

**The 2004 Work Programme of the
European Institute for Asian Studies asbl (EIAS)**
(January 1-December 31, 2004)

**Brussels' research and policy think tank analysing political, economic and security
relations between the European Union and Asia**

30 December 2003

CONTENTS

I.	The EIAS Mission.....	2
II.	Institutional, Geo-political and Economic Context of the Work Programme... 3	
	Institutional Context	
	Geo-political Context	
III.	EIAS Work Programme for 2004.....	5
	Introduction	
	Themes for Studies and Policy Analysis on EU-ASIA	
	Dissemination through Brussels-based Intellectual Exchange	
IV.	Concluding Remark	12
Annex:	2004 EIAS Calendar of Events (Preliminary)	

European Institute for Asian Studies asbl (EIAS) Brussels, Belgium

I. The EIAS mission

The *European Institute for Asian Studies asbl* (EIAS) is a Brussels-based policy and research think-tank. It aims to promote understanding and cooperation between the European Union and Asia. It does so through working closely together with the European Union institutions in Brussels, as well as with research centres across Asia and within the Europe Union. It undertakes research studies and analysis of developments in Asia, drawing out their implications for the European Union at large and EU policies in particular. It disseminates the findings of this research and analysis through a comprehensive programme of Brussels-based intellectual exchange, including publications, public meetings as well as specialised briefings for EU policy makers or the press.

The 2004 EIAS work programme aims to continue providing this support through undertaking, in close collaboration with EU institutions, studies and analysis of the policies of the European Union vis-à-vis Asia, organising round table meetings, specialised briefings, in-depth seminars and international conferences. EIAS publishes its in-house research as well as commissioned research papers through its series of *EIAS Briefing Papers* and offers analyses, insight and viewpoints through its bi-monthly *EurAsia Bulletin*. EIAS supports its own Internet site on EU-Asia (www.eias.org) and contributes to other publications and web-based exchanges. EIAS participates in Europe-Asia networks of research and analysis, most notably as a Member of the *European Alliance for Asian Studies*. (Please consult www.asia-alliance.org).

EIAS has an excellent track record of providing direct support to the EU institutions, in particular the European Parliament and the European Commission, utilising effectively its institutional links and its proximity to these institutions. EIAS has benefited from the financial support from the Budget of the European Communities during a number of years.

The EIAS work programme will include research and dissemination of activities and programmes focusing on each of the major sub-regions in Asia covered by the Asia-Latin America Regulation (ALA-regulation) in a balanced way. The 26 Asian countries covered by ALA Regulation are Afghanistan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Cambodia, China, East Timor, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam and Yemen. This includes the newest UN member state (East Timor), the two most populous countries of the world (China and India), the three 'axis of evil' countries (Iran, Iraq and DPRK), the six members of SAARC (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka) and eight of the members of ASEAN (Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam). Ten out of the twenty six countries are classified by the UN as 'Least Developed'. This diversity needs to be responded to with a comprehensive, inter-disciplinary and multi-dimensional programme.

II. Institutional, Geo-political and Economic Context of the EIAS Work Programme

In defining its research activities and selecting the themes for its meetings and briefings for 2004, EIAS anticipates both the institutional as well as geo-political and economic developments within the European Union as well as in Asia.

Institutional Context. The institutional changes within the European Union during the next few years will be profound and far-reaching, most notably in response to the enlargement of the European Union, bringing ten Central and Eastern European Countries into the EU. The accession, after a decade of transition and adjustment, will have significant implications for the EU's external relations with Asia. The new EU members are very eager and enthusiastic to participate, develop and intensify such relations. Their EU membership will mean, inter alia, that they will participate and join the Asia-Europe Meeting V scheduled to take place October 8-9, 2004 in Hanoi, Vietnam.

From the perspective of the EU, a great deal of explaining about the aims and objectives, ideas and practices about its relations with Asian countries to the new Member States and their representatives will be necessary. This will intensify the demand for Brussels-based intellectual exchange on EU-Asia relations, with a focus on active participation from the CEEC Member States representatives and specialists. It may be noted that the new Members have in recent years given only limited attention to their relations with Asia, reflecting their focus on EU accession as well as the limited external relations space which membership of the Soviet bloc permitted them.

Moreover, the EU enlargement is likely to affect EU-Asia relations in several other ways too. First, some Asian countries have voiced concern about the possible loss of markets in the new Member States as technical, sanitary, phyto-sanitary and food safety regulations and, for some products higher Common European Tariffs, may increase entry barriers to these markets. Second, EU investment flows to Asian countries may be affected, with diversion in favour of the newly acceding Member States possibly taking place. Appropriate policy responses to EU enlargement by Asian governments and non-state actors will become an important area of studies and analysis during 2004.

Second, major institutional changes will result from the rethinking of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) which has been prompted by several independent but simultaneous processes, in particular, (i) the European Convention on a draft constitution for the EU; (ii) the reform of the EU institutions dealing with its external relations; (iii) the inability to achieve a EU-wide consensus on the war in Iraq; and (iv) the EU enlargement process creating further doubts about the feasibility of achieving common positions in main areas of EU external relations.

The reshaping of the CFSP will be an ongoing process that will receive further impetus from the election of a new European Parliament with a vastly changed Membership as well as the appointment of a new European Commission towards the end of 2004. Briefing the newly

(re)-elected Members of the European Parliament on EU-ASIA relations within the context of the CFSP will be an important task for EIAS.

Geo-political context. In view of the ‘war on terrorism’ across Asia with focal points in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Indonesia and the Philippines as well as the ongoing war and reconstruction in Iraq, numerous geopolitical flashpoints within Asia will continue to demand pro-active responses from the European Union. These include the following.

- Within *South Asia* civil and military tension will continue to revolve around
 - (i) the Kashmir issue and their impact on India-Pakistan relations;
 - (ii) the continued presence of Al Qae'da in Pakistan;
 - (iii) the question about legitimacy of the Pakistan's elected government;
 - (iv) the difficult transition towards a legitimate democratic government in Afghanistan with control over the countries' fragmented regions;
 - (v) political instability and weak governance in Nepal;
 - (vi) the slow progress in the Sri Lanka Peace Process seeking to resolve the long running civil war;
 - (vii) the deteriorating governance climate in Bangladesh.

Within *South East Asia* civil and military tension will continue to arise from

- (i) the demands for autonomy in Indonesia, in particular emanating in Aceh and West Papua, and the failure of implementation of COHA, set against the context of the forthcoming 2004 Presidential elections;
- (ii) the military operations to address the terrorism in Southern Philippines and the repeated challenges to the democratic government from military quarters;
- (iii) the tensions between Myanmar and its neighbours, in particular Bangladesh, India and Thailand, about issues relating to the forced migration of ethnic minorities.

Within *East Asia* the key geo-political flashpoints are

- (i) the Korean peninsula, in the context of DPRK's efforts to develop a nuclear weapons programme for nuclear defence and its inflexible negotiation strategy within the framework of the Beijing-based six party talks (US, Russia, China, Japan, South Korea and North Korea);
- (ii) China's internal threats to stability emanating from economic transition as well as political transition from the third to the fourth generation leadership; and
- (iii) the increased tensions across the Taiwan Straits in the run-up to the 2004 Presidential elections in Taiwan.

Throughout 2003 the European Union institutions responded to these military conflicts and regional hotspots through a variety of initiatives (see below). EIAS studies, analyses and public debate will seek to inform on such actions and initiatives. Inevitably, security-related initiatives, conflict resolution and prevention in Asia will remain an important focus of the EIAS activities. In view of the above contexts, three major themes are identified for the 2004 EIAS work programme:

- EU-ASIA Inter-Regionalism and Integration and Cooperation within Asia
- Political and Security Developments in Asia
- EU-ASIA International Political Economy

Moreover, EIAS research and intellectual exchange will also assess the *global* implications of EU-Asia relations, in particular its linkages with global security concerns and the significance of EU-Asia relations for shaping global multi-polarity and in particular EU-US-Asia relations.

III. The EIAS 2004 Work Programme

1. Introduction

EIAS inter-disciplinary policy-focused research will contribute to shaping policy within the EU concerning Asia through topical and strategic analyses. In particular, research will provide the intellectual and analytical basis for the execution of round tables, conferences and specialised briefings. Findings of research and analysis of unfolding events and the on-going monitoring of political, security and economic trends will be disseminated through

- organising Round Table meetings and Specialised Briefings;
- organising in-depth Seminars and International Conferences;
- regular in-house publication of
 - (i) the bi-monthly *EurAsia Bulletin* (six issues) covering a wide range of viewpoints, themes and topics;
 - (ii) the recently launched *EIAS Policy Briefs* concisely presenting key-insight of research and seminar discussions, with a focus on policy recommendations for the EU (four to six during 2004);
 - (iii) the *EIAS Briefing Papers* (three to five issues) presenting in-depth analysis of topical issues
- contribution to international research publications on relevant topics;
- intensive use of the recently redesigned EIAS Website as a portal for EU-Asia information and analysis; and
- contribute to web-based exchanges on relations between the EU and specific countries or regions, e.g. EU-India.

2. Themes for Studies and Policy Analysis on EU-Asia

In-house studies and analyses by EIAS staff, collaborating with Institute members and research associates, will provide the basis for innovative and well-informed discussions, intellectual exchanges and publications about Asia and EU-Asia. Studies and analyses by EIAS will focus on three inter-related but distinct themes.

- ***EU-ASIA Inter-Regionalism and Integration and Cooperation within Asia***

Regionalism in Asia is accelerating as shown through numerous sub-regional institutional

frameworks initiated recently such as, amongst others, ASEAN (1967); SAARC (1981); ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (1996); the BIMSTEC initiative (1999); ASEAN-plus-China+Korea+Japan (1999); the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (2001), ASEAN-China bilateral FTA (2001); the Bao initiative (2001), bilateral initiatives between Singapore and Japan (2001), Thailand (2002), Malaysia (2003) on the other, ASEAN-plus-India (2003); the ASEAN-China Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (2003) and yet others.

The ASEM process (1996) is in itself a unique formula for informal inter-governmental inter-regional cooperation between the Asia region and the EU, seeking to provide an effective and comprehensive framework for EU-Asia engagement.

EIAS events and publications will continue to address some of the key questions about the implications of manifestations of regionalism in Asia for the EU's CFSP:

- Through which mechanisms and instruments can EU best respond to this process?
- How is the experience of EU itself relevant to these processes?
- What are the dynamics driving the slow and hesitant integration processes in Asia?
- Will the process primarily seek economic gains or will security gains and anti-terrorism become its most important rationale?
- Will the players seek to maximise 'relative gains' or 'absolute gains'?
- Are the present initiatives solid and irreversible or will they suffer from the same institutional weaknesses as earlier cooperation initiatives?
- To what extent will domestic political objectives within Asian countries limit the scope for collective international action such as the formulation of common regional policies and integrated markets?

ASEAN is at a crucial juncture seeing its relevance and purpose questioned. Taking as a starting point the issues reviewed at EIAS's ongoing annual EU-ASEAN Think-Tank dialogues,¹ EIAS will continue to monitor ASEAN and its importance for future relations with the EU. Studying and analysing the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), to date the only institutionalised security forum that covers the above issues and of which the EU is a full member, will be a key activity in this regard.

Studies and analyses within this theme will be led by Dr Willem van der Geest (political economy issues) and Dr Axel Berkofsky (security issues).

- ***Political and Security Developments in Asia***

Political and security developments in specific countries and sub-regions will remain a major focus of attention in the EIAS work programme. The list of conflict zones and geo-political flash points, identified above, will provide the starting point for specific EIAS activities. During 2003 the European Union institutions responded to these specific situations through a

¹ See below for the 2004 EU-ASEAN Think Tank Dialogue proposed to be held in Brussels and Lisbon (Sept 2004). It is expected to focus in particular on the implications of EU enlargement for Asia as well as the issues of global multi-polarity with a focus on EU-US-Asia relations.

variety of initiatives.

- Regarding Kashmir, the European Parliament mounted an ‘ad hoc’ delegation to assess the scope for reconciliation and peace-building;
- Regarding Nepal advisory missions and expertise were mobilised;
- Regarding Afghanistan, the Bonn-Tokyo pledges were strictly adhered to, while international efforts were intensified to create a stronger support base for the Kabul-based transitional government;
- In support of Sri Lanka’s peace process, the European Commission co-chaired the Tokyo conference seeking to create incentives for peace by focusing ODA commitments on the northern and eastern parts of the country, subject to Tamil participation in the peace process. Commissioner Patten and several Members of the European Parliament assisted the peace process in Sri Lanka, seeking to provide a platform for informal negotiation.
- The European Parliament will send an ‘ad hoc’ delegation to Pyongyang during the early months of 2004, following up the December 2003 ‘Troika’ visit. The delegation will assess the scope and content of EU engagement with DPRK, including a possible role for the EU in the Beijing-based talks.

Each of these (and other) initiatives will require substantive and imaginative follow-up with a focus on conflict prevention and human security. EIAS studies, analyses and public debate will seek to inform such actions and initiatives.

Furthermore, political developments across Asia will also include elections in two major countries i.e. Parliamentary elections in India and Presidential Elections in Indonesia. Publication and seminars reviewing these major political events will inform the EU response to the specific conflict issues outlined above.

Studies and analyses within this theme will be directed by Dr Apurba Kundu (political issues) and Dr Axel Berkofsky (security issues), drawing on the expertise from EIAS Members and research associates.

- ***EU-ASIA International Political Economy***

For the EU’ s external relations with Asia, a strong focus on (i) trade, investment and finance issues as well as (ii) international development goals will remain.

Trade, investment and finance issues will feature prominently in the debate about the impact of the EU enlargement on Asia. One of the key-research questions will be how EU-enlargement will influence investor’ s perceptions in EU as well as Asia. Will enlargement lead to an increase of Asian investment into the new Member States in response to new opportunities? Will EU businesses divert investments from Asia towards the new members? What will be the net effects on trade and employment creation in both regions?

The *development commitments* by the EU and other global players were pledged at the

- 2000 Millennium summit seeking to realise tangible improvements in social indicators and reduce poverty incidence to half by 2015;
- 2001 fourth WTO Ministerial meeting which launched the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) on trade and development. This has now stalled due to the failure to reach substantive agreement at the 2003 September WTO fifth Ministerial meeting in Cancun.

Speaking at the 4th EU-ASEAN Think Tank Dialogue, convened by EIAS in Brussels in 2002, the Director-General of the WTO H.E. Dr Supachai Panitchpakdi noted that the unfinished Doha Development Agenda counted more than 50 issues including agriculture, special & differential treatment, TRIPS, anti-dumping, etc. as well as regulatory issues of particular importance for the EU such as rules on investment, competition policy and others.

How to restart the Doha process in a way that will ensure gains for developing countries, including LDCs, will be a major issue for EIAS Brussels-based intellectual exchange in the run up to the sixth Ministerial expected to take place in Hong Kong end of 2004. Several Asian countries were key-players in Cancun, in particular China, India and Bangladesh, the latter as the spokesman for the LDC-group. To assess their position and enlist their support for a positive approach to concluding the Doha Development Round will be of paramount importance. EIAS research and intellectual exchange will contribute towards this goal.

As a contribution to the World Bank's 'Annual Bank Conference on Development Economics' (ABCDE), scheduled to be taking place in Brussels on May 9-10, 2004 EIAS will convene a workshop on 'Economic and Development Cooperation between the EU and Asia'. How do EU policy interventions affect the possible scenarios for future growth? What are the implications for (i) ongoing reform processes across Asia; (ii) pro-active and effective poverty reduction strategies in Asian countries; and (iii) the EU's institutions role as a source of long-term development finance and advice.

Furthermore, particularly important will be to inform public debate about the work of the 'ASEM Taskforce on Closer Economic Partnership', launched in Copenhagen as a joint initiative of European Commission President Romani Prodi and Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong. It is expected that a draft report will be discussed by the ASEM Finance Ministers Meetings in Brussels (July 6, 2004) as well as the ASEM Economic Ministers Meeting in Rotterdam (16-17 September, 2004). EIAS will seek to stimulate public interest in the Taskforce's recommendation by cooperating closely with the press to analyse and assess the implications, especially through one or more *EIAS Policy Briefs*.

This research will be directed by Dr Willem van der Geest (political and economic aspects) in collaboration with Mr Malcolm Subhan (international relations aspects).

3. Brussels-based Intellectual Exchange

During 2004 EIAS will continue to implement a varied and active programme of conferences, round tables and seminars (open free of charge to EU officials and EIAS members), expected to include:

- Ten to twelve Lunch Briefings at EIAS and/or Specialised Briefings for the EU institutions
- Several public events with high-profile academic and/or political speakers.
- Four to six Round Tables or High-Level Seminars involving EU and Asian specialists
- One or two International Conferences or Dialogues
- A range of publications and web-based information.

At this stage the following topics have already been identified, while allowing for a flexible approach to respond to new issues as events unfold.

Ten to Twelve Lunch Briefings by leading academic or political speakers, focusing on topical subjects will be held at EIAS in the course of 2004, continuing a long-standing and well-appreciated tradition. During 2003 ten Lunch Briefings at EIAS took place, covering a wide range of topics with speakers from Asia as well as EU.

Topics identified:

Outcomes of the Islamabad SAARC Summit
 Taiwan's Presidential Elections - why the referendum?
 Kyrgyzstan Perspective on WTO Doha Round
 Myanmar and ASEM
 The European Parliament's Report on Kashmir
 Issues for the Economic Minister's Meeting ASEM
 Outcome of the Indian Elections

Speakers to be invited:

South Asian Ambassadors
 Selected Members Legislative Yuan
 Deputy Minister for Trade
 Senior Officials ASEM FMM, Dublin
 MEPs and South Asian Ambassadors
 Econ Min. LJ Brinkhorst, NL
 tbc

High-profile academic and/or political speakers. During 2003 some five 'high-profile speakers' were (co)-hosted by EIAS.² It is anticipated that these successful events will carry on during 2004.

Topics Identified:

EU-US-Asia Economic and Political Relations

Speakers to be invited:

Leading Academics incl. Prof Jagdish Bhagwati, Clyde Prestowitz etc.

² During 2003 EIAS (co)- hosted Prof S Jayakumar, Foreign Minister, Government of Singapore on the future of ASEAN; Ambassador S. Wiryo, Chief Negotiator, Government of Indonesia on the COHA process; Dr Vladimir Norov, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Uzbekistan on Regional Security; Mr Praful Patel, Vice-President for South Asia, World Bank on South Asia's Prospects and Mr Kasuri, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Government of Pakistan on the Pakistan's role in the war on terror. Furthermore ten Lunch Briefings were delivered by respectively Dr Yorizumi Watanabe, Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Japan's approach to FTAs; Takahiro Shinyo, Ministry of Foreign Affairs on EU-Japan security co-operation; Trinh Duc Minh, Deputy Secretary General ASEAN on EU and ASEAN integration; Dr Eric Teo, Singapore Institute for International Affairs on Shifting Geo-politics in the East Asia Region; President Sam Wong of ACCA on Corporate Governance in Hong Kong and China; Richard Jones of Univ. of Liverpool on E-Commerce and the Law in India; Dr Girish Kumar on Local Governance in India (Madya Pradesh) and Prof Shamsul AB on Islam in South East Asia.

Round Tables/High-Level Seminars/International Conferences involving EU and Asian specialists. EIAS has convened International Conferences since 1996. The following topics have been identified for intellectual exchanges (for further details about co-organisers and venues see the 2004 EIAS Calendar of Events):

Topics Identified:

One Year After – Implications of the Iraq War for Asia
 EU-Enlargement – Implications for Asia
 Re-assessing ASEM Diplomacy (working title)
 India-China Conference
 ASEM Civil Society Forum
 and Asian countries
 Taiwan, China and Regional Security and Stability
 Prospects for the Sri Lanka Peace Process

 KOREA Update

 The Outcomes of the ASEM V Summit in Hanoi

 ASIA UPDATE

Speakers to be invited:

Invited Ambassadors and MEPs
tbc
 Practitioners from EU and ASEM
 International Academic Speakers
 Civil Society organisations from EU

 Invited China and Taiwan Scholars
 Academic analysts specialised on
 power-sharing and minorities
 Foreign Ministry Officials Nordic
 Countries
 ASEM Counsellors Dutch Presidency
 & European Commission
 Academic Specialists of the European
 Alliance for Asian Studies.

The EIAS range of publications and web-based information instruments to support the intellectual exchange includes the following:

EurAsia Bulletin (editor Malcolm Subhan, deputy John Quigley). Further development of this EIAS publication will continue to be an important objective during 2004. Consideration will be given to developing the scope of the publication, as well as to assess new modes of dissemination and delivery (including web-based e-commerce of the publication). During 2003 the *EurAsia Bulletin* covered a wide range of topics with each issue including one or more ‘viewpoint’ articles as well as reviews of EU-Asia debates by EIAS staff.

EIAS Policy Briefs (editors Dr Willem van der Geest and Dr Apurba Kundu). Policy recommendations will be disseminated through *EIAS Policy Briefs*, launched during 2003 to disseminate research findings and insights gained from Round Tables and Conferences in a concise and policy-relevant manner. The Policy Briefs are of limited length (never exceeding 3000 words) and their outline will include a section focusing on EU policy responses and, if appropriate, policy recommendations.

EIAS Briefing Paper (editor Dr Willem van der Geest), will continue in-depth analysis of topical issues (three to five issues foreseen during 2004).

EIAS Website (IT manager Andy Carling). The EIAS website, www.eias.org is a continuously updated source of information on EU-ASIA. Further design work was

undertaken during 2003 to enhance its user-friendliness. In particular, frequent updates target a professional audience including corporate and institutional members of EIAS as well as those working within the EU institutions. Its usage by visitors has soared in recent months.

Academic networking. Finally, in support of research, policy analysis and Brussels-based intellectual exchange, EIAS Staff members will undertake several missions to Asia each year. These will be in response to invitations to speak at major international conferences and seek to develop research collaboration with Asian think tanks and policy research centres. Last but not least, EIAS will continue to fulfil its role as a beacon and reference point for visitors to the EU, briefing them on recent developments within the EU institutions. In recent years the number of EIAS Visitors has been well in excess of one hundred per calendar year.

IV. CONCLUDING REMARK

Diversifying income beyond the Budget of the European Community will remain a key short- and medium-term objective in order to ensure the long-term sustainability and institutional development of the European Institute for Asian Studies asbl. Corporate and Individual Membership of EIAS will be stimulated and encouraged as well as co-sponsorship of conferences and research studies.

*European Institute for Asian Studies, Brussels
December 200*

