

Does a Security Order Exist in Asia?

by
Dr. Muthiah Alagappa

Muthiah Alagappa: John, thank you very much for the kind introduction. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the Sasakawa Peace Foundation for this opportunity to present the book that just appeared about a couple of months ago. And it is also a great pleasure to be here on the panel with my colleagues, Dave Kang and Ming Wan. Three of us together with another—I'm not sure—another nine, ten, we were together in a project on Asian security. The project started about some time in 1999, and the book appeared December of last year.

Talking about—sorry, I'm recovering from a cold—talking about Asian security order, this particular time, it's somewhat timely, but it's also highly dangerous, in one sense. We speak about order, but right now there's so many issues in question both in relation to North Korea, the war on terrorism, and so forth. The question is whether an order exists that encompasses these issues.

I will make a case for the existence of the security order in Asia. But let me begin with some words on how people think about Asia. The way we have defined Asia for the project, it includes Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, and also Central Asia. But for want of expertise, we really did not include Central Asia case studies. But we do cover all the other three sub-regions.

So when one thinks about security in Asia, automatically one is drawn to the numerous challenges that confront the region. Despite the fact that the Cold War has ended, one only has to look at the acute conflicts in the Korean peninsula and Taiwan and Kashmir, the territorial conflicts both on land and at sea, the nuclear question, the changes, the distribution of power and now, of course, the war on terrorism.

Some Scholars See Asia as a Dangerous Place

One can quite easily come to the conclusion that Asia is in fact full of conflict and a dangerous place. And this is in fact the thesis that has been advanced by quite a number of scholars. Aaron Friedburg is the one that's cited very frequently, but also Barry Buzan, the late Gerald Seagal, Tom Christenson, Charles Kupchan, you can go on listing them. And this particular trend became even more pronounced after the 1997 financial crisis. People began to characterize Asia as an unstable place.

And here again, there are lots of people, both economists and political economists, who began to view Asia as unstable and unpredictable. And of course, the war on terror, especially with Southeast Asia being projected as the second front in the war, and also South Asia for being what it is, and now the North Korean nuclear standoff.

With all this, it's undeniable that Asia faces serious security challenges, and that some rivalry and competition are still featured in the evolving strategic picture. However, I'd argue that it's not a foregone conclusion; that Asia is a dangerous place characterized by capricious interaction and instability. Contemporary Asia is a far more stable and predictable place than during the early post-independence period that coincided with the height of the Cold War.

That period, witnessed among others in the Korean War, the French and American Indo-China wars, the Indonesian confrontation against Malaysia and Singapore, Soviet, Chinese, and Vietnamese-supported communism insurgencies in several Southeast Asian countries, North Vietnam's conquest of South Vietnam, Vietnam's invasion and occupation

of Cambodia and Laos, 1978, '79, the three Indo-Pakistani wars, the Sino-India border war, the Sino-Soviet military confrontation, and you can list other wars and insurgencies. So there were numerous wars and insurgencies in the Cold War.

Asia Enjoyed Relative Peace for Two Decades

So for the better part of three decades, Asia was really a region in turmoil. Now Asia has enjoyed relative peace and stability for more than two decades. There has not been a major war since the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia, and despite periodic tensions, there has not been a war across the Taiwan Strait or in the Korean Peninsula. The Kashmir conflict has witnessed much greater military activity and casualties, but even here despite the acquisition of nuclear capabilities by India and Pakistan and periodic crisis, military activity has remained largely at a low intensity level.

With very few exceptions, Asian states do not fear for their survival. And even when survival is at stake, as in the case of Taiwan, international interaction is not always governed by considerations of survival and threat of force. The international, political, economic, and social interaction of most Asian states occurs in the context of a stable and predictable environment, and generally is in a court with internationally accepted principles and norms. International power and position are important, but these are long-range considerations, not immediate triggers of behavior. Contemporary Asia is much more stable than Asia of the past, and India most stable than several other regions. There is little likelihood that such stability will be undermined quickly.

I realize here I'm making some very bold assertions, which people may want to challenge. Not only has Asia experienced relative peace and stability, but it has also prospered. Of course, the continuing economic stagnation in Japan and the financial crisis of 1997 that affected Thailand, South Korea, Indonesia,

and Malaysia, has tarred Asia's miracle economy image. But notwithstanding this sobering development, it's important to acknowledge that the spectacular growth enjoyed by the East and Southeast Asian countries for over twenty years has transformed their economies, which continue to grow but at slower but respectable rates. China's economy continues to grow at a fast pace, where that of India has picked up, and Asia has emerged as one of the three centers of the global economy.

And I think the predictability and stability that I'm talking about are quite remarkable in light of the persistence of the many challenges that I alluded to at the beginning of my presentation. And these, of course, involve the major powers, the spread of nuclear weapons and missile systems, and the lingering suspicions and animosities among the major players, as well as the many internal political and economic challenges they continue to confront in several of the Asian countries.

Likelihood of War Has Diminished Considerably

But I think one cannot rule out the outbreak of war. It's important to acknowledge, it seems to me, that the likelihood has diminished considerably, and there is much greater predictability interaction of parties to the conflict. I think over the years it's possible to argue that Asian states have reached certain understandings and developed formal and informal forums and rules to manage their interaction and to adjust their differences.

The existence of predictability and stability despite serious security challenges is the puzzle that we investigated in this study. That security order exists in Asia. What is the nature of that order? What explains existence of order in the context of serious security challenges? How is the Asian security order likely to change? And what is the connection between security order in Asia and that at the global level? These are some of the issues that we investigated in the project.

I think when talking about order, it's important to define what I mean by "order." Okay, so for this project we define "international order" as a formal or informal arrangement that sustains ruled governed interaction among sovereign states in the pursuit of individual and collective goals. The key here is who governs interaction because global interaction makes for a predictable, stable environment in which states can co-exist and collaborate in the pursuit of national, regional, and global goals.

Differences and disputes can be adjusted in a peaceful manner, and change occurs without resort to violence. But I want to stress that order does not prescribe force and war, but circumscribes and regulates the utility and rules. And I want to stress two points here: first, order is not an either/or condition. Order is also not an ideal or ultimate condition but a matter of degree, and it spans a spectrum. And second, order does not emerge from nowhere; it is a construction by agents over a period of time.

Order depends on three important factors, or the type of order depends on factors. One is the organizing principle of the international principle, the second is the distribution of power, and third is the normative factor that influences the structure of order, and I'll come along to all three factors in due course.

Three Types of Order

But for our purposes, we can identify three types of orders. So we distinguish three types of orders: one is instrumental order; the second is normative, contractual order; and the third is solidarist order.

These three orders correspond to the three main traditions in international relations. The first is more in tune with the realist factorization of international relations, and the second relates more to the liberal, institutional tradition, and the third one relates to order based on community. And the closest that we have in practice would be what's prevailing in the West or Europe now.

So those are the three types of order. So when one speaks of order, I'm basically speaking about ruled, governed interaction, and then the types of order, I put three, and I'll speak about where Asia fits in these three types of order.

Next I want to move on to having set the definition and types of order. I want to move onto Asia. In Asia as it stands, there are three competing conceptions of security order. One, hegemony with liberal features; second is strategic condominium, a balance of power; and third is multilateral institutionalism. It's difficult to characterize, and in each country there are different ideas and nuances, and there are competing visions and strategies for the conception of order. But these three conceptions, it seems to me, are useful in a heuristic fashion to discuss the competing views of how security affairs in Asia should be managed.

The first, hegemony with liberal features, ties in closely with the vision that the United States has for the construction of security order in Asia, and more broadly, in the world. The second strategic conundrum of balance of power is a vision that relates quite closely to the Chinese conception of what order should be in Asia. And the third conception, is to a very large extent the exposition of countries in Southeast Asia, which are members of the ASEAN grouping.

As I said, there are many variations and nuances in each country. And so I would not say that this represents, this is a solid representation of how these countries view the conception of the management of security affairs in the region. But I think it's broadly represented.

NE Asia Viewed as Vital to American Interests

The American vision for the Asian region is derivative of its global vision. Along with Europe and the Western hemisphere, Asia, particularly Northeast Asia, is viewed as vital to American economic and security interests. Close and hostile Asia is deemed to be inimi-

cal to American security. Washington seeks to expand the international order rooted in Western values and make it a truly global order under its leadership.

In a series of addresses, President Clinton and his Asia staff articulated the vision for a Pacific community and its elements. The key features of this vision: American predominance and leadership; the development of market-based national economies that are integrated into a global capitalist economy; promotion of human rights and democracy; and a regional security system that is anchored in the network of American alliances.

Since the 1940s, a key goal of American policy in Asia has been to prevent the rise of any power or any hegemonic power in East Asia. This again was reaffirmed in the leaked classified Pentagon policy documents prepared immediately after the Cold War, and the 2002 QDR prepared by the Bush administration emphasized the enduring national interest in precluding hostile domination of critical areas. In addition to preserving and enhancing its own capabilities, Washington seeks to lead a dominant coalition in the region by including key states like Japan and managing the rise of non-allied states like China.

In the management of security affairs, Washington views its networks of bilateral alliances and a forward military presence as the core pillars of regional security and stability. Washington supports cooperative security through participation in sub-regional and its regional multilateral institutions like the ARF, but only as a supplement to its alliance system. It opposes exclusive Asian regional bodies like the EAAC, for example, that are deemed to be hostile to the United States.

American Vision of Order Contested by China

American vision of order has been contested by China, especially in the context of deterioration in bilateral relations that began in 1998

for a number of reasons including: the lack of capability to seriously challenge American dominance, the lack of trust by fellow Asian states, the concern not to draw attention to its rising power and to downplay perceptions of the China threat, and its low capacity to provide economic and security public goods. China has not articulated a specific vision for the Asian region. For the most part, it has reacted to American ideas and policies.

But beginning in 1998, Beijing articulated a new security concept for the establishment of a more just and equitable international order, which it argues is a better alternative to an order dominated by the United States. Although articulated in normative terms, Chinese thinking about regional security order has been largely instrumental and pragmatic. The goal of international order in the Chinese view should be to protect state sovereignty and territorial integrity, prevent external interference in domestic affairs, and promote national prosperity and strength. In this conception, each country will be free to determine its political system without external interference.

Although the Chinese conception emphasizes multi-polarity, the real Chinese preference is for a strategic partnership of condominiums with the United States in which it is one of two co-managers of Asian security. The Chinese conception assigns a key role to global multilateral institutions like the UN and its Security Council, where it has veto power, and has become more positively disposed towards regional, multilateral institutions like the ARF. However, the preference in the Chinese conception in dealing with security affairs is for bilateralism, because this method facilitates the deployment of its power and influence to protect its national interests, and this is really the preferred Chinese approach to dealing with security affairs.

ASEAN and Chinese Conception Share Several Goals

The third conception that I referred to was that

of ASEAN and the ASEAN conception shares several goals and principles with the Chinese conception. Sovereignty, equality of states and non-intervention in internal affairs are key pillars of the Asian conception of regional security order. It also emphasizes peaceful adjustment of disputes and non-use of force in interaction of Asian states.

The difference between the ASEAN and the Chinese conception lies in the pathway to order, not in the goals. Despite the emphasis on principles, the Chinese conception emphasizes power balancing and understanding among the major powers. The ASEAN approach, on the other hand, emphasizes principles, norms, and rules as the key to regional, international interaction. And it places special emphasis on multilateral institutions on the sub-regional and regional levels.

Although the U.S. has preponderant power and plays a crucial role in the management of security affairs especially in Northeast Asia, it has not been able to enforce its notion of order on the region. The three conceptions I've outlined co-exist uneasily with only minimum integration and no clear division of labor. The competing features of the three concepts generate tension and frustration, and also frustrate a development of a comprehensive and legitimate security order in Asia. But despite these differences, the three conceptions of order are not mutually exclusive, and they're not always antagonistic. There are areas of overlap and convergence as well.

So what I'd like to do in the next part, I'm skipping a lot here because it's really very difficult for me to cover a book of six hundred and fifty-odd pages in thirty, forty minutes. So what I've done is to basically outline for you what we mean by international order, ruled governing interaction, the types of order, and then sort of looked at the competing conceptions of order in Asia. And I'd like to move on to present five of the findings of the project, at least as I, editor of the volume, read the various contributions.

Okay, so rather than read, I think what I'll do is just talk about—there are five propositions that we advanced in the book. The first contradicts the position that Asia is a dangerous place, the study argues that security order exists in Asia. Second, that Asian security order is largely instrumental in character but it also has important normative, contractual features. That second one relates to the types of orders that I talked about. The third one is that multiple factors sustain the present security order. The fourth, security and stability in Asia rests on several pillars, not just the U.S. security role and forward military presence. And finally, the present security order is likely to persist when others dictate or more. Change when it happens is likely to be gradual and uphill both in the distribution of power and in the normative structure.

So let me deal with the first proposition. We define international order as I indicated, as a formal or informal arrangement that sustains the role-governed interaction among sovereign states in the pursuit of private and public ends. Our contention that security order exists in Asia rests on a number of elements.

Widely Shared Normative Framework

First is the existence of a widely shared normative framework. Such a framework actually has been in development in Asia since the 1950s. A lot of Western scholars tend to be very cynical and very skeptical about the normative framework in Asia. I would argue that in the '50s, '60s, and '70s, the framework, the principles articulated were violated very frequently. But since the '80s, it's possible to make a case that these principles, norms, and rules have actually become much more influential in the behavior of Asian states.

And the normative framework of Asia is largely a Westphalian one, which emphasizes sovereignty, equality, and non-interference in domestic affairs. And I think this normative framework has played an important role in easing the security dilemma of even small countries.

I don't have time to go into it, but perhaps we can take it up in the Q&A period, that the survival of most Asian states is no longer in question. I think the only states which may disappear from the political map are maybe Taiwan, and maybe one of the two Koreas at unification, if that happens. But other than that, the political map of Asia is pretty much stable.

There have been two new countries in Asia, Singapore and Bangladesh. And one country has disappeared from the map, that's South Vietnam. But other than that, the map has been pretty stable. I mean, look to the future. So it's unlikely that even small countries like Brunei and Singapore ... they are concerned about their survival and they do develop military capabilities, but survival in that sense is ... sheer existence is no longer problematic. There's much more concern about regime identity and issues related to that. But those are issues slightly different, which we will talk about.

The second argument for this existence of security order is that there's much cooperation and coordination among Asian states in the pursuit of common goals. Again, when you look back into an earlier period and now, one can see that national interests have increasingly been tempered by the common good and the pursuit of common goals. And even in the case of managing acute conflicts and limitation of force, certain basic understandings have been reached. And I think Dave Kang will speak about this issue in his presentation.

But at the same time, I want to emphasize the effectiveness of rules varies from issue to issue and from region to region. Clearly in the case of the nuclear issue, one can contest the notion that rules do exist right now for the management of nuclear affairs. And this is an issue that we can take up in the discussion time.

No Regional Nuclear Regimes in Asia

On the nuclear issue, there are really no

regional regimes in Asia. Most of them are global, and global regimes have been undermined, not so much by the actions of the Asian states. Well, in the case of NPT, it's possible to make a case that Asian states have undermined the regime. But the other regimes have not been undermined only by the actions of Asian states.

So there are gaps, and the effectiveness of rules do vary. But on the other hand, rules do exist. And I think what's important to recognize is that eighty, ninety percent of international states do abide by rules of the game. People very often focus on the few cases where rules do not obtain. The question is whether these few cases in fact undermine the existence of order in the other domains. So I think it's important to keep that perspective in mind, and it's with that in mind that you argue that security order does exist in Asia.

Order Is Largely of an Instrumental Character

The second proposition ... this order is largely of an instrumental character, and I didn't have time to go through what I mean by instrumental, but basically to point out that national goals and national interests are predominant. And those are the driving forces of state international interaction in Asia. But international social life in Asia displays features of multiple paradigms. And there's growing interdependence in the economic arena, and implications of that Ming Wan will address in his presentation. But in the security arena, it is still very much a realist paradigm that obtains. But this paradigm is to a considerable extent modified by interaction in the other domains.

But even within the realist paradigm, the dominant security orientation of Asian states is defense and deterrence, not offense and aggression. Moreover, certain realist features such as the struggle for power and influence are tempered by normative constraints and with growing economic interdependence and cooperation.

Reflecting this perspective, the largely instrumental security order in Asia has important normative, contractual features. And this is evident from the goals of order in the principles that constitute the Asian normative framework in the purposes and roles of regional institutions and in the scope and domain of order.

Primary Goal of Order in Asia Is National

The primary goal of order in Asia as I pointed out is national. It's national in character, survival, and prosperity, and the common goal is stable and relative peaceful international environment, which is considered necessary in order to achieve the national goals of survival and prosperity. And these are very much realist-oriented goals. But the pursuit of economic growth and modernization through participation in the global economy requires Asian states to act in accordance with international agreements and rules.

And this, I think, has an important consequence for the type of order that is emerging in Asia. And increasingly the definition of national interest is in large measure status quo-oriented. And I think the modification of national interest based on the consideration of larger public good, however, is still incipient and tentative, and could be reversed by developments like in the case of China in relation to Taiwan.

Let me move on quickly to the third proposition that multiple pathways sustain order, or the multiple pathways to order. And here I think one can make a case that important hegemonic features of the security order in Asia, and this derives to a very considerable extent from the preponderant power of the United States and the important role that the U.S. plays in maintaining security in the region. Particularly in Northeast Asia, but increasingly also in South Asia.

U.S. Cannot Write Rules by Itself in Asia

But as important as the U.S. is, it's difficult to argue that a hegemonic order prevails in Asia.

The U.S. in many ways is important, but it plays ... its role is much more in a pattern of balance, deterrence, and a holding operation. It really cannot write the rules of the game by itself. And as we can see in the North Korean case, the current standoff and relation to other issues, it has a negative veto but it really doesn't have the power to write and enforce the rules of the game by itself.

Power balancing is a common feature in Asia. One sees the states in Asia seek to preserve and enhance their power positions while trying to constrain the power of other countries. The U.S., of course, seeks to maintain its predominant position while constructing a counterbalance to the rising power of China. China seeks to balance the United States while limiting the development of Japan and India's power. Japan and India seek to augment their power and balance China. Taiwan, Vietnam, and the Philippines seek to balance China. Pakistan seeks to balance India. North and South Korea seek to balance each other. And there's also concern about the rising power of China and Japan. North Korea is concerned about the preponderant position of the United States.

So you see there is, the power is a factor in terms of the calculations. But on the other hand, one notices that the primary contribution of power balancing is related to the goal of survival. But power balancing plays a veritable role in the resolution of conflicts itself.

This is also witness of the hegemonic features of this system. The U.S. really has not been able to solve the many issues in the region. It's been able to deter, to reassure, but not bring about a settlement. So once one can argue that power balancing is important, it's a common feature of the region, it has limited applications in terms of constructing an order, and it is difficult to characterize the order in Asia as a balance of power order.

Similarly with multilateral institutions, they play an important role, but again, it's

difficult to perceive multilateral institutions as providing the backbone of order in Asia.

Economic Cooperation Is Important Approach to Security Order in Asia

So what we do have, an economic cooperation, which I have not addressed and which I hope Ming Wan will address a lot more, is also another important approach to security order in Asia. But none of these orders by itself or none of these pathways by itself will suffice to maintain order in Asia. So what we do find is ad hoc combinations of the different pathways to order. And I think this is going to be, it's a weakness but it's also strength. It's a strength in the sense that if there's weakness in one area, it can be compensated. And sometimes, like economic cooperation can help to lead to strengthen other pathways to order.

And the fourth proposition that we advanced, which is very closely related to the third one, is that order in Asia does not rest only on the United States. There is a very common proposition, especially in this town, and many scholars advance the argument that without the U.S. the security dilemma in East Asia and South Asia will intensify and that the countries in the region are not capable of coming to terms with each other.

Factors that Contribute to Order in Asia

The U.S. plays a very key role in deterrence and reassurance. I do not want to downplay the significance of the United States. I think the U.S. plays a very crucial role. But order in Asia is not only dependent on U.S. power and role. It seems to me that there are three other important factors. One is the development and consolidation of Asian states as modern nation states. This seems to me to be very crucial, and people do not give this much weight.

You cannot construct a rule-based order, a rule-based system, without effective units. And what's happened in Asia over a period of time is the development of effective units,

which now, they still do face challenges, both internal and international. But the capacity to maintain internal and external sovereignty has increased quite dramatically over the period that we're talking about. And their engagement in both the political, diplomatic and economic arena, and participation in the global economy has strengthened, which is the second part I'm coming to, the normative framework in Asia. And that seems to me to be very crucial because it's an important development over the last two or three decades, which also underpins the security order in Asia. And that seems to me to be crucial.

And the third reason or third important factor in order in Asia is the economic interdependence, which seems to me—to be again very crucial. So I think these factors taken together with the shift in the distribution of power from bipolarity to uni-polarity and the dominance of the United States is, this combination seems to me, makes possible the meeting of these challenges as well as the peace and prosperity that has come to characterize Asia.

Present Order Will Stay at Least Another Decade

So finally in the very few minutes that I have left, I just want to talk about the future. It seems to me that the present order is here to stay at least another decade or two, possibly even slightly longer, it seems to me. And change, when it happens, it's likely to be incremental. If you look at the literature in the '80s, as we talk about hegemonic struggle on the horizon. First it was Japan, then subsequently and now a lot of people talk about China, but it seems to me that change in the distribution of power is likely to be much more incremental than initially anticipated.

So if change is likely to come about, and a distribution of power is going to be incremental, and I think the position of U.S. is going to be important. There are several developments that can undermine this notion of evolutionary, incremental change. But it looks to

me unbalanced and incremental change is much more likely.

And the second incremental change is likely to be that the normative component of order is likely to become much more substantial over the next decade or two. And here I think my reason for arguing this is that state consolidation, despite the problems, is likely to continue. And I think increasingly one would see that more and more domestic areas will become subject to international governance. There is at the moment great emphasis on non-interference in domestic affairs of the Asian countries, but I see that democratization, protection of minorities, and individual rights, these are going to be very significant and important.

And one only has to look at the landscape over the last two decades, how many democratic transitions have occurred in Asia, and the whole notion of popular sovereignty has taken, and even in China one sees local election and the broadening of the base of the communist party to increase the business groups. And I don't see dramatic revolutions, but I see incremental changes, even in this politically sensitive area.

So as one looks forward, the system in Asia is likely to be still based on sovereign states, although they're likely to be non-state actors, but it will still be essentially dominated by the states. But there will be incremental changes, both in the distribution of power and in the normative structure, which will make the system move more from an instrumental order to a normative contractual order. So with that, I'll bring my presentation to a close. Thank you very much.

David Kang: All right, I have five minutes ... seven minutes to talk about three acute conflicts in Asia: Kashmir, Taiwan, and North Korea. So I'm going to talk really fast.

Management of Three Acute Conflicts

What I will try and do in this very brief pres-

entation is give you a flavor for what actually is in the chapter and hit on what I think is the key analytic, or interesting, theoretical question that we were exploring. The chapter that I was given by Muthiah has to do was the management of the three acute conflicts in Asia: Kashmir, the Taiwan issue, and then North Korea. How have they been handled? And what are the causes of solutions because often, these are explored in isolation of each other.

There's a lot of research on Kashmir, there's a lot of research on Taiwan, a lot on Korea, but very rarely do we look at each other and say, "what is it about these three conflicts that makes them so acute and so difficult to resolve?" In a lot of ways, they're very similar. These are all conflicts that occurred right in the end of World War II, with this division of the world into a set of ... into the Cold War.

They all began in an area that had previously been somewhat unified. Korea, China broadly defined, India ... India and Pakistan were not those countries before Britain created them. They involve an acute security dilemma, meaning both sides are sort of stuck very close to each other and there's very little room there to back down, to trade space for time. They are also very much zero-sum.

Issues of Identity Are Not Addressed in Conflicts

And in a lot of ways, one of the reasons that these are so acute—and this is what I will spend the time trying to make the argument, is that often what we see is that when you have an ability for power to force the resolution of an issue, then you don't have to worry about issues of identity. So what you see is that in some places where someone is able to win by force and set up a solution, then you can impose a solution on an issue. The Vietnam case was one. You had competing issues about what Vietnam should be. But basically, the North won and was able to impose a solution on all of Vietnam.

These three conflicts have existed, and have been managed, with a focus on power or the balance of power, material interests. So Taiwan has been defended by the United States, North Korea, South Korea. There's a balance of power, there's deterrence that goes on there. In Kashmir, it's the management, the balance of power has slowly been ratcheted up as both sides have subsequently gone from just having large militaries to now having nuclear weapons. But because all three conflicts have a balance there that makes it very difficult to impose a solution, one side can force the other side to cave in at this point—the actual underlying issues of identity aren't being addressed.

And what I think is interesting about this is precisely that at heart, these are all issues of national identity, or conceptions of who we are, as opposed to some more power-based conflict over trade or military threats or something like that. And what I mean is that in terms of national identity, all three of these are issues about who or what the nation should be.

Korea: One or Two Nations?

In the case of the Korean Peninsula, is there really one Korea? And this is something that neither side actually talks about. What we're hoping for in the next ... whatever ... day or six months or ten years, is some kind of management whereby North Korea and the U.S. can find a modus vivendi. But the larger issue about is Korea really two nations, or is it really ineluctably one nation that has existed for five thousand years, is not being talked about?

Precisely because if you start bringing up those kinds of issues, then there really isn't. It's much more hard to deal with the subject. South Korea has stopped talking about taking over the North, and the North really isn't really talking about taking over the South. But at the heart of that issue is should there be two Koreas or should there only be one.

Western and Chinese Conceptions of Taiwan Are Very Different

The same, the Taiwan issue. And this is something where I think Western conceptions of Taiwan and Chinese, or mainland Chinese conceptions are very different because we have a very interesting question about Taiwan. China does not have the force to actually go and impose a solution on Taiwan right now. The United States' implicit or actually relatively explicit military support makes it very difficult for China to envision actually starting a war and being able to force Taiwan back into the fold. But the question of what Taiwan really is, is actually at the heart of the issue.

A Western conception is basically they are a nation state, but not quite formally so. And we don't really address this issue. In other words, you go to the ... Taiwan doesn't exist as a nation state, so in the World Bank, or actually you can go to the CIA World Fact Book, there's all these countries and down at the end is Taiwan because it's not really a nation state. We don't recognize it. We don't have embassies there; we don't have formal national relationships with Taiwan. But we treat it de jure, or de facto, I'm sorry, as if it were a nation. And so China has no right to impose a solution on another country. Now that's a Western conception, which is sort of fuzzy.

The Chinese conception is very clear. This is not a nation state; it is a province of China. It's always existed peripheral to China, but it's always been clearly part of us. So this is an internal matter. And these two conceptions—and of course the Taiwanese are right in the middle of trying to decide, “are we a nation aside, an independent democracy that should be able to vote and decide for ourselves what we are? Or are we basically part of China?” And that issue, since it's not possible to impose a solution by force, the issue of national identity is very much at the core. But often, changing this, or even the discussion of it, is sort of put off for issues of more balance of power.

Kashmir Not Related to Survival of Pakistan or India

The same thing for Kashmir. Kashmir, I think, in some cases should be the most interesting, or the most easily solved because at the heart of Kashmir is not the survival of either Pakistan or India, whereas in the other two you really have the survival of one of these political units. So you'd think that in a sense this should be the easiest to solve.

It's not a strategically important border region between the two countries. Neither Pakistan nor India is calling for the dissolution of the other country. So why is it so intractable? Why is it so acute? And at heart, I think it's because what you have there is a different conception of what the nation should be.

For India, for example, being a sort of secular democracy, it's very important that they don't kick out all the Muslim sections and that they keep the Muslim sections in order to justify the fact that India exists. Because if they start saying, "well, okay, it's basically Muslim. There's a lot, we'll let you go," there's a lot of concern in India that then you will have a sort of bunch of regions saying, "well, we want autonomy as well. Why should we then exist within this Hindu-dominant society?" So India as a nation state doesn't want to start hiding off religion sections or ethnic sections.

Pakistan on the other hand sees itself as basically a Muslim nation state. And its *raison d'être* in the original conception of it, in the 1940s, was it's a Muslim national entity. And a sort of sectarian quasi-democracy that's obviously prone to many coups, but they see themselves as a Muslim national state. And so in order to allow India then to have part of this territory that's dominated by Muslims, makes it difficult then for Pakistan as its conception of what it is to bring that into question as well.

Intractable Set of Conflicts

And since these are diametrically opposed

conceptions in each one of the conflicts as to what should happen, what should the nation state be. And since power is not able to force a solution in one of these three issues, then what you see is an intractable set of conflicts. Which means there's two ways that you can start resolving this conflict ultimately in the long run. Not managing it, which is what we're trying to do now in the Korean Peninsula, which is manage it. Make sure it doesn't get out of control, and drag us into a war, which, by the way, is not going to happen.

But in any case, you can either impose it by force, which in all three is going to be extraordinarily difficult and has been for six decades, or at some point you start re-conceptualizing. The leaders of the nations, the various populations, whatever, will start re-conceptualizing what it means to be India or what it means to be Taiwan or China. And this is very, very difficult to do. It's not likely it will happen.

We have issues in Northern Ireland where it hasn't been resolved, but there are places where countries have re-imagined what their national identity is. Much of Europe, if you'd have looked fifty years ago and said well, we could imagine France and Germany all agreeing to give up a lot of power and give it to some other institution and get along friendly. You would say there's no way, if you said that right after World War II. These are countries that can't stand each other.

But there has been a re-conception of what a national identity is in many European countries. I'm not necessarily saying this will happen, but you've either got an imposition by force or you've got an imposition or you've got a change of the national identity. And one of the reasons these are so acute is neither one has happened in these various regions.

Now I know I have been way too superficial, but I have managed to stay only two minutes over time, so I'd be happy to talk in the question and answer section.

Ming Wan: A few years back when Muthiah asked me to contribute a chapter on how economic cooperation contributes to security order, I immediately jumped on the opportunity. Not only because this would be my own pathway to this interesting project, but because I believe that commercial liberalism makes lots of success, particularly for East Asia.

Factually, there has been much economic cooperation going on in the region, and factually there has been relatively peaceful compared to this troubled past and compared to several other regions in the world. So it's natural to wonder whether there is a connection between these two developments. And I'll use my five or seven minutes to make three quick points here.

Meaning of Commercial Liberalism

First at the very beginning, I want to say a few words about what commercial liberalism means. This may sound expansive, but it's necessary, because whenever you argue that trade contributes to peace, some people immediately jump on you and call you naïve and they won't even listen to your substantive point. So I think some clarification on this occasion is important.

At the core, commercial liberalism argues that when countries have extensive economic ties with each other, conflicts between them would be much more costly. Awareness of that cause factor should make them less likely to engage in conflict.

Now, we're not arguing that when countries trade with each other, they will stop fighting. And as Muthiah mentioned earlier, we do not have any single pathway to secure the order. Maybe with the exception of shared democratic values and institutions, but even there, there is a debate.

Economic Cooperation and Integration in East Asia

My second point is that factually there has

been much economic cooperation and integration going on in East Asia. I don't have time to show you the numbers, but factually that is the case. And most governments in the region have adopted engagement strategies. When you look around, it seems that everyone is trying to engage everybody else. The clear purpose is trying to moderate the other countries' political and security behavior. And this is not just rhetoric. There are series of debates in many of these countries. And the governments have adopted policies to implement that strategy.

I argued in my chapter that commercial liberalism has been a useful security pathway, a sacred order pathway in East Asia. There are two ways to look at this. First, so many sources of conflicts that existed in the region no longer exist. Second, even when we think about the acute conflicts in the region, I would argue that without economic engagement and cooperation, the situation would have been much worse and people might want to challenge that, but that's what I'm arguing here.

Commercial Liberalism Contributes to Peace

And commercial liberalism contributes to peace in the region in two ways. First, we can adopt strategic logic, and economic interdependence certainly increases the cost of the conflict. And we can set this logic in the domestic political context. This logic would affect different groups unevenly. Those most affected negatively by conflict would obviously wage domestic battle to prevent conflict.

And in East Asia, what's interesting about the region is that most governments now rely on performance legitimacy. They depend on economic growth for their political legitimacy. So it's very important that they support the sectors, the companies that produce economic growth. This would give them relatively more power in domestic politics.

The second way to look at how economic cooperation may contribute to peace in the

region is to look at an adopted transformative logic, how economic corroboration transforms politics itself. When we talk about economic integration and economic cooperation in the region, we're really talking about this in the context of capitalism. The market is playing a more and more important role in the region. So in a way we're seeing the triumph of capitalism in the region. We may debate about whether there is an Asian version of capitalism, but the reality is the market has become more and more important.

Economic Growth Leads to Democracy

Capitalist development has important implications for society and politics. Few people would argue that there is a straight line from capitalist development to democracy. But that logical sequence seems likely. And you can look at regions, you can look at South Korea, look at Taiwan, and the factor that these places became democratic after sustainable economic growth, and you can look at that, even the developments in China, and I would argue that you do see that logical sequence.

No one is arguing that China will be democratic tomorrow. But I just recently read that in Shenzhen, they are introducing limited political reform. It should not surprise anyone that they are trying that in Shenzhen. After all, Shenzhen is the city where the Chinese government first experimented with capitalism. There is a correlation there. And we know that democracies tend not to fight with each other.

Further Economic Cooperation Promotes Security Order

My last point is that promotion of further economic cooperation is central to the project of building security order in the region. And I would argue this is not a naive argument. Rather, this is an approach that's pragmatic and consistent with the hard realities in the region.

Two ways to look at this: First, if you argue

that economic engagement is naive and impractical, you have to show that alternative approaches would work better. And if you do not want to engage, what would you do? And even you look at the Korean crisis, and I agree, accept the arguments made by President Kim Dae Jung and President-elect Roh, they essentially argue that confrontation with North Korea has not worked in the past. So the Sunshine Policy might provide a better opportunity. And that is a powerful and logical argument. And it appears that even though the Bush administration doesn't like the Sunshine Policy, they have very little choice but to offer incentives to engage with North Korea.

Second, we would indeed be naive if we advocate engagement policy while disarming ourselves. And that approach may actually invite conflict because the opponents might be encouraged and consider your behavior to be weak. But that's not the reality in East Asia. The reality in East Asia is that engagement has only been part of the strategies adopted by the countries. This is really cautious engagement based on strength and preparation.

So this, in my mind, has worked pretty well in the region, and there's no reason why we should not continue. And I would add to that, I will still argue that commercial liberalism makes sense, even if there is serious conflict in Korea. The reason is that since engagement has only been a part of the strategies adopted to deal with North Korea, if conflict happens, then we should not blame economic cooperation alone for that problem. Thank you.

Q & A

John Ikenberry: Thank you, Ming. We have about thirty-five minutes, forty minutes for Q&A, and I'll just start things off just by asking the first question, and then we'll open it up and we have microphones that we would like you to use.

I really like this volume. It's very evocative. The idea that we tend to think of East Asia as

an immature region that hasn't quite... it's often seen in contrast to Europe where you've really developed a regional order that has integrity whereas East Asia doesn't have that.

And I think what Muthiah and his colleagues seem to be doing is to say that you can talk about it as an order on its own terms, not simply as something short of what Europe has achieved. And it's all the more provocative because they argue that it's actually quite stable. And all the more provocative arguing that it's quite stable even if you diminish the importance of the American role in keeping it stable, because there are those who would disagree with the right for rivalry thesis that do so by stressing the hegemony argument. And what they are doing is in some sense countering the right for rivalry thesis and simultaneously downplaying the hegemony thesis. So that's quite interesting.

But the more I heard Muthiah talk—to be a devil's advocate here—the more I became alarmed because it sounded like the order that was being described sounded a lot like pre-World War I Europe. Think about the major characteristics. None of the major great powers have territorial claims against each other. The major normative principles of order are sovereignty, Westphalia principles, nationalism. All the countries were seized with modern state-building. They were all in a modernization project, and there was a great deal of economic inter-dependence between them. You had the war break out not because of any great power wanting to march across Europe, but because you had this unexpected spiral out of Serbia and Austria-Hungary. So it was war that no one really wanted, but it was war that came out of the cracks of the order.

And so I wonder if what most worries you, I guess the way I would pose my question is: what sorts of ways in which you would... where you would point your finger, so to speak, and try to say these are where we would be most, where the concerns mostly are. And I guess I would reinforce that by saying the

North Korean issue and the Taiwan issue are particularly explosive precisely because they do seem to be in violation of the Westphalian norms that are the basis of the order in East Asia. So it's precisely because it's a first step kind of regional order that it makes those two incomplete states in effect, so provocative regionally.

Let's just open it up now and if there are any questions, we can let the speakers respond to me as they respond to you. Please in the back here. Identify yourself, and then ask your question.

Questioner: I'm with the Asia Foundation. I had a sort of related to your question ... and that is—I guess I have two questions. The first is, this is an interesting structure that you guys have worked on, and I was wondering how that kind of structure can inform us on how to actually solve these problems. This seems like a description of what the security order looks like, but how can we then use that to solve security problems?

And the second question relates to this idea that you sort of assume that nation states exist, that they are sovereign. It's almost like the whole realist vision of balance of power and the bouncing of the different balls as nations. But if we look at something like, some place like Burma or Myanmar, or you see places like the Wa people where they challenge the existence of, in the region where they exist, they challenge the sovereignty of the country. And also the Maoists in Nepal, and you can't really say that Nepal as a country has full sovereignty over their country. What does that say, then, for this security order that you're talking about? Thank you.

Larger Picture Must Be Taken in Looking at East Asia

Alagappa: Very interesting questions. As we finished this book, some time toward the end of 2000 ... no, 2001 ... I just moved to Washington and 9/11 happened ten days after

I moved here, and I was finishing the revisions of this book. And I was thinking to myself, “well, are we doing a book that’s no longer relevant?” In another sense, has the situation so altered that what we talk about in the book, how relevant it is? And I thought about this quite a bit. And events happened, like what the situation is happening in North Korea, and I’m pretty much convinced that you cannot be driven by the issue of the moment. You have to take a much larger picture into consideration in looking at the region.

John talked about the situation in Asia being similar to the pre-World War I situation, where the Westphalian system, nationalism, high economic inter-dependence, but you had this war which then spiraled. So if you take that approach and you look at the current conflicts, which are the conflicts that can actually have that kind of a spiraling effect? And you refer to North Korea and Taiwan.

And it seems to me that in the case of Taiwan, an implicit understanding has been reached, that this issue is really not going to be solved through outright war. And I think there have been various crisis over the years, but more or less I think there is an understanding that there are certain lines which are not crossable, and that lead to war between the United States and China over the Taiwan issue. It seems to me if that really does happen, this is the conflict that will really bring the major powers into war. But the chances of war over this conflict seem to me to be very slim.

In the case of the Korean Peninsula, which I’m sure Dave will want to address as well, the chances of North Korea invading South Korea seem to me to be very, very slim. And for South Korea to invade North Korea or to take any action—in other words, what I’m arguing here is that the situation that was ripe for conflict in the ’50s, ’60s, and so forth, it dramatically has altered. The chances for conflict, outright open conflict, seem to me to have diminished considerably.

In the case of South Asia, there is a possibility, and we’ve seen the crisis. But even here it’s possible to argue that there has been a learning over this period, and one does not in fact see the prospect of major war between India and Pakistan.

Chances of Escalation Seem Much More Limited

So at least my take on reading all these three conflicts, the chances of escalation both horizontally and vertically seem to be much, much more limited now than it was in an earlier period. So that’ll be my take on the question. And I think there are enough checks and balances in the system to prevent that kind of spiral.

Is this merely a description of an existing situation? How does it help us to solve the problems? I don’t think we venture in this book to seek to identify, to analyze, but we really did not venture to suggest solutions, but I think you can draw some inferences from the findings of the project.

Rule-Based System

Number one: it seems to me you want to create a rule-based system, and you want to move in that direction. So whether you have a hegemonic system with the U.S. as the dominant player, or you have multiple pathways, you really want to move to create rules in specific areas. So in the case of the nuclear issue which I referred to, the rules at this point are pretty weak. The U.S. opposition to the CTBT and the violations of the non-proliferation regime ... the point that I want to make here is that there are two aspects to this: one is the security concerns for states. And the states’ concern for states in this particular issue. So you have to address those issues.

And if you do have rules that do not address those issues, then it’s very difficult to ensure that those rules are maintained. And if rules are violated, then you need someone to take action to enforce those rules. And it seems to

me in the nuclear area at this point that is not too much common understanding of the rules of the game.

And finally on the internal conflicts, I was trying to point out most of the states in Asia are post-colonial states. They are in the process of constructing nation states out of the populations' territorial boundaries that they inherited from colonial, metropolitan powers. And this construction of nation states is a long-term process; it's not something that's achieved very quickly.

But Asia has made considerable progress. But there are also cases like Burma, which you point out, just not the Wa, but there are so many minority groups in Burma where this issue has not. In a country like Indonesia which many people talk about as likely to fall apart. But actually given all the trouble, it has held together quite well. The only two areas where the issues of concern are Aceh and Papua, and even there one sees that there are movements, in the case of Aceh, in the direction of autonomy and trying to resolve... it's not completely resolved, at least manage the problem.

So I think the point in conclusion I'd like to make is that our point is not that there are not challenges. There are many, many challenges. But the whole question is that it is not an unstable, unpredictable place. And even in the most acute conflicts, there are certain informal understandings that in fact govern the conduct of things in this management of security affairs.

Ming or David? Do you want to add on?

Kang: Would you mind if I make a little comment about the North Korea one? And shamelessly plug the book that hopefully any day will have the North Korea one.

The thing is, people always talk about how explosive the North Korean peninsula is. The DMZ, they call this tinderbox, this powder

keg, and everything else. And I would just like to point out that we are coming up on fifty years where that powder keg has not blown up. And so depending on how you measure it, that's either fifty years or three hundred and sixty-five times eighteen thousand days which this powder keg didn't blow up. Which means either we're extremely lucky, if it's really a powder keg, which is the way we tend to think about it: "oh my God! It could blow up tomorrow!" Or there is more stability there than we tend to admit. And this is what I think is happening, and I don't obviously want to say, "oh, everything's fine."

Sides Aware of Conflict's Cost on Korean Peninsula

But I think I would go along with Muthiah here by saying that all the countries in that region—North and South Korea, Japan, China, the United States, Russia for that matter—know how bad it would be if we actually got in another war. And so they have been very careful not to go down that path. For fifty years. If you think about it, that's a long time when they have managed to avoid starting another war on that, given the amount of tension that could potentially arise. Which does not mean for me to say it's a pangloss, everything would be fine.

But I think everybody's aware of the costs and the potential danger. And so they have tried to manage it very carefully. We still aren't that close to a solution but I think that that's the prima facie evidence that it's not quite as explosive. Potentially it could be, but potentially anything could be, right? I mean, compared again to a couple of decades earlier, I think that the actual potential for war in that region is much, much lower than it was during the height of the Cold War.

Questioner: Dr. Kang mentioned a little bit about Russia. The Cold War is over, but still remnants of that Cold War mentality seems to remain in terms of the North Korea situation and also Taiwan issues. Is this a creation of

the United States foreign policy maintaining this? Or do you see in the future Russia's contribution or revival or assertion of the integrated Russian power? Disintegrate, I guess. Does this help maintaining the status quo or incremental change that Dr. Alagappa seems to mention, in the next ten years or so? How does Russia play into these Asian security matters?

I know Russia is maybe out of sight at the moment, in terms of military power and then in an international influence of power play. But I'd like to see even in terms of economic integration or the commercial liberalization, which Dr. Ming Wan seems to mention. How Russia plays into Asian affairs, that's my question.

Russia Has Not Figured Significantly in Calculations of Asian States

Alagappa: We do talk about Russia in the book. Lots of things we talk about in the book, which really have not been presented because we're trying to present a massive volume in a short period of time. The key is post-Cold War Russia really has not figured very significantly in the calculations of Asian states. And to a very considerable extent, this is also a function of Asia having a more Europe orientation, at least in the early phase but increasingly now, we do see Russian interest in the region.

And as you can see in the case of the Korean issue, Russia has been trying to play a role. But it just does not yet have the power, the reach, and the influence in the region to be a player in the larger structure. It is a member of the various regional forums and so forth. And it looks like it's improving relations with China, and at one point people talked about a Sino-Russian alignment against the United States.

But that clearly is not—I mean, there's improvement in relations, but that counterbalancing, counter-hegemonic balance is not

something that's likely to materialize. And the Russians are also trying to improve or go back to relations with India in the earlier period that they did have.

But the circumstances are so changed, and the Russian position right now is relatively weak that it is not a significant player in the regional security situation. Beyond that, for example, how does Russia think in terms of security order in Asia? I really have not seen Russian articulation of security order in Asia, at least not a coherent one.

Questioner: This is to Dave, because I can't talk to him every day. A clarification: you talked about the 3EQ conflicts as being foundationally... because they were not solvable by force, moving into an identity future. Are you seeking to propose a epiphenomenal relationship between instrumental aspects and identity aspects? What's the relationship there? Does one jump in to fix the other? Does one follow the other? What's the relationship between the two?

Kang: This is a very deep question. I'll try to answer and be very short ... because it comes down to identity. The real question, when people start talking about identity in world politics, does it really go down all the way to the bottom? Where what you think you are really matters? Or at the heart of it: is power and material resources the basic source of international relations?

Power at the Base Really Matters

I actually tend to lean more toward the side that what matters is really power at the base. Economics and fundamental structures that are—and this would go back to Mr. Kim's question before, which is, if you really think about it in those kinds of terms, the U.S. is sustaining a lot of the conflicts. Because without U.S. security help to Taiwan, they would probably be part of China eventually, regardless of what they thought or how they envision themselves.

So on the whole, I tend to think that at its heart, power is really what sort of makes the world go round. But I don't think that it's nearly so one-sided. And that's where I think you get these very intractable issues, is that it's about a lot more than just power, it's about the conceptions of who you are. So lacking that ability to force or impose a solution on somebody, these tend to play out. We can go on for much length, but that's...

Questioner: Then are you suggesting that in situations where you have a deadlock on instrumental ties that identity features, given time, will play out, even if they are epiphenomenal? Even though they're intractable at the moment, will slowly build normative features to cover over the power dynamic?

Kang: That's how I concluded. And that's what you see. You could envision a leader of India saying ... really trying to lead. For example, here's DJ in South Korea is a better example, where he really took a different path toward dealing with North Korea. I mean, very different from all the other leaders before him saying, "we are not going to follow this path. We are going to try the Sunshine Policy" and ran around trying to convince the South Koreans that there was a different way to go about it.

At heart, the fundamental power paradigm didn't really shift in '97, per se. But the leadership did, and the leadership made a very strong case that this hard-line ... and he's convinced a lot of South Koreans. So yeah, you can envision a case in India or Pakistan a leader coming in, or not purely one, but a change in national conception where you could moderate the power balance, the power of dynamics. It tends to be more rare then.

Questioner: I'm here from Radio Free Asia. And you'll forgive me as a journalist if I take this back to North Korea again. I know you don't want to draw suggestions for the North Korean situation, but I'm going to ask you anyway. Perhaps I could just ask you to assess

the Bush administration's tactics right now in dealing with North Korea. If you would like to suggest—if you had five minutes to sit down with George Bush and say... I mean, it seems like the administration obviously is not going to take military action. You all seem to support engagement as the only solution, as many people seem to. How do we move forward in a nuanced way, in a way that's amenable to all the parties involved?

Kang: I would be happy to talk about North Korea at length. By the way, I have a book coming out. I will go first, and other people should clearly feel free to step up.

I think one of the reasons, and this goes back to the concern in South Korea right now, the anti-American riots, or whatever are going on, are not just epiphenomenal again. They're not emotional responses to a couple of incidents or a good will club. That's part of it. But I think it really involves much more, a feeling that engagement has worked on the peninsula and there were strides being made that you can see if you're in South Korea, that you don't necessarily see if you're in the United States. A lot of talk here about, "the South Koreans should be more worried," but they're not. The other way to put it would be maybe here in America we don't see the gains that are being made.

Concern that Bush Administration Can't Follow Through

And I think that sort of at the heart of the concern here is the Bush administration has gotten locked into a policy that they couldn't really follow through with, which is you're not going to war in the peninsula, the costs are too high. And so they have to back off of that very quickly and are now trying to—I think both sides are going through...

When I use this phrase, and I got yelled at for it, but I think a lot of what was going on over the last month or so was sort of like *kabuki* theater, where we're going through the motions of outrage. And then eventually we'll

get down to talking about it. And I was told I should not use a Japanese name, Koreans would get mad at me.

I mean, there's a lot of that. What we need to do is go through the motions for domestic audiences. A lot of the stuff that's going on is for domestic audiences here, and at some point the discussion about the U.S. relationship to North Korea being moderated through all these other countries is sort of playing itself out.

Does North Korea Feel a Security Threat?

I would be happy to see the U.S.—I think the key question for North Korea is, do they actually feel a security threat? If they don't, then they are some crazy madman, blah blah blah. But if they do feel a security threat, then their concerns about the U.S.'s unwillingness to even talk about a non-aggression pact are justified. If they don't, then they're not justified. But if they are, if there really is a threat that they feel, then unless you address that threat, you're not going to get any progress, which is where we were talking about pressure does not tend to work. If the country feels threatened, threatening them will probably not make them feel less threatened. And this is where my perspective is a little different from the Bush administration's.

But engagement in that sense is a secondary order to resolving that feature of threat. Economic goodies and all that kind of stuff, I think the North Korean regime is—that is secondary, and can be an inducement later on. But the first thing we have to do is if we don't give them kind of a security guarantee, some kind of non-aggression pact, maybe even a peace treaty from the 1953 Armistice, right? If we do something like that and they don't disarm, then I'm completely wrong and I would admit it. I would admit it now.

But lacking that, lacking some genuine U.S. saying "we aren't going to threaten you," I don't think we're going to get any progress

because if I was Kim Jong II, I would not disarm and trust the United States. I just simply wouldn't. And that's what I think the key is, and engagement can come later.

I think the United States, if we don't like dealing with dictators, we should say, "fine, we're not going to trade with you. We're not going to give you any goodies. But we will give you a security guarantee. We're not going to invade either." And if they confirm, then I think yeah, let's trade with them. Because I do think that capitalism is a good thing to do. I don't want to take too much time.

Alagappa: I just want to add... in a sense this is not directly addressing your question but going back to an earlier question. Dave talked about countries being sensitive to the costs and not wanting to go down the path of confrontation and war in the Korean Peninsula. And I think this shows up quite clearly in the difference of approach taken toward Iraq and taken toward Korea in terms of what the costs are and what the consequences could be. So I just wanted to reinforce that particular point.

In relation to North Korea, it seems you really don't have to separate out. There are several issues on the table and they all tend to be conflated. One is the whole question of the security of North Korea, which Dave referred to. And the second, how significant, how important is the nuclear question to the security issue? The third is the question of the regime in North Korea. Fourth is the longer-term question of the Korean Peninsula identity and unification issues related to that.

Nuclear Issue Tied to Security of North Korea

So it seems to me there are a number of issues on the table, and very often when people do talk about, there is a conflation of issues, which makes it much more difficult to address the issue. So if you're talking essentially about the nuclear issue, then the one set of issues that have to be addressed. But I think

the nuclear issue is very much tied to the security of North Korea.

And from the point of view of the U.S. in approaching it—and I think it's moving in that direction—is whether one wants to see a nuclear North Korea or not. And if one doesn't want to see a nuclear North Korea, all countries like China and Japan and South Korea, can they be mobilized in support of that viewpoint? And that's essentially what's happening at this point in time through these various diplomatic channels and talking. And how can you assure North Korea of its security so that it doesn't go down this path?

But I'm not sure whether North Korea is willing to trade or not. That's a fundamental question which people assume that it's willing to trade, and I'm not sure in my mind that it is open to trade.

Wan: If I could add, it seems that what we're talking now is just like give negotiated settlement a chance... at this stage. There has to be a stage too, if they started talking and they still don't want to dismantle the nuclear weapons program, then what are we to do? I think at that stage, it would be easier to have an international coalition to deal with North Korea. Right now it's hard, it seems to me, for the U.S. to go to China, Russia, to say, "put pressure on North Korea." So they keep giving them a chance.

And at the end of the day, no one wants to see a nuclear North Korea. I haven't seen that changing. What if, after several rounds of negotiations, you can't go on forever? At least, give it a chance. That seems to me a reasonable thing to do.

Ikenberry: A couple of last questions. We'll bunch them up, and then we'll let our speakers have the last word.

Questioner: Now, let me post a scenario. The United States attacks Iraq ... we talked about. What happens in Pakistan? Everything I'm

reading about Pakistan suggests this would have a really tremendous impact, could shove the country in a violently anti-American direction. Could Musharraf hold power? I mean, there are coups in Pakistan. That's how he came to power. If he's overthrown, if these anti-American groups take power, what does India do? Does it allow Taliban-type people to have control of the nuclear weapons?

Questioner: You had talked about World War I as sort of a unit affecting the system. But it seems to me after 9/11, we've got the system, particularly the concern of terrorism, impacting the units, particularly North Korea. How big an impact do you think that is on that issue? We seem to be focusing on the regional issues, North or South, particularly. But to me, all of these issues have been radicalized since the new preponderance of concern on terrorism. Would you mind addressing that, David?

Ikenberry: I've got one last question. Do we have a question back here? Yeah, go ahead.

Questioner: This is a question for Mr. Wan. Talking about the commercial liberalism theory, is that simply a descriptor? Or is that maybe a way of promoting integration specifically like Taiwan and China? Is that really a conduit for that, or is it simply just a descriptor situation?

Ikenberry: My last question is really to Muthiah, and it comes back to the thesis of the volume. You said that the region is actually more stable than many people think and that in fact, maybe moving from an instrumental type of organizing modality to more normative and even solidaristic, it's moving... one can see movement in that direction or anticipate it. My question is, at the end of that movement is a kind of order, I would describe, as a security community. That is to say, where there is trust, where use of force among the units is unthinkable. It's what Carl Deutch in the 1950s used to describe the North Atlantic region, a pluralistic security community where

there really is this kind of fundamental alteration of the units and there is an emergence of trust and interdependence and institutional mechanisms for resolving conflict.

My question is, how far down that pathway can you go in East Asia, number one? And do you need to have certain additional factors altered to move very far down in that direction, mainly do you really, to get very much further down this pathway, democracy in China, and perhaps also the removal of American power from the region? Or to put that second factor more pointedly, do you think, in your heart of hearts, that the American presence in East Asia is a short-term positive but a long-term negative to the emergence of a more mature normatively, and even solidaristically organized region?

Alagappa: Dave, if you want to start, I can take the other question. What do you want to do? Let me address a couple of questions, and then I'll pass it on.

Let me take the last question first, because it sort of goes to the heart of the thesis. One thing which I try to point out is that, it is not a linear progression, it is not uni-linear in the sense that there can be reverses as well as moving towards a more robust order. And there are factors at play, which can negatively affect the situation. So I want to sort of put that up in front.

But with that complication, I really do not see a solidarist order where a security community in Asia, where the threat of force is no longer relevant in the management of international affairs. I do not see that in the next ... I'm talking about two decades here. I'm really not talking any further down the road. I think it's far too difficult to envision what happens further down the road. But I do see that the cost of using force is becoming increasingly high.

Cost of Using Force Is Becoming High

As the countries in the region become much

more developed, as human life becomes much more valued, and as weapons become much more potent, the costs are not... in earlier wars, if you look at the cost of both wars and the cost of future wars, it seems to me that generally the cost of using force is becoming high.

Secondly, the rule of force is being gradually transformed from more offensive to deterrence rules. If you look at the role of force within the Korean Peninsula or in the Taiwan Straits or to some degree even in the South Asian case, deterrence is becoming much more significant. In some cases, reassurance is becoming much more significant.

So the role of force is changing in the region. Someone could say, "well, force is being used here." But I think what I'm talking about is much more the macro-level change rather than... and even in the case of the territorial conflicts at sea, one really does not envision those conflicts leading to massive use of force in trying to address those issues.

I do, and I concluded by saying that I still see an instrumental order in a large fashion, but the normative components of this are becoming much more significant. And I think that's about the best that one can hope for in the sort of time frame that one is looking in.

Democracy in China—I did a book on Taiwan's presidential politics, and we have one chapter in there in terms of democracy in China. Of course, a lot of people, whether China will follow the path of Taiwan, Taiwan you had a Leninist party state which over a period of time gave way to a democratic system. Whether China will move in that direction or whether China will pursue some other path or whether there could be in fact internal turmoil in China as a consequence of an open economic system and a closed political system.

I'm not sure which direction it will go, but it seems to me that at least from the leadership point of view, that there is gradual

liberalization of the political arena. And if that moves forward, one can see a more open China even in the political area in time to come.

But I don't put too much hope on this for the foreseeable future and a democratic peace in Asia. But the whole issue of whether the U.S. role in Asia is positive in the short term or negative in the long term, I think this is an important question, which you cannot really answer except without the real role experiment, so to speak. But if you reason it out, it seems to me that...

China Has Come to Accept Japan as a "Normal Power"

Take, for example, if the U.S. does withdraw, does it automatically mean a re-militarization of Japan? Does Japan automatically become a military power? Does it automatically acquire nuclear weapons? It seems to me that there is that possibility, but it is not a given. And one even begins to see that the Sino-Japanese relationship is beginning to change. In the sense that the Chinese, although they still criticize visits to the shrine and whenever Japan undertakes an incremental role, but in the long term it seems to me that Chinese have come to accept the fact that Japan is going to move, or to become "a normal" power. And that it is in the Chinese interest, in fact, to facilitate and to channel this, rather than to continue to so-call "contain" Japan or keep Japan the way it is.

So I think gradually the major players in Asia will begin to accommodate, understand and accommodate each other. But that does not mean there will not be power balancing. I think both these go hand-in-hand. And so I think it does a bit of disservice in faith, the Americans are keeping the cork in the bottle. That's an argument, which you hear repeatedly being thrown out. So does that mean that Japan is a country that really cannot be trusted, and that the American cork is always to be there in order for Japan to behave in the manner that it's behaving?

I tend to think that the U.S. role is important, but it is not uncontroversial. It has negative consequences. It sustains certain conflicts, and it deters war in some cases, but it also prevents movement toward some solutions and accommodations among the players.

So it's not a question that one can answer, it seems to me, in a very black and white fashion, that it's with a positive or negative, but it seems to me carries with it this bag of positive and negative. Over the long haul, it seems to me that even if you look at the Sino-Indian relations, or the Sino-Japanese relations, there is beginning to be a movement in the direction of trying to place these relationships on a different footing somewhat independent of the relations with the United States.

But for the moment, the U.S. is the dominant global power, and almost every country in the region wants to have good relations with the United States. That's a given. I don't see any changes in that. But in addition to that, I do see the other major countries in the region beginning to develop relations on a bilateral basis, and to set that on a much more positive footing.

But I think there are periods... it's going to go through periods, and there are going to be crises in this relationship. That's how I tend to look at the region as a whole. But I don't see this as this periodic crisis as undermining the security order in Asia.

Going back to the first question, what happens if U.S. invades Iraq and that has a negative backlash in Pakistan with Musharraf being overthrown and somebody else or the radicals acquire nuclear capabilities. All this is possible. I'm not sure that will happen, but it's very possible. And I'm not quite sure how to respond to that. Because I think would that mean that that would be a surgical strike on the nuclear facilities by the United States? I can't see that happening, and I can't see the Indians undertaking that. And I don't think...

I'm not sure what kind of radical regime will acquire this capability in Pakistan. It makes it extremely difficult for me to answer that question. But what would they do if they do in fact acquire the control over these nuclear weapons in Pakistan? Are they going to use them against India? Are they going to use them against other countries in the region? I do not know.

Wan: To answer the gentleman, to answer your question very quickly. The first order of the book is to describe, right? That's as the security order exists in East Asia, and if it does exist and can identify a pathway to secure order, then yeah, a part of my chapter is about the description. But obviously, you have to reason.

And as I understand the book, it does have a normative concern, which is security order is good and we need to figure out ways on evidence and logical reasoning. Yes, I would advocate economic factors as a way to promote peace.

Alagappa: Can I make one other point? That's an important question in terms of the system, and I think Dave will address too in terms of terrorism. But it seems to me, sitting in Washington, it's very easy to assume that terrorism is the primary threat and is a systemic factor that influences the wholes. I'm not so sure.

I mean, if you look at East Asia, for example, and I'll let other people address this issue, of course it's an important issue, but it doesn't feature to the same degree. And it's nothing like the Cold War dynamic, which had an impact on almost every single conflict. How does the war on terror or terrorist threat affect

the Taiwan conflict? I mean, does it change the dynamics of that conflict? How does it change the dynamics of the Korean conflict? How does it change the dynamics of the Indo-Pakistan conflict?

Most of the dynamics that one talks about were there well before the terrorist threat. And have these conflicts actually been under-weighted by the threat of terrorism? It seems to me that—and I would be in the minority here, because very much, many people in the town think that terrorism now is a dominant dynamic in world politics—my view is that gradually people will come to recognize that terrorism is an important threat. But it's one of the several threats that have to be addressed, that it is not the dominant or driving dynamic of the international system. At least, that's my point of view, which I would like to put out.

Kang: I will be very quick. I would mostly agree with Muthiah on the radicalization of it, which was, even the Bush administration was pulling back from the agreed framework and had a lot of concerns about it right from the time they came in. And a lot of us who watched North Korea a lot thought that eventually, and very soon—in fact, I predicated it was going to be this fall. I didn't know about the nuclear revelations, but most of us said, “look, the agreed framework is dead”—long before it was 9/11 because you could just see the two parties who don't trust each other. So 9/11 really mattered, so terrorism mattered, but I don't think it's central to the Korean conflict. Or what's showing up now.

Ikenberry: Well, on that final word, we will thank you all for coming, and if you will join me in thanking the panel for their interesting commentary. (End)

About the Panelists

Main Speaker **Dr. Muthiah Alagappa** is Director of the East-West Center Washington and has been a Senior Fellow at the Center since 1989. Previously he was a visiting professor at Columbia University, Stanford University and Keio University, a senior fellow at the Institute of Strategic and International Studies, Malaysia, and adjunct professor at the University of Malay and National University of Malaysia. Dr. Alagappa also is series editor of *Asian Security* and *Contemporary Issues in the Asia-Pacific*, and is a member of several journal editorial boards. He received a Ph.D. in international affairs from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University. Dr. Alagappa's most recent publications are *Asian Security Order: Instrumental and Normative Features* (editor, 2003), *Coercion and Governance: The Declining Political Role of the Military in Asia* (editor, 2001) and *Asian Security Practice: Material and Ideational Influences* (editor, 1998).

Discussants **Dr. David Kang** is Associate Professor of Government, Adjunct Associate Professor at the Tuck School of Business, and Fellow at the Center for Asia and the Emerging Economies, Dartmouth College, and an Adjunct Fellow with the Center for National Policy. Professor Kang has been a visiting associate professor at Yale University, a visiting assistant professor at Korea University, and a visiting professor at U.C. San Diego. He received an A.B. with honors from Stanford University and his Ph.D. from U.C. Berkeley. Professor Kang has published *Crony Capitalism: Corruption and development in Korea and the Philippines* (2002), and has written scholarly articles in journals such as *Comparative Politics*, *International Security*, and *Security Studies*. *Nuclear North Korea? A debate over engagement strategies* (with Victor Cha) will be published in 2003.

Dr. Ming Wan is an Associate Professor in the Department of Public and International Affairs, George Mason University. He has held postdoctoral fellowships at Harvard, the John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies and the Pacific Basin Research Center, and has been a visiting research scholar at Tsukuba University, Japan. Professor Wan received his B.A. from the Beijing Foreign Languages Institute and his Ph.D. from Harvard University. He has published two books, *Human Rights in Chinese Foreign Relations: Defining and Defending National Interests* (2001) and *Japan Between Asia and the West: Economic Power and Strategic Balance* (2001). Professor Wan has also published in journals such as *Asian Survey*, *Orbis*, *Public Affairs* and *International Studies Quarterly*.

Moderator **Dr. G. John Ikenberry** is the Peter F. Krogh Professor of Geopolitics and Global Justice at Georgetown University. In addition, he was a Senior Associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and a Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. Dr. Ikenberry is the author of numerous publications, including, *State Power and World Markets: The International Political Economy* (2002), *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars* (2000), and *Reasons of State: Oil Politics and the Capacities of American Government* (1988).