

ASEAN BRIEFS

The South China Sea and
the Wider ASEAN-China Relations



Vol. 6/ Issue 4/ December 2019



ASEAN Briefs is a regular publication about current developments on ASEAN regionalism, especially in the Political-Security, Economic as well as Socio - Cultural Pillars.

**The Habibie Center -
ASEAN Studies Program ASEAN Briefs**

Project Supervisor:

Hadi Kuntjara

(Executive Director)

Mohammad Hasan Ansori

(Director of Program and Research)

Head of ASEAN Studies Program/Editor:

A. Ibrahim Almuttaqi

Researcher:

Muhamad Arif

Vierna Tasya Wensatama

Marina Ika Sari

Finance and Administration:

Anissa Dini

M. Sohib

Design and Publication:

Mayka Risyyatul Asnawiyah

Executive Summary

- The South China Sea dispute has often dominated any discussion regarding ASEAN-China relations. This body of water is frequently referred to as a 'significant flashpoint' whilst multiple alarmist news media regularly portray it as likely triggering the next World War. Further, increased tensions in the South China Sea have threatened to overshadow the strategic partnership between ASEAN and China
- This was especially true since 2010 after Beijing's submission of two notes verbales to the United Nation, with its infamous nine-dashed line claims to the South China Sea, which was followed by the then-US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton articulating Washington's interest in the disputed waters at the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).
- Yet for all the attention given to the disputed waters, the wider relationship between ASEAN and China appears strong. ASEAN-China elite interactions and regionalization - key factors for the South China Sea's relatively stable peace prior to 2010 – have not only continued to apply throughout the 'flashpoint' period but that they also intensified.
- Leaders from ASEAN and China continued to exchange state visits with one another (interestingly soon after certain incidents), Track 1.5 and Track 2 diplomacy carried on discussing the South China Sea, regionalization efforts saw a wealth of initiatives and milestones achieved, whilst economic integration and interdependence.
- That is not to say that the concerns over the issue should be ignored, nor that the threat of a more muscular and assertive China should be dismissed. Such risks remain and ASEAN (as well as others) would do well to guard against it. However, the South China Sea issue is not the 'end all and be all' of ASEAN-China relations. The capitals of ASEAN member-states, China, and other major powers would do well to be mindful of this fact and ensure the issue does not jeopardize the region's peace, security and prosperity.



Introduction

Given the South China Sea's strategic importance, potential natural gas and oil reserves, and the different claimants/actors involved, it is unsurprising that this body of water has often been referred to as a 'flashpoint'. A senior political scientist from RAND Corporation, for example, described the South China Sea as 'a significant flash point in U.S.-China rivalry' and a 'key hot spot' whilst multiple alarmist news media often portray it as likely triggering the next World War.^{1 2}

Increased tensions in the South China Sea have also threatened to undermine the strategic partnership between ASEAN and China, with the dispute often seemingly dominating any discussion on a relationship that has existed since 1996. Yet for all the attention given to the disputed waters, the wider relationship appears strong. Indeed writing in 2010, Weissmann, senior research fellow at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs, argued 'war is becoming more and more unthinkable' pointing out that 'the positive relations have built solid conditions

conducive for peace.'³ This edition of *ASEAN Briefs* will examine whether this remains the case today or whether tensions over the South China Sea issue has reached a stage where the ASEAN-China strategic partnership is under threat.

Solid Conditions Conducive for Peace

Making the argument that the positive ASEAN-China relations were solid conditions conducive for peace, Weissmann credited elite interactions – characterized by Track 2 diplomacy and personal networks – and regionalization – the wider ASEAN-China rapprochement, economic integration and interdependence – as key factors.⁴ In his view, these two factors have not only helped prevent any disputes from escalating into conflict, but have also helped build peace in the region to the extent that 'war is very unlikely'.⁵

Weissmann explains how elite interactions through Track 1.5 and Track 2 diplomacy have been important for fostering regional trust and confidence building among officials in informal settings.⁶ He cites how the informal South

1 Scobell, A. (2018). 'The South China Sea and U.S.-China Rivalry.' *Political Science Quarterly* (Volume 133, Number 2). Retrieved from: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/polq.12772>

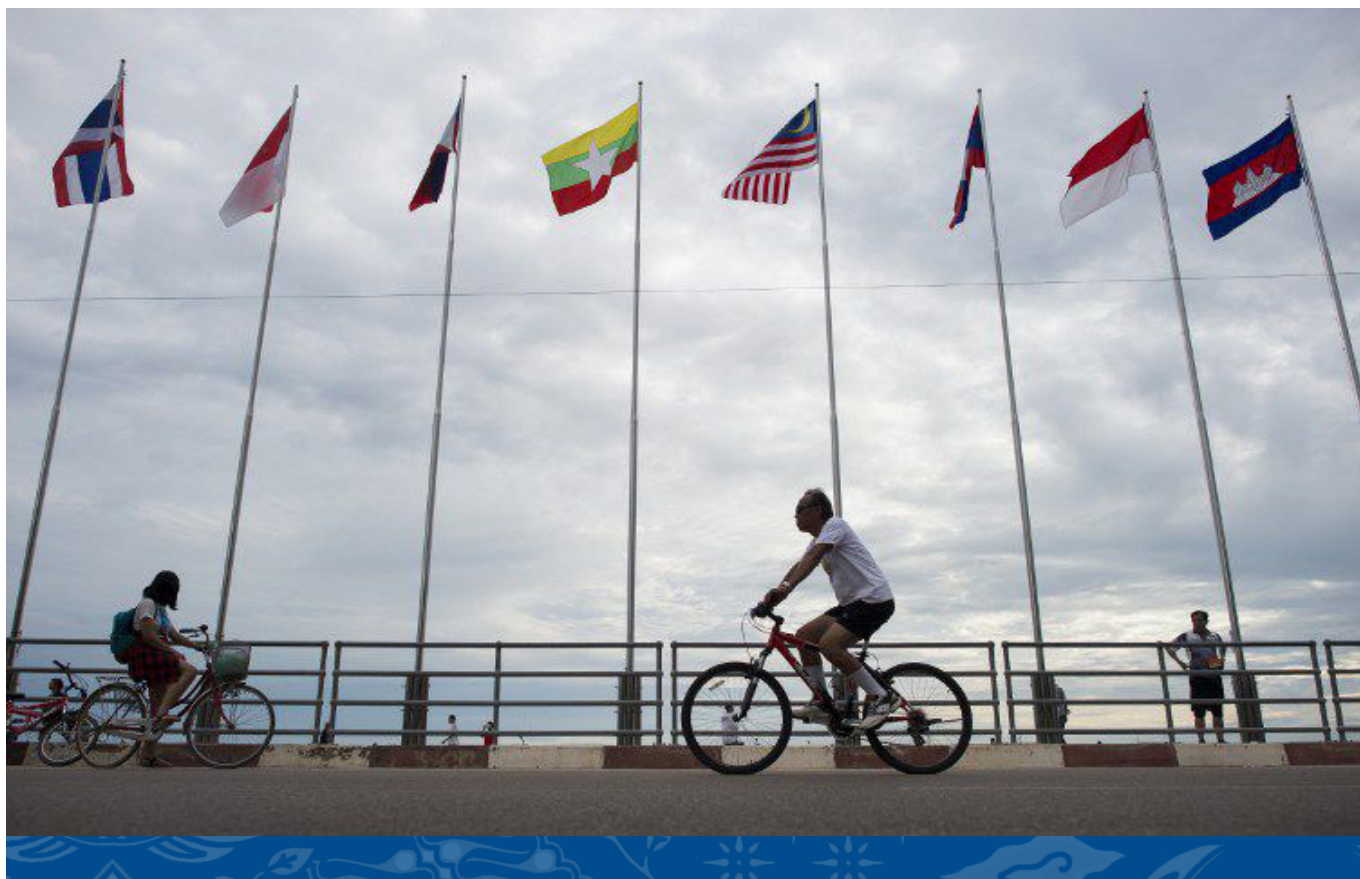
2 See for example Chang, G.G. (2015, May 25). 'History's Next Great War Zone: The South China Sea.' *The Daily Beast*. Retrieved from: <https://www.thedailybeast.com/historys-next-great-war-zone-the-south-china-sea>

3 Weissmann, M. (2010). 'The South China Sea Conflict and Sino-ASEAN Relations: A Study in Conflict Prevention and Peace Building.' *Asian Perspective* (Volume 34, No. 3, 2010), pp. 35-69. Retrieved from: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42704721>

4 *Ibid*

5 *Ibid*

6 *Ibid*



China Sea Workshops held in the 1990s were successful platforms for innovating policy and pre-negotiations, serving as a possible starting point for more official talks.⁷ Other mechanisms such as the Network of East Asian Think Tanks (NEAT), ASEAN-ISIS, and CSCAP have served similar purposes. Personal networks and interpersonal contacts among leaders have also been crucial in not only creating mutual trust and understanding, but also ‘a nascent regional identity.’⁸ Significantly, Weissmann points out leaders in Beijing have traditionally not engaged in developing personal networks with their international counterparts, making their interpersonal interactions with Southeast Asian leaders – facilitated by a web of ASEAN-led gatherings and processes – all the more noteworthy.⁹

With regards to regionalization, Weissmann

notes that in the early 1990s Beijing adopted a ‘soft power’ diplomacy, attempting to cultivate a comprehensive relationship with ASEAN. This coincided with ASEAN’s own ‘constructive engagement’ approach to China.¹⁰ As a result, China became a dialogue partner of ASEAN in 1992, joined the ARF in 1994, and took part in the first ASEAN Plus Three (APT) gathering in 1997. Interestingly, while Beijing was initially rather reluctant and dismissive of multilateral frameworks, by the late 1990s it had become more confident and comfortable, to the point that ‘since 2000, China has moved beyond being a participant and has become a proactive actor in multilateral settings.’¹¹ For Weissmann, China’s transformation can be largely attributed to ASEAN’s effort to lock Beijing into regional multilateral institutions and to accept the ASEAN Way of diplomacy.¹² The above regionalization also extends to

7 *Ibid*
8 *Ibid*
9 *Ibid*

10 *Ibid*
11 *Ibid*
12 *Ibid*

economic integration and interdependence. Trade between ASEAN and China multiplied fifteen times from its level in 1991 to 2005.¹³ Moreover in 2002 the two sides agreed on an ASEAN-China Free Trade Agreement that came into force in 2010. Weissmann notes this economic integration and interdependence increases the cost of war providing an important incentive for disputing states to avoid any escalation of tensions.¹⁴ Were confrontation to break out, the benefits of economic cooperation would be undermined. As such, the positive relations that had been developed between ASEAN and China – at least up to 2010 – had thus built ‘solid conditions conducive for peace.’¹⁵

Since 2010, however, tensions in the South China Sea have arguably heightened. Beijing’s submission of two *notes verbales* to the United Nation, with its infamous nine-dashed line claims to the South China Sea, was followed by the then US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton articulating Washington’s interest in the disputed waters at the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) – a move which China saw as ‘complete U-turn’ who ‘reacted angrily.’^{16 17} That anger saw Beijing adopt a hardened position between 2009-2015 when China started claiming ‘indisputable sovereignty’ over the South China Sea; a term it had never used prior to 2009.¹⁸ Yet, despite such developments, the key factors credited as solid conditions conducive for peace nevertheless continued to exist between ASEAN and China during this period of heightened tensions in the South China Sea. This edition of *ASEAN Briefs* shall

thus proceed by examining each factor one by one and to assess how they developed during the years 2009-2018 (i.e. when tensions over the South China Sea dispute heightened).

Elite Interactions between ASEAN and China

Between 2009 and 2018, elite interactions between ASEAN and Chinese leaders continued uninterrupted. Whilst data covering then-President Hu Jintao’s years in office were relatively more difficult to obtain, we can be sure that he made at least three state visits to ASEAN countries (Malaysia and Singapore in November 2009 and Cambodia in March 2012). Hu Jintao also received state visits from ASEAN leaders on at least 11 occasions during the same period. His successor, President Xi Jinping made at least nine state visits to ASEAN countries as well as four additional trips to attend multilateral meetings hosted by Southeast Asian countries. In return, he has hosted his ASEAN counterparts for state visits on at least 11 occasions. Table 1 provides more details of the state visits that have taken place between ASEAN and Chinese leaders between 2009 and 2018.

From **Table 1**, it is clear that increased tensions in the South China Sea did not prevent ASEAN-China leaders from interacting with one another. This was true both during the ‘flashpoint’ period and immediately after it. Interestingly, just months after the PCA ruling, China’s Xi Jinping would meet his Philippine counterpart in a move to show ‘this issue is not the sum total of bilateral relations.’¹⁹

A similar trend was seen with another vocal

13 *Ibid*

14 *Ibid*

15 *Ibid*

16 Zhang, F. (2017). ‘Chinese Thinking on the South China Sea and the Future of Regional Security.’ *Political Science Quarterly* (Volume 132, Number 3). Retrieved from: http://bellschool.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/uploads/2017-09/feng_zhang-2017-political_science_quarterly.pdf

17 Scobell, A. (2018). ‘U.S.-China Rivalry.’ *Op.cit.*

18 *Ibid*

19 BBC (2016, October 20). ‘Duterte in China: Xi lauds ‘milestone’ Duterte visit. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-37700409>

Table 1 - State visits between ASEAN-China. (Source: Various)

Year	State Visits made by Chinese leaders to ASEAN capitals	State visits made by ASEAN leaders to Beijing
2009	Malaysia and Singapore	Malaysia
2010	-	Cambodia, Myanmar and Singapore
2011	-	Lao PDR, Myanmar, the Philippines and Vietnam.
2012	Cambodia	Indonesia, Singapore, and Thailand.
2013	Indonesia and Malaysia	Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Myanmar, Singapore, and Vietnam.
2014	-	-
2015	Vietnam and Singapore (plus Indonesia for 60 th Asia-Africa Conference Commemorative Summit and the Philippines for APEC meeting)	Indonesia
2016	Cambodia	The Philippines and Cambodia
2017	Vietnam and Lao PDR	(Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Vietnam attended Belt and Road Forum)
2018	Brunei Darussalam and the Philippines	

critic of Beijing's actions in the South China Sea: Vietnam. During Xi Jinping's state visit to Hanoi in 2015 – just a year after the China-Vietnam oil rig incident – the Chinese President made history by becoming the first foreign leader to address Vietnam's National Assembly.²⁰ Neither the South China Sea nor the oil rig incident was mentioned during his address, which saw Xi Jinping instead declare,

'China and Vietnam are joined by mountains and water and the friendship between our two peoples goes back to ancient times.'²¹

Xi Jinping's state visit to Indonesia in 2013 also saw him become the first foreign leader to address Indonesia's House of Representatives,

²⁰ <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/1876440/president-xi-jinping-tells-hanoi-parliament-china-and>

²¹ Hoang, C. (2015, November 7). 'President Xi Jinping tells Hanoi parliament China and Vietnam can survive 'disruptions', but fails to mention South China Sea dispute.' South China Morning Post. Retrieved from: <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/1876440/president-xi-jinping-tells-hanoi-parliament-china-and>



and launch China's 'maritime silk road' idea (later becoming the Belt and Road Initiative).²² Despite 2016 witnessing a series of stand-offs between Jakarta and Beijing over incidents in parts of Indonesia's EEZ that overlap with China's controversial Nine-Dashed Line, Indonesia's President Joko Widodo would meet Xi Jinping for the fifth time since coming to power two years earlier.^{23 24} It should be noted Table 1 refers only to official state visits (and multilateral gatherings) and not the various working visits and sideline meetings between ASEAN and China's leaders. Pang notes the sitting Lao Prime Minister has visited China at least once a year since 2011, whilst Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen has done

the same since 2012.²⁵

Track 1.5 and 2 Diplomacy

Whilst the informal South China Sea Workshops were discontinued in the 1990s – well before the 'flashpoint' period – other mechanisms such as ASEAN-ISIS, CSCAP and NEAT continue to function. Notably, CSCAP's Regional Security Outlook – an annual volume that 'brings expert analysis to bear on critical security issues facing the region' – regularly covers the South China Sea. Indeed its 2017 edition, a year after the PCA ruling, had as much as five articles dedicated to the issue.²⁶ Meanwhile the 2015 and 2016 editions had images of China's land reclamation on Fiery Cross Reef and a standoff between Chinese and Vietnamese coastguard

22 BBC (2013, October 3). 'China's Xi Jinping addresses Indonesia parliament.' Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-24361172>

23 Panda, A. (2016, June 21). 'A Third 2016 Natuna Stand-Off Highlights Growing Indonesia-China Tensions.' The Diplomat. Retrieved from: <https://thediplomat.com/2016/06/a-third-2016-natuna-stand-off-highlights-growing-indonesia-china-tensions/>

24 Parlina, I. (2016, September 3). 'Jokowi has fifth meeting with China's Xi.' The Jakarta Post. Retrieved from: <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2016/09/03/jokowi-has-fifth-meeting-with-chinas-xi.html>

25 Pang, E. (2017, September 5). "'Same-same-but Different': Laos and Cambodia's Political Embrace of China.' ISEAS Perspective. Retrieved from: https://iseas.edu.sg/images/pdf/ISEAS_Perspective_2017_66.pdf

26 Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (2017). CS-CAP Regional Security Outlook 2017. Retrieved from: <http://www.cscap.org/uploads/docs/CRSO/CSCAPCRSO2017.pdf>



vessels for its cover.²⁷ Although NEAT does not explicitly mention the South China Sea – at least in publicly available documents – it is difficult to imagine how discussions on an East Asian Community could avoid the topic. Crucially NEAT’s annual conferences have continued and in 2018 saw its 16th edition. NEAT is arguably interesting given the participation of Chinese experts and suggests the effort to socialize Beijing into a multilateral platform bound by certain norms and principles is showing some success.

With regards to Track 1 diplomacy, perhaps the most premier security-defense forum in the region is the Shangri-La Dialogue held in Singapore. The year 2007 was notable as it was the first time Beijing sent a high-

level delegation led by the Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA). Recent years have seen similar high-level participation with 2015 and 2016 witnessing Jianguo Sun, then-Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the PLA serving as a key speaker.²⁸ Further, the 2019 edition saw General Wei Fenghe, Minister of National Defense and State Councilor speak in a plenary session.²⁹

ASEAN-China Regionalization

The continued efforts of ASEAN’s ‘constructive engagement’ and China’s ‘soft power’ diplomacy saw even more gains being made in the area of ASEAN-China regionalization between 2009 and 2018.

27 Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (2015). CSCAP Regional Security Outlook 2015. Retrieved from: <http://www.cscap.org/uploads/docs/CRSO/CSCAPCRSO2015.pdf> and Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (2016). CSCAP Regional Security Outlook 2016. Retrieved from: <http://www.cscap.org/uploads/docs/CRSO/CSCAPCRSO2016.pdf>

28 See <https://www.iiss.org/events/shangri-la-dialogue/shangri-la-dialogue-2015> and <https://www.iiss.org/events/shangri-la-dialogue/shangri-la-dialogue-2016>

29 See <https://www.iiss.org/events/shangri-la-dialogue/shangri-la-dialogue-2019>



The year 2012 saw the establishment of the Mission of the People's Republic of China to ASEAN in Jakarta and the appointment of the first Chinese ambassador to the regional organization. Further, a commemorative summit was held in Lao PDR in 2016 to mark the 25th anniversary of ASEAN-China dialogue relations and two years later a Strategic Partnership Vision 2030 document was issued to celebrate the 15th anniversary of ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership.³⁰

Despite the controversies surrounding the PCA ruling of 2016, all ASEAN leaders attended the aforementioned commemorative summit and in the joint statement the two sides pledge to,

'resolve the territorial and jurisdictional disputes by peaceful means, without resorting to the threat or use of force, through

friendly consultations and negotiations by sovereign states directly concerned, in accordance with the universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.'³¹

In addition, a Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES) and a hotline communication for ASEAN and Chinese officials were also established in the same year as the PCA ruling.³² Whilst critics dismissed such progress as slow and underwhelming, they were progress nonetheless. At the very least, the progress demonstrated that incidents such as the Scarborough Shoal in 2012, the Second Thomas Shoal in 2013, and the China-Vietnam oil rig incident in 2014 would

30 ASEAN (2019) 'Overview of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations.' Retrieved from: https://asean.org/storage/2012/05/Overview-of-ASEAN-China-Relations-Jul-2019_For-Web_Rev.pdf

31 ASEAN (2016). Joint Statement of the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN Member States and China on the Full and Effective Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea. Retrieved from: <https://asean.org/storage/2016/07/Joint-Statement-on-the-full-and-effective-implementation-of-the-DOC-FINAL.pdf>

32 ASEAN (2016). Chairman's Statement of the 19th ASEAN-China Summit to Commemorate the 25th Anniversary of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations, 7 September 2016, Vientiane, Lao PDR, Turning Vision into Reality for a Dynamic ASEAN Community. Retrieved from: <https://asean.org/storage/2016/09/Final-Chairmans-Statement-of-the-ASEAN-China-25th-Anniversary-Commemo.pdf>

Table 2 - Number of ASEAN-China statements issued (Source: ASEAN Secretariat)

Year	Number of Summit-level statements	Number of Ministerial-level statements
2009	1	2
2010	1	2
2011	2	2
2012	2	2
2013	2	4
2014	1	5
2015	1	3
2016	4	4
2017	4	4
2018	2	N/A

not be allowed to escalate into conflict.

Aside from progress in the South China Sea, ASEAN-China regionalization saw other areas of improvements. This can be seen from the increasing number of statements issued by the two sides both at the summit-level and ministerial level as indicated in **Table 2**.

Notably, ASEAN and China not only continued to issue statements throughout 2009-2018, but the number of statements issued also increased over the years. Whereas in the beginning of the ‘flashpoint’ there were only three statements issued, by 2016 this had more than doubled to eight statements. Moreover of the total 48 statements issued from 2009-2018, only four were related to

the South China Sea. As such, whilst the two sides were open to discussing the issue of the South China Sea, it was not the ‘end all be all’ of ASEAN-China relations.

Indeed, there were significant developments in the relationship. Negotiations for an ASEAN-led Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) – which China is a negotiating party – were launched in 2012. Beijing itself initiated the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) in 2015 and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in 2013 – initiatives that have the backing of all ten ASEAN countries. These significantly were launched at the height of the ‘flashpoint’. Further, at the U.N. General Assembly in September 2018 China declared

itself a ‘champion of multilateralism’.³³ If Beijing had evolved from its initial misgivings over multilateral frameworks to being more confident and comfortable in the late 1990s, it was now a champion of multilateralism with its own initiatives and with the support and encouragement of ASEAN and its member-states.

Economic Integration and Interdependence

Weissmann had noted how ASEAN-China trade jumped fifteen fold from 1991 to 2005. Whilst the ‘flashpoint’ did not see similar remarkable jumps, two-way trade did go up. From a total ASEAN-China trade of USD 231.9 billion in 2010, the figure increased by almost 50 percent to USD 345.4 billion in 2015.³⁴ It was further reported that in 2017 ASEAN-China trade stood at USD 514.8 billion.³⁵ China has since 2009 been ASEAN’s largest trading partner, whilst the regional organization has been Beijing’s third largest trading partner for seven years in a row.³⁶ Notably, trade between the two sides was not impacted by any issues surrounding the South China Sea during the period 2009-2018. Whilst trade did fall slightly in 2014 and 2015, this was more due to the slowing global economy rather than anything else.³⁷

ASEAN-China’s increasing economic

integration has led to greater interdependence between the two sides. Consequently, this offers a significant disincentive for any party to go to war in the South China Sea. To demonstrate this point, when Mahathir Mohamad – who had been critical of Beijing – won a second stint as Malaysian Prime Minister in 2016, Chinese officials reminded him,

‘Currently, our bilateral relations enjoy a sound momentum of growth with fruitful outcomes in cooperation which has delivered tangible benefits to the two countries and peoples. This is worth cherishing and upholding by our two sides.’³⁸

An article by the South China Morning Post was also headlined, ‘134 billion reasons for Mahathir not to rethink Chinese investment.’³⁹ Whilst some may see this as Beijing using its economic might to pressure an ASEAN country, it could also be argued that the same logic works the other way: that Beijing also has billions of reasons not to go to war in the South China Sea. With China now committing billions of dollars to ASEAN countries through initiatives such as the AIIB and BRI, it is difficult to see why Beijing would jeopardize the improving cooperation between ASEAN and China. Indeed, this edition of ASEAN Brief’s analysis of elite interactions between ASEAN and China and ASEAN-China regionalization suggests the issue of the South China Sea has not been allowed to undermine this improving cooperation, even during the ‘flashpoint’ period.

33 King, A. (2018, September 29). ‘China is ‘champion of multilateralism,’ foreign minister says. Nikkei Asian Review. Retrieved from: <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/China-is-champion-of-multilateralism-foreign-minister-says>

34 ASEAN (2017). ASEAN Community in Figures – ACIF 2016. Retrieved from: <https://www.aseanstats.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/25Content-ACIF.pdf>

35 CGTN (2018, September 11). ‘China-ASEAN in numbers: Trade ties.’ Retrieved from: https://news.cgtn.com/news/3d3d414e3145544d7a457a6333566d54/share_p.html

36 Ibid

37 Khan, M. ‘How the world fell back into economic meltdown: 2014 in charts.’ The Telegraph. Retrieved from: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/economics/11301059/How-the-world-fell-back-into-economic-meltdown-2014-in-charts.html>

38 New Straits Times (2018, May 15). ‘China foresees new achievements for Malaysia under Mahathir’s leadership.’ Retrieved from: <https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2018/05/369787/china-foresees-new-achievements-malaysia-under-mahathirs-leadership>

39 Liu, C. (2018, May 14). ‘132 billion reasons for Mahathir not to rethink Chinese investment.’ South China Morning Post. Retrieved from: <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/geopolitics/article/2145797/134-billion-reasons-mahathir-not-rethink-chinese-investment>

Conclusion

In 2010, Weissmann had argued war was very unlikely in the South China Sea. Despite increased tensions and several incidents, this remains the case. Back then, Weissmann credited ASEAN-China elite interactions and regionalization as key factors for the South China Sea's relatively stable peace. This edition of *ASEAN Briefs* has shown those factors not only continued to apply throughout the 'flashpoint' period (and beyond) but that they also intensified. Leaders from ASEAN and China continued to exchange state visits with one another (interestingly soon after certain incidents), Track 1.5 and Track 2 diplomacy carried on discussing the South China Sea, regionalization efforts saw a wealth of initiatives and milestones achieved, whilst economic integration and interdependence deepened to the point there was arguably over 500 billion reasons for all sides not to engage in war in the disputed waters.

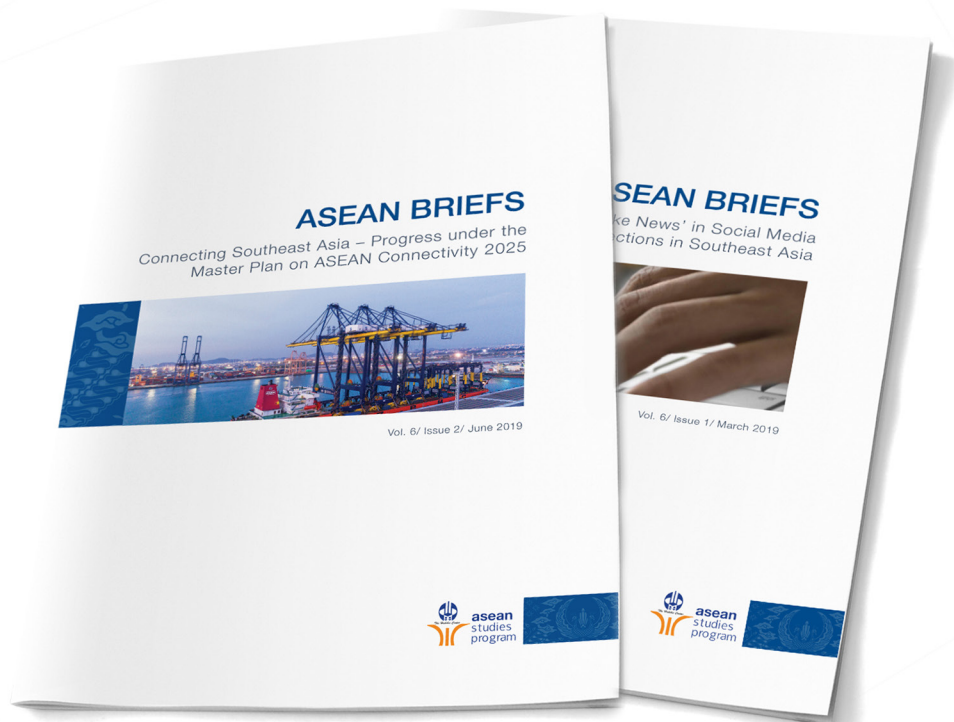
Whilst tensions over the South China Sea issue heightened during this period, ASEAN-China relations remained strong. That is not to say that the concerns over the issue should be ignored, nor that the threat of a more muscular and assertive China should be dismissed. Such risks remain and ASEAN (as well as others) would do well to guard against it. However, as this edition of *ASEAN Briefs* has shown, the South China Sea issue is not the 'end all and be all' of ASEAN-China relations. The capitals of ASEAN member-states, China, and other major powers would do well to be mindful of this fact and ensure the issue does not jeopardize the region's peace, security and prosperity.





References

- ASEAN (2016). Chairman's Statement of the 19th ASEAN-China Summit to Commemorate the 25th Anniversary of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations, 7 September 2016, Vientiane, Lao PDR, Turning Vision into Reality for a Dynamic ASEAN Community. Retrieved from: <https://asean.org/storage/2016/09/Final-Chairmans-Statement-of-the-ASEAN-China-25th-Anniversary-Commemo.pdf>
- ASEAN (2016). Joint Statement of the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN Member States and China on the Full and Effective Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea. Retrieved from: <https://asean.org/storage/2016/07/Joint-Statement-on-the-full-and-effective-implementation-of-the-DOC-FINAL.pdf>
- ASEAN (2017). ASEAN Community in Figures – ACIF 2016. Retrieved from: <https://www.aseanstats.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/25Content-ACIF.pdf>
- ASEAN (2019) 'Overview of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations.' Retrieved from: https://asean.org/storage/2012/05/Overview-of-ASEAN-China-Relations-Jul-2019_For-Web_Rev.pdf
- BBC (2013, October 3). 'China's Xi Jinping addresses Indonesia parliament.' Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-24361172>
- BBC (2016, October 20). 'Duterte in China: Xi lauds 'milestone' Duterte visit.' Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-37700409>
- CGTN (2018, September 11). 'China-ASEAN in numbers: Trade ties.' Retrieved from: https://news.cgtn.com/news/3d3d414e3145544d7a457a6333566d54/share_p.html
- Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (2015). CSCAP Regional Security Outlook 2015. Retrieved from: <http://www.cscap.org/uploads/docs/CRSO/CSCAPCRSO2015.pdf>
- Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (2016). CSCAP Regional Security Outlook 2016. Retrieved from: <http://www.cscap.org/uploads/docs/CRSO/CSCAPCRSO2016.pdf>
- Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (2017). CSCAP Regional Security Outlook 2017. Retrieved from: <http://www.cscap.org/uploads/docs/CRSO/CSCAPCRSO2017.pdf>
- Hoang, C. (2015, November 7). 'President Xi Jinping tells Hanoi parliament China and Vietnam can survive 'disruptions', but fails to mention South China Sea dispute.' South China Morning Post. Retrieved from: <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/1876440/president-xi-jinping-tells-hanoi-parliament-china-and>
- Khan, M. 'How the world fell back into economic meltdown: 2014 in charts.' The Telegraph. Retrieved from: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/economics/11301059/How-the-world-fell-back-into-economic-meltdown-2014-in-charts.html>
- King, A. (2018, September 29). 'China is 'champion of multilateralism,' foreign minister says. Nikkei Asian Review. Retrieved from: <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/China-is-champion-of-multilateralism-foreign-minister-says>
- Liu, C. (2018, May 14). '132 billion reasons for Mahathir not to rethink Chinese investment.' South China Morning Post. Retrieved from: <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/geopolitics/article/2145797/134-billion-reasons-mahathir-not-rethink-chinese-investment>
- New Straits Times (2018, May 15). 'China foresees new achievements for Malaysia under Mahathir's leadership.' Retrieved from: <https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2018/05/369787/china-foresees-new-achievements-malaysia-under-mahathirs-leadership>
- Panda, A. (2016, June 21). 'A Third 2016 Natuna Stand-Off Highlights Growing Indonesia-China Tensions.' The Diplomat. Retrieved from: <https://thediplomat.com/2016/06/a-third-2016-natuna-stand-off-highlights-growing-indonesia-china-tensions/>
- Pang, E. (2017, September 5). "'Same-same-but Different": Laos and Cambodia's Political Embrace of China.' ISEAS Perspective. Retrieved from: https://iseas.edu.sg/images/pdf/ISEAS_Perspective_2017_66.pdf
- Scobell, A. (2018). 'The South China Sea and U.S.-China Rivalry.' Political Science Quarterly (Volume 133, Number 2). Retrieved from: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/polq.12772>
- Weissmann, M. (2010). 'The South China Sea Conflict and Sino-ASEAN Relations: A Study in Conflict Prevention and Peace Building.' Asian Perspective (Volume 34, No. 3, 2010), pp. 35-69. Retrieved from: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42704721>
- Zhang, F. (2017). 'Chinese Thinking on the South China Sea and the Future of Regional Security.' Political Science Quarterly (Volume 132, Number 3). Retrieved from: http://bellschool.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/uploads/2017-09/feng_zhang-2017-political_science_quarterly.pdf



Check out our latest edition of *ASEAN Briefs* and download at www.habibiecenter.or.id

About The Habibie Center

The Habibie Center was founded by Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie and family in 1999 as an independent, non-governmental, non-profit organisation. The vision of The Habibie Center is to create a structurally democratic society founded on the morality and integrity of cultural and religious values. The mission of The Habibie Center are first, to establish a structurally and culturally democratic society that recognizes, respects, and promotes human rights by undertaking study and advocacy of issues related to democratization and human rights, and second, to increase the effectiveness of the management of human resources and the spread of technology.

About ASEAN Studies Program

The ASEAN Studies Program was established on February 24, 2010, to become a center of excellence on ASEAN related issues, which can assist in the development of the ASEAN Community by 2015. The Habibie Center through its ASEAN Studies Program, alongside other institutions working towards the same goal, hopes to contribute to the realization of a more people-oriented ASEAN that puts a high value on democracy and human rights. The objective of the ASEAN Studies Program is not merely only to conduct research and discussion within academic and government circles, but also to strengthen public awareness by forming a strong network of civil society in the region that will be able to help spread the ASEAN message. With the establishment of ASEAN Studies Program, The Habibie Center aims to play its part within our capabilities to the ASEAN regional development.

About Talking ASEAN

Talking ASEAN is a monthly public dialogue held at The Habibie Center in Jakarta. Covering a wide array of issues related to ASEAN, Talking ASEAN addresses topics of: Economic Integration, Socio-cultural, & Democracy, human rights and regional peace, among others. Featuring local and visiting experts, Talking ASEAN is one of a series of twelve dialogues regularly held each month and open to a target audience consisting of ASEAN officials, foreign ambassadors & diplomats, academics, university students, businesses, and the media.

Cover Image:
(JCJH/jcjha.com)

www.habibiecenter.or.id



ASEAN Studies Program - The Habibie Center

The Habibie Center Building - Jl. Kemang Selatan No.98, Jakarta 12560
Tel: 62 21 781 7211 | Fax: 62 21 781 7212 | Email: thc@habibiecenter.or.id

 facebook.com/habibiecenter  [@habibiecenter](https://twitter.com/habibiecenter)  [@habibiecenter](https://www.instagram.com/habibiecenter)