



Report of the Meeting of the CSCAP Study Group on Multilateral Security Governance in Northeast Asia, November 14 2011, Vladivostok, Russia

1, Summary

The third and final meeting of the CSCAP Study Group on Multilateral Security Governance in Northeast Asia was held in Vladivostok, Russia, on November 14 2011. More than 20 experts from 9 member committees and other regions participated in the meeting. The Co-Chair expressed their heartfelt thanks to the CSCAP-Russia for their excellent conference arrangements and hospitality expended to the participants.

The meeting was divided into three sessions. The first session(1) reviewed a variety of multilateral institutions and processes to establish multilateral security framework of the region such as the Six Party Talks, Four Party Talks, Trilateral Summit between China, Korea and Japan and its relevant institutions etc; (2) evaluated the past history of multilateral institution building in Northeast Asia; (3) identified the factors that have been both promoting and obstructing the establishment of multilateral framework of cooperation; and (4) assessed the current situation of promoting multilateral institutions in the region.

One participant reviewed the strategies of both Koreas under the framework of the US-China "ad hoc concert" on regional issues, especially those on the Korean affairs. He argued that South Korea has adopted a "bonding strategy" in which South Korea has tried to put its voices in the US-China ad hoc concert throughmultilateralizing the bilateral ad hoc concert. This strategy resulted in the establishment of such regional institutions as the KEDO, the Four Party Talks and the Six Party Talks. On the other

hand, North Korea, fearing of the US-China rapprochement, has adopted “wedging strategy” in which North Korea has tried not to be caged in the US-China concert, and sought to establish bilateral dealings with the US and China respectively.

As for the Six Party Talks, there were competing assessments. On the one hand, one presenter highly evaluated the usefulness of the Six Party Talks to deal with DPRK’s nuclear issue, pointing out a variety of “positive” developments in the recent past among the parties concerned. On the other hand, the other presenter questioned the utility of the Six Party Talks. He argued that the track record of the Six Party Talks since its establishment in 2003 does not ensure to realize the goal of denuclearization. He pointed out that the Six Party Talks would “disappear” sooner or later without producing substantial results on denuclearization. Instead, he proposed to modify the modality of the Six Party Talks. He argued that the Six Party Talks should expand its agenda to include other aspects such as economic cooperation with North Korea. In this regard, other participant argued that the Six Party Talks has been characterized by “excessive gradualism” so far, and that the way of dealing with nuclear issue had to be changed. He proposed the Six Party Talks take more “comprehensive and packaged” approach, not just piecemeal and gradual approach, once the Six Party Talks is reconvened.

Different views were presented over the resumption of the Six Party Talks on which mutual consultations are underway among the parties concerned. The detailed explanations on the “pre-steps” demanded for DPRK to take before the resumption of the Six Party Talks was given by the participant.

The second session dealt with designing appropriate institutional arrangements to promote regional security on a multilateral basis. The session touched upon issue-specific multilateral institutions and subregional arrangements that include some of the Northeast Asian countries, dealing with specific issue areas such as finance and trade.

One participant presented a paper on possible multilateral regime building on energy. She elaborated further her arguments that were presented at the second meeting of the Study Group in May. Reviewing a variety of regional institution building in the region, she proposed to construct a multilateral energy regime as international public goods, whose benefits be shared among the economies of the region on a equal and stable basis. She argued that energy security should constitute an important part of “human

security" of the region.

A Russian participant gave a detailed briefing on the Russian proposal on the construction of the gas pipe line passing through the Korean Peninsula. He argued that the construction could contribute to confidence-building among the parties concerned. Some concerns were expressed that "transit fees" are relocated to developing military weapons modernization. There was a proposal to link the pipeline issue and the denuclearization processes under the Six Party Talks. On the other hand, one participant argued that the pipeline issues should not be a "hostage" of the Six Party Talks.

The third session focused on identifying new concrete ideas and ways of establishing multilateral institutions and promoting institutional coordination between a variety of institutions on a bilateral, subregional and multilateral basis.

One participant reviewed the Trilateral Summit among China, Japan and South Korea, and proposed to develop regional cooperation mechanism on nuclear safety. He argued that such multilateral mechanism should contribute to transparency of nuclear activities.

The participants discussed multilateral institution building from an evolving regional architecture in East Asia and the Asia-Pacific. An opinion was expressed that the newly expanded East Asia Summit may become an "umbrella" forum under which a variety of regional and sub-regional institutions are coordinated their respective activities and programs including those related to Northeast Asia such as the Six Party Talks. Another participant argued that the Six Party Talks should be "embedded" into the East Asian Summit, especially on norms and rules regulating interactions among the parties.

There were a lot of discussions on the ongoing negotiations of TPP(Trans-Pacific Economic Partnership) and their possible impacts on Northeast Asia. There are three competing conceptions on how to organize the Asia-Pacific economic interactions. On the one hand, TPP could greatly contribute to upgrading norms and rules of economic interactions and management of the Asia-Pacific economies, by introducing a variety of reform measures in the respective domestic institutions and regulatory mechanisms that are critically important for the Asia-Pacific economies to respond to the challenges posed by economic globalization. On the other hand, given the huge gaps among the

countries in Northeast Asia in terms of modernization of domestic regulatory institutions, TPP may put an additional constraint on economic exchanges among the economies in Northeast Asia. In this regard, a view was expressed that Northeast Asian economies should more seriously consider the conclusion of Northeast Asia FTA, especially around the trilateral cooperation among China, Japan and South Korea.

2, Next Task

The next and final task of the Study Group is to produce a CSCAP Memorandum to be presented to the CSCAP Steering Committee (or some jointly crafted document that summarize the research activities of the study group) and circulate it to relevant institutions and experts some day in the near future.

For this, the Co-Chairs of the Study Group would start the drafting process soon. After the Co-Chairs draft a tentative, jointly crafted document, the Co-Chairs will circulate it to the member committees and other institutions that have been involved in the study group. Hopefully the Co-Chairs would submit the final document to the next Steering Committee to be held next year.