

The EU's External Relations with Asia



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2 The EU as a Global Actor in Asia

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EU aims to increase cooperation with and in Asia

- Interaction on bilateral level
- Interaction in multilateral fora: ARF, ASEM, SAARC
- Economic interests but no vital hard security interests
- New *Guidelines on the EU's foreign and security policy in East Asia* name security threats in relation to: North Korea, the Taiwan Strait and China's rise

Does the EU have an approach to security and confidence building in East and Central Asia?

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No real European Asia strategy exists

- EU is no nation state and an incomplete, evolving political actor
- Europeans support conflict resolution, e.g. in Aceh

Intrinsic tendency of Europeans to facilitate region and community building processes in Asia

- EC uses political dialogues, cooperation programmes, humanitarian assistance as instruments
- EU aims to strengthen regional cooperation & rules-based international system

▶ EU follows „vision in which a system of global governance, with regional structures as its cornerstones effectively addresses trans-regional problems.“ Javier Solana

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China

- EU-China relations have broadened & deepened since late 1990s: EU is China's major trade partner
- EU-China relations remain a „secondary relationship“

India

- EU is India's major trade partner
- Both actors regard each other as „natural partners“ as they share a commitment to democracy, the rule of law, human rights and pluralism

Japan

- Japan criticised EU for lack of strategic understanding of East Asian region
- EU regards Japan as „closest partner“ in East Asia

 Qualities of the strategic partnerships in Asia differ significantly because of normative differential.

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EU multilateralises its relations with Asia

- Europeans support ASEAN intraregional cooperation since 3 decades
- In mid 1990s Europeans responded positively to ASEAN's interest of engaging China regionally
- EU facilitated the cooperation between Northeast- and Southeast Asia
- EU also tries to interregionalise its relations with Central Asia

▶ The interregional level forms an important dimension of the EU's multilateral interaction with Asia.

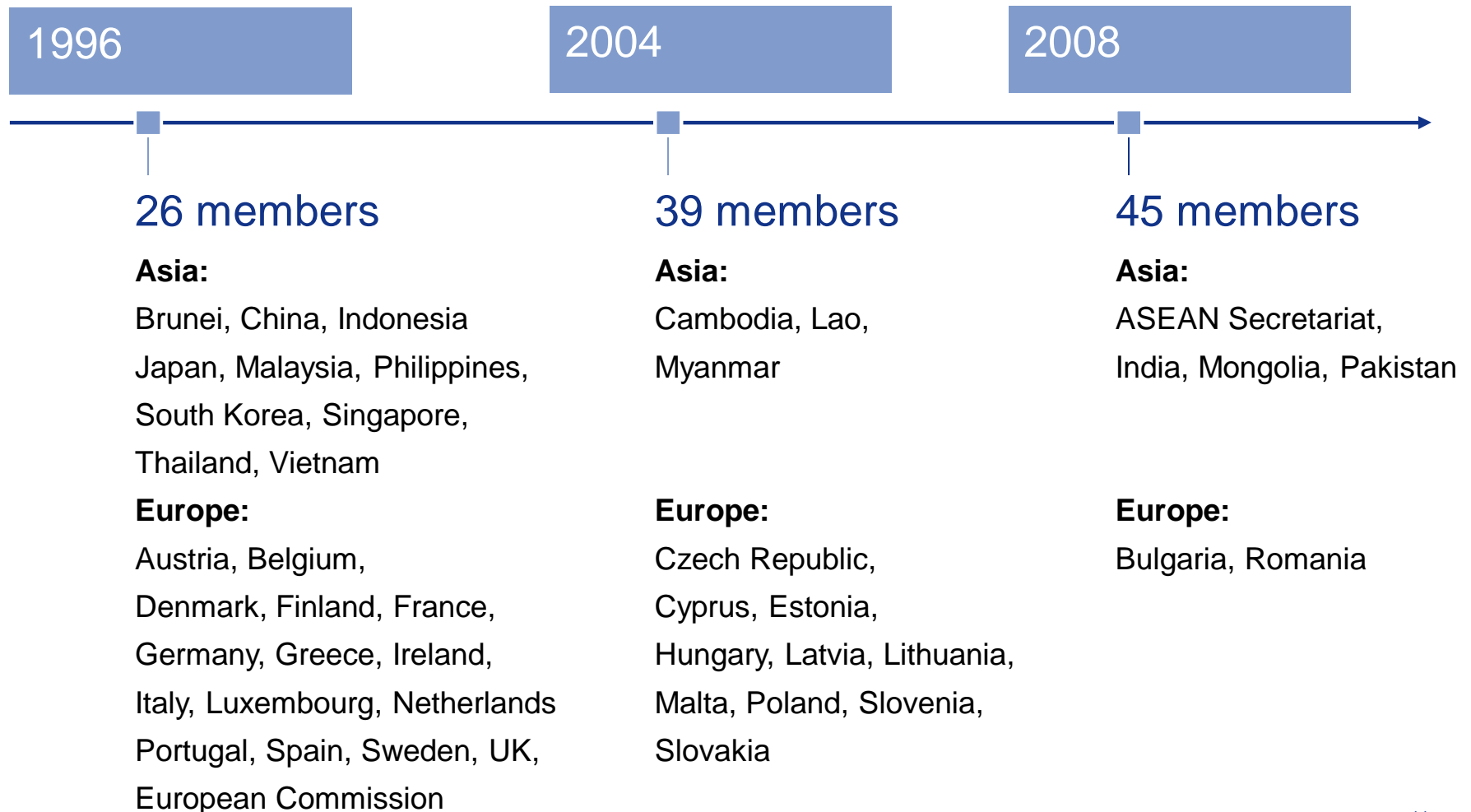
The ASEAN-EU-Dialogue

- EU is increasing its activities in Southeast Asian affairs
- New common agenda intensifies political and security cooperation
- Quality of EU-ASEAN relations will ultimately depend on integration of ASEAN

The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)-Process

- ASEM has evolved into central platform for Asia-Europe cooperation
- ASEM generates and manages interdependency
- In October 2010 Australia, New Zealand and Russia will become ASEM members

Members of ASEM



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The EU's first Central Asia Strategy (2007) names promotion of security & stability as strategic interests because:

1. Strategic, economic and political developments in the region impact on EU's interests
2. EU and Central Asia are moving closer because of EU enlargement
3. The energy supplies in the region can help to meet EU's security and supply needs

EU aims at promoting the political & economic transformation and modernisation of Central Asia

- Russia and China have strategic advantages in the region
- EU has structural power deficit because of differing political systems
- EU supports regional cooperation in order to overcome the political and institutional differences between Europe and Central Asia

 EU approach to support regional cooperation is based on belief in the socializing power of cooperative diplomacy and institutions.

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Europeans have no direct influence on security hot spots in Asia

- With regard to Asia's hard security Europe is a free-rider that depends on the power projection capabilities of the USA
- The Europeans support an incremental approach to confidence-building which is also promoted by ASEAN
- EU approach has strong normative underpinning: Europeans aim to transform political systems through the support of regional and interregional policies

The EU's approach to the challenges for security and confidence building in Central and East Asia constitutes a comprehensive engagement policy, based on the socializing power of bilateral cooperation and multilateral regional integration.

Thank you
for your attention.

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