

## ASEM 2006 and Enlargement: Some Effects of EU and ASEAN Enlargements to ASEM 2006

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### Abstract

ASEM merangkaikan kawasan Asia dan Eropa dalam pola hubungan terstruktur. Pola hubungan ini bersifat inter-regional sehingga tekanannya difokuskan pada organisasi regional. Organisasi regional itu adalah UE (Uni Eropa) dan ASEAN plus tiga negara Asia yang lain. Kedua organisasi ini mengalami penambahan jumlah keanggotaan yang berdampak pada pelaksanaan ASEM tahun 2006. Dampaknya terhadap ASEM tahun 2006 yang berlangsung di kota Helsinki memperlihatkan kuatnya baik identitas regional Eropa dan identitas regional Asia. Akan tetapi, identitas ini berbeda yakni posisi negara-negara UE sangat kuat dan sebaliknya posisi negara-negara ASEAN plus tiga adalah kurang kuat. Selain itu, negara-negara UE mungkin mendominasi jalannya ASEM 2006, sehingga peran Finlandia sangat menentukan agar ASEM 2006 tetap bersifat demokratis dan tidak menyerang satu partisipan tertentu.

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*Keywords:* regionalism, international politics, democratizations, enlargement, economic co-operation

### Introduction

Since 1996 ASEM which regularly took place every two years in rotating both Europe and Asia was main agenda amongst ASEAN plus three and EU leaders. As current EU Presidency, Finland hold the sixth ASEM summit in which Global Challenge and Joint Response

discussed there will decorate Helsinki's political landscape for two days on 10-11 September 2006. The summit brings together the European Commission and leaders of 38 of Asian and European countries.

A increased number of EU leaders from former fifteen to twenty five is resulted in its fifth enlargement. This

enlargement will have a profound impact on the character and functioning of the EU.<sup>1</sup> About six months after ten European countries have integrated to EU, their leaders began to participate for the first time in the fifth 2004 ASEM summit in Hanoi. But in Helsinki ASEM now European participants really doubled from Asian participants which effect actuating the summit. They will be both individually and unitedly dominating direct dialog in the agenda.

The Helsinki ASEM now is tenth anniversary summit marked critical cooperation process between Europe and Asia. Have been erupted political and economic transformations EU generated fifth enlargement to east European countries in order to strengthen democratization of those countries in European integration context. Having been democratized in south east Asian countries ASEAN also generated its enlargement to Burma, Laos and Cambodia in order to strengthen regional identity. Now it is a good time to evaluate all of process and dialog of the 2006 ASEM summit. What are impacts of their enlargement to this ASEM?

This article proposes two aims. Firstly, the article provokes enlar-

gement such as UE fifth enlargement and ASEAN increasing member countries to include Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar strictly define each regional identity. Secondly, it attempts to analyse some impacts of those enlargement towards current ASEM summit in Helsinki.

### EU Fifth Enlargement

Based the Commission perspective under Agenda 2000 issued in July 1997 EU have finalised its fifth enlargement in 2004 through pre-accession strategy<sup>2</sup> and negotiation<sup>3</sup> when ten European countries in east European and Mediterranean was formally constituted as EU new country members. Prior to this inclusion of ten European countries to EU, Nice Treaty have opened constitutional adaptations required for a Union which might ultimately consist twenty-seven country members.<sup>4</sup>

2 See Christopher Preston, "Poland and EU Membership: Current Issues and Future Prospect," in Jackie Gower and John Redmond, ed., *Enlarging the European Union: The Way Forward* (Sydney: Ashgate, 2000), pp. 39-60; and see also Irina Bokova, "Bulgaria's Pre-accession Strategy," in Jackie Gower and John Redmond, ed., *ibid.*, pp. 61-68.

3 See Fraser Cameron, "The Commission Perspective," in Jackie Gower and John Redmond, ed., *ibid.*, pp. 13-25.

4 Stanley Henig, *The Uniting of Europe: From Consolidation to Enlargement* (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 109.

1 Michael Baun, "Enlargement," in Laura Cram, Desmond Dinan and Neill Nugent, eds., *Developments in the European Union* (London: Macmillan, 1999), p. 269.

These new ten members posed a unique challenge.<sup>5</sup> They have successfully negotiated accession process in which all of those candidates moderately could attain Copenhagen criteria.<sup>6</sup>

Its fifth enlargement is extractive and massive because of amount of countries integrated EU in contrast to several previous enlargement is only minimally one country and/or maximally four countries.<sup>7</sup> It is also different from other west European members because of level of economic performance of the new member countries still low<sup>8</sup> and their democratic condition especially east European countries still have to strengthen political institution and civic society.<sup>9</sup> Besides of those factual argument current enlargement will increase broad heterogeneity in regional aspect of EU. There are Iberian, Nordic, and Mediterranean, but nowadays it is Visegrad region

included to EU regions.<sup>10</sup>

The latest enlargement largely is pressured by mixtures of external and internal forces. In the context of external pressure EU faced critical development of post Cold War political landscape both in international locus and European locus. In international locus, EU now assume as alternative power to balance of hegemonic power of US tended to take unilateral action, while the Soviet disappear from international arena. Its successor is Russia which is still far away as well as the Soviet. In European locus, east European countries have fastened their peace revolution, except Romania, to replace political and economic system from socialist-Stalinist model to democratic liberal model. According internal context, EU attempts to democratise organizational setting in the name of Union Constitution. Unfortunately, ratifications of the Constitution are blocked by referendum in two founding countries, French and Dutch, which have destroyed deepening of European integration.<sup>11</sup>

Consequently EU fifth enlargement has solid regional identity generated political and economic integration. It is important that EU still demonstrate long national arrays consist of twenty-

5 Michael Baun, *loc.cit.*

6 Michael Emerson, *Redrawing the Map of Europe* (London: Macmillan, 1998), p. 198.

7 Agus R. Rahman, "Orientasi Politik Luar Negeri Negara-Negara Sub-Kawasan eropa Tengah dan Timur: Suatu Perspektif Perbandingan," *Jurnal Kajian Wilayah Eropa*, Vol. II/1 (2006): 35.

8 See Marie Lavigne, *The Economics of Transition: From Socialist Economy to Market Economy* (London: Macmillan, 1995).

9 See John Higley, Jan Pakulski and Wlodzimierz Wesolowski, eds., *Postcommunist Elites and Democracy in Eastern Europe* (London: Macmillan, 1998).

10 Agus R. Rahman, *loc.cit.*

11 See Laurent Cohen-Tanugi, "The End of Europe?", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 84/6 (November/December, 2005): 55-67.

five country members. Their voice is ultimately sole position directed by Finland as current Presidency and host the summit.

### Third ASEAN Enlargement

Original country members of ASEAN are five countries signed Bangkok Declaration in 1967 in Thailand. These five founding country members of ASEAN consisted of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand added Brunei Darussalam in January 1984. Next eleven years in July 1995 Vietnam joined to ASEAN. The last is movement of ASEAN to ten members to include Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar. From this point of view, participant Myanmar in ASEM since 2004 has provoked controversial dialogue crossing Europeans and Asians.

In post Cold War era some ASEAN countries have intensified democratization after those countries had erupted substantial crises such as Thailand and Indonesia. This crisis is typically political economy of region of southeast Asian.<sup>12</sup> They continued political and economic transformation. Some countries continued political transformation focused to democratization process.

But critical point of this development concentrated in Myanmar. Since

its inclusion to ASEAN, Myanmar proved as black hole for transformation effort in ASEAN countries. Last year in 2005 ASEAN foreign ministers approved special note concerning developments of level democratization in Myanmar. They proposed of lifting all of restrictions and development democratization process in the country ruled by military junta. There is no political participations in democratic process involving all of the parties concerns.<sup>13</sup>

In current ASEAN foreign ministers in Kuala Lumpur, they again still faced continuing trouble with Myanmar. There is no substantial progress in democratization process. Moreover, Myanmar had little commitment to self-reforming his political landscape since military-junta has controlled all of country. Unfortunately, ASEAN has no trump card to impose strict pressure towards Myanmar military elites who powerfully generated government.<sup>14</sup>

On one side Myanmar successfully underlines ASEAN to strengthen regional identity. But on the other side ASEAN foreign ministers does not conveniently gain good explanation why they failed to reconcile among political actors. Consequently this process is fully democratic dialogue in which all of participants is equal.

12 See T.J. Pempel, ed., *The Politics of the Asian Economic Crisis* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), p. 5.

13 Chairman's Statement of the Seven ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting, Kyoto, 6-7 May 2005.

14 *Kompas*, July 26, 2006, p. 11.

Moreover, ASEAN has no power to force Myanmar to follow ASEAN initiatives. One important constraint is that ASEAN is not formal regional organization created by a treaty ratified by national parliament of country participants. In the era millennium ASEAN has regional identity on basis of soft association.

### ASEM 2006

One sometimes viewed that ASEM provided a new link between Asia and Europe in trilateral concert of regions such as Asia, Europe and North America.<sup>15</sup> It also supposed a back-trough to inter-regionalism in managing Asia and Europe relationships.<sup>16</sup>

For the Europeans ASEM is second link to balance the first sophisticated transatlantic relations.<sup>17</sup> They have institutionalized deep alliance with

USA under NATO's structural and functional mechanism for Cold War era. Until now of the post Cold War they maintain existence of NATO which has revitalized ideological reason to integrate some east European countries.<sup>18</sup> From this view US is dominantly hegemonic power toward Europeans.

For Asians ASEM is second link to balance the first increasing transpacific relations.<sup>19</sup> Asians and North Americans have developed deep liberalization in the Pacific region to strengthen intra-regional trade and investment. Dynamics of liberalization of APEC really depended to US and Japan to drive economic gain for each country in the region.

Because of politico-military dimension, transatlantic relations in post Cold War proved institutionalized defense and military alliance between Europe and North America. While it is a fact that APEC assumed as based-Asia and Pacific regime of economic cooperation covering diverse geographic and economic landscape of the region. So ASEM is differ from transatlantic link because of ASEM is

15 See K. Kesavapany and Mely C. Anthony, "ASEM at Ten: Reflections from Singapore," in Tadashi Yamamoto and Yeo Lay Hwee, *ASEM in its Tenth Year: Looking Back, Looking Forward; Asian Country Reports* (Tokyo: Japan Center for International Exchange, 2006), pp. 118-141.

16 See Harms W. Maull and Nuria Okfen, "Inter-Regionalism in International Relations: Comparing APEC and ASEM," *Asia Europe Journal*, Vol. 1/2 (May, 2003): 237-249.

17 See Heiner Hanggi, "ASEM and the Construction of the New Triad," *Journal of the Asia Pacific Economy*, Vol. 4/1 (1999): 56-80; and Jurgen Ruland, "EU as Inter-Regional Actor: The Asia-Europe Meeting," in Suthipand Chirathivat, et.al., eds., *Asia-Europe on the Eve of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Bangkok: Centre for European Studies, Chulalongkorn University, 2001), pp. 43-57.

18 See Todd Sandler and Keith Hartley, *The Political Economy of NATO: Past, Present, and into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999); and also S. Nelson Dew, ed., *The Future of NATO: Facing an Unreliable Enemy in an Uncertain Environment* (New York: Praeger, 1991).

19 Heiner Hanggi, *loc.cit.*, Jurgen Ruland, *loc.cit*

not politico-military alliance. Moreover, ASEM is also differ from transpacific link because ASEM brought two regional organisations revitalised their relations.<sup>20</sup> This is a new mechanism for enhancing Europe-Asia relations in the future which they have been established ten yeas ago.

In other words ASEM is designed as inter-regional forum which characterized to be loose, evolutionary and open. Moreover, ASEM then developed informal model of organization and interactive modes.<sup>21</sup> Both enlargement of EU and ASEAN made the Helsinki summit 2006 is not equal dialogue in which there is difference experience with summit model between both sides. Nevertheless, ASEM is an appropriate method to revitalized EU-Asia relations.<sup>22</sup>

There are twenty-five independent country participants and also EU leader represented by the president of European Commission, while ten independent ASEAN country members is not accompanied by ASEAN executive body. It is mainly caused by no executive body in ASEAN in which it is not institutionalized regional

organization. In political dialogue EU country members will probably dominate the discussion. They are in very strong position which supported integrated policy directed by the Presidency of European Commission. Nevertheless, amongst ASEAN plus three countries, they are no integrated policy. It is probably that they only coordinated their shared interest so that their position is still weak in facing EU policy. Each country has national position in this Helsinki summit. It is true that elites dominated of participants in the summit in various levels which demonstrating direct and elitist diplomacy. But all of the process, some people are mostly hope that Finland will have directed excellent function to drive democratic dialogue.

In two other pillars EU and Asian participants have successfully formulate and activate some initiatives. Some have developed bilateral summit with EU such as Japan, China and South Korea. How is about ASEAN country members? One important issue how important ASEM in future is to institutionalize the summit. For this aim, the first attempt is to institutionalize ASEAN, prior to move to ASEAN plus three. This is revolutionary and fantastic approach to ASEM especially for Asian countries.

As Presidency EU until December 2006 Finland has been to determine what issues they directed to discuss. The Summit probably addressed some

20 See also Zhimin Chen, "NATO, APEC and ASEM: Triadic Interregionalism and Global Order," *Asia Europe Journal*, Vol. 3/3 (October, 2005): 361-363.

21 See Edison Muchlis M., "Program dan Implementasinya," in Edison Muchlis M., ed., *ASEM dan Revitalisasi Hubungan UE-Asia* (Jakarta: P2P LIPI, 2001), p. 90-91.

22 Agus R. Rahman, "Prospek ASEM dan Revitalization of UE-Asia Relations," in Edison Muchlis M., ed., *ibid.*, pp. 187-195.

topical international issues such as support for the multilateral international system; threats to security including global health threats such as avian flu; questions related to energy security; international efforts to curb climate change and ways of reducing greenhouse gas emissions; the ambition to bring negotiations on the WTO Doha Development Agenda to a successful conclusion; questions relating to globalization, competitiveness and structural changes in the global economy; intercultural dialogue as a means to promote mutual understanding. Unfortunately, it is obviously that subsidies of EU agricultural product are not an important topic discussed in the summit.

From this agenda-setting those issues adopted in Helsinki summit is differentiated from US hegemonic agenda. EU has failed to activate some special issues contrasting to US interest. It is factual that four founding country members such as Germany, UK, France and Italy and the president of European Commission brought together in G-8 summit. Moreover, Britain under Prime Minister Tony Blair is hard-line follower of US President George W Bush's global politics. In the front to US, EU is still soft power and it has some great structural limitations to grow up as global actor in this millennium. It is important to underline that until now EU based on state as country members which they are not able to dismantle each country's policy coordination with US. Its policies have to be autonomous from US interest.

From the view of EU enlargement ASEAN and three other East Asia

countries will gain one important lesson in some continuing summits how EU democratized East European countries which have transformed in transitional period. By the way current trade ministerial ASEAN meeting have driven to speed Single ASEAN Market in next decade. This is main other effect of EU enlargement toward ASEAN countries in which ASEM still maintain. In this context ASEAN enlargement will take some benefits from this development.

### Conclusion

The Helsinki summit will mark an anniversary summit which is structured by political dialogue and three pillars such as economic, political and cultural and intellectual pillars. A large number of ASEM participants will determine results of the summit. Increasing European participants directly make strong regional position in political dialogue. They probably dominated the discussion, but Finland as chairman have to held democratic spirit in order to prevent this informal forum to attack a participant on his national policy. ASEAN enlargement is assume in their way into ASEAN integration.

Among Asian countries there is no one regional position because of they are not integrationist approach. The Helsinki summit prove that European and Asian continuously attempt to revitalize their position in global challenge and propose common responses. Unfortunately they both Europeans and Asians is not able to independent yet towards US. All of them still develop bilateral moderate good relations with Washington. □

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