



Engaging Southeast Asia

A HUB OF DYNAMISM AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Empowering Southeast Asia through region-specific research, discourse, and outreach

Southeast Asia is home to some of the most dynamic countries in the world. Although the member states that make up the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are diverse, regional cooperation and integration have shown remarkable progress. Economic engagement continues to grow among ASEAN members, as well as with outside economic players.

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF ASIAN RESEARCH (NBR) has led the way in creating and supporting programming that gives a voice to the perspectives and experiences of Southeast Asian countries within the broader scope of Asia-Pacific policy research. NBR supports strong Southeast Asian representation in its international programs and engages with policymakers, industry representatives, and academics in the region to work toward greater prosperity across Southeast Asia.

“ASEAN has to be united in terms of energy security. It’s not only individual countries thinking of their own energy security; there has to be a broader energy security concept. If we have strong leadership in ASEAN, then we can build that kind of a network.”

Satya Widya Yudha

Member, Commission VII, House of Representatives, Indonesia



Left: **Satya Widya Yudha**, Commission VII, House of Representatives, Indonesia

Right: **Ambassador Ashok Kumar Mirpuri**, Embassy of Singapore to the United States



Bringing ASEAN perspectives into policy discussions

NBR has a strong legacy of strengthening policy discussions on the Asia-Pacific by drawing from an extensive network of scholars, corporate leaders, and policymakers across the region. In Southeast Asia, NBR’s varied programs have enhanced understanding of the diverse issues facing countries in an era of great dynamism and supported policy within ASEAN.



"I distributed NBR's paper on social license to several ministers at a major energy and environment meeting in my country. The paper inspired me to rethink Myanmar's government collaboration with private companies around coal-fired power plants, and it helped me convince my government to rethink public regulation of private partners in this field."

U Thein Lwin

Secretary, Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation Committee, Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House of Parliament), Myanmar

Building on a long-standing focus in a developing environment

Ongoing Analysis of Myanmar's Re-emergence

Myanmar's domestic reforms and improved relations with the United States, European Union, Japan, ASEAN, and others have opened the door for the country to play an important regional role. Through long-term studies, timely publications, and ongoing engagement, NBR has followed Myanmar's trajectory for over 15 years.

Since the May 1998 publication of our first essay on the country, "Democracy in Burma: The Lessons of History," by Mary P. Callahan, NBR's work has informed the policy of the United States and other governments in a period of marked changes and developing domestic and foreign policies.

Myanmar's Growing Regional Role: An NBR Special Report

The NBR Special Report "Myanmar's Growing Regional Role" addresses the issues surrounding the country's re-emergence as a regional power and the implications these developments continue to have on U.S. policy. The report was launched at a high-profile event on Capitol Hill, which featured remarks by the Honorable Kyaw Myo Htut, Ambassador of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. Essays include:

**The Influence of Domestic Issues on Myanmar's Foreign Policy:
A Historical Perspective**
Priscilla Clapp, *Asia Society; United States Institute of Peace*

Second Chance: Prospects for U.S.-Myanmar Relations
Catharin Dalpino, *Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State*

**Myanmar's Chairmanship of ASEAN:
Challenges and Opportunities**
Mely Caballero-Anthony, *Nanyang Technological University*

Myanmar Foreign Policy in a Time of Transition
Morten B. Pedersen, *University of New South Wales;
Australian Defence Force Academy*

Myanmar and Asia's New Great Game
Abraham M. Denmark, *NBR*

Myanmar's Emerging Role in the Regional Economy
Meredith Miller, *NBR*

Interviews and commentaries

**Myanmar's Peace Process:
Mediating Historic Distrust**
Gum San NSang
Kachin Alliance

**Myanmar:
What Is Next for Business
Engagement?**
Erin Murphy
Inle Advisory Group
James Clad
IHS Jane's Defence Group

**Myanmar's 2014 ASEAN
Chairmanship:
A Litmus Test of Progress**
Moe Thuzar
*ASEAN Studies Centre;
Institute of Southeast Asian Studies*

**Myanmar's Financial Integration:
Normalizing International
Payment and Settlement Systems**
Koji Kubo
*Institute of Developing
Economies, Japan External Trade
Organization*

“Southeast Asia is becoming the cornerstone of [Asia]. There’s a lot more trade and investment among countries within the region, and there’s a lot more cultural awareness and links.”

Ambassador Dino Patti Djalal

Former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and former Ambassador to the United States, Indonesia



Assessing regional developments and strategic implications for regional economic and geopolitical stability

Strategic Asia

NBR’s Strategic Asia Program aims to strengthen and inform policy decisions by providing innovative research on challenges and opportunities for U.S. national interests in the Asia-Pacific, including Southeast Asia.

Strategic Asia volumes have addressed an array of topics relevant to the region:

- U.S. alliances and partner relationships with ASEAN countries
- the rise of China and India
- economic interdependence
- military and security capabilities
- economic and market dynamics

Strategic Assistance: Disaster Relief and Asia-Pacific Stability

The Strategic Assistance initiative highlights the importance of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief in mitigating the severe impacts of natural disasters and other calamitous events in Asia, and explores how close cooperation strategic assistance can strengthen intra-regional relations. The program has featured participation from numerous Southeast Asian countries, including Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.

USNS Mercy off the coast of Manado Bay after the opening ceremony for Pacific Partnership 2012. U.S. Navy photo by Camelia Montoy/Released is licensed under CC BY 4.0 / Lightened from original.



Non-claimant Perspectives on the South China Sea Disputes: An Asia Policy Roundtable

The South China Sea is one of the most important and contested maritime spaces in the Asia-Pacific. This *Asia Policy* roundtable examines the perspectives, positions, and rising stakes of key non-claimants in the South China Sea disputes: Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, ASEAN, the European Union, and the United States.

Essay highlights

Raising the Stakes: The Interests of Non-claimant States in the South China Sea Disputes
Tiffany Ma and Michael Wills, *NBR*

Rules, Balance, and Lifelines: An Australian Perspective on the South China Sea
Rory Medcalf, *Australian National University, Canberra*

Out of Its Comfort Zone: Indonesia and the South China Sea
Ristian Atriandi Supriyanto, *Australian National University*

Singapore and the South China Sea: Being an Effective Coordinator and Honest Broker
Jane Chan, *Nanyang Technological University*

Walking the Talk in the South China Sea
Thomas B. Fargo, *NBR*





“At no other time in the history of mankind has energy been so central to our security, prosperity, and our living environment.... Ensuring energy supply, therefore, is not limited to the energy sector, but it requires well-coordinated and comprehensive solutions, cutting across sectors.”

Ambassador Dang Dinh Quy
President, Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam

Engaging policymakers, industry representatives, and researchers in high-level programs focused on market-based solutions

2015 Energy Security Program Indonesia: A Regional Energy Leader in Transition

Indonesia's strong economic growth and successful democratic transition have made the country a major political and economic power in Southeast Asia and the broader Asia-Pacific. NBR's 2015 Energy Security Program examined the key energy and environmental security challenges facing Indonesia and strategies for promoting greater access to energy while stimulating sustainable sector investment. Essays in the 2015 Energy Security Report include:

Introduction: Sustaining a Positive Role for Energy in Indonesia's Rise
Clara Gillispie, *NBR*

Indonesia's Energy Policy: Challenges and Opportunities
Alexandra Stuart,
US-ASEAN Business Council

Oil in Indonesia: Transitioning to a "New Normal" of Managed Import Dependence
Mikkal E. Herberg, *NBR; University of California-San Diego*

Indonesia: The Nexus of Gas and Electricity
Natalie Bravo, *independent consultant*
Nikos Tsafos, *analytica*

Redefining Indonesia's Energy Security: Efforts to Adopt Cleaner, More Sustainable Energy Strategies
Hanan Nugroho, *National Development Planning Agency, Indonesia*

Economic Development and Regional Integration

Economic integration and the promotion of free trade are core goals for ASEAN. Through its research and publications, NBR has followed key policy developments surrounding these issues.

Publication highlights

Regional Economic Integration: Bringing Myanmar into the Fold
Zaw Oo, *Myanmar Development Resource Institute*

Malaysia's ASEAN Chairmanship: Furthering Regional Economic Integration
Ambassador Awang Adek Hussin, *Embassy of Malaysia to the United States*

Indonesia's Economic Outlook Post 2014 Elections
Gunawan Wicaksono, *Harvard University*

ASEAN Economic Community Prepares for December Launch
Rachel Wagley and Kaela Mananquil, *NBR*

Pacific Energy Summit

The Pacific Energy Summit is an annual invitation-only event that convenes leaders from government, business, and the research community to explore innovative solutions to the dual challenges of rising energy demand and climate change. The 2016 Pacific Energy Summit, "Sustainable Futures: Energy and Environmental Security in Times of Transition," was held in Singapore.



Left to right: **Meredith Miller**, *Albright Stonebridge Group, NBR*; **Luluk Sumiarso**, *Indonesian Institute for Clean Energy*; and **Victorino Bala**, *ASEAN Council on Petroleum*

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