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THINK TANK REVIEW

Asia-EU relations

Special issue - 2014

The 10th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) takes place on Thursday 16 and Friday 17 October 2014.

This special issue of the monthly Think Tank Review gathers papers on various aspects of the Asia-EU relations which we harvested over the past two years of Think Tank Reviews. They cover different aspects, including regional security, trade relations, economy and financial crisis, migration and others. Together, they offer a good perspective on the relation between the two continents.

The current Review and past issues can be downloaded from the [Central Library blog](#).

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FRIENDS OF EUROPE

ASEM: why Asia Europe relations matter in the 21st century

by Shada Islam and Patricia Diaz

July 2014

Link to the article in [English](#)

This policy briefing explores the relevance of ASEM in the volatile global order and efforts under way to revive ASEM through new formats, a sharper focus on content and engagement with civil society and the media. It makes policy recommendations for energising the Asia-Europe partnership and ensuring it gains more traction in the months leading up to ASEM's 20th anniversary in 2016.

CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN REFORM

A presence farther east: can Europe play a strategic role in the Asia-Pacific region?

by Rem Korteweg

July 2014

Link to the article in [English](#)

Korteweg argues that Europe must play a greater role to promote East Asian security. Its economic interests, the relevance of the transatlantic relationship and ties with Asian partners are in jeopardy.

VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT BRUSSEL - INSTITUTE FOR EUROPEAN STUDIES

Options for increasing Europe's security role on the Korean peninsula

by Mason Richey and Ohn Daewon

July 2014

Link to the article in [English](#)

Mainstream thinking about the role of the EU in East Asia usually rests on non-traditional security threats such as human and environmental security. In contrast, and within the context of the continuing instability on the Korean peninsula, this Policy Brief looks at the potential for EU-Republic of Korea cooperation on hard security matters.

FUNDACIÓN PARA LAS RELACIONES INTERNACIONALES Y EL DIÁLOGO EXTERIOR
(FOUNDATION FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND FOREIGN DIALOGUE)

How does Central Asia view the EU?

by Sébastien Peyrouse

June 2014

Link to the article in [English](#)

Central Asia's perception of the EU varies widely: this paper offers insights into how politicians, business leaders, scholars and civil society from Central Asia view the EU and its approach to the region.

EUROPEAN POLICY CENTRE / KONRAD-ADENAUER-STIFTUNG (FOUNDATION KONRAD-ADENAUER) / EAST ASIAN INSTITUTE / EU CENTRE IN SINGAPORE

Migration and integration - Common challenges and response from Europe and Asia

by Andrea Frontini and Yves Pascouau

15 April 2014

Link to the article in [English](#)

In order to ensure their economic growth and maintain their welfare systems, many European and Asian countries have implemented a series of measures to reduce the demographic effects, among which opening channels to legal migration plays a key role. As these countries try to attract the same group of people, mainly highly-skilled professionals and low-skilled workers, increasing competition between the two regions might be observed in the upcoming years. This publication discusses the different migration policies and challenges in the concerned countries.

FUNDACIÓN PARA LAS RELACIONES INTERNACIONALES Y EL DIÁLOGO EXTERIOR
(FOUNDATION FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND FOREIGN DIALOGUE) / AGORA ASIA-EUROPE

Mapping EU-ASEAN relations

by Gauri Khandekar

5 March 2014

Link to the article in [English](#)

This publication provides an in-depth review of the EU's relationship with the ASEAN and each of its 10 member countries. EU-ASEAN bilateral ties have undergone much progress in recent years. They are multi-layered, and cover a wide array of issues. By working with ASEAN, the EU enhances its presence in Asia and supports regional cooperation and multilateralism at large. This publication argues that the two parties should build on these achievements and deepen their partnership to exploit its full potential.

NEDERLANDS INSTITUUT VOOR INTERNATIONALE BETREKKINGEN - CLINGENDAEL
(NETHERLANDS INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS)

The Asian Development Bank. What's in it for Europe? Economic diplomacy and geostrategic interests in an Asian context

by Maaike Okano-Hejmans and Duncan Waardenburg

February 2014

Link to the article in [English](#)

EU MS need to engage more deeply with the Asian Development Bank, both on practical matters as well as for strategic purposes. As the authors of this report point out, European countries have an interest in a prosperous and stable Asia–Pacific region and stand to benefit from deeper cooperation and integration. The ADB has made significant contributions on both fronts. The Bank is now facing the challenge of adapting to a rapidly evolving environment in order to maintain legitimacy. Its role in sustaining and furthering development, stability and regional cooperation will increase in importance in the years to come.

FUNDACIÓN PARA LAS RELACIONES INTERNACIONALES Y EL DIÁLOGO EXTERIOR
(FOUNDATION FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND FOREIGN DIALOGUE)

Is the EU downscaling political engagement in Central Asia?

by Jos Boonstra

27 February 2014

Link to the article in [English](#)

As of 1 March 2014, the EU will no longer have a EUSR to Central Asia. Ambassador Patricia Flor, who has fulfilled the role since June 2012, has been recalled to Berlin and she will not be replaced. Instead, the EEAS is likely to appoint a special envoy to the region. As an EEAS staff member, an envoy will have less political clout with Central Asian leaders and in broader political processes than a representative appointed by the Council.

CENTRE FOR EU-RUSSIA STUDIES

Eurasian regionalism as an identitarian enterprise: representation of European other in Russian discourse on Eurasian integration

by Aliaksei Kazharski

December 2013

Link to the article in [English](#)

The article argues that the recent discourse of the Russian elite on building an "Eurasian Union" contains a series of new attempts of delineating Russian identity. An analysis of discourse on Eurasian regional integration is undertaken in order to show which patterns of Russian identity this political project discursively reproduces and how they may interplay with the future of EU-Russia relations.

EUROPEAN COUNCIL OF FOREIGN RELATIONS

Divided Asia: the implications for Europe

by François Godement

22 November 2013

Link to the article in [English](#)

With trade integration on the continent growing, relationships between Asian countries are becoming as important as US military guarantees in ensuring that Asia's conflicts do not erupt into violence. This paper argues that the European approach to Asia is out of step with the continent's own trends. Asia is not interested in Western imports of multilateral security institutions and international arbitration, and the EU should abandon its efforts to transfer its own post-war solutions to the Asian situation. Instead, it should focus on rewarding compromise and build on its growing arms trade with the region to take a more central security role.

BRUEGEL

Global and regional financial safety nets: lessons from Europe and Asia

by Changyong Rhee, Lea Sumulong and Shahin Vallée

20 November 2013

Link to the article in [English](#)

This paper analyses the interplay between global and regional safety nets, concluding *inter alia* that an international monetary system resting on strong regional currencies allows better balance than a unipolar international monetary system.

PETERSON INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL ECONOMICS

Asian and European financial crises compared

by Edwin M. Truman

October 2013

Link to the article in [English](#)

The two most recent major regional crises largely had share of origins but more diverging evolutions, with Europe facing less demanding reform programs and getting more external support, argues the author. The International Monetary Fund and other countries were mistaken in treating the European crises as country crises rather than as a crisis for the euro area as a whole, that demanded policy conditionality on all members of the euro area.

POLSKI INSTYTUT SPRAW MIĘDZYNARODOWYCH (POLISH INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS)

Regionalism in East Asia: a bumpy road to Asian integration

by Justyna Szczudlik-Tatar

27 June 2013

Link to the article in [English](#)

The shifting global power centre from the West to the East, China's rise, and the US "pivot" to the Asia-Pacific region have all accelerated the integration processes in East Asia. ASEAN is trying to enhance its internal cooperation and extend it to other, non-ASEAN countries. Simultaneously, in Northeast Asia, despite territorial and historical disputes, China, Japan and South Korea are deepening trilateral cooperation. This paper argues that recent initiatives to deepen economic integration in East Asia are in the EU's interest, offering an opportunity for greater region-to-region cooperation.

EUROPEAN INSTITUTE FOR ASIAN STUDIES

Japan-EU collaboration towards re-emergence of Europe

by Aiichiro Yamamoto

May 2013

Link to the article in [English](#)

Japan and the EU can work together for a more stable and resilient world, argues the paper. The author comments that if the EU is to strengthen its capability to respond to global challenges by strengthening coordination among the external EU institutions such as the EEAS, DG DEVCO and DG Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO), Japan will be the best partner for the EU to help Europe to re-emerge as a global player.

FUNDACIÓN PARA LAS RELACIONES INTERNACIONALES Y EL DIÁLOGO EXTERIOR
(FOUNDATION FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND FOREIGN DIALOGUE)

The European Union in Asia's alphabet soup

by Gauri Khandekar

13 May 2013

Link to the article in [English](#)

With a growing power shift towards Asia, it is essential to understand the hybrid regional architecture evolving in the region and to evaluate how the EU engages within various Asian fora, argues the paper. The paper offers an insight on how the EU could enhance its engagement in the region.

UTRIKESPOLITISKA INSTITUTET (SWEDISH INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS)

A European strategy towards East Asia: moving from good intentions to action

by Mikael Weissman

22 March 2013

Link to the article in [English](#)

The EU has failed to become a strong, cohesive, actor in East Asia because of a lack of an unified strategic vision for the region, argues the paper. The author recommends that the Union needs a clear prioritisation of areas where it realistically can have an impact. He suggests that emphasise should be put on enhancing the bilateral trade and investment conditions as well as on pursuing principled policies, in particular towards Southeast Asian nations that are going through a democratisation process.

The EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement: potentials and Japan's domestic agenda

by Stijn Lambrecht and Anna Yumi Pohl

March 2013

Link to the article in [English](#)

Despite the cancellation of the EU-Japan Summit in Tokyo due to the Cyprus crisis, the negotiations on the EU-Japan FTA were officially launched. The first round of negotiations is expected to take place in Brussels from 15 to 18 April 2013. The paper outlines that the bilateral EU-Japan trade and investment relationship isn't fulfilling its potential during last years. It stresses that non-tariff measures are major barriers to EU exports to Japan and some parts of its markets are totally closed to EU exports. At the same time the main interest for Japan is the EU tariff elimination, particularly since the entry into force of the EU-Korea FTA.

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(FOUNDATION FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND FOREIGN DIALOGUE)

The Afghanistan-Central Asia relationship: what role for the EU?

by Vera Axyonova, Marlène Laruelle and Sébastien Peyrouse

12 February 2013

Link to the article in [English](#) and in [Russian](#)

The European Union will have to develop a clearer strategy to avoid condoning the repressive policies and opaque interests of the Central Asian governments, argues the paper. It points out that the EU should focus on a few well-chosen areas and prioritise the involvement of local actors, in particular civilian stakeholders. The EU is vague about cooperation with other external actors. But if security is a real concern, then the role of Russia as a partner in Central Asia must be clearly addressed, argue the authors.

EU-Asia trade: in need of a strategy

by Gauri Khandekar

24 January 2013

Link to the article in [English](#)

The EU remains Asia's largest trading partner, but its position is fast eroding relative to competitors. An EU-Asia trade strategy is needed to supply effective guidance over the medium to long terms, scrutinise developments in Asia, and exploit the yet untapped trade potential. Given the trade shifts within Asia, as well as between Asia and non-traditional markets amidst Europe's economic crisis, redoubled efforts from the EU and its member states will be required to prevent the decoupling of Asian economies from the West.