

SECURITY ISSUES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA



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Power Transition: what will China do in SEA?

- ▣ China's military spending
- ▣ 'Defensive in nature' (China)
- ▣ 'outstanding questions remain about the rate of growth in China's military expenditure due to the lack of transparency' (Annual Report on China's Military Power, US DoD, April 2014)

LKY on the issue of trust in Great Powers

- ▣ LKY once described the United States as 'the least distrusted Great Power' in the Asia-Pacific (Helmut Schmidt, 1994)
- ▣ Lee highlights the distrustful nature of the international setting in the region
- ▣ BUT also the importance of trust in intentions of rising powers like China



China's recent behaviour

- Aug 2014: US criticized 'risky intercept' of US surveillance plane near Hainan Island by Chinese J-11 fighter which performed 'barrel rolls' over the US plane



Places oil rig in Vietnam-claimed waters in May 2014



South China Sea: Strategic Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOC)

- July 2010: Chinese deep-sea submersible plants flag on South China Sea
- Ongoing disputes with Vietnam, Philippines, Brunei, over the Spratly islands because of supposed mineral riches and also control over the strategic waterway



Ways of Escape? ASEAN and conflict management?

- ▣ 1992 ASEAN Declaration on the South China Sea
 - ▣ emphasised the non-use of force
 - ▣ Urged all parties to exercise restraint
 - ▣ Work to build confidence and trust
 - ▣ Move towards eventual peaceful resolution
- ▣ 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea signed with China and all ASEAN member states
- ▣ Progress on Code of Conduct elusive thus far

Difficulties

- ▣ How can ASEAN remain 'neutral' when some of its members are 'claimant' or 'frontline' states?
- ▣ Manila and Hanoi have been involved in naval stand-offs with China in S China Sea
- ▣ Claimants and non-claimant states have different expectations and interests
- ▣ Yet members stress 'ASEAN Centrality'
- ▣ ASEAN must play lead roles in resolving regional political and security issues

The stakes are high

- ▣ 'Many countries are watching us closely' (Singapore PM Lee, 2012)
- ▣ How China deals with difficult bilateral problems with its neighbours as a sign of what China's rise means for the world

The US 'rebalance' to Asia

- ▣ Nov 2011: President Obama announces deployment of US Marines in Darwin, Australia
- ▣ Rotation of US Navy Littoral Combat Ships through Singapore
- ▣ Indonesian Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa hints at danger that it will 'provoke reaction and counter-reaction...a vicious cycle of tension and mistrust'

Singapore's views: Lee Kuan Yew's interview with Asahi Shimbun, May 2010

- ▣ 'When two elephants fight, the grass suffers. And when they make love, it is disastrous'



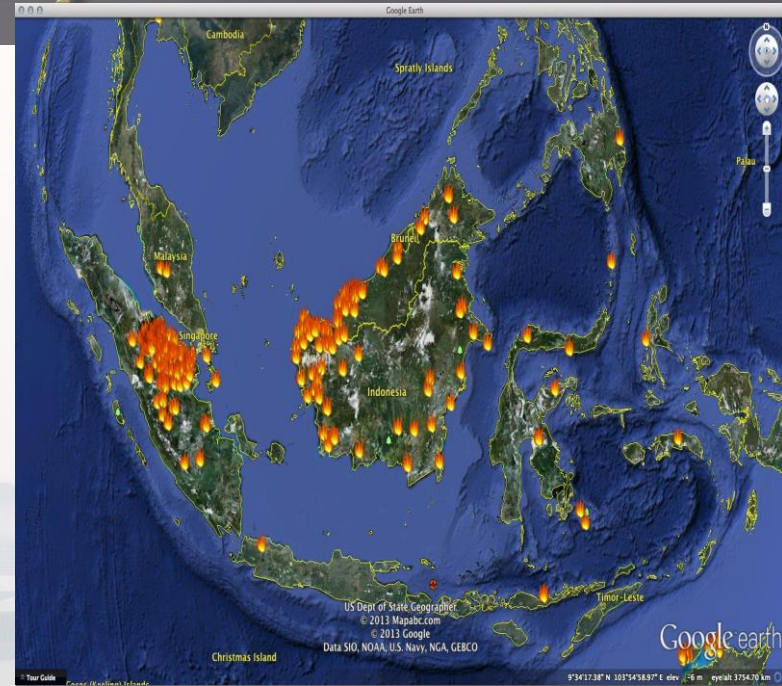
Having our cake and eating it

- ▣ 'everybody here would like to benefit from it (China's rise)...at the same time we would like to remain friends with all our other friends, including the US, India, and the EU. We would like to have our cake and eat it and be friends with everybody...we want the US to have constructive and stable relations with China. That makes it easier for us. Then we don't have to choose sides.' (PM Lee Hsien Loong, March 2013)

De-escalating low-intensity conflicts; The Sabah Incursions 2013



Non-traditional threats: Transboundary haze



Climate Change:

- ▣ Severe Bangkok floods 2011 meant shortage of parts and knock-on disruptions to production and manufacturing chains from Japan to North America.



Prolonged dry spells in Singapore/Malaysia 2014 and 2015

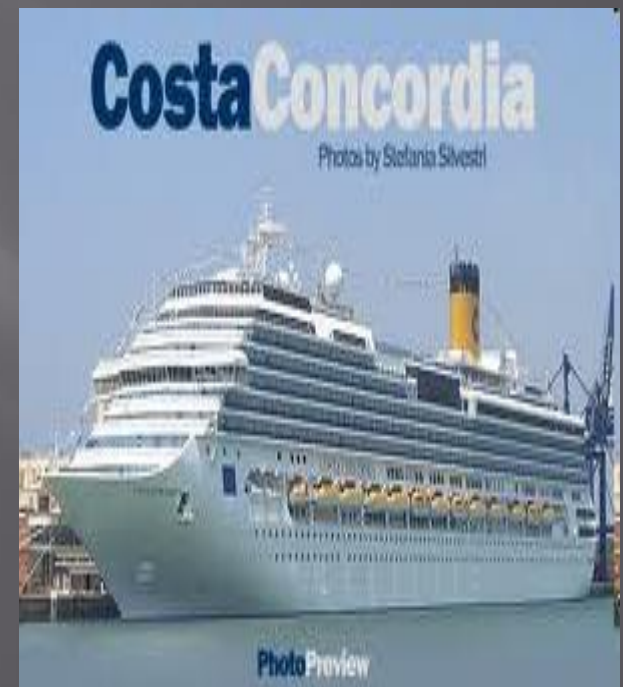
Fish farms devastated by plankton bloom ; food security issues?

Water levels drop in reservoirs; water security issues?



Imagine this in busy Straits of Malacca?

- ▣ Piracy and/or maritime terrorism



South-east Asia and IS

- ▣ the Malay Archipelago Units for the Islamic State formed of mainly south-east Asian militants Malay-speaking from Indonesia and Malaysia
- ▣ Recruit and facilitate people who want to go to Syria to defend the Islamic caliphate

Territorial disputes: Preah Vihear Temple



History Issue: The Usman Harun Incident 2014

- ▣ Indonesian warship barred from Singapore waters



MacDonald House Bombing 1965

- ▣ Indonesian Marines dressed in civilian clothes planted bomb: killed several Singaporeans

