

Soviet's regional agenda (views which were echoed in a gentler way by Washington) or to impose European models on Asia. The revolutionary approach taken by ASEAN in the leadup to the 1991 PMC obliged Japan to reconsider its attitude towards discussion of regional security arrangements.

Virtually all Asia Pacific governments have vivid memories of Japanese militarism, and many regional actors' determination to retain a stabilizing American military presence was designed as much to keep a lid on Tokyo's suspected military aspirations as to guard against Soviet encroachment. These suspicions had made much more difficult Japan's attempts to satisfy American requests for greater burden-sharing and those international critics who demanded that Japan assume a greater and more activist political role in world affairs. Increases in the Japanese defence budget (necessary to provide increased host nation support to USA forces in Japan) were criticized by China, Korea and others. Debates in Tokyo over Japanese participation in United Nations sanctioned peacekeeping operations were viewed suspiciously and commented on disparagingly by many in Asia Pacific.

By the time news of ASEAN's intentions had reached Tokyo, much rethinking had already been done,¹⁹ and a decision was taken to support calls for a multilateral forum to discuss security. To ensure that the Soviet Union would continue to be isolated from the region, it was decided to support ASEAN's proposals but with the proviso that the existing PMC be the preferred forum. This would allow discussions on "regional reassurance" to take place among like-minded countries while deferring participation by the Soviet Union.

Having launched the "Nakayama initiative"²⁰ at the 1991 ASEAN-PMC, Japan has committed itself to participation in a multilateral dialogue on regional security issues.²¹

The United States

Once again, the United States finds itself in a situation where action or inaction will have an enormous effect on Asia Pacific security. To date, the USA has been steadfast in its expressed preference for bilateral security arrangements over multilateral discussion and its reluctance to allow the issue of naval arms control to become the subject of multilateral discussion. Suggestions of broadening the concept of security to include non-traditional, non-military threats have fallen on deaf ears. Yet there are indications that a change of policy is slowly taking place and that Washington is in the process of recognizing that cooperative security discussions in Asia Pacific are, in many respects, already occurring.

There are indications that current thinking in some Washington circles is that an institutionalized APEC may, sometime in the future, offer an alternative vehicle for multilateral discussions of a broadened security agenda. The benefits of such an arrangement are that, while China will soon be a member of APEC, the Soviet Union and other regional non-market economies are not; the United States would be in a better