

KAS IN ASIA

FROM "HELP TO HELP THEMSELVES" TO A DIALOGUE BETWEEN EQUALS

Stefan Friedrich

It is September 2004. A telephone call comes in from Beijing. The caller is a representative of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China. His question: a draft of China's new company law is now available; would it be possible for German experts to conduct a critical review of the draft and to make suggestions for improving it during a workshop organized for this? Would the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) be able to support this exercise? Our answer: we will cover the expenses of the German experts if the Chinese partner covers the local costs on the Chinese side. The result: the law that was passed 9 months later was amended in crucial places in line with the recommendations of the German experts.

While such urgent requests are clearly not the only matter Resident Representatives have to deal with, they meanwhile do constitute a vital part of the work carried out by the Foundation's staff in Asia. Requests like this are the result of the trust that has been built up over many years of successful cooperation with local partners. The networks that have been developed and nurtured during this time are the key to this success.

FROM "4 TO 20" – GROWTH IN THE NUMBER OF OFFICES IN ASIA

The first KAS office opened in 1964 in the Philippines, followed by India (1967), Indonesia (1968) and Sri Lanka (1969). Thus, by the end of the 1960s the KAS had its own Resident Representatives in four Asian countries. It was no coincidence that the Foundation's first office was opened in the Philippines. In 1977, Lothar Kraft, then Head of the



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KAS Institute for International Solidarity (IIS), summed up the situation as follows: "It was not easy for us to gain spiritual access to East, South East and South Asia, brought up as we were in the traditions of Christianity and the Enlightenment. There is no other region in the world where there are so many major religions, advanced civilisations and so much ethnic diversity. So it is understandable that the IIS initially sought out partners in the only Christian country in Asia and supported numerous projects that were initially connected with Christian missions or orders."¹

It is interesting to look at the circumstances surrounding the choice of the initial locations in Asia. India and Indonesia were among the top five recipients of German development assistance between 1950 and 1975, and therefore seemed ideal candidates for KAS activities. In addition the Hallstein Doctrine that was in force until 1969 had a significant influence on the choice of countries. But the key issue then, as it is still now, was the political changes that were taking place in the countries themselves.² It is essential that a political foundation does not wait until the process of democratisation is in full swing before becoming involved. In many instances, including in Asia, the KAS opened offices in countries that did not introduce democratic reforms until some years later. The main job of the Resident Representatives was to give positive support to these developments from the very start. South Korea and Thailand are good examples of this work carried out by the KAS in Asia. The Foundation sent its own staff to South Korea back in 1978, eight years before the political changes of 1986. And in the wake of various individual projects that had been ongoing since the 1970s, a Resident Representative was sent to Thailand in 1983, nine years before the military handed over power to a civilian government in 1992.

There was one significant setback for the Foundation's activities in Asia that tends to be forgotten: the defeat of the USA in the Vietnam War. Lothar Kraft again: "At the beginning of 1975 [...] the KAS was still supporting six projects in South Vietnam [...]. Between 1966 and 1975 the Foundation sent 54 staff members to South Vietnam, while

1 | Lothar Kraft, "Zur Arbeit der KAS in Asien", in: Minutes of the Staff Conference from 28 Oct to 4 Nov 1977, Singapore, 4-20, here: 8.

2 | Ibid., 9.

during the same period only 15 Resident Representatives were working on all other projects. Supporting projects in South Vietnam was a central plank of the Foundation's work in Asia.³ In April 1975 all remaining KAS staff members were flown out of Vietnam, sometimes under difficult circumstances. The KAS did not return to the reunited Vietnam until 1993.

This return to Vietnam was a direct result of what proved to be the biggest turning point thus far for the KAS's involvement in the region, the collapse of the Eastern Bloc and the end of the Cold War. Although in the early 1990s Germany was preoccupied with reunification and the progress of European unity, the Kohl government was the first European government to develop an Asia strategy that took account of the momentous changes that had taken place. The government's appreciation of the importance of Asia was mirrored within the KAS itself. On 12 July 1993 the Foundation's Board of Directors decided to "shift the emphasis of the Foundation's international activities" towards Central and Eastern Europe, and Central and East Asia. Following this decision, the International Department was also asked to develop a new concept for Asia.⁴ In 1992, a partner project in Xi'an (China) had already been launched. More offices in Mongolia (1993), Uzbekistan (1994), Beijing (1996), and also in Cambodia (1994), were to follow. At the same time as the KAS was expanding its presence in individual countries in Asia, concepts were also being developed to underpin the Foundation's key activities in the region. The result was the creation of a series of regional programmes: Political Dialogue Asia (the forerunner to this programme actually dates back to 1981), Media Programme Asia (1996), Rule of Law Programme Asia (2005) and most recently Social and Economic Governance Programme Asia (2011), which are used to address the central issues involved in the Foundation's activities on a region-wide basis. The Foundation currently has twenty offices in Asia, from Astana to Tokyo, and from Ulan Bator to Jakarta.⁵

3 | Ibid., 4.

4 | Cf. Minutes of the meeting of the KAS Board of Directors on 12 Jul 1993, 12, and the minutes of the KAS General Assembly on 13 Dec 1993, 5.

5 | For an up-to-date view of the set-up of Team Asia and the Pacific, cf. Stefan Friedrich and Martin-Maurice Böhme, "Die Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in Asien", *ASIEN*, 122, Jan 2012, 139-143, <http://kas.de/wf/de/33.30242> (accessed 31 May 2012).

THE MAIN FOCUS OF KAS ACTIVITIES IN ASIA – FROM INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION WORK AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT TO DIALOGUE ON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY

Asia has undergone enormous changes over the last 50 years, and the activities of the KAS in the region have changed accordingly.

Political foundations always work in a political way, but there can be significant differences in terms of approach, content and form. This can be a matter of financial resources, but it is most often determined by the circumstances under which they operate. And these in turn are often dictated by the circumstances pertaining to the host country itself and the importance that we as Germans accord a particular country or region. As previously mentioned, the circumstances in Asia have undergone enormous changes over the last 50 years, and the activities of the KAS in the region have changed accordingly.

The Early Years up to the End of the Cold War

Younger staff members and supporters of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung may be surprised to learn that the main focus of the Foundation's activities in its early years was the support of trade unions. By 1977, more than 20 per cent of project financing was still being allocated to this area of activity. "The IIS supports trade unions that ensure that workers are given effective representation on all social issues by building strong, independent organisations."⁶ In Asia the Foundation's main partner in this sphere of activity was the Brotherhood of Asian Trade Unionists (BATU); however, in this context, it should be noted that the BATU went by a different name when it was first set up, one that made it a natural partner for the KAS: the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions – IFCTU.⁷

Other main areas of focus for the Foundation's early activities in Asia were rural development, community development, youth work and, already at that time, the media. These issues formed the backbone of the Foundation's

6 | Kraft, n. 1, 11.

7 | Cf. Joachim Sikora, "Ideologien der asiatischen Projektpartner: Philippinen", in: Minutes of Staff Conference from 28 Oct to 4 Nov 1977, Singapore, 24-33; idem., "Erwachsenenbildung am Beispiel der gewerkschaftspolitischen Bildungsarbeit von BSI und PSI, Philippinen", in: *ibid.*, 64-86.

activities in Indonesia in particular during the 1960s and 1970s. One of the KAS's main partners at the time was the Office for the Coordination of Agricultural Advice at the Ministry of Agriculture. The aim was to support the Indonesians in setting up effective agricultural self-help groups.⁸ As far as direct political activity was concerned, the KAS acted on the assumption that the "process of economic, social and state development [...], in most countries, had not yet reached the stage at which social advocacy groups, political parties, and properly functioning free organisations of varying political persuasions can not only exist, but also survive in the long-term".⁹

Fig. 1



In November 1979 a delegation under KAS Chairman Bruno Heck was welcomed by Chinese Deputy Prime Minister Bo Yibo in Beijing. | Source: Archive for Christian Democratic Policy (ACDP).

A new area that came increasingly into focus, especially at the end of the 1970s, was the media sector. The Foundation had already been working with the forerunner of the Communication Foundation for Asia (CFA, founded 1973) in the Philippines since 1970. One of the key concepts at the time was Development Communication (DevCom) and, at the end of the 1970s, the CFA was setting itself up to become a regional centre for DevCom in Asia. It was therefore no

8 | Cf. Joachim Schmidt, "Ideologien der asiatischen Projektpartner: Indonesien", in: Minutes of the Staff Conference from 28 Oct to 4 Nov 1977, Singapore, 46-50.

9 | Kraft, n. 1, 14.

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accident that the first headquarters of the KAS Media Programme Asia, created in 1996, was in Manila. It was only later that the programme was moved to Singapore. However, the KAS's main partner for training journalists in Asia is still based in the Philippine capital: the Konrad Adenauer Asian Center for Journalism (ACfJ) at the Ateneo de Manila University.

Changes in Asia and the Shift towards Asia since the Mid-1980s

However, the most lasting change that affected KAS activities came about as a result of what became known as the third wave of democratisation, which reached Asia in 1986: "The current, third wave of democratization reached the shores of East Asia more than a decade after it began to spread from Southern Europe in 1974. The region's participation in this wave began in 1986 with the removal of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos through the people's power movement in the Philippines. One year later, South Korea ended military rule and elected a new president in a free and competitive election for the first time in nearly three decades. In the same year, after ending more than three decades of the Kuomintang's one-party rule, Taiwan lifted martial law and ushered in an era of highly competitive multiparty democracy. In 1990, Mongolia became a third-wave democracy by abandoning its sixty-year-old communist one-party system and holding competitive multiparty elections. The October 1991 Paris Accord (Ear 1997) made it possible for Cambodia to begin its transition to democracy. In 1992, Thailand re-established democratic rule after massive protests ousted the military-backed government. In 1999, Indonesia ended three decades of Suharto's personal dictatorship and thereafter held democratic elections to become the largest third-wave democracy in the region. By the end of the last decade, the third wave had brought about seven new democracies in East Asia."¹⁰

10 | Doh Chull Shin, "The Third Wave in East Asia: Comparative and Dynamic Perspectives", *Asian Barometer*, 4, <http://asianbarometer.org/newenglish/publicationsconferencepapers/2008conference/sec.1.1.pdf> (accessed 31 May 2012).

These endogenous change processes helped to fuel the demand for the “direct promotion of democracy”,¹¹ including countries where we had already been active to some extent for many years, albeit focused on other issues. We were suddenly being asked more and more questions about the workings of parliament, committees and how to organise political parties and non-governmental organisations. At the same time, more and more time was spent in discussions with our partners addressing issues relating to the necessary prerequisites for setting up constitutional structures (codes of practice, the work of the courts, the implementation of legal principles, etc.). The regional Rule of Law Programme Asia, created in 2005, expanded the work being undertaken at the national level through region-wide projects. A good example is the annual Conference of Asian Constitutional Court Judges, initiated by the KAS in the region. This series of conferences has resulted in the establishment of the Association of Asian Constitutional Courts (AACC), which offers a forum where representatives of Asian constitutional courts, whose position in each country can vary greatly, can exchange ideas on particular problems or share individual success stories.¹² One example at a national level can be seen in the work being carried out in Uzbekistan. Since the introduction of habeas corpus in 2008, the Foundation has been working with various constitutional and non-constitutional organisations, and in particular with the ombudswoman

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11 | The Deputy Head of the Department for International Cooperation at that time, Silke Krieger, used this term to describe the KAS’s global activities during the period following the end of the Cold War: “In the aftermath of the global political change in 1989/90, the KAS organised a whole series of issue-specific and specialist conferences with all Resident Representatives, with a view to reviewing all projects in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Latin America, and to start the process of the *direct promotion of democracy*, which had suddenly become a possibility in many countries. A significant paradigm shift took place on every continent, with development policies becoming more and more associated with the principle of democratisation.” Silke Krieger, “Perspektiven für die Asienpolitik der Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung”, in: Minutes of the conference “Regional Strategies of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung for Asia” from 28 May to 2 June 1995 on Rügen, Sankt Augustin, 1995, 317-325, here: 322 (author’s italics).

12 | Cf. “Congress of the Association of Asian Constitutional Courts and Equivalent Institutions”, inaugural conference after the official founding in 2010, Seoul, 20-22 May 2012, <http://kas.de/rspa/en/events/50547> (accessed 24 May 2012).

of the country's parliament, to improve the knowledge of judges, public prosecutors, lawyers, and representatives from civil society pertaining to the rights of prisoners. And, to work towards an internationally-recognised application of appropriate processes and procedures.¹³

Providing advice on regulatory policy issues has become an increasingly important area since the end of the Cold War, and not only in those countries that have adopted a democratic constitution. As early as 1986, Vietnam opted to follow the Chinese example and began a series of economic reforms, known as Doi Moi, which were meant to lead to a socialist market economy. Issues of regulatory policy was of vital interest to our partners when the KAS started working in China (1992) and Vietnam (1993) and thus formed a core part of the Foundation's work. These issues also gradually took on greater importance in other countries in the region. Especially in the last four to five years it could be observed that a social market economy is increasingly perceived as an attractive possible economic model. The effects of the current financial and economic crisis and the hope that a social market economy can be seen as a genuine alternative to a "pure market economy", have also contributed to these changes. Clearly it is not a case of simply adopting the German model; but along the lines of the German model countries can evaluate their own ideas before adapting them to their own particular circumstances. In some South Asian countries, such as Malaysia, Indonesia and Cambodia, this kind of approach has found particular favour.¹⁴ It is against this background that the Foundation decided to create its Social and Economic Governance Programme Asia. Based in Tokyo, the aims of the project include responding to requests for assistance on the issue of social market economies, as well as contributing to the discourse on the future development of global financial structures, in cooperation with our Asian partners.

13 | Cf. e.g. the event "Habeas Corpus: Die Zusammenarbeit des Ombudsmanns mit den Gerichten und Rechtsschutzorganen", Fergana/Uzbekistan, 21 Apr 2011, <http://kas.de/zentralasien/de/events/45232> (accessed 20 May 2012).

14 | In this context, translations of the *Social Market Economy Encyclopaedia* have proven to be very useful. This 500-page work, which was published by Rolf H. Hasse, Hermann Schneider and Klaus Weigelt in 2002 (UTB-Verlag) is now available in Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean and, of course, English.

The Media Programme Asia project that was initiated in 1996 has been able to build upon experiences gained through earlier media policy projects. With the help of this programme, the Asia News Network (ANN) was set up in March 1999: a network that today includes 21 leading English-language daily newspapers from across the region. The goals of the ANN now, as then, are:

1. to improve the quality of reporting on Asian issues,
2. to make it easier for member newspapers to gain access to credible sources of information in Asia,
3. to support and promote the professionalisation of journalism in the region.¹⁵

The year 2000 saw the opening of the Konrad Adenauer Asian Center for Journalism at Ateneo de Manila University, where journalists from all over Asia have been trained, mostly via online courses.¹⁶ In recent years the issue of political communication has also been accorded more importance within the Media Programme Asia project. Topics include, for example, the growing importance of political polls in countries such as Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines, or how new forms of communication, such as Facebook, Twitter, et al., are also being used within the political sphere in Asia.¹⁷

Even the Foundation's oldest regional project in Asia has begun addressing more directly political issues in recent years. The Political Dialogue Asia regional programme had been set up as far back as 1981, with the goal of monitoring political developments in the region. It was also during this time that the very successful partnership with the Institute of South East Asian Studies (ISEAS) began, a partnership that continues to this day. In the beginning, working together with the ASEAN nations was central to the programme's activities. Since then, as with all of our regional programmes, the focus has shifted to incorporate

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15 | Cf. "About ANN", *Asian News Network*, <http://asiannewsnet.net/home/aboutann.php> (accessed 13 May 2012).

16 | Cf. website of the Konrad Adenauer Asian Center for Journalism at the Ateneo de Manila University, <http://acjf.ateneo.edu> (accessed 13 May 2012).

17 | Cf. Media Programme Asia, <http://kas.de/medien-asien/en/> (accessed 13 May 2012).

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the whole of the ASEAN+3 region (i.e. China, South Korea and Japan) as well as South Asia. In recent years, the project has been able to work more intensively with the regions young political elites. Within the framework of a specialist conference in Kuala Lumpur at the beginning of 2009, the Asia Team developed a concept to compensate for the lack of "natural partner parties" in the region (with the exception, at times, of the Philippines and South Korea). Meanwhile, the virtual Konrad Adenauer School for Young Politicians (KASYP) provides support and training for reform-oriented and politically-active young people, both at a national level within the framework of country programmes, and at the regional level through the Political Dialogue Asia programme. Ultimately, the aim of this initiative is to promote an understanding of the importance of programme-based political parties in Asia, without being reliant on already having a partner party in each individual country.¹⁸

The areas of activity mentioned above, the media, the rule of law, regulatory policy issues, the direct promotion of democracy, etc., all belong to a greater or lesser extent to the portfolio of activities carried out by our colleagues in the individual country programmes. The work done in, say, China or Vietnam clearly has different areas of focus than that done in the Philippines or Cambodia, for example. However, as far as it is able with the resources available, the Foundation tries to promote the role of women in the political sphere in all Asian countries. This is true of the KASYP project, for example, and also of projects in Mongolia, Indonesia and East Timor, where seminars aimed specifically at women are being offered with the aim of helping to strengthen their representation in politics.¹⁹ In Islamic countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia and Pakistan this type of support and promotion also incorporates another element. In these countries our activities are focused on making an overall contribution to democracy by

18 | Cf. Wilhelm Hofmeister, "Konrad Adenauer School for Young Politicians (KASYP) – Politisches Trainingsprogramm für junge politische Führer aus Asien", Mar 2010, http://kas.de/wf/doc/kas_19229-1522-1-30.pdf (accessed 13 May 2012).

19 | Cf. the most recent example: "The Role of Women in Politics and Society", organised in conjunction with the Democratic Women's Association, Ulan Bator, Apr 2012, <http://kas.de/mongolei/de/events/50414> (accessed 18 May 2012).

promoting the role of women in politics. The compatibility of Islam and democracy can be seen in the possibility and willingness of women to become involved in their country's politics.²⁰ It is and will remain an important part of our work to support these developments as much as we can.

Asia as Germany's Partner in Creating Tomorrow's World – A Dialogue between Equals

As previously mentioned, the newly-created Social and Economic Governance programme should not only help to bring more expertise relating to social market economy issues into our work in Asia, but should also contribute to the debate on the future architecture of the global financial system. In our view, key players in Asia will play a very important role in this process²¹ – whether it is countries such as Japan and South Korea who have traditionally always had very strong economies, or the emerging nations that have joined the ranks of the global economic elite as part of the strengthening of the G20 process. This would include the Asian BRIC countries China and India, as

well as other up-and-coming nations such as Indonesia. And also Australia, which is of course a continent in and of itself but which has very strong ties to Asia. Even before the current financial and economic crisis, there was general agreement amongst experts that

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with the dawn of the 21st century we are beginning to see a seismic shift in global financial power.²² The decades-long dominance of the transatlantic powers will start to diminish, and the centre of global financial power will increasingly shift towards Asia, or at least to the transpacific region. Demographics will of course play a key role here, along with developments in the real economy. A practical example of the changes under way is provided by the

20 | A current example in Indonesia is the planned seminar on the topic of "Women in Positions of Political and Social Responsibility", Jun 2012, West-Sumatra, <http://kas.de/indonesien/en/events/49953> (accessed 18 May 2012).

21 | Cf. a panel discussion held in conjunction with *Rundfunk Berlin-Brandenburg*: "The new world order will be Asian – an opportunity for Europe?", Berlin, 14 Mar 2012, <http://inforadio.de/programm/schema/sendungen/forum/201203/170750.html> (accessed 24 May 2012).

22 | Cf. "Asia as a strategic challenge and opportunity for Germany and Europe – Asia-Strategy of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group", resolution dated 23 Oct 2007, abridged version, 2.

discussions currently taking place about the leadership of the IMF and the World Bank. It is becoming increasingly difficult to justify maintaining the traditional division of responsibility between the USA (head of the World Bank) and Europe (head of the IMF). For us as Germans and Europeans, it is important that we do not simply seek to cling to old, cherished traditions. We will not be able to maintain the old system forever: the developments currently underway in Asia are simply too dynamic to allow that to happen. But we can help to ensure that all the achievements of the past are not simply cast aside by the new global systems, and that the legitimate interests of "old Europe" continue to be taken into consideration during the ongoing discussions. The Social and Economic Governance programme has this end in mind and seeks to approach discussions with our Asian partners on the basis of creating a dialogue between equals. In this respect the approach is very different to that adopted by the Foundation in the other projects it has undertaken in Asia over the past decades.

However, the Social and Economic Governance programme is not the only project that has now been accorded a totally different approach. In recent years, discussions with regional partners about foreign and security policy have become increasingly important for our work. This is of course tightly bound up with the fact that increased global interconnectedness means that developments in

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remote regions of the world can now have a direct impact on domestic policy in Germany. An obvious example of this is Afghanistan, where for ten years now the German Bundeswehr has had its largest deployment of troops abroad since its founding. Naturally, Germany has a major interest in keeping open the shipping routes between Asia and Europe (the South China Sea, Straits of Malacca, Horn of Africa, etc.), and in ensuring that strategies are found at international level to avoid potential military conflicts such as North Korea, Taiwan, Kashmir, etc. One of the Foundation's main tasks is to do what it can to bring together German and Asian policy-makers in a dialogue between equals. The origins of this focus go back to the 1990s, when this kind of dialogue was initiated with China in particular and later with India. Over recent years, activities in this area have been systematised and given a

much broader base. Of course India and China continue to play a dominant role, but we also approach top foreign and security policy-makers from other countries in the region. There has been a trilateral dialogue with India and China for almost ten years now. An informal India-NATO dialogue was initiated by KAS and the parties met for the fifth time last year.²³ This dialogue has now led to the establishment of an official dialogue between NATO and India.

KAS's SAARC regional programme²⁴ has initiated the first association of South Asian think tanks on foreign and security policy: the Consortium of South Asian Think Tanks. COSATT has set itself the objective of formulating recommendations on foreign and security policy for South Asia, addressing issues such as the fight against terrorism and the strengthening of intra-regional ties.²⁵ In China, Singapore and South Korea there has been high-level dialogue over recent years between German and Asian security experts on a wide range of issues including maritime security, cyber war and the fight against terrorism. At the end of June 2012, a high-level conference, the German-Malaysian Security Dialogue, will be held in Kuala Lumpur.²⁶ These dialogues have changed; they no longer revolve around a unilateral transfer of knowledge, but are now an exchange between equal partners. It is extremely important for German and European policy-makers to not simply keep themselves informed about the changes that are happening in the region and the people involved, but also to understand these changes first-hand.

An additional factor also has to be considered that was barely an issue for us in the early days: how to identify and encourage potential synergies with new partners in

23 | Cf. "Fifth NATO-India Dialogue: From Convergence to Cooperation", symposium, New Delhi, 1 Feb 2011, <http://kas.de/indien/de/events/44166> (accessed 18 May 2012).

24 | South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), <http://saarc-sec.org> (accessed 20 May 2012).

25 | Cf. COSATT, "Countering Terrorism – Building a Common Approach in SAARC", New Delhi, Apr 2010, <http://kas.de/saarc/en/publications/23488> (accessed 1 Jun 2012); idem, "Building Bridges – Strengthening Physical, Emotional and Economic Linkages in South Asia", Kathmandu, May 2012, http://kas.de/wf/doc/kas_31145-1522-1-30.pdf (accessed 20 May 2012).

26 | Cf. KAS Malaysia website, <http://kas.de/malaysia/en/events/51094> (accessed 18 May 2012).

international development work. In the Asia-Pacific region, countries like Japan and Australia share many of our core values and have similar interests to Germany and Europe in the area of development cooperation. It is important for us to identify what we agree on, where there are differences, and above all, which areas are worth considering for more intensive cooperation. The resumption of KAS activities in Japan in 2004 has gradually made this aspect a focus of our activity. Since then, we have developed a strong partnership with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). This new priority has been demonstrated by the organisation of conferences on areas of joint activity in Africa and Asia (held in Berlin and Tokyo in 2009),²⁷ and a recent conference entitled "Addressing local conflicts before they turn global – the nexus between security and development" (Tokyo 2012).²⁸

Australia has also attracted attention for KAS activities. No other Western country has closer ties to Asia than Australia. So it is hardly surprising that Australia's universities, think tanks and government offices have a high degree of expertise in this area. With our regional programmes, we are trying to integrate Australian experts into our dialogues with Asia. But we are also keen to bring this

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topic more to the forefront in Germany, incorporating it into expert circles and above all into the political discourse. In May 2012, a first event was held in Berlin in conjunction with the Australian embassy. Under the banner "Australia and Germany – Partners in the Asia-Pacific Region?" it examined ways the two countries could work more closely together on development policy in the Asia-Pacific region.²⁹

27 | The first conference took place in Berlin in January 2009 under the banner of "Global Responsibility in the Development Cooperation of Japan and Germany – Common Approaches for Common Interests? – The Example of Africa", <http://kas.de/wf/de/33.15567> (accessed 1 June 2012); the second conference took place in the same year in Tokyo, entitled "Challenges of State-building in Asia. Global Responsibility in Development Cooperation of Japan and Germany", 7 Nov 2009, http://jica-ri.jica.go.jp/announce/post_2.html (accessed 18 May 2012).

28 | Cf. KAS Japan Website, <http://kas.de/japan/en/events/49553> (accessed 18 May 2012).

29 | Cf. Event Report, "Partner in der Region Asien und Pazifik? Australien und Deutschland", Berlin, 23 May 2012, <http://kas.de/wf/de/33.31129> (accessed 24 May 2012).

The issues of climate change and resource security were important topics at these discussions – topics that are gaining in significance in the Foundation’s international work. Home to the world’s most densely-populated emerging nations, India and China, the continent of Asia is where the problems of global climate change are most glaringly apparent. The UN Climate Change Conferences in Copenhagen and Durban showed clearly that Europe and Asia are taking very different approaches, which will continue to be the case for many years to come. As a foundation, we understand the importance of this issue and are engaging in very open dialogues with our partners. In India in particular, we have been nurturing this dialogue for many years, mainly with our partner, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI). An institutionalized joint forum deals with topics relating to the environment, climate change and energy security.³⁰ Last year, we also introduced new initiatives in other countries, including Malaysia, China, Indonesia and Thailand.

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FUTURE CHALLENGES FOR KAS ACTIVITIES IN ASIA

It is a combination of old and new challenges that will play a major role in the KAS’s work in Asia. The old challenges relate to the situational analyses that Lothar Kraft made back in the 1970s: Asia remains a very heterogeneous continent in terms of both ethnicity and religion as well as economics and politics. Regarding economic development, this is also true for China as a nation on its own; some regions of China have development levels that are comparable with any major city in Europe, while there are also huge undeveloped areas where the population is merely seeking to survive at the most basic level. As a result, China finds itself attempting a “balancing act”,³¹ and other countries in the region are struggling with similar problems. Then there are other nations such as Myanmar or Cambodia that are still quite economically under-developed and which

30 | Cf. inter alia “Study and Information-Programm for Indian Experts on ‘environment, energy and climate change’”, Munich and Berlin, 4-10 Sep 2011, <http://kas.de/indien/en/events/47316> (accessed 18 May 2012).

31 | Cf. also Stefan Friedrich, “China im Entwicklungsspagat”, *Das Parlament*, Themenausgabe: China und seine Nachbarn, 24/31 Jul 2006, 1.

need a considerable amount of assistance and support. The new challenges can also be traced back to these unequal rates of development. On the one hand, we are dealing with a set of very self-assured elites who are asking what "old Europe" still has to offer them. Times have changed however since 30 or 40 years ago, when countries seeking to introduce reforms were falling over themselves to get advice from the West. There are now countless endogenous growth models, and the erstwhile dominance of the West, or at least Europe, is on the decline. Asia really does matter. We can no longer be indifferent to what is happening in China. Not all, but certainly most of the changes happening in Asia today also have an effect on us. When Europe is in a financial and economic crisis, naturally China is concerned. But today, were it the other way round and China was in a deep crisis, this would have a direct impact on economic growth in Europe. This is why it is also so important for our politicians to familiarise themselves with the region: its opportunities, problems and key players.

If nothing else, Asia will determine how the transatlantic relationship plays out. The Obama administration has pivoted the USA to Asia and it is remarkable to see so many of the top U.S. politicians visiting the region. Its more active involvement with Asia also means that Europe can increase its significance as a partner of the USA. Germany in particular commands a great deal of respect in many Asian countries, something which can and should be used to greater effect. The Asian Century is coming, but the next few years will determine whether it will make use of any of the transatlantic era's positive achievements. This may happen, but only if the USA and Europe are prepared to cooperate. We must be prepared to do more in this respect.

The new emphasis of our projects on creating dialogue between equals is extremely important, but we should not focus on high-level political dialogue to the exclusion of all else.

A specific challenge for the KAS is the need to always remember that the region is extremely heterogeneous. The new emphasis of our projects on creating dialogue between

equals is extremely important, but we should not focus on high-level political dialogue to the exclusion of all else. There are many regions where the Foundation still uses traditional methods of helping local nationals to help themselves in order to improve their lives, and it will continue down this path. An Indian politician in the area of

foreign and security affairs hit the nail on the head when he commented: "On the question of a role for Germany and Europe, Professor Chellaney used the term 'comprehensive development': [...] Asia can and must learn a great deal from the experiences and accomplishments of the old continent."³²

We need to see a continuation of the multi-pronged strategy that the Foundation has always used in its work. This strategy places great demands on our Resident Representatives. They have to wear a variety of hats, including that of manager, project developer, networker, accountant, author and writer of applications to the EU, while working from relatively small offices.³³ We can count ourselves fortunate that we have such excellent staff in the region.

Other issues that will have an impact on our work in the region include the tendency towards greater religious intolerance, which is unfortunately increasingly the case in some predominantly Islamic societies, and the possible emergence of old and new conflicts in the region. Experts are warning that Asia will see dramatic disputes over access to drinking water.³⁴ More traditional conflicts such as those in Mindanao (the Philippines), Kashmir (India/Pakistan) or currently in southern Thailand have remained unresolved for some time and could plunge the region into serious crisis. Of course, the Foundation does not have the means to resolve these issues, but we are nevertheless trying to make a contribution and play the role of the "honest broker" between the conflicting parties. One example of how this can succeed is the KAS's work in the Mindanao conflict in the Philippines, where the Founda-

Traditional conflicts such as those in Mindanao, Kashmir or southern Thailand have remained unresolved for some time and could plunge the region into serious crisis.

32 | Cf. Event Report, "Asia's changing power dynamics – How Japan and India can partner for peace", 5 Dec 2012, <http://kas.de/japan/en/events/48960> (accessed 1 Jun 2012).

33 | Recently a high-level official from the Foreign Office came to my office to find out more about KAS activities in a country he would shortly be visiting. After I had told him about our main activities and outlined one or two flagship projects, he rather hesitantly asked how many staff we employed at the office. He was quite shocked to discover that all the work is done by one Resident Representative, one Research Assistant and a few local staff.

34 | Brahma Chellaney, *Water: Asia's New Battleground*, Georgetown University Press, Washington, D.C., 2011, 400 et sqq.

tion has been accepted as a mediator by the government, the military, and the rebel organisations.³⁵

Regarding domestic debate in Germany, it will be our job to make policy-makers more aware of the significance of developments in Asia for Germany and Europe. This was addressed in a strategy paper by the CDU/CSU parliamentary group as far back as 2007: "European integration and transatlantic relations are the two traditional pillars of German foreign and security policy. These must be urgently expanded to include the Euro-Asian dimension."³⁶

At present, we find ourselves caught up in a process that should result in the creation of this additional Euro-Asian dimension. But there is still a great deal of work to be done before it is given the significance it deserves in terms of policy-making, despite all the other pressing problems within Europe itself and around its fringes. It is a question of the future of Germany and the future of Europe – and we will only be able to actively shape this long-term future if we pay sufficient attention to the developments in Asia, the world's fastest-growing continent.

35 | Cf. inter alia the events "Peace Workcamp in Mindanao", 20-23 May 2010, and "Kusog Mindanao Conference: Mindanao 2020 Peace and Development Agenda", 8-10 Jul 2010, cf. <http://kas.de/philippinen/en> (accessed 1 Jun 2012).

36 | Cf. n. 22.