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**From:** Anthony Milner [mailto:Anthony.Milner@anu.edu.au]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 24 December 2008 8.04 pm  
**To:** Carter, John Gordon (REPS)  
**Subject:** Re: RE: RE: ASEAN Inquiry Track 2 organisations

Last weekend I was at the First ASEAN ISIS-Aust-NZ 'Dialogue' in Kuala Lumpur. I attach a very brief DRAFT report for your interest. Asialink was the key partner in the Asialink-ANU-Lowy team that represented Australia. In organizing the event, we kept close contact with DFAT (esp Gillian Bird, the Amb. to ASEAN), and the Aust. and NZ High Coms in K.L. both participated, as did the Deputy Director-General of ONA. This Govt. contact is, I think, very much in the spirit of Track II.

This meeting could be seen as an Australian engagement in Asian - rather than Asia-Pacific - regionalism. The meeting did not involve the U.S. or Canada, and in the past members of the influential ASEAN-ISIS group have sometimes expressed a degree of hesitation toward Australia. A regular Aust-NZ 'Dialogue' with ASEAN-ISIS - which was proposed at the Dec 5/6 event - could be viewed as one further contribution to building Australia into the Asian region.

The Dialogue was proposed initially by the Malaysian ISIS Chair, Tan Sri Jawhar. He raised the issue at the Australia Malaysia Institute's colloquium in KL last year - but I am sure his involvement in the past in the 'Asialink Conversations' process and the St.James Ethics Centre regional conferences, and his close contact with Australian in CSCAP I(the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific), paved the way for the invitation.

With respect to the 'Asialink Conversations', these have been held over the last few years in Malaysia, Vietnam and Australia. They are focussed on ASEAN, and have been warmly assisted by the different Australian embassies in the region. The 'Conversations' were an initiative of Baillieu Myer AC, who developed the process in cooperation with Jenny McGregor (CEO Asialink) and me. The most recent 'Conversations' were held a few weeks ago in Delhi - and we brought a team of ASEAN representatives there, along with our Australian participants. My impression was that the presence of our ASEAN friends served as a reminder of Australia's longstanding involvement in that region, and was viewed very positively by our Indian hosts. I'm happy to discuss these two events with you, or send some extra information.

As to the general question about Track II, yes, 'Asialink Conversations', ASEAN-ISIS, CSCAP, St. James Ethics regional meetings are Track II - and they may include people from such organizations as the CSIRO, universities, business operations, NGOs. The Track II events are strengthened by reaching out in this way - just as they must relate closely to Track I (Government). To be effective the Track II leadership needs to be well aware of the Track I agenda, testing or debating new ideas relating to or extending that agenda. With respect to certain topics Track II might well draw on the views of a CSIRO official. Track II ought to help to develop new regional (and Australian) networks relevant to Australian national interests, and in some circumstances might operate in areas where Governments themselves are wary of operating. The struggle against terrorism offered some particular opportunities for Track II, as has the ongoing crisis in Thailand.

Concerning CSCAP (Professor Des Ball and I are the Co-Chairs of the Australian committee), this is the premier second-track security organization in the Asia-Pacific region. It was set up in 1992-93 to provide 'a more structured regional process of a non-governmental nature... to contribute to the efforts towards regional confidence building and enhancing regional security through dialogues, consultation and cooperation' in the region. In addition to Australia, CSCAP has member committees - usually well connected with their respective governments - in Canada, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, United States, New Zealand, Russia, DPRK, Mongolia, China, Vietnam, Europe, India, Cambodia and Papua New Guinea. The Malaysian Institute of Strategic and International Studies provides the CSCAP Secretariat. The 6th CSCAP General Conference was held in Jakarta in December 2007, and was notable partly for the constructive engagement of the Chinese representatives. ASEAN is at the core of CSCAP with one of the two Co-chairs always a representative of an ASEAN Member Committee.

Aus-CSCAP has some 120 members. The Committee meets twice a year, usually in February and August, to consider the major security issues in the region. The latest meeting in September 2008, was held in Melbourne in conjunction with Asialink, and addressed by the Foreign Minister. It was attended by some 80 people. Discussion topics included security architectures in Asia, dilemmas in defence planning, security aspects of resource ownership in Australia and a series of updates on terrorism.

Aus-CSCAP members are active in the various regional CSCAP Study Groups, and co-chair the groups on maritime security, the security implications of climate change and combating transnational crime. Australia has also been a partner to Indonesia in holding the major CSCAP conference in Jakarta every two years. Participants in these meetings include senior figures from academia and research institutes, along with senior government officials and Ministers. The Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs has attended a number of these conferences.

CSCAP's network of officials, media, military and academic representatives provides Australia with opportunities to influence attitudes and debate in the region. Again, I would be happy to provide further information if required.

Best wishes,  
Tony Milner

**ANU in the First ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Dialogue  
5-6 December 2008, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**

ANU academics have been key players in the First ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Dialogue, held in Kuala Lumpur on 5-6 December. The host organization was ASEAN-ISIS, the influential Track II organization that has played a critical role in regional diplomacy. ANU participants were Professors Des Ball, Andrew MacIntyre and Tony Milner. The Dialogue was characterized by frank discussion - about the strengths and weaknesses of ASEAN, the way the new ASEAN-Australia-NZ Free Trade Agreement might be implemented, the security different contributions made by Australia and New Zealand to the region, the causes and regional implications of the current global economic crisis, the Australian proposal for an Asia-Pacific Community, and the deep traumas of Myanmar/Burma.

ASEAN, Australian and NZ participants exchanged views about the larger regional powers: The US, China, Japan, India and Russia. There was no sign of hostility from ASEAN toward a rising China - but nor was the idea of a Chinese regional paramountcy viewed as inevitable, or welcomed.

Everyone in the room engaged in these discussions - and the frankness (and sometimes passion) of the exchanges was striking. Here some saw real evidence of the way Track II processes can help deepen regional engagement.

A number of practical ideas were floated - ideas for implementing the new FTA, a suggestion for an Australia-NZ role in the Chiang Mai initiative, a possible expansion of the longstanding 'Five Power' security arrangements (currently involving only Malaysia, Singapore, NZ and Australia), a proposal to develop a special role for Indonesia and Australia representing ASEAN views in the G20 context. Some of these ideas may prove influential - but, in any case, the Dialogue gave an opportunity to test them in a relaxed, informal way.

The Australian participation in the Dialogue was a partnership between Asialink, ANU and the Lowy Institute, and included also representatives from The Australian and the Office of National Assessments. Dr Richard Grant, Executive Director of the Asia New Zealand Foundation, led the New Zealand participants. Both the Australian and NZ High Commissioners in Kuala Lumpur took part in the discussions. The ASEAN-ISIS Chair, Professor Carolina Hernandez, opened the Dialogue, and ISIS-Malaysia (under its Chairman Tan Sri Mohamed Jawhar Hassan) was the host organization.