

Workshop on Asia-Pacific Regional Nuclear Governance

Singapore, 9 March 2017

Definitions and Questions for Participants

Workshop definitions

Nuclear: safety, security, non-proliferation (including safeguards), promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy

Governance: organizations, treaties, agreements, mechanisms, regulations, cooperative and consultative arrangements

Asia-Pacific: China, Japan, Mongolia, the two Koreas, Taiwan, plus all ASEAN states (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam), plus Australia and New Zealand.

Significant extra-regional stakeholders: European Union, IAEA, India, Pakistan, Russia, US.

Session I: What is the state of nuclear governance in Asia-Pacific?

(a survey and charts will be distributed in advance to inform the discussion)

- Although there is no region-wide nuclear governance body for Asia-Pacific, what are the regional bodies that deal with the issue, at least in part?
- How comprehensive are they in terms of: membership and coverage of the issues?
- Is there a logical division of labour or overlap, competition and duplication?
- Are nuclear issues embedded in larger organizations or mechanisms that have higher priorities?
- Is governance 'stove-piped' along traditional nuclear governance lines into: safety, security, non-proliferation and promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy? Or are there instances of overlap and integration?
- Is there a North Asia/SE Asia split in attitudes/policies/norms, or is it more complex?
- To what extent do regional bodies match their rhetorical intention and ambition with practical programs and participation?"

- Are there any regional or sub-regional nuclear norms that can be identified beyond the obvious one of non-acquisition of nuclear weapons by non-nuclear weapon states (Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone)?
- Is there an interest in establishing regional standards, guidelines or regulations for any aspect of nuclear? (radiological seems to be a candidate)
- If there is interest, which existing regional body would be the ideal candidate to carry out that development and implementation?
- Is there any sentiment in favour of a comprehensive regional nuclear organization, along the lines of EURATOM?
- Did the Fukushima accident have a noticeable effect on enthusiasm for strengthening regional governance?
- How does the nuclear field compare to governance of other fields in the region: civil aviation, for example?
- What are the applicable lessons from other fields that we can apply to nuclear governance?
- How extensive is regional membership of and participation in global nuclear governance institutions, notably the IAEA, but also others like GCINT, WINS, and WANO?

Session II: What are the principal barriers to strengthened nuclear governance in Asia-Pacific as traditionally conceived: strategic, political, economic, geographical

- Strategic competition and power differentials are often cited as a major consideration: rivalry between China, Japan, the US; in Southeast Asia the strong influence of Indonesia: to what extent are these vital factors or are they just background?
- Regional territorial, historical and other conflicts are also cited: between the Koreas; China-Japan; Taiwan; South China Sea territorial claims: are these barriers to nuclear cooperation?
- Are differences in political system germane? Democracies versus authoritarian versus socialist?
- Are economic disparities a determinative part of the picture? i.e. while China, Japan, ROK and Taiwan can afford nuclear power and other sophisticated nuclear enterprises, other states, although having ambitions in that direction, have not proved able to afford such capabilities: is this a significant barrier to strengthening regional governance?
- Do regional disparities in nuclear capacities produce national embarrassment (loss of face?) when it comes to nuclear governance collaboration?
- Do different nuclear priorities preclude closer cooperation: many states have only research reactors and radiological sources; at the other end of the scale are huge

nuclear enterprises like those of China, ROK and Japan (is there a fear of nuclear colonialism, especially as nuclear reactor exports are projected to grow from these states?)

- Is the existence of states with nuclear weapons within and on the fringes of the region a significant barrier to broader nuclear cooperation?
- Does geography itself serve as a barrier: all regional states are roughly in the same time zone but distances are enormous and much of SE Asia is archipelagic rather than continental (like Europe, Latin America, Africa): does this matter?

Session III: What are other barriers to strengthened nuclear governance in Asia-Pacific? philosophical, cultural, including negotiation style, organizational, legal?

- Is there something to the notion that philosophical or cultural differences prevent the construction of nuclear governance in the region in the way that Western states envisage?
- Are there differences in legal thinking and approaches in different Asia-Pacific states that affect their willingness to move to strengthened regional governance?
- Are trust and confidence-building viewed differently? Should they be approached differently as a result?
- Is there a North Asia-ASEAN diplomatic and cultural divide in this realm?
- To what extent are cultural differences in negotiation style still meaningful in international diplomatic culture in the region and is this an impediment to strengthening nuclear governance in the region?
- Do Asia-Pacific states resist formal arrangements or mechanisms in the nuclear field because they value their sovereignty and national rights more highly; is there a colonial legacy at work here?
- Is there a long view in which it is assumed that over time the region will develop a comprehensive approach: but that in the meantime relationship-building and solemn declarations are most important and regional law-making regulation less so (as per the ASEAN way)
- How different are attitudes towards transparency and confidentiality: do these affect the readiness to strengthen governance?
- Are different attitudes to safety and security culture a barrier; are these malleable?
- Are attitudes towards regulation and regulators (prevalence of regulatory capture in some countries) problematic in increasing cooperation between states?
- Are bilateral arrangements privileged over regional or multilateral ones?
- Are organizational imperatives within national governments different from Western governments when it comes to building international regimes?
- Are there simply other priorities that crowd out nuclear: i.e. economic development, trade, internal security, national governance challenges?

Session IV: What might be done to attenuate/remove the barriers (if we think that necessary); and how might Asia-Pacific contribute to global nuclear governance?

- Does greater regional governance await the acquisition of nuclear power reactors by newcomers beyond those traditionally involved in it? Can regional governance be strengthened in advance as logic would dictate?
- Is there a lack of awareness of the need for strengthened nuclear governance that can be addressed through: education (there are surprisingly few young scholars in the region studying such issues); training; capacity-building; regionally-based research
- Are there regional leaders that can act entrepreneurially (Singapore?) How could we facilitate opportunities for them to connect?
- Is there anything that extra-regional players can do to nudge matters along without seeing as interfering? (EU, US, Australia?); or is this likely to be counter-productive?
- Given the possibility that the Trump administration will be less enthusiastic and nurturing about strengthening nuclear governance is there a great role for China, Japan, ROK, Indonesia, Singapore?
- Can any of the existing regional organizations be used as a platform to grow regional nuclear governance more systematically and comprehensively?
- Is there a need for an Asia-Pacific Nuclear Energy Community?
- How might the various limited governance bodies be strengthened?
- How useful is the IAEA's involvement and assistance in fostering regional cooperation? Or is their involvement counter-productive by increasing reliance on the IAEA as the driver? e.g. the Regional Cooperation Agreement (RCA), nuclear security centres of excellence, regional virtual networks
- How might Asia-Pacific states contribute to global nuclear governance, especially through the IAEA;
- Are there areas for further research that may help stimulate regional debate about the need for strengthened nuclear governance in Asia-Pacific?