

## China's "Counter-hedging" Engagement with Southeast Asia

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### **Abstract**

After the leadership transition in CCP's 16th Congress, the policy toward Southeast Asia of PRC will exhibit more continuity than disruption. Beijing desires to broaden and intensify existing modes of diplomatic, economic, security or socio-cultural interaction between China and the countries of Southeast Asia. China perceives that Southeast Asian countries has adopted a form of "hedging" or "fence-straddling" behavior of combining economic engagement with strategic hesitation when it comes to dealing with China. Southeast Asian countries hope to optimize economic opportunities and benefits with China, but also help the United States retain a military presence in the region and engage Japan in non-traditional security roles. China would want to turn Southeast Asia's desire to hedge on China into a longing for comprehensive cooperation instead. Beijing is prepared to adopt a strategy of "counter-hedging", including weakening the US-Japan alliance and bilateral alliances between the US and Southeast Asian countries, in reaching out to Southeast Asian countries, to make them come to terms with China's leadership in Asia.

**Keywords:** ASEAN, Counter-hedging Strategy, Bilateral Free Trade Agreement, PRC, Sovereign Disputes in South China Sea

The world anticipates a transfer of leadership in the People's Republic of China from the current third generation leaders, centered around President and Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Secretary General Jiang Zemin, to the fourth generation leaders, centered around current Vice President Hu Jintao, after the CCP holds its 16th Congress in November 2002. At the latest, we can expect the leadership transition to take place by the first session of the 10th National People's Congress in March 2003, when President Jiang, Prime Minister Zhu Rongji, and Chairman of the National People's Congress, Li Peng, will formally relinquish their official positions. Even then, of course, the transition may yet still be incomplete, depending on what party positions and how much influence as party elders the present national leaders will retain after the congresses. Politics is often an unpredictable game, no less in China than anywhere else.

In any case, whatever new or partially new leadership which emerges after 2002 or 2003 will still have to be concerned with affairs in China's geographical neighborhood, and all the more so when it comes to China's relationship with its backyard-Southeast Asia. I believe that China's foreign policy orientation toward the region will exhibit more continuity than disruption. This means that whatever changes made will largely reflect Beijing's desire to broaden and intensify existing modes of diplomatic, economic, security or socio-cultural interaction between China and the countries of Southeast Asia, rather than establish radically new patterns of intercourse.

Unlike in the past, China no longer views the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a Western-inspired grouping that is inimical to China's interests, which impelled Beijing to

continue supporting communist insurgencies in Southeast Asia to subvert regional governments. Indeed, China became a full dialogue partner of ASEAN in 1995, four years after it first participated in the group's annual foreign ministers' meetings as an observer. However, China perceives, correctly in my opinion, that Southeast Asian countries has adopted a form of "hedging" or "fence-straddling" behavior of combining economic engagement with strategic hesitation when it comes to dealing with China as a rising power. The region hopes to optimize economic opportunities and benefits with China, but is uncertain as to its future foreign and security policy orientation. Will a strong country like China behave like a threatening military hegemony or a friendly economic partner to countries in the region that are, vis-a-vis China, military weak, economically unsteady, and beset by ethnic, religious and boundary problems? With as yet no ready answer to that question, some Southeast Asian governments are helping the United States retain a military presence in the region as a security insurance and stabilizing element for economic growth, and also engaging Japan in non-traditional security roles such as joint anti-piracy patrols. To maintain a cooperative balance of interests of the three major powers of China, U.S. and Japan in the region, Southeast Asian states have also pushed for the ASEAN Regional Forum, or ARF, and the ASEAN+3,<sup>1</sup> to promote security discussions and economic interactions in multilateral settings, respectively.

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1. The ten member states of ASEAN, acronym for the Association of South

China would want to make sure that Southeast Asia as a region will not be alienated to an external or regional power unfriendly to China, and turn Southeast Asia's desire to hedge on China into a longing for comprehensive cooperation instead. As such, Beijing is prepared to adopt, or rather, enhance, a strategy of "counter-hedging" in reaching out to Southeast Asian countries, to bring them into its embrace, and make them come to terms with China's leadership in Asia. There are, broadly, six aspects to this "counter-hedging" strategy. They are: **i) weakening regional support for the U.S.-Japan security alliance and bilateral alliances between the U.S. and Southeast Asian countries; ii) opposing any heightening of Japan's security role in the region or the deployment of the Theater Missile Defense (TMD) system on or around Japan; iii) settling the Spratly islands dispute as much in China's favor and with as little involvement from non-claimant states as possible; iv) strengthening political, military, and trade, investment and infra-structural linkages with Southeast Asian states; v) conducting joint border patrols with Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam against cross-national crimes; and vi) acting as the engine of economic growth and putative financial backer for the region.** The idea is to make Southeast Asia a less conducive,

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East Asian Nations, are Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, and Cambodia. The first five countries were the founding members of the organization in 1967, with Brunei joining in 1981, Vietnam in 1995, Laos and Myanmar in 1997, and Cambodia in 1999. The ARF was formed in 1994, and ASEAN+3 was developed out of the dialogue session at the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference in 1997 with China, Japan, and South Korea.

or at least a more constrained, environment for the U.S. or Japan to get involved with politically, economically and especially militarily. It is also to get regional states to be more supportive of, if not integrated into, the foreign, economic and defence policies of China, and to prevent them from using Taiwan's trade and investment links with Southeast Asia to play off China's growing influence in the region.

**Weakening regional support for the U.S.-Japan security alliance and bilateral alliances between the U.S. and Southeast Asian countries.** China is wary that Japan will use the call by the United States to world governments to join hands in doing long-term battle with global terrorism, to gradually expand the mandate of the Japan Self-Defence Force, or JSDF. Beijing views the anti-terrorist legislation passed by the Japanese Diet in late 2001, that allows the JSDF to transport war material and conduct surveillance activities for the U.S. as an obligation under the US-Japan security framework, without prior need for UN authorization, as further signs of Japanese remilitarization. China also views it as an added measure by Japan to strengthen its security co-operation with the U.S. in preparation for emergencies occurring in “areas surrounding Japan,” which to the Chinese, mean East and Southeast Asia, and notably Taiwan.

The Chinese government will continue to question the usefulness of the bilateral security arrangements that the U.S. maintains with Thailand and the Philippines, by portraying them as being as much Cold War relics as the U.S.-Japan alliance, that Beijing would not hate to see dismantled. Beijing also voices its doubts to Southeast Asian governments as to the wisdom of seemingly searching for

enemies by conducting joint exercises with the U.S. military. This is especially since these exercises are involving ever-increasing contingents of air force, navy and army detachments from more and more countries, including JSDF officers who participate as observers. China is uneasy about the set of annual U.S.-led military exercises known as Team Challenge, that brings together U.S. training exercises in combined armed manoeuvres with Australia (Tandem Thrust), the Philippines (Balikatan), and Thailand, with Singapore's participation since 2001 (Cobra Gold). Hence, it has requested the right to send observers to the Balikatan and Cobra Gold exercises. China is also wary about the presence of U.S. soldiers in the Philippines to help the host country fight its Abu Sayyaf rebels. Beijing sees them as attempts by the Southeast Asian allies of the U.S. to restrain China's military reach into the region, and hedge on its intentions, by augmenting the American security presence there as a balancing force. Beijing will also disapprove of any attempt to enmesh the existing U.S. bilateral security agreements or understandings with Southeast Asian countries, Japan, South Korea, and Australia into a multilateral security framework covering these countries and perhaps even Taiwan. China fears being locked out of the Western Pacific and the South China Sea by such a move.

Chinese officials are known to be privately unhappy to see the Singapore government offer docking facilities to American warships and aircraft carriers at its port of Changi, or continue to train its soldiers in Taiwan.<sup>2</sup> China is concerned that Singapore may become a major base of operation for the deployment of U. S. in the Taiwan Straits in the event of a conflict situation in that

area. However, China did not raise these matters publicly because of its strong political and economic ties with Singapore. In view of the fact that Russia's lease over Cam Ranh Bay will expire in 2004, China would be justifiably concerned if the U.S. turns out to be the new leaseholder of Vietnam's premier naval base. China will also be watching with some interest India's budding military relationship with Vietnam, especially since Indian naval vessels exercised with their Vietnamese counterparts in the South China Sea in mid-2000.

**Opposing any heightening of Japan's security role in the region or the deployment of the Theater Missile Defense (TMD) system on or around Japan.** The Chinese government is likely to protest vociferously any joint military exercises in the Southeast Asian region that will include elements of the JSDF, such as further multinational mine sweeping exercises in the Straits of Malacca involving Japanese navy ships, as occurred in June 2001. It expects Japan to become increasingly assertive diplomatically, and perhaps even strategically, under governing coalitions led by an increasingly nationalistic Liberal Democratic Party. It anticipates that future Japanese governments will try to work around or water down Article 9 of the Diet Constitution forbidding the right of collective self-defence or the dispatch of combat forces overseas, a move Beijing opposes. Already miffed by the sinking in December 2001 of a North Korean boat in China's exclusive economic zone after it was fired at by Japanese coast guard cutters, Beijing could not

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2. Private conversation between the author and Chinese diplomats and military officers.

have missed the more recent threat issued by Liberal Party leader Ozawa Ichiro that Japan could easily produce three to four thousand nuclear warheads if China engaged in military expansion.<sup>3</sup> The Chinese government will send representatives to any multilateral conference where the JSDF or the Japanese Coast Guard will be present, to discuss topics of common concerns such as jointly undertaking anti-piracy measures in regional waters, conducting search and rescue missions, or escorting oil tankers from the Middle East. However, Beijing will not agree to take part in such activities or sanction them in an institutionalized framework, seeing them as the thin edge of the wedge of an expanded Japanese security involvement in East and Southeast Asia. Such a concern also underlies China's failure to support Japan's on-going bid for permanent membership in the United Nation Security Council.

Beijing is naturally worried about the construction and deployment of an upper-tier sea-based TMD system around the American bases at Okinawa or other parts of Japan. Beijing is concerned that this would bolster the confidence of pro-independence forces on Taiwan, by allowing the US or even the JSDF to offer them military protection under the TMD system should they one day wish to declare an independent state.<sup>4</sup> It is also worried that its limited capacity for nuclear deterrence and counter-attack would be obliterated

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3. *The Mainichi Shimbun* (Japan), April 7, 2002.

4. Xie Wenqing, "US TMD and Taiwan," *International Strategic Studies* (Beijing), No. 3 (Serial No. 57), July, 2000, pp.27-31. See also Xuetong Yan, "TMD Rocking Regional Stability," *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, Vol XI, No.1, Summer 1999.

by such a TMD system in the event of war. Beijing will naturally speak out strongly against any Southeast Asian country which voices support for this TMD scheme, or for any expanded non-economic role undertaken by Japan in the region or the world without China's prior concurrence.

**Settling the Spratly islands dispute as much in China's favor and with as little involvement from non-claimant states as possible.** China is likely to continue reiterating its claims over the Spratly and other South China Sea islands during the Code of Conduct meetings with ASEAN, and at the same time, expressing its sincere desire to develop the islands with the claimant states of Southeast Asia. Meanwhile, given the confused state of the dispute, it will not take any concrete actions, either to assert its claims on the ground any further, or to conduct joint economic development projects in the disputed areas. In any case, the Spratly islands does not rank as high on China's geopolitical list of priorities as its attempts to integrate Taiwan, and any imprudent moves on the claims may well impel Southeast Asian countries to enhance their security linkages with the U.S., Japan, and perhaps even India. Further actions by Chinese and regional navies to ascend and construct shelters on reefs, atolls and islands will become uncommon, since most of them are already occupied by claimant states. However, China and other Southeast Asian claimants like Vietnam and the Philippines will continue to fortify and upgrade their listening devices on the structures that they have already occupied. As well, intrusions by fishermen from foreign countries who have accidentally or otherwise entered the claim areas of a disputant state will still occur, which may well lead to military

action on the part of its navy, and consequent diplomatic entanglement with the foreign countries concerned. It is not likely that the government of China will agree to a political division of the disputed areas, even if this is feasible, because it will be too politically compromising on its long-held logic of indivisible territorial sovereignty for the excitable popular audience back home. Beijing will also not agree to allow foreign participants outside ASEAN to take part in the Code-of-Conduct discussions with China, even as observers, to prevent ASEAN from using their presence as leverage to pressure China on concessions. Unfortunately, without a political settlement on the dispute as to who owns what, joint development will just be a tantalizing prospect on paper, and conservation efforts will be hard to co-ordinate.

China will continue to support an ARF that is centered on the chairmanship of ASEAN,<sup>5</sup> principally to forestall any attempt by the U.S. or Japan to steer the forum. It will allow discussions to be conducted under ARF auspices which deals with trans-national security issues, like that of states getting together to fight international terrorism. However, it is wary of other states or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) interfering in what it considers to be its internal affairs, especially with regard to matters of state security and sovereignty, such as territorial disputes. As such, China will allow the South China Sea issue to be raised at ARF meetings, but no negotiations on its disposition will be conducted at the

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5. Pan Zhenqiang, "A Chinese Perspective," in ed. Khoo How San, *The Future of the ARF* (Singapore: Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, Nanyang Technological University, 1999), pp.55-56.

forum. It is also likely to keep on resisting attempts by quarters in the ARF to operationalize preventive diplomacy concepts in dealing with conflict prevention, amelioration, or resolution.<sup>6</sup> Beijing will continue to be reticent over revealing its weapons inventory and arms acquisition plans, for fear that other countries may use such confidence-building measures to gather military intelligence on China.

**Strengthening political ties, military engagements, and trade, investment and infra-structural linkages with Southeast Asian states.** To promote trade in the poverty-ridden border districts of China and Vietnam, the railway linking China's Guangxi and Yunnan with Vietnam was reopened even before the boundary treaty ratifying the land border between the two countries was signed in December 2000. In addition, toll-roads are being built between the two countries. The Chinese are also planning to help the government of Laos build a road connecting the ancient royal capital of Luang Prabang to Yunnan's provincial capital of Kunming,<sup>7</sup> which on completion, will become a stretch of the planned Pan-Asian Highway joining Singapore to Beijing. China's participation in the Mekong Development Project as a dialogue partner with Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, as well as with the United Nations and the Asian Development Bank, allows it a major say on the improvement of transportation, hydroelectric generation, environmental management, and commerce along the Mekong River.<sup>8</sup>

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6. 同註 5，頁 56-57。

7. *The People's Daily* (China), March 15, 2001.

8. Evelyn Goh, "The Hydro-Politics of the Mekong River Basin: Regional

Militarily, we can expect more familiarization visits by the Chinese Defence Minister, Chiefs-of-Staff and other high-ranking military officers to Southeast Asian countries in the future, and visits by their counterparts from these countries to China. The Chinese military has been providing their counterparts in Myanmar, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia with training, weaponry and spare parts, to foster closer defence ties between Beijing and these countries.<sup>9</sup> China may well want to acquaint itself with the coastal terrain of Cambodia or Vietnam, to explore the possibility of constructing or using naval or other military bases there to increase its security presence, or at least its signal intelligence-gathering capability, in Southeast Asia for the future. The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) has reportedly long been involved in the development with the Myanmar authorities of a naval base at Hianggyik Island and a radar station at Coco Island.<sup>10</sup>

Economically, the Chinese government would like to expand trade with, and investment in, Southeast Asia, to thwart attempts by Taiwan to penetrate the region economically, and heightening

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Cooperation and Environmental Security," in ed. Andrew T. H. Tan and Kenneth J. D. Boutin, *Non-Traditional Security Issues in Southeast Asia*, Select Publishing for Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, 2001.

9. S. D. Muni, "China's Strategic Engagement with 'New Asia'," *Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies Monograph Series*, No.1, forthcoming 2002, pp. 79-90.

10. J. Mohan Malik, "Sino-Indian Rivalry in Myanmar: Implications for Regional Security," *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol. 16, no.2, September 1994, p.140.

Taipei's diplomatic profile in an indirect way. Although China's trade volume with ASEAN has exceeded that of Taiwan's by 2000,<sup>11</sup> investments by Taiwanese companies in Southeast Asia are still far above the amount made by Chinese companies in the region. Since July 2002, Taiwan's President Chen Shui-bian has exhorted Taiwanese businessmen to diversify the risk of investing too much in China by "going south," and also called on his officials to redouble efforts to work out free trade agreements with countries in Southeast Asia and elsewhere. China is concerned that Southeast Asian countries may become more receptive to Taiwanese money and influence, and the "vacation diplomacy" conducted by Taiwanese leaders with secretly arranged holiday swings through regional countries to meet their officials, as China becomes a more attractive destination for foreign direct investment that would otherwise have gone to Southeast Asia.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, China quickly sought diplomatic relations with independent East Timor, to prevent Taiwan from re-

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11. In 2000, China-ASEAN trade volume is about US\$ 39.5 billion, while Taiwan-ASEAN trade volume is about US\$ 37.5 billion. Kwei-Bo Huang, "The China-ASEAN Free Trade Area: Background, Framework and Political Implications," *Peace Forum Papers 2002-02* (Taiwan). <<http://www.dsis.org.tw/peaceforum/papers/2002-02/APEC0202001e.htm>>.

12. Indonesian authorities were receptive to Taiwanese Vice-President Annette Lu's "vacation diplomacy" most likely because they were disappointed with Beijing's decision to buy liquefied natural gas (LNG) from an Australian consortium rather than from Indonesia. Taiwan is a potentially large Indonesian LNG customer. See Jason Dean and John McBeth, "Lu's Excellent Adventure," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, August 29, 2002, p.16.

establishing its consulate in Dili that was closed following the Indonesian invasion in 1975.

Beijing will cultivate or maintain excellent political ties with the governments of Southeast Asian states, irrespective of the political system, for the purpose of securing or strengthening its own strategic, economic and diplomatic influence in the region. It is keen to adopt a diplomatic and ideological front with ASEAN states to denounce efforts by Western countries to promote human rights and democracy as a form of domestic interference, and exchange intelligence with regional countries to fight separatism or terrorism on ethnic or religious grounds. Beijing understands that engaging China, at least economically, is one of the few issues that the native elites of Southeast Asian states and their economically dominant Chinese minorities can and will continue to agree upon. However, as in the past, these Southeast Asian elites may worry about possible intervention by Beijing in their domestic politics through its influence over the local Chinese communities. This accounts for Beijing's oft-repeated assurances to Southeast Asian leaders that it adheres to the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries, and respects the right of countries to choose their own political systems. By so doing, Beijing hopes to make regional countries more unreserved in supporting China's position and pronouncements on Taiwan, the Spratlys, human rights, and other issues; more willing to drum up private investments in China, especially when and where businessmen are hesitant to commit themselves because of a perceived lack of legal or regulatory clarity, or as a result of bad past experiences in China; and finally, less likely to view China as a future security

threat which necessitates the active involvement of the Americans, Japanese, or others, in security matters relating to the region.

**Conducting joint border patrols with Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam against cross-national crimes.** As part of China's frontier defence of the difficult mountainous terrain at its borders with Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam, Chinese border guards are conducting joint patrols and exchanging intelligence with the military forces of these countries against common threats. The focus is on combating non-traditional aspects of security threats such as illegal migration, drug trafficking, smuggling and guerrilla activities undertaken by ethnic minorities fighting against their central governments. The illegal migrants from China are mostly men who find their way to these countries to engage in cross-border trading, smuggling, and in northern Myanmar, the cultivation of opium on idle land, making of antiphetamine pills in jungle factories, and pushing of these drugs.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, many womenfolk from Myanmar or the Indochinese are lured to China to become the wives of farmers or prostitutes in city brothels, and their numbers are expected to rise. In the past three years alone, one thousand four hundred Vietnamese women were reported to have been abducted to work as prostitutes in China.<sup>14</sup> China will try to patrol the border in such a way as to deny safe sanctuary for ethnic-based guerrilla groups engaging in subversive activities against the governments of Myanmar, Laos or Vietnam, with which Beijing

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13. Aung Zaw, "Drugs, Generals and Neighbors," *Irrawaddy*, June 2001, pp. 15-19.

14. *Straits Times*, July 30, 2002.

wants to be on good terms. To raise funds for their activities, many of these insurgent bands are also engaged in the trafficking of narcotics from the so-called “Golden Triangle” into Yunnan and beyond, which has led to a significant rise in the number of drug addicts in China.<sup>15</sup> To interdict this traffic, the Yunnan and Guangxi authorities have been working with Myanmar, Laotian, and Thai law enforcement agents to try and capture drug tycoons and smugglers operating in the area.<sup>16</sup> With the U.S. war on Afghanistan having disrupted a major heroin trade route coming from the Near East to this part of the world, China will need the co-operation of these Southeast Asian countries even more in the fight against this influx of “new opium”.

For the purpose of promoting and regulating legal trade between the border provinces of China, Laos, Thailand and Myanmar, the governments of the four countries decided in 1993 to construct two highways linking Yunnan’s Kunming south through Jinghong with Thailand’s Chiangrai, one via Kengtung in Myanmar, and the other via Laungnamtha in Laos.<sup>17</sup> They are expected to be completed

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15. The number of known drug addicts in China reached a figure of 860 000 in 2000. See China’s first official White Paper on “Narcotics Control in China,” issued by State Council of the People’s Republic of China in June 2000. <<http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/1/index.htm>>. Also, see *China Daily*, February 2, 2001, report on “Drug Problem worsens, upsets social stability.”

16. *The People’s Daily*, February 16, and June 2, 2001.

17. Chulacheeb Chinwanno, “ASEAN-China Cooperation in the Wider Context of East Asia,” conference on “ASEAN-China Dialogue: The Challenges of Cooperation,” organized by Singapore Institute of International

by 2004. It is not inconceivable that the Chinese coast guard or navy might in future engage regional countries in bilateral or multilateral efforts to fight illegal fishing, piracy or smuggling on the South China Sea, although Beijing is against the efforts of the Japanese to do that. China might also want to have the Vietnamese troops that are currently deployed in Laos to help fight anti-government insurgents evicted or replaced by the PLA eventually, to extend its own influence into Indochina. In the last decade, Southeast Asia has become a major labor export market for China, especially in the construction sector. Hence, Beijing may have grounds in the future to insist that Southeast Asian authorities cooperate with it to vigorously enact and enforce legislation to protect the rights and interests of the Chinese workers that they are hosting in their countries.

**Acting as the engine of economic growth and putative financial backer for the region.** Even as a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), China still wants to establish the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (FTA) in ten years, as proposed by Prime Minister Zhu Rongji at the ASEAN summit in Singapore in November 2001. Beijing will have added impetus to do so, especially since Singapore has already entered into an FTA with Japan, and ASEAN as an organization looks set to come into an agreement with Japan to establish an FTA. If the ASEAN-China FTA succeeds, it could mean that China would take over the economic leadership of Asia from Japan, and be in a position to obstruct Taiwan's participation in regional frameworks for trade

and investment liberalization. China will also want to strengthen its support of ASEAN+3 as a precursor to a region-wide free trade area, encompassing ASEAN, China, Japan and South Korea, of which Beijing will be potentially the biggest player and beneficiary. Under the Chiangmai Initiative, China would likely increase the amount of foreign exchange pledged to the currency swap arrangements reached bilaterally with individual Southeast Asian countries starting May 2001, but which would almost certainly be subsumed in future under the rubric of ASEAN+3 as a whole. Doing so would be to demonstrate its support for the economies of most countries of Southeast Asia that are just showing signs of sustained recovering from the world-wide recession of 2001.

Two-way trade between ASEAN and China has been expanding at the average annual rate of 20% per annum,<sup>18</sup> reaching the figure of US\$41.6 billion by 2001.<sup>19</sup> China is potentially a major customer for the natural resources, consumer goods, and household electronics produced by these countries, as its per capita income rises. As China's industrial engine gathers more steam in the years ahead, public, individual, private, and joint enterprises from that country will increasingly provide investment capital for the extraction and processing of agricultural products, raw materials and natural

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18. Tommy Koh, "ASEAN, Japan and China: An Axis of Virtue," opening remarks at the symposium entitled "Economic Partnership Between ASEAN, Japan and China: Opportunities and Challenges," organized by ISEAS and Keizai Koho Center, Japan, March 25, 2002, Singapore. Koh was quoting Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, Director General-designate of the WTO.

19. *Straits Times*, August 30, 2002.

resources from Southeast Asia. China also looks set to supply more tourists to this part of the world, with 2.2 million nationals having already visited ASEAN's ten member states in 2000, thus making it ASEAN's second biggest source of tourists.<sup>20</sup> China would also look more closely at Southeast Asia as a market for its foodstuffs, textiles, manufactured goods, motorcycles, and consumer electronics, as its own domestic market becomes increasingly saturated. However, China attracts nearly four-fifths of the foreign direct investment that comes to Asia,<sup>21</sup> capital which might otherwise have flowed into Southeast Asia, and is in many ways an economic competitor of Southeast Asian countries for export markets in the industrialized world. Furthermore, while the economies of Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand are basically complementary to that of China, other ASEAN countries are essentially competitive. Tariff reductions undertaken by the Chinese government in the wake of China's entry into the WTO only create the potential for attracting more imports from Southeast Asia into China; regional governments and businesses will have to work very hard in seeking out their own opportunities if they wish to penetrate the China market. By retaining an advantage in plentiful low-cost labor, yet at the same time, developing a base of high-technology, China will force Southeast Asian countries either to specialize in some niche areas of industrial production, designing, transshipment, or marketing, or risk the loss of third-country markets and de-industrialization in

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20. Sadanand Dhume and Susan V. Lawrence, "Buying Fast Into Southeast Asia," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, March 28, 2002, p.33.

21. "The east is in the red," *The Economist*, May 19, 2001, p.36.

due course. While businesses from Southeast Asia will have greater opportunities to invest in post-WTO China and its restructured state-owned enterprises (SOEs), the poorer countries in the region can also look forward to receiving more official infra-structural aid from the Chinese government,<sup>22</sup> which wants very much to cultivate their political goodwill.

Beijing's challenge, after all, is to demonstrate to Southeast Asians that they have very much to gain, very little to lose, and nothing to hedge against, by living next to a powerful, but friendly China.

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<sup>22</sup>.同註9，頁122。

## 中共與東南亞的交往：「反避險戰略」

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### 摘 要

中共於「十六大」進行權力接班後，對東南亞各國的外交政策將會繼續擴大並強化雙邊既存的外交、經濟、戰略與文化互動模式。中共認為東南亞各國是對其採取一種「避險」或「兩面討好」的行動，在經濟上與大陸交往，戰略上則有所保留。東南亞國家希望從大陸獲得經濟利益，惟亦協助美國在區域內保有軍力，且又想讓日本扮演非傳統性的安全角色。中共希望東南亞國家放棄騎牆態度，改採與大陸全面合作之政策。中共準備採取「反避險戰略」，包括削弱美日同盟以及美國與東南亞國家間之雙邊關係等，以促使東南亞國家接受中共在亞洲之領導地位。

**關鍵詞：**東協、反避險戰略、雙邊自由貿易協定、中共、南海主權爭端

