Cross-Strait Participation in the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific: A Case Study of a Multilateral Track Two Approach to Conflict Prevention

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The Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) is characterized by neo-liberal thinking on cooperative security and ideational contributions to regional security. Its discussions are less focused on ongoing tensions or conflicts in the region. Despite the fact that CSCAP does not get involved in resolving any particular conflict, the inclusion of non-like-minded security actors in a dialogue process suggests a possible role in conflict prevention. During the decade of cold peace (1999-2008), when official/semi-official contacts across the Taiwan Strait were limited to managing the politico-diplomatic tension, CSCAP was a stable channel through which delegations from Beijing and Taipei could exchange views on regional security. This study takes a close look at the case of cross-Strait participation in CSCAP during that period from the perspective of conflict prevention and explores the theoretical limitations of a multilateral track two approach to pre-conflict prevention.

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For decades, the Taiwan Strait has been a flash point in Asia-Pacific security. The military, political, and diplomatic tensions in the area have mainly been due to the long-running dispute over sovereignty between the governments in Taipei and Beijing. Beijing has still not renounced the option of using force against Taiwan in the event of a declaration of de jure independence in Taipei. The lack of mutual trust has impeded the two sides from establishing any meaningful dialogue for tackling political differences. After Beijing adopted a policy of opening-up to the outside world in 1979, cross-Strait exchanges at the non-governmental level became possible. Nevertheless, these ever increasing socio-economic exchanges were undertaken without the safeguard of management at the official level. The governments in Taipei and Beijing continued to see each other as political adversaries. In the early 1990s, the Taipei-based Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) and the Beijing-based Association for Relations across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS) were established as governmental proxies to negotiate institutional arrangements that would facilitate stable socio-economic exchanges between the two sides. The launch of SEF-ARATS talks opened a new phase in cross-Strait relations. It was believed that functional cooperation would ease political tension and lay the foundations for peace in the long run. The "1992 Consensus," under which the two sides agreed to differ on their interpretations of the "one-China" principle, enabled Taipei and Beijing to put the sovereignty issue aside. This resulted in the signing of a couple of functional agreements in 1993.¹

¹The Agreement on the Use and Authentication of Cross-Strait Notarized Documents and The Agreement on the Tracing and Compensation of Cross-Strait Registered Mail were signed during the first talks between the head of the SEF, Koo Chen-fu (辜振甫) and his ARATS counterpart Wang Daohan (汪道涵) in Singapore on April 27-29, 1993.
However, the relationship quickly turned sour after President Lee Teng-hui (李登輝) of Taiwan visited the United States in 1995. In a speech to alumni of Cornell University, President Lee emphasized Taiwan's sovereignty by making more than fifteen references to the "Republic of China on Taiwan," instead of merely "Taiwan." Beijing interpreted the speech as provocative and decided to postpone the second round of talks between the heads of the SEF and ARATS. In 1996, the unstable situation across the Taiwan Strait escalated into military crisis when Taiwan held its first direct presidential election. In 1999, Lee attempted to redefine cross-Strait relations by a means of the theory of "special state-to-state relations." In response, Beijing severed the SEF-ARATS channel of communication. In the following eight years (2000-2008), both the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party (DPP, 民主進步黨) government in Taipei and the pro-unification government in Beijing were extremely cautious about resuming any official or semi-official contact. Indeed, talks between the SEF and ARATS only resumed in the second half of 2008, after a Kuomintang (KMT, 國民黨) candidate won the presidential election in Taiwan. During the decade 1999-2008, there was a dual trend in cross-Strait relations, a rapid increase in social and economic ties between the two sides took place against a backdrop of intensified political and diplomatic tension at the state-governmental level. During this period, cold peace often escalated into open tension but did not erupt into armed conflict.

Noticeably, during the same period of time, countries in the Asia-Pacific region were going through an important stage of regional security institution-building. In the early 1990s, think tanks and policy research institutes initiated numerous meetings and dialogues to explore new approaches to regional security order. Some of them were one-off events, but others developed into series of conferences. Among them, the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP), formally chartered in 1993, is one of the very few processes to be institutionalized and to have

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2For discussions on the dynamics of cross-Strait relations since the early 1990s, see Su Chi, Taiwan's Relations with Mainland China: A Tail Wagging Two Dogs (London: Routledge, 2009).
continued to be relevant today. CSCAP is a multilateral track two (T2) security mechanism that networks leading think tanks in the region. It allows incumbent and former government officials to join in discussions with experts, scholars, and journalists, in a private capacity and a non-committal way, to explore cooperative approaches to regional security.\(^3\)

Although CSCAP does not aim to resolve any particular political dispute, its adoption of an inclusive membership policy, which permits the participation of non-like-minded security actors with diverse interests and views in a regional dialogue process, inherently implies the utility of conflict prevention. Once issues of cross-Strait participation had been temporarily settled in 1996, CSCAP became relevant in the dynamics of cross-Strait tension. In retrospect, during the decade of cold peace (1999-2008), when official (or semi-official) contacts across the Taiwan Strait were extremely limited, CSCAP was one of the few stable channels through which delegations from both sides of the Taiwan Strait were able to exchange views on security matters.\(^4\) The inclusion of delegations from both Taipei and Beijing in the process opened an opportunity for a regional mechanism to play a role of conflict prevention in cross-Strait relations.

This article takes a close look at the case of cross-Strait participation in the CSCAP process and from that assesses the utility of a multilateral T2 approach to conflict prevention. The first section highlights the institutional features of CSCAP and their implications for conflict prevention. The second section summarizes the case on the basis of the author’s

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\(^4\)Although both Taiwan (under the name Chinese Taipei) and mainland China are members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), their interactions in APEC were not significant during those years and the issues discussed in that forum were economic rather than security-related.
CSCAP as a Conflict Prevention Process

Notions of conflict prevention are frequently introduced into discussions of institutional approaches to security and peace. At the global level, the establishment of the United Nations (UN) indicates the necessity of international collaboration in conflict prevention. In practice, UN missions and operations are organized only after tension has escalated into crisis or armed conflict. The measures adopted may be said to be designed to avoid the recurrence of conflict, but not necessarily to tackle the root causes of tension. In the early 1990s, the UN secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, called for studies to be carried out on long-term preventive strategies for resolving tensions before they erupted into armed conflicts. His successor, Kofi Annan, initiated reforms of the UN’s conflict prevention processes.\(^5\) Academics are now encouraged to conceptualize notions of conflict prevention in order to better translate rhetorical policy statements into pragmatic measures and strategies.\(^6\) In line with the measures stipu-

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\(^5\) For discussions on related UN initiatives in the late 1990s, see Tapio Kanninen, “Recent Initiatives by the Secretary-General and the UN System in Strengthening Conflict Prevention Activities,” *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 8 (2001): 39-43.

lated in Article 33 of the UN Charter, a ladder of preventative steps has been suggested, ranging from early warning to the use of force.\(^7\)

At the regional level, the role of international organizations in conflict prevention varies depending on the features of regional institution-building. In the early 1990s, faced with strategic uncertainties in the wake of the Cold War, states in the Asia-Pacific region responded cautiously to multilateral initiatives for peace and security. Meanwhile, think tanks with various degrees of attachment to governments started an informal dialogue to search for appropriate institutional forms. Understandably, the lack of mutual trust among regional powers was a barrier to the establishment of a legalist format for security commitment at the inter-government level. Instead, reciprocal and non-committal discussions involving academics, think tank researchers, journalists, and both former and current officials participating in their private capacities were more feasible and welcome. Organized unofficial activities like these are known as T2 diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific.\(^8\)

CSCAP was an extension of a joint T2 project, Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (SCAP), jointly convened by the Pacific Forum/CSIS based in Honolulu, the Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA), the Seoul Forum for International Affairs, and the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Institutes for Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN ISIS). Participants of the third SCAP meeting, held in Seoul on November 1-3, 1992,\(^9\) agreed that there was a need to institutionalize a structural regional process of a non-governmental nature for confidence

\(^7\)The steps include early warning research based on gathering information on minor signs of tension, fact-finding missions operated by either the UN or other organizations, the initiation of peace-keeping operations (such as preventative deployment), the use of coercive measures (such as sanctions), and the threat to use force. See Peter Wallensteen, *Executive Summary of the 1997 Executive Seminar on Preventing Conflicts: Past Records and Future Challenges* (Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, in cooperation with the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, August 20-22, 1999), 4.

\(^8\)For discussion on the definition of T2, see David Capie and Paul Evans, *The Asia-Pacific Security Lexicon* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2002), 233-236.

\(^9\)The first two meetings had been held in Honolulu (October 29-30, 1991) and Bali (April 17-19, 1992).
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building and security cooperation. In June 1993, scholars and experts from ten leading think tanks in the region met in Kuala Lumpur and formally launched the CSCAP process. The CSCAP Charter was adopted in December that year. The core thinking was to establish a habit of dialogue and to achieve security through cooperation.

Some argued that the Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference (PECC), an international non-governmental organization (NGO) which promoted regional economic cooperation, could serve as an institutional model for CSCAP, while others recognized the sensitivity of regional security issues and made more cautious assessments. At the executive level, a Steering Committee (co-chaired by an ASEAN member committee and a non-ASEAN member committee, thus ensuring a balance of views across the region) was set up to plan CSCAP activities and meetings. Working groups with different themes were also organized to facilitate exchanges of views among participants. Since they were given a high degree of flexibility with regard to their goals, the co-chairs of each working group were able to reflect their respective national perspectives through their agendas.

In many cases, T2 diplomacy refers to government sponsored and endorsed activities that test proposals for peace settlements. The CSCAP

11 The ten founding members were the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University (Australia), the University of Toronto-York University Joint Center for Asia Pacific Studies (Canada), the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (Indonesia), the Japan Institute of International Affairs (Japan), the Seoul Forum for International Affairs (Republic of Korea), the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (Malaysia), the Institute for Strategic and Development Studies (the Philippines), the Singapore Institute of International Affairs (Singapore), the Institute for Security and International Studies (Thailand), the Pacific Forum/CSIS (United States).
12 The Charter was subsequently amended in August 1995.
16 For examples, see discussions in Joseph Montville, "The Arrow and the Olive Branch: A Case for Track Two Diplomacy," in The Psychodynamics of International Relationships,
process, however, was initiated to sustain a no-war status in the Asia-Pacific in the post-Cold War period rather than to act as a forum for pre-negotiations for conflict resolution. The development of conflicts often follows a cyclical pattern, starting from relative stability and peace, escalating into open political tension then into armed conflict (or war), thereafter deescalating into relative peace (see figure 1). The issues to be tackled at different stages vary, as do the measures of response. It is notable that CSCAP is designed to tackle issues at the low-to-mid level of the conflict cycle rather than to conduct the post-conflict negotiation of a peace settlement.

Participants in T2 diplomacy in the peace settlement or crisis management phase are usually delegated by the parties involved in the conflict rather than acting in their private capacities, and therefore they are prevented from making non-authorized interventions. In contrast, participants in CSCAP meetings are encouraged or supported by state governments but in their discussions and exchanges they are not confined to official/governmental positions. Interventions made by government officials in meetings have been critical in helping participants to understand official positions, but the dynamics and momentum of CSCAP still rely on non-governmental institutions. Although some of the member committees are closely tied to their governments (such as CSCAP China and CSCAP Vietnam), the conclusions of CSCAP meetings are collectively made under the rule of consensus. Such a format allows CSCAP to be independent from governments but at the same time to earn their appreciation by being relevant to policy.

In CSCAP’s first decade of operation, its participants reviewed the concepts of regional security, acted as a link between the academic and policy research communities, and generated useful discussions.\(^{17}\) The working groups accounted for the main activities of CSCAP and each working group had its own momentum. The North Pacific Working Group emphasized full-house participation, especially in its engagement with delegations from North Korea. This group’s main goal was to achieve a candid exchange of views among security stakeholders on the Korean Peninsula rather than to produce academic explorations or publications. In some meetings, heated debates even escalated into open tension among participants. Discussions in other working groups were less confrontational. Ideas and papers presented in the Comprehensive and Cooperative Working Group were more focused on shaping security concepts and were issued in edited volumes.\(^{18}\) The Maritime Cooperation Working Group, the Con-

\(^{17}\)For a record of CSCAP’s early development, see Desmond Ball, *The Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific: Its Record and Its Prospects* (Canberra, Australia: Australian National University, 2000), 1-33.

\(^{18}\)Four volumes were published by CSCAP New Zealand (Center for Strategic Studies)

In December 2004, the working groups that targeted the same issues over time were transformed into study groups focusing on current regional security concerns. Topics for study groups can be proposed by individual members but are reviewed periodically by the Steering Committee. So far, CSCAP has completed studies on capacity building for maritime security cooperation in the Asia-Pacific, multilateral security frameworks in Northeast Asia, drug-trafficking in the Asia-Pacific area, peacekeeping and peace-building, the security implications of climate change, and multilateral security governance in Northeast Asia/North Pacific. Ongoing projects include such topics as responsibility to protect, naval enhancement in the Asia-Pacific, the safety and security of offshore oil and gas installations, the establishment of regional transnational organized crime hubs in the Asia Pacific, and countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the region.

The epistemic aspect of the CSCAP community has become stronger in the study groups. Most of their members are research-oriented academics, and they make more of a contribution to analyzing the substance of issues than they do to addressing political concerns. Even when participants have close ties with their respective governments, they maintain their intellectual independence and make policy recommendations on the basis of their expertise. The common objective across the study groups is

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19 The Transnational Crime Working Group was set up in 1996, while other working groups date from the establishment of CSCAP.

20 By the end of 2004, CSCAP had published nine memorandums. Four were from the Maritime Cooperation Working Group, two from the Transnational Crime Working Group, and the rest were from the CSCAP Steering Committee, the CSBM Working Group, and the Comprehensive and Cooperative Working Group.

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to draft memorandums on specific issues for regional policy consideration. During meetings, participants often make direct exchanges on comments and revisions of documents. On a very few occasions delegations with strong links to their governments requested official consultations back home. Once a consensus is reached on those documents, they are presented to regional intergovernmental mechanisms by the co-chairs of the CSCAP Steering Committee. In order to avoid political sensitivity, the summaries of study group meetings are now presented as statements by the co-chairs rather than as joint declarations by member committees.

Since its establishment, the CSCAP Steering Committee has presented reports and memorandums jointly adopted by CSCAP working/study groups to the chair of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the only pan-Asia Pacific intergovernmental security cooperation mechanism. ARF adopts these documents on an ad hoc case-by-case basis.21 In 2006, after ARF adopted a concept paper entitled "Enhancing Ties between Track I and Track II in the ARF, and between the ARF and Other Regional and International Security Organizations," the relationship between ARF and CSCAP was noticeably strengthened. Co-chairs of the CSCAP Steering Committee or the study groups may now be invited to attend ARF meetings and make direct contributions to the ARF process.22 Such developments have institutionalized an NGO (non-governmental organization) approach in regional security multilateralism and enabled CSCAP to perform an early warning function in pre-conflict prevention. By flagging up issues of common concern, CSCAP alerts ARF member states to potential threats at an early stage. Since measures taken in the pre-conflict phase are believed

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22For instance, Tan Sri Mohamed Jawhar Hassan and Ralph A. Cossa were invited to the ARF ISG meeting on confidence building measures and PD in Singapore in October 2008 and later to other meetings to update ARF on CSCAP activities.
to be effective in avoiding the expenditure of time and resources in later missions, CSCAP has become an important forum for preventing comprehensive security concerns from becoming sources of regional tension.

In the early 1990s, parties involved in diplomatic and military tensions in the Asia Pacific were neither ready to initiate any bilateral detente, nor willing to bring up the disputes in any multilateral forum. The CSCAP platform suggests an alternative to the highly politicized process of official diplomacy. Through informal dialogues and meetings, government officials, in their private or non-official capacities, were able to be involved in a low risk process of conflict prevention. It is hoped that this kind of low-risk, low-cost investment in the T2 format will yield high dividends in the future. More importantly, through the dialogue process, participants from opposing parties may narrow their differences and push forward an ideational approach to norm-building.

The Case of Cross-Strait Participation in the CSCAP Process

Given the strategic uncertainties presented by a rising China, the CSCAP founding members soon reached a consensus that it was essential to invite China into this process if CSCAP was to be relevant in regional security. At the initial stage, China was hesitant about joining, due not only to its lack of experience in multilateralism and the insufficient autonomy of its think tanks, but also to concern regarding how the CSCAP

founding members would handle the issue of Taiwan's participation in line with the CSCAP principle of inclusiveness. Beijing's view is that only national governments are qualified to discuss security issues in the international community. Taiwan's participation in such discussions, even at the T2 level, risks sending out the message that Taiwan's sovereignty is recognized. The CSCAP founding members fully understood the sensitivity of this issue, but also saw the importance of including security actors with differing views in the dialogue process. Thus, including delegations from both Beijing and Taipei in the CSCAP process was an issue at the very beginning.

After three years of discussion and communication, the conditions for cross-Strait participation were temporarily settled in December 1996. The China Institute of International Studies (CIIS), a think tank directly attached to China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), took the seat of CSCAP China with full membership, while Taiwan's participation was restricted to an individual basis. Under the "one-China" principle, three key arrangements were made. First, invitations to working group meetings could be extended only to scholars and experts from Taiwan, not to individuals with official titles. Second, security concerns across the Taiwan Strait were considered to be China's internal affair and thus should not be discussed in CSCAP meetings. Third, the arrangements at meetings should not lead to any implication of the recognition of "two Chinas" or "one China, one Taiwan." Taiwanese delegates could only be identified as "other participants" in meetings.

CSCAP China was not so receptive to the idea of T2 diplomacy. Most of the time, the CSCAP China delegations at working-level meetings consisted of one high-ranking former official (either an ambassador or a general), the project coordinator of CIIS, an expert on the particular issue at hand, and a lower ranking official from MOFA. The views of the Chinese participants were less flexible and mostly followed the official line.

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In contrast, participants from Taiwan were intellectuals and academics who were free to express their professional views. The Institute of International Relations, National Chengchi University, has been negotiating and coordinating Taiwan's participation in CSCAP-related activities and meetings since the early 1990s. In order to avoid misunderstandings or disruptions of proceedings, Taiwan is required to submit a list of members to the CSCAP Steering Committee and select its delegate to each meeting from this list. In practice, the rule of consensus allows individual member committees, including CSCAP China, to influence the composition of the Taiwan delegation.

The original limits on Taiwan's participation were gradually eased after 1999. Participants from Taiwan were permitted to play a full role in the work/study group meetings, including making contributions to CSCAP-related publications. The category of "other participants" is no longer exclusive to Taiwan, but also includes invitees who do not belong to a CSCAP national committee. In the first few years, the seating arrangements for "other participants" puzzled many newcomers to CSCAP meetings. Later, the co-chairs or the host of each meeting adopted more flexible arrangements, such as unassigned seating or participants sitting in alphabetical order of names.

The above arrangements were mainly documented in the CSCAP Secretariat's correspondence with CSCAP China and the Taiwanese coordinators up to the end of 2004. During the 22nd meeting of the CSCAP Steering Committee held in Kunming, "Procedural Guidelines for the Parti-

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28The main worry was CSCAP China's refusal to tolerate any pro-independence arguments raised by Taiwanese participants in meetings.
29As in 2008, eleven scholars and experts from Taiwan were on the participant list pre-agreed by the CSCAP Steering Committee.
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cipation by Scholar/Experts from Chinese Taipei in CSCAP Study Group Meetings,” drafted by CSCAP China, were adopted without Taiwan's knowledge. The guidelines stipulate conditions for Taiwan's participation based on what had been agreed and practiced since 1996 except for two points. First, members agreed to refrain from using the terms "Taiwan," "ROC," "Central," or "National" in reference to Taiwan's participation. Instead, "Chinese Taipei" was to be used at all times to refer to Taiwan in CSCAP documents. The co-chairs of each working group were thus not permitted much flexibility in making alternative arrangements. Second, Taiwanese scholars who are not on the pre-agreed list may be invited to meetings with the prior consent of the CSCAP Steering Committee. This latter point gave Taiwan more flexibility in organizing its delegations. In practice, nevertheless, the coordinator often consults with CSCAP China before suggesting new names to the CSCAP Secretariat. Although the guidelines were adopted without Taiwan's knowledge, Taiwanese participants had no choice but to accept the rules of the game in order to stay in the process.

In terms of the conflict cycle, the cold peace that prevailed in cross-Strait relations during the period 1999-2008 approximated to a medium level of tension, that is, a no-war situation in which an unstable peace sometimes escalates into open political tension but not into a crisis situation in which an outbreak of war is imminent. To what extent and in what context can the CSCAP process, as a multilateral T2 mechanism, be considered a mechanism of conflict prevention in that period? Since cross-Strait issues are barred from the formal agenda of CSCAP meetings, CSCAP could hardly have played a third party role in facilitating cross-Strait talks, mediating between Beijing and Taipei. However, by comparing the dynamics of cross-Strait tension at the governmental level and the reactions of CSCAP China in this T2 process, it is possible to perceive CSCAP's pre-conflict prevention utilities of early warning and tension detection.

In general, the "one China" principle was restated in CSCAP meetings whenever comments were made in relation to security in the Taiwan Strait. In most cases, interventions were stopped immediately by the co-
chairs of the meeting or the CSCAP China delegation. Interestingly, participants who were not familiar with the preset rules of the game often continued their discussions during coffee breaks, lunches, and dinners. Through this unintended pattern of interaction, more and more scholars across the region came to realize the sensitivity of bringing up cross-Strait issues in this international security forum and to expand their knowledge of security in the Taiwan Strait.

It seemed that CSCAP China was the only party excused from adherence to the preset rules and allowed to make exceptions. In March 2000, Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁) of the pro-independence DPP won the presidential election in Taiwan. In his inaugural speech, President Chen committed his administration to a policy of "five nos": no declaration of independence, no change in the title of the nation, no inclusion of the "state-to-state" description in the Constitution, no referendum to change the status quo, and no abolition of the Guidelines for National Unification or the National Unification Council. In response, China adopted a "wait and see" attitude to Chen's administration and at the same time signaled the possibility of negotiating the content of the "one-China" principle. In 2001, a senior delegate of CSCAP China took the floor in a working group meeting to make a statement on China's official position regarding the flexible definition of "one China." Although there was no follow-up discussion in the meeting, the message was well received by all the scholars and experts present, in particular by the Taiwanese participants. It was apparent that in this case China intended to use CSCAP as a low risk channel to deliver a political message.

In 2002-2003, when cross-Strait relations were in a constant state of open tension, the DPP government officially rejected the "one-China" principle and the "1992 consensus" and took a number of initiatives that highlighted Taiwan's sovereignty, such as the president's use of "one country on each side of the Taiwan Strait" to define relations between Taiwan

31 Due to the adoption of Chatham House Rules in all CSCAP meetings, the details will not be provided here.
and mainland China. In 2003, CSCAP China changed the composition of its working team and the stable relationship built up between the two CSCAP counterparts across the Taiwan Strait since 1999 was disrupted. The new CSCAP China team started to check closely on how Taiwanese participants were presented in CSCAP documents, including the agendas of meetings, and on the affiliations of Taiwanese participants and the addresses used in lists of participants. Words such as "Taiwan," "National," "Central," or "ROC" were considered to imply "one Taiwan, one China" or "two Chinas" and thus their removal was requested. At one meeting in 2003, CSCAP China delegates even used correction fluid to blank out the sensitive words in copies of the program without the co-chairs' knowledge. Since then, only on very few occasions have the affiliations of Taiwanese participants appeared in CSCAP documents without some words missing.

In terms of developing measures for pre-conflict prevention, a direct approach would aim at preventing the escalation of tension, while a structural approach would involve changing the dynamics of tension and narrowing the ideational differences of the parties involved. Once the founders of CSCAP had adopted the concept of cooperative security, which stresses the inclusion of all regional security stakeholders in dialogues, CSCAP became a potential vehicle for developing direct measures to prevent tensions from escalating into crises. When the five working groups were set up to cover issues of a non-military and non-political

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32 This was contained in Chen's opening address, delivered by video link, to the 29th Annual Meeting of the World Federation of Taiwanese Associations, August 3, 2002.
33 This happened during one of the North Pacific Working Group meetings. CSCAP China was later advised to consult with co-chairs about meeting arrangements in the future.
34 In the mid-1990s, two types of prevention strategies, operational prevention and structural prevention, were defined in the final report of the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict. These categories were later developed into direct and structural prevention measures in many studies of conflict prevention. For example, see Peter Wallensteen, "Northeast Asia: Challenges to Conflict Prevention and Prevention Research," in Swanstrom, ed., Conflict Prevention and Conflict Management in Northeast Asia, 39-49; and Chyungly Lee, "Conflict Prevention in Northeast Asia: Theoretical and Conceptual Reflections," in Conflict Prevention and Conflict Management in Northeast Asia, ed. Niklas Swanstrom (Uppsala, Sweden: Uppsala University, 2005), 51-70.
nature, recommendations for promoting comprehensive security cooperation suggested structural ramifications to reshape the regional security environment.

With its NGO approach, CSCAP allows Taiwan to participate in the process without necessarily raising concerns about legitimacy or sovereignty issues. To some extent, the interactions between CSCAP and ARF also allow Taiwan to make an indirect contribution to regional security cooperation. The equal participation of CSCAP China and the Taiwanese scholars in the working/study groups opens up a regular direct channel for both sides to jointly work on the detection of regional security concerns and to recommend regional responses. On the sidelines of the meetings, delegations from Taipei and Beijing have often taken opportunities to exchange views informally and to collect information on their governments’ positions on the most recent development in cross-Strait relations.

In terms of the substance of the discussions, the increasing concern about trans-boundary security resulting from the increasing socio-economic interdependence and integration across the Taiwan Strait has prompted the two sides to explore a similar agenda of regional comprehensive security cooperation. Delegations from Taiwan and mainland China, through the coordination of the two CSCAP counterparts, have held several bilateral workshops on the related themes. The topics covered were economic security (in 2001), health security (2006), regional economic integration (2007), and climate change (2008). Although translating discussions in cross-Strait workshops into policies is a lengthy business, the institutionalizing of the dialogue process itself indicates the possibility that structural prevention measures may be developed to deal with the root causes of anxiety surrounding the increase in socio-economic interdependence.

35The first workshop was held in Beijing. Since 2006, the workshops have been held alternately in Beijing and Taipei.
Theoretical Reflections

Although CSCAP is characterized by its ideational contribution to regional security and neo-liberal thinking on cooperative security, the observations in this case study prompt at least two theoretical reflections: (1) the difficulty in building an explanatory theory that causally links the contributions of multilateral T2 efforts to ideational shifts in national security perceptions, and (2) the limitations of the NGO approach to developing state-centric pre-conflict prevention measures.

Indirect Evidence of Supporting Ideational Impacts

To some extent, studies of ideational impacts on actors with views of social constructivism suggest possible correlations between the CSCAP process and the shaping of the security perceptions of member committees. However, causal links between the views of those who were engaged in the CSCAP process and the rationales of policy makers were not identified. Dialogues and meetings, as direct prevention measures, are useful for communicating the security perceptions of parties involved in tension. But it is questionable to what extent agreements reached in T2 meetings can be delivered to policy makers. In this case study, evidence supporting ideational impact on the redirecting of national security concepts in Taipei and Beijing has been found during the period of cold peace, but only indirect inferences can be made.

The primary goal of Taiwan's national security policy in this period was to counter the military threats coming from Beijing. Participation in the CSCAP process helped the security community in Taiwan to develop a broader security agenda. Through individual connections and networks, several CSCAP participants were able to contribute their observations and help construct a comprehensive approach to assessing Taiwan's security.

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The first National Security Report released by the National Security Council in May 2006 clearly suggested a comprehensive agenda for assessing Taiwan's security environment. During the preparation of this document, two regional security experts on the preset list of Taiwanese participants of CSCAP meetings were appointed as advisors to the National Security Council. However, the report itself was the collective effort of several working teams. To what extent the change in security perception reflected in the report can be attributed to the impact of CSCAP participation remains unclear.

Indirect evidence of the cognitive evolution of China's security thinking can also be found. Although it continued to make assertions about defending its sovereignty and territorial integrity, experience of multilateral engagement did widen China's perception of regional security and encourage the Chinese authorities to work on a comprehensive agenda that was more focused on human security. When the subject of "human security" was first raised in the CSCAP Comprehensive and Cooperative Working Group in 2000, CSCAP China reserved its position for fear of sending out a signal that it was downgrading the importance of "national" security. These concerns were soon removed, however. In 2001, CSCAP China became a co-chair of this working group and began working on economic and human security issues with other participants, including scholars and experts from Taiwan. Recently, China's efforts in leading initiatives on preparation for emergencies and disaster relief in regional intergovernmental mechanisms such as APEC and ARF have been salient. Nevertheless, evidence of T2 impact on such changes remains limited. In fact, observing the behavior of CSCAP China seemed to suggest the reverse. In support of their arguments during CSCAP meetings, the Chinese delegation constantly referred to China's new security concept thereby reflecting the influence of the official position on them.

37 For the most recent discussions of China's views on multilateralism and new security concepts, see Michael Yahuda, "China's Multilateralism and Regional Order," in China Turns to Multilateralism: Foreign Policy and Regional Security, ed. Guoguang Wu and Helen Lansdowne (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 75-89.
Cross-Strait Participation in CSCAP

Gaps between Neo-liberal Thinking and Neo-realist Practice

In the Asia-Pacific, the increasing politico-economic pluralism\(^\text{38}\) has encouraged the development of neo-liberal security ideas in which informal networks have played an important role in regional institution-building. Some have even argued that Asia-Pacific diplomacy can be and has been pursued through both official and unofficial channels,\(^\text{39}\) and solutions to multidimensional security concerns can be found through cooperation of non-state actors. Multilevel networks and international non-governmental organization (INGO), bypassing state governments, could play a role of conflict prevention. Unlike those INGOs that are directly involved in field work, CSCAP often requires a policy response at governmental level before its memorandums are realized. Therefore, institutionalizing access to official networks is essential if the conclusions reached at CSCAP meetings are to be translated into prevention strategies. Nevertheless, official responses to T2 suggestions are usually influenced by the neo-realist mentality of state governments. In some cases, neo-liberal institutional arrangements for conflict prevention were modified in order to accommodate the interests of individual regional powers.\(^\text{40}\) The gap between neo-liberal security thinking and neo-realist practice has been of great concern in the case of cross-Strait participation in the CSCAP process.

According to the CSCAP Charter, membership of CSCAP is on an institutional basis and consists of member committees.\(^\text{41}\) In addition to regular membership, associate membership may be granted to an institu-


\(^{41}\)According to Article III of the CSCAP Revised Charter, the admission of new members requires the unanimous agreement of the Steering Committee.
tion or consortium of institutes in a country or territory.\footnote{According to Article IV of the CSCAP Revised Charter, associate members are eligible to participate in meetings at the working level and in the CSCAP General Meeting. Associate members may also be invited to participate as observers in meetings of the CSCAP Steering Committee.} Candidates for membership must form a "member committee," not a "national committee." Avoidance of the term "national" was intended to ease the difficulty of inviting institutions from political entities involved in disputes over sovereignty. Moreover, making institutions in a "territory" also eligible for associate membership allows the CSCAP process to accommodate these institutions without provoking sovereignty disputes. The criteria for CSCAP membership indeed reflect a neo-liberal thinking on security that views as essential the accommodation of regional security actors with differing views or those which are involved in political tension. The founding members of CSCAP believed that such arrangements not only support the principle of inclusiveness in security cooperation but also facilitate the simultaneous participation of mainland China and Taiwan.\footnote{Carolina G. Hernandez, "Governments and NGOs in the Search for Peace: the ASEAN ISIS and CSCAP Experience," paper presented at The Alternative Systems Conference: Focus on the Global South (Bangkok, Thailand, March 27-30, 1997). (www.focusweb.org/focus/pd/sec/hernandez.html) }

In practice, however, CSCAP China has played a decisive role in Taiwan's participation. One of the examples was an incident at the 2003 CSCAP General Conference. According to Article XI of the CSCAP Charter, individuals and organizations from non-member countries or territories may be invited to attend general meetings as guests. When the CSCAP General Meeting was expanded into the CSCAP General Conference in 2003, the chairperson of the host member committee extended invitations to scholars and experts from Taiwan as guests of the host institute. CSCAP China was uneasy about this, and the opening session of the General Conference was delayed until the heads of the CSCAP member committees had reached an agreement on how to handle the already present Taiwanese participants. In response to a strong protest from CSCAP China, the CSCAP Steering Committee agreed to remove the names of the Taiwanese participants from the formal conference record.
In the following years, despite the fact that the biennial General Conferences were each attended by around two hundred and fifty academics and policy researchers from around the world, scholars from Taiwan were not able to attend any of them. This situation did not change until 2009, after the improvement in cross-Strait relations. It seems that such an improvement in relations was a necessary condition for utilizing the neo-liberal institutional function of CSCAP regarding Taiwan's participation. In an early review of the CSCAP process, one of the founders suggested that the prospects for CSCAP would depend ultimately upon its capacity to influence and shape the development of tension and conflict, and to contribute to the construction of a regional security architecture in which cooperative modalities prevail over power politics. But in the case of cross-Strait participation, the opposite seems to be the case.

Conclusion

Overall, cross-Strait participation in the CSCAP process during the period of cold peace was a fair reflection of a neo-liberal institutional approach to pre-conflict prevention. In practice, however, the institutional utilities were undermined by the neo-realist mentalities of state behavior. Since Ma Ying-jeou became president in May 2008, Beijing and Taipei have resumed their bilateral dialogue on a number of levels. In addition to the SEF-ARATS talks, the dialogue between the KMT and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has been officially designated a T2 mechanism. In these circumstances, how relevant will the CSCAP process be in the future? It is predictable that interactions between delegations from CSCAP China and Taiwanese participants in CSCAP meetings will be less tense given the new dynamics of cross-Strait relations. Nevertheless, in the short term, resolving the paradox of a tendency toward a neo-realist mentality in a neo-liberal institutional setting will continue to be a challenge.

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In addition to the structural factors in international relations, domestic pluralism raises concerns about the legitimacy of delegations in T2 meetings. If member institutes of CSCAP are too close to their governments or if they favor particular political positions, the pluralist trend in the dialogue process will be compromised and the innovative or ideational function of T2 diplomacy will be lost. But if CSCAP member institutes or individual participants are too distant from their governments or political groups, T2 initiatives can hardly be translated into policies. Given the fact that a domestic consensus on cross-Strait issues is still lacking in Taiwan, it is questionable what would be the optimal composition of delegations from both sides of the Taiwan Strait in order for a meaningful dialogue on conflict prevention measures to take place.

The reactions of CSCAP China to the ups-and-downs of cross-Strait relations suggest that CSCAP has the utility of early warning and tension detection. In the cold peace period, however, neither government had sufficient political will to adopt any initiatives that would have changed the dynamics of tension. Is it, therefore, possible to develop a conflict prevention strategy that can be carried through without being affected by fluctuations in tension? Will a third party approach, by which an independent body either jointly organized by the parties involved or suggested by the international community implements a pre-conflict prevention strategy, be a valid option? It seems that only when both Beijing and Taipei come to value the flexibility of a non-state-centric approach, will neoliberal security multilateralism be applied to cross-Strait relations.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


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45This concern was also raised in the case of ASEAN ISIS. See Herman Joseph Kraft, "The Autonomy Dilemma of Track Two Diplomacy in Southeast Asia," *Security Dialogue* 31, no. 3 (2000): 343-356.


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