

The ASEAN States: Coping With Dependence

JÖRG FRIEDRICH

East Asian Regional Security

What the ASEAN Family Can (Not) Do

ABSTRACT

The "ASEAN family" of regional security institutions has a mixed record: it has proved very helpful in improving interstate trust, fairly helpful in managing peaceful change, somewhat helpful in enhancing regime stability, but virtually useless in resolving interstate conflict. Overall, East Asia remains dominated by conventional forms of international relations.

KEYWORDS: East Asia, Southeast Asia, ASEAN, regional security, international relations

FROM A WESTERN PERSPECTIVE, there is something paradoxical about the emergent East Asian international order. There is an apparent tension between globalization and interdependence on the one hand and the persistence of a fairly traditional regional nation-state system on the other. What is more, the countries of East Asia are upholding Westphalian-style sovereignty precisely at a time when significant parts of the West, most notably in Europe, are moving "beyond Westphalia."¹ As a consequence, the emergent East Asian international order can be appropriately characterized by the term "Eastphalia."²

There is indeed a notional paradox here, but only when we make the teleological assumption that globalization and interdependence inexorably

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1. Westphalia stands here for the modern system of sovereign nation states, the foundational moment of which is commonly held to be the Westphalian peace, concluded in 1648 at Münster and Osnabrück.

2. Tom Ginsburg, "Eastphalia as the Perfection of Westphalia," *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies* 17:1 (Winter 2010), pp. 27–45.

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