

A Study of the Strategic Fulcrum Role of Sino-Thai Relationship in the China-ASEAN Cooperation: From the Perspective of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road

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The Effectiveness and Challenges of China-ASEAN Cooperation

In 2003, China and ASEAN signed the “Declaration on the Establishment of a Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity”.

In trade, the total bilateral trade between China and ASEAN has been raised from 2002's \$54.77 billion to 2012's \$400.1 billion, at an average annual growth of 22%.

In investment, as of 2012, a total two-way investment between China and ASEAN has reached \$100.7 billion, in which China accounted for 23.4%, and ASEAN accounted for 76.6%.

In engineering and construction, the ASEAN countries are the main markets for Chinese project contracting. In 2005, China enterprises' total project contracts was \$35 billion, and in 2012, the total value of the project contracts has been increased to \$134.9 billion.

In 2012, the Chinese tourists visiting ASEAN has increased to 7,320,000 passengers, that is about three times of 2002. China has become ASEAN's second largest source of tourists.



The Effectiveness and Challenges of China-ASEAN Cooperation

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Chinese government is very optimistic about the China-ASEAN cooperation prospects.

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang:

China and ASEAN join hands in creating a “golden decade” of cooperation, and will definitely create a new “Diamond Decade”.

China-ASEAN “2 +7” Cooperation Framework.

Two political consensuses

Seven recommendations



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But, due to the historical and practical reasons, lack of faith has always been an important strategic obstacles lie between China and ASEAN.

I China's rise issue

From 2002 to 2011, the Chinese economy has maintained a high-speed average annual growth of 10%.

II South China Sea disputes

South China Sea dispute involves only part of the ASEAN member countries, but the impact on the overall situation of China-ASEAN relations.

III The great power game

The United States has never given up the strategy to contain China.



Strategic Significance of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road

President Xi Jinping

China is willing to jointly build the 21st century Maritime Silk Road with ASEAN countries

From the development planning perspective, 21st century Maritime Silk Road (MSR) will start from China, via Southeast Asia, across the Indian Ocean, arrive in the Middle East and the African continent, and will become an important maritime strategy passage.

For China, the MSR is related to long-term strategic layout, not only conducive to the sustainable development of Chinese society and economy, but also help to implement China's good-neighborly foreign concept, effectively improve strategic mutual trust between China and ASEAN, and promote the stability and prosperity of East Asia.



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Strategic Significance of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road

I Offer open and sustainable economic cooperation framework

The MSR takes the infrastructure construction as entry point, the Asian infrastructure investment bank as fulcrum, and the transport infrastructure construction of deep-water port, railway network, highway network, and inland waterways as grasper, so as to gradually absorb the countries along the passage into the interoperability cooperation framework, and further improve the facilitation of trade and investment cooperation mechanism.

II Offer security cooperation framework embodied the Asian security concept

In May 2014, President Xi Jinping actively promoted the Asian security concept of common security, comprehensive security, cooperative security, and sustainable security, and advocated to build a new framework for regional security cooperation, so as to safeguard the prosperity and stability in Asia



The Strategic Fulcrum Role of Sino-Thai Relationship

In the initial stage, due to the negative impact of the South China Sea disputes and the great power game, the MSR faces many obstacles, and is necessary to take key breakthrough strategy.

For the MSR, the primary objective of the initial phase is to open up the strategic channel from the mainland of Chinese to Indian Ocean.

However, due to the United States and Japan fueled, the South China Sea dispute has been intensifying in recent years, and makes it difficult to start building sea channel of MSR in the short term, which will go through the South China Sea and the Malacca Strait into the Indian Ocean Sea.

Therefore, the construction of land route through Indochina, from southwest inland China to the Indian Ocean directly, will become the most feasible select.



The Strategic Fulcrum Role of Sino-Thai Relationship

From the current point of view, among the countries in Indochina, Thailand is the most workable ideal object of the strategic fulcrum select.

I The flexible foreign policy of Thailand will help to resolve misunderstandings and conflicts between China and ASEAN countries

As the fulcrum of international multilateral cooperation, the country should have some flexibility in diplomacy, and maintain a high political trust with all other countries.

II The high tolerance and adaptability of Thai society will help to reduce the potential social risk in the cooperation

With the deepening of economic cooperation and frequent personnel exchanges, especially the massive increase in new immigrants, social and cultural impact and friction will further exacerbate.

III The economic complementarities between China and Thailand will help to enhance the model effects of MSR

By integrating transnational resources, it will be able to form an Indochina “Sino-Thai” twin-engine economy pattern, so as to maintain the prosperity and stability of Indochina.



That's all.
Thanks!

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