For a complete listing of 2004 publications, see page 54.


Rethinking Security in East Asia is the first book in the Studies in Asian Security series sponsored by the East-West Center and published by Stanford University Press. This book offers a new theoretical approach to the study of Asian security. Throughout the 1990s, conventional wisdom among U.S. scholars of international relations held that institutionalized cooperation in Europe fosters peace, while its absence from East Asia portends conflict. Developments in Europe and Asia in the 1990s contradict the conventional wisdom without discrediting it. Explanations that derive from only one paradigm or research program have shortcomings beyond their inability to recognize important empirical anomalies. International relations research is better served by combining explanatory approaches from different research traditions.


The Asia Pacific Security Outlook, now in its eighth annual edition, provides assessments of the security environment, defense issues and regional and global cooperation from the perspectives of countries that participate in the ASEAN Regional Forum. The 2004 edition also presents theme-oriented essays on major sub-regional problems: the North Korean nuclear threat in Northeast Asia, terrorism in Southeast Asia, and the tortuous search for paths to peace in South Asia. Based on the work and expertise of a multinational team of security analysts and written for generalists and specialists alike, the Outlook is the most concise and authentic comparative work in this field.


A heightened sense of vulnerability to terror has touched every part of the world, including the Pacific Islands, and has linked small nations to large in new ways. Since the September 11 tragedy, concern has risen that so-called “failed states,” losing the struggle to maintain law and order at home, could become springboards for terrorism. Australia has shed its reluctance to intervene militarily in Pacific trouble-spots—such as Solomon Islands, whose descent into chaos and violence was sparked in 1998 by ethnic tensions in the capital. With regional support, Australia led a mission in 2003 to restore law and order. A short-term success, the mission leaves questions about its long-term ability to achieve either well-being for Solomon Islands or security for the region. Its emphasis on shoring up a perennially weak central government, and its inattention to other pillars of Solomons society, threaten to undermine its success and create a crippling sense of dependency. For the mission to succeed, it must empower Solomon Islanders to take charge of their own destiny.

India and Pakistan have had volatile relations ever since they became independent of Britain in 1947. Frequent hostility has stifled cooperation between the two countries and inhibited development in the region. Recently, however, tensions show signs of easing. In March 2004, India’s then prime minister visited Pakistan to attend a South Asian regional summit. Flights, bus service, and cricket matches between the two countries have resumed; India’s newly elected government continues to support the process. Peace could bring a wide range of benefits not only to India and Pakistan but to the wider region as well. For example, it could enable cooperation on importing energy via a natural-gas pipeline, which would support environmentally sound development. The improved road and rail system that would necessarily accompany a pipeline would also support the goal of building an Asian highway network and the resurgence of cross-border trade, another likely consequence of détente. These benefits could spread far beyond India and Pakistan into the wider west, central, and south Asian region.


Participants in the East-West Center’s fifth annual Senior Policy Seminar agreed that the overall strategic environment of the Asia Pacific region in 2003 is positive. Nevertheless, a number of continuing issues are cause for concern. The threat of terrorism and the potential for the Korean peninsula to lurch into deeper crisis remain the paramount concerns of the United States in the region. On the other hand, non-American participants expressed concern, and in some cases alarm, over the overwhelming power of the United States in international affairs. The multilateral world that many had expected to emerge after the end of the Cold War has not eventuated, and America’s position as the sole superpower has strengthened. Much of the seminar was devoted to discussions of what this means for the countries of Asia as they seek to deal with the United States.


Climate-related disasters can jeopardize social development goals—such as ameliorating poverty; providing adequate food, water, housing, sanitation, and health care; and protecting the environment—as well as economic development investments that provide employment and income. At the same time, the drive for social improvement and economic growth can create new disaster risks. Thus it is critical to integrate disaster management within the sustainable development agenda.


The HIV epidemic varies widely across Asia. While Asian epidemics will almost certainly never rise to the levels seen in Sub-Saharan Africa, prevalence rates for the region as a whole could easily reach 2-5 percent over the next decade if effective prevention programs are not implemented. Although the potential for expanding HIV epidemics is high, experience in Thailand and Cambodia shows that well-targeted prevention programs can be extremely effective. Other Asian governments need to build up and maintain focused prevention programs. Societies in Asia will bear much greater costs tomorrow, both in human and financial terms, should they fail to prevent expansion of the HIV epidemic today.

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