

Final Report for the International Seminar on Asia-Pacific Cooperative Security

April 3-8, 2003

Taipei, Taiwan

About 50 foreign participants from 20 countries and 150 Taiwanese came together to attend the International Seminar on Asia-Pacific Cooperative Security, held in Taipei, Taiwan from April 3rd to 8th, 2003. This despite the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) spreading around the world and the war in the Middle East.

In his opening address at the Seminar, President Chen Shui-Bian pointed out that, “Mutual trust, information exchange, consultation, and collaboration are crucial to the success of international cooperation.” He realized that, in the wake of 911 terrorist attacks on the U.S., the current conflict in Iraq and the crisis with North Korea, and the escalation of SARS, we have been forced to give serious consideration on major issues such as global terrorism, missile defense, cyber crimes, and disease epidemics. He, thus, proposed the concept on “cooperative security” in order to bring peace and security for the Asia-Pacific region.

Such was the focus of the second Taipei ISODARCO Seminar, co-organized with several Taiwan counterparts. **The transformation in the military affairs, ballistic missile defense, information warfare, and anti-terrorism** were the main theme. The Seminar covered not only this region but also related to other parts of the world.

Sixteen lectures were delivered with twenty papers submitted. A couple of lecturers missed the Seminar because of the SARS but their papers were included in the proceedings. Some of the papers have been translated into Chinese language for the convenience of Taiwanese participants.

The lectures and discussion on the ballistic missile defense, including Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, were very well covered with enthusiasm, if not well balanced, by the participants from both the East and the West. European and Canadian researchers stressed on the negative parts of the missile defense while those from Asia, except the Chinese being prohibited to attend by their Government, emphasized on the positive sides.

The other sections of the Seminar, the transformation in the military affairs, information warfare, and anti-terrorism, were also well presented. The North Korea

Nuclear Crisis was seriously debated by the panelists and the participants in general. The interesting fact and reality in Korea Peninsula were explained by a former diplomat with his personal experiences. Japanese scholars also contributed to the same issue related with Japan.

Almost all of the participants came from nations which practice the rule of law and where there is a strong judiciary and a representative form of free and democratic government. Why is it that this gathering of searchers for peace and security was made up, almost entirely, of democrats? The role of the soldier and sailor in providing peace and security was mentioned and questioned as well.

At the concluding session with the proposals to build cooperative security for Asia-Pacific region, it was argued that it is too difficult for such vast region to begin the cooperation in security matter. Nevertheless, to start with cooperation in humanitarian, cultural, economic, and social aspects should be an excellent and more realistic endeavor.

It was considered to be a meaningful and successful Seminar with wide coverage of media and keen attention of government high officials as well as that of academia and military. However, we need to invite more influential participants from larger countries in order to voice their concern and press their impact on the governments.

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