

(Translation of the German original taken from Prof. Manfred Mols report entitled “Evaluierung Regionalprojekt Politik Ost- Südostasien und Länderprogramm Korea” Berlin 2005)

EU-East Asia Think Tank Dialogue

One of the most obvious stabilizing factors of the ASEAN is its early and continuous acceptance by the West. The KAS and not least their regional programme has always taken the unfolding process of regional co-operation and integration seriously⁴ and has shown its support at many, and at times, for Asian standards unconventional levels. This has been taking place in the various forms of the Euro-Asian dialogue, which in its co-operation with the KAS has grown to a think tank level in the same measure as the importance of the role played by the epistemic communities within the ASEAN, including the ASEAN-ISIS, ASEAN-CSIS activities etc. The representative of the ASEAN secretariat have been among those who have been regularly invited to these think-tank dialogues.⁵ In the contacts with the foundation, the generally well-equipped ASEAN desks of the member countries are also included depending on the topic and demand.

IV.6 Impact on the dialogue with the EU

The Euro-Asian dialogue shows a clear continuity within its Regional Programme. In October this year, the seventh (!) respective round of talks (International Conference in Jakarta) is expected to be held as part of the ASEAN-ISIS, CSIS and EIAS⁶, entitled “Community Building in Europe and East Asia: Challenges, Opportunities and Future Prospects”. The Regional Programme is a major co-organizer. Of major importance are

4 I refer to the role of the then KAS representative Dr. Chris Rieger in the ASEAN Reform Discussions of the 80s. This happened with the close agreement of ISEAS.

6 From the part of the German political foundations, the dialogue of the ASEAN secretariat with the Seidel-Stiftung carries, however, the bigger weight.

8 = “European Institute of Asian Studies” (Bruxelles).

the invitation to as well as the visits of Asian disseminators from among the political circles, high government officials, representatives of the society at large etc.

Assessment: The fact that such initiatives are of vital importance to the European-Asian relations requires no further proof. The fact that major Asian think tanks are participating [in these initiatives] contributes indirectly to a lasting effect of the encounters and experiences, since research institutions in Asia (as well as in Europe) depend on competencies, which in general is most likely when based upon the continuity of the work of the participating researchers and experts.