

International Conference on
Regional Integration and Socio-Political Change in East Asia
A comparison with the EU experience

organised by
CARC – Contemporary Asia Research Centre
University of Milano

with the cooperation of
Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo
Asia Development Bank

with the contribution of
The Japan Foundation

24-25 November 2005
Venue: University of Milano

East Asia is still a fragmented economic and political region. However, in the last decades market driven integration has greatly advanced, and the economies of the region are now closely linked via trade, investment and financial flows. In this economic context, regional leaders are considering how to strengthen the process of regional integration. Bilateral and multilateral free trade agreements have been signed or are discussed. Moreover, in December 2005 Kuala Lumpur will host the first East Asian Summit. Thus, notwithstanding the serious obstacles still hampering political cooperation, the region is moving forward. The establishment of an East Asian Community is no longer such a remote or unrealistic option.

Understanding and assessing the impact of East Asian process of regional integration is important given the economic size and the dynamism of the region. It is particularly relevant for European countries facing both the competitive pressure and the market opportunities originating from the East Asian countries. On the other hand, a meeting with European scholars and experts provide an opportunity to reflect on the requirements, the implications and the pitfalls of regional integration.

These are the aims of the International Conference to be held in Milano. In the first part, we will discuss the prospects and the problems of East Asian integration. Scholars and experts from different countries will be invited to present their views and to discuss them with European colleagues and experts.

In the second part we will analyse specific issues concerning socio-political change in the countries of the region and how these issues are or might be affected by regional integration. The topics have been chosen considering the expertise and the academic achievements of University of Milano and its partner institutions in these fields.

PROGRAMME

1. Thursday, November 24, 2.15 PM, Sala Napoleonica, Via Sant'Antonio 12, Milano

- Welcome addresses
- Prof. Gianpiero Sironi, Vice Rector, University of Milano
- Ambassador Nobuko Matsubara, Japanese Ambassador to Italy
- Prof. Marino Regini, President, Contemporary Asia Research Centre, University of Milano
- Prof. Michio Nitta, former Director, Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo

- Opening session on East Asian Regional Integration: the Asian Views

Chair: Ambassador Alessandro Quaroni

Speakers:

- Prof. Akihiko Tanaka, University of Tokyo
"East Asian Regional Integration: Japanese Perspectives"
- Prof. Lu Jianren, Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, China Academy of Social Sciences
"East Asian Economic Integration for Regional Economic Growth"

Coffee break

- Dr. Yeo Lay Hwee, Singapore Institute of International Affairs
"East Asian Regional Integration: Singaporean Perspectives"
- Ambassador Vinod C. Khanna, Indian International Centre
"China, India and Japan: Competitive Partners in moulding the Future of Asia"

Discussants:

- Dr. Axel Berkofsky, European Policy Centre
- Prof. Maurizio Ferrera, University of Milano
- Prof. Marco Pedrazzi, University of Milano

2. Friday, November 25, 9.00 AM, Sala Napoleonica, Via Sant'Antonio 12, Milano

- Session on Economic Issues

Chair: Prof. Daniele Checchi, Dean, Faculty of Political and Social Sciences, University of Milano

Speakers:

- Prof. Masahiro Kawai, Asia Development Bank and University of Tokyo, and Dr. Giovanni Capannelli, Asia Development Bank
"Regional Economic Integration. Learning from the Asian and the European Approach"
- Prof. Sabhasri Chayodom, Chulalongkorn University
"The Implications of ASEAN-CHINA FTA on Thai Economy"

Coffee break

- Prof. Yuan Zhijia, Rissho University
"Low Degree Integration: China's Attitude toward East Asian Regional Integration"

Discussants:

- Prof. Giorgio Barba Navaretti, University of Milano
- Prof. Carlo Filippini, Bocconi University
- Prof. Giovanni Ferri, University of Bari

3. Friday, November 25, 2.30 PM, Sala Napoleonica, Via Sant'Antonio 12, Milano

● **Session on Labour Market and Welfare**

- **Chair: Prof. Marino Regini, President, Contemporary Asia Research Centre, University of Milano**

Speakers:

- **Prof. Michio Nitta, University of Tokyo,
“Changes in Employment Systems and Labour Law Reform in Japan”**
- **Prof. Ronald Dore, London University
“The social side of regional integration: the interaction of sentiment and interest”**
- **Dr. Oh Hak-Soo, Japan Institute of Labor Policies and Training
“Foreign Workers in East Asia- the Case of Korea-“**

Discussants:

- **Prof. Paolo Piacentini, University of Roma “La Sapienza”**
- **Prof. Ida Regalia, University of Milano**

● **Conclusions**

- **Prof. Corrado Molteni, Director, Contemporary Asia Research Centre, University of Milano**