CIMUN XIV
CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

BACKGROUND GUIDE
Honorable Delegate,

The Asia Cooperation Dialogue will be called into session on Thursday, November 30th at the Hilton Hotel in Chicago, Illinois to discuss matters of international importance. The following agenda items will be discussed:

Topic 1 – Mediating Conflicts Regarding the South China Sea  
Topic 2 – Expanding Trade Agreements Between Member States  
Topic 3 – Establishing Guidelines for Improving Food Security and Agricultural Development

For your reference, our staff archivists have compiled the following Background Guide to provide you with relevant information regarding the topics that will be debated in the upcoming session. You will need to read and understand the contents of this Guide in order to expand upon their research and represent your home government accurately and effectively.

If you have any questions regarding the operations of the committee meetings being held at Chicago International Model United Nations (CIMUN), please refer to the CIMUN MUN Toolkit which you have been provided. Should you have any questions concerning the content of your guide or questions on policy, you may consult with an official from the Department of Home Government by sending an email to homegovernment@cimun.org.

Sincerely,

Walker Fountain

President of the General Assembly
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1 Topic 1 – Mediating Conflicts Regarding the South China Sea

1.1 Topic Overview

The ACD seeks to “promote interdependence among Asian Countries in all areas of cooperation.” Since its 2002 inauguration, the body has held 14 retreats with 24 member nations to promote peace and prosperity throughout the region.1

The South China Sea (SCS) boasts rich fisheries, a large amount of international trade/transit, and unexploited reserves of oil. Consequently, there is an earnest excitement to explore and tap these resources. This competition for the resources and prosperity sets the stage for an international dispute as many South Asian nations hope to take advantage of these resources. Conflicting territorial and maritime claims from China, Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, and other Asian states have led to increased maritime aggression in the region. Specifically, China’s 9-dash claim over most of the sea runs directly contrary to the claimed Exclusive Economic Zones of Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, and Japan. The hotly contested Spratly and Paracel islands in the SCS have no clear owner, as they are claimed both by the nine-dash line of China and the EEZs of multiple states. Additionally, tensions have escalated dramatically due to the

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1 http://www.acd-dialogue.org/about-acd.html
2 https://www.cfr.org/publication/interactive/31345#1/31345
construction of Chinese artificial islands in the SCS, which seem to be hosting a military presence to defend China’s claim to the SCS. The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the ASEAN Declaration on the Conduct of Parties (DOC) have laid out international and regional law in regards to EEZ zones, continental shelves, and joint exploitation of resources; but these declarations have only slowed, rather than reversed, the potential for conflict due to rising tensions. An agreement between all involve parties must be reached regarding the division of economic and military control within the SCS, especially over the disputed islands. International bodies like the Permanent Court of Arbitration may have a role to play, but as demonstrated in their ruling against China in the Philippines v. China case, international bodies only have sway as long as all countries involved recognize legitimacy of their decisions. Therefore, the ACD must address the issue as it may be the best hope of reaching an agreement between all parties.

1.2 Historical Background

Historically the “cannon shot” rule designated three miles from shore as the start of the high seas\(^3\). Everything inside the three-mile limit was under the country's territorial sovereignty. This rule quickly became outdated as interest in marine resources grew and there was consensus that three miles simply was not a relevant marker anymore.

The 1930 Hague Conference for Codification of International Law attempted to deal with the issue of territorial waters as a larger part of its mission to “formulate a comprehensive system of international law on all outstanding issues.”\(^4\) However disagreements between member states led to no concrete action on the topic.


The three summits for the UN Conference on the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS I-III), especially UNCLOS III, laid the foundation for much of our current understanding of international maritime law. From 1949 to 1956 the International Law Commission (ILC), with input from the UNGA, codified draft articles for resolving maritime disputes and outlining territorial sovereignty. The final consolidated report in 1956\(^5\) lay the foundation for 86 member states to participate in the first UNCLOS I in 1958\(^6\). The mandate of the conference was to “examine the law of the sea in light of not only legal but also technical, biological, economic and political aspects of the problems involved, and to embody its results in one or more conventions or other appropriate instrument.\(^7\)” UNCLOS I culminated in four separate conventions and an optional protocol of signature:


2. Convention on the High Seas\(^9\): Defined High Seas as “all parts of the sea that are not included in the territorial sea or in the internal waters of a State,” and laid out freedom of navigation, fishing, pipeline laying, and flying in said areas.

3. Convention on Fishing and Conservation of the Living Resources of the High Seas\(^10\): “Set out principles and mechanisms for the rational management of fisheries in the high seas.” The low number of ratifications indicated some controversy due to Article 9 which laid out a process for compulsory settlement of fishery disputes. This convention was followed by the 1982 United Nations Fish

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\(^7\) See 5


Stock agreement which laid out further clarification on conservation and management of marine resources.\(^{11}\)

4. Convention on the Continental Shelf\(^{12}\): Defined Continental Shelf as “the seabed and subsoil of the submarine areas adjacent to the coast but outside the area of the territorial sea, to a depth of 200 meters or, beyond that limit, to where the depth of the superjacent waters admits of the exploitation of the natural resources of the said areas” and gives coastal states the sole right of exploring and exploring their continental shelf area.

5. Optional Protocol on the Compulsory Settlement of Disputes\(^{13}\): “Provides for compulsory jurisdiction of the ICJ for all disputes concerning the interpretation or application of the Conventions.” This has never been applied in practice, outlining the limitations of the UNCLOS I.

The first conference outlined many points of agreement but failed to define a breadth of territorial sea or fishing limits, and the ratification of 4 different conventions rather than one overall document highlighted the difficulty in achieving the required plenary two-thirds majority. UNCLOS II in 1960 attempted to define a 6-mile territorial breadth and 6-mile fishing limit, but failed to achieve the two-thirds majority in the plenary.

In 1974, UNCLOS III culminated in the UN Convention on the Laws of the Sea(UNCLOS) which is considered the “constitution of the ocean.”\(^{14}\) The convention defined maritime rules in one document for over 150 countries. Of relevant interest to the SCS dispute are clauses that:

\(^{11}\) http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/convention_overview_fish_stocks.htm
\(^{14}\) http://legal.un.org/avl/ha/uncls/uncls.html
• Enshrined a 12 nautical mile territorial breadth, contiguous zone of up to 12 nautical miles, and a 200 nautical mile EEZ from baseline.

• Allowed coastal states the right to their continental shelf for exploration and exploitation of up to 200 miles with provision for wealth sharing after 200 miles.

• Asserted that “rocks which could not sustain human habitation or economic life of their own would have no economic zone or continental shelf.” This is of particular importance with regards to occupied Spratly islands and outposts.

• Placed responsibility on states in “settling by peaceful means their disputes concerning the interpretation or application of the Convention”

• Allowed for resolution of conflicts by “submission to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea established under the Convention, to the International Court of Justice, or to arbitration.” Note that this applies only to interpretation of the clauses in UNCLOS. For matters of island sovereignty, of which UNCLOS makes no mention, the ITLOS has no role.

The Chinese 9-Yard Line forms the basis of historical claims by China and Taiwan on the disputed islands, which China would not have based on its 200 nautical mile EEZ set forth in UNCLOS. Released publicly in 1947, the nine dash line encompasses most of the disputed islands and draws strength from historical documents telling of Chinese fishing and exploration in the area. The line “rarely appears in official Chinese media,” and there has been no clear legal
exposition on what the line claims to own, whether the entire maritime area or just the rocks and islands dotting the sea. In 2013, the Philippines opened arbitration through the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) and asked for a ruling on the validity of China’s claims in the SCS. Though the PCA deemed the line had “no legal basis” for maritime claim, Beijing rejected the ruling and their rhetoric and actions reflect a belief in ownership of islands encompassed by the line.15 16

Military occupation of the outposts and islands—especially manmade islands China has recently constructed in the SCS—are increasingly becoming a manner of asserting both power projection and sovereignty claims, stretching back to China’s 1974 seizure of the Paracel islands from Vietnam all the way to the 1995 Chinese capture of Philippine-owned Spratly Islands17. In order to protect its claim to the SCS, China recently began constructing manmade islands in the SCS. These manmade islands are primarily located in the contested Spratly island chain. Not only is China building these artificial islands, but China is also arming them with military might.

On these islands, as well as Woody Island in the Paracel island chain, China has built hangars for

16 http://globalnation.inquirer.net/140947/key-points-arbitral-tribunal-decision-verdict-award-philippines-china-maritime-dispute-unlos-arbitration-spratly-islands-scarborough
fighter jets and or bombers. It seems that ““Beijing…is seeking to become the dominant military power in this part of the world with a capacity to prevent, deny or veto other countries from accessing these waters.” This has both military and economic significance, as it could give China the power to restrict the $5 trillion worth of goods that flows throughout the SCS annually.\textsuperscript{18} However, for many the primary fear is that this increase in military presence may cause military conflict occur in the region.

Several bilateral agreements helped to pacify the situation. Two agreements drafted in 1969 and 1970 between Indonesia and Malaysia clarified their disputed areas. A 1973 Indonesia-Singapore agreement divided their claims in the Strait of Malacca. Even when there wasn’t clear division of claims, these agreements often used Joint Development agreements to allow resource exploitation or maritime research despite the still standing claims\textsuperscript{19}.

That is where the ASEAN Declaration on the Conduct of Parties comes into play. The ASEAN DOC was signed in 2002 by all member nations of ASEAN and the People’s Republic of China. This non-binding

\textsuperscript{18} http://www.news.com.au/world/asia/south-china-sea-controversy-heats-up-as-manmade-islands-are-almost-complete/news-story/84aa8664ef1f147d704b8f1e78e62516
\textsuperscript{19} https://www.jstor.org/stable/20690688?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents
declaration was intended to prevent tension over the disputed islands\textsuperscript{20}. Article 10 of the DOC says: “the Parties concerned reaffirm that the adoption of a code of conduct in the South China Sea would further promote peace and stability in the region and agree to work, on the basis of consensus, towards the eventual attainment of this objective.” Even though Taiwan did not participate in the talks, the DOC is considered an important milestone in talks throughout the region\textsuperscript{21}. Japan and Vietnam have pushed in recent years for the ASEAN to adopt a binding code of conduct but to little avail.

1.3 Current Situation

The UNCLOS did delineated general widths for claims based on continental shelf location; however, the close proximity of several countries in the South China Sea, the complexity of historical claims, and the lack of specificity with regards to smaller islands led to the conflict of the early 1990’s in the South China Sea. The ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA), which held that China’s nine-dash line claim held no legal significance, is recognized throughout the region, except by China. Additionally, countries like Vietnam and the Philippines are looking at military maneuvers with the U.S. or other forms of arbitration to counter Chinese island building and military buildup. Nevertheless, Beijing has embarked on a goodwill campaign that makes many

\textsuperscript{20} https://academic.oup.com/chinesejil/article-abstract/2/1/311/358044/More-Than-a-Declaration-A-Commentary-on-the?redirectedFrom=PDF
\textsuperscript{21} http://thediplomat.com/2015/10/examining-the-flaws-of-the-south-china-sea-code-of-conduct/
countries reluctant to openly criticize their actions, for fear of economic repercussions.\textsuperscript{22, 23}

1.3.1 Senkaku (Diaoyu) Islands

Known as Senkaku Islands by Japan and Diaoyu Islands by Taiwan and China, these small uninhabited islands in the Southern part of the SCS are disputed by Japan, Taiwan, and China. The islands were incorporated into Japan in the late 19th century with its victory in the First Sino-Japanese war. After surveys of the islands and surrounding water suggested presence of valuable oil-reserves, both Taiwan and China laid claim to the area. The Taiwanese and Chinese claims are based on historical documents that place the islands under control of the Chinese Empire as far back as the 15th century. The presence of natural resources, overlap of EEZs, and presence of international trade lines marked the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands as an important cornerstone of the much larger fight for supremacy of the South China Sea. More recently, the 2012 Japanese purchase of several private Senkaku islands and the 2013 Chinese establishment of an Air Defense Identification Zone encompassing the islands have only escalated the potential for military conflict over these islands.\textsuperscript{24, 25, 26}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{22} http://www.npr.org/2012/09/07/160745930/little-islands-are-big-trouble-in-the-south-china-sea
\bibitem{23} http://multimedia.scmp.com/south-china-sea-disputes-maps/assets/south-china-sea-map-back-page.png
\bibitem{25} https://intpolicydigest.org/2016/08/01/senkaku-islands-dispute/
\end{thebibliography}
1.3.2 Pratas Islands

As an uninhabited atoll in the north of the SCS, the Pratas islands boast a rich supply of salt, minerals, and fishing. Moreover, their strategic location serves as an outpost for the Taiwanese navy. Taiwan’s claim on the islands has been contested primarily by China.  

1.3.3 Paracel Islands

a. The ownership of the group of small coral islands with high potential for oil exploration is hotly disputed by China, Taiwan, and Vietnam. In 1974 China invaded the archipelago and took control of the entire archipelago placing it under control of the Sansha municipal government. Beijing has built “harbors, helipads and an air base” since then. In 2014, a Chinese state-owned oil rig started exploratory work in the area prompting increased Philippines naval presence and diplomatic complaints. The rig pulled out ahead of schedule but is expected to return.

1.3.4 Scarborough Shoal

Ring of reefs within the Philippines EEZ that are claimed by China, Taiwan, and the Philippines. The Chinese claim is based on a long history of Chinese fishing in the area. In April 2012, China took advantage of a standoff and effectively took control of the shoal, blockading Philippines’ access, and fishing rights. In 2015, Chinese navy boats used water cannons on Philippines fishing vessels and seized their catch. The current Philippine President Duterte unequivocally claims the Shoal for his country, but has been reluctant to take further action to

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27 https://fas.org/irp/world/taiwan/facility/pratas.htm  
28 http://www.scmp.com/topics/paracel-islands  
29 https://www.ft.com/content/32abaea8-0924-11e7-97d1-5e720a26771b  
counter the Chinese activity in the area. China has relaxed the blockade and allowed fishers to return to the area, but maintains a large naval presence, which prompts worries that China might be building or planning to build an outpost or artificial island in the area. A 2016 ruling by the Permanent Court of Arbitration sided firmly with Philippines over the China's nine-dash line claim; however, China dismissed the ruling as invalid and biased.31

1.3.5 Spratly Islands

The Spratly islands are claimed in whole or in part by Brunei, China, Taiwan, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Vietnam. In fact, all the countries but Brunei currently occupy at least one outpost or island in the area. Vietnam occupies 21 features, the Philippines occupy 10, ROC occupies Itu Baba, and so forth32. One of the main developments is the mass land reclamation effort on the part of the Chinese for their controlled outposts. Such efforts turn formerly uninhabited low elevation rocks into military outposts that could fall under the definition of an island, potentially demanding the EEZ benefit that an island entails. Moreover, the longer the Chinese and the ROC can hold on to and administer these inhabited “islands,” the stronger their claims to sovereignty becomes.

1.3.6 Macclesfield Bank

One of the largest atolls in the world near the Paracel islands is claimed by China, ROC, and the Philippines. In 2012, China placed the bank under administration of the municipal Sasha government. The Philippines have protested this action and even requested American help in monitoring the region, but have erred on the side of de-escalation, keeping in line with the

31 http://www.reuters.com/article/us-southchinasea-china-philippines-witne-idUSKBN17E09O
foreign policy of Duterte. The atoll is surrounded by rich fishing waters and is a major player in the South China Sea.

1.4 Bloc Positions

1.4.1 China and Taiwan

China and Taiwan claim by far the largest portion of the South China Sea, with a heavy emphasis on historical texts showing Chinese exploration and fishing in the disputed islands stretching back centuries. The “9-Dash Line” encompasses the Senkaku, Paracel, and Spratly islands as well as the Macclesfield Bank and Scarborough Shoal. Their claims stretch into the 200-mile EEZs of surrounding nations which has prompted strong international pushback, and the ruling of the PCA effectively invalidated the 9-dash line as a means of claiming the waters in the zone, however the position of “Strategic Ambiguity” on the exact nature of the 9-dash line means that it is unclear whether China and the ROC are claiming territorial sovereignty over just the landmasses or over the entire waters. The unique nature of ROC and PRC governments means that each government claims the entirety of the other, including its maritime claims. Therefore, these two governments are in direct competition for these claims.

The 2012 seizure of the Scarborough shoals from the Philippines and 2014 Vietnam Oil rig confrontation show an increasing willingness to use military force. The administration of municipal governments by China in Sansha City and Taiwan in Itu Baba, show an eagerness to use the UNCLOS convention to their advantage for the 200-mile EEZ. The land reclamation and artificial island building of over 2900 acres by China represent an unprecedented effort to increase power projection and bolster territorial claims throughout the region.

33 http://globalnation.inquirer.net/43171/philippines-protests-china%E2%80%99s-moving-in-on-macclesfield-bank
34 https://www.lawfareblog.com/south-china-sea-dispute-brief-history
35 https://www.cfr.org/publication/interactive/31345#!/31345
Given that the ITLOS has no role to play in determining sovereignty, the PCA has already ruled against China, and the China has veto power in the Security Council, it seems that China is relatively safe from punitive action on an international scale. Therefore, the main worry is full-blown military conflict, especially if Western involvement in the region ramps up.

1.4.2 Philippines

The Philippines have historically pushed back hard and often against Chinese claims in the SCS. The state occupies the Paracel and Spratly islands and lays claim to the Scarborough Bank. The Philippines initiated arbitration procedures against China and their 9-dash line claim, an arbitration that sided squarely with the Philippines. They are also considering resuming drilling in Beijing contested areas. Nevertheless, the presidency of Duarte has marked a notable shift in rhetoric and action. The Philippines have one of the weaker navies in the area and there is a vast economic incentive to be gained with good relations with Beijing. On their part, China has relaxed their presence in the Scarborough Bank and bilateral relations between the two countries have been described as in a “golden period of fast development.”

1.4.3 Vietnam

Vietnam lays claim to the Spratly and Paracel islands, citing occupation and administration dating back to the 17th century. Vietnam has been one of the strongest voices against the ROC and PRC, urging ASEAN to establish a legally binding code of conduct and take a stronger stand against militarization and island building. Deeper defense cooperation with the U.S. and a strong diplomatic push in ASEAN and other international bodies open

37 [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/south-china-sea-dispute-duterte_us_597603aae4b09e5f6cd0d53b](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/south-china-sea-dispute-duterte_us_597603aae4b09e5f6cd0d53b)
Vietnam up to being a leader against encroaching Chinese claims at a time when the Philippines has toned down its rhetoric and actions.

1.4.4 Malaysia

Malaysia occupies three Spratly islands and claims all the islands within its 200-mile EEZ. As chair of the ASEAN in 2015, Malaysia pushed for progress on a binding Code of Conduct. The Prime Minister of Malaysia has slammed China’s actions as invalid. Nevertheless, Beijing represents Malaysia’s largest trading partner and Malaysia is intent on preserving the goodwill and economic incentives that their bilateral relationship can bring.

1.4.5 Coastal States vs. Occupying States

The island of Itu Baba provides a good case study of one of the main points of contention in the sea: whether the occupied land masses in the SCS should be defined as islands or as rocks. Itu Baba is currently occupied and administered by Taiwan. Going off the articles of the UNCLOS, if Itu Baba is considered an island then it is entitled to a 12-mile territorial area and a 200-mile EEZ, which would encompass a large portion of the Spratly islands. If Itu Baba is not ruled an island, then China and Taiwan wouldn't have quite the same benefit from occupying these islands and couldn't use that occupation to support their claims, which would benefit countries such as Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, and Vietnam.

1.5 Discussion Questions

• One of the key de-escalators in international conflict is a trusted and reliable method of arbitration. With the PCA ruling against China having little to no effect, how, if at all, can

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41 See 40
the UN act to ensure continued trust in our international bodies? A nuanced response would hopefully highlight the futility of military conflict, the missed economic potential of continued territorial divisions, and the importance of bilateral and multilateral talks without resorting to punitive or definitive actions.

- UNCLOS and ITLOS continue to play an important role in protecting high seas while ensuring both coastal and landlocked nations have a chance to profit from the wealth of the seas. Nevertheless, the SCS dispute shows the limitations of a convention that was never meant to decide sovereignty of islands and outposts and that is ill-equipped to deal with artificial island making and military outpost building. Is there an existing mechanism for these disputes to play out, whether with the PCA or ILC, or should there be discussion for a new mechanism to decide territorial sovereignty over islands?

- How can island building and land reclamation efforts fit into existing maritime law?

- Given the limited impact of UNCLOS and the PCA ruling in resolving the conflict due to China’s refusal to accept their legitimacy of its nine-dash line claim, how can the ACD develop a solution that will be accepted by all parties?

- Given the efforts of some states to get America involved, what would the impact of foreign intervention be for ACD states?

1.6 Key Terms

- Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)

- Territorial Breadth (also known as territorial sea)

- Contiguous Waters

- International Law Commission (ILC)

- UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)
• International Court of Justice (ICJ)
• International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)
• The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)
• Declaration on Conduct of Parties (DOC)
• Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ)
• Sansha City
• Taiping (also Itu Baba)
• Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOP’s)

1.7 Relevant UN Documents

• UNCLOS Overview:
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• 1958 Geneva Convention on the Law of the Sea:
  https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%201006/volume-1006-I-14758-
  English.pdf
• Santiago Declaration:
  https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%201006/volume-1006-I-14758-
  English.pdf
• Settlement of SCS Disputes:
  http://www.un.org/depts/los/nippon/unnff_programme_home/fellows_pages/fellows_pap
  ers/nguyen_0506_vietnam.pdf
• UNGA 70+ Session: 70/235 Oceans and the Law of the Sea Resolution


### 1.8 Resources


• Truman Declaration on Continental Shelves:  

• 1969 INDONESIA-MALAYSIA: AGREEMENT ON CONTINENTAL SHELF BOUNDARIES: https://www.jstor.org/stable/20690688?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

• ASEAN Declaration on the Conduct of Parties (DOC)


• Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands:
  
  o https://www.economist.com/blogs/economist-explains/2013/12/economist-explains-1

  o https://intpolicydigest.org/2016/08/01/senkaku-islands-dispute/

• China Island Building: http://time.com/4785577/south-china-sea-us-china-control/

• Chinese Land Reclamation efforts in the Spratly islands:
  
2 Topic 2 – Expanding Trade Agreements Between Member States

2.1 Topic Overview

The Asia Cooperation Dialogue holds trade discussions and economic development between nations as a central point to its policy goals. Specifically, the forum’s second objective is, “To expand the trade and financial market within Asia and increase the bargaining power of Asian countries in lieu of competition and, in turn, enhance Asia's economic competitiveness in the global market.”\(^{42}\) This objective is continuously developed within both dimensions of the ACD, which are dialogue and projects. Routine meetings and proposed areas of cooperation facilitate the creation of an “Asian Community” that is economically competitive and a major player within the international marketplace\(^{43}\). As the Asian trade and financial markets have seen significant growth since the early 2000s due to interconnectedness, its continued growth demands stronger regional policy cooperation and integration\(^ {44}\). Without coordinating policy efforts, member states of the ACD face stagnant growth, losing a competitive edge internationally. With the possible negative spillover effects of one nation’s economy onto another, this could result in a domino effect of domestic and regional crises, with the financial strain creating an inability to address domestic issues.

2.2 Historical Background

The basis of European success comes from its trade and often subsequent exploitation of Asian states upon finding easier trade routes to Asia in the 16th century. These western states


\(^{43}\) [http://www.mei.edu/content/asia-cooperation-dialogue-acd-progress-and-potential](http://www.mei.edu/content/asia-cooperation-dialogue-acd-progress-and-potential)

formed their own East India companies seeking what were deemed as exotic products, like spices, silks, and cotton. The British established substantial footholds in the Indian subcontinent, modern day Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Malaysia; the Dutch in Southeast Asia, especially Indonesia; the French in the Indian subcontinent and the Indochinese Peninsula\textsuperscript{45}. These footholds would eventually turn into colonial rule and a fundamental alteration of what these now colonies exported. Before their trade partners became their subjects, European states would purchase completely finished goods. Afterwards, it became more profitable to simply export the raw materials from the colonies to the industrial centers of their empires. While not all ACD members were subject to being economically dominated by the West, Japan, for instance, traded with Korea and China and almost entirely banned trading with the West, most felt the impacts of subjection and agreed that independently they could develop their own success using these same raw materials.

War and independence movements would mix throughout the 20th century, resulting in the destruction of the European empires in the mid-19th century. While Asian states were able to celebrate the creation or restoration of their autonomy, they faced new economic challenges due to centuries of importing from their subjugator, primarily exporting raw material, and the destruction of historic regional trade network\textsuperscript{46}. Two main strategies appeared: either create substitutes for previous imports or promote new exports. With rising globalization, Asian states would embrace international competition - notably among one another. Markedly increased competition meant that most Asian states imported not from one another, but other parts of the world. Ultimately, this only caused their economies to be victims of the much larger international market and to suffer economic crises throughout the late 1990s. The unemployment and poverty

\textsuperscript{45} https://www.britannica.com/place/Asia/Trade
\textsuperscript{46} https://okusiassociates.com/garydean/works/seatrade.html
that followed left a sour taste for Asian states and a newfound desire to unite in order to bolster their economies.

The past few decades have seen these states fortifying trade with former partners, such as the European Union (EU), and turning inwards to improve economic ties within Asia. One effort to do so lies in creating organizations dedicated to stabilizing the prices of products produced in Asia, like the International Sugar Agreement. Non-product based efforts predominantly involve creating and joining organizations, such as the ACD, that tackle not only trade-based issues, but also other international topics and relations. This increased interconnectedness and growth in trade in combination with trade liberalization has led to the creation of various international supply chains in comparison to the European and North American supply chains, the Asian supply chain is more vulnerable to disruptions, whether manmade or due to natural occurring events. This is due largely to the supply chain being more dispersed, meaning trade goods cross more borders to add value before reaching their final destination. When crafting policy, it is paramount that the free flow of inputs and outputs is prioritized in order to avoid disruption in one state’s production to adversely affect another within the region. This increase in risk is offset, though, by the benefit of the various emerging market economies (EMEs) in Asia to be able to enhance the technological content of their goods, making states such as China more competitive in sectors traditionally dominated by Western economies. Altogether, this has allowed for EMEs, like many East Asian states, to become major players of global trade when vertical specialization has allowed for regional concentrations of trade.

For years now, a major feature of the Asian supply market has been the relocation of lower-end labor-intensive assembly processes to newly industrialized economies (NIEs). This trend has

enabled there to be more competition in the financial investment sector and given cause to reducing trade barriers between nations, garnering the nickname “Factory Asia” for the region’s trade activities. These NIE states, including China and many ASEAN states, have in turned gained a comparative advantage in production of regional exports and an ability to reinvest in their industrial capacity, effectively “recycling (their) comparative advantage”. While this has led to economic growth, such as in Southeast Asia with an average economic growth rate of more than five percent per year, it has made Asian nations significantly more trade-dependent on one another.

2.3 Current Events

As the ACD is a forum based on volunteering and collaboration, naturally its 34 members participate in an overlapping and intertwining series of organizations and trade groups outside of just the ACD itself. This list includes such notable groups such as: the South Asian Association

for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States (Turkic Council), the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). These organizations have had varying degrees of success when it comes to promoting trade within Asian states. For example, the GCC struggles to promote trade as its member states have similar economies whereas ASEAN has made significant progress in reducing trade barriers. Yet, even though ASEAN appears to be a great success, less than a third of the bloc’s exports go to other bloc states. Clearly, there is still ample room for growth in intra-Asian trade.

With the exception of the Persian Gulf exporting petroleum, most ACD members have moved away from their historical export of raw goods and have shifted towards finished products and international services. These states have seen a rise in exporting data processing services, cheap manufactured goods, and automobiles. Development in recent decades has driven rapid income growth, urbanization, and lifestyle changes. Still, ACD member states struggle with issues of poverty, fair labor standards, and a changing climate. In order to fight these issues, especially poverty, it is fundamental that Asian nations with significant rural and poor populations have robust agricultural economies. Without successful policies promoting agriculture are put in place, “there is a danger that the decline of agriculture will be accompanied by increased rural poverty, some of which will find its way into the urban areas”.

The ACD has taken note of the importance of agriculture in the economies and trade of its member states. Since the Fifth ACD Ministerial Meeting in 2006, there have been multiple

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agricultural projects spearheaded by China, Pakistan, and Kazakhstan. These projects focus on many areas, including food security, agricultural trade, and the promotion of sustainable development. China in particular has emerged as a leader for ACD agricultural efforts, organizing seminars, trainings, and forums. Aside from agriculture improvement efforts, the ACD currently is working on projects in 20 areas of cooperation that all affect trade, ranging from energy to biotechnology to financial cooperation.

Due to the established interconnectedness and relative vulnerability of the Asia supply chain and Asian markets, it is vital that states coordinate policy efforts in order to further growth, avoid negative economic spillover, and address domestic issues requiring attention, from poverty to infrastructure. States have been attempting to coordinate economic and trade policy above and beyond easing tariffs through two key deals: the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). The original proposed TPP deal was a trade agreement between 12 countries that accounted for 40% of global GPD and 20% of global trade. Most of the partnership would focus on expanding access to the Pacific region market, eliminating tariffs, and securing and standardizing various environmental, intellectual, and labor protections. RCEP, on the other hand, boasts 46% of the global population and 24% of global GDP. Its 16 member states seek to create a massive free-trade zone without protections such as those proposed in TPP.

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Following World War II (WWII), the rise of internationalism was particularly evident in the United States of America (USA) becoming more involved in global affairs. As China has become more of an economic and military heavyweight, the two states have been competing for international influence, with Asia being no exception. With the election of a new president, the USA’s desire to be involved appears to be dwindling as jingoism and isolationism creeps into their daily rhetoric. A clear example of this was the January 23, 2017 executive order withdrawing the USA from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)\(^1\). The USA reducing its influence provides an opportunity for China to be able to more greatly impact the future of Asia.

With China emerging as a clear leader, other ACD states might be able to likewise rise in influence, including: already economically strong states, like G4 states Japan and India; ACD project leaders, such as Thailand, the prime mover on Asian bond market development initiatives;

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or GCC countries that have taken on key roles within the ACD as prime movers and embraced the volunteerism-based group to a much greater degree than initially expected.

Altogether, ACD states agree that trade within their bloc must be bettered in order to unify and fortify Asia within the global economic market. Due to the varying strengths of their individual economies, human rights practices, foreign affairs priorities, rising industries, and a variety of other factors, it may prove difficult to prioritize trade discussions and projects. Above all else, any state looking to be a major power in Asia does not want a rival potential power to be setting the rules of trade without them. Whichever trade standard establishing wins out sets the expectations for all nations trading in Asia, not just those who signed on. If TPP were to continue with its 11 current states, ACD members Brunei, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, and Vietnam would all have an advantage over their non-TPP counterparts, including economic heavyweights China, India, and South Korea. As of June 2017, Japan has announced that it is working in combination with Mexico to continue the push for TPP, with Mexico taking on a more substantial role in strengthening trade ties with Japan and other Pacific states. Should RCEP instead take the lead, Brunei, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, and Vietnam would still have a seat at the table in determining intra-Asian policy, but would struggle to assert dominance and all likely fall to the dominating Chinese state. Another viable competitor to TPP is the nearly decade old Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP). This less concrete and more aspirational coordination of international policy, which includes the US, has become revitalized in recent years as China seeks to maintain regional economic dominance.

2.5 Discussion Questions

- How strong are Asian economies following economic crises of the 1990s?

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• How can ACD members create effective programs impacting trade while maintaining volunteerism?
• What is the best way to navigate the various trade organizations and agreements that ACD members are already committed to?
• Aside from potentially lacking strong agricultural economies, what other factors perpetuate poverty within ACD states? How should agricultural economies be strengthened and other potential factors addressed?
• With varying interests among ACD members, which industries ought to be prioritized?
• What will happen to the Asian economy if the USA begins to withdraw its involvement?
• What factors have enabled some ACD states to have stronger economies than others?
• How can South Asian and Persian Gulf states better integrate themselves into the overall Asian economy?
• What measures can be taken to safeguard financial stability?

2.6 Key Terms

• Areas of Cooperation
• The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)
• The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)
• The Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC)
• The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)
• The Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States (Turkic Council)
• The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)
• The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)
• The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)
• The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)
• The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)
• Free Trade Agreement (FTA)
• Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs)
• Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)
• Emerging Market Economies (EMEs)
• Newly Industrialized Economies (NIEs)
• Asian Supply Chain

2.7 Resources

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3  Topic 3 – Establishing Guidelines for Improving Food Security and Agricultural Development

3.1  Topic Overview

The Asia Cooperation Dialogue was founded in 2002 to form a Pan-Asian community and have an operational foundation for dialogue between Asian nations on four specific progress. One of the six main pillars of cooperation of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue is Interrelation of Food, Water, and Energy Security. To do achieve this, the member states of the ACD need to work together to diversify, develop and conserve these resources.

Food security as an issue is extremely complex and multidimensional. When thinking about solutions for food insecurity, discussion about economic growth, shifting demographics, and environmental change is also necessary. And when public policy does not carefully consider all of these aspects, instead of helping it can compound the problems individuals are facing.

The issue of food security can be separated into four main topics of consideration. The first is the quantity of food available to individuals. The second is the nutritional value of the food available to individuals. The third is understanding dietary and cultural preferences and needs. And the final dimension is stability. In recent years, Asia has faced stunning growth and progress in areas such as poverty and industrialization, yet more than 60% of the world’s hungry call it home.

3.2  Historical Background

3.2.1  ACD Background

Originally, the idea of an Asia Cooperation Dialogue was first raised at the First International Conference of Asian Political Parties held in Manila in September 2000 by Dr.

Surakiart Sathirathai on behalf of his party leader Thaksin Shinawatra, then Prime Minister of Thailand. The ACD originally had 18 founding member states and currently has 34-member states as of 2016. The main member states are Pakistan, Kuwait, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Indonesia, Thailand, Uzbekistan, China, and Japan. They are known as the Ten Major ACD Nations.

The main objectives of the ACD are to:

1. Promote interdependence among Asian countries in all areas of cooperation by identifying Asia's common strengths and opportunities which will help reduce poverty and improve the quality of life for Asian people whilst developing a knowledge-based society within Asia and enhancing community and people empowerment;

2. Expand the trade and financial market within Asia and increase the bargaining power of Asian countries in lieu of competition and, in turn, enhance Asia's economic competitiveness in the global market;

3. Serve as the missing link in Asian cooperation by building upon Asia's potentials and strengths through supplementing and complementing existing cooperative frameworks so as to become a viable partner for other regions;

4. Ultimately transform the Asian continent into an Asian Community, capable of interacting with the rest of the world on a more equal footing and contributing more positively towards mutual peace and prosperity.\(^{54}\)

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\(^{54}\) Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), [http://www.acddialogue.com/about/#01](http://www.acddialogue.com/about/#01).
The overall goal of the ACD is to form an independent entity that can be identified as the “Asian Community” and have it be a major player within the international system of politics. An important dimension of the ACD to note is that it is essentially a forum, not an organization. As a result, there are two main aspects to the ACD: discourse and project areas. The discourse element is mostly made up of the annual Ministerial Meetings. However, Ministers also meet during the UN General Assembly meetings to solidify ACD cooperation and come through as a singular Asian voice.

In terms of food security, an important development within the ACD is the acceptance of Agriculture as a specific project area. In 2006, Agriculture was adopted as a project area and China, Pakistan, and Kazakhstan have taken the lead on the agriculture projects. In a conceptual paper, China proposed to use the ACD as a venue for agricultural cooperation and exchanges focusing on trade, food security and quality of life in rural areas. To do this, the paper urged the sharing of agricultural development and policy, promotion of sustainable development and occurrence of useful training programs. As a result, China has been holding many seminars and training programs to prove the value of its concept. The first seminar was in October 2006 when the ACD Agricultural Officials’ Seminar took place in Beijing. At this seminar, 20 officials from ACD member states studied China’s agricultural development. Another example of this is when Beijing held a forum on agricultural wholesale markets where participants came together to share their experiences in market management.  

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55 http://www.mei.edu/content/asia-cooperation-dialogue-acd-progress-and-potential
3.2.2 Food Security Background

Before we go into the current state of food insecurity, we should look at historical developments that have both helped and hindered food security. We can start in 1946, when the newly established FAO organized its first World Food Survey. The main objectives of the survey were to find out whether there was enough food, specifically energy and calories, for everybody on earth at the time. The conclusion was that there was not enough. In fact, the report found that at least one third of the world population could not get a sufficient amount of energy. This report combined with the lack of food in many countries who participated in World War II, led governments to care about increasing food production. However, this in turn led to production exceeding consumption and creating surpluses that required extra management. As a result, the next report from the FAO in 1947 requested that governments also take into consideration the consequences of overproducing agricultural products.

At the time, however, overproduction was not a large issue since with food surpluses came food aid. For example, over 3 billion dollars of food aid was given to Europe from the US through the Marshall plan. However, food aid is not very efficient in terms of providing food. Furthermore, food aid does not address long term issues with food security as it is not “teaching a man to fish”. With these surpluses, the FAO established the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) to help manage these surpluses in 1952. The CCP recommended to establish a permanent committee to deal with surplus disposal now known as the Consultative Sub-Committee on Surplus Disposal (CSSD). It also recommended a code of conduct for the disposal of agricultural surpluses.

In 1960, the UN GA passed a resolution on “the provision of Food Surpluses to Food-Deficit people through the United Nations Systems”. This basically established the World Food Program (WFP). At the time of creation of the WFP, the recognized ultimate solution to food
security was with the economic development of developing countries. As a result, the WFP mainly used surplus food for development programs and agreed upon multilateral development purposes. At this time, further research by the FAO acknowledged a distinction between chronic malnutrition and famine. This discovery was an important step in treating food security as its own specific issue since at the time, famine and malnutrition were treated with no separate distinction. However, with no further developments, the answer still laid in the provision of bulk food in the form of food aid.

Not all hope was lost, however. One of the most important developments in agricultural history was also occurring in the 1960s: The Green Revolution. The Green Revolution refers to several initiatives that increased agricultural development across the world, most notably in developing countries. Through research and the transfer of technologies, the Green Revolution spearheaded by Norman Borlaug created a package of best practices to replace traditional agricultural technology. It involved modernizing agricultural management techniques, expanding irrigation, and farming infrastructure, maximizing crop yield through high-yield varieties of crops and distributing all of these techniques and resources to farmers.

In Asia, the two main areas the Green Revolution played a part in were the Philippines and India. In 1960, the Republic of the Philippines established the International Rice Research Institute with the help of the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation. As a result of cross breeding at the institute, the IRRI created a new cultivation called IR8. Although it required the use of fertilizers and pesticides, IR8 produce large numbers in its yields. In fact, rice production more than doubled from 3.7 to 7.7 million tons in the next two decades making the Philippines a rice exporter.56

India was on the brink of extreme famine in 1961. Borlaug was invited to help resolve the underlying issues such as the bureaucracy from India’s grain monopolies. However, the Indian government and Ford foundation collaborated to import new wheat see from the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT). With the help of Borlaug, India began its own program of cross breeding, expansion of irrigation infrastructure and use of agrochemicals. The state of Punjab was chosen to be the test site for the new program and crops. Eventually, India also adopted IR8 and increased the rice yield per hectare over 10 times under optimal conditions as compared to traditional rice.

However, even with all the successes the Green Revolution has brought, there are a few pieces of criticism to take under consideration. While the Green Revolution has saved lives, and helped prevent widespread famine in Asia, many people believe that the increase in food production has created a larger population problem as now the rate of population growth is even larger. Furthermore, there are claims that the Green Revolution has actually decreased food security for specific populations. For example, in India, much of the land was used for staple crops of the Indian peasant’s diet. However, the Green Revolution caused a shift away from that to wheat, which peasants can’t use or eat.57

In 1976, the FAO established a Food Security Assistance Scheme that assisted developing countries in reaching food security. The two main foci of the Scheme were improving food supply and increasing short term food supply. Then three years later, the FAO Conference approved a Food Security Action Program that helped developing countries to import and store food. More and more policies focused on long term solutions to food security other than food aid were being made and put into practice.

In 1982, the Rockefeller Institute started research on golden rice. The research originally came from an attempt to find a solution for vitamin A deficiency. Since the majority of vitamin A deficient countries relied on rice as a staple food, it was thought that one could use genetic modification to make rice produce beta-carotene which is a vitamin A precursor. Eventually the first studies were published in Science in 2000. However, it initially faced backlash since it didn’t provide anywhere near the necessary amount of beta-carotene. As a result, more research was conducted and in 2005 the second version was introduced. This variation had over 23 times the amount of beta-carotene than the original. This was equal to 50% of the recommend daily requirements from just one cup. The potential for golden rice has yet to be seen as data is still being recorded.

Although the potential for golden rice seems near boundless, there are very valid concerns and it has seen much opposition from environmental, anti-GMO, and anti-globalization institutions. Since golden rice is so much more superior to regular rice, it threatens to eliminate not only biodiversity, but also market competition. If all farmers are growing golden rice, there is very little variation (there are only three strands) between farmers. Furthermore, it is not very easy to be able to get the golden rice crop. As a result, the problems of using golden rice as a crop can be multiplied by the corporate control of agriculture. Opposition to golden rice also point to problems with GMOs in general as well as stating that there are more sustainable and efficient ways to solve vitamin A deficiency. Although the concept of golden rice has been around for over 35 years, it is still relevant today and plays a very significant role in the current situation of food security.
3.3 Current Situation

In recent history, there has been a major setback in the fight for food security. These are the market crash of 2007-2008. In 2007-2008, the prices of staple food commodities, specifically cereal crops rose dramatically to almost quadruple the preexisting prices. This had an imposing effect on access to food for many and also hindered food aid. As a result, much of the progress made towards food security, especially in developing countries stalled or reversed. However, since then, the agriculture markets have recovered and progress is still being made.

In Asia, there have been many state-level initiatives and improvements. For example, there have been large strides towards rice self-sufficiency in many countries. Rice is the staple grain to the majority of the people in the region and is regarded as a high-priority commodity. Therefore, a goal for many countries is to reach rice self-sufficiency to avoid importing rice. In the Philippines, recently set aside 86.1 billion pesos (US$1.9 billion) to their Agricultural Development Program. In high-income countries like Japan and Korea, the quest for rice self-sufficiency is being fulfilled through trade restrictions and tariffs.

There are many other developments in Asia as well. Cambodia took a US$300 million loan from China to build 10 new rice warehouses that can store up to 1 million tons of rice. Thailand has reduced the disparity between market prices for rice and the subsidized prices to farmers to create a large buildup in rice that can eventually be exported or used as feed for animals or biofuels. Bhutan has made their own National Organic Program to try and introduce organic farming as a lifestyle for Bhutanese farmers. This in turn will increase nutritional health and eventually household income by hopefully becoming an exporter of organic goods. China, other than holding many agricultural trainings and seminars released their “No. 1 Central Document” which called
for changing domestic policies to focus on support for farmers and increase dietary diversity permitting more feed imports for livestock.\textsuperscript{58}

In the international community, a recent development to look to is the new Sustainable Development Goals from the United Nations. These Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are built from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). While the MDGs were very specific and measurable, many people felt that with this specificity, there were other areas that were equally important, but left out. As a result, the SDGs were made to focus on a broad range of issues with an overall goal to eradicate poverty. In terms of food security, the SDGs are important because the My World Survey put out by the UN showed that people believe that “affordable and nutritious food” is the sixth most pressing global development issue.\textsuperscript{59}

Within Asia, there are multiple things to consider when discussing the current situation of food security. First, you must consider how varying trends in population and economic growth have spread resources very thin. When discussing solutions, you must understand that there is a very limited number of resources that you can use. Industrialization and urbanization have already

\textsuperscript{58}http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4624e.pdf
\textsuperscript{59}https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/09/what-are-the-sustainable-development-goals/
caused a large shift in resources away from rural areas where most food is produced, so consider how you can utilize resources in the best way possible to ensure your solution will succeed.

Another concept to consider is that as of now, expanding cultivated land is no longer an option. This means that food productions growth cannot rely on more land, as most arable land has been recorded and is in use. However, that does not mean there are no solutions pertaining to land. For example, there is room to grow in the efficiency of crops and the efficiency of land use. However, more land is not an available solution.

The SDGs’ overall goal is to reduce poverty and economic growth has been a proven measure to do this. However, to ensure that poverty is reduced and people have access to food, one must take measures to ensure that the benefits from economic growth are shared equally among people. Otherwise, hunger and food security will remain and the gap between the rich and poor will only grow wider.

One problem to discuss is increasing food prices, as mathematics shows that an increase in food price disproportionately affect the poor. This is because the poor spend a larger portion of their income on food than people in a higher wealth class. As a result, any increase in food price actively negates the benefits of economic growth and poverty reduction. Thus, you must take precautions to make sure that food price crashes like the one in 2008 don’t occur or have its effects muted.

As there is a lack of expandable land, our frameworks for tackling food security must be reviewed and refocused on the rural sector. This is because the majority of Asia’s poor and food insecure live in rural areas. If our solutions and policies focus on agriculture and rural development as the center to ending food insecurity, it will guarantee economic inclusivity. However, when creating a framework, you can’t just focus on higher incomes and economic
growth only. You must also focus on increasing productivity and smallholder control since many of the poor survive through small-scale subsistence farming. Therefore, with increased productivity, you also create more food availability. Through all of this, keep in mind the four aspects to food security: availability, quality, dietary needs, and stability.\textsuperscript{60}

3.4 Bloc Positions

3.4.1 China, Pakistan, and Kazakhstan

These three countries are the lead on the agriculture focus area in the ACD. As a result, their ideas will have a large impact on where discussion goes. However, each country has a different focus and desire as they each have different levels of development and urbanization.

3.4.2 Japan and Korea

These countries are very high-income countries that have rice as a very large part of their diet. As a result, they will desire rice self-sufficiency like many of the other countries present. However, there preferred method is through increased tariffs and regulations which may hurt other countries such as the Philippines which is a very large rice exporter.

3.4.3 Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Vietnam

These countries work together on poverty alleviation. Their focus is on making sure the benefits of economic growth get reaped by all and would like to focus on rural development.

3.4.4 India, Myanmar, Malaysia, Thailand, and Russia

These countries want to focus on infrastructure to increase efficiency of land and promote financial cooperation between countries especially with providing resources and open trade.

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\textsuperscript{60} https://www.adb.org/publications/food-security-asia-and-pacific
3.5 Discussion Questions

- What are the key objectives to focus on for Asia as a region in regard to food security and agricultural development?
- How does the country you represent factor into that plan?
- How can large players in this issue help or hinder your goals?
- Don’t forget to think about outside help and interference. Is it useful? Can you find a mutually beneficial relationship? Keep in mind the UN sustainable development goals.

3.6 Keywords

- Food Security
- ACD
- FAO
- CCP
- GMOs
- Green Revolution
- Golden Rice
- SDGs
- MDGs

3.7 References

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