



(VISION DOCUMENT)

6th International Turkish-Asian Congress

Asian Union? Parameters of Politics, Security, Economy and Culture

(7th -8th June 2012)

More than half of world's population live in Asia. With the advancement of technology and progress of education in countries like Russia, China and India; Asia is on its way to become the new power centre for global economy.

Asian countries are trying to develop cooperation among themselves and be active in international arena in today's world where balance of power is changing rapidly.

Asian countries are facing serious economic, political and social **challenges in current conjecture, in which power balances are changing dramatically**. Global economic crisis, terrorism, drug trafficking, unemployment, ethnic conflicts, high demand towards natural resources etc. all push Asian countries to cooperate to derive their interests in a peaceful way.

The characteristics of the policies of some major powers outside Asia affect the quality of the relations among Asian countries. In order to manage foreign relations with great powers in favour of Asia, cooperation is necessary among Asian countries. Otherwise; it is highly possible that tensions and conflicts on continental scale may turn into actual wars. Therefore; it is crucial for Asian countries to develop their relations within mutual respect and equality.

After the 2nd World War “**Regional Integration Initiatives**” have accelerated and organizations like European Union (EU), The North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and Association of Southeast Asian Nations were established. Although Asia has strong countries at global scale and it is in the process of rapid regionalization, any union has not been established at continental scale yet. The main obstacles towards Integration process in Asia are geographical latitude and distrust among great powers of the continent. The unique conditions of Asia prevent European Union type economical and political integration. However, this is not to be taken as an obstacle for principal actors in the continent to cooperate in order to improve their relations.

Political, military and cultural relations pave the way to improve economic relations but developing good political and strategic relations depends on the fact that the potential interests which to arise after the good economic relations is high enough. Asian countries have complementary economies in the fields of energy, agriculture, industry and high technology.



However, high custom walls prevent Asian countries to cooperate in the fields of economy and trade. In order to improve political and economical relations in the continent; it is crucial to develop confidence building measures in every parameter particularly with public diplomacy and cultural activities. Otherwise, it is inevitable that tensions and crisis outside will affect Asian countries.

Asian countries have the opportunity to cooperate in the fields of energy, tourism, finance, environment, human rights, transportation, agriculture, education, technology and struggle with natural disasters and poverty. In order to create interdependency between Asian countries; it is necessary to **determine the power of Asian countries and develop information-based societies to** annihilate poverty, increase the life standards of individuals, build peace and wealth on solid grounds. Trade within the continent and development of financial markets is crucially important in today’s highly competitive global age.

The main obstacle against cooperation between Asian countries is lack of confidence. It is impossible to develop meaningful strategic political and cultural relations between countries in terms of confidence building. The first step in resolving the issue of distrust; is to improve economic relations within the continent. But this step should be supported concurrently with political, strategic and cultural cooperation. If there is sufficient development in economic relations, this paves way for political, security-related and cultural relations so that more healthy and long term relations can be established.

The success of security related cooperation among Asian countries and regional integration depends on **creation of a common identity perception at the continental scale. The creation of a common identity perception and discourse against the threats from outside and inside of the continent will be a first step for common initiatives.** Security organizations that will develop the collective international security or defence organizations that will protect Asian countries from terrorism, illegal groups, drug trafficking, will be create a security umbrella for the continent. Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), Conference on interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Common Wealth of Independent States (CIS) and Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (CCASG) are important continental and regional steps; but they are relatively new organizations. In order these organisations reach to determined goals, they must be able to adapt effectiveness criteria.

At this point; one should not underestimate the positive role of think tanks and Non-governmental Organizations. Think Tanks and NGOs are vital in developing relations between Asian countries. Activities of NGOs and think tanks are vital in reaching maximum level of interaction among bureaucracies, the intellectual communities, businesses, public opinions and peoples. Only in this way, the relations among countries can gain a meaningful depth.



The purpose of 6th International Turkish-Asian Congress is to discuss the obstacles before cooperation in the Asian continent, to reveal possible gains of cooperation for the Asian countries and, in this respect, to provide a Turkey-centred strategic contribution in constructing an intellectual and institutional ground.

The main theme and subtitles of the congress is as follows:

Main Theme

Asian Union? | Parameters of Politics, Security, Economy and Culture

Subtitles

Political Integration in Asia

Experiments; Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), Common Wealth of Independent States (CIS), Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), East Asian Union (EAU), Turkic Council (Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States)

“Security Cooperation/Integration in Asia

Experiments; Conference on interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Common Wealth of Independent States (CIS), Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO)

Economic Integration in Asia

Experiments; Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Developing Eight (D-8), Asian Development Bank (ADB), South Asian Union

Cultural Cooperation/Integration in Asia

Experiments; Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), TÜRKSOY (International Organization of Turkic Culture)

Contribution of Think Tanks and NGOs to Cooperation and Integration in Asia

Experiments; BFA (Boao Forum for Asia), Congresses of Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Studies (TASAM)