as a desk researcher is to examine earlier studies' findings to acquire a comprehensive grasp of the subject, according to Travis (2016).

As Juneja (2015) points out, the two types of desk research methodologies are external desk research and internal desk research. The most efficient way to begin a research project is with internal desk research. The utilization of internal resources and the cheap cost of obtaining data from external sources make internal desk research efficient and affordable. External Desk Research involves gathering pertinent data by conducting research outside the boundaries of the organization. There are three types of external desk research approaches: customer desk research, internet desk research, and government released data, according to Juneja (2015).

The amount of information available on the internet is remarkable. According to Juneja (2015), there are two techniques for gathering useful information from the internet. One method is to visit relevant websites for specific information and extract it from them. The second method is to use the various search engines to perform customized searches. To reduce the amount of work and time spent searching, the researcher must first comprehend the significance of the research and then adhere to the principles analytically, according to Juneja (2015),

The majority of important information can be found on government websites, which are often free to visit. Therefore, this might be the least expensive way to collect the data. Also, communicating directly with existing or prospective clients is one of the most successful and recognized methods for gathering research data.

We should keep in mind that, although secondary research is accessible in Western countries, it is still limited in some countries such as China. These limitations exist for a variety of reasons, including political, economic, regulatory, cultural norms, and other reasons, according to Juneja (2015). These limitations will soon be overcome when more researchers use secondary research methods.

Conceptual Framework

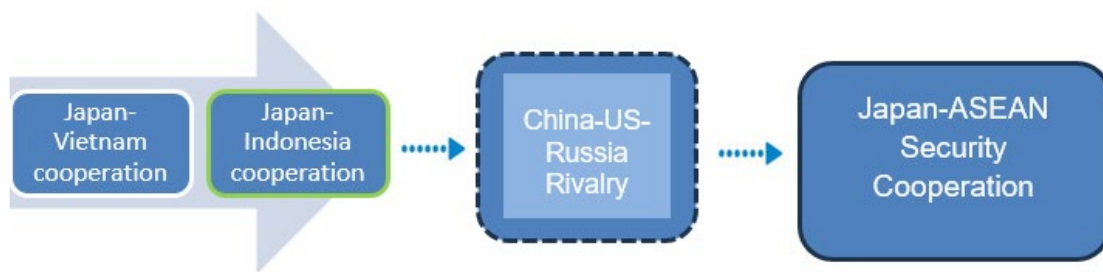
This qualitative study explored the history and future prospects of ASEAN security cooperation with Japan. The study has examined the developments in security cooperation within the framework of China's growing aggression in the South China Sea and the threat this aggression poses to the interests of the ASEAN member states bordering the South China Sea.

The study examines the performance of ASEAN as a multilateral organization by analyzing Indonesia and Vietnam cases. The implementation of decisions made in forums, summits, and meetings organized by ASEAN is compared to Japan's implementation of policies with Indonesia and Vietnam.

Moreover, this research studies writings and comments by regional and world leaders, reviews multiple empirical literatures relevant to the subject, views video news and documentaries, and listens to a variety of podcasts dealing with global issues. This research also examines studies on joint military exercises and equipment upgrades, as well as information on the ASEAN-Japan alliance, mutual interests, and security concerns.

Furthermore, this research examines how China and the United States' rivalry in the region influences the ASEAN countries to enhance their cooperation with Japan. Figure 1 illustrates the framework of the study. The sequence suggests that knowledge and understanding of Japan-Vietnam-Indonesia cooperation leads to understanding of the US-China-Russia rivalry, which may lead to ASEAN-Japan security cooperation.

Figure 1: The Framework of the Study.



This research examines how ASEAN countries want to utilize the enormous prospects offered by China's signature infrastructure and connectivity program, the Belt and Road Initiative, by national development objectives, while still maintaining a level of political and strategic policy autonomy. For several of Southeast Asian countries, the China threat manifests itself in the form of territorial disputes in the South China Sea, illegal unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU), the presence of Chinese migrant workers, and large trade deficits.

The study recognises that China, the United States, and Russia are key actors in the region and how their rivalry influences ASEAN security and stability. This research also examines how leading ASEAN countries, particularly Indonesia and Vietnam, in response to the rise of rivalry between China and the United States and uncertainties about the US commitment to the region, explores a variety of soft balancing approaches

through military cooperation and maritime infrastructure development collaboration with Japan. Table 1 illustrates the objectives, core ideas, and tactics of Vietnam and Indonesia's security cooperation with Japan.

Table 1

Vietnam and Indonesia security cooperation with Japan

Issue	Suspicious that China is pursuing to expand its influence in the region
Goal	Enhance their military capacity to counter China's aggressive behavior in the region
Core Idea	Tame China's aggressive behavior in the South China Sea
Tactics	1. Forming security cooperation with Japan 2. Receiving high-tech weaponry from Japan 3. Participating in joint military exercises

The history and potential prospects for ASEAN and Japan cooperative security are the main topics of this study. The study provides important insight when looking back at the history of ASEAN security cooperation. For a long time, the ASEAN members' behavior and the accepted norm was bilateralism. The gradual shift from bilateral security cooperation to multilateral security cooperation in the region is the most significant development to have occurred in ASEAN security cooperation since the end of the Cold War. This significant capability leads ASEAN countries to develop cooperative relations with Japan. By highlighting the security cooperation capabilities of ASEAN, this study can

assist in understanding how ASEAN has been linked to the notion of cooperative security with Japan.

This research examines how bilateral security agreements between Indonesia, Vietnam, and Japan will shape the primary means of multilateral security cooperation between ASEAN and Japan in the region. Also, the concept of multilateral security cooperation assists the ASEAN member states in allowing the emergence of a sense of unity and mutual security in their capacities. The study demonstrates that despite some obstacles, ASEAN security cooperation with Japan will continue to advance. The main purposes for ASEAN security cooperation will continue to be confidence-building and crisis-prevention, instead of becoming a traditional military bloc.

This study investigates how Vietnam and Indonesia cooperate with Japan with respect to security matters and what factors and enhancements may shape this cooperation. Furthermore, this study aims to determine factors that shape the security mechanisms in the context of Vietnam-Japan and Indonesia-Japan arrangements as well as recommend some measures for the enhancement of these arrangements.

This study examines Japan's security strategies in relations with ASEAN countries and explores the answers to the above questions through case studies of Indonesian and Vietnamese cooperation with Japan. The assumption of this study is that the outcomes will be true for the ASEAN as a whole, so what has been true for Indonesia and Vietnam will also be true for all the ASEAN member states, even if they are not part of the study.

The finding of this study is that security cooperation with Japan which significantly enhances the security and economic growth of Indonesia and Vietnam will also result in

enhanced security and economic growth for the ASEAN member states. Southeast Asian countries have used ASEAN to retain both a US strategic commitment to the region and to engage China in the principles of peaceful dispute resolution and a network of regional multilateral institutions. Maintaining ASEAN's centrality via multilateral organizations such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and a number of other ASEAN institutions can be considered as a way to ensure ASEAN's relevance and ability to control regional power distribution.

Governments throughout Southeast Asia aim to maintain some degree of political and strategic autonomy while simultaneously pursuing national development objectives that capitalize on the enormous potential presented by China's flagship infrastructure and connectivity initiative, the Belt and Road Initiative. The threat posed by China to several Southeast Asian states is mixed up with the extremely delicate domestic political issue of ethnic Chinese minorities. This threat is manifested through territorial disputes in the South China Sea, IUU (illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing), the presence of Chinese migrant workers, and high trade deficits.

Research Design

The study examines the measures that Japan has taken with ASEAN, Vietnam, and Indonesia to strengthen their security cooperation. Also, the study analyzes how Vietnam and Indonesia's security cooperation with Japan enhances their security.

This study determines what mechanisms are employed to deal with security challenges and whether the mechanisms have been effective or not, and what factors

may have influenced their adoption. This paper emphasizes how enhancing ASEAN-Japan security cooperation can protect their mutual benefits in the context of the "shifting international balance of power." For the purpose of illustration, this study examines the cases of Japan-Vietnam and Japan-Indonesia cooperation within the context of ASEAN's security cooperation.

This study analyzes what role Japan plays (if any) in this cooperation and ASEAN's security strategy in general. The benefits and limitations of Vietnam, Indonesia, and ASEAN's bilateral and multilateral security strategies are also analyzed in this paper.

Case studies are typically used when a "why" or "how" question needs to be answered. It can be extremely helpful when trying to understand a complex phenomenon, when there is limited research available, or when you're looking for practical answers to a problem, according to Geering (2006).

As Geering (2006) points out, the case study is a "study of a single unit with an aim to generalize across a larger set of units." In other words, the case study is a detailed examination of a single unit with the goal of projecting to a larger set of units. Likewise, Yin (2009, p.18) defines a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon in its real-life context.

1. Research Method

This study utilizes a case study methodology to collect data, in which comprehensive qualitative information about specific entities or cases is gathered,

organized, analyzed, and presented in a narrative format. Case studies provide a thorough understanding of components, circumstances, and challenges through their diverse viewpoints and perspectives, according to Kumar (2013).

Also, the comparative case study is "the systematic comparison of two or more data points (referred to as "cases") obtained through the use of the case study method," according to Kaarbo and Beasley (2002, p.372).

This research uses the case study method because it has the following key characteristics, according to Priya (2020, p.95);

1. A case study is more than just a technique or method for gathering data; it is a research strategy.
2. A case study implies an in-depth examination of the unit of analysis in question in its natural setting.
3. A case study method is comprehensive; thus, the researcher is allowed to utilize whatever strategy for data collection that best suits the purpose (as long as it is practicable and morally sound).

Furthermore, politicians and decision-makers will benefit from detailed case studies that explain how complex strategies function as well as their results (Patton, 2002). Lastly, case studies are effective instruments for enhancing theory, identifying limitations of generalizability, and posing questions and challenges for further investigation, according to Stake (2005).

2. Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

There are several sources from which data can be obtained. For instance, information for a case study of bilateral cooperation could be acquired by studying the documents the parties created, keeping quantitative records of their output, examining major previous events involving the parties, and observing meetings and other encounters.

This study selects two cases (Vietnam and Indonesia), examines relevant characteristics, and analyzes security cooperation between Vietnam, Indonesia, and ASEAN with Japan.

The cases of Vietnam and Indonesia are not compared with one another. Its primary focus is on ASEAN's role as a group and how, if any, bilateral security cooperation can help to shape ASEAN-Japan multilateral security cooperation.

The content analysis method was also used for research on documents and agreements. This technique narrows down the vast amount of information into the notional units, limiting it to the essential components and certain key features, according to Hsieh and Shannon (2005, p.1278).

As Geering (2006) recommends, the study collects data by using document analysis and observations. Then, it analyzes the collected data to find patterns, themes, and relations that can aid in addressing the research questions. The study also examines previous studies, theoretical development, as well as existing policy or program documents. These methods allow us to identify particular elements of the subject by comparing similar and different features, according to Esser and Rens (2017, p.2).

This study analyzes a selection of primary research materials, including official statements, books, archival manuscripts, articles in research journals, or audio-visual records.

The study assumes that the security cooperation will have an impact on the degree of peace and security challenges in the region while examining the security cooperation between Vietnam and Indonesia with Japan. According to Bailes and Cottey (2006, p.199), there are four different types of regional security cooperation: alliances, security communities, security regimes, and collective security. These four models can help to understand the characteristics, prospects, and limitations of various types of regional security cooperation.

It was ultimately decided to examine the effectiveness and/or methods of both countries' contributions to Japan's national security objectives. The other key concentration area is the function of ASEAN as a whole and *how (if at all) bilateral approaches enhance or complement multilateralism*.

In addition, the theoretical foundation of the security strategy for Japan and ASEAN is examined. In the first part, the analysis of the structure, units, system, and anarchic global order is presented. The second part examines the idea of security, with a focus on non-traditional security, which is crucial in ASEAN-Japan relations, and how neo-realism applies to this concept. It explains specific processes taking place in the research field because it focuses on the security of the state through the state's preferences, the balance of power process, and the anarchic global security system. The security

cooperation between ASEAN countries and Japan will also be discussed. This study will focus on Indonesia and Vietnam's security cooperation with Japan.

Furthermore, the study reviews the security cooperation between Vietnam and Japan as well as Indonesia and Japan and the ASEAN's role in it. This research explores the increase of their arms purchases from Japan, the increase of their maritime air and naval capabilities, and their military equipment upgrades with Japan's assistance. In conclusion, the study describes the essential elements for achieving security cooperation between Japan and ASEAN.

Ultimately, the study analyzes the enhancement of political and security cooperation between the ASEAN and Japan. According to Bin Hassan (2003), initially, the ASEAN countries' relations with Japan were primarily shaped by economic factors (p. 145). These economic factors have served as the foundation for political relations with Japan. In addition to economic relations, Japan and ASEAN countries cooperate closely in a number of security cooperation such as the ARF and ASEAN plus Three.

Japan has emerged as one of the leading economic partners with Vietnam and Indonesia since the 2000s. As a result, the initiative for "an expanded strategic alliance for peace and prosperity in Asia" in 2014 was driven by expanding bilateral trade and investments from Japan, particularly in Indonesia and Vietnam, according to Shira (2018). In addition to being the largest official donor of development aid, Japan is also Vietnam's fourth-largest commercial partner, third among foreign investors, and second among tourists, according to Shira (2018). Consequently, in 2006, the two parties announced their intention to enhance their partnership as strategic partners for peace and prosperity

in the Asian region (MOFA, 2006). This study predicts that their future political and security cooperation will be based on cooperation in the areas of intelligence, police, and maritime security. This would be achieved by information sharing, improving joint training, capacity building between the Coast Guards, and multi-layered and multi-level dialogues and engagements.

This study analyses the reasons for it as well as a review of the literature on the subject. It also explores how Japan has increased its cooperation in the region. In this analysis, we examine earlier research on the security cooperation between ASEAN and Japan, each of which starts from a different theoretical foundation and conclusion. The main argument in this study is that although in the past ten years, regional conflicts and other conventional security challenges in Southeast Asia, such as territorial disputes and arms races, were decreased. However, ASEAN is facing new divergence threats and Japan is probably the best candidate for them to form strategic security cooperation.

3. Propositions

The study has listed the propositions in two parts. These propositions are listed in the order of likelihood that ASEAN will enhance security cooperation with Japan. They are, in my opinion, the most likely reasons for ASEAN and member countries' enhanced security cooperation with Japan. The propositions are based on the assumption that we are on the verge of transition from a unipolar to a multipolar world order.

Proposition One: If ASEAN countries enhance security cooperation with Japan, then they can protect common Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC) from changes and

maintain the status quo and freedom of navigation. This proposition is supported by the literature on Chinese expansion into the South China Sea and the threat it poses to shared SLOCs. Main literary works also stress how crucial it is for the South China Sea to remain peaceful and stable.

Proposition Two: If Japan utilizes all of its assets in order to enhance its security cooperation with ASEAN and member countries the result would be mutual prosperity and security deterrence.

Japan is enhancing security cooperation with ASEAN and member countries to obtain support against North Korean missile and nuclear tests. Furthermore, Japan desires a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. The literature on Japan and ASEAN also supports the notion that Japan is accumulating the necessary international support for its ambition through bilateral engagement and cooperation with regional organizations. This is also confirmed by primary source materials from ASEAN, ASEAN forums, Indonesia, and Vietnam, all of which identify North Korean missile and nuclear activity as a source of instability in the region.

Research Procedures

Data Collection

The study collects data through observations and case studies. Documents and agreements represented by Vietnam's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defense, Vietnam News Agency (VNA), related books, and articles are examined in order to

evaluate the official Vietnamese Government's security goals, statements, and relevant aspects.

Also, the study collects information from the official ASEAN website, ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) declarations and statements, Japanese reports, official speeches, governmental communiqués, and related books and articles. Where possible, primary sources that have been translated into English will be utilized. They help assess the security concerns faced by each ASEAN country. However, the concern with using translated documents is that a misinterpretation could cause the original meaning to be lost. As a result, to minimize the likelihood of errors in English translation, official translations from the ASEAN and the Japanese Ministries of Foreign Affairs are utilized. Also, the potential risk of a biased view toward the Japanese perspective exists when using joint statements supplied by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Furthermore, documents and agreements represented by Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, Ministry of Defense, Indonesia News Agency, and related books and articles are analyzed in order to evaluate the official Indonesian government's security goals, statements, and relevant factors.

Moreover, documents and agreements represented by The ASEAN Secretariat, ASEAN official websites, such as ASEAN-Japan Forums, ASEAN summits, The ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, The ASEAN Charter, related books and articles and Asian news networks are analyzed in order to evaluate official ASEAN's security goals, declarations, and related factors.

In addition, documents and agreements represented by Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Ministry of Defense (MOD), and National Security Council, such as the NSS, and National Defense Program Guidelines, are analyzed in order to evaluate official Japan's Government's security goals, declarations, and related factors.

The majority of the material on the ASEAN-Japan and bilateral cooperation was obtained from ASEAN official websites. A wide range of public media sources, particularly The Jakarta Post, Việt Nam, The Diplomat, Asia Times, The Japan Times, and South China Morning Post were regularly studied to analyze the events and their significance following the signing of these agreements.

Also, this research analyzes a variety of scholarly articles. The most notable examples are Professor Parameswaran, Professor Nagy, Professor Koh, and Professor Nguyen on Vietnam-Japan security cooperation. Also, professor Inkiriwang and Professor Honna on Indonesia-Japan security collaboration are among the most significant examples. Although only a few of these scholars' works are cited, several of them were examined to obtain a deeper understanding of regional relations.

Since this study proposes that Japan is an ideal candidate for ASEAN to strengthen its security cooperation, it is essential to understand how Vietnam and Indonesia strengthen their security collaboration with Japan.

1. Why Vietnam and Indonesia?

Vietnam and Indonesia were chosen because there is a specific collaboration between these countries. Vietnam and Indonesia were chosen because they are directly involved in the South China Sea dispute. There is an ongoing territorial dispute between China, Vietnam, and Indonesia, and they have made claims in certain areas of the South China Sea. China has arbitrarily drawn a nine-dash line that partially overlaps Indonesia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the nearby Natuna Islands region where Indonesia's EEZ extends 200 nautical miles (370 km) beyond the Natuna Islands, according to Febrica (2017, p.93). Indonesia dismissed China's claim, stating that there is no legal foundation for China's nine-dash line claim to parts of the Natuna islands. Also, China's nine-dash line in the South China Sea crosses portions of Vietnam's territory. China's claims to Scarborough Shoal, the Paracel Islands, the Spratly Islands, and a few additional boundaries in the Gulf of Tonkin were rejected by Vietnam, according to Hai (2017, p.93).

Additionally, there is more transparent interaction between these countries. Although China and Vietnam have had disputes in the South China Sea, one could wonder why Indonesia was selected as a subject in this study.

The Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Brunei are among the ASEAN nations that have made claims in certain parts of the South China Sea. There is an ongoing territorial dispute between China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Brunei about ownership of the Spratly Islands. China also maintains its claim to the resource-rich waters on its enormous "nine-dash line" map. Additionally, the United Nations has rejected China's claim to the majority of the South China Sea.

Undoubtedly, China considers the region's natural resources to be its property if it considers the majority of the South China Sea to be its territory. Additionally, China claims that it has the historical right to fish in Indonesia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). China's efforts to reclaim territory in the South China Sea have increased recently, with the intention of physically expanding existing islands or to make whole new islands. Besides building ports, military outposts, and airports in the Paracel and Spratly Islands, China has also militarized Woody Island, according to the Council on Foreign Relations (2023). The largest of the Paracel Islands in the South China Sea is Woody Island, also known as Yongxing Island by Taiwan and China and Phú Lâm Island by Vietnam.

Indonesia, similar to several other countries, finds itself in disagreement over the vast number of natural resources in the maritime area. Indonesian President Joko Widodo in a forum at Brookings said "Indonesia is not a party to the [South China Sea] dispute, but we have a legitimate interest in peace and stability there", according to Dews (2015).

Consequently, Indonesia has made a number of moves to protect its maritime territorial rights. The southern part of the South China Sea has a new name thanks to Indonesia: it's now known as the North Natuna Sea, and fishermen from Java have been sent there to catch fish, according to Reuters, (2023).

Moreover, Indonesia's government approved an offshore gas project worth over 3.2 billion dollars within its exclusive economic zone in the South China Sea in January 2023. In the Tuna block gas field, which is close to the Natuna Islands, a significant natural gas resource will be developed for Indonesia. By 2027, the gas plant will produce a maximum of 115 million cubic feet per day. According to preliminary plans, the gas will

be exported to Vietnam starting in 2026, according to Strangio (2023). China warned Indonesia to cease oil and natural gas exploration in maritime territory that both nations consider their own in 2021, according to Reuters' sources (2023).

Evidently, this Indonesian initiative is much more than merely an economic project. Many Japanese businesses relocated to Vietnam from China. Based on a key finding of the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) survey, about 60 percent of Japanese businesses plan to expand in Vietnam in the next 1-2 years, according to Viet Nam News (2023). In terms of the proportion of Japanese corporations intending to extend operations beyond the Asia-Pacific region, Vietnam ranked third only after Bangladesh and India.

Moreover, during late Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's first month in office in 2013, he decided to make his first official visits to both Vietnam and Indonesia, reflecting Japan's strong commitment to preserving close relations with ASEAN countries, according to the Public Relations Office of the Government of Japan (2013). These two ASEAN countries have security cooperation with Japan and appear willing to enhance their security cooperation with Japan.

In addition, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga stated that he would visit Vietnam and Indonesia. He also said that Japan plans to sign an agreement with Vietnam allowing it to export defense technology and equipment to that nation as part of a campaign aimed at strengthening the defense capabilities of Indo-Pacific countries to oppose Chinese maritime aggression, according to Nikki News (2020).

The Japanese government is attempting to persuade Japanese firms to relocate to Vietnam from China. Vietnam has an increasing need for energy, and Indonesia can

provide a reliable supply of affordable energy. This triangular partnership offers ASEAN and Japan an exceptional opportunity to enhance their security cooperation.

In recent years, conflicts about which country has sovereign rights in the South China Sea have halted energy development in the region. Chinese coast guard and maritime militia vessels have disrupted exploration in the exclusive economic zones of Vietnam, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

It is crucial to explore why Vietnam and Indonesia appear to be more eager to collaborate with Japan since this knowledge can help other ASEAN nations realize why they should cooperate with Japan if they want to safeguard their security. Although certain ASEAN nations would not cooperate with Japan on a bilateral basis in terms of security, many of them can collaborate through the ASEAN organization.

2. Indonesia's Regional Approach

In 2010, Indonesia stated that it is not a contender in the South China Sea sovereignty dispute. However, it is currently demonstrating a keen interest in the region's security challenges. There are indications that Indonesia intends to alter its relations with China. China claims that its Nine-Dash Line marks the border with Indonesia's North Natuna Islands, a claim that the Indonesian government strongly opposes, according to Febrica (2017, p.93).

During a 2015 trip to Tokyo, Indonesian President Joko Widodo has openly opposed China's Nine-Dash Line claim in the South China Sea. Later, during a visit to

Beijing, he stated that “Indonesia's global maritime fulcrum concept” compliments China's Maritime Silk Road. President Widodo's statements appear to convey a contradictory message to ASEAN member states. Consequently, Indonesia may have to choose between increasing its cooperation with China and rejecting China's claims to the Natuna Islands.

Meanwhile, Indonesia and the Philippines agreed to strengthen defense cooperation when their leaders met in Manila in January 2024 to address security concerns in the South China Sea, according to the Straits Times (2024). They are among Southeast Asian Nations that have overlapping claims with China in the disputed Waters. Their leaders are discussing efforts to build closer ties among ASEAN member states. The presidents of Indonesia and the Philippines met in Manila on January 10, 2024, to talk about a number of topics, including recent developments in the South China Sea and initiatives to foster stronger cooperation between their nations and to conclude the code of conduct for the region, according to the Straits Times (2024). Following the meeting, President Widodo of Indonesia and President Marcos of the Philippines announced in a joint press conference that "President Widodo and I had a fruitful and honest discussion on regional events of mutual interests", according to the Straits Times (2024). They also decided to strengthen their security cooperation and ongoing agreements on border cooperation. President Widodo said “We agreed to... expedite revision of joint border patrol and crossing agreements, (and) also to strengthen the defence cooperation, including on military hardware”, according to the Straits Times (2024).

3. Japan's Positive Pacifism

the characterization of Japan as a pacifist country is widespread and deceptive. After the Second World War, Japan adopted a pacifist strategy regarding military action, but the government and the younger generation have recently taken a more proactive position. As a result, one could emphasize the significance of Japan's peace movement by citing Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, that prevents Japan from utilizing the military to resolve international disputes. Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution not only prohibits the use of force to settle international conflicts, but also Japan's maintaining of an army, navy, or air force. However, since 2000, there has been a significant public debate concerning the potential of eliminating or altering the Article 9.

The available literature indicates that there is a noticeable generational gap. The younger generation of Japanese people are more confident and aware of their surroundings' threats. In light of recent security concerns regarding North Korea's missile and nuclear tests as well as China's hostile behavior, the younger Japanese generation perceives peace and security more realistically. Both the North Korean Taepodong missile which overshot Japan in 1998 and the Taiwan Straits crisis that happened in 1996 alarmed the people of Japan. According to Professor Oros (2017, p.1), a commitment to peace has become a cornerstone of modern Japanese identity and has shaped diplomacy and defense policy, with successive governments declaring support for proactive pacifism.

Similarly, it could be argued that in the real world, there is a reaction for every action. Subsequently, what kind of reaction is appropriate to China's aggression in the

South China Sea? Reactions can vary from accepting China's claims to engaging in bilateral dialogue with China. The study proposes that, with Japan as a key regional power, the best course of action would be to enhance security cooperation between ASEAN member states and Japan.

Evidently, there is a growing lack of sympathy for pacifist ideas among the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Japan's objectives for the 2020s and its vision of its place in the Asia-Pacific region are significantly heading in that direction, based on the literature that is readily available. Publication of three new national security documents shows Japan is scrapping its pacifist postwar defense strategy and heralds a new era. According to Professor Oros (2017, p. 1), Japanese civilian officials, particularly those working in the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and the National Security Council (NSC), are in charge of coordinating military strategy across the government and engaging the Japanese public in open debate about the complex challenges Japan will face in preserving its security throughout the twenty-first century.

Chapter IV

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

ASEAN-JAPAN SECURITY COOPERATION

This chapter examines Vietnam and Indonesia's bilateral security cooperation with Japan in order to accomplish their security goals through engaging in dialogues with other regional powers. The study will illuminate the challenges and issues that emerge while trying to maintain a common strategy between Vietnam, Indonesia, and Japan with the aim of enhancing regional and Indo-Pacific security. Subsequently, an analysis of Vietnam and Indonesia's cases will reveal if their security cooperation has the capacity to assist ASEAN and Japan in developing multilateral security cooperation in the future.

ASEAN -Japan Security Cooperation with a focus on the Vietnam and Indonesia cases

Vietnamese and Indonesian officials have admitted the limitations of diplomacy as a tool for meeting their nation's security objectives, particularly in relation to their initiatives to counter China's influence in the region. Vietnam and Indonesia may counter a regional threat by two distinct methods: first, by enhancing their military capabilities and domestically produced weapons, and second, by utilizing an external balance of powers in order to underwrite the status quo through military alliances according to Walton (2016, p.6).

Vietnam and Indonesia's military forces cannot compete with Chinese forces, and because of their unique geography, they must rely on outside security guarantees. The Chinese invasion of Vietnam in 1979 represents the perfect example of the threats facing these countries. China advanced more than 50 km into Vietnamese territory and captured Lang Son in just two weeks. China had the option of directly attacking Hanoi from Lang Son, 120 kilometers distant, but instead chose to retreat to prevent Soviet engagement, according to Koh (2018).

Since the 1990s, Japan and ASEAN states have initiated defense exchanges, which have improved their relations, which have grown to encompass more tactical and operational defense cooperation with ASEAN states starting in the 2000s. Meanwhile, Japan's growing engagement in Asia-Pacific security multilateralism since the early 1990s originated from optimism for the advancement of cooperative security protocols but also from optimism that multilateral security cooperation could be an instrument for addressing its greater security concerns regarding North Korea's Nuclear Program and its dispute over territory with China in the South China Sea. Ultimately, Japan anticipated that the multilateral cooperation on security concerns could promote long-term cooperation and policy coordination among countries that were concerned about the same challenges such as the South China Sea dispute. Territorial disputes over the Senkaku islands, or the Diaoyu islands as the Chinese call them, also contributed to the escalation of Japanese security concerns.

Japan is promoting cooperation with ASEAN on political and security issues through multilateral discussions in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and various bilateral frameworks like the ASEAN Defense Minister's Meeting-Plus (ADMM Plus) with

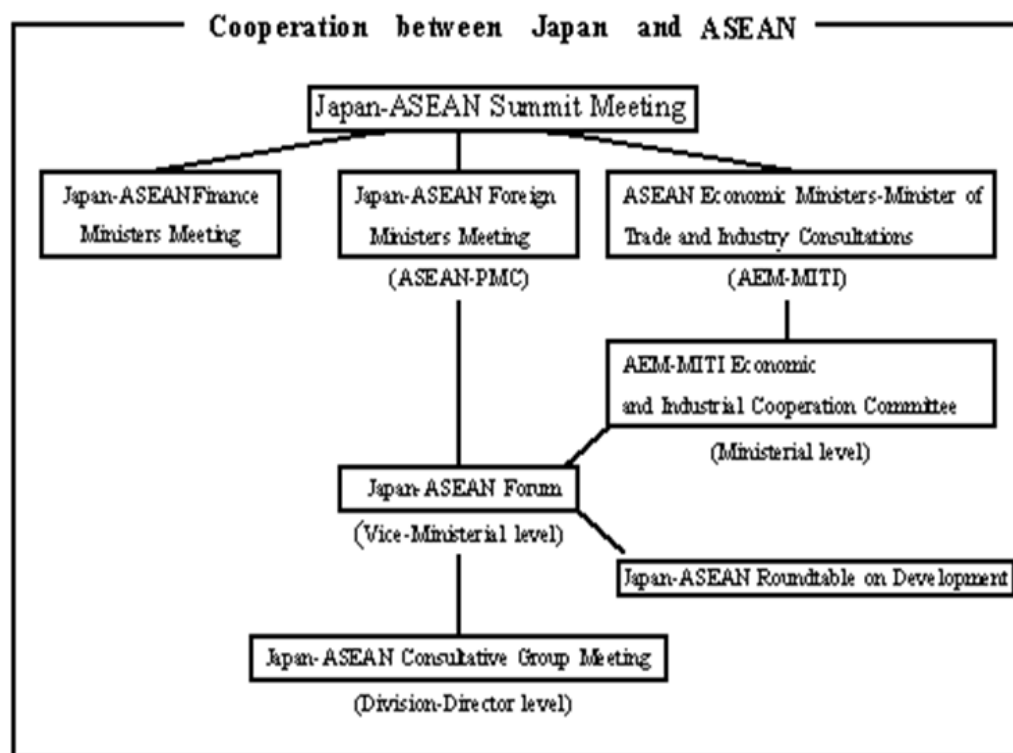
Southeast Asian nations. Multilateral cooperation between ASEAN states and Japan has improved since 2010 through regional frameworks like the ADMM Plus and the introduction of new initiatives including capacity-building cooperation with additional specialists and practical actions (MOFA, 2017).

Also, the ADMM Plus has been supported and participated in by the Japanese Ministry of Defense, which has emphasized pragmatic collaboration. In addition to actively participating in the meetings of the Experts' Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations and meaningful group drills to encourage pragmatic collaboration, Japan is eager to create guidelines to tackle upcoming maritime and aerial confrontations, according to Japan Ministry of Defense (2018).

For example, according to Vietnam News Agency (2022), a video conference was used on October 11, 2022, for “the 16th meeting of the Experts' Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations Cycle 4 for the years 2021–2023”. Col. Nguyen Nhu Canh, the deputy director of the Vietnam Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and Tomoko Matsuzawa, the director of the Japanese Ministry of Defense's working group on peacekeeping and responsible for defense cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region, served as the event's co-chairs. The Japanese defense minister, Takeshi Iwaya attended the fifth ADMM Plus conference in Singapore in October 2018. In his remarks, he expressed his gratitude for “the Guidelines for Air Military Encounters (GAME)” approval and stated that the strengthening and expansion of the rule of law would help to embed trust in the region, according to Japan Ministry of Defense (2018).

Japan has historically provided Southeast Asian states with maritime capacity-building assistance, including joint exercises, training opportunities in Japan for defense personnel, and technology transfer. In addition, Japan is conducting bilateral defense exchanges with ASEAN member countries like Vietnam and Indonesia in order to promote mutual understanding, friendship, and mutual confidence between them. The multilateral cooperation between Japan and ASEAN is illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Cooperation between Japan and ASEAN.



Source: Relationship between Japan and ASEAN from MOFA, retrieved 16 May 2023 from <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/asean/pmv9812/relation.html>

1. ASEAN-Japan Security Cooperation through Vietnam-Japan and Indonesia-Japan Security Relations

The security cooperation between Vietnam, Indonesia, and Japan has significantly increased since their initial collaboration in the late 1990s. This study attempts to describe ASEAN-Japan security cooperation through Vietnam-Japan and Indonesia-Japan security relations. Over the past 20 years, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Japan have been progressively developing their bilateral security cooperation, which has immediate effects on Indo-Pacific security.

According to Parameswaran (2021) this is in line with the larger objectives of these nations, since Japan is promoting closer relations with ASEAN nations and Southeast Asian nations in general as part of its own Indo-Pacific strategy. Vietnam and Indonesia are also strengthening relations with a variety of capabilities as part of their multidimensional foreign policy.

2. Vietnam and Japan Security Cooperation

This chapter also examines the nature of Japan's security cooperation with Vietnam, the factors that contributed to its development, and potential future implications. It wasn't until the late 1990s that formal security cooperation between Vietnam and Japan began, and even then, it wasn't initially very advanced. Most Vietnam interactions with the Japanese during the 1990s were dedicated to economic development.

Although Japan and Vietnam have had diplomatic relations dating back to 1973, after Vietnam invaded Cambodia, Japan stopped providing the country with aid. Vietnam decided to overthrow Democratic Kampuchea's Khmer Rouge-dominated government because they believed it to be pro-Chinese and hostile to Vietnam. Economic cooperation did not resume until 1992 after Vietnam left Cambodia. Japan was able to forge stronger

interactions in the region by delivering aid to Vietnam and fostering business ties with the country.

Despite the fact that security cooperation between Japan and Vietnam is not as comprehensive compared to that between Japan and the Philippines, it has made significant improvements during the last 25 years. Vietnam and Japan started diplomatic relations in 1973, but commercial relations weren't resumed between the two nations until 1992. Considering the fact that Japan and Vietnam's formal strategic cooperation has only been in effect for a very short time, the two countries now have a solid security framework in place.

The development of Japanese-Vietnamese security cooperation, which began in the 1990s when the two countries established their economic ties and extended through 2018, as well as the two countries' current security cooperation, will be discussed in this section. Furthermore, we examine the four joint declarations made by Japan and Vietnam on their strategic partnership and how they have evolved over time, starting with the 2006 "Towards a Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia" through the 2017 "Joint Statement on Deepening the Extensive Strategic Partnership."

When Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Prime Minister of Japan and Vo Van Kiet the Prime Minister of Vietnam engaged in security dialogues, the countries attempted to establish a maritime security cooperation.

Furthermore, the Chinese invasion of Mischief Reef in 1995 raised tensions in Southeast Asia and prompted countries like Vietnam to consider extra-regional security cooperation, according to Koh (2018, p.155).

According to Vietnam Ministry of National Defense (2024), Deputy Defense Minister of Vietnam, Lieutenant General Hoang Xuan Chien, visited Tokyo in 2024, reaffirmed his support for Japan's security partnership with the US and highlighted how it assisted to maintain regional stability. In addition, General Chien promised “opening up opportunities for multifaceted cooperation between the two defence ministries”, according to Vietnam Ministry of National Defense (2024).

3. Vietnam and Japan Strategic Partnership

Since 1999 the security dialogues started to yield tangible results. First, Tokyo decided to accept three Vietnamese students annually in the National Defense Academy of Japan. Also, it was the first time when Japanese warships had visited Vietnam when the JS Kashima and JS Hamagiri, two Japanese MSDF vessels, made a stop at Ho Chi Minh City on May 9, 1999. From 2000 to 2003, Japan and Vietnam held defense and security dialogue exchanges despite the fact that there was limited actual cooperation between the maritime law enforcement authorities or the defense institutions of either state (Truong and Ngoc, 2023).

The study's findings demonstrate that Japan and Vietnam repeatedly held expert-level discussions on foreign policy and defense, and Hanoi is expressing interest in strengthening security and defense cooperation (Foreign Ministry of Vietnam, 2023).

Vietnam's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2023) reports that Vietnam and Japan have “finalized four agreements pertaining to a Joint Strategic alliance,” which restate their goals of forging a strategic alliance or enhancing their ongoing collaboration. These joint declarations illustrate how dedicated both countries are to enhancing their security

connections while simultaneously enhancing their economic ties, according to Truong and Ngoc (2023).

The first joint statement "Japan-the Socialist Republic of Vietnam Foreign Ministers' Joint Statement towards a Higher Sphere of Ensuring Partnership," was made in 2004. Later it was extended to the "Japan-Vietnam Joint Statement towards a Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia" which was signed by Japan and Vietnam on October 19, 2006 (Truong and Ngoc, 2023).

The 2006 Joint Declaration specifies six areas for greater interaction and cooperation between the two nations, including technology transfers, cultural exchanges, and economic and development cooperation. In the declaration, Vietnam and Japan promise to work together both bilaterally and multilaterally to deal with these issues, emphasizing that terrorism, human trafficking, the proliferation of Weapon of Mass Destruction (WMD), and drug usage are threats to stability and security, according to MOFA (2006). Vietnamese support for Japan's permanent UN Security Council (UNSC) seat was stated in the 2006 Joint Declaration, according to Truong and Ngoc (2023).

The second joint strategic partnership agreement "Japan-Vietnam Joint Declaration on the Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia" was signed in 2009. The 2009 Joint Declaration confirmed the existence of a Strategic Partnership between Vietnam and Japan and indicated that both parties aimed to improve their relations and acknowledged the collaboration established via previous accords, according to MOFA (2009). However, Vietnam did not provide support for Japan's

permanent UN Security Council seat despite the Joint Declaration of 2006 (Truong and Ngoc, 2023).

In 2014, Vietnam and Japan decided to enhance the status of their Strategic Partnership via the “Japan-Viet Nam Joint Statement on the Establishment of the Extensive Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia”, according to Truong and Ngoc (2023).

The study's findings indicate that in contrast to the Joint Statements of 2006 and 2009, the 2014 "Extensive Strategic Partnership" statement looks at regional and international concerns as well as bilateral defense and security cooperation. In fact, the new partnership was a commitment to enhanced political trust through increased bilateral cooperation.

Furthermore, the study's findings demonstrate that The Extensive Strategic Partnership agreement places more emphasis on defense collaboration than other areas of cooperation. It seems that the two nations agreed to keep the vice-ministerial level of communication open. Also, for the first time, Japan and Vietnam acknowledge that the JSDF and the People's Army of Vietnam need to cooperate more closely together. The declaration further notes that Prime Minister Abe approved to provide a research team to Vietnam in order to determine the ideal methods to assist Vietnam in developing its maritime security capabilities.

The "Joint Statement on Deepening the Japan-Vietnam Extensive Strategic Partnership" was released three years later, in 2017. This was another step in Japan and Vietnam's commitment to further collaboration. Similar to the Extensive Strategic

Partnership agreement of 2014, this statement demonstrates that cooperation on defense and security became an essential component of significance for both nations, according to Truong and Ngoc (2023). According to MOFA (2017), the two countries agreed to strengthen current collaboration on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) capabilities, taking part in UN peacekeeping missions, and maritime security in order to promote successful dialogue and exchanges.

The study's findings demonstrate that the declaration refers to Prime Minister Abe's promise to collaborate with Vietnam on enhancing its capacity for maritime law enforcement and pledges to offer both new and used patrol vessels.

4. Indonesia and Japan Security Cooperation

In light of Indonesia's protectionist stance after WWII and during the Cold War, political and diplomatic relations between Japan and Indonesia were complicated, and collaboration largely depended on economic benefits for the two sides. Currently, with China's rising power, both nations have increased their areas of cooperation, including developments in the SCS, Indo-Pacific strategy, and challenges related to the Malacca Strait. Japan and Indonesia have been developing their security cooperation in recent years, driven by shared concerns over regional security challenges.

5. Indonesia and Japan Strategic Partnership

The 1990s witnessed deterioration in Indonesia-Japan ties as a result of criticism of Japan's unconditional assistance for economic development in response to Indonesia's annexation of and atrocities in East Timor. As a result, foreign development assistance

to Indonesia was discontinued; however, Japan maintained its support for Indonesia based on Indonesia's long-term political stability compared with other states in the region. Japan's non-interference approach shifted after China's regional power increased and Japan began to exert influence in order to ensure Indonesia's democratic stability. For example, Japan's aid in separating Indonesia's military and police forces was the initial source of support for the democratization process, according to Honna (2018).

Moreover, one of the main principles of Abe's extended security strategy was the relaxation of export prohibitions subsequent to the establishment of the new Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology in 2014 (Honna, 2018).

Furthermore, Prime Minister Abe and President Yudhoyono issued the "Strategic Partnership for a Peaceful and Prosperous Future" joint declaration in 2006, which defined further pledges to regional peace initiatives, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam (2023). Following the announcement, Japan supplied Indonesia with three patrol vessels the following year. The project was included in Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) and it was intended to be used solely as a deterrent to terrorism and piracy.

The study shows that these factors demonstrate the delicate balance between Japan's development assistance and defense capacity-building in the Southeast Asia region during the Abe administration. The study also believes that the Abe administration's policies in Southeast Asia demonstrate a profound increase in security and defense cooperation with Indonesia, not only as a result of China's more aggressive

claims and changes in regional security but also as a result of Indonesia's core member status within ASEAN.

The Factors That Shape the Security Mechanisms among Vietnam, Indonesia, and Japan

As a result of China's reclamation efforts and the building of airfields on artificial islands in the Spratly archipelago, Vietnam and Indonesia are concerned that China is expanding its military reach far into maritime Southeast Asia. Consequently, Japan is also growing more concerned about the security of Southeast Asia.

The study's research demonstrates that the late Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe specified in his speech to the 183rd Session of the Diet that enhancing Japan's relations with ASEAN countries is "indispensable for the peace and prosperity of the region while also being in Japan's national interests", according to the office of the Prime Minister of Japan (2013). In the same way, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, during his visits to Vietnam and Indonesia in 2020, emphasized Japan's goal of expanding its cooperation with Southeast Asia, especially with Vietnam and Indonesia, as Tam Sang also notes (2021).

The success of security measures and military are examined along with the factors that shape them. From the author's point of view, there is a clear relation amid security and the military because the military plays a significant role in security as Hao (2022) also

notes. In the following paragraphs, we will describe how several factors shape the military and security mechanisms among Vietnam, Indonesia, and Japan.

The study's findings indicate that Japan considers Vietnam as the platform for boosting its impact throughout Southeast Asia, particularly in view of the nation's elevated profile as a result of its successful campaign for ASEAN centrality during its 2020 ASEAN chairmanship. From the author's point of view, China now leads Japan in the competition to dominate Southeast Asia's economy, but Japan is embarking on an effort to enhance its security and defense cooperation with ASEAN member states. For example, Japan is increasing security and defense cooperation with Vietnam intending to persuade it to join the Indo-Pacific "Quadrilateral" alliance.

This study's research indicates that Vietnam and Indonesia's shared concerns about China's territorial claims in the South China Sea, have led them to adopt a strategic counterbalancing approach against China. In addition, Tokyo, Jakarta, and Hanoi's growing fears about living in a new "Sino-centric order" have also been made more serious by Vietnam's and Japan's complicated relations with Beijing and their territorial and maritime disputes with China. On the other hand, the rising aggressiveness of China in the East and South China Seas has resulted in an improvement in military and security cooperation between Vietnam, Indonesia, and Japan since 2012. Meanwhile, Japan has started to promote an active outreach in order to increase its strategic alliances with ASEAN countries, with a specific focus on Vietnam and Indonesia.

As a result, Vietnam and Indonesia are collaborating more with Japan to reinforce their comprehensive policy, specifically now that Southeast Asia is receiving more

attention from Japan. For instance, Vietnam Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Nguyen Minh Vu stated that “Vietnam always considers Japan as a long-term and leading important partner”, at a meeting with a visiting delegation of the Japan-Vietnam parliamentary friendship alliance in Hanoi, according to Vietnam Plus (2023). Furthermore, in 2016, Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang stated that Japan is "one of Vietnam's most important cooperative partners" (Nguyen, 2016).

The author believes that building human capacity, providing coast guard ships, interoperability training, developing marine domain awareness, and having Japanese naval ships visit Vietnamese ports are all elements of the strategic cooperation among Vietnam and Japan as Nagy (2021) also notes.

In the author's opinion, the conventional understanding of security as a political instrument no longer applies to current research on military and security systems which tend to be concentrated on economic factors as Frazier and Hutto (2017) also accept as accurate. For instance, the military and security strategies of the United States and China shift over time due to changes in their economic ties and challenges to their economic interests in the global market.

1. Main Factors that Shape the Security Mechanisms between Vietnam and Japan

After studying Nagy (2021), Koh (2018), and Nguyen (2016), we come to the conclusion that Vietnam and Japan have developed a strategic cooperation partnership in recent years in response to China's increasing power in the region. The author believes

that this is the main factor for their cooperation, with a focus on security, economic, and diplomatic cooperation. We describe the key elements in greater detail below:

1. **Defense Cooperation:** Vietnam and Japan have pushed for the possibility to restructure defense cooperation by forming an innovative form of alliance. The significant development is the ratification of the Japan-Vietnam Defense Equipment and Technology Transfer Agreement in September 2021. The agreement will likely accelerate negotiations over the transfer of particular equipment, including vessels. Both parties also stated their intention to advance cooperation in order to sign memorandums on military medical care and cybersecurity.
2. **Regional Security Cooperation:** Vietnam and Japan have increased their security cooperation in recent years, particularly in reaction to the aggressiveness of China in the South China Sea. Japan has provided Vietnam with maritime patrol vessels and other equipment to enhance its maritime security capabilities. The two countries have also carried out combined military drills and signed a defense cooperation agreement in 2018.
3. **Maritime Security Cooperation:** Vietnam and Japan's cooperation in maritime capacity-building aligns with their shared strategic objectives, which include countering China's growing aggressiveness in territorial and maritime disputes and safeguarding the security of maritime trade routes. Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific vision for an international rules-based order aligns with Vietnam's need for maritime capacity building support. Since 2021, Japan's involvement in bilateral

cooperation has taken center stage and consists of equipment transfers, joint drills, and training seminars.

4. **Political Cooperation:** Vietnam and Japan have also strengthened their diplomatic ties in recent years. Vietnam's application for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council has received support from Japan. Also, Japan has provided assistance for Vietnam's participation in international organizations. The two countries have also held high-level diplomatic meetings, including visits by the Japanese Prime Minister and the Vietnamese President.
5. **Infrastructure Development:** Japan has been involved in several infrastructure projects in Vietnam, including the construction of the Nhật Tân Bridge in Hanoi and the Ho Chi Minh City Metro. Japan has also provided funding for the development of Vietnam's infrastructure through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).
6. **Economic Cooperation:** Japan has been a key partner in Vietnam's economic development, providing financial assistance and investment in various industries. In 2018, Japan became Vietnam's largest foreign investor, with a total investment of \$9.11 billion. The two countries have also signed various trade agreements, including the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and the Japan-Vietnam Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA).
7. **Human Resource Development:** Japan has been helping Vietnam in developing its human resources, particularly in the areas of education and vocational training.

Japan has established several vocational training centers in Vietnam and has also provided scholarships to Vietnamese students to study in Japan.

8. Cultural Cooperation: Vietnam and Japan have also promoted cultural exchange as part of their strategic cooperation. Japan has provided funding for the construction of the Vietnam-Japan Friendship Culture Center in Hanoi, which serves as a venue for cultural exchange activities. The two countries have also held various cultural events, such as the Vietnam-Japan Festival and the Japan Cultural Days in Vietnam.
9. Environmental Cooperation: Vietnam and Japan have also collaborated on environmental issues, particularly in the area of climate change. Japan has provided technical assistance and funding for Vietnam's initiatives aim to decrease its emissions of greenhouse gases and prepare for the implications of climate change.

The factors discussed above demonstrate that the framework for the security cooperation mechanism between Vietnam and Japan has been based on multilateral, mutual trust, and shared values, and has contributed to regional stability and prosperity. Also, their cooperation has focused on maritime security, defense cooperation, regional security cooperation, political cooperation, economic cooperation, infrastructure development, human resource development, cultural cooperation, and environmental cooperation. In light of the foregoing, the author judges that the aforementioned developments have strengthened the position of the ASEAN states bordering the South China Sea in protecting their offshore interests, in particular offshore natural resources,

from encroachments by China. We predict that the economic and security cooperation between Japan and ASEAN member states will continue to develop further.

2. Main Factors that Shape the Security Mechanisms between Indonesia and Japan

Without a doubt, the adoption of a collective self-defense strategy is one of Japan's most significant security policy reforms in 2016. Formerly, the use of force by Japan was only authorized in the case of a direct military attack on the country. The new collective self-defense policy allows Japan to deploy its military forces to support the armed forces of other countries in situations when there is a "significant impact on Japan's peace and security" (Setiawan, 2016). In light of Japan's new military strategy and its deteriorating relations with China, Indonesia is a major player in efforts to actively negotiate a deal with Japan to keep South East Asia stable.

The study's findings indicate that the security of countries both inside and outside of the Indo-Pacific region can be impacted by the emergence of a strategic threat in that region. Similarly, Indonesia, a country situated in the heart of the Indo-Pacific, is addressing its regional security challenges through a number of defense and security cooperation initiatives. Besides, Japan and Indonesia have a longstanding strategic partnership built on economic relations, security cooperation, and shared democratic values.

After studying the previously described factors and examining Inkiriwang (2021), Honna (2018), and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (2019), we

conclude that Indonesia and Japan have developed a strategic cooperation partnership in recent years in response to China's increasing power in the region. This is the main factor for their cooperation, with a focus on economic, security, and diplomatic cooperation. We describe the key elements in greater detail below:

1. Defense Cooperation: Indonesia and Japan have also been expanding their defense cooperation in recent years. In 2015, the two countries signed a defense cooperation agreement, which includes provisions for information exchange, joint research and development, and training and education.
2. Regional Security Cooperation: Indonesia and Japan have also been cooperating with other countries in the region to promote regional security and stability. For example, Japan has participated in the trilateral defense dialogue with the United States and Indonesia, which aims to enhance regional security cooperation and maintain the rule of law in the South China Sea.
3. Maritime Security Cooperation: Indonesia and Japan have been working together to enhance their maritime security capabilities, mainly in the fields of maritime surveillance and search and rescue. Japan has provided Indonesia with patrol boats and technical assistance to enhance its maritime security capabilities.
4. Political Cooperation: Indonesia and Japan hold regular high-level political dialogue, including meetings between their foreign ministers and leaders. In 2020, Japanese Prime Minister Suga Yoshihide and Indonesian President Joko Widodo held a virtual summit, during which they reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening their strategic partnership.

5. **Economic Cooperation:** Japan is one of Indonesia's largest trading partners and investors, with bilateral trade between the two countries reaching \$31 billion in 2020. Japan has also provided financial and technical assistance to Indonesia for infrastructure development, including the construction of toll roads and railways.
6. **Energy Cooperation:** Indonesia and Japan have been cooperating in the energy sector, particularly in the areas of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and renewable energy. Japan is one of the largest importers of LNG from Indonesia and has provided technical assistance to help Indonesia develop its renewable energy sector.
7. **Human Resource Development:** Japan has been working with Indonesia to develop its human resources through educational and vocational training programs. Japan has established several vocational training centers in Indonesia and has granted financial aid for Indonesian students to study in Japan.
8. **Disaster Management:** Indonesia and Japan have been cooperating on disaster management, given Indonesia's vulnerability to natural disasters. Japan has provided technical assistance and financial support to help Indonesia improve its disaster management capabilities, including the construction of earthquake-resistant buildings and the development of early warning systems.
9. **Science and Technology Cooperation:** Indonesia and Japan have also been working together on science and technology cooperation, particularly in the areas of information technology and biotechnology. Japan has provided technical assistance and funding to help Indonesia develop its science and technology

capabilities, including the establishment of a joint research center for biotechnology.

Overall, the author believes that the security and stability of this region have been largely attributed to Indonesia and Japan's cooperation mechanism, as well as their multilateral relations, shared ideals, and mutual trust basis. Defense cooperation, maritime security, regional security cooperation, economic development, resource development, and energy cooperation have been the main areas of cooperation between them.

ASEAN Countries' Cooperation with Japan on Political and Security Matters, in Modernizing Military Hardware and Enhancing Their Military Capabilities

According to Japan's Ministry of Defense, "there are a number of challenges existing in the region, including in Japan's vicinity, such as the rapid modernization of military forces and intensification of military activities" by China (MOD, 2023).

As a result, in the National Defense Program Guidelines (2018), the Ministry of Defense/Japan Self-Defense Forces (MOD/JSDF) declares that "Japan will strategically promote multifaceted and multilayered security cooperation, taking into account characteristics and situations specific to each region and country, in line with the vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific" (MOD, 2023).

Therefore, "Japan will aggressively employ its defense capability to cooperate on defense exchanges and collaboration, including joint training and exercises, defense equipment and technology cooperation, capacity building support, and interchanges among military services" (MOD, 2023).

Consequently, this study emphasizes four key components of success for ASEAN-Japan security cooperation. These key components are Japan's capacity-building assistance, Japan's cutting-edge military equipment and technology assistance, joint training and exercises, and interchanges among military branches between ASEAN countries and Japan.

Based on the integration of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) and the "ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific (AOIP)," released by ASEAN in June 2019, as well as possibilities of integration between FOIP and AOIP, Japan has increased defense cooperation and exchanges with the ASEAN Member States.

A number of practical cooperation initiatives, including capacity building, bilateral training exercises, and cooperation in defense technology and equipment, are being increased with ASEAN Member States. The "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" (FOIP) concept was originally mentioned by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in August 2016.

According to the Japanese government, FOIP is an initiative that pursues to development of a unified ASEAN. For the region as a whole to experience peace and prosperity, a unified ASEAN is necessary to uphold the rules-based international order in a comprehensive, inclusive, and transparent framework for regional integration. (MOD, 2023)

In addition to these types of bilateral relationships, multilateral frameworks are also making progress in terms of cooperation with ASEAN like the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus). Furthermore, the "Vientiane Vision 2.0" which acts as a road map for future ASEAN-Japan security

cooperation, is also shared by Japan with ASEAN Member States. In November 2019, at the ASEAN-Japan Defense Ministers' Meeting in Bangkok, Japanese Defense Minister Taro Kono presented the updated Vientiane Vision 2.0, which replaces the original version introduced in 2016. The main focuses of Vientiane Vision 2.0 are the exchange of defense equipment and infrastructure, the training and development of defense sector personnel, and joint defensive exercises with ASEAN allies (MOD, 2019).

Former Japanese Defense Minister Satoshi Morimoto, in an interview, stated that ASEAN member states will benefit as Japan aims to enhance its security cooperation with the regional alliance via Vientiane Vision 2.0 (Malay Mail, 2019).

Satoshi Morimoto added that "Tokyo is keen to play a more proactive role in strengthening its bilateral relations with ASEAN through defense cooperation, and in the long term contribute to the prosperity, stability, security of this region." (Malay Mail, 2019)

Despite the fact that the new mechanism for security cooperation has not yet been revealed, a number of scholars, including Tomotaka Shoji and Takeshi Yuzawa, have argued that ASEAN and Japan's security cooperation should and will evolve. Yuzawa (2007, p.45) argues that Japan invested a significant determination to persuade the United States of the value and efficiency of a multilateral security cooperation for regional security. Furthermore, Japan should maintain its own initiatives to cooperate with ASEAN, and that Japan is in an ideal position to succeed in doing so due to its extensive record of participation with ASEAN and dedication to collaboration with other nations who share similar ideals, according to Shoji (2010, p.17). This development could be determined by

analyzing related data gathered through observations, case studies, and joint statements released by leaders and authorities.

This study's research indicates that the regional middle powers such as Vietnam, Indonesia, and the Philippines will play a crucial role in determining the future security of the Indo-Pacific as China and the United States' strategic rivalry escalates, as Campbell (2023) also notes. We recognize that as China's power grows, we think Beijing realizes it has the ability to affect world politics and is trying to transform the current system into one that more closely aligns with the principles of the Chinese Communist Party (CPP) and reinforces China's image as the "Centre of the World".

According to this study's findings, middle-sized nations in the region are more likely to work with the United States to increase their military arsenal and improve their military strength if Chinese diplomacy does not succeed, which Campbell (2023, p.49) also supports. As a result, we predict that middle powers will be extremely important in determining the future of the Indo-Pacific.

Vietnam's Military Cooperation with Japan

Following an examination of the published works of Nagy (2021), Koh (2018), and Nguyen (2016), the author we come to the conclusion that Vietnam and Japan have been expanding their military ties in recent years, with a focus on enhancing Vietnam's maritime security capabilities and countering China's growing assertiveness in the region. Below, we provide several examples:

1. Joint Military Exercises: Japan and Vietnam have conducted joint military exercises, including naval drills, to enhance their interoperability and strengthen

their maritime security capabilities. In 2020, the two countries conducted their first-ever joint naval exercise in the East Sea (also known as the South China Sea), which involved the Japanese destroyer JS Ariake and the Vietnamese frigate Dinh Tien Hoang.

2. **Military Equipment Transfers:** Japan has provided Vietnam with military equipment, including six patrol boats, to enhance its maritime security capabilities. In 2020, Japan also announced that it would transfer defense equipment and technology to Vietnam, including radar systems and communication equipment, to help Vietnam improve its defense capabilities.
3. **Defense Cooperation Agreement:** In 2018, Japan and Vietnam signed a defense cooperation agreement, which paved the way for additional military collaboration between the two nations. The agreement includes provisions for information exchange, joint research and development, and training and education.
4. **Regional Security Cooperation:** Japan and Vietnam have also cooperated with other countries in the region to promote security and stability. For example, Japan has participated in the trilateral defense dialogue with the United States and Vietnam, which aims to enhance regional security cooperation and maintain the rule of law in the South China Sea.
5. **Maritime Security:** Japan and Vietnam have been working together to enhance their maritime security capabilities, particularly in the South China Sea. Japan has provided Vietnam with six used patrol boats, which are being used to patrol Vietnam's territorial waters and protect its fishermen. Japan has also provided

technical assistance to Vietnam in the areas of maritime surveillance and search and rescue.

6. Intelligence Sharing: Japan and Vietnam have also been cooperating on intelligence sharing, particularly on issues related to maritime security and regional stability. In 2018, Japan and Vietnam signed an agreement to share classified information on security issues, which is expected to facilitate greater cooperation between their defense and intelligence agencies.
7. Counterterrorism Cooperation: Japan and Vietnam have also been cooperating on counterterrorism, particularly in the areas of sharing information and building capacity. Japan has provided technical assistance to Vietnam in the areas of counterterrorism law enforcement and border management.
8. Peacekeeping Operations: Japan and Vietnam have also been cooperating on peacekeeping operations, with Japan providing training and technical assistance to Vietnam in the areas of peacekeeping operations and disaster relief. In 2019, Vietnam sent a team of peacekeepers to South Sudan as part of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, which was supported by Japan.

After Japan's policy on transferring weapons to foreign nations changed, Tokyo decided to give Vietnam six used patrol vessels in 2014, according to Nguyen and Pham (2017). The first boat was delivered in August 2015. These small patrol vessels required modifications to function properly and weighed between 600 and 800 tonnes (Nguyen and Pham, 2017). The extent of visits by Japan's Minister of Self-Defense Forces and Japanese Coast Guard to Vietnam is displayed in figure 3.

Figure 3. Visits by JMSDF and Japanese Coast Guard to Vietnam.

Date of Visit	Organization	Vessel Name if known	Port if Known
7 May 1999	JMSDF	<i>JS Kashima; JS Hamagiri</i>	Ho Chi Minh City
14 April 2003	JMSDF	<i>JS Asayuki; JS Shirayuki</i>	Ho Chi Minh City
January 2007	Coast Guard	<i>JCGS Yashima</i>	Da Nang
March 2008	JMSDF	<i>JS Yamayuki; JS Matsuyuki</i>	Ho Chi Minh City
17 September 2011	JMSDF	<i>JS Uraga; JS Tsushima</i>	Danang
12 March 2012	JMSDF	<i>JS Hamagiri; JS Sawayuki; JS Asayuki</i>	Haiphong
7 September 2012	Coast Guard	<i>JCGS Shikishima</i>	Haiphong
30 July 2013	Coast Guard	<i>JCGS Kojima</i>	Da Nang
19 October 2013	JMSDF	<i>JS Kashima; JS Shirayuki; JS Isayuki</i>	Da Nang
March 2014	Unknown	P-3C Orion	Ho Chi Minh City
7 June 2014	JMSDF	<i>JS Kunisaki</i>	Da Nang
15 April 2015	JMSDF	<i>JS Asayuki; JS Kirisame</i>	Da Nang
May 2015	Unknown	P-3C Orion	Da Nang
10 May 2015	Coast Guard	<i>JCGS Yashima</i>	Da Nang
18 February 2016	Unknown	P-3C Orion	Da Nang
12 April 2016	JMSDF	<i>JS Ariake; JS Setogiri</i>	Cam Ranh Bay
29 May 2016	JMSDF	<i>JS Uraga; JS Takashima</i>	Cam Ranh Bay
15 July 2016	JMSDF	<i>JSDS Shimokita</i>	Da Nang
25 July 2016	Coast Guard	<i>JCGS Kojima</i>	Da Nang
13 April 2017	JMSDF	<i>JMSDF Fuyuzuki</i>	Cam Ranh Bay
20 May 2017	JMSDF	<i>JS Izumo; JS Sazanami</i>	Cam Ranh Bay
17 May 2018	JMSDF	<i>JS Osumi</i>	Khanh Hoa province
18 September 2018	JMSDF	<i>JS Kuroshio</i>	Cam Ranh Bay

Source: Koh “The Vietnamese perspective on the security partnership with Japan” - 2018

Additionally, Vietnam and Japan have collaborated throughout the Pacific Partnership exercises. Due to the Pacific Partnership, Vietnam was able to collaborate with the US military, the JSDF, and other nations' armed forces in a range of situations. After observing in 2012 and 2016, Vietnam also took part in RIMPAC for the first time in 2018. Eight ships from Vietnam participated in the month-long exercise, which featured Search and Rescue (SAR) operations, live fire drills, and anti-aircraft and anti-submarine warfare training (Vietnam News Agency, 2018). According to Vietnam News Agency (2018), between 2011 and 2018, the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) and

the Japan Coast Guard (JCG) warships made nineteen voyages, which included the first port visit by a Japanese submarine to Vietnam.

The author believes that based on Rocamora (2023) discussion, the deployment of the helicopter carrier JS Izumo in 2022 and 2023 signaled a shift in regional security cooperation. For instance, the most noteworthy aspect of the helicopter carrier JS Izumo's deployment to the Indo-Pacific is that it took part in a joint exercise with the naval forces of Vietnam and the Philippines.

There have been notable improvements in the two nations' defense cooperation since 2021. For example, Japan and Vietnam signed an agreement on September 11, 2021, to enhance their cooperation in response to concerns over China's rising military influence in the region, according to Parameswaran (2021). In the author's opinion, this agreement would allow the transfer of defense technology and equipment developed in Japan to Vietnam. As a result, this agreement elevates the two countries' defense partnership "to a new level" and that Japan and Vietnam plan to enhance defense ties through multinational joint exercises, as Japan's Defense Minister Nobuo Kishi also noted. In a statement, he added that details of the precise equipment transfer, including the transfer of navy vessels, will be worked out in subsequent meetings. Later, Japan and Vietnam signed an agreement on Nov 23, 2021, to cooperate in cybersecurity and space defense, after the parties rapidly increased their military cooperation due to concerns over China's increasing aggressiveness, according to the Japan Ministry of Defense (2021). As reported on February 13, 2023, Gen. Nguyen Tan Cuong, the deputy minister of defense and chief of staff of the Vietnam People's Army (VPA), stated that Vietnam has

always valued the development of its extensive strategic collaboration with Japan. (Vietnam News Agency, 2023).

The author concludes that these developments will certainly enhance defense and security cooperation between Vietnam and Japan, which will benefit both nations.

Indonesia's Military Cooperation with Japan

Following an examination of press releases issued by the Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia (2021) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (2018), we believe that Indonesia and Japan have been expanding their military relations in recent years, driven by shared concerns about regional security and stability.

It is necessary to keep in mind that Indonesia is the sole ASEAN country participating in the G20. We describe the key defense cooperation in detail below:

1. **Defense Cooperation Agreement:** Japan and Indonesia signed a defense cooperation agreement in 2015, which provides a framework for cooperation in areas such as joint training, capacity building, and information sharing.
2. **Joint Military Exercises:** Japan and Indonesia have conducted several joint military exercises in recent years, including a joint air exercise in 2018 and a joint naval exercise in 2019. These exercises are aimed at enhancing interoperability and building trust between the two countries' armed forces.
3. **Defense Equipment Cooperation:** Japan and Indonesia have also been cooperating on defense equipment, with Japan providing Indonesia with patrol

boats, transport aircraft, and other military hardware. In 2018, Indonesia announced plans to purchase Japanese-made fighter jets, marking a significant step in their defense cooperation.

4. **Maritime Security Cooperation:** Japan and Indonesia have been working together to enhance their maritime security capabilities, mainly in the areas of maritime surveillance and search and rescue. Japan has provided Indonesia with patrol boats and technical assistance to enhance its maritime security capabilities.
5. **Counterterrorism Cooperation:** Japan and Indonesia have also been cooperating on counterterrorism, particularly in the areas of information sharing and capacity building. Japan has provided technical assistance to Indonesia in the areas of counterterrorism law enforcement and border management.
6. **Regional Security Cooperation:** Japan and Indonesia have been working with other countries in the region to promote regional security and stability. For example, Japan has participated in the trilateral defense dialogue with the United States and Indonesia, which aims to enhance regional security cooperation and maintain the rule of law in the South China Sea.
7. **Peacekeeping Operations:** Japan and Indonesia have also cooperated on peacekeeping operations, with both countries contributing troops to United Nations peacekeeping missions. Japan has provided training and equipment to Indonesian peacekeeping forces, and the two countries have worked together to promote greater coordination in peacekeeping operations.

8. **Cybersecurity Cooperation:** Japan and Indonesia have also been cooperating on cybersecurity, given the increasing importance of digital technology in defense and security. Japan has provided technical assistance to Indonesia in the areas of cybersecurity policy and capacity building, and the two countries have worked together to develop common cybersecurity standards.
9. **Defense Industry Cooperation:** Japan and Indonesia have also been exploring opportunities for defense industry cooperation, with Indonesia seeking to develop its domestic defense industry. In 2019, Indonesia and Japan signed a memorandum of understanding on defense industry cooperation, which includes provisions for joint research and development, technology transfer, and the exchange of information.

In addition, we have observed growing considerable defense cooperation among Indonesia and Japan recently. This can be broken down into several cases.

For example, on March 30, 2021, during "two plus two" security talks between the two countries' foreign and defense ministers, Indonesia and Japan signed an agreement allowing the supply of Japanese defense technology and equipment to Indonesia as the two nations enhance their military cooperation in response to China's growing aggressive behavior in the region, according to Yamaguchi (2021). Additionally, they decided to actively take part in international military exercises and jointly create remote islands in the South China Sea.

Japanese Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japanese defense forces will join in Indonesia's Garuda Shield exercise for the first time from August 1, 2022, for two weeks,

according to Strangio (2022). As a result, Japan participated in the Garuda Shield military exercise with Indonesia in 2022 intending to ensure freedom of navigation. Likewise, Indonesia hosted Super Garuda Shield 2023 with seven countries including Japan, in an effort to promote security and stability in the region. This multinational, multi-force military exercise started in East Java, Indonesia, on August 31, 2023 (Gusty Da Costa, 2023).

Additionally, following talks with Indonesian President Joko Widodo in Tokyo, Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan will support Indonesia's efforts to strengthen its maritime security capabilities in order to maintain maritime safety and peace throughout the Indo-Pacific region, according to Yamaguchi (2022). He also said that Indonesia was a “key strategic partner for Japan” according to Strangio (2022).

The results of our study indicate that the Japanese defense forces' participation in the military exercises marks a turning point in Indonesia and Japan's defense and security cooperation. It is evident that as both nations have realized the importance of regional security and stability, their military relations have grown stronger in recent years. Their collaborations cover a number of areas, including regional security, peacekeeping missions, cybersecurity, and defense industry cooperation. They have worked together on joint military exercises, defense equipment, maritime security, counterterrorism, and intelligence sharing, with the objective of strengthening Indonesia's defense capabilities and fostering deeper cooperation based on shared concerns over regional security and stability.

The author believes that Indonesia, Vietnam, and Japan will help to shape the development of Japan's military and technological cooperation with ASEAN. Likewise, we

expect that such close cooperation amongst Japan and ASEAN countries will guarantee peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region in the future.

Chapter V

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

Conclusion

The Indo-Pacific and ASEAN region is now defined by the concept of connected oceans, with ASEAN countries at its hub and serving as the epicenter of great power rivalry. Consequently, due to the presence of multiple external players in various fields of regional cooperation, the region has developed into a dense area that increases the chances of accidents. The ASEAN countries have the ability to influence allies and rivals by putting emphasis on achieving their own goals. Additionally, they have succeeded in establishing a distinct position in the areas of infrastructure, politics, military, economics, and the environment. The ASEAN countries released the ASEAN's Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) in 2019, offering their own definition of the Indo-Pacific in response to the Indo-Pacific notions. In other words, putting a strong emphasis on cooperation and opposing "zero-sum competition."

The security cooperation between Vietnam, Indonesia, and Japan has expanded significantly since their first cooperation in the late 1990s. Nguyen's (2021) statements support the study's assessment that Japan has historically assisted the development of marine capacities in Southeast Asian nations by offering technology transfer, joint military exercises, and opportunities for defense personnel to train in Japan. As a result of these robust security cooperations, Japan will be exposed to any potential future conflicts with China, and ASEAN member states will not be left alone at a disadvantage. Moreover, the ongoing commitment from Japan certainly contributes to ASEAN's security. He adds that

these security cooperations aim to increase the state's capability for law enforcement and maritime technical expertise, enabling rapid and effective reactions to security threats.

For instance, the Japan-Vietnam Joint Statement, "Towards a Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia" from 2006 allowed both states to contribute more to security relations while additionally prioritizing higher-level discussions and economic cooperation. Later on, the "Japan-Vietnam Joint Statement on the Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia" published in 2009 formalized a strategic alliance between the two nations. When the strategic partnership was elevated to an "Extensive Strategic Partnership" in 2014, it was determined that its creation had benefited both states. In a joint statement from 2017, Japan and Vietnam highlighted their concerns over revisionist forces in the region and aspirations to change the status quo because the South China Sea is an important Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC) for both countries.

Kireeva's (2021) comments support this study's assessment that these initiatives indicate why Indonesia and Vietnam have enhanced their security cooperation with Japan, and Japan regards them as vital elements of its Indo-Pacific foreign policy.

It is evident that Vietnam, Indonesia, and Japan's strategic cooperation has been based on mutual trust, respect, and shared values, such as promoting free and open trade and upholding the rule of law. Their partnership has contributed to regional stability and prosperity and is expected to continue to grow in the years to come. Vietnam's involvement in the Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC) Its ongoing involvement in Pacific Partnership exercises demonstrates the nation's determination to engage in

international operations. Although the Japanese Self Defense Forces (JSDF) and Vietnamese military have not conducted many bilateral exercises, these bilateral operations enable both sides to cooperate together on a range of issues such as Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), drug and human trafficking, and piracy. This collaboration provides Japan and Vietnam with the capabilities needed to confront other states' vessels in disputed seas, while also allowing Vietnamese law enforcement authorities to continue operating at sea for extended periods of time by receiving updated maritime patrol ships from Japan.

Furthermore, Gronning's (2018, p.3) remarks support this study's assessment that the expansion of Indonesia, Vietnam, and Japan's military cooperation in recent years has been motivated by growing regional security and stability challenges as well as concerns about China's escalating regional assertiveness. The fundamental objective of their cooperation has been to improve Indonesia and Vietnam's defense capabilities. They have also developed close cooperation in the fields of maritime security, intelligence sharing, counterterrorism, and peacekeeping operations, as well as in the advancement of regional security and stability.

Moreover, Indonesian and Vietnamese leaders appear to want Japan to be an active participant in Southeast Asia, and they perceive Japan's position in the region as beneficial through aid and security cooperation. In general, Indonesia and Vietnam perceive Japan as the ideal ally in their fight against China in the South China Sea and for the modernization of their military forces and law enforcement. It is also evident that Japan's capacity-building aid for Vietnam and Indonesia is consistent with Tokyo's Free

and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) vision, which intends to increase Southeast Asian states' capacity for developing a regional rules-based order.

Another important issue is that ASEAN has debated several Indo-Pacific initiatives, such as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), which involves the United States, Japan, Australia, and India, because it has increased ASEAN's sense of vulnerability. However, external factors are not the only influences that impact ASEAN. There are also internal factors that influence ASEAN. ASEAN has long been criticized for undermining its own strategic framework by being divided internally and suffering from competing or incompatible security goals and threat assessments.

It is evident that the ASEAN's centrality is being undermined by the increased number of foreign initiatives competing for strategic priority and vitality in the Southeast Asian region as a whole. As a result, ASEAN is no longer the only regional organization, and it is no longer as central as it would want to be. Consequently, ASEAN centrality and unity may be preserved through bilateral security cooperation between ASEAN member states and Japan as a local player. The bilateral security cooperation will assist in determining the future multilateral cooperation between ASEAN and Japan.

The study comes to the conclusion that Vietnam and Indonesia have emerged as crucial partners for Japan's initiatives to enhance marine capacity in Southeast Asian states. The convergence of strategic objectives, particularly the security of maritime trade routes and rising concerns about what China is doing in the South China Sea in relation to territorial and maritime disputes has led to close security cooperation between Japan, Vietnam, and Indonesia to enhance their maritime capabilities. These cooperative

activities include the sharing of technology and equipment, combined drills with Coast Guard and Navy units, and training seminars.

Such close security cooperation reviewed above will ensure that Indonesia and Vietnam's security cooperation with Japan will not remain an isolated matter but it will encourage other ASEAN countries to form a close cooperation with Japan. These bilateral security cooperations will also form the basis for future cooperation between Japan and ASEAN as a whole. Above all, ASEAN also remains an effective narrative-creation and communication network.

Additionally, Japan has been offering assistance to ASEAN countries in the fields of primary, secondary, and higher education through initiatives like the Young Leaders' Program (YLP) and Asian Youth Fellowship (AYF). Furthermore, through the Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths (JENESYS) program, Japan continues to support ASEAN. JENESYS fosters mutual trust and understanding among the peoples of Japan and ASEAN, establishing the foundation for future partnership and cooperation. These programs greatly improve people-to-people engagement and exchanges, and they foster the development of students in accordance with the ASEAN Work Plan on Youth 2016-2020. Also, the ASEAN in Today's World program (ASTW) has been established by a group of universities from ASEAN Member States and Japan. It promotes cross-border mobility and the promotion of ASEAN studies programs and courses at the higher education level. It is a crucial component of the ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2016-2020.

Furthermore, Japan has been expanding ASEAN student admissions by increasing the number of government scholarships accessible and improving the environment and infrastructure for this purpose. It ensures that more scholars and experts will study this topic and write more literature about its significance. Also, it will promote a better understanding of ASEAN and East Asia affairs.

Recommendations

ASEAN and Japan have been cooperating since 1973, only six years after ASEAN was established (Bin Hassan, 2013). ASEAN–Japan cooperation is aligned with the ASEAN's fifty-year history. This is an important moment in history. The relationships between the ASEAN countries and Japan have largely been formed by economic factors, however this is anticipated to alter in the coming year.

Japan is currently regarded largely as an ally and partner that understands the needs and aspirations of ASEAN. The Japanese government is interpreting its pacifist constitution liberally, equipping itself with the necessary political and legal resources, and moving away from its policy of self-imposed self-defense in favor of a broader security profile.

The ASEAN-Japan security cooperation's strategic framework is often unpredictable. A single incident can change the whole picture, even when many other aspects stay the same. Likewise, a sudden and unanticipated event could drastically alter the cooperative environment. For example, China and Taiwan's tense relations might get

worse, possibly engaging the US, Japan, and other nations and driving both sides to the brink of open conflict.

Southeast Asia plays two roles in the rising geostrategic rivalry between the US and China: first, it is home to Japan's key marine lines of communication and natural resources for the country's "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" (FOIP) strategy. The 50th anniversary of Japan-ASEAN relations represents an excellent occasion for ASEAN to enhance its comprehensive security cooperation with Japan.

As ASEAN has experienced incredible progress during the past five decades, Japan-ASEAN relations have also significantly strengthened. The country of Japan ranks second in terms of foreign direct investment and the third-largest economic partner of ASEAN, according to Yasukazu (2023). In promoting regional and international peace and security, ASEAN plays a significant role. ASEAN is an essential partner for Japan because it upholds universal values like the rule of law, and Japan is dedicated to supporting ASEAN activities in this field.

A crucial geopolitical arena for Japan's "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" (FOIP) policy is Southeast Asia, not only because it features important maritime transportation routes and substantial natural resources, but also because it is a vital geostrategic arena for the competition between the United States and China, according to Yasukazu (2023). As a result, Japan should focus on a series of recommendations to boost relations with ASEAN and its member countries, specifically under the 1977 Fukuda Doctrine. Japan should continue to recognize ASEAN centrality and the ASEAN way and look forward to collaborate with ASEAN to promote regional development and security. Japan should

also collaborate with ASEAN member states to advance universal principles including liberty, democracy, and fundamental human rights.

ASEAN and ASEAN-led organizations have influenced Southeast Asia's political environment since the conclusion of the Cold War. They additionally contributed to the establishment of regional laws and regulations. As a result, ASEAN is crucial to Japan's Foreign Policy Initiative (FOIP) since Japan depends on its diplomatic support to uphold and strengthen the present rules-based international order, which has historically benefited Japan both diplomatically and economically. Therefore, as indicated in the MOFA statement (2023, p. 1), Japan ought to continuously display that it is fully in favor of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and ASEAN centrality and unity.

In addition, this study recommends that ASEAN and member states should encourage academics, business leaders, and government officials to enhance relations with Japan by means of the Expert Panel for the 50th Anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation and the "ASEAN-Japan Economic Co-Creation Vision" Project as indicated in the MOFA statement (2023, p.4).

This study recommends an ASEAN-Japan plan of action based on three principles: Collaborator for Peace and Security, Collaborator for Economic Prosperity, and Collaborator for People-to-People Connectivity.

In December 2022, Japan released the renowned "three security documents," namely Japan's National Security Strategy (NSS), National Defense Strategy (NDS), and Defense Buildup Program. Although ASEAN is essential for the establishment of regional order in Southeast Asia and the Indo-Pacific, according to Yasukazu (2023). The NSS,

however, is silent on the strategic positions that Japan wants ASEAN to play. Instead, by highlighting the importance and unity of ASEAN, the NDS reaffirms Japan's support for ASEAN-led security institutions such as the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting Plus, the East Asia Summit, and the ASEAN Regional Forum.

As we approach the 50th anniversary of ASEAN-Japan friendship and cooperation, this is an ideal opportunity for ASEAN to inquire that this be reflected in Japan's three security documents.

ASEAN is also facing strategic challenges. The emergence of international frameworks such as the Quad, AUKUS, and the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) tacitly calls into question ASEAN's centrality in the Indo-Pacific. Regional challenges, such as the South China Sea and the Myanmar coup, constitute obstacles to ASEAN unity.

It is advised that the following issues should receive top priority in any future political and security cooperation between ASEAN and Japan, regardless of whether it is carried out bilaterally between Japan and particular ASEAN nations or collectively with ASEAN as a whole:

1. Collaborating on defense partnership and engagements through cooperative exercises and training, technical assistance in the security and defense fields, exchange for fostering human resources, and technology collaboration as well as cooperation in defense.
2. Emphasis on building up defense capabilities.

3. Enhancing intelligence capabilities in the ongoing battle against terrorism and transnational crime.
4. Contributing to the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) in Malaysia, which offers counterterrorism training and capacity building.
5. Close collaboration between foreign policymakers and security agencies such as defense, maritime security, police, and intelligence.
6. Close cooperation on illegal drug production and trafficking including Myanmar, Thailand, and Laos.
7. Increasing official and backchannel diplomacy on political and security matters in order to form their common platform. The main issues include military enhancement programs and cooperation among regional states, China-Taiwan relations, the rise of China's aggressive behavior in the South China Sea, nuclear disarmament, weapons of mass destruction, the role of the United States in the region, and terrorism.
8. Close collaboration on piracy protection including Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore, individually and cooperatively.
9. ASEAN ought to voice serious reservations about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) ballistic missile launches and usage of ballistic missile technology. Tensions on the Korean Peninsula, coupled with the DPRK's recent increase in intercontinental ballistic missile testing and launches, are concerning developments that pose a threat to regional peace and stability.

10. Japan should keep playing a positive intermediary role in attempts to resolve conflicts in countries such as Myanmar.

11. ASEAN countries and Japan ought to work together to advance their shared interests and look for areas of mutual benefits in international organizations, and closely collaborate on global issues.

There are several reasons to be optimistic about the potential for increased political and security cooperation between ASEAN and Japan. These include the growing economic ties between the two sides, the policy of Japan to engage in the area more actively on the political and security fronts, and the growing ability of ASEAN and its members to cooperate with Japan and other countries through initiatives like ARF, ASEAN + 3, APEC, the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC), CSCAP, and a budding network of think tanks and nongovernmental organizations.

In accordance with the Implementation Plan of the Joint Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation Trusted Partners (MOFA, 2023), it is highly advised to enhance the friendship and cooperation between ASEAN and Japan, particularly through the complete and successful execution of the Revised Implementation Plan of the Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation: Shared Vision, Shared Identity, and Shared Future, as indicated in the MOFA statement (2023, p.1).

Moreover, in accordance with the Joint Statement on The Establishment of the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (MOFA, 2023), it is strongly encouraged that to establish a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) between ASEAN and Japan. In the 50th year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, the

CSP is significant, tangible, relevant, and advantageous to both parties. We all witnessed that in recognition of this historic occasion, the Joint Statement on the Establishment of the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Strategic Partnership was adopted.

Prospective political and security cooperation between Japan and specific ASEAN countries, or among ASEAN members overall, is advised to be carried out through bilateral channels, acknowledging the importance of refraining from interference in domestic disputes, and shall be open to suggestions, comments, and criticisms of conduct that is clearly in gross violation of human rights and recognized norms of international behavior. In accordance with the Implementation Plan of the Joint Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation Trusted Partners (MOFA, 2023), it is recommended that promoting peace, security, and stability throughout the region and throughout the Indo-Pacific should be the primary objective of political and security cooperation between ASEAN and Japan.

This study recommends that ASEAN implement a clear policy to emphasize the significance of regionalism, multilateralism, and respecting international law in promoting peace, stability, and prosperity on a global and regional scale. This study suggests that, in line with the Joint Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation Trusted Partners Implementation Plan (MOFA, 2023), ASEAN should be optimistic that Japan supports ASEAN unity and centrality, and that ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) aligns with Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) vision by sharing important core values for fostering peace and cooperation.

Furthermore, in line with the Joint Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation Trusted Partners Implementation Plan (MOFA, 2023), this study recommends that based on the Joint Statement of the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit on Cooperation on the AOIP, ASEAN should highlight its commitment to strengthen the ASEAN-Japan partnership through increased practical cooperation and collaboration in the four key spheres of the AOIP. Also, through "Vientiane Vision 2.0: Japan's Defense Cooperation Initiative with ASEAN," ASEAN should assist Japan in strengthening the abilities of ASEAN Member States' defense authorities. ASEAN should support the Japan-ASEAN Defense Vice-Ministerial Forum, as well as the operationalization of the ASEAN Direct Communications Infrastructure (ADI) among Japan and the ASEAN Member States.

This study, in accordance with the Implementation Plan of the Joint Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation Trusted Partners (MOFA, 2023), emphasizes the necessity to keep improving collaboration in order to tackle security concerns that are shared by all, such as international economic crime, maritime security, and transnational crime. Also, in accordance with the Implementation Plan of the Joint Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation Trusted Partners (MOFA, 2023), this study emphasizes the implementation of the renewed ASEAN Plus Japan Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC + Japan) Work Plan on Cooperation to Combat Transnational Crime (2023-2027) under the ASEAN Plus Japan Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC + Japan) Consultation framework and emphasized the necessity of making sure it is implemented promptly and successfully.

Finally, in line with the Joint Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation Trusted Partners Implementation Plan (MOFA, 2023), in addition to encouraging greater cooperation in the fight against cyber threats, this study emphasises how crucial it is that Japan supports ASEAN Member States in strengthening their cyber defenses via the ASEAN-Singapore Cybersecurity Center of Excellence (ASCCE) and the ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Center (AJCCBC).

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