

# **MAPPING TRACK II INSTITUTIONS IN NEW ZEALAND, AUSTRALIA AND THE ASIAN REGION**

An Independent Study Submitted to the  
Asia New Zealand Foundation

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report documents the leading 'Asia-focused' Track II institutions and activities in Australia and the Asian region, with a view to ascertaining where New Zealand either is or could be most productively engaged.

While Track II processes with an Asia focus continue to burgeon, New Zealand is already affiliated with most of the leading second track institutions in the region, such as the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP), the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC), and the APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation) Business Advisory Council (ABAC). New Zealanders also consistently take part in a number of major annual conferences with an Asia focus, such as the Shangri-La Dialogue, Pacific Trade and Development (PAFTAD), the Asia Pacific Roundtable and the Williamsburg Conference. Where New Zealand is largely excluded from leading regional Track II processes, such as the Network of East Asian Think Tanks (NEAT), the Council on East Asian Community (CEAC) and the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), this is typically for reasons largely beyond its control, namely perceived geography.

The report also suggests, however, that New Zealand has been less well positioned to take a stimulatory role in Track II diplomacy than, for instance, Australia or Canada. New Zealand's relatively small size, coupled with the obvious financial and human resource constraints this imposes, is certainly a key factor here. Partly due to New Zealand's size, however, a further strategic strengthening of its involvement in Track II processes is becoming increasingly important and necessary as part of its overall engagement with Asia. Moreover, while there is still scope to further strengthen

the relationship between New Zealand's Track II community and those working at the Track I level, a clear recognition does appear to exist throughout New Zealand's policy community as to the potential utility of second track processes as part of the broader objective of enhanced engagement with Asia.

The following conclusions and recommendations focus on how New Zealand might best go about strengthening its Track II engagement with the Asian region:

1. ***A strengthening of New Zealand's Track II engagement with Asia requires a long-term commitment*** because second track processes are often strategic and medium to longer term in their outlook. This means that they will often take time and resource input to demonstrate their true value. A consistent governmental commitment is therefore required in order to maximise the returns from any initial efforts undertaken to enhance New Zealand's Track II engagement with Asia.
2. ***A significant broadening of New Zealand's Track II engagement with Asia calls for measured rather than urgent steps*** because New Zealand is already either a member of or a participant in most of the region's major Track II processes and undertakes a substantial commitment to Track II engagement with Asia.

Partly due to New Zealand’s size, however, a further strategic strengthening of its involvement in Track II processes is becoming increasingly important and necessary as part of its overall engagement with Asia.

- 3. ***Should New Zealand opt to undertake further broadening of its Track II involvement in the region, this would most productively be focused upon sponsored workshops with a specifically New Zealand-influenced agenda.*** As New Zealand initiatives with New Zealand funding support, such events provide the opportunity to discuss issues from specifically New Zealand (as well as other) perspectives. They may also assist in strengthening relationships and formulating issues in ways that can assist New Zealand in the broader, well established regional Track II processes. A number of regional institutions might be contemplated for partners in organising such initiatives.
- 4. ***To deepen Track II engagement it would be beneficial for New Zealand to identify two or three key issue areas where, through expertise, consistency and coordination with Track I, it could make a valuable ‘niche’ contribution to regional second track processes.*** While New Zealand’s size and limited resources mean that few participants in regional Track II processes expect it to make an ‘across-the-board’ contribution, peacekeeping and peace operations, transnational crime (especially human trafficking), oceans and fisheries management, disarmament and environmental management issues are areas where New Zealand expertise could make an extremely worthwhile contribution. The New Zealand government could usefully consider contributing additional funding and high-ranking representatives to established second track processes with a view to raising New Zealand’s Track II profile within the region.
- 5. ***A clear correlation exists between the level of resources devoted to second track processes and their effective operation,*** simply because Track II institutions and activities are unable to function effectively in the absence of adequate resources. While the funding required for effective second track mechanisms need not come exclusively from government, it has proven more difficult in New Zealand’s case to attract the levels of corporate sponsorship required to enable their effective operation.
- 6. ***Greater coordination of New Zealand’s Track II institutions is still advisable, particularly those focused on politico-security issues*** in order to make the most of the available resources. There may be scope here for the development of a mechanism similar to the Asia New Zealand Foundation’s Asia Pacific Business Network (AP-Net), which provides a focal point for New Zealand’s economic Track II institutions and activities.

7. ***Track II institutions could be tasked to identify presently underutilised expertise on Asia within New Zealand.*** Consistent with their role as ‘brokers’ between government, on the one hand, and a broad range of potentially useful Track III processes, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), specialist organisations and academic institutions on the other, Track II organisations could be tasked to identify such expertise, drawing it to the attention of government.
8. ***Efforts to nurture the ‘next generation’ of Track II participants are desirable*** because the success of second track processes is often heavily reliant upon the personal networks and experience of the individuals involved. Through its ‘New Voices’ initiative, the Lowy Institute for International Policy has begun steps to help build the skills and networks of those who will likely become the future leaders of Australia’s Track II community. This may provide a useful example for New Zealand to draw upon. So too might the Canadian Consortium on Asia Pacific Security and the recently established Australian Strategic Studies Alumni.
9. ***Some innovative thinking is required on how best to utilise the New Zealand Diaspora and New Zealand’s growing Asian communities.*** Bearing in mind that engagement with Asia is often built upon personal relationships and local knowledge, better use could be made of New Zealanders with Asia expertise living in the region.
- Likewise, while taking care to avoid co-opting or exploiting New Zealand’s growing Asian communities, consideration could also be given to how best to involve them in second track engagement with Asia.
10. ***Strategic alliances’ between Track II institutions and local media outlets should be encouraged*** with a view to strengthening public awareness and appreciation in New Zealand of the importance of second track diplomacy. Involving leading media outlets in this process will help safeguard against the possibility that promising Track II initiatives will escape public attention.
11. ***Institutions and activities focused on crystallising the notion of ‘East Asian Community’ building need to be monitored carefully,*** particularly by countries such as New Zealand which are often described as being geographically peripheral. Although the jury remains out on how far these emergent processes will go in advancing the potentially powerful idea of an East Asian Community – indicating that New Zealand should avoid any sudden or dramatic moves away from the more established processes with which it is currently affiliated – close attention should still be given to the upward trend in such institutions and activities.

One of the key conclusions to emerge from the Seriously Asia project – Ensure New Zealand institutions operate effectively as ‘NZ Inc’ – remains just as relevant, if not more so, when it comes to the optimisation of New Zealand’s Track II engagement with Asia.

It is hoped that the above conclusions and recommendations will be relevant to New Zealand’s government, diplomats, business, media, academics, Track II community, and the public more generally. In the final analysis, the success of New Zealand’s second track engagement with Asia ultimately remains contingent upon the contribution that such parties are willing and able to make.

Hence, one of the key conclusions to emerge from the *Seriously Asia* project – Ensure New Zealand institutions operate effectively as ‘NZ Inc’ – remains just as relevant, if not more so, when it comes to the optimisation of New Zealand’s Track II engagement with Asia.

# INTRODUCTION

In 2003, at the request of Prime Minister Helen Clark, the Asia New Zealand Foundation (Asia:NZ) launched the *Seriously Asia* project. The primary objective of this initiative was “to identify priority goals and practical actions to energise New Zealand’s links with Asia.”<sup>2</sup> The perceived need for a strengthening of New Zealand’s ties with the Asian region derived from at least three factors. First, there was apprehension that New Zealand’s trade and economic linkages with the region had reached a plateau and were actually beginning to decline, particularly since the 1997–98 Asian financial crisis. Second, concerns existed that this worrisome trend was partly a result of the fact that New Zealand’s perceptions of the region were outdated and too narrowly focused on trade. Finally, there was a recognition that the 11 September attacks on the American homeland and the subsequent onset of the ‘Global War on Terror’ had diverted New Zealand’s attention toward Western nations and away from Asia.

Following an extensive public consultation process and a major forum, hosted by the Prime Minister at Parliament in November 2003, the *Seriously Asia* project produced 260 proposals for action on how New Zealand could strengthen its Asian linkages. Among these were suggestions that New Zealand could “make better use of Track Two institutions to develop enhanced interaction between government, academics and business” and “consolidate and support regional Track 2 and business networks.”<sup>3</sup>

Against that backdrop, in September 2004 Asia:NZ commissioned a study on ‘Mapping Track II Institutions in New Zealand, Australia and the Asian Region’. A team of researchers from the Australian National University (ANU)

were successful in gaining the contract to undertake the research. The team was led by Professor Anthony Milner, Dean of the Faculty of Asian Studies, ANU, and Professor Desmond Ball of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre (SDSC), ANU. The other team members were Dr Brendan Taylor, also of the SDSC, and Ms Andrea Haese of the Faculty of Asian Studies. Their research brief was essentially twofold:

- To document New Zealand’s existing Track II engagement with Asia; and
- To catalogue those Track II institutions and networks with an Asia focus that exist in Australia and the Asian region with which New Zealand is or could be engaging. In so doing, the research team was asked to conduct an assessment of the relative importance of these institutions and networks in order to ensure that New Zealand is engaging with the most productive.

The project spanned a four-month period. Preparatory work included a thorough review of the existing literature on second track processes in the Asian region. Fieldwork was then conducted in New Zealand, Australia, Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand.<sup>4</sup> The purpose of the fieldwork was to gain insights into the nature and scope of second track processes in the Asian region, beyond those noted in the literature, to gain a greater appreciation of New Zealand’s existing Track II engagement with Asia and a better understanding of some of the main issues and potential obstacles confronting a strengthening of this, and to gain insights into how New Zealand’s

1. The authors would like to acknowledge the valuable input of the advisory panel established to review this report: Professor Gary Hawke, Head of the School of Government at Victoria University of Wellington; Dr Robert Ayson, Fellow at SDSC, ANU; and Dr Pauline Kerr, Fellow at the Asia Pacific College of Diplomacy, ANU. The authors would also like to acknowledge those who agreed to be interviewed for this project. In New Zealand this included academics, journalists, representatives from New Zealand’s second track institutions, senior bureaucrats from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Ministry of Defence, and senior government officials.

2. Asia New Zealand Foundation. (2004), *Seriously Asia Final Report: Unleashing the Energy of New Zealand’s Asian Links*, Wellington, p.3.

3. Ibid. pp.69, 76.

4. At all stages of the project, the research team followed the joint National Health and Medical Council/Australian Vice-Chancellor’s Committee *Guidelines on Research Practice* (1997), as required by the ANU. As part of this process, those individuals interviewed for the purposes of this project were required to sign a consent form that stipulated that their names and job titles would be suppressed in all published work, unless they explicitly requested otherwise.

Although seemingly straightforward in theory, the distinction between Track I and Track II has proven a great deal more difficult to maintain or even apply in practice. Indeed, analysts remain unable to agree upon a definition for second track processes.

5. William D. Davidson and Joseph V. Montville. (1981-1982), 'Foreign Policy According to Freud', *Foreign Policy*, vol. 45, p.155.

6. Brian Job. (2002), 'Track 2 Diplomacy: Ideational Contribution to the Evolving Asia Security Order', in: Muthiah Alagappa (Ed.) *Asian Security Order*, Stanford University Press, California, pp.246 -247.

existing Track II efforts are broadly perceived at the Track I level. A final round of interviews with leading regional experts on Track II diplomacy was held during the 22nd CSCAP Steering Committee Meeting in Kunming, China. These interviews aimed to: gain further insights into the key issues and prospects facing second track processes in the region; ascertain how New Zealand's existing Track II engagement with Asia is broadly perceived; and test and further refine a number of recommendations for how New Zealand can optimise its future Track II engagement with this region.

### What is Track II Diplomacy?

Despite the prevalence of its usage in international politics, the term 'Track II' is often a confused and confusing one. Its first use is commonly attributed to Joseph Montville, a Foreign Service Officer in the United States' (US) State Department. During the early 1980s, Montville used the term more broadly than it tends now to be used, to define the unofficial channel of people-to-people relations. He juxtaposed this against the official channel of government-to-government relations, which were described as "track one diplomacy". Because the overriding prerogative of leaders in Track I diplomacy is to defend their nations' interests, Montville observed, they are required to operate according to worst case assumptions regarding their adversaries. In Track II diplomacy, by contrast, this spiral of insecurity could be circumvented and new types of relationships developed, largely because the interaction associated with this method of diplomacy is based on the assumption "... that actual or potential conflict can be resolved or eased by appealing to common

human capabilities to respond to good will and reasonableness".<sup>5</sup>

Although seemingly straightforward in theory, the distinction between Track I and Track II has proven a great deal more difficult to maintain or even apply in practice. Indeed, analysts remain unable to agree upon a definition for second track processes. A recent study by Canadian scholar Brian Job, for instance, correctly observes that the term has at least two connotations in the Asia Pacific context. The first refers to "the entire complex of informal networking activities, unofficial channels of communication, and people-to-people diplomacy, across national and regional levels, including official and nongovernmental diplomacy, undertaken across social, political, and economic realms of civil society". A second, more widely accepted definition describes "a particular form of dialogue activity associated... with the promotion of cooperative security and multilateral security regionalism". This type of dialogue activity typically involves academics and journalists, as well as politicians and government officials participating in their 'unofficial' or 'private' capacities.<sup>6</sup>

This definitional problem is compounded by the fact that nations in the Asian region have often tended to adopt quite different perceptions of and approaches to second track processes. In the case of China, for instance, the demarcating line between Track I and Track II is often so blurred as to become almost indistinguishable. The distinction between what constitutes official and unofficial activities has at times even become a problem for prominent region-wide institutions, such as the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian

Nations) Institutes for Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS) and CSCAP.<sup>7</sup>

The term 'Track one and a half (or 1.5)' diplomacy, coined by Paul Dibb in the mid-1990s, has proven useful in partially resolving this issue. Track 1.5 processes are those 'unofficial' activities attended predominantly by officials from government and the military or where the agenda has been set by government officials. At the other end of the spectrum, 'Track III' diplomacy describes activities undertaken by NGOs, transnational networks and advocacy coalitions that claim to represent peoples and communities largely marginalised from the centre of power.<sup>8</sup>

The influence and importance of Track III organisations and activities have grown in recent years, particularly throughout Southeast Asia. This is partly a reflection of some of the limitations of Track II processes discussed later in this report. In particular, the so-called 'autonomy dilemma', wherein second track institutions are seen as becoming too closely aligned with their Track I counterparts, has played a key role here. Because Track III processes typically adopt a more critical stance toward government and seek to influence policy more indirectly, a perception exists that it is much easier for them to avoid this characterisation.<sup>9</sup>

Despite these useful analytical distinctions, the lines between Tracks I, 1.5, II and III diplomacy often remain blurred in practice. The ASEAN People's Assemblies (see below under ASEAN-ISIS) provide a case in point. Commonly referred to as a Track III process, they bring together approximately 350 NGO leaders and representatives of grassroots organisations from throughout

Southeast Asia. Yet they are organised by ASEAN-ISIS, a prominent Track II institution, and are also attended by a small number of senior ASEAN officials. As will be detailed later in this report, the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Shangri-La Dialogue is an equally ambiguous case combining elements of Track I and Track II.

Because a primary aim of this report is to document and evaluate explicitly 'Track II' processes, it was necessary to establish from the outset a method for negotiating such definitional ambiguities. The following definitional criteria were used to distinguish which institutions and activities fell within the purview of this report:

- Institutions and activities were regarded as Track II where their membership comprised academics, journalists, business people and, occasionally, politicians. Civilian and military officials will also usually be involved, but typically a 'polite fiction' that these were acting in their 'unofficial' or private capacities will be maintained. Taken together, this type of membership composition is traditionally described as being 'mixed' or 'blended'.
- The 'unofficial' or 'non-official' nature of second track processes was regarded as a defining characteristic.

7. See, for instance, Herman Joseph S. Kraft. (2000), 'The Autonomy Dilemma of Track Two Diplomacy in Southeast Asia', *Security Dialogue*, vol. 31, no. 3, p. 347.

8. For further reading on the definitional issues surrounding 'tracked diplomacy', please consult David Capie and Paul M. Evans. (2002), *The Asia-Pacific Security Lexicon*, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, pp. 209-219.

9. Track III processes come in all shapes and sizes and cover a wide range of issue areas, including women's issues, the environment and anti-globalisation. They are by far most active in the area of human rights. The Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (Forum Asia), for instance, is a leading network of human rights and development organisations in South and Southeast Asia. It seeks to facilitate greater cooperation and the sharing of expertise between these groups. The Alternative ASEAN Network on Burma is an equally prominent human rights institution that organises activities in support of democratisation in Burma. Other prominent Track III processes in the Asia Pacific region include Focus on the Global South, the Council for Alternative Security in the Asia Pacific, and Peace, Disarmament and Symbiosis in the Asia Pacific. For further reading on Track III processes, see David Capie and Paul M. Evans. (2002), *The Asia-Pacific Security Lexicon*, pp. 217-219; and Tadashi Yamamoto (Ed.). (1995), *Emerging Civil Society in the Asia Pacific Community*, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore and Japan Center for International Exchange, Tokyo.

10. Stuart Harris. (1996), 'The Regional Role of "Track Two" Diplomacy', in: Hadi Soesastro and Anthony Bergin (Eds), *The Role of Security and Economic Cooperation Structures in the Asia Pacific Region*, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Jakarta in cooperation with Australian Defence Studies Centre, Canberra, p.147.

- Despite their 'unofficial' nature, the institutions and activities regarded as Track II were required to have either formal or informal channels into the policymaking process or, at the very least, a demonstrable interest in developing these.

### Why Track II Diplomacy?

Generally speaking, second track processes are regarded as having a number of beneficial characteristics, some of which are intangible and, therefore, not readily quantifiable.

First, Track II institutions and activities can serve as a useful source of *advice* to governments. Typically the most helpful advice usually pertains to either relatively new or longer-term issue areas, upon which government agencies rarely have either the time or the resources to develop quickly a substantial base of expertise. In this regard, second track processes can act as a useful mechanism for *building capacity*. A clear case in point is the ASEAN-ISIS role in the building of ASEAN. Since 1993, senior ASEAN officials have met annually with the leaders of this second track institution and have also asked for studies to be conducted by the organisation on a regular basis.

Second, Track II processes can provide a 'laboratory' of sorts, where new *ideas* can be generated and tested. Often the *ideas* in question are simply too sensitive or controversial to be discussed at the Track I level. PECC serves as an appropriate example of this useful *ideational* function.

As Stuart Harris, an individual closely associated with the development of this highly influential institution, reflects:

"The overall purpose was to have unofficial channels of dialogue on economic matters where analysts and others close to government could discuss economic issues and policy options in a more exploratory manner and with greater frankness than is normally possible for government officials as officials. Out of the PECC process came ideas on open regionalism, the need for greater harmonisation of standards and regulatory processes affecting international trade, and the need for an investment code in the region".<sup>10</sup>

Third, second track processes provide an alternative diplomatic route when progress at the first track level stalls or becomes deadlocked. The South China Sea (SCS) Workshop process provides a useful example of Track II diplomacy performing such a role. Since January 1990 this initiative has sought to provide a forum where the countries in the South China Sea region can meet to discuss the potential for cooperation in areas where it is functionally and legally required (such as environmental protection, search and rescue at sea, and environmental monitoring). The highly acrimonious nature of claims over the Spratly and other islands in the region initially rendered discussion of such cooperative possibilities problematic at the Track I level.

A fourth benefit of Track II institutions and activities is the useful 'brokerage' role they are often able to perform by serving as a conduit between government, on the one hand, and a broad range of potentially useful Track III processes, NGOs, specialist organisations and academic institutions on the other. Track II institutions and organisations that are consistently able to perform this function effectively will

Generally speaking, second track processes are regarded as having a number of beneficial characteristics, some of which are intangible and, therefore, not readily quantifiable.

be valued at the first track level, partly because of a capacity to tap into a wide range of expertise – to bring new voices, new ideas, new knowledge to the attention of government.

Finally, Track II processes can perform a range of broader 'socialising' functions. At a basic level, second track activities provide an opportunity for potential adversaries to meet and get to know one another, where otherwise they would not be able to. CSCAP Study Group meetings, for example, allow policy experts from China and Taiwan to interact and exchange views in both formal and informal settings. In the process, it is likely that they will gain a greater appreciation of each other's respective national standpoints and gradually begin to develop certain shared understandings. As has been the case in Europe, the growing conversation – not only the identifying of commonalities, but also the acknowledging of differences – can also contribute critically to the substance of regionalism.<sup>11</sup>

Some analysts of second track diplomacy qualify this observation by suggesting that frequent participants in Track II processes will gradually develop an affinity for a particular international institution or activity. As Dalia Dassa Kaye has argued:

"In the process of developing greater understanding about one's adversary and building a common set of knowledge, many participants begin to identify themselves as part of a track two group. To be sure, national identities never recede and sometimes are reinforced in such processes, but over time some participants have observed that they feel they are now part of a group which thinks differently than those who are outside the process."<sup>12</sup>

Other versions of these 'socialisation' arguments suggest not only that involvement in Track II institutions and activities will ideally impact upon the views of the individual participants, but that the greater exposure to international and regional norms that occurs in the process may exert a positive influence in shaping the foreign policy orientation of the country they represent. In recent years, such arguments have typically been made with reference to China as a result of the marked expansion that has occurred in its participation in regional multilateral activities at both the Track I and Track II levels.<sup>13</sup> Some analysts have even gone so far as to suggest that the idea of cooperation can, over time, become learnt across entire regions.<sup>14</sup>

Notwithstanding the obvious benefits that second track institutions and activities are generally assumed to bring to the economic and strategic environment in the Asian region, these processes also exhibit a number of commonly acknowledged limitations.

First, most if not all second track processes face severe funding constraints. In his recent evaluation of security diplomacy in the Asia Pacific, Sheldon Simon documents this problem with reference to CSCAP. Simon points out that even the wealthiest member committees, such as US CSCAP, confront financial difficulties. Because participants are required to pay for their own travel expenses, this can lead to a situation where even the most appropriate experts for a particular issue area are unable to participate in CSCAP Study Group activities. Likewise, where a proposal is put forward for the initiation of a new study group, the member committee proposing it must be prepared to meet the costs involved in running it. This is clearly problematic for

11. Anthony Milner. (2003), *Region, Security and the Return of History*, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore.

12. Dalia Dassa Kaye. (2001), 'Track Two Diplomacy and Regional Security in the Middle East: Prospects and Limits', Paper at the 2001 Annual Meeting of the International Studies Meeting, Chicago Hilton, 20-24 February.

13. For further reading regarding the possibilities of socialisation within international institutions, see Alastair Iain Johnston. (2001), 'Treating International Institutions as Social Environments', *International Studies Quarterly*, vol.45, no.4, pp.487-515.

14. Pauline Kerr. (1994), 'The Security Dialogue in the Asia-Pacific', *The Pacific Review*, vol.7, no.4, p.400.

15. Sheldon W. Simon. (2002), 'Evaluating Track II approaches to security diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific: the CSCAP experience', *The Pacific Review*, vol.15, no.2, p.187.

16. Herman Joseph S. Kraft, *The Autonomy Dilemma of Track Two Diplomacy in Southeast Asia*, pp.346-347.

17. Joseph A. Camilleri. (2003), *Regionalism in the New Asia-Pacific Order: The Political Economy of the Asia-Pacific Region*, vol. 2, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, UK, p.260.

less affluent CSCAPs and those that do not enjoy direct links to governments or private foundations.<sup>15</sup>

The need to secure government funding contributes toward a second limitation, which Herman Kraft has labelled the "autonomy dilemma" of Track II diplomacy in the Asian region. According to Kraft, many second track institutions in this part of the world have gradually become too closely aligned with their Track I counterparts. This is not an altogether negative development, in that it has allowed Track II diplomacy access to otherwise privileged information, along with a direct channel of influence into the official policy process. At the same time, however, Kraft's concern stems from the fact that the growing intimacy between the first and second tracks limits the capacity of the latter to engage in critical thinking and analysis. He suggests that this tendency has even begun to impact upon some of the leading Track II processes in the region, such as ASEAN-ISIS.<sup>16</sup> Along similar lines, Joseph Camilleri has suggested that too close an alignment between Track I and Track II will often lead to a replication of the very geopolitical dynamics of the Track I level that second track processes are designed to circumvent. Camilleri also maintains that those second track institutions and activities that marry their fortunes too closely to the Track I level will invariably tend to limit the strategic options available to them.<sup>17</sup>

A third common limitation facing second track processes in the region is their lack of capacity to move as quickly as Track I on a pressing issue. Track II institutions must therefore carefully choose the issues to which they devote time and resources. This typically means that the subject matter nominated for consideration is often more academic in

nature. In the interests of making the most effective and efficient use of the resources at their disposal, second track institutions also tend to adopt a measured and strategic approach to these issues. From the perspective of the practitioner, however, this creates particular problems. One is that the immediate policy relevance of this work is not always immediately apparent, but at the same time, when the first track does decide to move quickly on a particular issue under consideration, second track processes are invariably going to struggle to keep pace.

This latter observation exposes a fourth limitation of second track institutions and activities: these processes can often become a victim of their own success. When a new economic or security challenge emerges, it is not uncommon to find government officials turning to the second track for policy advice, in view of the fact that their own agencies may not yet have had an opportunity to build sufficient policy expertise on the issue in question. As this expertise is developed, the interest of the first track in obtaining policy information and guidance from the second track is likely to diminish. While this should not be viewed as an inherent weakness of second track processes, it is certainly a factor limiting their capacity to make a sustained contribution, particularly on issue areas where their resource capabilities are likely to be gradually superseded by those at the disposal of the first track. Perhaps the real message here is that effective Track II organisations must have the flexibility and the capacity to focus on new issues, at the time they are passing older issues over to Track I

## **Structure of the Report**

The report is divided into two sections. Section one identifies the leading Track II institutions and activities with an Asia focus that exist in Australia and the Asian region. It also describes the extent of New Zealand's involvement in these. After documenting and evaluating a number of additional New Zealand-based institutions that exhibit an Asia focus and that also contribute to Track II processes, section one concludes with an assessment outlining some of the key trends and future prospects facing second track diplomacy in the Asian region.

Section two then canvasses the main issues and prospects for strengthening New Zealand's Track II engagement with Asia.

It begins by identifying some of the benefits that second track processes offer New Zealand, but also identifies a number of potential hurdles to strengthening Track II engagement.

Finally, a series of conclusions and recommendations is provided as to how New Zealand might best go about strengthening its Track II engagement with Asia.

The names, contact details and a brief description of the institutions and activities referred to in this report can be accessed via the Track II Directory on the Asia:NZ website at [www.asianz.org.nz](http://www.asianz.org.nz)



# **SECTION ONE**

## **Leading Track II Institutions and Activities in Australia and the Asian Region**

18. Some efforts have been already been undertaken to catalogue the broad range of dialogue activities taking place in the region. The Japan Center for International Exchange, for instance, administers a 'Dialogue and Research Monitor' (DRM) which performs this task. The DRM, however, is a purely descriptive exercise. More evaluative studies have tended to be significantly less comprehensive in their coverage than this report. See, for example, Charles E. Morrison (2004), 'Track 1/Track 2 Symbiosis in Asia-Pacific Regionalism', *The Pacific Review*, vol.17, no.4, pp.547-565, which evaluates eight second track networks in the region. Indeed, evaluative studies of Track II diplomacy will often only undertake to analyse a single institution or activity. See, for example, Sheldon W. Simon (2002), *Evaluating Track II Approaches to Security Diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific: the CSCAP Experience*, pp.167-200. Various institutes and think tanks in the region also engage in Track II activities – too numerous to describe here. They include, for instance, the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (Singapore), the Singapore Institute of International Affairs, the Shanghai Institute of International Studies and the Japan Center for International Exchange. For further reading see Tadashi Yamamoto (Ed.) (1995), *Emerging Civil Society in the Asia Pacific Community*.

This section of the report documents and evaluates the leading second track processes in Australia and the Asian region that exhibit an Asia focus, and the extent of New Zealand participation in these. While some useful previous reviews of Track II diplomacy in the Asian region have covered parts of this purview, no comprehensive collation and assessment of the type attempted here have thus far been undertaken.<sup>18</sup> A primary objective of this section is to identify those institutions and activities that appear to be having the greatest impact upon the trade, economic, political or security environment in the Asian region. Where a relatively new or emerging process exhibits the potential to meet these criteria over the longer term, it is also documented here.

In documenting and evaluating the leading second track institutions and activities in Australia and the Asian region, the following seven factors are taken into consideration:

*Purpose:* The circumstances giving rise to a second track process and the reasoning for its establishment need to be taken into account. In particular, what are its core priorities and focus? It is equally important to take note of any instances where a particular Track II institution or activity achieves its objective(s) as originally stated, or where subsequent developments force a recalibration of its basic mission in order for the process in question to retain a sense of purpose and relevance.

*Membership:* In addition to identifying the range of countries represented in the Track II process, the number and

composition of those individuals belonging to and/or participating in it also needs to be considered. In particular, the balance between official and non-official members/participants has to be taken into account. This should provide useful insights into the nature of the relationship between Track II and Track I, particularly in terms of the level of autonomy that the former enjoys from the latter.

*Organisation:* How a Track II institution is organised can offer useful insights into its importance and level of impact. A high level of institutionalisation will usually connote a process that is well established and that has been undertaking sustained activities over a number of years. At the same time, however, a high level of institutionalisation can also act as an impediment to both the progress and the effectiveness of the Track II process in question.

*Administration:* Where a particular Track II institution or activity is located or administered from will often serve as a guide to its level of import – particularly if it is based at a prestigious think tank or academic institution – as well as offering further insights into its proximity to Track I. Likewise, where a particular Track II institution or activity is based will often provide an indication as to who the main drivers behind the process are.

Track 2 would have been a sterile exercise but for its impact on Track 1. In fact, almost by definition Track 2 cannot exist without a Track 1.

*Meeting Arrangements:* The frequency, nature and scope of meetings held under the auspices of a particular Track II institution or activity can provide an indicator regarding the health of the process in question, as well as better illuminating its impact. A sharp decline in the number of meetings held or in the numbers of those attending could signal that the process is not travelling particularly well. Conversely, if a Track II process has formalised or institutionalised meeting arrangements with the Track I level, this will usually mean that it is more likely to exhibit a high level of importance and influence.

*Funding:* Few if any Track II processes do not face resource constraints of one form or another. Nevertheless, the level of funding available for a Track II institution or activity, coupled with the primary source of this, is a key variable in determining what it is ultimately able to accomplish. A second track process with a steady revenue stream, for instance, is obviously going to find it easier to operate in a more strategic manner, over a sustained period of time. This, in turn, will have a bearing upon its perceived importance and level of influence. At the same time a Track II institution or activity that receives its primary funding from government sources is more likely to be seen as having an insufficient degree of independence from the Track I level.

*Interaction with Track I:* The very existence of Track II processes is ultimately contingent upon their symbiotic relationship with Track I. As Charles Morrison has recently observed “Track 2 would have been a sterile exercise but for its impact on Track 1. In fact, almost by definition Track 2 cannot exist without a Track 1.”<sup>19</sup> Documenting and evaluating the level and impact of interaction – both formal and informal – of the second track process with the Track I level clearly represents a critical facet of the current report. It will be useful to consider the extent to which individual participants in Track II institutions and activities can be said to have any degree of influence with government, either as leading members of that government or as prominent private sector, academic or media figures.

The ‘Asia focus’ of the second track processes in question will, of course, be an important factor in deciding which particular institutions and activities to analyse. As such, important New Zealand-based Track II processes such as the Otago Foreign Policy School, the Pacific Cooperation Foundation and the Australia New Zealand Leadership Forum will not be considered given that they do not exhibit either a strong or specific ‘Asia focus.’ Finally, it should also be noted that the institutions and activities covered in the report are listed alphabetically and do not necessarily appear in order of significance.

19. Charles E. Morrison. (2004), *Track 1/Track 2 Symbiosis in Asia-Pacific Regionalism*, p.550.

20. See [www.abaonline.org](http://www.abaonline.org) [Accessed 5 January 2005.]

21. Charles E. Morrison. (2004), *Track 1/Track 2 Symbiosis in Asia-Pacific Regionalism*, p.557.

## **APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)**

ABAC was established in November 1995 by APEC leaders at the APEC Summit in Osaka, Japan. Its initial brief was to “provide advice on the implementation of the Osaka Action Agenda and on other specific business sector priorities, and to respond when the various APEC fora request information about business-related issues or to provide the business perspective on specific areas of cooperation.”<sup>20</sup>

ABAC is made up of three senior business representatives from each APEC economy: Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, the US and Vietnam. All three representatives are political appointments. ABAC is administered through an international secretariat based in Manila, the Philippines. Funding for this secretariat is provided by a system where each economy is required to make a financial contribution. Consistent with the APEC formula, this annual due is structured to reflect the size of the economy in question.

ABAC meets formally as a group four times per year. Most of its work is undertaken by task forces and working groups covering a range of issues, including global trade and investment, corporate governance and transparency, regulatory frameworks, labour movements, e-commerce and cargo security. ABAC also produces an annual report and meets formally each year with APEC leaders. It participates in the APEC Senior Officials’ Meeting and in the

sectoral ministerial meetings. From time to time, ABAC also issues statements on issues of contemporary concern.

ABAC New Zealand is administered through an office based at Asia:NZ. Its expenses, including travel, accommodation and administrative costs, are met by the New Zealand government. New Zealand ABAC representatives are appointed for a two-year term, which is often renewed in order to maximise experience and maintain continuity. They enjoy relatively strong links with the Track I level and will typically interact – both formally and informally – with senior government officials on a weekly basis.

In terms of impact at the Track I level there is little evidence suggesting that ABAC as a whole has had a substantial degree of influence on policy. This is partly a result of the fact that business, while undeniably important, is but one amongst a range of constituencies whose views governments must take into account. Particularly during the ‘War on Terror’ period, the increasing relevance of political and security issues as items on the APEC agenda has had the effect of further increasing the number and range of constituencies with which ABAC must now compete.<sup>21</sup>

## **APEC Study Centres (ASCs)**

In 1993 the APEC Leaders' Summit agreed to establish an ASC in each APEC member economy. The purpose of the ASC was to facilitate educational exchange between APEC member economies, to encourage NGOs, media and the business sector to engage in dialogue and study relating to APEC, and to assist the APEC process by encouraging advanced, collaborative research on issues of importance to it. There are now 19 ASCs throughout the Asia Pacific region. Each participates in an annual ASC consortium meeting and undertakes a range of other research activities.

The New Zealand ASC is based at the University of Auckland. Its activities include research on APEC-related issues, the facilitation of information flows between overseas ASCs and interested parties in New Zealand, the administration of a programme of APEC research scholarships, and the organisation of seminars, conferences, workshops and public lectures on APEC-related themes. The New Zealand ASC enjoys particularly close linkages with the University of Auckland's Economics Department and the New Zealand Asia Institute (NZAI). The Australian ASC undertakes a similar range of activities and is based at Monash University in Melbourne.

The ASC network performs a range of useful functions, including the facilitation of research on APEC and improving intellectual awareness in the process. Overall, however, the network has failed to live up to expectations, with considerable confusion remaining over its appropriate role. Indeed, as Charles Morrison, a former Director of the ASC at the East-West Center in Hawaii, has recently argued, "for the most part, the APEC Study Center

network simply added more confusion to the webs of non- and quasi-governmental research and educational institutions associated with the regional economic cooperation processes."<sup>22</sup>

## **ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN BAC)/ASEAN Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ASAN-CCI)**

The ASEAN BAC was launched by the ASEAN leaders in April 2003. It comprises prominent regional businesspeople selected by ASEAN leaders and subsequently approved by national Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Its role is to serve as the primary channel for private sector feedback and guidance to ASEAN on matters of economic integration and competitiveness. It is also tasked to identify areas for the consideration of the ASEAN leaders. The ASEAN BAC formally submits its recommendations to the annual ASEAN Leaders' Summit. It does not have a permanent secretariat or maintain a website.

Each year, the ASEAN BAC organises a major ASEAN Business and Investment Summit (ASEAN BIS). The stated objectives of this gathering are to: foster an exchange of views and perceptions between the private sector and government within ASEAN; facilitate trade and transaction between the business community within ASEAN; and explore intra-ASEAN and ASEAN-plus business and investment opportunities.<sup>23</sup> The ASEAN BIS is designed to complement the Track I ASEAN Summit. The first ASEAN BIS was held in Bali in 2003 and attracted over 700 business leaders from throughout the region and beyond. ASEAN BIS 2004 was held in Vientiane, Laos and brought together

22. Ibid, p.559

23. See [www.aseanbis2004.com/bis.htm](http://www.aseanbis2004.com/bis.htm) [Accessed 20 January 2005.]

24. See [www.asean-cci.org/public/home.htm](http://www.asean-cci.org/public/home.htm) [Accessed 20 January 2005.]

25. (1991), *A Time for Initiative: Proposals for the Consideration of the Fourth ASEAN Summit*, ASEAN-ISIS, Jakarta, 4 June, p.1.

26. Herman Joseph S. Kraft, *The Autonomy Dilemma of Track Two Diplomacy in Southeast Asia*, p.345.

approximately 500 business leaders. Funding for this initiative is provided by the ASEAN Secretariat and a range of corporate sponsors, including DHL, Proton, Keppel Corporation, Lane Xang Minerals, Beer Lao and MasterCard.

Prior to 2003, the ASEAN-CCI served as the main channel for private sector participation in ASEAN. The ASEAN-CCI is a regional network of peak business organisations from each ASEAN member state. Its role is to represent the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the ASEAN countries and to support the objectives of ASEAN in its pursuit of effective measures for regional economic cooperation.<sup>24</sup> It strives to foster closer relations and cooperation among its constituent members, as well as those regional and international organisations with similar aims and objectives. These include a number of foreign private sector networks that also engage in a range of second track activities, such as the US-ASEAN Business Council, the ASEAN-European Union Business Council, the ASEAN-Japan Business Council, the ASEAN-Korea Business Council and the ASEAN-China Business Council. The ASEAN-CCI also has regular contact with New Zealand and Australia through its links with the AFTA-CER (ASEAN Free Trade Area-Closer Economic Relations) Business Council – an organisation established in 2002 with a view to reducing impediments to trade and lowering business costs in a number of areas between AFTA and CER.

The ASEAN-CCI is a co-organiser of the ASEAN BIS. It also holds its own ASEAN-CCI conferences and council meetings. The organisation is financed through subscriptions from constituent members and corporate associate members. The ASEAN-CCI is administered through a secretariat which is based in Singapore. In terms of interaction with

the Track I level, the ASEAN-CCI receives invitations to attend all ASEAN Senior Economic Officials' Meetings, relevant working group meetings and ministerial meetings as required. In recent times, however, it has not been as active in terms of producing and tabling reports as has the ASEAN BAC.

### **ASEAN Institutes for Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS)**

ASEAN-ISIS was established in 1984. Its stated purpose is to "encourage cooperation and coordination of activities among policy-oriented ASEAN scholars and analysts, and to promote policy-oriented studies of, and exchanges of information and viewpoints on, various strategic and international issues affecting Southeast Asia's and ASEAN's peace, security and well being."<sup>25</sup> It remains one of the most influential second track institutions in the Asia Pacific. Indeed, Herman Kraft goes so far as to suggest that "track two in Southeast Asia is largely synonymous with ASEAN-ISIS".<sup>26</sup>

ASEAN-ISIS has nine member institutions: the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) (Jakarta); the Brunei Darussalam Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies (Brunei Darussalam); the Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace (Cambodia); the Institute of Foreign Affairs (Laos); the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (Malaysia); the Institute for Strategic and Development Studies (the Philippines); the Singapore Institute of International Affairs (Singapore); the Institute of Security and International Studies (Thailand); and the Institute for International Relations (Vietnam). ASEAN-ISIS is administered through a secretariat based at CSIS Jakarta.

## Track two in Southeast Asia is largely synonymous with ASEAN-ISIS.

ASEAN-ISIS is responsible for organising a number of significant meetings. Each year it runs the Asia Pacific Roundtable, a major Track II event at which over 250 scholars, journalists and civilian and military officials meet to discuss regional peace and security matters. As noted in the introduction to this report, it has hosted the ASEAN People's Assembly since 2000. ASEAN-ISIS also runs regular bilateral seminars with counterpart institutions in China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, India and Europe. Although no Australian or New Zealand institution is formally a member of ASEAN-ISIS – due to the fact that only research institutions based in ASEAN member countries may join – Australian second track personnel are frequently invited to attend or participate in ASEAN-ISIS activities. New Zealanders and Australians also regularly participate in the Asia Pacific Roundtable.

The influence of ASEAN-ISIS has been considerable on a number of fronts. Among its most significant achievements was the seminal role it played in establishing the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and CSCAP. Since 1993, the heads of ASEAN-ISIS have also met with ASEAN senior officials on an annual basis, reflecting the strong formal and informal linkages of this institution with the Track I level. Indeed, the record shows not only that ASEAN has adopted the overwhelming majority of recommendations made to it by ASEAN-ISIS, but also that the ASEAN Secretariat continues to commission ASEAN-ISIS to undertake studies on a wide range of issues. Taken together, these outcomes illustrate the degree to which ASEAN-ISIS has been effective in directly influencing the foreign policymaking bodies of ASEAN, as well as several other governments in the Asia Pacific region.<sup>27</sup>

### ASEAN-Affiliated Non-Government Organisations

Since the mid-1980s, a number of NGOs have established formal relations with ASEAN. Most of these are professional and industry associations, including associations of bankers, public relations organisations, radiologists and other medical professionals, teachers and consulting engineers. As of August 2002, the number of such organisations to have formally affiliated with ASEAN totalled 57. Of these, only the ASEAN-CCI and ASEAN-ISIS enjoy regular interaction and consultation with the Track I level. Nevertheless, a number of others engage in activities exhibiting a definite second track 'flavour'. A complete listing of these organisations, including their contact details and primary objectives, can be found on the ASEAN website.<sup>28</sup>

### Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD)

The ACD was formally proposed at the July 2001 ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting with the stated aim of providing "an informal, non-institutionalized and evolving forum for high-level policymakers (up to the Foreign Ministerial level) in the Asian region".<sup>29</sup> This Thai initiative is essentially a Track I mechanism and currently has 22 members. Over the past year, however, at least two second track meetings have been held under its auspices. In June 2004, for instance, Thailand's Saranrom Institute of Foreign Affairs (SIFA) organised a high-level seminar on Asian cooperation and development at which approximately 100 academics, policy experts, former officials and diplomats, and delegates from the 22 ACD member countries were in attendance. This meeting was held in Qingdao, China and was organised in collaboration with the Boao Forum for

27. For further reading see Carolina G. Hernandez. (2003), 'The ASEAN-ISIS and CSCAP Experience', in: Sharon Siddique and Sree Kumar (Eds), *The 2nd ASEAN Reader*, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, pp. 280-284.

28. See [www.aseansec.org/6070.htm](http://www.aseansec.org/6070.htm) [Accessed 7 January 2005.]

29. See [www.acddialogue.com](http://www.acddialogue.com) [Accessed 10 January 2005.]

30. See [www.aspi.org.au/events.cfm?t=recent&st=dialogue](http://www.aspi.org.au/events.cfm?t=recent&st=dialogue) [Accessed 10 January 2005.]

Asia (BFA) and NEAT. Likewise, in December 2004 a symposium of ACD think tanks was held in Bangkok, Thailand. This event was organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, in cooperation with the SIFA. It was attended by 36 participants and discussed issues of energy cooperation, biotechnology, economic and financial cooperation in Asia and human resource development. The symposium ultimately proposed the establishment of an 'Energy Security Community', with a view to promoting cooperation between energy-supplying and energy-consuming countries in the region, as well as the creation of an 'ACD Human Resource Development Centre'. By developing further projects and establishing linkages at the second track level, it is envisaged that this network of think tanks might eventually come to serve as the academic arm of the ACD.

### **The Asialink 'Conversations'**

The Asialink 'conversations' are an Australia-ASEAN dialogue. They are a private, non-government initiative led by Mr Baillieu Myer and Mr Carrillo Gantner (Chair of Asialink), in cooperation with Professor Tony Milner and Ms Jenny McGregor (Executive Director of the Asialink Centre). The Asialink Centre was initiated by the Myer Foundation and is based at the University of Melbourne.

The Asialink 'conversations' were developed in 2001 with the support of the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Australia and involved close cooperation with Australian embassies and high commissions in ASEAN countries. The aim of the conversations was to counter the perception that Australia had "turned its back on Southeast Asia", to identify new methods for strengthening relations

between Australia and ASEAN, and to foster long-term personal relationships between younger Australian leaders and their counterparts in the ASEAN region.

Two rounds have taken place thus far. The first was held in 2002 in Lindenberg, Victoria, Australia. The second took place in August 2004 in Langkawi, Malaysia and was co-hosted by the Institute of Strategic and International Studies, Malaysia.

This second round received particularly favourable media coverage and appears to have played a constructive role in the improvement of Australian-Malaysian relations. It involved a valuable meeting with the Malaysian Prime Minister and other senior Malaysians.

### **Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) Track II Dialogues**

ASPI is a Canberra-based think tank established in 2000 by the Australian federal government to provide an independent source of information and ideas on defence and security issues in Australia. As part of its mission ASPI organises a number of bilateral Track II dialogues involving civilian and military officials (both former and current), diplomats, academics and journalists from throughout the Asia Pacific region. ASPI's stated objective in developing and managing these dialogues with key regional countries is to strengthen "bilateral security and defence relations to achieve a level of closeness befitting their common interests".<sup>30</sup> Dialogues have thus far been held with defence and security experts from China (July 2003), India (October 2003, May 2002, July 2001), Indonesia (July 2002) and Japan (April 2004, September 2002).

There have been suggestions that the BFA aspires ultimately to become Asia's version of the World Economic Forum.

A report summarising the proceedings of the dialogue is typically produced, primarily with a view to informing and influencing the Track I level.

ASPI has cooperated with and received assistance from a number of government agencies and other institutions in organising these events, including the Australian Department of Defence, the Australia India Council, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the China Institute for International Strategic Studies, the Australia-Japan Research Centre and the Japan Institute of International Affairs.

### **Boao Forum for Asia (BFA)**

The BFA was established in February 2001 with a view to fostering greater economic interaction and cooperation in the Asia Pacific region. It is a Chinese initiative based in the city of Boao, Hainan province. There have been suggestions that the BFA aspires ultimately to become Asia's version of the World Economic Forum.

Each year, the BFA holds a major conference. The first conference took place in April 2002 with Chinese President Hu Jintao delivering a keynote address. The event was attended by over 1,000 senior politicians (including a number of world leaders), diplomats, business and industry leaders, journalists, academics and representatives from international agencies, such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. The 2005 BFA annual conference will address a number of issues including energy, monetary politics and innovation in the information technology sector. A seminar addressing the post-tsunami economic situation will also be held. Australian Prime Minister John Howard

and Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi have indicated that they will be present.

In addition to its annual conference, the BFA organises a number of other events. In December 2004, for instance, it hosted the World Logistics Conference in Shenzhen, Guangdong province. In July 2004, it organised a meeting on energy and sustainable development in Tehran, Iran attended by approximately 100 government officials, business leaders and academics. As noted previously, in June 2004 the BFA also co-organised an ACD seminar on Asian cooperation and development.

The BFA receives strong financial support from the Chinese government. It has attracted sponsorship from a number of major companies, including TNT, Merrill Lynch, BMW and the German oil and gas producer Woodside. The BFA has also signed an agreement with the World Bank which provides US\$1.25 million in assistance.

Opinion remains divided as to whether the BFA will attain a status comparable with that of the World Economic Forum. Some observers suggest that its importance will likely grow in the future, particularly as China's economic and political weight continues to increase. Others, however, argue that the forum is beginning to show signs of losing momentum, with fewer national leaders attending BFA meetings due largely to the demands of having to attend similar gatherings elsewhere in the region and beyond. For this reason, there have been suggestions that the BFA will begin to focus more on hosting business activities. Either way, as long as this process continues to enjoy strong Chinese government backing, it is likely to remain a fixture on Asia's second track diplomatic scene.

CEAC is a Japanese initiative launched in May 2004. Its establishment apparently reflects growing concerns that Japan is falling behind China and other key Asian nations in its preparedness for the proposed formation of an East Asian economic bloc.

31. Charles E. Morrison. (2004), *Track 1/Track 2 Symbiosis in Asia-Pacific Regionalism*, p.561.

32. See, for example, Council for Asia-Europe Cooperation. (2004), *Asia and Europe: Cooperating for Energy Security*, A CAEC Task Force Report, Paris.

### **Council for Asia-Europe Cooperation (CAEC)**

The CAEC was established in May 1996 following a request at the inaugural Track I-level Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) for greater interaction between Asian and European scholars and policy specialists. The primary function of the CAEC is to facilitate such interaction and, through its work, to inspire the ASEM process.

The membership of the CAEC comprises a network of Asian and European think tanks. Its Asian members include CSIS (Jakarta), the Ilmin International Relations Institute (Seoul), the Institute for Asia Pacific Studies, the Chinese Academy of Social Science (Beijing), the Institute of Policy Studies (Singapore), the Institute of Strategic and Development Studies (Manila), the Japan Center for International Exchange (Tokyo) and the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, ANU (Canberra).

Its European members include the Center for East Asian and Pacific Studies (Trier), the Stockholm School of Asian Studies (Stockholm), the Center for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation (Warwick), the German Council on Foreign Relations (Berlin), the Institut Francais des Relations Internationales (Paris), the International Institute for Asian Studies Leiden University (Leiden) and the Royal Institute of International Affairs (London).

The CAEC is managed by a steering committee comprising representatives from the research institutes listed above. Its Asian secretariat is located at the Japan Center for International Exchange while the European secretariat

is based at the German Council on Foreign Relations.

The CAEC has thus far been unable to establish itself, in any official sense at least, as the second track counterpart of ASEM.<sup>31</sup> An additional shortcoming is that it does not maintain an up-to-date website. On the plus side it does produce a number of high-quality task force reports that are widely distributed amongst relevant scholars, journalists and government officials in advance of ASEM Summits.<sup>32</sup>

### **Council on East Asian Community (CEAC)**

CEAC is a Japanese initiative launched in May 2004. Its establishment apparently reflects growing concerns that Japan is falling behind China and other key Asian nations in its preparedness for the proposed formation of an East Asian economic bloc. In particular, its establishment appears to have been strongly influenced by the Chinese-led second track initiative discussed later in this section, NEAT.

The primary aim of the Council is to strengthen intellectual collaboration, build intellectual foundation, and facilitate the sharing of strategic ideas amongst a group of Japanese business people, government officials and academic leaders with a common interest in the concept of an East Asian Community. Japan's leading 12 think tanks belong to the Council, which also consists of 15 corporate members and 52 individual members comprising a mixture of scholars, journalists and politicians. Nine government ministries, including representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry have also joined the activities of the Council in the capacity of 'Counsellors'.<sup>33</sup>

The instigator of this new grouping is the President of the Japan Forum on International Relations, Kenichi Ito. Ito has also been named the President of the Council, which is chaired by former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone.

The Council is administered through a secretariat based at the Japan Forum on International Relations and engages in a range of second track activities. It holds an annual plenary meeting, which is expected to form the basis of a policy report issued at the end of each year. This policy report is initially drafted by a task force, which also assists in the deliberations of the plenary meeting. In addition, the Council organises a number of international exchanges, which in 2004 included a Japan-ASEAN Dialogue and a Japan-China Dialogue. In August 2004, the Council also sent a delegation of 10 members to attend the NEAT conference in Bangkok.

### **Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP)**

CSCAP was set up in 1992-93 with a view to providing "a more structured regional process of a non-governmental nature... to contribute to the efforts towards regional confidence building and enhancing regional security through dialogues, consultation and cooperation".<sup>34</sup> Its primary mission is to provide studies on security matters for its Track I counterpart, the ARF.

CSCAP has 22 member committees located in Australia, Brunei, Canada, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore,

Thailand, the US, New Zealand, Russia, North Korea, Mongolia, China, Vietnam, Europe, India, Cambodia, and Papua New Guinea. The Pacific Islands Forum is an Associate Member. CSCAP is guided by a steering committee comprising representatives from each of these member countries and is administered through a secretariat located at Malaysia's Institute of Strategic and International Studies.

CSCAP-NZ is New Zealand's committee of CSCAP. It is administered through the Centre for Strategic Studies: New Zealand, which is part of the School of Government at Victoria University of Wellington. CSCAP-NZ relies on annual funding from the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the New Zealand Defence Force and the New Zealand Ministry of Defence. It also receives support for salary and overhead costs from Victoria University.

Meetings of the CSCAP-NZ member committee are held twice yearly. In recent times, a concerted effort has been made to involve younger scholars and specialists in these activities. CSCAP-NZ has also worked hard to forge a closer relationship with its Australian counterpart, AUS-CSCAP, with New Zealand representatives regularly attending the six-monthly committee meetings of this body. Consistent with its mandate, CSCAP-NZ is an active participant in CSCAP activities throughout the Asia Pacific region, having taken the lead in a study group addressing 'Security in Oceania' and playing a productive role in several others.

33. See [www.ceac.jp/e-membership.html](http://www.ceac.jp/e-membership.html). [Accessed 25 January 2005.]

34. See the 'Seoul Statement on Security Co-operation in the Asia Pacific', cited in Desmond Ball. (2000), *The Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific: Its Record and Its Prospects*, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No.139, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, The Australian National University, Canberra, p.1.

35. David Dickens (Ed.). (2002), *The Human Face of Security: Asia-Pacific Perspectives*, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No.144, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Canberra; and Peter Cozens (Ed.). (2004), *Engaging Oceania with Pacific Asia*, Centre for Strategic Studies New Zealand, Wellington.

36. Rowan Callick. (2003), 'Track Two Diplomacy Proves Most Effective', *Australian Financial Review*, 6 December, p.32.

37. Sheldon W. Simon (2002), *Evaluating Track II Approaches to Security Diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific: the CSCAP Experience*, p.187.

It also produces and distributes some very useful publications, including recent edited volumes addressing human security in the Asia Pacific and security in Oceania.<sup>35</sup>

The Australian Committee for CSCAP, AUS-CSCAP, has approximately 90 members. This membership comprises a mix of academics, journalists, government officials and private sector representatives, in addition to a range of retired diplomats, politicians and defence officials. A new initiative is also underway to include postgraduate students as observers at AUS-CSCAP meetings. These meetings are held twice a year, usually in February and August.

AUS-CSCAP is administered through an office based at the ANU's SDSC. Its primary annual funding is provided by the Australian Department of Defence and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The Australian Federal Police and the defence contractor Tenix also provide ongoing financial support.

Beyond this, AUS-CSCAP obtains funding for particular projects as required. By way of example, AUS-CSCAP, in collaboration with the ANU's Faculty of Asian Studies, is currently undertaking a major project examining Islam in Southeast Asia. The project has two inter-linked components: a two-day conference and the production of a sourcebook on Islam in Southeast Asia. It is funded by AusAID – an Australian government agency within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. This project also involves a number of partner institutions from across the region, including CSIS Jakarta and the State Islamic University, Jakarta. The Australian Government also underwrote participation with Indonesia in the first CSCAP General Conference, which was held in Jakarta in December

2003 and attended by a number of high-ranking government officials, including the Indonesian and Australian Foreign Ministers and other ministers from Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Japan and Timor Leste. With such support, it can be argued that AUS-CSCAP has been able to help the Australian government to promote Australia's bilateral relations with Indonesia. As Rowan Callick suggested at the time, "determining the agenda of such a meeting of regional security heavyweights, and doing so hand-in-hand with the Indonesians, is clearly a considerable asset for Australia."<sup>36</sup>

While national member committees are clearly an important component of CSCAP, much of the institution's work is produced by eight study groups that work on discrete issue areas and run for a two-year period. Funding for these and the larger CSCAP enterprise is often problematic, particularly for less affluent members. Some of the wealthier member countries are able to rely on foundation grants, while others – such as Australia and New Zealand – have been able to attract government subsidies. Issues of funding often determine which countries and individuals are able to attend CSCAP meetings, with the attendance of some less wealthy members contingent upon obtaining financial assistance from the relatively more affluent CSCAP member committees.<sup>37</sup>

In terms of interaction with and influence at the Track I level, CSCAP's relationship with the ARF has been considerably strengthened over the past few years. There are now fairly regular communications between CSCAP co-chairs and the ARF senior officials, while CSCAP is linked to Track I processes at steering committee, working group

and member/national committee levels. There is close interaction, for instance, between the Indonesian and Malaysian CSCAP leaderships and their respective national governments. The Australian CSCAP co-chairs have regular meetings with Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade officials, and also fairly regular discussions with relevant government ministers.

CSCAP has clearly made an impact at the first track level, most notably when it assisted the ARF to develop a working definition of preventive diplomacy during the late 1990s.<sup>38</sup> A CSCAP working group on Confidence and Security Building Measures has continued to work closely with the ARF on this subject and it is probably the CSCAP work that has been most appreciated by the ARF.<sup>39</sup>

Likewise, CSCAP working group and study group meetings on maritime cooperation have produced a number of excellent edited volumes and memoranda, rendering it one of the most important second track activities concerning maritime security matters in the region. More recently, CSCAP has also been intimately involved in the development of measures to further institutionalise the ARF.

Finally, in evaluating the impact and importance of CSCAP, it is worth reflecting upon the many high-profile individuals who have been intimately involved in the continuing development of this institution. These include SR Nathan (President of Singapore), Han Sung-Joo (former South Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs), Jim Kelly (Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs), Yukio Sato (Japan's former Ambassador to the United Nations (UN)),

Jusuf Wanandi, Tan Sri Noordin Sopiee and Stuart Harris (former Secretary of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade).

### **The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Shangri-La Dialogue**

Initiated in 2002, the Shangri-La Dialogue is an Asian security and defence conference held in Singapore. It is organised by the IISS of the United Kingdom (UK) and modelled on the *Wehrkunde* Conference series, which since the 1960s has been the premier gathering each year on NATO security issues. Approximately 200 defence ministers, deputy defence ministers and civilian and military officials from throughout the Asia Pacific region attend the Shangri-La Dialogue. Scholars from around 20 countries are also present by invitation.

The Shangri-La Dialogue receives generous funding from the Australian, Japanese, Singaporean and UK governments, as well as additional contributions from the Starr Foundation, Robert and Ardis James Foundation and Singapore's Institute for Defence and Strategic Studies. In addition to its significant financial contribution, the Singaporean government covers the considerable costs associated with the necessarily tight security arrangements surrounding the gathering.

Although the Shangri-La Dialogue ostensibly combines Track I and Track II, its underlying function is to provide an opportunity for regional defence ministers to meet coincidentally in the more relaxed setting of an academic conference. As such, while providing a good networking opportunity, the process provides minimal opportunity

38. For further reading please see Sheldon W. Simon. (2002), 'The ASEAN Regional Forum Views the Councils for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific: How Track II Assists Track I', *NBR Analysis*, vol.13, no.4, pp.5-23.

39. Desmond Ball. (2000), *The Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific: Its Record and Its Prospects*, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No.139, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, The Australian National University, Canberra, p.16.

At the same time the fact that a European institute has taken the initiative of facilitating a process that was regarded as a logical 'next step' for the ARF has created a degree of reticence amongst some Asian governments.

40. For further reading see Ross Babbage. (2002), *Recovering from Terror Attacks: A Proposal for Regional Cooperation*, An ASPI Occasional Paper No.1, The Australian Strategic Policy Institute, Canberra.

for any extensive interaction between Track I and Track II, not least due to the security issues associated with ensuring the safety of some of the more high-profile attendees. These have previously included US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz.

While efforts have been undertaken previously to institute a more formal gathering of Asia Pacific defence ministers, these initiatives have consistently aroused regional sensitivities. By organising 'break-out' sessions where Ministers have time for private discussions, the Shangri-La Dialogue appears to have gone part of the way in circumventing these. It could also be argued that this process has assisted in accelerating the political will to establish a more formal gathering of defence ministers at some point in the future. At the same time the fact that a European institute has taken the initiative of facilitating a process that was regarded as a logical 'next step' for the ARF has created a degree of reticence amongst some Asian governments.

China's participation has also proven problematic in recent times. Indeed, the future of the entire IISS Shangri-La Dialogue came under a cloud in 2004 after Beijing refused to participate fully due to a disagreement regarding Taiwanese involvement. The IISS and the Singaporean government, however, have recently arrived at an agreement that will facilitate a continuation of the process for a further three years.

In terms of New Zealand and Australian participation, both countries send delegations to the Shangri-La Dialogue. Australian members of the IISS Council, in particular, were intimately involved in the development of initial proposals

that prompted the idea. Likewise, Australian participants have played substantial roles in the Dialogues that have occurred thus far. By way of example, Australian defence expert Ross Babbage made the suggestion at the inaugural Shangri-La Dialogue that regional governments might cooperate to better manage the consequences of a mass terror attack. This idea generated a high level of interest amongst conference participants, was discussed informally by some of the ministers and other delegation leaders, and subsequently was developed into a written proposal distributed via ASPI's publications programme.<sup>40</sup>

### **Lowy Institute for International Policy Conferences**

The Lowy Institute is a relatively new player on Australia's second track diplomatic scene. It is a Sydney-based think tank established in April 2003 as a result of a gift from one of Australia's leading businessmen, Mr Frank Lowy. The Lowy Institute aims to inform and deepen public debate about international policy within Australia. It also aspires to shape broader international discussion on these issues. It is staffed by a dynamic team of former officials, senior academics and a number of younger, emerging scholars. The Lowy Institute also runs a research programme focused specifically on the Asia Pacific region. Through its active programme of publications, seminars and lectures, the Lowy Institute has made an immediate impact on the Australian scene. At the Track II level, it has already hosted a number of major conferences, including the inaugural 'New Voices' forum of May 2004. This event brought together early-career people from a wide range of backgrounds, including international

law, investment banking, civil society, the media, academia and key government agencies.

Along similar lines, the Institute co-hosts an annual APEC Future Economic Leaders' Think Tank, which senior officials from government financial institutions who have been identified as future leaders are invited to attend. In conjunction with the International Peace Academy, the Lowy Institute in September 2004 also ran a three-day conference addressing Asian approaches to peace and security and the role of the UN. Close to 50 government officials, politicians, diplomats, academics, think tankers and civil society representatives from throughout the region participated in this event. The New Zealand Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control, the Hon. Marian Hobbs, was among those in attendance.

### **Network of East Asian Think Tanks (NEAT)**

NEAT is a relatively new, but significant initiative. It was created as a direct result of proposals contained in the reports of the East Asia Vision Group and East Asia Study Group convened under the auspices of the ASEAN-Plus-Three Summit Meeting. Following the European example, the purpose of NEAT is to promote the notion of an East Asian regional community. Its primary functions are to provide intellectual support and policy recommendations on issues of East Asia cooperation, as well as to research issues raised during the ASEAN-Plus-Three Summit and from the East Asia Study Group.<sup>41</sup>

China has been a key player in this initiative. It is currently the general coordinator for NEAT, which is administered through a central secretariat based in the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. The first annual conference of NEAT took place in Beijing in late September 2003 and was attended by approximately 100 participants from ASEAN, China, Japan and South Korea. The second was held in Bangkok, Thailand in August 2004. Under the theme 'Towards an East Asian Community', this gathering discussed issues of economic cooperation, political and security cooperation, socio-cultural cooperation and institutionalisation. The second annual conference also covered a number of issues relating to the organisation and development of NEAT, including the adoption of a set of 'Basic Rules and Framework of the NEAT', and agreed that a memorandum paper incorporating policy recommendations from the conference would be submitted to the November 2004 ASEAN-Plus-Three Summit meeting.

The establishment of NEAT has raised concern amongst some analysts, particularly from outside the immediate East Asian region, who view it as a potential (Chinese-led) challenge to more established second track processes, such as CSCAP. As noted previously, Japan too has displayed a degree of apprehension over the establishment of NEAT, as reflected in the launching of its own East Asian Community-focused institution. However, it is also interesting to note that Japan has been nominated to host the third annual conference of NEAT in 2005.

41. See [www.neat.org.cn/main.htm](http://www.neat.org.cn/main.htm) [Accessed 25 January 2005.]

42. See [www.igcc.ucsd.edu/](http://www.igcc.ucsd.edu/)  
[Accessed 13 January 2005.]

## **Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue (NEACD)**

The NEACD was founded in 1993 by Professor Susan Shirk, who was the Director of the University of California's Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation (IGCC) from 1991 to 1997. Its stated purpose is "to reduce the dangers and enhance cooperation in Northeast Asia, in the absence of even an informal consultative process to advance these interests."<sup>42</sup>

The NEACD is funded by the US Department of State and administered through the IGCC. At its annual meetings approximately 20 foreign and defence ministry officials, military officials and academics from China, Russia, South Korea, Japan and the US discuss Northeast Asia regional security issues. North Korea was also a founding member of this Dialogue, but has not attended meetings other than the initial planning session. In addition to this obvious weakness, the process is also perceived by some states in the region to be a predominantly US-driven activity.

Although neither Australia nor New Zealand are formal members of this process, Australian individuals have participated in a number of NEACD activities on a variety of occasions.

In terms of influence at the Track I level, the NEACD is often regarded as a Track 1.5 mechanism due to the high level of official involvement in the process. Indeed, it aspires to become a Track I process one day. According to the NEACD website, "while over the long run, this forum may move toward an official multilateral process, this possibility remains premature for the near term."

## **Pacific Trade and Development (PAFTAD)**

PAFTAD is an informal, private academic conference series. It was first held in Japan in 1968 as a response to growing concerns amongst the economically advanced Asia Pacific nations – including Australia and New Zealand – regarding the trade implications of the newly established European Economic Community. Initially intended to be a one-off event, 30 PAFTAD conferences have since been held, with participants composed primarily of leading economists and individuals with national and regional influence. New Zealand usually sends representatives to these conferences. Australia has offered particularly strong intellectual and some political support for PAFTAD, with the economist Sir John Crawford playing an influential role during its early days and others such as Professors Peter Drysdale and Ross Garnaut of the ANU continuing to make an active contribution. Many PAFTAD participants are also members of other prominent Track II institutions, such as PECC. Previous PAFTAD conferences have addressed a wide range of topics, including employment, mineral resources, technology transfer, structural change and financial reform.

PAFTAD is guided by an international steering committee, which identifies conference themes, defines research plans, and commissions research papers. Associate Professor Robert Scollay of the University of Auckland is a member of this committee. PAFTAD is administered through an international secretariat located at the Asia Pacific School of Economics and Government, ANU. As a privately organised and operated conference, PAFTAD is heavily reliant upon external funding, which it receives from a range of private

organisations (such as the Ford Foundation) and government agencies (such as the Australian Agency for International Development and the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

With respect to impact at the Track I level, the influence of PAFTAD participants tends to vary from country to country. Overall, although PAFTAD remains a significant intellectual network, the interviews undertaken as part of this project suggest that its influence is largely indirect and that its importance in official circles has diminished somewhat as new second track processes with an economic focus, such as PECC and ABAC, have emerged.

### **Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC)**

PBEC is an association of senior business leaders from throughout the Asia Pacific region. It was founded in 1967 and met formally for the first time in 1968. Initially, PBEC served primarily as a forum where business leaders could network, exchange perspectives and do business. It was not until the creation of APEC in 1989 that PBEC members became more interested in influencing policy directly. Unlike PECC and ABAC, however, PBEC does not participate formally in the APEC process.

PBEC has member committees in 20 economies throughout the region. These are Australia, Canada, Chile, China, Columbia, Ecuador, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand and the US. PBEC is administered through its international headquarters located in Hong Kong.

PBEC hosts a major business conference each year, at which business leaders, government officials, journalists and other delegates from around the region meet to discuss business opportunities and challenges facing the region. The most recent of these, the 37th Annual International General Meeting of PBEC, was held in Beijing in June 2004. It was attended by more than 350 participants.

Despite being the region's oldest regional business organisation, however, the PBEC process has grown increasingly moribund in recent years. Attendance rates at its meetings are well down, some of its member committees have essentially become inactive, and PBEC has been forced to borrow against its Special Fund in order to meet the costs associated with a number of its activities. The PBEC New Zealand Member Committee is amongst those really struggling at the present time. An inability to attract and sustain private sector funding has been a major contributing factor here, as indeed is the case with the organisation as a whole. The establishment of competing mechanisms, such as ABAC, has also played a part in undermining the influence and importance of PBEC.

### **Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC)**

The PECC process began in September 1980. Its first meeting, originally dubbed 'the Pacific Community Seminar', was held in Canberra. This meeting proposed the establishment of a regional institution designed to advance economic cooperation and market-driven integration.

43. See [www.pecc.org](http://www.pecc.org) [Accessed 13 January 2005.]

44. Our research indicates that Associate Professor Robert Scollay of the University of Auckland is one member who not only continues to make a particularly valuable contribution to NZPECC, but also to PECC as a region-wide institution.

45. See <http://apseg.anu.edu.au/auspecc> [Accessed 13 January 2005.]

PECC's stated aim since has been "to serve as a regional forum for cooperation and policy coordination to promote economic development in the Asia-Pacific region."<sup>43</sup>

PECC has 25 member committees from Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, China, Columbia, Ecuador, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Pacific Islands Forum, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, the US and Vietnam. France (Pacific Territories) and the Mongolian National Committee on Pacific Economic Cooperation are associate members. Each member committee comprises a unique tripartite combination of representatives from business and industry, government and academia.

NZPECC is New Zealand's committee for PECC. It has approximately 200 members, comprising an even spread of representatives from academia, business and government officials acting in a private capacity.<sup>44</sup> Membership of NZPECC is by invitation only and there is no fee involved.

Funding for NZPECC is provided primarily by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, with additional financial support given by the Ministry of Economic Development and a number of New Zealand businesses. New Zealand businesses also provide considerable support in kind – namely through the provision of conference and catering facilities. Academic institutions and other research institutions also support the work of NZPECC by providing support for staff members' research time.

NZPECC typically holds at least two general meetings per year – one in Auckland, one in Wellington. These are often held in collaboration with other

like-minded organisations, such as ABAC New Zealand. NZPECC also maintains extremely close links with the Track I level in New Zealand.

AUSPECC is Australia's committee for PECC. Its stated role is "to combine the interests of government, business and academia in providing input into PECC and through PECC to APEC, ensuring practical policy outcomes for Australia in the Asia-Pacific region."<sup>45</sup>

AUSPECC members are appointed by the Minister for Trade nominally for a period of two years, although the current AUSPECC membership has not changed since November 2000. This membership comprises 21 senior academic, government and business figures, many of whom contribute directly to the PECC process as well as to AUSPECC.

AUSPECC is administered through a secretariat based at the Asia Pacific School of Economics and Government of the ANU. Until 1997, an annual allocation of secretariat funding was made available to AUSPECC by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Since then the secretariat has been funded primarily by consulting work carried out by Professor Christopher Findlay, who is the Vice Chair of AUSPECC and also the Chair of the PECC Coordinating Group. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade continues to meet the cost of AUSPECC's annual contribution to the PECC international secretariat, which in 2004 was US\$24,600.

AUSPECC maintains a close working association with a number of like-minded institutions, such as ABAC Australia. Informal discussions have also taken place with NZPECC to explore ways in which AUSPECC and NZPECC might cooperate more effectively so as to add to their joint contribution to PECC.

Not least due to the composition of its membership, AUSPECC also has strong relations with Australian government and business.

As a region-wide institution, PECC is governed by a standing committee, which meets twice a year. A coordinating group, which meets more regularly, is responsible for the day-to-day development of the organisation, while administrative matters are handled through an international secretariat based in Singapore. PECC holds a general meeting every two years, which constitutes its major forum. However, most of PECC's materials and recommendations are produced by task forces, fora and project groups. PECC member committees are primarily responsible for funding the fora, task forces and project groups that they elect to organise. Because these activities are essentially self-financing, one of the major difficulties PECC has encountered in recent years is that of imposing organisational discipline over them.

A PECC fund does exist that enables representatives from member committees in developing countries to participate in PECC activities. The PECC fund also finances the operation of the international secretariat.

In terms of interaction with Track I, PECC has formal observer status in the APEC process. It continues to be regarded by many as the Asia Pacific region's most influential second track policy network. This is not least due to the central role PECC played during the 1970s and 1980s in terms of providing a basis from which the APEC process eventually developed. Having facilitated that outcome, however, PECC is reported to have struggled somewhat over the ensuing one and a half decades to

establish a clear vision of the organisation's future role.<sup>46</sup>

## Regional Ethics in Leadership Conferences

The Regional Ethics in Leadership Conferences are an initiative of the St James Ethics Centre, Sydney, Australia. They aim to bring together young leaders from Southeast Asia and Australia, with more experienced senior leaders from around the region, to discuss issues of common concern. The first Regional Ethics in Leadership Conference ran in January 1996 and a total of nine have thus far been held. Six of these have taken place in Malaysia, two in Hanoi, Vietnam, and one in Bangkok, Thailand. They have addressed a number of topics, including 'Responses to Great Power', 'Responding to Terror', 'Identity', 'Is There a New World Order?', 'Intergenerational Equity' and 'Ethics and Globalisation'.

The St James Ethics Centre was established in 1988 and is based in Sydney. It is an independent, not-for-profit organisation whose stated aim is to provide "an open forum for the promotion and exploration of ethical questions arising in contemporary society".<sup>47</sup> The Regional Ethics in Leadership Conferences were initially conceived as part of the Vincent Fairfax Fellowship, which is a leadership programme run by the Centre. Since their inception, the Regional Ethics in Leadership Conferences have involved the participation of a number of prominent individuals, including Tan Sri Dr Noordin Sopiee (a key figure in a number of other regional Track II processes, such as ASEAN-ISIS and CSCAP), the Director of the Institute of Security and International Studies at Thailand's Chulalongkorn University

46. Charles E. Morrison. (2004), *Track 1/Track 2 Symbiosis in Asia-Pacific Regionalism*, p.557.

47. See [www.ethics.org.au](http://www.ethics.org.au) [Accessed 25 January 2005.]

48. For a thorough recounting of the origins and objectives of the SCS Workshops, see Hasjim Djalal and Ian Townsend-Gault. (1999), 'Preventive Diplomacy: Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea', in: Chester A. Crocker et. al (Ed.), *Herding Cats: Multiparty Mediation in a Complex World*, United States Institute of Peace Press Washington, D.C., pp.107-133.

49. Hasjim Djalal. (2002), 'Indonesia and the South China Sea Initiative', *Ocean Development and International Law*, vol. 32, pp.97-103.

Dr Pranee Thiparat, Mr Tran Dac Loi (Director General of the International Youth Cooperation Development Center, CYDECO Vietnam) and a number of serving ambassadors. Regular Australian attendees include Mr Bernard Collaery (former Australian Capital Territory Attorney-General), Michael Mann (former Australian Ambassador to Vietnam) and Professor Tony Milner (Dean of Asian Studies, ANU). Over recent years, Brigadier Roger Mortlock of New Zealand has been a major contributor. Each of the nine conferences held thus far has been co-chaired by Dr Simon Longstaff, the Executive Director of the St James Ethics Centre.

The Institute of Strategic and International Studies Malaysia has been the joint convenor of a number of the Regional Ethics in Leadership Conferences and remains an important partner in this evolving process. Personal relationships appear to have played an important role in developing this partnership. The introduction of Dr Longstaff to Dr Sopiee, for instance, was initially arranged through Dr Anil Seal of Cambridge University and facilitated by the late Dato' Alexander Yu Lung Lee of Malaysia.

### **South China Sea (SCS) Workshops**

Formally known as the 'Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea' process, the SCS Workshops were established by Ambassador Hashim Djalal of Indonesia and Canadian academic Ian Townsend-Gault in 1990. As an exercise in preventive diplomacy designed to reduce the chances of armed conflict and promote the idea of maritime cooperation between the countries of the SCS region, the Workshops initially had two basic objectives: first, "to manage the

potential conflicts by seeking an area in which everyone could cooperate", and second, "to develop confidence building measures or processes so that the various claimants would be comfortable with one another, thus providing a conducive atmosphere for the solution of their territorial or jurisdictional disputes."<sup>48</sup>

The first SCS Workshop was held in Bali in January 1990. Only participants from ASEAN were invited to attend this meeting. Funding for the process was provided by the Canadian International Development Agency. Participants from other countries in the SCS region were gradually invited to attend and the process enjoyed relatively close linkages with the Track I level as it began to gather momentum.

Over 10 SCS Workshops have been held since the process was initiated. In addition, associated groups of expert meetings, technical working groups and study groups have been established. These have examined a wide range of issues including legal issues, marine scientific research, safety of shipping navigation and communications, environmental protection, hydrographic data and information exchange, resource assessment, and zones of cooperation in the SCS.<sup>49</sup>

As so-called 'non-littoral' states, participants from Australia or New Zealand were never intended to play a role in the SCS Workshop process. Although China was initially extremely strict in vetoing the participation of 'non-littoral' people, Commodore Dr Sam Bateman of the University of Wollongong did attend one SCS Workshop as a 'resource person' in the late 1990s, in addition to a number of

other technical meetings addressing issues of marine education, training, hydrography and marine safety.

In recent years, the momentum of the SCS Workshops has slowed significantly. A major factor here appears to have been the March 2001 decision by the Canadian International Development Agency to withdraw funding for SCS Workshop participants. The gradually improving security environment in the SCS region has also played a role. That said, the SCS Workshop process continues to function and there can be little disputing the positive contribution it has already made to stability in this part of the world.<sup>50</sup>

## United Nations Centres

Various UN Centres engage in second track processes with an Asia focus. The UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific serves as a useful example. Created by UN General Assembly Resolution in 1987, the Regional Centre became operational in January 1989. Its initial brief was to “provide, on request, substantive support for initiatives and other activities mutually agreed upon by Member States of the Asia-Pacific region for the implementation of measures for peace and disarmament.”<sup>51</sup> The headquarters for the Regional Centre are located in New York. The Centre is funded solely from voluntary contributions of UN Member States and other interested organisations, with the Japanese government providing particularly generous financial support.

The Regional Centre is responsible for running a number of regular Track II dialogues. The centrepiece of these is the so-called ‘Kathmandu process’, at which delegates from throughout the

Asia Pacific region meet to discuss issues deemed to be of current importance in the field of disarmament and arms control. The idea for the creation of a UN Register of Conventional Arms was initially proposed within this forum. Each year, the Regional Centre also organises the ‘Kanazawa Symposium’ at which government officials, UN representatives, journalists, academics and other policy experts from around the region meet to discuss a range of regional disarmament and security issues. As its name suggests, this forum is held in Kanazawa, Japan and entered its 10th year in 2004. At least two Australian academics, Professor James Cotton of the Australian Defence Force Academy and transnational crime expert Mr John McFarlane, are regular attendees. The Centre also co-organises an annual regional disarmament meeting with the government of South Korea. This is attended by approximately 20 people comprising government officials participating in their private capacity, academics, representatives of international organisations and representatives from NGOs from throughout the Asia Pacific.

In addition to these major gatherings, the Regional Centre organises a further two to three day-long symposiums each year addressing disarmament issues. It is also interesting to note that in March 2001 the Centre ran a conference on disarmament in the Pacific region, which was held in Wellington, New Zealand. In total, approximately 1,800 people have attended the dialogues and activities organised by the UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific since its inception.

50. For further reading on recent developments, see Yann-Huei Song. (2003), ‘The Overall Situation in the South China Sea in the New Millennium: Before and After the September 11 Terrorist Attacks’, *Ocean Development and International Law*, vol. 34, pp.229-277.

51. See <http://disarmament.un.org.8080/RCPD/history.htm> [Accessed 24 January 2005.]

Asia:NZ runs a burgeoning publications programme. A recent addition to this programme is a series of research papers called Outlook. The immediate aims of this promising initiative are to strengthen New Zealand's research and policy analysis capability; to stimulate debate among policymakers; and to improve dialogue between researchers, policymakers and practitioners.

52. The Asia Society also has an Australian branch, the 'Australasia Centre'. The Chair of this Centre is Mr Hugh Morgan, who is currently the President of the Business Council of Australia. The Founding Director of the Centre is Mr Richard Woolcott, a former Head of Australia's Foreign Affairs Department.

### **The Williamsburg Conference**

The Williamsburg Conference is an annual event organised by The Asia Society, a New York-based NGO established in 1956 by John D Rockefeller III.<sup>52</sup> The Asia Society's aim is to broaden understanding between Asian and American peoples, as well as to facilitate high-level networking activities.

The Williamsburg Conference brings together leaders in government, business, academia, civil society and journalism from throughout the Asia Pacific to discuss a range of economic and security issues. Meetings are held at different locations throughout the region, with the most recent taking place in New Delhi, India, in April 2004. The first Williamsburg Conference was convened in 1971 by John D Rockefeller III with a view to promoting greater US-Asian understanding. The process is now convened by distinguished individuals from the US and Asia (most recently Carla Anderson Hills, Chairman of Hills & Company and former US Trade Representative; Tommy Koh, Ambassador-at-Large to the Foreign Ministry of Singapore; and Minoru Murofushi, Chairman of ITOCHU Corporation and Chairman of the Japan Foreign Trade Council). It is sponsored by the Lee Foundation and the Starr Foundation. The Williamsburg Conferences also receive contributions from a range of private companies, primarily from Japan.

Participation in the Williamsburg Conference is limited to approximately 40 individuals, with both Australian and New Zealand representatives having attended previously. The seniority of participants and the presence of government officials ensure that it does have some impact.

### **Other New Zealand-Based Track II Institutes and Organisations**

Added to those Track II institutions and activities listed above, a number of New Zealand-based institutes and organisations with an Asia focus contribute to second track processes. These also require consideration.

#### **Asia New Zealand Foundation (Asia:NZ)**

Asia:NZ was established in 1994. It strives to promote initiatives that deepen understanding and relationships between New Zealanders and the peoples of Asia. Toward this end, Asia:NZ engages in a broad range of Track II activities in the areas of education, business, culture, media, research and policy studies.

Asia:NZ is well known throughout the Asian region and networks extensively with a number of counterpart institutes in this part of the world. These include prominent regional think tanks, such as the Shanghai Institute of International Studies (SIIS) and ASPI. Asia:NZ representatives also participate in a number of major regional second track processes, such as the Williamsburg Conference and the Asia Pacific Roundtable in Malaysia. It is represented on the CSCAP-NZ National Council. As discussed elsewhere in this report, Asia:NZ is also home to AP-Net and hosts an ABAC New Zealand representative at its Wellington offices.

Asia:NZ runs a burgeoning publications programme. A recent addition to this programme is a series of research papers called Outlook. The immediate aims of this promising initiative are to strengthen New Zealand's research and policy analysis capability; to stimulate

debate among policymakers; and to improve dialogue between researchers, policymakers and practitioners. It is hoped that this new series will gradually contribute toward the larger goal of building a 'virtual' cluster of experts on topics relating to the Asian region, with a view to going some way towards the creation of a 'virtual' centre of Asian expertise in New Zealand.

### **Business Councils and Trade Associations**

A number of New Zealand-based business councils and trade associations with an Asia focus engage in Track II-type activities. These include organisations such as the Korea-New Zealand Business Council, the ASEAN-New Zealand Combined Business Council, the NZ-China Trade Association, the Hong Kong-New Zealand Business Association, the New Zealand-Taiwan Business Council, the New Zealand-Singapore Business Council, the Japan-New Zealand Business Council and the New Zealand-APEC Business Coalition. The Auckland Chamber of Commerce runs the secretariats for the majority of these organisations.

Similar organisations exist in Australia, including the Australia-China Business Council, the Australia-Malaysia Business Council, the Australia-Philippines Business Council, the Australia-Korea Business Council, the Australia-India Business Council, the ASEAN-Australia Business Council, the Australia-Indonesia Business Council, the Australia-Japan Business Cooperation Committee, the Australian-Taiwan Business Council and the Australia-Singapore Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Each of the above business councils and trade associations strives to perform a range of economic and trade functions for its membership, which typically comprises a mixture of companies, organisations and government agencies. These functions include promoting trade, expanding investment, strengthening business ties, influencing policy and providing links between business and government. Business councils and trade associations usually undertake a range of activities, including the provision of information and research to members, organising trade missions and bilateral joint discussions and liaising with the government, as well as hosting visiting government and business leaders from abroad.

Owing to New Zealand's small size, one of the problems business councils and trade associations continue to face is the maintenance of adequate membership levels, while developing and then sustaining any form of collective arrangement among them have also proven difficult. The establishment of ABAC has further diminished their impact in recent years. On a more positive note, business councils and trade associations have shown their potential at the second track level previously. A clear case in point is the period prior to the establishment of CER between Australia and New Zealand, when the Australia-New Zealand Business Council played an instrumental role in reducing protectionist opposition to CER, particularly within the New Zealand business community.

53. See [www.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.auckland.ac.nz)  
[Accessed 13 January 2005.]

### **New Zealand Asia Institute (NZAI)**

The NZAI was established by the University of Auckland in 1995 and officially opened in 1996. It was established in response to "the growing importance of Asia to New Zealand and to the university's own changing socio-cultural context".<sup>53</sup> The Institute runs an active programme of conferences, lectures and seminars. In 2005, for instance, it will co-host the Australasian Korean Studies Association Conference. The NZAI will also host four other major conferences this year addressing 'The State, Development and Identity in Multicultural Societies'; 'English in Asia'; 'Asia Media Perceptions of New Zealand and New Zealand Media Perceptions of Asia'; and 'The Korean Diaspora'.

The first of these four conferences will be co-hosted by the University of Malaya, with additional funding from the Japan Foundation and the Good Governance Programme of the New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID). The Institute also runs a very active publications programme, which includes an informative twice-yearly newsletter entitled *Asia Info*. The NZAI is presently working on an Asia:NZ research contract that involves a stocktake and assessment of the existing literature on New Zealand-Asia engagement. It also seeks to establish linkages with external constituencies in New Zealand and the broader Asian region, including government, business, media, universities, other research institutes and NGOs. An example of this was the successful Track II dialogue organised by the NZAI in collaboration with the (SIIS) for International Studies in December 2003. This forum brought together scholars from several of China's leading foreign policy think tanks together with

a team largely comprising academics from the University of Auckland and the Auckland University of Technology.

### **New Zealand Institute of International Affairs (NZIIA)**

Established in 1934, the NZIIA serves as a mechanism for promoting informed public discussion and understanding of international affairs, particularly as they affect New Zealand. It has 20 corporate members and 35 institutional members, each of which provides financial support. This membership includes government departments, embassies and universities. The two major partners of the NZIIA are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Victoria University of Wellington. The Institute's national office is located at Victoria University.

The NZIIA organises seminars and talks at its nine branches, which are scattered throughout the country in Auckland, Waikato, Wanganui, Palmerston North, Wairarapa, Wellington, Christchurch, Timaru and Dunedin. In recent years, the NZIIA has hosted a number of high-profile speakers, including Prime Minister Helen Clark, Foreign Minister Phil Goff, former UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali and former British Secretary of Defence Sir Michael Quinlan. Although the NZIIA does not appear to have any real impact at the Track I level – and neither does it purport to – it does provide a useful forum that various government agencies, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, have been able to utilise as an independent platform for visiting dignitaries and other speakers. In addition to organising such seminars, the NZIIA publishes books on international politics and a relatively well known bi-monthly periodical, the *New Zealand International Review*.

The cross-Tasman counterpart of the NZIIA – the Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA) – was established in 1933. The AIIA is a nationwide, independent, non-profit organisation whose stated objective is to “promote interest in and understanding of international affairs in Australia”.<sup>54</sup> It has eight branches, with approximately 1,200 members nationwide. The AIIA runs regular lectures, seminars and conferences and also sponsors research and publications.

The AIIA receives an annual grant from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, which is principally directed to the publication of the Institute’s journal, *The Australian Journal of International Affairs* (AJIA). The AJIA is one of the Institute’s real strengths and is currently ranked just outside the top 20 scholarly journals in the world in terms of academic citations. The AIIA also produces the *Australia in World Affairs* series, a four-yearly overview that remains the definitive commentary on Australian foreign policy.

In addition to this strong publications programme, the AIIA maintains close contacts with a number of like-minded institutions. The most active of these is probably its relationship with the NZIIA. The AIIA also has close links with parts of the ANU, as well as specific associations with Asialink, the Australian Defence Force Academy, the Japanese Institute of International Affairs and the Chinese People’s Institute of Foreign Affairs.

Notwithstanding these linkages and the long tradition of scholarship that the AIIA has built up, the influence and importance of the Institute have diminished in recent years, partly due to comparative funding difficulties. Nevertheless, the AIIA national office has hosted a number of national fora on

foreign policy issues in the past few years and the Institute’s branches have continued to host major political speeches as well as regular presentations by foreign policy experts.

### Emerging Trends and Future Prospects

Track II institutions and activities in the Asia Pacific region continue to burgeon. One of the most interesting developments as part of this increase in second track activity is the emergence of institutions and activities – such as NEAT, CEAC and the ACD – focused on crystallising the notion of East Asian Community building. This trend is being mirrored at the Track I level, as evidenced over recent years in the ASEAN-Plus-Three process.<sup>55</sup> Consistent with its apparent desire to play a more active role in the Asia Pacific region, Beijing has been one of the main drivers of this trend. Similarly, at the Track II level, China took responsibility for establishing NEAT once approval for this process was given at the ASEAN-Plus-Three Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in May 2003. Kenichi Ito, the President and CEO of the Japan Forum on International Relations, was present at the inaugural September 2003 meeting of NEAT in Beijing. He has since observed that he “was impressed by the strong determination shared by all participants to create a momentum for regional integration that would not fall behind that of other regions.”<sup>56</sup>

The emergence of a number of non-traditional security challenges in the region, such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Avian Influenza, have proven conducive to this increased focus on East Asia Community building. The Indian Ocean tsunami could well have a similar effect.

54. See [www.aiia.asn.au](http://www.aiia.asn.au) [Accessed 13 January 2005.]

55. For further reading see Brad Glosserman. (2004), ‘ASEAN Plus Three Leads the Way’, *PacNet*, no. 51A, Pacific Forum CSIS, Honolulu, Hawaii, and Anthony Milner. (2000), ‘ASEAN + 3, Asia Consciousness and Asian Values’, *PROSEA Research Paper*, no. 39, Academia Sinica, Taipei.

56. Kenichi Ito. (2004), ‘Japan’s Move to Community’, *Japan Times*, 16 April.

Although traditional security issues continue to serve as the primary focus for a majority of Track II institutions and activities in the region, the rise of non-traditional and human security issues has diverted attention away from these.

57. Japan Center for International Exchange. (2003), *Towards Community Building in East Asia*, Dialogue and Research Monitor, Overview Report.

58. Paul Evans. (2003), 'Trend Report 2002', *Dialogue and Research Monitor: Inventory of Multilateral Meetings on Asia Pacific Security and Human Security Issues and Community Building*, 28 February.

59. Brian L. Job. (2002), *Track 2 Diplomacy: Ideational Contribution to the Evolving Asia Security Order*, p.273.

60. Herman Joseph S. Kraft. (2000), 'Track Three Diplomacy and Human Rights in Southeast Asia: The Case of the Asia Pacific Coalition for East Timor', Paper presented at the Global Development Network 2000 Conference, Tokyo, 11-13 December.

61. Brian L. Job. (2002), *Track 2 Diplomacy: Ideational Contribution to the Evolving Asia Security Order*, p.275.

The 11 September attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon have also focused regional attention, giving rise to a flurry of first and second track activity examining a range of terrorism-related and human security issues.<sup>57</sup> While this has clearly provided opportunities for the initiation of new second track processes in the region, it has also presented challenges. Although traditional security issues continue to serve as the primary focus for a majority of Track II institutions and activities in the region, the rise of non-traditional and human security issues has diverted attention away from these. By way of example, although territorial disputes in the South China Sea remain far from settled, second track activities focusing on this issue appear to have declined markedly in recent years.<sup>58</sup>

As noted previously, resource constraints often make it difficult for Track II institutions to evolve and adapt to meet many of the challenges posed by a rapidly changing global economic and security environment. This problem is compounded in the case of some of the more established second track processes which, over time, tend to take on a 'life of their own' typified by a high degree of institutionalisation. The issue of what level of institutionalisation is appropriate for a Track II institution has, of course, been debated for some time. As Brian Job notes in his excellent evaluation of second track diplomacy in the region:

"Track 2 suffers from an extreme form of the Asia Pacific allergy to formal institutionalisation. Reluctant, in the first instance, to create Track I institutions with any independent authority or sovereignty-restricting powers, Asian states appear even less willing to give their Track 2 counterparts any decision-making or investigative or monitoring capabilities."<sup>59</sup>

Contrary to Job's observation, however, it could be argued that by significantly raising administrative demands and operating costs, the gradual institutionalisation of some of the more longstanding Track II processes in the Asia Pacific has become a factor potentially inhibiting their progress.

Finally, the relationship between second and third track activities in the region requires further consideration. Kraft, for instance, has put forward the idea of re-establishing Track II "as a bridge between tracks one and three".<sup>60</sup> In many ways this is already happening. AUS-CSCAP, for instance, is in a sense acting as a bridge between Track III Islamic processes and Track I in the project on Islamic perspectives. One of the primary obstacles to realising this bridge ideal is the need to allay the concerns of Track III networks that this could result in their 'co-option'. The undeniable increase in importance of regional Track III processes suggests that some innovative thinking is urgently required to surmount this potential impediment. For as Job concludes, "encompassing the voices and interests of civil society must become a priority for Track 2 if it is to sustain its role in shaping the future of the Asia Pacific security order."<sup>61</sup>

## Conclusions

In addition to documenting and evaluating the leading second track processes with an Asia focus in Australia and the broader Asian region, the foregoing analysis provides valuable observations about New Zealand's Track II engagement with Asia.

It confirms that New Zealand is already affiliated with a number of key second track institutions in the region. Where New Zealand is excluded from regional Track II institutions and activities, such as NEAT, CEAC, the CAEC, ACD and the SCS Workshops, it is usually for reasons of perceived geography. Several Australian Track II personnel have demonstrated that it is still possible for 'outsiders' to participate occasionally in many of these processes. These are primarily cases of individual access and it is possible that this adds substance to Australia's second track engagement with the Asian region. The same would obviously apply in the case of New Zealand.

While New Zealand is already engaged in a number of second track processes in the Asian region, the foregoing survey does suggest that it has been less well positioned to take a stimulatory role – than, for instance, Australia or Canada. This observation is not inconsistent with a point that Prime Minister Helen Clark made during her keynote address to the *Seriously Asia* conference in November 2003, that "The Track Two activities which New Zealand is involved in are useful, but we probably do too little to maximise their utility".<sup>62</sup>

Against that backdrop, the report will now move to consider some of the main issues and prospects facing a strengthening of New Zealand's Track II engagement with Asia.

62. Rt Hon Helen Clark Prime Minister. (2005), 'Keynote Address to Seriously Asia Conference', 26 November. Available at: [www.asianz.org.nz/research/speeches/speech.pdf](http://www.asianz.org.nz/research/speeches/speech.pdf) [Accessed 12 January 2005], p.5.

# **SECTION TWO**

## **Strengthening New Zealand's Track II Engagement—Issues and Opportunities**

Section two is divided into three parts. It begins by identifying some of the main benefits that second track processes have to offer New Zealand and outlines why a strengthening of this country's Track II engagement is becoming increasingly important and necessary. The second part identifies a number of potential hurdles to enhancing New Zealand's current level of Track II engagement with Asia, but concludes that a clear recognition does appear to exist in both New Zealand government and the broader policy community regarding the prospective utility of Track II processes as a tool for energising New Zealand's links with this part of the world. The third part of the section provides a series of conclusions and recommendations, including suggestions as to how New Zealand might best go about strengthening its Track II engagement with the Asian region.

### **Why Track II Matters for New Zealand**

Second track processes offer New Zealand a range of potential benefits. First and foremost is the useful 'brokerage' role between government and Track II processes, as noted in section one of the report. By way of example, it became evident to the authors in writing this report that, partly because New Zealand's academic institutions are so geographically dispersed, government officials were sometimes unaware of the particularly valuable expertise available but not exploited. Track II organisations could be tasked to identify such expertise, drawing it to the attention of government. Along similar lines, some innovative approaches could be explored for how Track II organisations might act as 'brokers' between, on the

one hand, government and other relevant institutions in New Zealand and, on the other, the substantial Diaspora of New Zealanders living abroad, particularly those with business, academic and policy expertise relating to Asia.

Second, it is important to recognise the significance of personal relationships and local knowledge to sustaining and promoting the trade and economic benefits that New Zealand currently enjoys through its engagement with Asia. Second track activities can serve as a vehicle for developing and reinforcing such relationships, as well as providing a means for obtaining valuable information on emerging regional trends. Often these relationships are developed and this knowledge procured in the informal, social activities – such as conference and workshop dinners – attendant to formal second track activities. Likewise, the so-called 'corridor talk' that often takes place between business people and officials either in between or on the fringes of these more formal components can serve a similar function.

Third, when considering the potential benefits of second track processes to New Zealand, it is important to reflect upon some of the achievements that have been made thus far. The work of NZPECC is widely regarded as indicative of the potential benefits that second track processes have to offer New Zealand. NZPECC has proven particularly adept at generating and contributing to the public debate on trade and economic issues, thereby capturing attention for these at the Track I level. Likewise, its meetings serve as a particularly useful forum for facilitating greater interaction between New Zealand's business, academic and policy communities. A number of other

63. Brian Lynch. (2004), 'Where To From Here?', *New Zealand International Review*, vol. XXIX, no.6, p.2.

Track II institutions and activities with a distinctly economic flavour – such as ABAC – appear to have been equally influential and effective within New Zealand.

Progress on the politico-security side of the ledger has perhaps not been as substantial as that on the trade and economic side. As noted previously, CSCAP-NZ produces and distributes some very useful publications. Likewise, the meetings of the NZIIA provide a useful forum where officials (civilian and military) and academics can interact and exchange ideas. Overall, however, second track institutions such as these might be seen to face an uphill struggle when it comes to generating debate on politico-military issues, largely because New Zealand enjoys a security environment that is relatively benign when conceived in terms of traditional military threats.

However, the same cannot be said when it comes to the challenges of the so-called 'new security agenda', such as environmental security issues, unregulated population movements, transnational crime, drug trafficking and money laundering. Each of these phenomena is highly relevant to New Zealand's security and to that of its immediate region. The weaker countries of the South Pacific are particularly vulnerable, although the transnational character of these threats makes it difficult for any nation to claim immunity from them. Brian Lynch put it well in a recent *New Zealand International Review* guest editorial when he observed that "the impact will be widespread. It promises to be as dramatic in New Zealand's near neighbourhood as anywhere else. The 'tyranny of distance' offers no immunity from the effects of the great global issues of the day."<sup>63</sup>

A fourth benefit of Track II institutions and activities, therefore, is the important part they have to play in better understanding and addressing such challenges. CSCAP as a whole, for example, is particularly well equipped to provide expert analysis and sound, yet innovative, policy advice on these very issues. Among the eight study groups that CSCAP currently runs are those addressing security in Oceania (including internal security, economic and environmental vulnerability, people smuggling, drug trafficking and terrorism); maritime cooperation among member states (including issues such as threats from terrorist groups and non-state actors, piracy, smuggling, poaching and container security); and globalism and the law: opportunities for criminality, transnational crime and terrorism.

Finally, second track activities provide a useful venue where the 'next generation' of New Zealand scholars and policymakers can interact with and get to know their regional contemporaries (in addition to one another), while simultaneously 'learning the ropes' from their more senior counterparts. Likewise, second track processes can potentially serve an important role in better informing and educating the New Zealand public more generally. The aforementioned success of NZPECC in generating public debate on a range of issues is testament to this. Our research suggests that Asia:NZ's *Seriously Asia* project has been similarly successful in terms of raising public awareness regarding the importance of enhancing New Zealand's links with Asia.

## Potential Challenges to Further Strengthening New Zealand's Track II Engagement

Notwithstanding these obvious benefits, the strengthening of New Zealand's second track engagement with Asia still faces a number of potential challenges. First and foremost, the size of a country and its economy has an impact on the level of financial and human resources available for such an undertaking. While it is rare to find a second track process anywhere in the world with infinite resources at its disposal, the limitations imposed by resource constraints are magnified in New Zealand's case by virtue of its small size and sense of distant geographical location. The cost of travel to Track II activities is often significantly higher for New Zealand participants, for instance, than for many of their Australian and Asian counterparts. Corporate backing for second track processes – particularly those of a politico-security variety – has also proven much harder to attract in New Zealand than in other parts of the region. Added to this, the relatively small size of the New Zealand academic and policy communities means that there is often a lack of capacity to be able to devote personnel resources to Track II activities.

Second, although some of New Zealand's Track II personnel – Professor Gary Hawke of Victoria University was often mentioned – enjoy extremely good linkages with the Track I level, there is still scope to enhance the relationship between New Zealand's Track II community and those working at the Track I level. Further strengthening this relationship will not be a straightforward exercise. Part of this difficulty stems from the fact that New Zealand's comparatively modest pool of

Track I-level policy practitioners is already overstretched. They are necessarily driven by the demands of responding to the most immediate and pressing issues of the day, meaning that the urgent must often take precedence over the important. Because second track processes tend, by their very nature, to be more incremental and future oriented, this represents a potential obstacle to developing greater interaction and synergies between the Track I and Track II levels in New Zealand. Our interviews suggest that this problem is compounded by the fact that some of the efforts that have been undertaken to ease the burden on New Zealand's policy practitioners, such as the outsourcing of some services, have partially undercut the role of Track II institutions and activities. Drawing upon outside expertise (sometimes at relatively high expense) can often provide a flow of new thinking and ideas that second track processes might otherwise offer. Added to this, there are currently few formal structures in place to facilitate a greater degree of interaction between the Track I and Track II levels in New Zealand.

Third, second track processes suffer from a 'public relations' problem of sorts in that there is sometimes a tendency for them to be perceived, particularly at the Track I level, as nothing more than a 'talkfest'. This phenomenon is certainly not unique to New Zealand and is one that Track II institutions and activities continue to encounter worldwide. It is largely a product of the fact that participants in second track activities will often consider dialogue, networking activities and the generating of new ideas to be valuable undertakings in and of themselves, whereas those at the Track I level responsible and accountable for allocating government funding to these processes will typically exhibit a

A consistent level of governmental commitment is required over the longer term in order to maximise the returns from any initial efforts undertaken to enhance New Zealand's Track II engagement with the region.

64. Rt Hon Helen Clark. (2004), 'Address to the NZ Institute of International Affairs', 23 June, available at: [www.vuw.ac.nz/nziia/RecentSpeeches.htm](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/nziia/RecentSpeeches.htm) [Accessed 13 January 2005].

preference for more tangible and measurable progress and may not see how Track II activities can help achieve their ends. Bridging this perceptual divide is particularly important in the case of engagement with the Asian region at this time, when such a high priority continues to be placed on dialogue and the development of common understandings as a means of advancing the cause of regionalism. (We noted above the key role 'talk' played in European regionalism.)

Each of the potential obstacles canvassed above will require careful negotiation if New Zealand is to strengthen further its Track II engagement with Asia. The good news, however, is that a clear recognition regarding the potential utility of Track II institutions and activities uniformly appears to exist at the Track I level in New Zealand. At the highest levels of government, this view has been publicly expressed by the Prime Minister herself. In a June 2004 address to the NZIIA, Prime Minister Helen Clark made the observation that the "process of capability-building would be enhanced by more, or at least more co-ordinated, input into the policy process from the so-called 'Track II' institutions in New Zealand".<sup>64</sup> Based on the range of interviews conducted with senior and middle-level bureaucrats for the purposes of this report, this is a belief that is pervasive throughout New Zealand's policy community.

Against that backdrop, the final part of this section summarises the key conclusions and recommendations to emerge from the report.

## Key Conclusions and Recommendations

### 1. ***A strengthening of New Zealand's Track II engagement with Asia requires a long-term commitment***

Second track processes are necessarily strategic and medium to longer term in their outlook. Indeed, they are often at their most effective and influential when they operate in such a manner. In addition, the benefits that Track II institutions and activities provide may not always be easily measured. Accordingly, many of the outcomes resulting from a strengthening of New Zealand's Track II engagement with Asia may not be immediately visible. There needs to be an understanding and acceptance therefore, particularly at the Track I level, that these processes will often take time to demonstrate their true value. A consistent level of governmental commitment is required over the longer term in order to maximise the returns from any initial efforts undertaken to enhance New Zealand's Track II engagement with the region.

### 2. ***New Zealand already undertakes a relatively substantial commitment to Track II engagement with Asia, suggesting that the broadening of its involvement in second track processes calls for measured rather than urgent steps***

Track II diplomatic approaches have clearly established themselves as a permanent fixture on the Asian economic, political and strategic landscape. As section one of this report observes, there are clear indications that the volume of second track activity in the region continues to increase. The foregoing analysis also suggests that

New Zealand is already either a member of or a participant in most of the region's leading Track II processes, such as ABAC, PECC, PBEC and CSCAP. New Zealanders also take part in a number of major second track conferences in the region, such as the Shangri-La Dialogue, the Asia Pacific Roundtable, PAFTAD and the Williamsburg Conferences. Given this substantial commitment – which is all the more significant given New Zealand's small size – any major broadening of New Zealand's Track II regional engagement calls for measured rather than urgent steps.

**3. *Should New Zealand opt to undertake further broadening of its Track II involvement in the region, this would most productively be focused upon sponsored workshops with a specifically New Zealand influenced agenda***

Although the effectiveness of second track processes is difficult to measure with any real degree of precision, sponsored workshops do appear to be making quite an impact. As noted in section one of this report, the Asialink 'conversations' is one recent Australian-led initiative that serves as a case in point here. As an Australian initiative with Australian funding support (private in this case), such events provide the opportunity to discuss issues from Australian perspectives. It can be an advantage, for instance, to consider Australia-Asian issues outside the immediate context of US-Asian dynamics. Another advantage of initiating Australian- or New Zealand-sponsored workshops is that they may assist in strengthening relationships and formulating issues in ways that can assist Australia and New Zealand in the broader, well established regional Track II processes.

This report has identified a number of other regional institutions that would be worth contemplating as partners in organising similar initiatives with an Asia focus. These include ASPI, the Lowy Institute for International Policy, the ANU, the Japan Institute of International Affairs, the China Institute for International Strategic Studies, the SIIIS, the Institute of Strategic and International Studies Malaysia, and CSIS, Jakarta.

**4. *To deepen Track II engagement, it would be beneficial for New Zealand to identify two or three key issues areas where, through expertise, consistency and coordination with Track I, it could make a valuable 'niche' contribution to regional second track processes***

Owing to New Zealand's size and limited resources, few participants in regional second track processes expect it to make a contribution across the board, in each and every issue area. However, a series of specialised 'niche' contributions would likely still be regarded as particularly useful. The area of peace operations and peacekeeping is certainly one of tremendous relevance to most if not all Asian nations and is one where New Zealand has much to offer, particularly given its recent experiences in Timor Leste, Bougainville and the Solomon Islands. Transnational crime (and the issue of human trafficking in particular), oceans and fisheries management, disarmament and environmental management are equally important areas where New Zealand also has substantial expertise to contribute.

To enhance New Zealand's Track II endeavours, the New Zealand government might also be willing to

65. The first meeting of this Forum was held in May 2004 at Government House, Wellington. The Forum brought together 76 participants from both sides of the Tasman, including government ministers and politicians, senior public servants, business leaders, academics, journalists, regulators, union representatives and sporting figures to discuss the nature and future of the relationship between Australia and New Zealand. A clear objective was to canvass ways to broaden, strengthen and deepen the already close economic ties between the two countries. The idea to convene such a forum was initially recommended by the New Zealand Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade. The next meeting is scheduled to take place in late April/early May 2005 in Melbourne.

consider contributing additional funding and high-ranking representatives to established second track processes with a view to raising New Zealand's Track II profile within the region. As noted in section one of this report, the Australian government agreed to adopt such an approach by making a financial contribution and by sending its Foreign Minister to the inaugural CSCAP general conference in December 2003. The next CSCAP general conference, which is scheduled to take place in Jakarta, Indonesia in December 2005, may represent an opportunity for New Zealand to offer to make a similar contribution.

**5. *A clear correlation exists between the level of resources devoted to second track processes and their effective operation***

Funding is one of the most critical variables conditioning the operation and effectiveness of second track processes. The SCS Workshops, which have struggled to make an impact since the withdrawal of Canadian International Development Agency funding in 2001, serve as cases in point. The PBEC experience is also instructive, with this institution essentially becoming moribund in recent times, in part due to an inability to attract and maintain corporate sponsorship.

The contrasting examples of the Lowy Institute for International Policy and the Asialink 'conversations' provide recent examples of the impact that relatively well resourced second track processes can have. They also demonstrate that the funding for effective second track mechanisms need not come exclusively from government. Perhaps due to New Zealand's small size, it has proven more difficult to attract similar levels of corporate sponsorship for Track II

institutions and activities. The experience of the Australia New Zealand Leadership Forum illustrates that the potential is there, notwithstanding the considerable efforts that were required to attract corporate funding for this initiative from the Bank of New Zealand and Qantas. <sup>65</sup> Without compromising their own basic missions and objectives, part of the challenge here is for New Zealand's Track II institutions to ensure that they remain relevant to corporate (and government) sponsors.

Whether the funding for these processes ultimately comes from government or the private sector, what is clear is that Track II institutions and activities are simply unable to function effectively in the absence of adequate resources. While many of the Track II institutions in New Zealand whose primary focus is trade and economics have fared reasonably well in recent times, largely due to their ability to attract a combination of generous government funding and corporate sponsorship, support for New Zealand's politico-security Track II institutions has tended to be rather more sporadic. In seeking to optimise New Zealand's second track engagement with Asia, therefore, this problem requires urgent attention.

**6. *Greater coordination of New Zealand's Track II institutions is still advisable, particularly those focused on politico-security issues***

Although no country has infinite resources to devote to second track processes, New Zealand's small size generates an additional imperative to make the most of those available. Toward this end, Asia:NZ's efforts to establish an Asia Pacific Business Network (AP-Net) are encouraging, particularly in terms of providing a

....mechanisms could usefully be developed to nurture the next generation of those who will ultimately fill the ranks of New Zealand's Track II community in the years ahead.

vehicle for the greater coordination and integration of New Zealand's economic and trade-oriented second track institutions. There may also be scope for the development of a mechanism (similar perhaps to AP-Net and perhaps based also at Asia:NZ) designed to foster a greater degree of coordination between New Zealand's politico-security Track II institutions and activities.

**7. *Track II institutions could be tasked to identify presently underutilised expertise on Asia within New Zealand, drawing it to the attention of government***

It became evident to the authors in writing this report that government officials were sometimes unaware of the valuable expertise available but not exploited in New Zealand. Consistent with their role as 'brokers' between government and a broad range of potentially useful Track III processes, NGOs, specialist organisations and academic institutions Track II organisations could be tasked to identify such expertise, drawing it to the attention of government.

**8. *Efforts to nurture the 'next generation' of Track II participants are desirable***

As part of this long-term effort, mechanisms could usefully be developed to nurture the next generation of those who will ultimately fill the ranks of New Zealand's Track II community in the years ahead. The findings of this report clearly show that the success of second track processes is often heavily reliant upon the personal networks and experience of the individuals involved. Through its 'New Voices' initiative, the Lowy Institute of International Policy has begun steps to help build the skills and networks of

those likely to become the future leaders of Australia's Track II community. This may provide a useful example for New Zealand to draw upon. So too would the Canadian Consortium on Asia Pacific Security – an initiative that has proven an extremely effective mechanism for training younger scholars and practitioners and providing them with an entrée to Canada's Track II community – and the Australian Strategic Studies Alumni – a recently established community of young professionals and academics with a common interest in strategic and international security issues.<sup>66</sup>

**9. *Some innovative thinking is required on how best to utilise the New Zealand Diaspora and New Zealand's growing Asian communities***

Recent New Zealand Treasury estimates indicate that the New Zealand Diaspora – defined as people born in New Zealand but resident overseas – numbers over 460,000. The majority of these are resident in Australia.<sup>67</sup> Within New Zealand itself, the percentage of those claiming Asian ethnicity in the 2001 census stood at 7 percent, a figure that is projected to rise to 9 percent by the year 2016.<sup>68</sup>

Through some imaginative thinking, there is clearly scope to utilise these two 'communities' in seeking to strengthen New Zealand's Track II engagement with Asia. On the one hand, better use could be made of those New Zealanders with Asia expertise living abroad, working for leading private companies or at prominent educational institutions. Further thought could be given to how their expertise could be utilised to build capacity within New Zealand. Where appropriate, it might even be viable to invite some among these to sit as part of

66. See [www.iir.ubc.ca/cancaps/](http://www.iir.ubc.ca/cancaps/) and [www.ausstrat.org.au/](http://www.ausstrat.org.au/). [Accessed 11 February 2005.]

67. John Bryant and David Law. (2004), 'New Zealand's Diaspora and Overseas-born Population', *New Zealand Treasury Working Paper 04/13*, September.

68. Asia New Zealand Foundation. (2002), 'The Immigration Debate', An Asia:NZ Occasional Paper, 27 November

Of the new processes to emerge recently in the region, the progress of those whose primary aim is to further the notion of an East Asian Community – namely NEAT, CEAC and the ACD – needs to be watched carefully, particularly by countries such as New Zealand that are often described as being geographically peripheral.

69. Colin James. (2004), 'Developing Tasman Agreement at a Deeper Practical Level', *New Zealand Herald*, 18 May.

New Zealand delegations at second track events overseas.

Consideration could also be given to how best to involve New Zealand's growing Asian communities in an enhanced second track engagement with the region. As noted earlier in this section, engagement with Asia is often built upon personal relationships and local knowledge. Where appropriate, it might be useful to consider ways in which New Zealand's Asian communities might contribute to this process, particularly at the Track II level. The underlying purpose of this suggestion is certainly neither to co-opt nor to exploit these communities. However, where they are willing and able to make a positive contribution to the benefit of all New Zealanders, this should be encouraged.

**10. 'Strategic alliances' between Track II institutions and local media outlets should be encouraged**

Strengthening public awareness and appreciation of the importance of second track processes is clearly central in strengthening New Zealand's Track II engagement. Media outlets have a key role to play in facilitating this process. The Australia New Zealand Leadership Forum once again serves as a case in point. Aside from a useful public report written by one of the journalists present,<sup>69</sup> this important Track II initiative received scant media coverage in New Zealand (or Australia for that matter). By building closer ties and possibly even some form of 'strategic alliance' with leading media outlets in New Zealand, Track II institutions can safeguard against the possibility that some of their most promising initiatives will escape public attention.

**11. The progress of emerging Track II institutions and activities focused on crystallising the notion of 'East Asian Community' building still needs to be monitored carefully**

Of the new processes to emerge recently in the region, the progress of those whose primary aim is to further the notion of an East Asian Community – namely NEAT, CEAC and the ACD – needs to be watched carefully, particularly by countries such as New Zealand that are often described as being geographically peripheral. The jury remains out on how far these emergent processes will go in advancing this potentially powerful idea. One line of thinking, however, maintains that these new initiatives could potentially begin to pose a serious threat to more established processes, such as CSCAP. While New Zealand should avoid any sudden or dramatic moves away from more established processes in the short to-medium term, it would still be prudent to monitor carefully the upward trend in these new institutions and activities in the months and years ahead.

## **A Final Word**

In closing, it is hoped that the above conclusions and recommendations will be relevant to New Zealand's government, diplomats, business, media, academics, Track II community, and the public more generally. In the final analysis, the success of New Zealand's second track engagement with Asia ultimately remains contingent upon the contribution that such parties are willing and able to make. Hence, one of the key conclusions to emerge from the *Seriously Asia* project – Ensure New Zealand institutions operate effectively as 'NZ Inc' – remains just as relevant, if not more so, when it comes to the optimisation of New Zealand's Track II engagement with Asia.

## ACRONYMS

ABAC APEC Business Advisory Council	ASEM Asia-Europe Meeting
ACD Asia Cooperation Dialogue	ASPI Australian Strategic Policy Institute
AFTA ASEAN Free Trade Area	AUS-CSCAP Australian Committee of CSCAP
AIIA Australian Institute of International Affairs	AUSPECC Australian Committee of PECC
AJIA <i>Australian Journal of International Affairs</i>	BFA Boao Forum for Asia
ANU Australian National University	CAEC Council for Asia-Europe Cooperation
APEC Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation	CEAC Council on East Asian Community
AP-Net Asia Pacific Business Network	CER Closer Economic Relations
ARF ASEAN Regional Forum	CSCAP Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific
ASC APEC Study Centre	CSCAP-NZ New Zealand committee of CSCAP
ASEAN Association of Southeast Asian Nations	CSIS Centre for Strategic and International Studies (Indonesia)
ASEAN BAC ASEAN Business Advisory Council	DRM Dialogue and Research Monitor
ASEAN BIS ASEAN Business and Investment Summit	IGCC Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation (United States)
ASEAN-CCI ASEAN Chambers of Commerce and Industry	IISS International Institute for Strategic Studies (United Kingdom)
ASEAN-ISIS ASEAN Institutes for Strategic and International Studies	NEACD Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue

NEAT  
Network of East Asian Think Tanks

NGO  
Non-governmental organisation

NZAI  
New Zealand Asia Institute

NZIIA  
New Zealand Institute of International  
Affairs

NZPECC  
New Zealand committee of PECC

PAFTAD  
Pacific Trade and Development

PBEC  
Pacific Basin Economic Council

PECC  
Pacific Economic Cooperation Council

SCS  
South China Sea

SDSC  
Strategic and Defence Studies Centre  
(Australia)

SIFA  
Saranrom Institute of Foreign Affairs  
(Thailand)

SIIS  
Shanghai Institute of International  
Studies (China)

UK  
United Kingdom

UN  
United Nations

US  
United States

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