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From the end of the Second World War up to the Cold War and post-Cold War eras, Filipino public officials considered the external defense of the Philippines and the peace of Southeast Asia (and of the Asia-Pacific) as dependent on the confluence of several factors, such as (a) strong military presence of the US in the region; (b) balance of power between the US and the now-defunct Soviet Union; (c) cooperation and harmonious relations among regional states; and (d) peaceful coexistence and constructive engagement among the extra-regional powers and between them and the regional states.

These factors served as the principal determinants of the foreign policy decisions and diplomatic initiatives of Filipino presidents, starting from President Roxas in 1946 up to President Estrada at present. Some of these determinants gained more weight due to the changing challenges and realities in the internal and external environment of the Philippines.

The Roxas Administration (1946-1948)

President Manuel Roxas served as the last President of the Philippine Commonwealth and the first President of the Philippine Republic.

When Roxas took over the presidency, the Philippines and the rest of Southeast Asia were in ruins, convulsing from the massive devastation wrought by the Second World War. Poverty was everywhere. There was an urgent need for the inflow of financial resources and technical assistance to rehabilitate the economy, society and infrastructures of the various Southeast Asian countries. The instability of the region was heightened, not only by the reactionary measures unleased by the western colonial powers against the independence struggles in many countries,

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but also by the rise of communist groups waging wars of national liberation and by the gross inadequacies of newly-independent states to achieve political stability, socioeconomic growth and ethnic harmony.

The foreign policy of Roxas was basically pro-American. Proof of this was his announcement during his inaugural address on July 4, 1946 that under his administration, the first plank of Philippine foreign policy was forging close cooperation with the United States "in all matters concerning our common defense and security."¹ In that historic occasion, he emphatically declared that

"... Our safest course and I believe it true for the rest of the world as well, is in the glistening wake of America whose sure advance with mighty prow breaks for smaller craft the waves of fear."²

The pro-American orientation of Roxas was the result of three factors: (a) his resolve to address the armed threat posed by the Hukbong Mapagpalaya sa Bayan, better known as Huks, a local communist group with a very successful guerilla record against the Japanese during the Second World War and whose armed partisans were active in various parts of the Philippines, particularly in Central Luzon, Metro Manila and Southern Tagalog in the postwar period; (b) his perception that international communism is a serious threat to the security of the Philippines and the rest of Asia; and (c) his interest to win continued US support to enable his administration to obtain the resources essential for the immediate socioeconomic rehabilitation of the Philippines and its defense, especially from internal threats. Of course, it may also be said that Roxas' partiality towards the US was his way of showing his gratitude to General Douglas MacArthur and US High Commissioner Paul V. McNutt for supporting his presidential candidacy in the 1946 election, in spite of the accusation of some guerilla groups that he was a Japanese collaborator. The actions of the two US officials contributed to his victory and to the defeat of then President Sergio Osmeña, Sr.

Highlighting the pro-US stance of the Roxas administration were two military agreements it had concluded with the US in March 1947: the Military Bases Agreement (MBA) and the Military Assistance Agreement (MAA). The MBA, which was considered by Roxas as vital to the internal and external defense of the Philippines and to the collective peace of the Asia-Pacific, gave the US the right to use at least sixteen (16) sites as military bases for ninety-nine (99) years. The largest sites are those found in Pampanga (the Clark Air Base which served as the headquarters of the US 13th Air Force) and in Zambales (the Subic Naval Base which served as the homeport of the US 7th Fleet). The MAA, on the other hand,

provided the Philippines the opportunity to receive military weapons, supplies, equipment and training from the US --- something the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) needed badly at that time in order that it could cope with the rising Huk threat. Records show, however, that the military assistance received by the Philippines were mostly surplus materials and merely served as entry point for the US to influence the overall defense policies of the Philippines and the forced structuring and organizational development of the AFP. Ideally, the development of the AFP should have given priority to the strengthening of its air and naval components, in view of the archipelagic and maritime characteristics of the country. This did not happen, however, since most of what were transferred by the US to the AFP under the MAA were surplus weapons for ground forces. The AFP was envisioned as a mere internal defense force, consistent with the recommendation of the Joint US Military Advisory Group (JUSMAG), a body created under the MAA to provide technical military advice to the Philippines. Thus, the external defense of the Philippines became the de facto responsibility of the US. This was somehow formalized under the 1951 Philippine-US Mutual Defense Pact.

A few weeks after concluding the MBA and the MAA with the US, President Roxas had the opportunity to articulate his administration's foreign policy objectives before the Asian Relations Conference (ARC) held at New Delhi from March 23 to April 2, 1947. This nongovernmental conference of Asian leaders was organized by the Indian nationalist movement headed by Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. The Philippine delegation, even if it expressed the desire to see Asian states develop cooperation, failed to create a favorable image for the Philippines, since it called for the discussion of issues which were not popular to the conference participants. These issues included "good life, progress and well-being, press freedom, one world, equality of sexes, and world peace and understanding."3 While most ARC participants preferred to discuss "regional" issues, such as Asian unity and support for freedom movements in Asia, the Philippine delegates extolled the colonial record of the US and talked of the need for world unity. The final resolution of the ARC gave the Philippine delegates a valuable lesson on the Asian meaning of regional cooperation when it stressed that: (a) there could be no peace in Asia unless the freedom and well-being of its people are secured; (b) friendly relations among Asians should be developed and nurtured; (c) freedom should be granted to colonies; (d) the status of women should be uplifted; (e) inter-Asian communications should be encouraged; and (f) political freedom should be reinforced by economic development.⁴ In effect, the ARC was saying that regional cooperation in Asia, to be meaningful and to win the support of the regional states, should give priority to these six specific concerns. Content-wise, these concerns are non-ideological, pro-freedom and anti-colonial.

Before the United Nations, the Roxas administration articulated support for certain fundamental issues, something it did not do at the 1947 Asian Relations Conference. These issues included "collective security, early world disarmament, non-interference in the internal affairs of free peoples, protection and promotion of all freedoms, and abolition of trade barriers and discriminatory trade provisions.⁵

It may be said that President Roxas failed to advance his concept of regional cooperation in Asia because of suspicions generated by his pro-US orientation. The advent of the Cold War which pitted the US and its allies, like the Philippines, against the communist/socialist countries and members of the nonaligned movement heightened these suspicions. The Cold War escalated the polarization of Southeast Asia and made meaningful collaboration among regional states extremely difficult, especially in the area of political and security cooperation.

The Quirino Administration (1948-1953)

Vice President Quirino assumed the Philippine Presidency following the death of President Roxas on April 17, 1948. He was reelected in the 1949 election. His experience as concurrent Secretary of Foreign Affairs during the Roxas Administration served him well. He is best remembered for his foreign policy initiatives, especially in the area of regional cooperation, that were initially nonmilitary and noncommunist in character. These initiatives made him unpopular with the US.

There were at least five major occasions that provided the Quirino administration with the opportunity to articulate its views on regional peace through regional cooperation: the January 1949 New Delhi Conference; the July 1949 Pacific Union; the October 1949 communist takeover in China; the May 1950 Baguio Conference and the 1950 Korean War.

The New Delhi Conference was convened on January 20 to 23, 1949 to solicit the ideas of Asian countries on how they could best assist the United Nations in bringing about a peaceful solution to a regional problem — the December 18, 1948 invasion of Indonesia by the Netherlands, its colonial master before World War II. The Philippines gave importance to the Conference by sending General Carlos P. Romulo, its foremost diplomat at that time, as its principal delegate. The Philippine delegation called for the restoration of Indonesia's authority over its territory and Asian cooperation to achieve Indonesian independence through the United Nations. Romulo declared:

"... The only way to save Asia for democracy is to give its freedom and to accept its nations and peoples, more than half of the human race, as co-equal partners in the making of a freer and a better world."⁶

The Philippines scored a point when Indian Prime Minister Nehru adopted its suggestion to have a permanent consultative machinery that will serve as a clearing house of information to enable Asian countries to formulate a common position on regional issues like the Indonesian question. This became a reality in 1977, or 29 years later, when the ASEAN Central Secretariat was set up in Indonesia itself.

Indonesia ultimately gained its independence in December 1949 and the Philippines was one of the first countries to extend diplomatic recognition to the new state. The Quirino administration's support for Indonesian independence is one of the reasons for the close bilateral relations between the Philippines and Indonesia.

The first formal initiative by the Philippine government to have an organization for regional cooperation in Asia was the Pacific Pact. This was proposed by Quirino on July 4, 1949 to preserve the independence of the Pacific states so that they could focus their individual and cooperative efforts on national and regional development.

While Quirino's proposal was warmly endorsed by Chiang Kai-Shek, who was then fighting a losing war against the communist forces of Mao Zedong in China, and Syngman Rhee of Korea, who was then challenged by communist elements in his country, it failed to win the support of India and the US. The proposed Pacific Pact was deemed by the two countries as premature, in view of the volatile politico-military situation obtaining in many parts of Asia. Not giving up, Quirino added a military and anticommunist dimension to his Pacific Pact proposal to elicit US support. When the US still remained indifferent, Quirino reverted to his original view: that the Pacific Pact shall be essentially nonmilitary, nonhostile and noncommunist in character. However, the proposal of Quirino failed to gain ground because of the lack of interest of the intended members, the indifference of the US (it was then thinking of having a collective security pact that was anticommunist and pro-US), and the victory of the communist forces in China, which inevitably altered the security configuration of Southeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific.

The communist victory in China on September 29, 1949, the flight of Chiang Kai Shek to Taiwan, and his eventual establishment of the Republic of China with US support, were among the major foreign policy questions that confronted the Quirino administration. Initially, Quirino tried to project a neutral stance in the conflict between China and Taiwan. In his inaugural speech on December 30, 1949, he stated that

"... In our relations with the Chinese people with whom we have had such close contacts over many centuries, we shall maintain an open mind giving due heed to the requirements of our national security and the security of Asia as a whole."⁷

To Quirino, Philippine recognition of China was inevitable. He was not against the Philippines having peaceful coexistence with China, a potential regional power at that time and an inevitable key player in the regional security of Asia, saying

"... We are not anti-communist. We are non-communist. What we in the Philippines are interested in is our economic prosperity and our happiness. We are happy under our present system of government."⁸

"... The Philippines is committed to democracy but will not attempt to suppress communism in other countries if the government of those counties of their own free will choose to turn communist."⁹

The neutral stance of Quirino towards the Chinese communists and his grant of absolute amnesty to the local communists (the Huks) on June 21, 1948 were among the reasons why his administration received cold treatment from the US. However, because of the Cold War and the urgent need of the Philippines for funds in order to undertake economic rehabilitation and to contain the rising Huk insurgency, the Quirino administration ultimately supported the Chinese policy of the US, which regarded the Republic of China headed by Chiang Kai Shek as the legitimate Chinese government. This posture became fatal to Quirino's effort to have regional cooperation in Asia that was noncommunist in character. Philippine and US recognition of Taiwan resulted in the automatic exclusion of China in any regional or multilateral effort organized by the US and the West to address vital concerns in Asia, especially in Southeast Asia.

The rapid political changes in Asia, especially the victory of communism in various countries like China and Korea and in the whole of Indo-China, prompted Quirino to sponsor an Asian conference in Baguio City on May 26 to 30, 1950. Those who attended the conference were delegations from India, Indonesia, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), Australia, Pakistan, Thailand and, of course, the Philippines. The 1950 Baguio Conference, according to Quirino, will be the opportunity for the Asian countries to discuss common problems, examine issues that impact on the

security and stability of the region, and plan a regional action and a permanent regional association that will address problems within the framework of the United Nations. It may be said that the conference was Quirino's subtle way of reviving the 1949 Pacific Pact.

The Baguio conference failed to accomplish the objectives set by Quirino. It did not make political recommendations nor discussed military and anticommunist topics. This may be due to the ideological polarization of the participants: one group consisted of US allies in the Cold War (the Philippines, Pakistan, Thailand and Australia), while the other group was composed of countries that were perceived to be less sympathetic to the US and partial to the nonaligned movement (India, Indonesia and Ceylon). The future of the Baguio Conference was expected, since it was difficult for the two ideologically disparate groups to agree to a regional cooperation scheme proposed by the Philippines, a close US ally. India, for one, had some apprehensions. It did not want to compromise its status as one of the emerging leaders of nonaligned countries.

On August 1951, the Philippines concluded a Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) with the US. And before that, with some pressure from the US, the Quirino administration sent military troops to South Korea, which had been invaded by North Korea in 1950, with some help from China. These twin decisions deepened the involvement of the Philippines in the Cold War. The rationale of the Philippine decision to send military troops to Korea was to contain the further advance of communism in the peninsula, which may trigger a domino effect in Southeast Asia. On the other hand, the principal rationale for the Philippine-US Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) was to deter Chinese aggression. The strong anticommunist orientation of the MDT and the raging Cold War made it impossible for the Philippines and the US allies in Asia to enter into a security cooperation with China, the Soviet Union and their respective allies.

Quirino was defeated in the 1953 presidential election by Ramon Magsaysay, his own Secretary of National Defense.

The Magsaysay Administration (1953-1957)

President Magsaysay was extremely popular with the Filipino masses and the US because of his populist appeal, personal charisma and strong anticommunist posture. During his term, the external environment of the Philippines continued to be volatile. This was due to the ethnic strifes in many parts of Asia, the communist takeovers in North Korea and North Vietnam and the protracted communist insurgencies in Malaya, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines and the Indonesian states. At this time, the Philippines continued to share the US perception that China was the principal threat to the peace of Southeast Asia. Because of this, the Magsaysay administration regarded with apprehension the communist victories in North Korea and North Vietnam.

These developments were among those that prompted Magsaysay to support the initiative of John Foster Dulles, the US Secretary of State, to form a collective security alliance between the US and its regional allies to contain the spread of communism in Asia. Magsaysay hosted a meeting that led to the signing of the Manila Pact of 1954 and to the establishment of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), a Cold War-oriented, pro-US, pro-West and anticommunist regional organization that aimed to replicate in Asia the Western Europe-based North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Magsaysay signed the Manila Pact even if the SEATO Charter did not meet two of his original conditions: that it will be a NATO-type alliance and that it will affirm the rights of the people to freedom and independence in the treaty area.¹⁰ From its inception, the SEATO, as a regional security organization in Asia, was flawed, since the majority of its original members (US, France, United Kingdom, Pakistan, Australia and New Zealand) were not Southeast Asian countries, and the driving force was the US (a nonregional state) and the primary target was China (an Asian state). These factors, as well as the conflicting perceptions of the more influential SEATO members (US, UK, and France), reduced the organization into a mere paper tiger group. The SEATO lasted until 1977, although the Manila Pact of 1954 remains binding insofar as the Philippines, US and Thailand are concerned.

On April 1955, Magsaysay had the opportunity to articulate his views on regional security cooperation when the Philippines attended the Afro-Asian Conference held at Bandung, Indonesia. He gave General Romulo, the head of the Philippine delegation, the following instructions:

"... to advocate continued non-recognition and non-admission into the United Nations of Communist China; (to manifest) that the five-point Nehru-Chou principles of peaceful coexistence were meritorious in paper but were already covered in the United Nations Charter; to reaffirm the purely defensive and non-aggressive character of the Philippine military alignments with the West; to call attention to the continued efforts of the United Nations to control atomic weapons; and to condemn colonialism in all its forms."¹¹

The five principles of peaceful coexistence laid down by Nehru (of India)

and Chou En Lai (of China) and described by Magsaysay as "meritorious in paper" were: (1) mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; (2) mutual nonaggression; (3) mutual noninterference in each other's internal affairs; (4) equality and mutual benefit; and (5) peaceful coexistence.

In the Bandung Conference, Romulo affirmed Philippine support for freedom and independence, warned against the dangers of communism, extolled the democratic way of life, and justified the SEATO as a purely defensive and nonaggressive collective security pact. His views revolved on two general themes: first, that communism was a threat to the freedom of Asians; and second, that said freedom could be possible only in a democracy.

The themes articulated by Romulo proved to be unpopular, since these were not incorporated in the final communique of the Bandung Conference. Instead, the participants identified the following as regional threats: colonialism, racialism, cultural suppression, discrimination and nuclear weapons.¹² Communism was not mentioned. Similarly, the solutions that were offered to address these regional threats were less ideological, namely:

"(1) respect for human rights; (2) respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations; (3) recognition of the equality of all races and of all nations; (4) non-interference in the internal affairs of another country; (5) respect for the right of each nation to defend itself singly or collectively, in accordance with the UN Charter; (6) refraining from acts of threats or aggression or the use of force against another country; (7) promotion of mutual interests and cooperation; and (8) respect for justice and international obligations."⁽³⁾

The emphasis on solutions anchored on national sovereignty, equality of all nations and noninterference were direct rebukes to the Cold War sentiments expressed by the Philippine delegation. The Bandung Conference reiterated a lesson that should have been learned by the Philippines in 1949, following the failure of the Pacific Pact initiative of Quirino: that regional cooperation in Asia for the achievement of peace can only endure if the participating states free themselves of prejudices caused by their contrasting ideologies and alliance systems. It was pathetic for the Philippine delegates to justify before the Bandung Conference, which was basically nonaligned in character, the Philippine defense alliance with the US and its support for a Cold War-inspired regional organization like the SEATO, since these defense postures were primarily directed against China, one of the conference participants and, at that time, already an evolving major player in the quest for peace in Asia.

Before his death in March 1957, Magsaysay made some decisions that continued the isolation of the Philippines from its Asian neighbors. These included: (a) his clarification of the "Asia for the Asian policy" which was articulated by then Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Leon Ma. Guerrero to mean Philippine support for independence and the right of self determination of freedom-loving Asian countries, as well as closer cultural and economic relations between them and the Philippines without compromising its partnership with the US, and not the evolution of a pro-China orientation; (b) his endorsement of the US position on Taiwan (which alienated China); and (c) his extension of diplomatic recognition to the Republic of Vietnam headed by President Ngo Dinh Diem, even if the support enjoyed by Diem came more from the US and less from the Vietnamese people, and which antagonized the group of Ho Chi Minh and its foreign sympathizers. Also adding to Magsaysay's unpopularity among the non-US allies in Asia was the claim of Prince Norodom Sihanouk that he was violating Cambodia's policy of nonalignment by pressuring it to join the SEATO.

On the whole, Magsaysay tried to have good neighbor relations with Asian states in the interest of regional peace. However, he failed to achieve the outcomes he desired, in view of the Cold War orientation of his foreign policies. These policies merely heightened past suspicions that the Philippines was a proxy state of the US in Southeast Asia and an instrument for the containment of its ideological rivals.

The Garcia Administration (1957-1961)

Vice President Carlos P. Garcia became President, following the death of Magsaysay in an airplane crash on March 17, 1957. He served as Secretary of Foreign Affairs in a concurrent capacity during the Magsaysay administration. He was reelected in the 1957 presidential election.

The failure of the past Presidents to address national and regional problems in spite of their close links with the US, and the reluctance of the American government to give him adequate support, were among the reasons that prompted Garcia to inject a nationalistic tone to his domestic and foreign policies. These could be seen from his "Filipino First" policy. This means that Filipino businessmen shall be given priority in the issuance of permits and incentives so that they could wrest the control of the Philippine economy from foreign businessmen, specifically the Chinese and the Americans. This policy also shows his desire to deal with foreign countries, particularly the major powers in the Asia-Pacific, on an equal basis.

Notwithstanding his nationalist posture, Garcia did not recast the defense ties of the Philippines with the US. He supported the SEATO and forged close relations with US allies in the region, like South Vietnam, Taiwan, South Korea and Japan. He maintained the anticommunist posture of the Philippines in several ways: by refusing to extend diplomatic recognition to China, by opposing its application for UN membership and by not lifting the travel ban to the said country.

Nonetheless, Garcia had two diplomatic initiatives which showed that his Asian policy was different from the one adopted by Magsaysay, namely: (a) active support for the establishment of the Association of Southeast Asia (ASA); and (b) conduct of successful negotiations to revise the onerous provisions of the 1947 Philippine-US Military Bases Agreement (MBA).

The ASA was established on July 31, 1961 by Malaya, Philippines and Thailand as an organization for regional cooperation in Southeast Asia. The three countries expected the organization "...to uphold the ideals of peace, freedom, social justice and economic well-being . . ." and "to serve as an effective machinery for friendly consultations and collaboration in the economic, social, cultural, scientific and administrative fields."¹⁴

Garcia warmly endorsed the formation of ASA because

"... cooperation within it would not be anti-communist or anti-Western, that ASA would not be a political bloc, that it would not be related to SEATO or any other defense arrangement, and that it would be in accordance with the spirit of Bandung and the principle of the UN."¹⁵

To ensure the success of ASA and the expansion of its membership, the original members deliberately deleted from the 1961 Bangkok Declaration that formalized its establishment any provision that may be construed as having Cold War content. In spite of these precautions, the formation of the ASA was still not warmly received by the other Southeast Asian countries. For example, Indonesia expressed preference for an Afro-Asian grouping that was anchored on the principles of the 1955 Bandung Conference. Cambodia, on the other hand, did not join the ASA since it did not want to abandon its policy of neutrality.

The applications of Taiwan and South Vietnam for ASA membership were rejected. The reasons were valid enough. Taiwan, as a Northeast Asian state, was deemed to be not qualified to become a member, since the ASA was intended to be not a regional grouping of Southeast Asian states. On the other hand, the ASA did not approve the membership application of South Vietnam since it did not want

to take sides in the political strife between the South and North Vietnamese. Instead, ASA called on all parties in the Vietnam War to negotiate and strive for a peaceful settlement of the conflict. This stance of ASA on the Vietnam War, which was supportive of regional peace (even if this had an anti-American content), was supported by the Garcia administration. Garcia's decision may be considered as part of his overall effort to let the pro-Asian drift of Philippine foreign policy, which started in 1961, to take its natural cause.

The other initiative of Garcia that had implications to regional peace was his success in revising the 1947 MBA, making it less threatening to China and the non-US allies in Asia. It should be mentioned that Magsaysay tried, but failed, to negotiate for the revision of some MBA provisions during his administration. Garcia proved to be luckier. He was successful in reducing the basing period from 99 years to 25 years, although the MBA may be renewed for a longer period or terminated any time by mutual agreement; in limiting the number of US bases to only four (Clark Air Base, Subic Naval Base, US Naval Air Station at Sangley Point and Camp John Hay); and in making the US recognize ". . . the right of the Philippines to be consulted on the operational use of the American bases in the Philippines in situations which might involve the US in Asia."¹⁶

The nationalistic policies of Garcia locally and regionally, while subdued by the Cold War, did not sit well with the US.

The Macapagal Administration (1961-1965)

Macapagal was a foreign service officer before he embarked on a political career that catapulted him to the presidency in 1961. He served as Chief of the Law Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and later as Consul and Second Secretary of the Philippine Embassy in Washington, D.C.

During his term, Macapagal made some foreign policy decisions that highlighted the Asian identity of the Philippines. First, he tapped Asian diplomats to represent the Philippines in countries where it had a diplomatic mission. Previous Philippine Presidents used American diplomats for this purpose, consistent with the 1946 Philippine-US Treaty of General Relations. Second, he cancelled his planned 1962 state visit to the US and changed the July 4, 1946 independence day of the Philippines (which was US-influenced) to June 12, 1898, in protest against the failure of the US government to complete its promised war damage payments. Third, he established closer relations with Indonesia, Malaya, South Vietnam, Thai-

land, Pakistan, Burma and Japan. And fourth, he did not support the US position on the Laotian question by endorsing the government of General Phoumi Nosavan, instead of the government of Souvannah Phouma, the one officially favored by the US.

On the whole, the foreign policies of the Macapagal administration had the following characteristics:

"...(1) continued emphasis on the domestic economy; (2) continued nonintercourse with the communist countries in the foreseeable future; (3) more criticism of the United States in its relations with communist countries and reliance on material rather than spiritual and ideological weapons; (4) more economic and financial relations with Japan, Western Europe, Spain and the Latin world because of the powerful Latin element in Philippine culture; and (5) more relations with Southeast Asia and Oceanic neighbors because of the inevitable pull of race, culture and geographical factors."¹⁷

These characteristics are reflected in its foreign policy goals, namely:

"...(1) peace and security in Southeast Asia, (2) respect for sovereignty of states, (3) right of self determination of dependent peoples in the region, (4) union of Malay peoples, (5) Asian solution for Asian problems, (6) defeat of communism, and (7) pacific settlement of disputes."¹⁸

From these listing of goals, one can surmise that the Macapagal administration tried to project the Asian identity of the Philippines and its resolve to have closer links between the Philippines and the other Asian countries. Its only goal that had Cold War overtone was its anticommunist posture. However, this was somewhat subdued by its commitment to respect the sovereignty of states, uphold the right of self-determination of dependent peoples in the region and provide Asian solution for Asian problems.

Macapagal is best remembered for proposing in 1962 the organization of Malaya, the Philippines and Indonesia into a loose confederation so that, together, they could address their disputes in a peaceful manner. He called this confederation the MAPHILINDO. At that time, Philippine-Malayan relations were strained because of the Sabah claim of the Philippines, Malaya's refusal to acknowledge the claim and its decision to include the Sabah territory in the federation of Malaysia that it was about to establish. On the other hand, Indonesian-Malayan relations were similarly strained. Indonesia regarded the soon-to-be-formed Malaysian Federation as a neocolonial state that will merely perpetuate the British influence in Southeast Asia, and therefore a threat to its national sovereignty. Malaya on its part,

felt threatened by the rise of communism in Indonesia, since this could complicate its own communist insurgency problem, and by the intrusion of Indonesian military forces in its territory after Indonesia announced its *konfrontasi* campaign to abort the Malaysian Federation.

The MAPHILINDO was Macapagal's contribution to the continuing quest of the Philippines for stable peace in Southeast Asia. He envisioned the confederation to eventually include the other regional states (like Thailand, Burma, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam), and to serve as a machinery for consultation and consensusformation for the settlement of the Sabah claim of the Philippines, for the adoption of common measures to bring about economic development in Southeast Asia (and thus insulate it from communism) and for the establishment of a lasting regional peace. Unfortunately, the MAHILINDO failed to take off because of the *konfrontasi* campaign of Indonesia against Malaysia, the Sabah claim of the Philippines and the cold response of the other Southeast Asian states. For example, Prince Sihanouk of Cambodia opposed the MAPHILINDO proposal because it might prejudice his country's policy of neutrality.

As stated earlier, the Macapagal administration continued to regard communism as a threat to the security of the Philippines and to the peace of Southeast Asia, like the other administrations before it. In keeping with this perception, Macapagal pledged that the Philippines will do its obligations under the SEATO charter to help bring about peace in the region, especially in South Vietnam, where the US and its allies were then busy assisting the Diem regime fight the armed challenge of the communist forces from North Vietnam. The Philippines, during the Macapagal administration, sent a team of doctors and nurses to South Vietnam. And as he was about to end his term, Macapagal requested the Philippine Congress to provide funds to support an engineering batallion that will be sent to the war-torn country. Macapagal, in these two instances, endeared himself to the noncommunist leaders in Asia, since he defied the wish of the US that the Philippines should, instead, send combat forces.

Macapagal's resolve to have an Asian solution for Asian problems and his lukewarm support to the Vietnam War policy of the US were among the reasons that made him unpopular to the Americans. In the 1965 presidential election, he lost to Ferdinand E. Marcos, the Senate President at that time. During the election campaign, Marcos publicly opposed the plan of Macapagal to send an engineering battalion to Vietnam.

The Marcos Administration (1965-1986)

Marcos made several decisions before September 1972 that had an impact on regional peace. These included the dispatch of an engineering batallion to Vietnam, support for the formation of the ASEAN in 1967 as a regional organization in Southeast Asia, reexamination of the security policies of the Philippines in response to the 1969 Nixon doctrine and expansion of Philippine-Asian relations, including the study of the possibility of the Philippines establishing diplomatic ties with the socialist and communist states in the Asia-Pacific, particularly with China and the Soviet Union.

Immediately after assuming the presidency in 1965, Marcos reversed his earlier stand against the sending of a military contingent to South Vietnam, after he obtained assurances from the US that the Philippines will receive equipment to support an AFP engineering brigade that will do civic action in remote regions of the country. In June 1966, he signed a law (Republic Act 4664) which authorized the formation of the first Philippine Civic Action Group to Vietnam (1st PHILCAG V). This group "consisted of engineering construction, medical and rural community development teams for socio-economic projects mutually agreed upon by the governments of South Vietnam and the Philippines."19 The decision of Marcos to send the PHILCAG V fell short of what US President Johnson wanted its Asian allies to do - to send combat troops and actively support the American war effort against the forces of Ho Chi Minh. This notwithstanding, the Philippines during the first Marcos administration remained an active participant in the Vietnam War. It authorized the US to use its facilities and personnel at Clark Air Base and Subic Naval Base in support of the said war. Camp John Hay, for instance, became the foremost rest and recreation center of American forces departing from the Vietnam war zone.

The year 1967 was a milestone in the history of regional cooperation in Southeast Asia. The year marked the establishment of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), with the following countries as original members: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. In a way, it may be said to be an expansion of the ASA that was formed in 1961.

In the discussions preparatory to the formation of the ASEAN, the Philippines insisted that the planned organization

". . . should not be a military nor an anti-communist league; (and) problems of security should be discussed frankly but each state should be left in upholding its own institutions." $^{\!\!\!\!20}$

This view was adopted by the ASEAN. This may be seen from its organizational aims and purposes, namely:

- 1. "To accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region through joint endeavors in the spirit of equality and partnership in order to strengthen the foundation for a prosperous and peaceful community of Southeast Asian nations;
- 2. To promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in the relationship among countries of the region and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter;
- 3. To promote active collaboration and mutual assistance on matters of common interest in the economic, social, cultural, technical, scientific and administrative fields;
- 4. To provide assistance to each other in the form of training and research facilities in the educational, professional, technical, and administrative spheres;
- 5. To collaborate more effectively for the greater utilization of their agricultural industries, the expansion of their trade, including the study of the problems of international commodity trade, the improvement of their transportation and communication facilities and the raising of the living standards of their peoples;
- 6. To promote Southeast Asian studies; and
- 7. To maintain close and beneficial cooperation with existing international and regional organizations with similar aims and purposes, and explore all avenues for even closer cooperation among themselves."²¹

Six of the seven objectives of the ASEAN highlights its status as a regional organization for economic, social and cultural cooperation. The only provision that is tantamount to a political objective was Objective No. 2 — to promote regional peace and stability. Perhaps one reason for this subdued political content was the desire of the original ASEAN members to insulate the organization from Cold War politics so that it could gain the support of the other Southeast Asian countries, become a viable instrument for regional peace and cooperation, and avoid the fate of the SEATO. This was their way of manifesting their collective resolve to

[&]quot;ensure their stability and security from external interference in any form or

manifestation in order to preserve their national identities in accordance with the ideas and aspirations of their peoples."²²

Marcos' perception of regional peace in Southeast Asia was affected by the so-called Nixon doctrine. It may be recalled that in 1969, as a result of the mounting social and financial costs of the US war effort in Vietnam, President Nixon stated that

"... while the US would honor its treaty commitments, it would not get involved in any more wars like Vietnam and would reduce its military commitments and presence in Asia."²³

The 1969 Nixon doctrine became a signal for the Philippines and its ASEAN partners who were perceived as US allies in Southeast Asia to reexamine their security policies and review their relationship with the US and the communist powers in Asia (China and the Soviet Union). Obviously, they could not afford to continue pursuing a "no peace, no war" policy towards the communist countries, now that the US had made known its plan to withdraw or reduce its military presence in the region. A continued hostile policy between the Philippines and the ASEAN countries on one hand, and the communist powers on the other hand, would be prejudicial to their internal security, considering that a number of them were threatened by protracted communist insurgencies.

Before the end of his first term in 1969, Marcos worked for the renegotiation of the RP-US Military Bases Agreement as well as directed the conduct of studies on the feasibility of establishing diplomatic relations with the communist countries. He declared before the Philippine Congress in 1969 the inevitability of the Philippines co-existing with China in the future, saying

"We in Asia must strive toward a modus vivendi with Red China. I reiterate this need, which is becoming more urgent each day. Before long, Communist China will have increased its striking power a thousand-fold with a sophisticated delivery system for its nuclear weapons. We must prepare to co-exist peaceably with Communist China."²⁴

In 1971, the Philippines under Marcos and the rest of the ASEAN countries signed the so-called Kuala Lumpur Declaration, which had a far-reaching implication on the peace and stability of Southeast Asia. This declaration bound the ASEAN countries to

"exert initially necessary efforts to secure the recognition of, and respect for, Southeast Asia as a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality, free from any

form or manner of interference by outside powers."25

In 1972, Marcos imposed martial law in the Philippines. From 1972 up to 1986, he used his extra-constitutional powers to make political, economic and sociocultural changes in the country to support his vision of a New Society that was pro-people, pro-God and pro-country. However, Marcos became ultimately unpopular because the outcome of his martial law policies was the establishment of an authoritarian government that violated the democratic values and institutions of the Filipino people.

However, there was one initiative of Marcos that was well received. This was his effort to make Philippine diplomacy more flexible, pragmatic, and development-oriented, in response to the rising domestic pressures and emerging realities in Asia. This reorientation was a big boost to regional peace, since it led Marcos to review the security links of the Philippines with the US, end its "no peace, no war" relations with communist countries and establish meaningful relations with nonaligned countries that were traditionally suspicious of the US.

There were several reasons why the Philippines established friendly relations with communist countries, starting with those in Eastern Europe in 1972 and 1973, with China in 1975 and with the Soviet Union in 1976. These included: the desire of the Philippines to obtain their support in addressing the local communist insurgency, find new markets for Philippine exports and boost its overall foreign trade; the increasing co-existence between the West and the communist countries; the end of the Vietnam War that resulted to a stronger Vietnam, a more influential China, and an ASEAN that was anxious to have a comprehensive engagement with China; the uncertain status of the US as regional power in the post-Vietnam War era; China's acceptance by the international community as evidenced by its 1971 UN membership, as well as its success in becoming a permanent member of the Security Council and in ousting Taiwan from the UN; and the 1972 Shanghai Communique which normalized US-China relations.

From 1972 to 1976, Marcos came out with the following foreign policy guidelines: (1) pursuit and maintenance of ties with all countries regardless of ideology, based on mutual respect, mutual beneficiality and mutual regard for each other's independence; (2) broadening of Philippine relations with the ASEAN and active support for its transformation into a viable regional organization; (3) pursuit of more vigorous trade and economic relations with the socialist states; (4) closer identification with the developing countries of Asia (and Africa and Latin America) in the establishment of a new international economic order; (5) reorientation of its

trade and security relations with the US in the light of the emerging realities in Asia; (6) continuation of beneficial relations with Japan; (7) support for the struggle of the Arab countries for a just and enduring peace in the Middle East consistent with UN resolutions; (8) increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the UN as a peace-making body through charter reforms.

These foreign policy guidelines were dictated by pragmatic considerations. The Philippines needed to have a balanced and more symmetrical relationship with the regional powers in Asia (especially the US, China and Japan), since the Cold War was subsiding, the strategic influence of China and Japan was steadily rising, and there is a need for it to diversify its trade and labor markets. Marcos called for closer Philippine-China and Philippine-Arab relations to enhance the capability of his administration to address the local communist insurgency problem and the Muslim separatist problem in the South, as well to assure dependable oil supply and overseas labor market for the Philippines.

In 1976, the Philippines under President Marcos signed two vital documents: the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) and the Declaration of ASEAN Concord. Under the TAC, the ASEAN member countries agreed to be guided by the following principles in their relations with one another: ²⁶

- a. Mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity and national identity of all nations;
- **b.** the right of every state to lead its national existence free from external interference, subversion or coercion;
- c. non-interference in the internal affairs of one another;
- d settlement of differences or disputes by peaceful means;
- e. renunciation of the threat or use of force; and
- f. effective cooperation among themselves

Under the ASEAN Concord, the Philippines (like the other ASEAN countries) pledged to

"take active steps for the early establishment of the zone of peace, freedom and neutrality; rely exclusively on peaceful processes in the settlement of intra-regional differences; strive to create conditions conducive to the promotion of peaceful cooperation among the nations of Southeast Asia on the basis of mutual respect and mutual benefit; vigorously develop an awareness of regional identity and exert all efforts to create a strong ASEAN community respected by all and respecting all nations on the basis of mutually advantageous relationships, and in accordance with the principles of self-determination, sovereign equality and non-interference in the internal affairs of nations."²⁷

The call for the establishment of the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) in Southeast Asia, which was first enunciated by the ASEAN in 1971, was a courageous move, since it highlighted the organization's resolve to insulate or free the Southeast Asian region from the strategic posturings of the major powers in the Asia-Pacific region, especially in the post-Vietnam war era.

On the whole, the foreign policy initiatives of Marcos gave the Philippines the opportunity to have closer and meaningful relations with Asian countries desiring its friendship. The establishment of diplomatic relations between the Philippines and China (and eventually between the other ASEAN member countries and China), as well as between the Philippines and the Soviet Union and other communist countries, was a big boost to the creation of a peaceful regional environment conducive to cooperation and independence. This was a historic achievement of the second Marcos administration.

The Aquino Administration (1986-1992)

President Aquino assumed the Philippine presidency in February 1986, following the "EDSA Revolution" that resulted in the downfall of the 20-year regime of Marcos. When she took over, a serious economic crisis faced the country. Among the many problems that confronted her administration were:

"poverty, income inequality, unemployment and underemployment, a huge external debt, urban and rural development disparities, a rapidly increasing population, insurgency, and a divided military."²⁸

The Aquino administration inherited

"an economy that had been plundered and devastated. The growth rate in 1984 was minus 4 percent, in 1985 it was minus 5 percent. The foreign debt was a crushing \$28 billion. . . the coffers were practically empty and many government financial institutions were in the red or bankrupt. It also inherited government agencies that had been corrupted, weakened and subordinated to the dictator (and) a politicized, divided and demoralized military."²⁹

These constraints prompted President Aquino to focus more attention on urgent domestic concerns, such as the dismantling of the remaining vestiges of the authoritarian regime of Marcos and the recovery of his ill-gotten wealth; restoration of democratic institutions and the establishment of a pluralist democracy; the rehabilitation of the national economy, which was ravaged by recurring brownouts that lasted for more than five hours daily, natural calamities (floods, earthquakes and the eruption of Mount Pinatubo), labor unrest and a huge public debt; and the neutral-

ization of internal threat groups such as the CPP-NPA, Muslim separatist, military rebels, Marcos loyalist forces and criminal syndicates. The seven coup attempts initiated by the military rebels, particularly the August 1987 and the November 1989 coups, and the intensified armed offensives of the communist insurgents and the Moro separatists made the Aquino administration the most beleaguered and threatened administration in Philippine political history.

However, in spite of its preoccupation with internal or domestic concerns, the Aquino administration still managed to pursue some initiatives in support of the cause of peace in Southeast Asia. For example, it broadened Philippine bilateral relations with communist countries like China and Vietnam, as well as enhanced regional cooperation through the ASEAN by working for an economic agreement and a consensus on regional security. It also succeeded in enacting a constitution (the 1987 Philippine Constitution) that mandates the Philippine government to pursue a policy of peace and cooperation with all nations, maintain an independent foreign policy and prohibit the deployment of nuclear weapons in any part of its national territory. The specific constitutional provisions are as follows:

- a. Section 2, Article II (Declaration of Principles) which reads:
 "The Philippines renounces war as an instrument of national policy, adopts the generally accepted principles of international law as part of the laws of the land and adheres to the policy of peace, equality, freedom, cooperation and unity with all nations."
- b. Section 7, Article II (State Policies) which reads:
 "The state shall pursue an independent foreign policy. In its relations with other states, the paramount consideration shall be national sover-eignty, territorial integrity, national interests, and the right to self-determination."
- c. Section 8, Article II (State Policies) which reads:"The Philippines, consistent with the national interest, adopts and pursues a policy of freedom from nuclear weapons in its territory."

The Philippines under the Aquino administration signed two ASEAN documents that boosted the cause of peace in Southeast Asia: the Manila Declaration of 1987 and the 1992 ASEAN Declaration on the South China Sea. The first document reiterated the objectives of the 1976 ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation and the Declaration of ASEAN Concord. It also called for the inten-

sification of efforts towards the early realization of ZOPFAN and the establishment of a Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), in consultation with states outside the ASEAN. The second document, on the other hand, listed the confidence-building policies that should be observed for the peaceful resolution of the Spratly issue; asked the claimant countries (China, Taiwan, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei) to exercise maximum restraint with the aim of creating a positive climate for the peaceful resolution of the dispute; and encouraged them to explore the possibility of joint cooperation in many endeavors, including maritime navigation and communication, marine environment pollution control, search and rescue operations and anti-piracy and drug trafficking efforts in the disputed South China Sea area. The ASEAN document was prompted by concerns about the Spratly dispute becoming a serious regional flashpoint because of the initiatives unilaterally taken by some claimant countries (notably China and Vietnam) to assert the legitimacy of their territorial claims through political and military means.

The positive environment created by these two ASEAN documents was somewhat eroded, however, by Aquino's decision, after a long "open option" posture, favoring the continuation of the US military facilities in the Philippines for seven years after 1991 under a new bilateral agreement called the Philippine-US Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Security. Her decision was prompted by the perception that these air and naval facilities are vital to the security of the Philippines (since these serve as deterrence to foreign aggression) and of the Asia-Pacific (since these balance the Soviet military presence at Cam Ranh Bay and Da Nang in Vietnam). Aquino's view on the importance of the US facilities in the Philippines was shared by Singapore and Thailand and opposed by Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam, although publicly, the ASEAN maintained that the future of the US military facilities in the Philippines was a bilateral concern of the Philippines and the US. According to one analyst,

"President Aquino missed an appointment with history when she reversed her original intent as a candidate for President to remove the US forces from the Philippine military bases . . . In her view as President, it was more important to delay the departure of the US military in order to avoid the economic dislocation of the people in surrounding communities and to ensure continuing US support in trade, aid, investments and national security."³⁰

The Philippine Senate, under the leadership of then Senate President Jovito Salonga, did not ratify the new treaty in 1991 (it lost by one vote) for a number of reasons. It rejected the position of the Aquino administration (and the US government) that the US military facilities in the Philippines contributed to global stability and provided the framework for regional stability and security necessary for the country's

economic growth, The Philippine Senate decision was hailed by the Soviet Union and the Indo-China states as well as by ASEAN members who are active in the nonaligned movement as a boost to regional peace. The rejection of the TFCS meant that the Filipinos "do not need a policeman from outside the region. The security of the region should be our concern, together with all our neighbors."³¹

The Ramos Administration (1992-1998)

The policy of the Ramos administration on regional peace may be derived from the views articulated by President Ramos himself. Security-wise, Ramos wanted a Philippines that is "peaceful, neutral and nuclear-free"³² and an "effective partner with the global community."³³ In short, he wanted the Philippines to free itself from its Cold War image as a client state of the West, particularly of the United States. To achieve this objective, Ramos called for the establishment of a new security environment in Southeast Asia that is anchored "in terms not of deterrence but of mutual reassurance, not of containment but of constructive engagement."³⁴ According to him,

"... this new security environment becomes possible only if the Southeast Asian countries become united, notwithstanding their contrasting cultures, historical experiences, and socio-political systems. If they develop a sense of community, they will gain the economic clout, the internal market, the cultural variety and the talent pool they need to become major players in the future world."³⁵

The unification of Southeast Asia has its obvious advantages. Ramos believed that

"... unification will strengthen Southeast Asia as a whole against strategic uncertainties, particularly since the relationship among the big powers with interests in East Asia are still evolving, in ways difficult to predict. Unification will prevent our countries from once again becoming pawns in the politics of great powers — as our countries were during the colonial period."³⁶

In 1994, Ramos stated that the logical core of a unified Southeast Asia was an expanded ASEAN.³⁷ He reiterated this in 1996 during the APEC Ministerial Meeting, saying

"expansion of the ASEAN is the key in order to establish a stronger identity, promote development and maintain stability. Our ultimate goal is to create a regional community in Southeast Asia through an expanded ASEAN

which will be the principal core of East Asia's future stability and growth."38

The ASEAN "expanded" in a *de facto* manner (or indirectly) when it formed the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). The latter was conceived as a multilateral forum of the ASEAN and its dialogue partners on regional security issues in Southeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific. Ramos was optimistic of the ARF, saying

"... the ARF is our equivalent of Europe's Conference on Security and Cooperation (CSCE). Flexible, informal and based on consensus, the ARF complements our network of bilateral and subregional security mechanisms in the work of building the enduring structures for Asian security and stability."³⁹

To make peace more enduring in Southeast Asia, Ramos called for the building of a sense of community among its neighbors, particularly the Asia-Pacific (ASPAC) countries, through intensified economic and technical cooperation. He wants the ASPAC countries to

"... fashion out a new model of cooperation, one that relies on the sharing of information, knowledge, experience and expertise, rather than merely transferring resources from the rich to the poor; one that encourages initiative and participation from the private sector, rather than relying on governments always to assume the central role; and where everyone contributes according to one's capabilities where priorities are jointly set, and where there are no junior partners, only equal partners."⁴⁰

Ramos admitted that developing the viable regional security system for Southeast Asia (and the Asia-Pacific) is not easy because

"... a process that would result in greater security for an entire region is not just a set of desired goals. It must be a veritable structure in itself — consisting of many building blocks and elements. Because regional security involves diverse nations, the effort is never simple. It evolves from the convergence of many efforts — on many fronts and many tracks. Such a security strategy — it has been suggested — should closely parallel the region's experience in economic cooperation. In both APEC and ASEAN, the outcomes we see today result from the years of patient and painstaking construction. Building for regional security requires the same patient, sustained and diversified effort."⁴¹

The views of Ramos that were cited earlier became the basis of the diplomatic initiatives pursued by his administration that contributed to the maintenance of peace, not only in Southeast Asia but in the Asia-Pacific as well. These initiatives

included the following: (1) support for the ASEAN membership applications of Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar; (2) ratification of and/or accession to several multilateral treaties or conventions to include the Chemical Weapons Convention, convention on prohibitions or restrictions in the use of conventional weapons, which may be deemed to be injurous or to have indiscriminate effects, Convention on Nuclear Safety, and Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty; (3) support for multilateral efforts that aimed to enhance peace in the Korean Peninsula; (4) support for the 1993 UN peace-keeping operations in Kampuchea and to the ASEAN effort to help bring about peace and political reconciliation in the country; (5) conclusion of bilateral codes of conduct with China and Vietnam for the peaceful resolution of the Spratly problem, consistent with the spirit of the 1992 Manila Declaration of the ASEAN; (6) normalization of relations with Malaysia, despite the Sabah question; (7) redefinition of the Philippine-US relations in the context of the existing and emerging realities in Asia and the conclusion of a Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) between the two countries (the VFA was ratified by the Philippine Senate in 1999, after the term of Ramos) to support the implementation of the 1951 Philippine-US Mutual Defense Treaty; (8) active participation in multilateral economic agreements like the World Trade Organization (WTO), APEC, ASEAN, and ASEM which promote trade and investment liberalization and facilitation as well as economic and technical cooperation; (9) support for ASEAN initiatives to boost intra-ASEAN trade through economic integration, such as the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA), ASEAN Investment Area (AIA) and ASEAN Industrial Cooperation (AIC); (10) active involvement in the efforts of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), a multilateral consultation mechanism between the ASEAN and its dialogue partners in the Asia-Pacific, to develop political and security cooperation through confidence building, preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution; (11) support to all UN General Assembly resolutions calling for disarmament and the immediate adoption of a nuclear disarmament treaty, the consolidation of all nuclear weapons-free zones in the world, and the adoption of a total ban on land mines; and (12) submission of a proposal calling for the establishment of ASIATOM that will include the ASEAN countries, China, Japan and South Korea to facilitate regional cooperation on nuclear safety and nuclear waste management.

The efforts of the Ramos administration to contribute to regional peace through bilateral and multilateral cooperation and to make the Philippines a newlyindustrializing country was stymied by a number of factors, among them the 1997 Asian financial crisis that led to the fall of economies, not only of Southeast Asian countries but also of East Asian countries like Japan and South Korea.

The Estrada Administration (1998-2004)

President Estrada has been in office for less than two years. His priority concerns are domestic issues, such as food security, agricultural development and peace and order. His views on regional peace do not depart radically from those expressed by Ramos — his definition of national security is almost a direct copy of Ramos' definition.⁴²

In support of his view of national security, Estrada announced that the Philippine under his administration will pursue five diplomatic thrusts:⁴³

First is to

"... strengthen or normalize our bilateral security arrangements, particularly with the United States, our ASEAN partners, and pursue greater confidence building and security cooperation with our multilateral security partners in the ASEAN regional Forum and in the United Nations."

Second is to

"... press for cooperation in the international community in addressing the financial and economic crisis gripping Asia, and in finding solutions to new or long-festering threats to peace, such as the situations in the South China Sea, the Korean Peninsula, South Asia, the Middle East and elsewhere."

Third is to

"...link up even more closely with other nations in combatting international terrorism, drug trafficking, trafficking in women and children, money laundering and other transnational crimes; and in addressing issues of nuclear non-proliferation, transborder pollution, women and children, indigenous peoples and human rights."

Fourth is to

"... continue our support for a more open, freer and fairer global trade and investment regime, and our active participation and commitment to the goals of AFTA, APEC, ASEM and WTO."

And fifth is to

"... seek further global cooperation in promoting and protecting the rights and welfare of migrant workers, and actively support initiatives on other migration issues."

Like Ramos, Estrada believes that the cause of regional peace will be served if there is integration of all Southeast Asian countries in ASEAN and if they develop a sense of community. This will be possible, according to him, if

"... we go back to the most basic, that is by allowing the confidence we have been building these past three decades to take its due course. Let us be open to one another and freely and candidly exchange views no matter how controversial the issue. Only by being open can we truly appreciate what unites us or divides us."⁴⁴

Estrada admitted that the ASEAN can only do so much in promoting regional peace and there is a need for the East Asian states to do their share. He said:

"... the ASEAN lives in a bigger neighborhood. A neighborhood of giants where the ghost of historic conflicts lurk and the debris of great wars fought litter the ground. Peace in East Asia contributes to peace in ASEAN. Stability in East Asia helps stability in ASEAN. Prosperity in East Asia spurs prosperity in ASEAN. Peace, true and lasting peace, in East Asia is possible only if the lingering animosities are put to rest, as they were in Europe, and if the unresolved issues from the Second World War are settled ... The way to the just and lasting settlement of the issues of war and peace in East Asia requires open, free and candid dialogue. It is time for Japan, China and Korea to talk and put the past behind them."⁴⁵

While Estrada called for a continuing bilateral cooperation with Asian nations to achieve a peaceful regional environment, he maintained that until the Philippines

"... develops a credible military deterrent, it must depend on the goodwill of its neighbors, on its treaty commitments with the United States, and on the skills of its diplomats in conveying to everyone that it wants only peace, stability and shared prosperity."⁴⁶

This explains why the Estrada administration actively worked for the ratification of the Philippine-US Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) — it was successful

in this endeavor. His administration regards the Philippine-US defense relationship as operationalized by the 1947 Military Assistance Agreement, 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty, and the 1954 Manila Pact as an important element in defending the country from external threats and in establishing peace in Southeast Asia. As highlighted by a 1998 VFA briefing paper of the Department of Foreign Affairs,

"One practical benefit to the Philippines of its defense and security alliance with the United States is the measure of deterrence this relationship provides against its would-be aggressors thereby guaranteeing its stability, which is vital to its economic development and the welfare of individual Filipinos. Aside from the long-term benefit of maintaining a peaceful regional environment and security from external aggression, another practical advantage of its defense cooperation with the United States is the opportunity provided by this defense cooperation for the Philippines to develop its defense capabilities through military assistance and training programs."⁴⁷

As the 21st century drew even closer, it appeared that the Philippine Republic still found the time-tested paradigms of foreign policy still operative and worth giving another try.

Notes

¹Quoted in Ricardo Jose, "One Hundred Years of Philippine-United States Relations: An Outline History," in Baviera, Aileen San Pablo and Yu- Jose, Lydia, *Philippine External Relations: A Centennial Vista* (Pasay City: Foreign Service Institute, Department of Foreign Affairs), 1998, p. 409.

² *Ibid.*, p. 408.

³Estrella Solidum, "Philippine External Relations with Southeast Asia," in Baviera and Yu-Jose, *ibid.*, p. 141.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Benjamin Domingo, *The Making of Filipino Foreign Policy*. (Manila: Foreign Service Institute, 1983), p. 150.

⁶Estrella Solidum in Baviera and Yu-Jose, *ibid.*, p. 143.

⁷Quoted in Benito Lim, "A History of Philippine-China Relations," Baviera and Yu-Jose, *ibid*, p. 225.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 225.

[°]*Ibid.*, p. 226.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 227; see also Domingo, *The Making of Filipino Foreign Policy*, p. 163.

Domingo, *ibid.*, p.162.

¹² Solidum in Baviera and Yu-Jose, *ibid.*, p. 156.

¹³*Ibid.*, p.154.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p.157.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p.158.

¹⁶Jose in Baviera and Yu-Jose, *ibid*, p. 421.

¹⁷Domingo, The Making of Filipino Foreign Policy, p.184.

¹⁸Solidum in Baviera and Yu-Jose, *ibid.*, p.163.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p.109.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p.168.

²¹Text of the ASEAN Declaration signed at Bangkok on August 8, 1967 may be found in *ASEAN and the Philippines*, *1997-1998*, published by the ASEAN-Philippines National Secretariat, Office of ASEAN Affairs, Department of Foreign Affairs. See p. 162.

²²*Ibid.*, p.161.

²³Jose in Baviera and Yu-Jose, *ibid.*, p. 423.

²⁴Quoted in Lim in Baviera and Yu-Jose, *ibid.*, p. 235.

²⁵See the Kuala Lumpur Declaration.

²⁶See the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC). Text may be found in *ASEAN and the Philippines*, 1997-1998.

²⁷See the 1976 Declaration of ASEAN Concord.

²⁸Abueva, Jose and Roman, Emerlinda (ed), *Corazon C. Aquino, Early Assessment of her Presidential Leadership and Administration and her Place in History.* (Diliman: University of the Philippines Press), 1993, p. 234.

²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 262.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 259.

³¹Manila Times. May 1990, p.2.

³²Fookien Times 1994 Philippine Yearbook, p. 27.

³³See the 1996 Ulat sa Bayan of President Ramos.

³⁴Ramos, Fidel, "East Asia Enters the Zone of Peace," *Foreign Relations Journal*, Vol. IX, No. 3, October 1994, p. 2.

³⁵Ibid. ³⁶Ibid.

³⁷*Ihid.*

³⁸*Philippine Star*, 18 March 1997, p. 30.

³⁹Ramos, Fidel, "East Asia Enters . . ," *ibid.*, p. 2.

⁴⁰*Philippine Star*, 18 March 1997, p. 30.

⁴¹Ramos, Fidel, "Building the Structure of ASEAN Security," in Security and Regional Order in ASEAN and the Role of External Powers, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and Institute for Strategic and Development Studies, Inc., 1997, p.10.

⁴²*Manila Bulletin*, 25 July 1998, p. 7.

⁴³*Ibid*.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵*Ibid*.

⁴⁶Speech of President Estrada at the graduation ceremonies of Regular Class No. 32, National Defense College of the Philippines, 20 August 1998 at Malacañang.

⁴⁷Primer of the Department of Foreign Affairs on the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement, p. 6.