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Научная статья / Research article

The Challenges of ASEAN's Involvement in the Eurasian Regional Order

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Abstract. This article explores the various constraints, including institutional, normative and other factors, that shape the nature and limits of the Association of South East Asian Nations' (ASEAN) engagement with the Eurasian regional order. The empirical foundation of the study is based on an analysis of ASEAN's core foundational documents, such as the ASEAN Charter and strategic documents reflecting the organization's long-term vision. The findings indicate that ASEAN's limited engagement is driven by a set of four structural factors. First, there is a significant discrepancy between the institutional logics of Southeast Asia and that of Eurasia. The distributed and functionally differentiated architecture of Eurasian institutions, characterized by the separation of economic, political, and security competencies among different organizations, contrasts with ASEAN's normatively driven and dialogue-oriented model, which is centered on consensus-building and procedural consolidation around ASEAN as the singular core of the regional order. Second, ASEAN's strategic positioning is predominantly oriented toward the Indo-Pacific region and a hedging strategy amid major power competition, whereas the Eurasian dimension is not institutionalized as an independent strategic priority in ASEAN's official documents. Third, the principle of ASEAN centrality and preservation of procedural autonomy constrain participation in frameworks that imply an institutional core alternative to ASEAN. This explains the organization's cautious stance toward Russian initiatives such as the Greater Eurasian Partnership and proposals for Eurasian security architecture. Fourth, internal heterogeneity among member states on key security issues, most notably the Myanmar crisis and territorial dispute in the South China Sea, as well as differing approaches to engagement with external partners, complicates the formation of a unified position. Collectively, these factors account for the fragmented nature of interregional linkages and impede the establishment of a comprehensive framework for cooperation with Eurasian institutions.

Key words: Eurasia, regionalism, EAEU, SCO, interregional interaction, Asia-Pacific region, Indo-Pacific region, institutional architecture

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Проблемы вовлечения АСЕАН в евразийский региональный порядок

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Аннотация. Исследованы институциональные и нормативные ограничения, определяющие характер и пределы вовлечения Ассоциации государств Юго-Восточной Азии (АСЕАН) в евразийский региональный порядок. Эмпирическую основу исследования составил анализ основополагающих документов АСЕАН, включая Устав Ассоциации и иные документы, отражающие стратегическое видение объединения. Проанализирован характер институциональных связей АСЕАН с ключевыми евразийскими структурами (Евразийский экономический союз (ЕАЭС), Шанхайская организация сотрудничества (ШОС), Организация Договора о коллективной безопасности (ОДКБ), Содружество Независимых Государств (СНГ)) и степень их формализации. Результаты исследования показывают, что ограниченная вовлеченность Ассоциации обусловлена совокупностью четырех структурных факторов. Во-первых, выявлено принципиальное несоответствие моделей незападного регионализма в Юго-Восточной Азии и Евразии: распределенная функциональная архитектура евразийских институтов с разделением компетенций и фокусов на вопросы экономки, политики и безопасности контрастирует с нормативно-диалоговой моделью, ориентированной на консенсус и процедурную консолидацию вокруг АСЕАН как единого центра регионального порядка. Во-вторых, установлено, что стратегическое позиционирование АСЕАН ориентировано преимущественно на Индо-Тихоокеанский регион и политику хеджирования в условиях соперничества крупных держав, тогда как евразийское направление не закреплено в качестве самостоятельного приоритета. В-третьих, подтверждено, что принцип центральности АСЕАН и сохранение процедурной автономии ограничивают перспективы участия в конструкциях, предполагающих альтернативное Ассоциации институциональное ядро. Это обусловливает дистанцирование объединения от таких российских инициатив и концепций, как Большое евразийское партнерство и евразийская архитектура безопасности. В-четвертых, показано, что внутренняя неоднородность государств-членов по ключевым вопросам в сфере безопасности (прежде всего кризис в Мьянме и территориальный конфликт в Южно-Китайском море) и взаимодействия с внешними партнерами затрудняет формирование единой позиции. В совокупности данные факторы определяют фрагментарный характер межрегиональных связей и препятствуют созданию комплексной рамки сотрудничества с евразийскими институтами.

Ключевые слова: Евразия, регионализм, ЕАЭС, ШОС, межрегиональное взаимодействие, Азиатско-Тихоокеанский регион, Индо-Тихоокеанский регион, институциональная архитектура

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Introduction

The current transformation of the international system is accompanied by the strengthening of the role of regional orders as key elements of global governance. The fragmentation of the global economy, the crisis of universal institutions, and growing competition between major powers have led to the development of diverse forms of regional cooperation, which increasingly serve not only as economic projects, but also as mechanisms for institution-building and strategic positioning. Under these conditions, regionalism is becoming a central category for analyzing macro-regional spatial organization and the establishment of sustainable regimes of interaction between states.

In international relations research, regionalism refers to the process of institutionalizing cooperation between states in a given geographic

space, aimed at creating sustainable mechanisms for coordination in the economic, political, and security spheres. This involves the development of shared norms, procedures, and institutions that ensure the reproduction of the regional order and the reduction of transaction costs of interaction. A special place in the contemporary research agenda is occupied by the phenomenon of non-Western regionalism, which is considered as models of regional construction that emerge outside the Western European context and do not automatically reproduce the institutional logic of the European Union as a normative standard of integration (Koldunova, 2026; Aghazada, Degterev & Kurylev, 2023; Acharya, 2016). Non-Western regionalism is characterized by a flexibility in institutional forms, a priority on sovereignty, a reliance on consensus and a significant role for political dialogue and informal coordination mechanisms (Honrada & Bokeriya, 2023). Some researchers classify non-Western regionalism into the category of 'new regionalism,' effectively equating these concepts (Söderbaum, 2003; Voskressenski & Koller, 2019; Wang, 2020).

Furthermore, a distinctive feature of non-Western or "new" regionalism is its adaptability to regional political realities and its desire to balance integration with the preservation of member states' autonomy. Furthermore, the essence of this phenomenon lies in countries' desire to ensure regional stability and economic development, while minimizing interference from external (Western) powers and maintaining political autonomy, which often manifests itself in the form of 'soft regionalism' or informal cooperation networks (Söderbaum, 2003; Voskressenski & Koller, 2019; Wang, 2020).

Within this research lens, Southeast Asia (SEA) and Eurasia are of particular analytical interest as large macro-regional spaces where their own models of non-Western regionalism, institutional practices, mechanisms of multilateral interaction, and approaches to organizing regional order are emerging.

The purpose of this study is to identify the institutional and normative factors limiting ASEAN's integration into the Eurasian regional order. We understand the Eurasian regional order as a combination of institutionalized (Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)) and non-institutionalized forms (Greater Eurasian Partnership, Eurasian security architecture) of cooperation in the post-Soviet space and the adjacent macro-region, including economic integration, security coordination, and multilateral political dialogue.

The study relies on qualitative methods. The empirical basis for the work consists primarily of ASEAN documents, including the Charter of the Association, ASEAN long-term strategic planning documents (ASEAN Vision 2045, the Kuala Lumpur Declaration 2025), and other materials reflecting the association's institutional priorities and foreign policy vision. By analyzing these sources, we are able to reconstruct the norms, operating principles, and official policies that define the framework for ASEAN's regional interaction and external positioning.

In addition, documents of the Russian Federation are used, in particular the provisions of the Russian Federation Foreign Policy Concept 2023 and the Sochi Declaration following the anniversary Russia-ASEAN summit, as well as official speeches and statements by Russian President Vladimir Putin and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, which provide conceptual guidelines for Eurasian integration, interregional cooperation formats, and initiatives in the area of regional security architecture. Their inclusion allows us to compare the institutional and normative frameworks of interaction with ASEAN and Eurasian associations and to identify

the parameters of the conceptual divergence between the two models of non-Western regionalism.

The study also utilizes the results of sociological surveys conducted in ASEAN countries. Their inclusion provides additional empirical support for assessing the factors that influence the foreign policy priorities of Southeast Asian states and Eurasia's place within them.

As a working hypothesis, the author suggests that ASEAN's limited involvement in the Eurasian regional order is not due to a lack of opportunities for external cooperation or a lack of interest on the part of individual Eurasian actors. Instead, it is due to the specific characteristics, fundamental operating principles, and priorities of ASEAN itself. These include:

1) incompatibility of regionalism models in Southeast Asia and Eurasia,

2) strategic positioning and foreign policy identity of ASEAN,

3) prioritization of ASEAN's central role in relations with foreign partners,

4) lack of internal unity.

These four structural factors act as barriers to the formation of sustainable mechanisms for interregional connectivity, reducing the potential for ASEAN's deep integration into Eurasian processes.

The research's novelty and the author's contribution consist of several elements. First, the work identifies and substantiates the structural factors limiting ASEAN's engagement in the Eurasian regional order. Second, the author clarifies the essence and nature of two models of non-Western regionalism—in Eurasia and Southeast Asia. Third, unlike existing studies that analyze interactions between regions primarily at the level of individual institutions (e.g., the EAEU—ASEAN or the SCO—ASEAN), this article proposes to view them as the result of a structural mismatch between the institutional and normative logics of regional orders. Thus, the article contributes to the development of conceptual and empirical understanding of non-Western regionalism and interregional interactions.

Conflicting Models of Regionalism

The first fundamental factor in ASEAN's limited integration into regional processes in Eurasia is the fundamental differences in the functioning of regionalism models in Southeast Asia and Eurasia. Eurasian regionalism in its current institutional configuration is characterized by a multilayered and functionally specialized architecture. Eurasia is replicating a model of distributed regionalism, in which various dimensions of regional interaction are institutionally formalized in different organizations and complement each other (Kurylev et al., 2021). Economic integration is institutionally enshrined in the EAEU, while collective security issues fall within the purview of the CSTO. Political, diplomatic, and humanitarian interaction are primarily the responsibility of the CIS. A broader multilateral framework of political dialogue and security cooperation is promoted through the efforts of the SCO. As a result, Eurasian regionalism does not form a single institutional center that sets universal norms and procedures for the entire macro-region. This fundamentally distinguishes the Eurasian model of regionalism from the model in Southeast Asia, within which a single procedural, discursive and normative space is maintained, built around ASEAN (Acharya, 2009b; Stubbs, 2014).

The most institutionally dense element of Eurasian regionalism is the economic framework promoted by the EAEU (Nikitina, 2025). The Union's integration model relies heavily on a ramified legal framework and the functioning of permanent supranational bodies. A number of researchers emphasize that legal institutionalization and the formalization of integration

regimes are the key differentiator between Eurasian economic regionalism and most non-European models (Dragneva, 2017; Vinokurov & Libman, 2022). This is the fundamental difference between Eurasian regionalism and the economic regionalism model in Southeast Asia. The refusal to make most economic agreements legally binding and the deliberately limited level of institutionalization are a deliberately chosen principle for shaping the regional order in Southeast Asia.

In this context, the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015 is a striking example. It did not envision a transition to a common market with a unified legal regime comparable to that of the EAEU, but rather focused on the gradual harmonization of norms, the reduction of non-tariff barriers, and the development of production chains (Tijaja, Tay & Das, 2024). Taken together, these characteristics form a 'soft' model of regionalism, within which the Association's foreign policy identity is defined not by the desire for institutional depth and strategic mobilization, but by the goal of maintaining the autonomy, inclusiveness, and governability of the regional environment in the face of increasing internal and external shocks (Koldunova, 2019).

The security landscape in Eurasia also differs from that observed in Southeast Asia. Within the CSTO, elements of collective defense, joint military planning, and threat response coordination have been institutionalized. ASEAN, for its part, consciously and consistently avoids creating collective security mechanisms, positioning itself as a non-aligned association that builds security cooperation primarily through dialogue and consultation formats (Goh, 2008). This approach explains ASEAN's emphatically careful and measured diplomatic approach to emerging network security formats in the Indo-Pacific region, such as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD), the trilateral AUKUS (Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) military-political bloc, and other mechanisms. In the 'ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific' document adopted in 2019, the Association consciously avoids supporting any exclusive or restrictive formats, emphasizing the priority of openness, dialogue, and reliance on existing mechanisms under the auspices of ASEAN itself.[1] As a result, security in Southeast Asia is institutionally constructed as a space for conflict prevention and risk management, whereas in the Eurasian architecture it also includes elements of allied interaction (Allison, 2013).

In the academic literature, this model is consistently described through the phenomenon of the 'ASEAN Way,' which prioritizes informal procedures, procedural flexibility, and the rejection of rigid coercive mechanisms (Pu, 2025; Caballero-Anthony, 2005). The consensus within the Association is not so much a tool for finding optimal solutions, but rather a means of preserving political integrity of the association and preventing institutional schism. As A. Acharya demonstrates, it is precisely the procedural nature of interaction—regular meetings, coordination of positions, multi-level consultation mechanisms—that has become the basis for forming a specific security community in Southeast Asia, in which conflict between members is perceived as a politically unacceptable scenario even in the absence of developed legal constraints (Acharya, 2009a).

The SCO occupies a special place in the Eurasian architecture, most closely resembling the ASEAN model of regionalism in its procedural characteristics, flexibility, and multifunctionality. The SCO is characterized by consensus-based decision-making, the rejection of rigid coercive mechanisms, and the priority of regular political

[1] ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific // ASEAN. URL: https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/ASEAN-Outlook-on-the-Indo-Pacific_FINAL_22062019.pdf (accessed: 26.01.2026).

dialogue and consideration of the individual characteristics of member states (Yuan, 2023; Denisov & Safranchuk, 2016). However, unlike ASEAN, where its institutional mechanisms are used by member states as a tool for foreign policy hedging and maintaining autonomy, a different institutional logic operates within the SCO. Here, the key parameters and priorities of cooperation are largely determined by the leading regional powers, while the organization itself serves primarily as a platform for coordinating their positions and actions of member states in a broader regional context (Lukin et al., 2025; Kurylev, 2025).

Thus, while regionalism in Southeast Asia can be characterized as normative and dialogue-based, aimed at strengthening ASEAN's agency and emphasizing the uniqueness of its path, Eurasian regionalism is primarily a functional and regulatory model.

Identity and Strategic Vision

In ASEAN's official discourse and documents, Eurasia does not appear as a distinct analytical category and is not recognized as a distinct macro-regional priority. The Asia-Pacific region (APR) has traditionally remained the dominant framework for ASEAN's foreign policy positioning. However, in recent years, the Indo-Pacific region (IPR) has increasingly become a key dimension of ASEAN's foreign policy and economic orientation. Specifically, the Kuala Lumpur Declaration 'ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future,' adopted following Malaysia's chairmanship of the ASEAN Summit in 2025, explicitly states that the Association aims to become the 'epicentre of growth in the Indo-Pacific region' by 2045.[2]

It's telling that the section on key challenges and opportunities in the ASEAN Vision 2045 document does not include a single conflict or issue with a distinctly Eurasian dimension. This means that various economic processes, crises, and other developments in continental Eurasia are primarily peripheral in ASEAN's conceptual and practical understanding. Ensuring peace, security, and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, including the South China Sea, tops the Association's list of priorities.[3] Next comes the confrontation between key centers of power. However, a more detailed analysis of this and other ASEAN strategic documents presented in the work allows us to conclude that the Association perceives great-power rivalry through the prism of the clash between the United States and the People's Republic of China (PRC), which is of a global nature.

In this case, the response and, at the same time, the necessity of ASEAN member countries is the implementation of a hedging policy (Kuik & Jamil, 2024). In practice, this means strengthening the association's interactions, primarily with key dialogue partners, including the EU, Japan, and other countries. It is significant that in a 2026 sociological survey conducted by the influential Singaporean think tank ISEAS, when asked the question 'Who would you choose as a third party to hedge the uncertainties of the US-China confrontation?' the majority of respondents from Southeast Asian countries chose the EU (37.7%), Japan (34.2%), and Australia (9.7%).[4]

Furthermore, none of the Association's member states has a comprehensive strategy for

[2] ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future // ASEAN. URL: https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/ASEAN-2045-Our-Shared-Future.pdf (accessed: 07.05.2026).

[3] ASEAN Community Vision 2045: "Resilient, Innovative, Dynamic, and People-Centred ASEAN" // ASEAN. URL: https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/05.-ASEAN-Community-Vision-2045_adopted.pdf (accessed: 07.05.2026).

[4] The State of Southeast Asia 2026 Survey Report // ASEAN Studies Centre at the ISEAS—Yusof Ishak Institute. URL: https://www.iseas.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/The-State-of-Southeast-Asia-2026-Survey-Final-Single.pdf (accessed: 10.05.2026).

interaction with Eurasia. Contacts with post-Soviet countries and Eurasian institutions are primarily conducted either bilaterally or through highly specialized sectoral approaches. Consequently, the absence of a Eurasian element in ASEAN's foreign policy identity and strategic vision creates an obstacle to establishing a stable interregional dialogue.

This limitation manifests itself in ASEAN's relatively weak institutional integration into the existing Eurasian regional order. For example, the Association lacks stable channels for interaction with the CSTO and CIS structures. The Association's cooperation with the SCO is more formalized, with a Memorandum of Understanding, but it is primarily protocol-based and limited to secretariat-level dialogue, involving the exchange of information and best practices in areas such as digitalization, combating transnational crime, terrorism, and drug trafficking.[5]

The only active and institutionally developed format for the Association's involvement in Eurasian regionalism remains interaction with the EAEU. The parties maintain regular dialogue on such areas as trade policy, technical regulation, customs administration, and many others (Khalova & Illeritskii, 2020). Annual business forums, expert dialogues, and industry events between the EAEU and ASEAN help strengthen ties between business and expert communities of both countries, enabling practical interaction to be maintained even in the absence of a broader political and strategic framework (Kanaev & Korolev, 2020).

At the same time, another important area of EAEU foreign economic development, the introduction of negotiations on the creation of free trade areas (FTAs), is being implemented bilaterally, involving the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) and individual ASEAN member states, without coordination and alignment of interests at the Association level.

Prioritizing ASEAN's Central Role

The Association consistently promotes one of the fundamental principles of the organization's functioning: ASEAN Centrality. This principle is enshrined in a number of ASEAN's founding documents, including the 2007 Charter,[6] the ASEAN Community Vision 2025,[7] the updated Vision 2045,[8] and the more comprehensive ASEAN Vision 2045.[9] The idea of ASEAN 'centrality' implies the association's desire to act as the main architect, moderator, and driving force in all multilateral processes (security and economic) in the Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific regions. In practice, this principle is implemented through a network of ASEAN-centric dialogue mechanisms, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum on Security, the East Asia Summit, and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus.

As R. Stubbs emphasizes, ASEAN's 'centrality' is determined not by the association's combined material power, but by its role in shaping and maintaining the procedures, agenda, and formats of multilateral interaction (Stubbs, 2014). In other words, the Association serves as an institutional core and procedural coordinator

[5] SCO and ASEAN Strengthen Ties // Shanghai Cooperation Organization. May 23, 2025. (In Russian). URL: https://rus.sectsco.org/20250523/1827784.html (accessed: 26.01.2026).

[6] The ASEAN Charter // ASEAN. URL: https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/images/archive/publications/ASEAN-Charter.pdf (accessed: 20.01.2026).

[7] ASEAN Community Vision 2025 // ASEAN. URL: https://www.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/images/2015/November/aec-page/ASEAN-Community-Vision-2025.pdf (accessed: 07.05.2026).

[8] ASEAN Community Vision 2045: "Resilient, Innovative, Dynamic, and People-Centred ASEAN" // ASEAN. URL: https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/05.-ASEAN-Community-Vision-2045_adopted.pdf (accessed: 07.05.2026).

[9] ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future // ASEAN. URL: https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/ASEAN-2045-Our-Shared-Future.pdf (accessed: 07.05.2026).

for interactions among external actors, allowing the bloc's states to maintain agency and relevance in the face of various crises and major power rivalries.

The prioritization of the central role and the 'ASEAN way' is manifested not only in the Association's distancing from military-political blocs and politicized formats, but also from the 'new regionalism' projects in Eurasia promoted by Russia. Russia's Greater Eurasian Partnership (GEP) initiative, put forward in the mid-2010s, occupies a special place in this context. Its conceptual design envisions the creation of a broad framework for interaction between the EAEU, the SCO, ASEAN, and other regional formats (Lukin & Novikov, 2019). At the same time, Russia views ASEAN as one of the leading elements of the GEP, which is reflected in Russian strategic foreign policy planning documents[10] and statements by Russian officials.[11] In addition, back in 2016, the Sochi Declaration following the anniversary summit "Russia—ASEAN" recorded the intention of the parties "to consider the possibility of mutually beneficial cooperation between ASEAN, the EAEU and the SCO",[12] which ideologically fits into the concept of the GEP.

Despite its declarative inclusiveness, the GEP lacks clear mechanisms for the participation of Southeast Asian states. For ASEAN, it remains unclear what added value inclusion in such a macro-regional framework could provide compared to existing Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific regionalism formats, and what role ASEAN could play in these processes.

Even more problematic is the issue of ASEAN's potential support for Russia's proposal to establish Eurasian security architecture, which is based on the notion of the need to reconsider the principles of pan-European and, more broadly, Eurasian security. However, within ASEAN's logic, security issues are traditionally viewed through the prism of inclusive dialogue involving all key external players, while unconditionally maintaining the Association's central role (Qiao-Franco, Karmazin & Kolmaš, 2025). ASEAN's integration into Eurasian initiatives, where the institutional center is shifting toward continental powers and institutions outside of Southeast Asia, threatens to erode the Association's central role in these processes.

Lack of Unity Within ASEAN

An additional structural factor limiting ASEAN's engagement in the Eurasian regional order is the lack of unity within the organization itself. Despite ASEAN's nominal position as a single community with a shared identity and vision, as enshrined in the ASEAN Charter and other ASEAN documents, the organization faces serious challenges in developing a coherent position on key regional development and security issues.

These problems manifest themselves both within ASEAN's internal agenda (primarily the crisis in Myanmar, which complicates the implementation of the principle of non-inter-

[10] The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (Approved by the President of the Russian Federation V.V. Putin on March 31, 2023) // Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. (In Russian). URL: https://www.mid.ru/ru/detail-material-page/1860586/ (accessed: 10.05.2026).

[11] See: Plenary Session of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum // President of Russia. June 17, 2022. (In Russian). URL: http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/68669 (accessed: 06.05.2026); Speech and Answers to Questions by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation S.V. Lavrov Following the Russia—ASEAN Meeting and the Ministerial Meeting of the Countries Participating in the East Asia Summit, Kuala Lumpur, 11 July 2025 // Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. (In Russian). URL: https://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/evraziyskaya_bezopasnost/2035949/ (accessed: 11.05.2026).

[12] Sochi Declaration of the Russia—ASEAN Anniversary Summit on the 20th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Dialogue Partnership between the Russian Federation and ASEAN "Towards a Mutually Beneficial Strategic Partnership" // Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. (In Russian). URL: https://asean.mid.ru/upload/iblock/7fa/zzviyy3klb33wxzqo0qdog58lh2uhqvi.pdf (accessed: 08.05.2026).

ference and collective response mechanisms) and within a broader regional framework, including the South China Sea, which is one of the most sensitive issues for several member states, as well as the institutionalization of the Indo-Pacific region.[13] In the latter case, differences between countries are becoming increasingly apparent. Indonesia[14] and Malaysia,[15] for example, are wary of the QUAD format and especially AUKUS, while Vietnam actively participates in expanded consultation formats, such as QUAD Plus (Thuong & Oanh, 2021), and the Philippines openly supports deeper cooperation with these structures to strengthen regional security and deter China in the South China Sea.[16] This asymmetry of strategic preferences hinders the development of a unified ASEAN foreign policy approach to extra-regional initiatives. Consequently, in the absence of consensus on a number of sensitive issues, it has become difficult to develop a coordinated strategy toward external actors and formats in Eurasia, which ASEAN member states do not perceive as existential for their national security.

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Conclusion

The analysis revealed that ASEAN's limited institutional and normative engagement in the Eurasian regional order is not due to isolated, episodic factors, but rather a combination of structural factors. The Eurasian model is characterized by functional differentiation and institutional dispersal, while the Southeast Asian regionalism model relies on normative-dialogue logic, procedural consolidation, and the principle of ASEAN centrality. These differences create incomparable institutional 'entry modes' into interregional interaction and limit opportunities for systemic dialogue.

The study also confirmed that ASEAN's foreign policy identity is more oriented toward the Indo-Pacific region and hedging in the face of US—China rivalry, while the Eurasian dimension is peripheral to ASEAN and not enshrined as an independent priority in any of its strategic documents. As a result, contacts with Eurasian structures are primarily fragmented and project-based, often taking place at the level of individual ASEAN member states, coordination or cooperation within the Association. Furthermore, deepening dialogue with institutions and formats in Eurasia is limited by the lack of a comprehensive framework for interaction and a sustained political demand from ASEAN member states.

An additional constraint is ASEAN's internal heterogeneity, which complicates the development of a unified position on key regional security issues and interactions with external initiatives. Taken together, these factors indicate that expanding cooperation between ASEAN and Eurasian institutions requires not only technical harmonization of instruments, but also a better understanding of mutual institutional compatibility and political added value.

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