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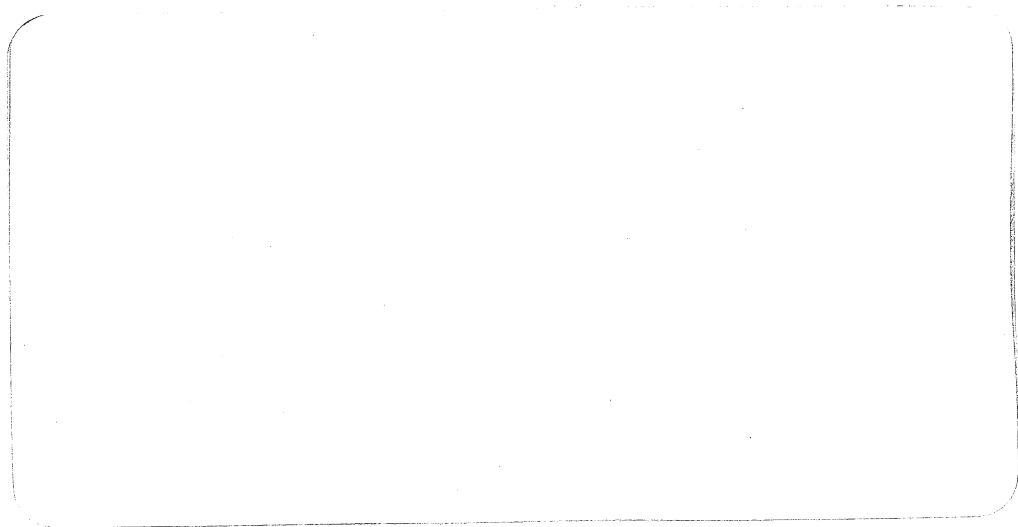


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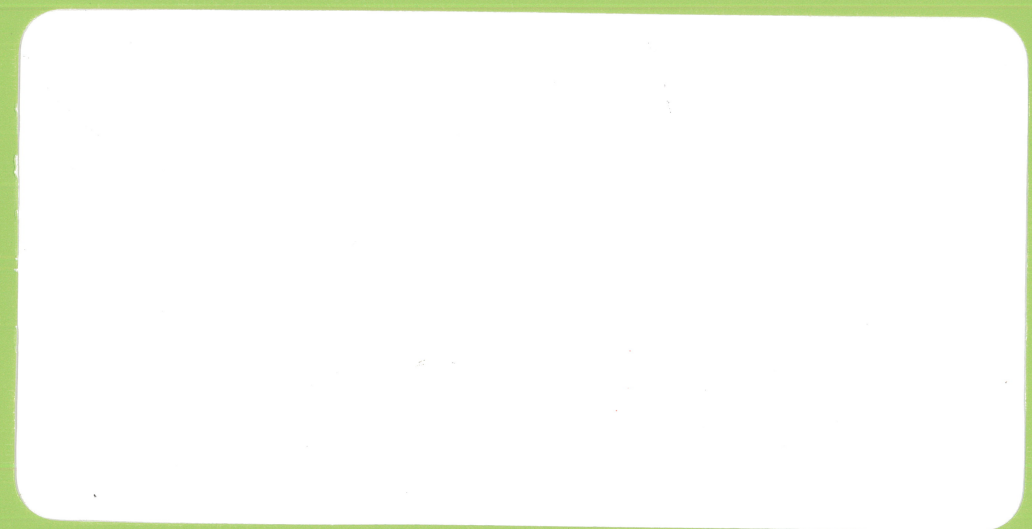
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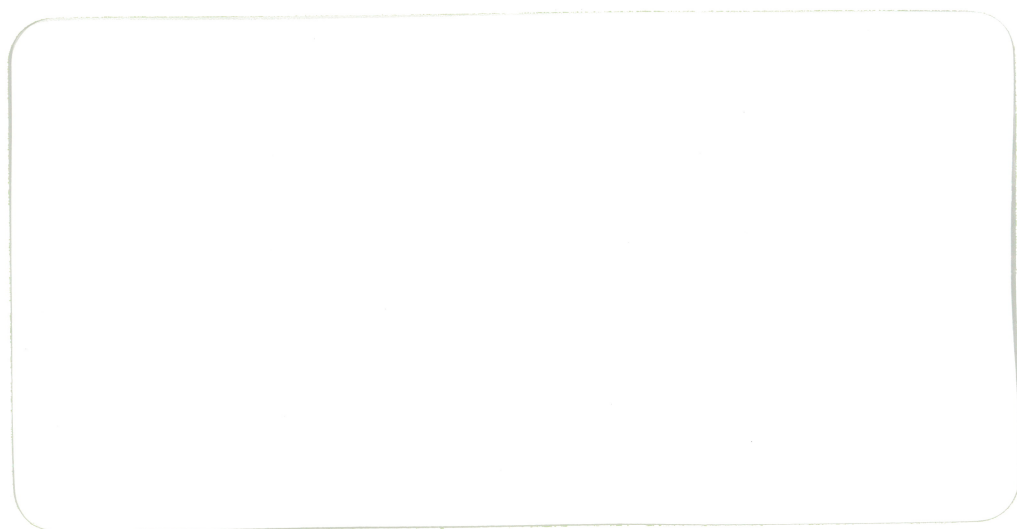
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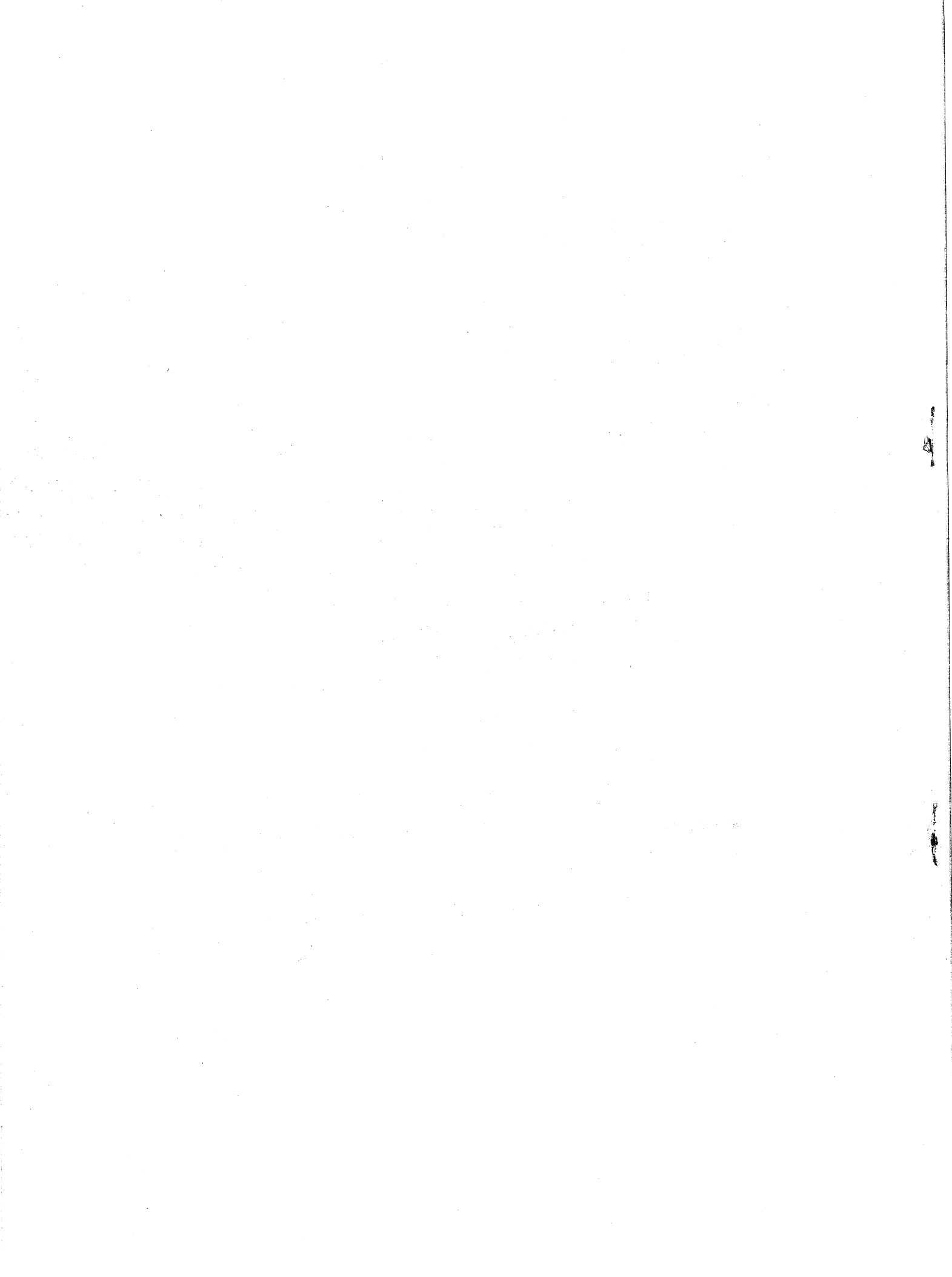
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**The ASEAN Economic Co-operation
-- Status and Challenges**

by
Chien-nan Wang

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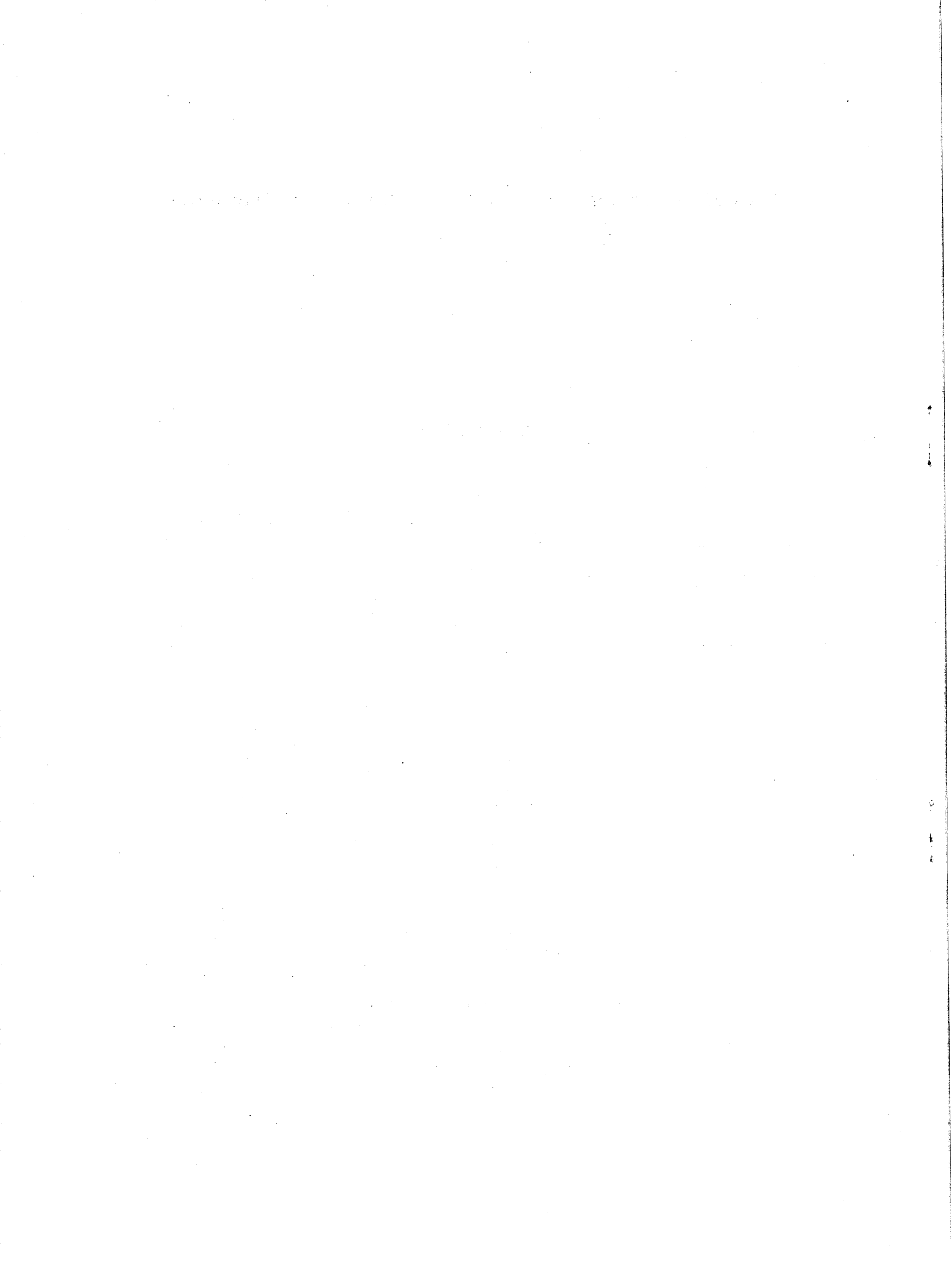


The ASEAN Economic Co-operation -- Status and Challenges

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Chien-nan Wang

Paper prepared for the Conference on
"Southeast Asia and the Emerging Economic Blocs."
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The ASEAN Economic Co-operation -- Status and Challenges

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Chien-nan Wang*

I. INTRODUCTION

The formation of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1967 was a political act, in response to the threat of communist expansion in Indochina. ASEAN enjoyed success in the political sphere. However, the progress of economic co-operation has been slow and erratic.

A major reason of the slow progress is the highly different economic, political, cultural, and religious country characteristics, especially in economic structure and development.

Nonetheless, the 1987 (third) ASEAN Summit in Manila demonstrated member states' strong desire to promote economic co-operation. Furthermore, the change of international environment such as rising protectionism, increasing bilateral trade blocks and failing Uruguay round all pressure ASEAN countries to form a tighter bargaining group vs. their dialogue partners and to link with each other more closely with economic ties.

This paper analyzes the current state of ASEAN economic co-operation and the challenges facing ASEAN, with the background of the ASEAN national policy reform

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and the changing international economic environment. The next part of the paper will survey the ASEAN economic co-operation programmes; the third part will analyze the international economic challenges facing ASEAN; the fourth part will explore possible ASEAN responses; the final part concludes the paper.

II. THE STATUS OF THE ASEAN ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

A. The History

The ASEAN economic co-operation started in the 1967 Bangkok Declaration, because economic stability was a prerequisite of political stability in the ASEAN. However, the earlier focus was on political co-operation. This, and the fact that ASEAN countries have quite different economic development and corresponding protection, plus the competitive rather than complementary nature of ASEAN commodities, all made the pace of economic co-operation rather slow (see Table 1).

Nonetheless, the liberalization of intra-ASEAN trade would create a large market. ASEAN countries could pool resources (such as petroleum joint production and processing), could reap the advantages of specialization and the benefits of large-scale production. Moreover, ASEAN countries could adopt a common stance in international economic problems, and could develop joint dialogues with extra-regional countries.

Table 1
Basic Statistics of ASEAN Countries

Country	Area (1,000km ²)	Population (millions)		GDP (US\$m)		Per capita GDP(US\$)		Real GDP growth ^b			Share of GDP ^a in			Merchandise			
		1970	1989 ^c	1970	1989 ^d	1970	1989 ^d	1983-86	1988	1989	Agri- culture	Ser- vices	Manu- factures	Exports (US\$m)		Imports (US\$m)	
		1970	1989 ^e	1970	1989 ^e	1970	1989 ^e	1983-86	1988	1989	1970	1989 ^e	1970	1989 ^e			
Brunei	6	0.1	0.2	546	5,773	4,202	25,512	-2.6	na	na	2	43	51	292	3,990	256	1,450
Indonesia	1,905	119.5	179.1	9,205	82,726	77	471	4.2	5.7	6.5	26	41	14	1,108	19,465	1,002	13,492
Malaysia	330	10.4	16.9	3,971	34,634	382	2,047	3.6	8.7	7.6	22 ^f	40 ^f	22 ^f	1,686	25,053	1,412	22,496
Philippines	300	36.9	60.1	7,190	44,348	195	738	-2.1	6.2	6.0	24	43	25	1,041	7,755	1,236	11,171
Singapore	1	2.1	2.7	1,896	28,360	916	10,504	4.2	11.0	9.2	1	62	29	1,554	44,665	2,461	49,667
Thailand	514	36.4	55.5	7,087	57,947	195	1,062	5.7	12.0	10.8	16	49	24	710	20,506	1,299	25,091

Notes

- a. 1986 for Brunei and 1987 for Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.
b. Growth of real GNP for the Philippines.
c. 1986 for Brunei and 1988 for Malaysia.
d. 1986 for Brunei and 1988 for Indonesia, and Malaysia, and Thailand.
e. 1986 for Brunei and 1988 for Indonesia.
f. Percentage of GDP in constant prices.

Sources: Brunei, Ministry of Finance, Brunei Statistical Yearbook 1975/1976 and Brunei Statistical Yearbook 1986. Asian Development Bank, Asian Development Outlook 1990; and Key Indicators of Developing Member Countries of ADB, July 1989. International Monetary Fund, International Financial Statistics, Yearbook 1989 and January, June, and August 1990. World Bank, World Development Report 1989.

However, it was not until the 1976 Bali Summit (the First Summit) that a clearer sense of direction emerged, and a programme of action for economic co-operation established. The Summit endorsed an ambitious programme for economic co-operation covering industrial co-operation and expansion in trade. The first step toward intraregional trade cooperation came at the Second Summit in Kuala Lumpur in 1977, when the Preferential Trading Arrangements (PTA) programme was instituted.

The first two ASEAN Summits were a big step into the unknown, aiming to form close economic ties among highly divergent countries. However, the programme was not very successful because several ASEAN countries, especially those at lower

stages of economic development, still protected import-substituting industries (mainly consumer goods) which happened to be those manufactured commodities that other ASEAN countries could produce competitively.

The Third ASEAN Summit in Manila demonstrated all member countries' desire to promote trade and investment links. A major reason was that ASEAN members all promoted economic development through market-based growth and greater private-sector participation. They also adopted outward-oriented industrial strategies aiming for expanding trade and investment. The synchronization of economic policies provided the impetus for further economic co-operation.

B. The Trade Cooperation

The ASEAN PTA is a scheme designed to facilitate, promote and expand intra-ASEAN trade. This is achieved through the Margin of Preference (MOP) arrangement to provide member countries special tariff treatment. The original MOP in 1977 was 20-25%.

The ASEAN trade liberalization movement started with tedious product by product negotiations. During 1980s, ASEAN adopted across-the-board approach, where the trade negotiation covered all imported items. However, some countries still preserve exclusion lists.

The 1987 Summit was a milestone to symbolize substantial intraregional trade liberalization. The MOP on traded commodities increased from 25% to 50% on over three-fourths of the traded goods. Moreover, within five years, the coverage would be increased to 50% of the value of 90% traded items, and the exclusion lists were restricted to 10% of items traded. This is the first time a timetable has been established for an ASEAN economic co-operation programme.

Nonetheless, intra-ASEAN trade accounts for only about one-fifth of total ASEAN trade. If Singapore is excluded, the number falls to 5-6%. The difficulty in the intra-ASEAN trade may come from the non-complementary nature of ASEAN countries vs. member states. In many aspects, they are competitors in natural resources, agriculture and fisheries sectors.

However, with great strides toward liberalization policies, coupled with the collapse of primary commodity prices, ASEAN countries are transforming their export structure to emphasize manufactures. For example, by 1988, Indonesia lowered its petroleum exports to less than one-half of export earnings. There is a good potential in developing intra-industry trade among ASEAN countries for industrial products.

C. The Industrial Co-operation

Three types of industrial cooperation agreements have been established:

1. ASEAN Industrial Project (AIP)

The AIP Agreement, signed in 1980, was essentially for participation by ASEAN governments as it involves large-scale government-owned projects, with each member hosting at least one large-scale industrial project geared to serve the ASEAN market-via the "resource-and-market" pooling and sharing principles. The host government would possess 60% of the project's total equity with the remaining 40% shared by other states.

The AIPs included two urea projects in Indonesia and Malaysia, a soda ash project in Thailand, a copper fabrication project in Philippine and a Hepatitis B Vaccine project in Singapore.

However, the scheme has been disappointing. ASEAN has only been able to reach agreement on 2 urea projects. A potash plant has just been endorsed for Thailand, and the copper smelting project has been reduced in scale. The soda-ash project and the Hepatitis B Vaccine project have been aborted.

Large project financing, collective decision difficulties, conflicts of interests among members and differences in perception about the desired pace of economic co-operation constituted the major problems that led to the lack of progress made by the ASEAN in this direction.

2. ASEAN Industrial Complementation (AIC)

This attempt at industrial co-operation was initiated in 1981 and involved liberalization of intra-ASEAN trade in intermediate products for the production of a final product to be assembled in ASEAN. The governments of the ASEAN countries set up the Basic Agreement, which required at least four ASEAN countries to participate an AIC project. However, the AIC projects could be initiated by both the governments and the private ASEAN Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

This vertical integration of production by country appeared to be suited to automobile assembly: two AIC projects were in operation, both involved joint venture with Japanese manufacturer (Mitsubishi and Toyota). However, the production costs became higher due to the separation of the production process, which was not well compensated by the efficiency gain from division of labor.

3. ASEAN Industrial Joint Venture (AIJV)

The AIJV agreement in 1983 was designed to promote ASEAN private joint venture of any scale (with required participants from only two ASEAN countries) and joint venture with foreign capital. It was more flexible and decentralized than other

programmes.

The recent revision (December 1987) of the Basic Agreement released foreign participation up to 60 per cent ownership. The MOP was also increased to 90% for AIJV related goods. The approval procedure was simplified, with pre-approved list allowing automatic approval for projects related to specific industries. With this upgrading, the AIJV scheme currently has 22 projects¹.

The original purpose of the AIJV was regional import-substitution. However, regional export-orientation should also be noticed to prevent competition with domestic industries. The difficult problem was to identify the appropriate products. One possibility was to choose intermediate goods, such as automobile parts. Currently, Malaysia and Thailand are the most active in AIJV plans. Both countries are quite willing to develop the automobile industry.

III. THE EXTERNAL ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

In 1970, 21% of total ASEAN export went to regional market. If Singapore was excluded, the number became 6%. However, the number fell to 18% and 4% in 1988 (see Table 2). This shows that interregional trade is much more important than intraregional trade for ASEAN economic growth based on export-promoting industrialization strategies. Moreover, the importance of international market is increasing. Therefore, it is natural that ASEAN has been worrying about the development of regionalism and protectionism in developed countries.

¹For the recent special preferences on AIJV products, see the "Joint Press Statement of the Twenty Second Meeting of the ASEAN Economic Ministers." Denpasar, Indonesia, 29-30 October 1990.

Table 2
ASEAN Export by Area (in percentage)

Area	1970	1988
Asia-Pacific	72.0	74.0
Australia	2.4	2.2
Canada	0.9	1.0
Japan	23.7	19.0
New Zealand	0.3	0.2
United States	17.0	20.7
NIEs ^a	5.6	10.3
ASEAN	21.4	18.1
Brunei	0.6	0.5
Indonesia	1.3	1.1
Malaysia	8.0	5.8
Philippines	1.0	1.0
Singapore	9.5	6.9
Thailand	1.1	2.8
ASEAN ^b	5.9	3.9
China	0.7	2.5
EC	13.8	14.3

a. Includes Hong Kong, Korea and Taiwan.

b. Not including Singapore.

Sources: IMF, DOT, Annual 1970-76, Yearbook 1989.

Republic of China, Ministry of Finance, Department of Statistics, Monthly Statistics of Exports and Imports, No. 157 (September 1982).

A. the North American Free Trade Area

The U.S.-Canada free trade agreement went into effect in January 1989. The U.S.-Mexico free trade area is currently under negotiation and 1992 is targeted as the year for the accord. The North-American Free Trade Area is shaping that is also extending to the Latin America. Since the U.S. is currently the largest recipient of the exports from ASEAN (see Table 2), the U.S. looking for bilateral arrangements raises the ASEAN fear for trade diversion.

However, when the U.S.-Canada Agreement became effective, there was about 75% of U.S.-Canada trade was already duty-free. The preference margin between

U.S. and Mexico will be limited too (current U.S. tariff on Mexico imports averages about 4%). Moreover, the Maquiladora exports (duty free) take 45% of total Mexican manufactured exports to the U.S.. Therefore, the North American Free Trade Area is not an immediate threat.

There can be some investment diversion from ASEAN destination to North American destination. However, the U.S. has recently signed a bilateral trade and investment agreement with the Philippines, has consented to form one with Thailand. The U.S. also is considering to negotiate an umbrella agreement with ASEAN covering a wide variety of issues. In general, the diversion effect is diluted.

Nonetheless, the U.S. protectionism is prevailing. The increasing use of nontariff barriers in manufactured sectors (such as quota and voluntary export restraints) and agriculture subsidies, countervailing duties, and anti-dumping measures have affected certain ASEAN exports. Moreover, the 1988 Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act and the increasing pressure to protect intellectual property right , highlight the future uncertainty.

B. The European Community Economic Integration

The 1985 Single European Act envisions the removal of barriers against movements of commodity, capital and labor within European Community by 1992. Plans are also made for monetary and fiscal harmonization. However, the removal of internal barriers does not accompany the removal of external barriers. Therefore, the fear of a "Fortress Europe" prevails.

Several factors exacerbate the fear. First, the EC special preference arrangements with developing countries often exclude ASEAN countries. Second, the accession to the EC of Portugal, Greece and Spain will increase competition with ASEAN

countries because of similar comparative advantages. Third, the EC, the EC-EFTA (European Free Trade Association) linkage, and the EC-Eastern Europe Cooperation will divert investment resources from ASEAN countries.

Furthermore, the EC has more often used non-tariff protective measures during 1980s. These include national quota on textile, clothing, vehicle, footwear, and electronic products that are important to ASEAN countries. Other protective measures include the abuse of anti-dumping code and countervailing duty.

C. The Asia-Pacific Regional Co-operation

The Asia-Pacific region incorporates highly diversified countries (see Table 3). Close economic cooperation is inherently difficult. Existing cooperative organizations are mostly loose and informal, they include Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC), Pacific Economic Co-operation Conference (PECC), and Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) ministerial meeting. While PBEC & PECC are private forums to provide communication channels, APEC is an official consultative body.

In response to a plethora of regionalization around the globe, Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Mahatir recently proposed to form the East Asia Economic Grouping (EAEG). Besides ASEAN countries, it may include Taiwan, China, Japan, Hong Kong, and S. Korea. The proposal is composed of two parts. The first part proposes to form a bargaining group against North American and EC blocks. The second part proposes close economic cooperation. While the first part seems to be feasible, the second part may be undesirable for the exclusion of the U.S.² In fact, the EAEG is renamed as East Asian Economic Caucus (EAEC) in the recent

²For the unfavorable results of excluding the U.S., see Hou, Chi-ming and Chien-nan Wang, "Globalization and Regionalization - Taiwan's Perspective," paper prepared for the 1991 Sino-European Conference on Economic Development: Globalization and Regionalization. May 23- May 24, Taipei, 1991.

Meeting of the ASEAN Economic Ministers (October 1991). The purpose is mainly to lower U.S. antagonism.

Table 3 Resource Endowments, Sectoral Shares of Total Trade and 'Revealed' Comparative Advantage in Developed and Developing Pacific Basin Countries, 1986^a

	Australasia ^b	North America ^c	Japan	China	Asian NICs	Other ASEAN	Industrial market economies	Developing economies ^d
Population density (persons per km ²)	2.4	13.8	326.6	110.2	507.0	95.4	24.0	53.0
GNP per capita (US\$)	11,157	17,158	12,840	300	3,308	647	12,960	610
Real GNP per capita growth rate, 1965-86 (per cent per annum)	1.7	1.7	4.3	5.1	6.8	4.0	2.3	2.9
Sectoral shares of total trade (per cent)								
Agriculture								
-Exports	46	17	1	22	11	33	13	22
-Imports	8	9	25	10	14	12	14	15
Fuels, minerals and metals								
-Exports	34	10	1	16	9	34	8	37
-Imports	7	12	40	4	16	14	16	11
Light manufactures								
-Exports	3	5	10	44	43	14	11	19
-Imports	14	13	8	13	18	10	13	14
Heavy manufactures								
-Exports	15	64	87	17	65	16	66	26
-Imports	68	63	25	70	51	58	55	58
'Revealed' comparative advantage								
Agriculture	3.3	1.2	0.1	1.6	0.8	2.3	0.9	1.6
Fuels, minerals and metals	2.2	0.7	0.1	1.0	0.6	2.3	0.6	2.5
Light manufactures	0.3	0.4	0.8	3.4	3.3	1.1	0.9	1.5
Heavy manufactures	0.3	1.1	1.6	0.3	1.2	0.3	1.2	0.5

Notes: a. Exports and imports refer to export and import shares, respectively. 'Revealed' comparative advantage is defined as the ratio of the share of a commodity group in total exports for a country or group of countries to that commodity group's share of world exports.
 b. Australia and New Zealand.
 c. United States and Canada.
 d. Excludes high-income oil exporters.

Source: Peter Drysdale, International Economic Pluralism: Economic Policy in East Asia and the Pacific, New York: Columbia University Press, 1988; updated from the International and World Bank, World Development Report, New York; Oxford University Press, 1988.

Though the formal tariff and nontariff barriers in Japan are very few, structural impediments such as barriers in the goods-distribution system prevail. Therefore, even though Japan is ASEAN's largest trading partner and its market becomes more open, ASEAN countries do not look to Japan as their booming market. Japan is also ASEAN's largest investor and aid donor.

In the last few years, the Asian Newly Industrialized Economies (ANIEs) have been liberalizing manufactured imports. ANIEs thus become a good place for ASEAN to diversify their exports. The ANIEs have also been increasing their ASEAN investments quickly. ASEAN has become the No. 2 place (next to the U.S.) for foreign investment from Taiwan and Korea.³ There still is space for ASEAN to develop more trade and investment relations with ANIEs.

IV. PROSPECTS OF ASEAN ECONOMIC COOPERATION

The changing international economic environment, including the trend toward bilateralism and protectionism, render ASEAN economic cooperation more compelling.

A number of suggestions have been raised:

- (1) The Third ASEAN Round Table (1989) suggested to learn from Taiwan's and Korea's experience in economic liberalization and to attract their investment and technology;⁴
- (2) Thailand proposed to form an ASEAN Free Trade Area, and the time schedule

³For the Korean trade and investment figures, see Kim, Duk-Choong, "Korea: ASEAN's New Partner," mimeo, 1991. For the trade and investment figures of Taiwan, see Lee, Sheng-yi, "Research Report on International Co-operation: ASEAN," 1990. See also Lee, Sheng-yi, "Trade and Investment Relations between Taiwan R.O.C. and ASEAN Countries," CIER Economic Monograph Series, No.16, 1986.

⁴See the Third ASEAN Roundtable, "ASEAN Co-operation in a Changing International Environment," 16-17 January, Singapore, 1989.

is 10 years;

- (3) Philippines suggested to sign a comprehensive ASEAN Treaty of Economic Cooperation;
- (4) Indonesia suggested to impose Common Effective Preferential tariff on a sector-by-sector basis.⁵

Reinforcing economic cooperation in a new international environment is expected to be the focus of the 4th ASEAN summit to be held in Singapore in January 1992. There are even suggestions that an ASEAN Free Trade Area can be proposed in the meeting. However, differences in economic structure and development are still in the way of close economic co-operation. Moreover, the limited portion of intra-ASEAN trade in total trade does not justify significant net benefits from economic integration. Nonetheless, several directions of improvements can be made.⁶

A. Pursuing Liberalization Policies

Divergent economies can be much more synchronized if they adopt similar economic policies. A common feature of recent ASEAN country developments is the adoption of internal and external liberalization policies. Only Philippines held back from outward-looking policies in the mid-1980s due to its political situation, and this made Philippines to be the last in ASEAN economic development. The liberalization policies should be further pursued to benefit individual countries and to promote ASEAN economic co-operation.

⁵For the various measures suggested by individual ASEAN countries, see Lee, Ju-song, "ASEAN Co-operation in the 1990s: Challenges," August 26, Taipei, 1991.

⁶For similar suggestions, see Naya, Seiji and Michael Plummer, "ASEAN Economic Co-operation in the New International Economic Environment," ASEAN Economic Bulletin, Vol.7, No.3, March 1991.

B. Promoting Economic Co-operation Programmes

ASEAN should press for intraindustry trade and investment via industrial, trade and financial co-operation programmes. The industrial co-operation through inter-governmental AIP programme did not show much promise, while the AIC programme and the AIJV programme based on private sector involvements have been progressing well. AIJV programme especially has the best potential due to its flexibility in scale, number of countries involved, and open attitude toward foreign participation.

The 1987 Bali Summit set up a five-year timetable to increase the MOP for most intra-ASEAN trade from 25% to 50%. However, there is still a gap from the AIJV preference (90%), and non-tariff barriers should be removed in greater pace. As ASEAN marches toward more industrialization, the removal of regional trade barriers can promote not only inter-industry trade but also intra-industry exchange. However, because of the importance of trade with non-ASEAN countries, ASEAN should adopt open regionalism. That is, ASEAN should also lower trade barriers and welcome economic cooperation with non-ASEAN countries.

A prominent example of financial co-operation is the ASEAN Finance Corporation (AFC) which was set up in 1981. Its purpose was to finance industrial co-operation programmes. AFC has been active in the Singapore financial market. However, the financing of ASEAN co-operation projects needs to be improved. Furthermore, ASEAN should mutually liberalize intra-regional banking activity in order to promote trade and investment.⁷

⁷For more suggestions of financial co-operation, see Lee (1990) and the Group of Fourteen, "ASEAN: The Way Forward," ASEAN-CCI, 1987.

C. Participating the International Economic System

The rise of protectionism and bilateralism makes GATT a more important institution to safeguard member countries' economic interests. By actively working as a group with developed countries in the GATT, ASEAN members can have larger bargaining power in a multilateral setup to manage nontariff barriers, trade related investment measures, tropical product arrangements... etc.

ASEAN as a group has developed successful joint dialogues with OECD countries and third countries, such as the ASEAN-EC Economic Dialogues. These successful forums are channels for ASEAN countries to jointly work against protectionism and request for more aid and investment from developed countries. In the future, these channels can be used more extensively to address trade and investment problems. ASEAN can also form a bargaining group with the four dragons to increase bargaining power.

The role of ASEAN in the Pacific co-operation is important. ASEAN is the best established regional organization in the Asia-Pacific area. The recent Malaysian EAEG proposal also shows the dynamism of ASEAN. Moreover, ASEAN is given special attention in the APEC that the APEC annual meeting holds in an ASEAN country every other year and the ASEAN Secretariat is often consulted by the APEC.

With the inclusion of Taiwan, mainland China, and Hong Kong, APEC has incorporated almost all important countries in the Pacific area (except Latin American Countries). Although economies in this area are quite divergent, the intra-industry trade covers 65% (1987) of total trade, and the protected industries are often the ones that other countries in this area have comparative advantages.

The strengthening of the APEC cooperation may diminish the incentive of ASEAN cooperation. Nonetheless, cooperating either to form a bargaining group or

to integrate economically will be more beneficial to member countries as a whole on the APEC level than on the ASEAN level. In evolution, ASEAN may well push for pacific cooperation based on open regionalism. That is to lower internal barriers without increasing external barriers. A Pacific Free Trade Area, even with many exceptions, can benefit member countries in the long run.

V. CONCLUSION

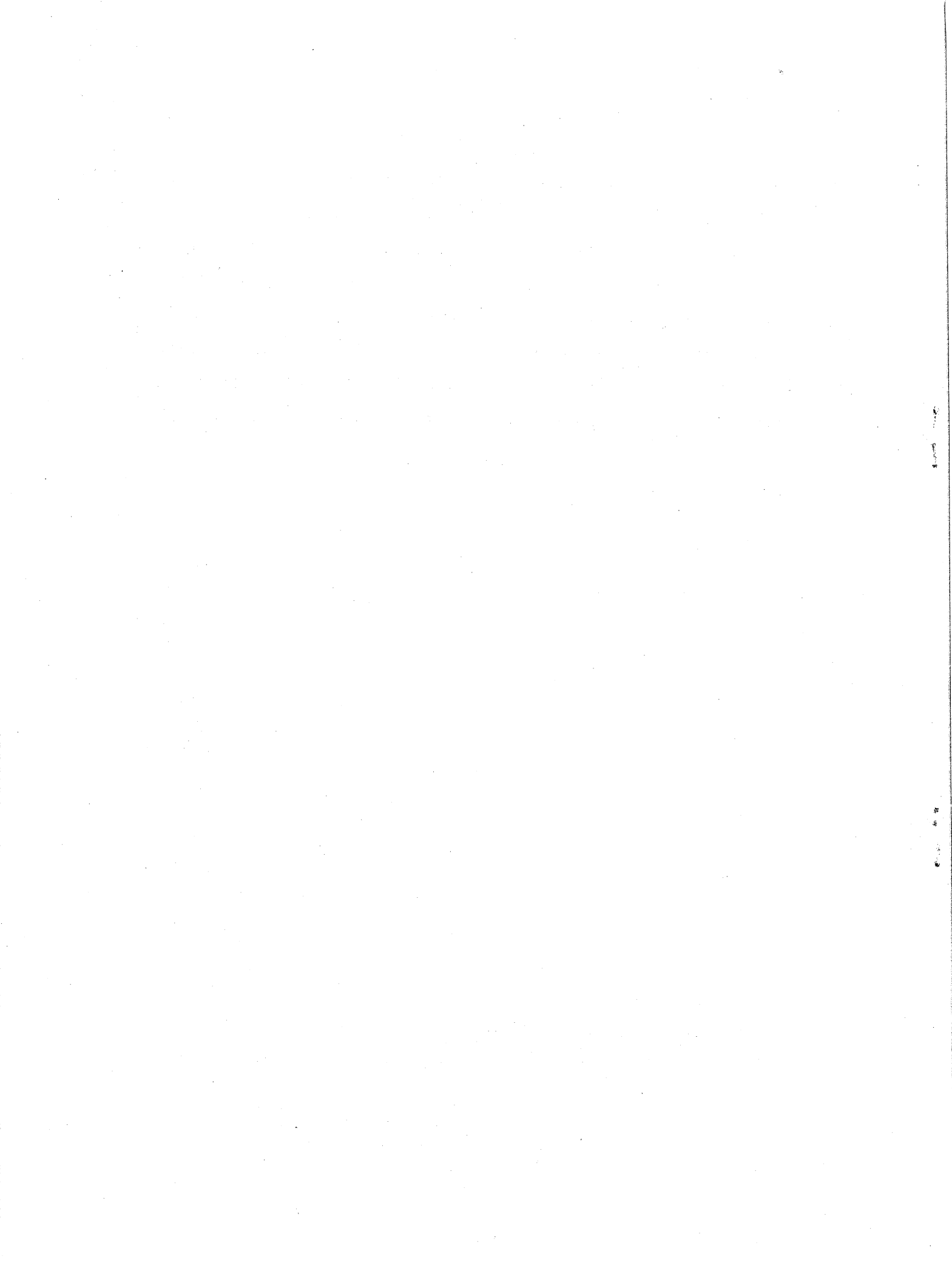
In the 1980s, the outward-looking development strategies based on market orientation and private sector involvements have brought ASEAN countries economic success. The precondition for economic co-operation is improved due to the synchronization of economic strategies.

Also, excluding Singapore, the intra-ASEAN economic interdependence is very low relative to their dependence of the world economy. Therefore, a major driving force for ASEAN economic co-operation comes from the development of the world economy.

The trend toward regionalization in the world economy provides initiatives for closer economic co-operation. On the one hand, the fear of the blockage of a "Fortress Europe" and a trade-diverting North American Free Trade Area push ASEAN to become a more coordinated bargaining group. On the other hand, increasing economic interdependence in the Asia-Pacific area has induced more conflicts that need to be diffused through regional cooperative organization. ASEAN, with its special status in the Asia-Pacific area, has been playing and will keep on playing an important role to enhance regional cooperation and consultation.

The internal and external developments have propelled ASEAN countries into closer, if still largely ad hoc, economic co-operation among themselves. Nonetheless, economic co-operation remains at an elementary level due to the large gap in economic development and the competitive nature of products. In the near future, unless there is a dramatic shift in the world economic environment, it is unlikely the current ASEAN co-operation will drastically change.⁸ However, incremental improvements are quite likely. In the long run (10 or 15 years), if ASEAN can persist in the economic co-operation, close economic integration may become a reality.

⁸For a similar conservative view, see Kng, Chng Meng, "ASEAN's Institutional Structure and Economic-Co-operation," ASEAN Economic Bulletin, Vol.6, No.3, March 1990. Kng also argued that the reform of the cumbersome ASEAN machine hinged on the synchronization of economic structures and developments of ASEAN countries.



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