



Preface

Energy security ranks as one of the highest-priority issues in Asia and the Pacific. The East and South Asia region is the fastest-growing oil consumer in the world, and because this region has such a small percentage of the world's oil reserves, it is the most highly dependent on oil imports of any world region. In the future, Asia will become even more dependent on imports as its energy needs expand with changing life styles and overall economic growth.

Asia's increasing energy needs have important implications for energy security throughout the world, and particularly in the United States. Like Asia, the United States is a large and growing importer of crude oil and petroleum products. It is also becoming a direct competitor with the East Asian economies for imported liquefied natural gas (LNG).

Construction worker cuts steel tubing for an offshore oil-drilling platform in Batam, Indonesia. Although a member of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Indonesia consumes more oil than it produces. © Robert Garvey/Corbis

This volume is intended to provide Asians and Americans with the factual information they need for clear understanding, informed policy dialogue, and effective cooperation on issues related to energy security. The United States and Asia have much in common in terms of their basic energy situation. Both regions have enormous hydrocarbon reserves in the form of coal, but both must import huge quantities of liquid hydrocarbons in the forms of oil and natural gas. The United States has an economy and a life style highly dependent upon imported energy, and increasingly, so does Asia. The environmental implications of energy use are of growing concern in both regions. Both share a common stake in an assured supply of oil and natural gas, in price stability in international energy markets, in efficient and sustainable use of oil and gas products, and in the development of technologies and fuel alternatives that can alleviate energy security and environmental concerns.

Two editors of this volume, Fereidun Fesharaki and Kang Wu, are leading international energy experts based at the East-West Center. They have assembled an outstanding team of Asia-Pacific specialists to describe recent trends and future challenges and to lay out a set of policy recommendations designed to strengthen the region's overall energy security. We at the East-West Center hope that this book will make a strong contribution toward understanding Asia-Pacific energy issues and solving the region's common energy problems.

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