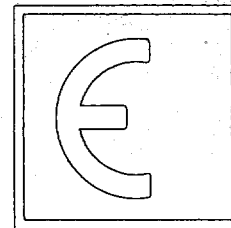


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A S E A N AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

51/81

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July 1981

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The Cooperation Agreement between the European Community and the five States of ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations), namely Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, was signed at Kuala Lumpur on 7 March 1980. This was the first such agreement to be concluded in the name of ASEAN by its five members. This agreement, which is evolutionary and flexible in character, is intended to consolidate, deepen and diversify economic relations between the two groups.

While individual countries of the European Community have had close historic links with member countries of the Association of South East Asian Nations (notably the Netherlands with Indonesia and the U.K. with Malaysia and Singapore), the tendency has over the last decade been towards a relationship between the two regional groupings, the Community and ASEAN.

The Community welcomed the formation of ASEAN and was the first to recognise the viability of the organization and its potential in regard both to the economic development of the region and to political stability and peace in the whole of South-East Asia.

The conclusion of the Economic Cooperation Agreement between ASEAN and the Community marks a temporary peak in the collaboration between the two groupings and offers very good prospects for the pursuit, if not the extension of the relationship.

A S E A N

The political background

ASEAN was established at Bangkok on 8 August 1967 by Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. As expressed in the ASEAN declaration, the aims of the Association are essentially to accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development of the region, to promote regional peace and stability on the basis of respect for justice and the rule of law and to promote active cooperation and mutual assistance on matters of common interest. The idea of regional solidarity and cooperation and of independence in order to ensure not only the economic and social progress and stability of the ASEAN countries but also their security from outside interference emerges clearly from the preamble to the declaration. The formation of ASEAN has already made an impact on the region and the Association has proved its durability, in spite of the different historic, religious and cultural traditions of the five member countries, and despite the physical difficulties of practical cooperation in a region of peninsulas and archipelagoes.

During its first decade of existence ASEAN initiated regional cooperation in a number of fields. However, the Bali summit of February 1976 - the first summit meeting of heads of government in the history of ASEAN - really marked a breakthrough in the development of the Association with the signature of the Declaration of ASEAN Concord and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. Politically, the Association is committed to preserving the stability of each Member State and of the region, particularly against the threat of subversion, to the peaceful settlement of intra-regional disputes and to the creation of a Zone of peace, freedom and neutrality. ASEAN does not constitute a military bloc and its stated aim, to create a zone of peace and neutrality, is a concept strongly supported by the European Community. There is no doubt that the cohesion of ASEAN has been strengthened by a growing sense of common destiny, both politically and economically. This was clearly demonstrated in Geneva in July 1979 at the U.C. Conference on refugees who had left Vietnam en masse by sea to seek asylum in the ASEAN countries. Since the Vietnamese intervention in Kampuchea at the end of 1978, ASEAN has also collectively made numerous approaches to the U.N. General Assembly and other international fora to demand respect for territorial integrity and to call for the withdrawal of foreign military forces in South-East Asia simultaneously bringing to the

World's attention the extremely grave problems posed by the mass exodus of refugees from Kampuchea into Thailand.

The economic background

ASEAN is making steady progress towards regional economic cooperation. It is not yet a free-trade area, much less a customs union, it has so far established preferential trading arrangements for 2400 products, and it has agreed on a number of regional industrial projects and on schemes for internal preferential supply of rice and crude oil in cases of shortage.

Regular regional meetings are held at Heads-of-Government, ministerial and senior official levels, and a permanent ASEAN secretariat has been set up in Jakarta. Since the second Heads-of-Government Summit (Kuala Lumpur, 1977), ASEAN has intensified its contacts with its international partners, including the European Community, the United States, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and Canada, all of which acknowledge the growing importance of ASEAN. Indeed the Japanese Prime Minister declared, on 29 November 1979, that Japan would henceforth treat ASEAN as a "priority region". Every year, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers, after their internal meeting, hold a Conference with the Foreign Ministers of these countries.

The five ASEAN countries have a total population of 250 million, slightly less than the 260 million inhabitants of the Community. This compares with just over 300 million for the 59 developing countries of Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific associated with the Community through the Lomé Convention and, again, the 300 million in the 20 countries of Latin America.

The economies of the ASEAN countries are among the fastest growing in the world. Between 1973 and 1980 the annual growth rate of the ASEAN countries Gross Domestic Product averaged between 6.8 % and 7.9 % compared to the Community's growth rate of less than 3 %. In 1980 the Gross National Product per capita of the five countries ranged from \$ 370 in Indonesia, \$ 591 in Thailand, \$ 626 in the Philippines to \$ 1457 in Malaysia and \$ 3817 in Singapore.

The ASEAN region is exceptionally rich in natural resources. It is the principal world supplier of natural rubber (80 %), abaca fibres (80 %), tropical hardwoods (75 %), palm oil (60 %) and coconut (50 %) as well as being a major producer of oil, tin, copper, sugar, coffee, rice and tobacco.

ASEAN, the European Community and the world

In spite of ASEAN's rapid economic development and its growing political cohesion and despite the region's historic trading and investment links with Europe, the Community has been slow to appreciate the opportunities for more intense economic exchanges with the area.

Where trade is concerned, there has been an absolute growth between the two regions :

	(in million European Units of Account)	
	1973	1980
EC imports from ASEAN	1.777	6.896
EC exports to ASEAN	1.656	5.317

However in relative terms the picture is less favourable : the Community's share of ASEAN exports in the period 1973-79 fell from 15.7 % to 14.1 % while its share of ASEAN imports dropped from 16.5 % to 13.7 %. In 1980 trade with ASEAN represented only 2.4 % of the Community's external trade. ASEAN is thus a much less important trading partner for the Community than Latin America (5.3 %) or the ACP countries (3.9 %) than might be expected from a comparison of its relative size as a market, its rich natural resources and the rapidity of its economic growth.

It is Japan which is now ASEAN's principal trading partner with over 25 % of the latter's external trade, followed by the United States with about 18 %.

Much the same trend can be distinguished in the investment field. Japanese investments in ASEAN have grown rapidly at the end of 1977 were estimated to represent just over 32 % of total foreign investment in the region as against about 16 % for the US and about 14 % for the Community. In 1977 the Community accounted for approximately 10 % of new foreign investment in Indonesia, 18 % in Malaysia, 11 % in the Philippines, 32 % in Singapore and 13 % in Thailand. Japanese investment was particularly important in Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE COMMUNITY'S RELATIONS WITH ASEAN

The first move to bring about closer relations between the two organizations came from the ASEAN side and was the result of fears about the effect on some of their countries' export trade of the loss of Commonwealth preference on the United Kingdom market following British accession to the Community. In June 1972 the ASEAN countries set up a Special Coordinating Committee of ASEAN nations (SCCAN) consisting of the Ministers of Trade, and the ASEAN Brussels Committee (ABC) composed of the ASEAN ambassadors to the Community. An ASEAN delegation under the Indonesian Trade Minister visited Brussels to establish a dialogue with the Commission which welcomed this approach. It was agreed to maintain regular contact through the ABC for the purpose of discussing trade problems and the implementation of the Community's Generalized Scheme of Preferences which allows duty free or preferential access to the Community market for products originating in the developing countries.

Since 1972 a regular dialogue has been maintained between the Commission and the ASEAN countries. Sir Christopher Soames, then Commission Vice-President for external relations, twice visited the ASEAN region and took part in SCCAN meetings at Bangkok in 1973 and Jakarta in 1974. Following the conclusion of the Community's Commercial Cooperation Agreement with India in 1973, and the decision to offer similar agreements to the other countries of the Indian sub-continent, the Commission sounded out the ASEAN countries as to whether they were interested in concluding similar agreements with the Community. They all replied that they preferred to develop their relations with the Community on a regional basis, which meant waiting till ASEAN's institutional development made it possible to envisage negotiating the present Cooperation Agreement. In the meantime a joint Study Group, comprising representatives of the Commission and the five ASEAN Governments, was set up with a view to exploring all possible areas of future cooperation. The Joint Study Group thus met at Brussels in 1975,

Manila in 1976, Brussels again in 1977 and Bangkok in 1978. At the same time, following the ASEAN Summit at Bali in 1976, the ASEAN countries sought to broaden their contacts with the Community institutions and with representatives of the nine Member States in particular. In November 1977, a dialogue was initiated in Brussels with the ASEAN ambassadors on one hand and the Committee of Permanent Representatives of the Community's Council of Ministers, together with senior officials of the Commission on the other hand. The ASEAN side on this occasion pressed for a meeting at ministerial level to complement the talks which had taken place during 1977 with the Prime Ministers of Japan, Australia and New Zealand, and with the U.S. Administration in 1978. There was a favourable response from the Community side. The notion of a joint ministerial meeting had already been put forward by the Federal German Foreign Minister, Mr. Hans-Dietrich Genscher on his visit to the ASEAN region in early 1977 and taken up again by Mr. Wilhelm Haferkamp, Commission Vice-President responsible for external relations on his first official visit to the five ASEAN countries later in the same year. At the second meeting of ASEAN ambassadors with the Community (July 1978), a ministerial meeting was scheduled for November 1978.

During this first Ministerial Conference, the Ministers decided among other things to launch exploratory talks with a view to the conclusion of a cooperation agreement. These negotiations opened in November 1979 and rapidly led to the conclusion of an agreement which was formally signed at Kuala Lumpur on 7 March 1980.

THE COOPERATION AGREEMENT : COLLABORATION IN THE TRADE, ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT FIELDS.

The Agreement provides inter alia for :

- commercial cooperation (the parties undertake for example to study how to remove trade barriers, to take into account their respective needs for improved access, create new trade patterns by bringing together economic operators, recommend trade promotion measures and consult on measures likely to affect trade);
- economic cooperation (e.g. encouraging closer contacts and industrial and technological cooperation between firms in the two regions);
- development cooperation (support for ASEAN development and regional cooperation through the Community's programmes for non-associated developing countries in coordination with Member States, promotion of cooperation between sources of finance in the two regions);
- a Joint Cooperation Committee to promote and review at least once a year the various cooperation activities and to provide a forum for consultation between the parties.

The basis for the kind of cooperation foreseen in the new agreement has already been laid through the activities of the Joint Study Group and other EEC/ASEAN contacts over the years. Some details of achievements and future prospects are given in the following pages.

Trade cooperation

Under the Joint Declaration of Intent attached to the Treaty of Accession, the enlarged Community undertook to seek appropriate solutions, essentially through its generalized system of preferences (GSP), to the trade problems which enlargement would cause the Commonwealth countries of Asia and other developing countries in the region. The primary goal of the Community's GSP is to aid the economic diversification, and notably the industrialization of the economies of developing countries such as ASEAN, through improving the access to Community markets of manufactured and semi-manufactured goods.

Ongoing discussions between ASEAN and Commission representatives have accordingly centred on improvements to the scheme. Although the GSP is applied autonomously and hence not subject to negotiation, the Community has gone a long way to meet ASEAN preoccupations since the scheme was extended to the new Member States in 1974, particularly through additions to the list of processed agricultural produce (e.g. various crustacea, coconut oil, preserved pineapples, palm oil, pepper and spices) as well as tobacco. Further improvements benefiting ASEAN were incorporated in the Community's tropical products offer under the Tokyo Round multilateral trade negotiations (MTN) which were implemented in 1977. In order to encourage intra-regional trade within ASEAN, the Community introduced in 1974 a special regime allowing certain products to be imported under the GSP from Singapore, which has an important entrepôt trade accompanied by origin certificates from other ASEAN countries. As from 1975, the Community has applied the principle of cumulative origin of imports from regional groupings such as ASEAN. In order to improve knowledge of the scheme among exporters and government officials in ASEAN, the Commission regularly organizes regional seminars on the operation of the GSP. The last of these was held at Kuala Lumpur on 27 and 28 January 1981. There has indeed been a substantial improvement in the ASEAN export performance under the scheme, particularly since 1977 when Community imports from ASEAN under the GSP rose by 88 %.

The five ASEAN countries are now, if taken together, by far the largest beneficiary of the system, accounting for over 20 % of total Community imports under the GSP.

Trade promotion

In the last three years, the Community has substantially improved and extended its schemes to promote exports from the ASEAN region to the Nine. These schemes include the organization of exporters' trade missions and European buyers' missions to ASEAN, participation in European fairs, some two workshops every year, the provision of experts in various fields, the offer of trade centres and aid for publicity programmes. Important increases in spending on these programmes were registered since 1979, and in 1981 which was the start of regional trade promotion operations:

	(in ECUs)				
	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981
Indonesia	281,000	196,000	346,000	394,000	239,000
Malaysia	215,000	196,000	346,000	305,000	351,000
Philippines	204,000	196,000	346,000	366,000	409,000
Singapore	150,000	136,000	193,000	165,000	180,000
Thailand	169,000	196,000	346,000	270,000	300,000
ASEAN regional actions					503,000

Commodities

As a major commodity producer, ASEAN is naturally concerned about the progress of negotiations in UNCTAD on the Common Fund and the Integrated Programme, and the subject was raised at the first ministerial meeting. The ASEAN countries have also shown considerable interest in the stabilisation of export earnings scheme (STABEX) developed by the Community in Africa, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP) under the Lomé Convention, and which they would like for their own commodity exports. At the first ministerial meeting, the Community recognized the importance of ASEAN as a major supplier of many key commodities and expressed its willingness to examine, within a global scheme involving all the industrialized countries, what possibilities there were for guaranteeing the stabilization

of export earnings of developing countries, including ASEAN, as a complement to other measures. It should be borne in mind that the ASEAN countries have a more diversified economic structure than the ACP countries and that unlike the ACP countries they do not rely almost entirely on the Community market as an outlet for their exports.

Textiles

Bilateral agreements on trade in textiles were negotiated by the Community with the five ASEAN countries at the end of 1977 in the framework of the Multifibres Agreement (MFA). Under these agreements which cover the period 1978-1982, the ASEAN countries agree to limit their exports of the more sensitive categories of textiles to the levels specified in the agreements, and to introduce export restraint for other categories at the request of the Community in the event of their sales reaching a certain percentage of total Community imports. These agreements have allowed the ASEAN countries moderately to increase their exports of textile products to the Community.

Economic Cooperation

It is in the area of investment and industrial cooperation where the most significant cooperation has thus far taken place, reflecting the ASEAN preoccupation with the under-representation of European industry in the region in comparison to Japan and the United States, and the European Commission's concern at the relative lack of European investment in the raw materials sector so vital to the Community economy.

Industrial cooperation has been stimulated above all by two ASEAN-EEC Conferences on Industrial Cooperation held at Brussels in 1976 and Jakarta in 1979. The first conference allowed ASEAN for the first time to present the investment potential of the ASEAN region as a whole to a high-level audience of European industrialists and bankers. The second conference, co-sponsored by ASEAN, the European Commission and four European banking consortia (ABECOR, EBIC, Europartners and Inter-Alpha), and which was opened by Indonesia's President Suharto and attended by Commission Vice-President Wilhelm Haferkamp, brought together some 800 leading businessmen, bankers and officials from the two regions, including senior officials from the European Commission, the nine Community Member States and European public development finance institutions. About one-third of the industrial companies and more than half of the banks were represented by their chief executives.

Taken together, the European presence comprised probably the strongest business delegation yet to travel from Europe anywhere in the world. This second conference, which led directly to numerous business transactions, dealt with eight principal sectors:

- chemical industries;
- electric industries;
- machinery/metal engineering industries;
- industrial processing of agricultural products;
- timber and timber-based industries;
- precision engineering;
- transport and communications equipment manufacturing and
- plantation of export crops.

It pointed the way to further European investment in the ASEAN countries, particularly in those industries which are labour-intensive, which rely on ASEAN raw materials and which will raise the technological capabilities of the ASEAN region.

Since that time, there have been contacts between the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the European Community and the ASEAN Chambers of Commerce with a view to creating an ASEAN-EEC Business Council. This Business Council, modelled on those already existing between ASEAN and the United States, Japan and Australia respectively, will periodically bring together industrialists from the two regions in order to encourage the development of trade and investment in the two groups of countries. It will be a forum for raising problems encountered by industrialists seeking to invest in one or the other region. This Business Council will also organize the various sectorial industrial conferences which will go more fully into the contacts already established during the two preceding general industrial conferences.

Since 1977, the Community has financed five technology transfer seminars, each in one of the ASEAN countries and aimed at businessmen and officials in that region.

A Programme of cooperation in science and technology has been set up with the ASEAN countries and from September 1981 will allow scholarships to be granted and seminars organized for the benefit of ASEAN countries

Development cooperation

In the framework of its programme in favour of non-associated developing countries, the Community is already committed to ASEAN development. The new Agreement however includes, for the first time in any Agreement concluded by the Community and non-associated developing countries - a development article, in which the Community pledges itself to cooperate with ASEAN in order to contribute to the region's self-reliance, economic resilience and social wellbeing. It will work with ASEAN to realise concrete projects and programmes including food production and supplies, rural development, education and training facilities.

On this basis, the Community has continued its actions of development cooperation with the ASEAN countries, granting either bilateral aid or aid at regional level. Since 1980, the stress has been on developing aid at regional level.

There are various aspects to the help given by the Community: financial and technical assistance, training, food aid.

. Financial and technical assistance

In the context of its budget in favour of non-associated countries, the Community has financed development projects in the three ASEAN countries which are eligible for such aid. This aid has increased constantly since 1976 and was initially granted bilaterally. Since 1979 it has also been granted for regional projects benefitting the ASEAN countries as a whole. ASEAN countries benefit from about 20 % of the global aid granted to all non-associated countries (see Annex V).

. Training

By granting scholarships or organizing seminars, the Community contributes to training ASEAN nationals. In this context, it financed in 1980 a seminar

on access to the European capital market and a training course on mechanization in agriculture.

Food aid

Since 1977 the Community has regularly granted food aid to certain ASEAN countries in terms of their needs. In 1981 it gave 1350 tons of milk and 5000 tons of cereals to Indonesia, and 1000 tons of milk and 100 tons of butteroil to the Philippines.

POLITICAL RELATIONS

Political relations between the Community and ASEAN have been considerably strengthened since 1978. Between November 1978 and October 1981, three Conferences were held between the Foreign Ministers of the Community and those of ASEAN. While the first of these, at Brussels in November 1978, gave only a limited place to political problems, the second ministerial meeting at Kuala Lumpur in March 1980 devoted a large part of the discussions to these problems and revealed a total identity of views among these two groups of countries on the two major crises of that time : Kampuchea and Afghanistan.

The third Conference of this type, essentially political in character, was held at London on 13 and 14 October 1981, and thus confirmed the principle now established of regular consultations at the highest level between the two groups of countries.

In addition, the Community has been invited by ASEAN to participate in the dialogue which it organises each year with its principal partners in the Pacific (United States, Japan, Canada, Australia and New Zealand). The President of the Council of the Community, Mr. van der Klaauw, and the Vice-President of the Commission Mr. Haferkamp represented the Community at this meeting held at Manila on 19 and 20 June 1981.

Finally, the Community and its Member States have supported the ASEAN countries in the Kampuchea crisis, not only by backing their approaches for a final solution of this crisis, but also by supplying 40 % of the total of international aid for the refugees.

PARLIAMENTARY RELATIONS

Parliamentary links between the two parties have been developed in parallel with the general evolution of their relations. Two meetings have already been held between the elected European Parliament and the Interparliamentary Association of the ASEAN countries, one at Strasbourg in 1979 and the other at Jakarta in April 1981 - and these contacts are now to be established on a regular basis.

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION IN THE ASEAN REGION

To promote relations between the Community and Asia and, in particular, the links between the EEC and ASEAN, the European Commission, since September 1979, has installed a Delegation (1) at Bangkok, comprising also a Press and Information Office.

- (1) Delegation for South and South-East Asia
Press and Information Office,
Commission of the European Communities,
Thai Military Bank Building, 9th and 10th Flrs.
34 Phya Thai Road,
Bangkok. TDIex 086/82764 COMEUBK TH.

ANNEX

TABLE I
ASEAN'S trading patterns 1979

(million US \$)					
	Export	%	Import	%	
World	49 939	100	46 448	100	
of which USA	8 844	17.7	7 474	16.1	
Japan	13 527	27.0	10 256	22.1	
EEC	7 054	14.1	6 365	13.7	
USSR	583	1.1	65	0.14	
China	460	0.9	1 083	2.3	
Australia	972	1.9	1 437	3.0	
ASEAN	8 210	16.4	6 184	13.3	

TABLE II
Evolution of Community trade with ASEAN - 1973-1980

(million ECU) (1)					
	1973	1975	1977	1979	1980
EC imports	1777	2200	4130	5424	6896
EC exports	1656	2634	3845	4344	5317
Trade balance	-121	+434	-285	-1080	-1579

TABLE III
Main Community imports from ASEAN 1980

(million ECU) (1)		
	Value	% of total imports
Sawn timber	600	8.7
Natural rubber	653	9.5
Manioc	545	7.9
Machinery & electrical eqpt.	643	9.3
Tin	426	6.2
Clothing	388	5.6
Palm oil	228	3.3
Coffee	165	2.4
Animal feedingstuffs	206	3.0
Copra	134	2.0
Plywood	149	2.2
Textiles (fibres and fabrics)	148	2.2
Oil and oilproducts	219	3.2
		65.5

(1) ECU = European Unit of Account

TABLE IV

Pattern of foreign investment in ASEAN (%)

	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	Singapore	Thailand
EEC	9.0	18.0	11.0	32.0	13.0
USA	11.0	15.0	33.0	33.0	16.0
Japan	37.0	27.0	25.0	15.0	35.0
Australia	3.0	2.0	5.0	n.a.	1.0
Hong Kong	11.0	10.0	1.0	n.a.	10.0
Others	29.0	28.0	25.0	20.0	25.0

TABLE V

EEC projects in ASEAN member countries under the Community's programme of development cooperation with non-associated developing countries.

Year	Country	Title of project	EC Contribution: m. ECU
1976	Indonesia	Soy-bean pilot project	1.00
	Indonesia	Bali irrigation (study) ^c	0.08
	Philippines	Mindanao irrigation (study) ^c	0.16
1977	Indonesia	S.E.Sulawesi transmigration project ^a	2.00
	Thailand	Pig-breeding centre project	0.11
	Thailand	Inland fisheries project ^b	0.90
1978	Indonesia	S.E.Sulawesi transmigration project ^a	3.00
	Indonesia	Bank Indonesia small business credit programme (technical assistance)	2.35
	Indonesia	Baturaden Dairy-cattle breeding centre (study)	0.15
	ASEAN	Regional study on timber marketing in ASEAN countries	0.30
	ASEAN	Research and training centre for grain harvests	0.30
	Thailand	Seed production centre (study)	0.10
	Thailand	Crop diversification (study)	0.20
	1979	Indonesia	Talungagung Flood Control and Drainage Project (Java)
	Indonesia	Crop development study	3.00
	Thailand	Winged beans crop development	0.60
	Thailand	Rubber small holdings development	1.80
	Thailand	Pa Mong and Lam Chiang SA ^d irrigation	0.70
	Thailand	Crop development in the N.E. region	2.60
	Philippines	Bicol River irrigation development ^a	4.50
	ASEAN	Aquaculture development (regional project)	0.30
1980	Indonesia	Husbandry development (cross-breeding) Italy ^e	4.4
		Irrigation project ^b	3.8
	Philippines	Crop protection programme (GFR) ^e	3.5
	Thailand	Huai Mong irrigation and drainage	11.0
		Rubber small holdings development	1.8
		Cooperatives programme	2.5
		Project for diverting waters of ING-YOM-NAM (study)	0.3

a) Co-financed with ADB (Asian Development Bank); b) project financed through ADB. d) Studies financed through ADB; d) In cooperation with the Mekong Committee. e) Co-financed with Member States.

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