

SCO-ASEAN: cooperation for mutual interest and socio-economic modernization

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Abstract. The article discusses the possibilities and prospects of interaction between SCO and ASEAN at the present stage, which will become important links of the "security belt" between Europe and Asia. The rapprochement of the two organizations that have observer status at the UN General Assembly not only strengthens their positive international image, but also contributes to an even greater demand in the world for their matching ideological baggage. The analysis allows us to conclude that Cooperation between the SCO and ASEAN can be vigorously developed in many if not in all of the areas in which they are engaged.

Keywords: ASEAN, SCO, security, regionalism, integration processes, collaboration, organization, exchange of experience.

The development of the integration process, the strengthening of own capabilities and the strengthening of influence in regional and international Affairs have become not only a subjective need, but also an objective requirement in order to respond to the dynamically changing international situation, emerging new risks and threats. In this regard, the role of regional organizations is growing, their number is multiplying and competition is growing. Most experts estimate that the Asia-Pacific region (APR), home to more than 60 per cent of the world's population, will be the geopolitical centre and active economic region in the new century [1]. As an essential part of the world economy, the region has a high potential for conflict. Therefore, stability and peace in this vast area have become an important condition for achieving sustained economic growth. Taking into account this trend indicates a way to combat modern risks and threats, as the creation of partnerships between different structures. The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) is an effective mechanism for discussing and addressing issues of combating modern challenges and threats in South-East Asia, and in recent years it has been joined by the Shanghai cooperation organization (SCO), which, according to many experts, will become important links of the "security belt" between Europe and Asia.

The ASEAN experience has confirmed the need for an evolutionary balanced approach. It is for this reason that the SCO expansion was treated with caution, having previously determined the quantitative indicators of the "critical mass" of the nucleus, which the organization is able to withstand without being subjected to self-destruction and without being distracted from the core of Eurasia [2]. As a result, only in 2015 the SCO adopted new members, which increased the likelihood of effective solutions to a number of problems of a regional nature.

However, in 2013, the issue of the inclusion of the ASEAN member country, namely Vietnam in the SCO, initially as an observer. According to the Russian

expert, Professor S. Luzyanin, Vietnam's accession could play a stimulating role for the development of cooperation between the two organizations. Vietnam could become a real "window" in ASEAN for the SCO as a whole. The benefits of this step for the two sides can be seen today, - says Sergey Luzyanin [3] . Indeed, Vietnam's accession would enable it to intensify investment and other economic cooperation and allow Vietnamese businesses to become more active in the SCO's economic space, including Russia and Central Asian countries.

According to experts, prospects of development of cooperation between the SCO and ASEAN, primarily due to the fact that these organizations adhere to a common position on many regional and global issues that can be seen in the table below.

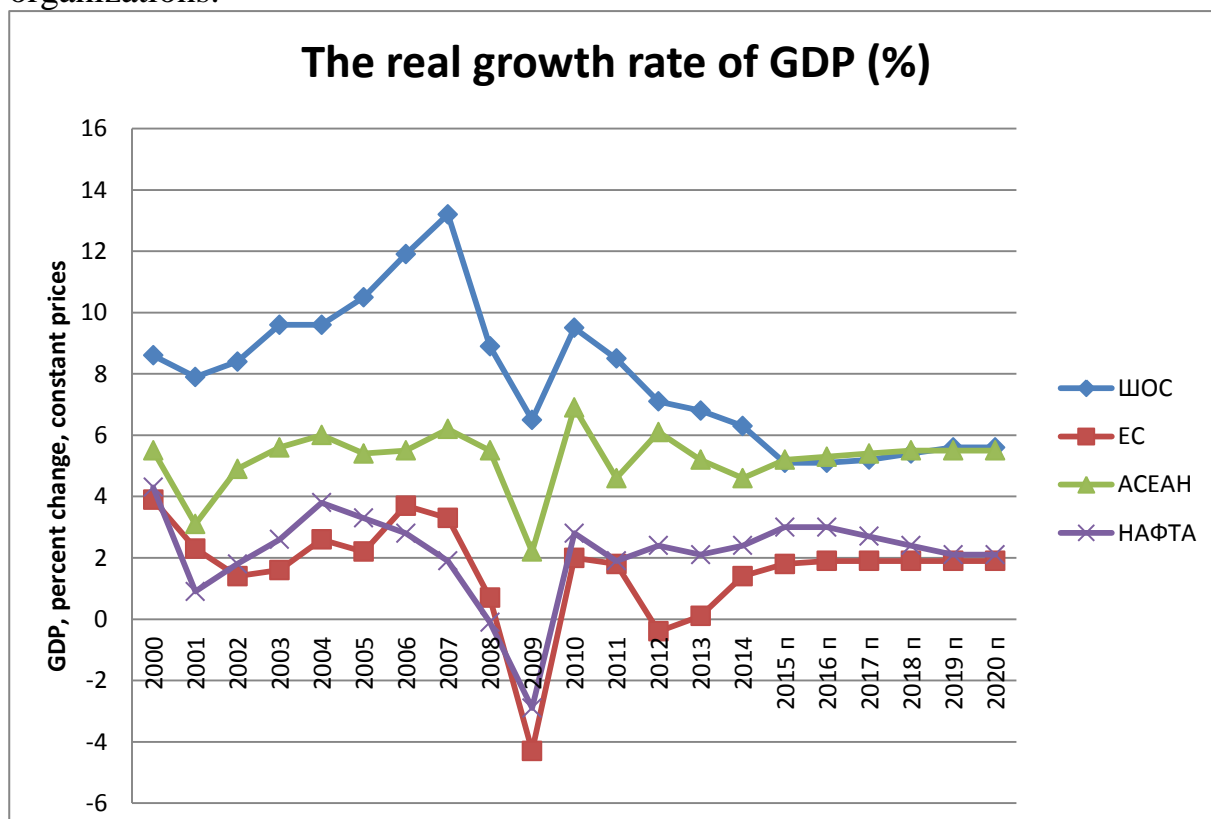
Organization	The purpose and objectives of
The Association of South-East Asia	The maintenance of peace, security and stability in the region; strengthen cooperation in the fields of politics, security, economy and social culture; the peaceful coexistence of member countries, the preservation of the denuclearized status of the South-East Asia; the reduction of difference between all members and the implementation of the uniform harmony and sustainable development. The fight against terrorism and provision of energy dialogue.
Shanghai cooperation organization	Development of comprehensive cooperation in order to maintain and strengthen peace, security and stability in the region, promotion of effective regional cooperation in political, trade-economic, defense, law enforcement, environmental, cultural, scientific-technical, educational, energy, transport, transit, credit-financial and other areas of common interest. The fight against terrorism, separatism and extremism.

As noted by the special representative of the President of the Russian Federation for SCO V. Vorobyov, when creating the SCO, ASEAN was chosen as an example for orientation, which was very impressed by its philosophy and structure, in turn, when ASEAN began to work out its Charter, they took ready-made documents of the SCO. That is, among organizations established mutual account. ASEAN has extensive experience in the field of security and preventive diplomacy, all of which can be borrowed to address the challenges posed by Afghanistan [4] .

Taking into account the current development of the situation, both structures, in addition to their similar goals and objectives in the military, political, economic, environmental and humanitarian dimensions, have other unifying features: the legal status of international organizations, the presence of signed Charter documents, political treaties on friendship and cooperation. SCO member States and ASEAN share geographical proximity and common interests in the Asia-Pacific region, but

not only does geography naturally bring SCO and ASEAN closer together. Despite the "age difference", both associations already have large plumes of dialogue partners and observers, among them – the largest and most influential countries of the modern world [5]. The participants of both organizations are interested in strengthening peace and stability in the "zones of activity", establishing mutually beneficial cooperation in such areas as economy, transport, culture and tourism. The development of cooperation between the SCO and ASEAN is facilitated by the establishment of investment and financial cooperation, including the establishment of information exchange on overcoming the consequences of the global recession, as well as contacts between representatives of the business community and the implementation of joint projects. Moreover, SCO is interested in a wide and diverse Arsenal of forms, techniques and mechanisms of interaction within the Association. ASEAN, with over 40 years experience, could give a lot of positive for such a relatively young structure as the SCO[6].

According to IMF [7] forecasts, the SCO and ASEAN will be leaders in GDP growth in the coming years, in our view, this is another common feature of these two organizations.



SCO-ASEAN cooperation is carried out within the framework of exchange of information and experience between the secretariats of these international organizations, expert consultations. On 21 April 2005, a Memorandum of understanding was signed between the SCO and ASEAN Secretariats, which identified the main areas of cooperation and interaction between the parties in such areas as economy, Finance, tourism, environmental protection, use of natural resources, social development, energy cooperation, issues related to the fight against

transnational crime and others. Undoubtedly, in the context of globalization processes, the adoption of this document opened new opportunities for expanding and deepening mutually beneficial cooperation between the two institutions in the interests of the SCO and ASEAN member States. In November 2007, it was decided to develop a plan for the practical implementation of the Memorandum to develop specific forms, methods and mechanisms of interaction. In November 2008, in Beijing (people's Republic of China), a meeting was held at the level of SCO and ASEAN secretaries General, during which it was confirmed the mutual intention to maintain regular contacts on the basis of the Memorandum adopted earlier.

However, taking into account the fact that the decision taken in 2007 to develop a plan for the practical implementation of the Memorandum has not yet been implemented, we can agree with the opinion of the Russian researcher S. Luzyanin that the signed Memorandum of cooperation between the SCO and ASEAN is still weak [8] .

It should be noted that one of the key areas of cooperation between SCO and ASEAN is cooperation in the field of regional security. As you know, ASEAN stands as an effective mechanism to discuss and resolve issues in the fight against modern challenges and threats in South East Asia. In turn, the SCO is of great importance for the construction of a collective security system in the Asia-Pacific region. Taking into account the fact that the fight against terrorism, radical extremism, separatism, drug trafficking and organized crime has not only regional but also global significance, the joint counteraction to terrorism and extremism in all their manifestations fully corresponds to the "broad profile" of cooperation between the SCO and ASEAN. Cooperation could begin with the joint elaboration of legal principles or a code of cooperation against terrorism. Such cooperation would avoid the creation of alternative structures and narrow formats, which, according to experts, are unlikely to be effective [9] .

The ambitious tasks of creating three communities by 2015 – politics and security, economic and socio-cultural-should undoubtedly be of interest to the SCO. As well as the ASEAN master plan for interconnectedness, approved in 2010 and aimed at the development of the Association's transport and information and communication infrastructure. For ASEAN can be curious some practical projects in the SCO, together with ESCAP. Along with other integration associations, the SCO is seen as an important link in the system of multilateral cooperation.

However, there are fundamental differences between the two organizations. For example, the establishment of the SCO was preceded by the process of solving border and territorial issues between those players who later formed the Shanghai cooperation organization. Unlike the SCO, the ASEAN strategy was built on other principles. According To E. V. Koldunova, the main, but, of course, not quite openly declared goal of this organization, of course, was the task of maintaining its intermediate position between different large regional and non-regional powers in order to prevent conflict between them. Therefore, many conflict situations between the members of the Association themselves were often perceived as secondary, they were frozen against the background of other major international problems in the

region. And, in fact, it turned out that they began to come to the fore only when the mechanism of collective action of ASEAN countries against non-regional players in General was formed [10] . As a result, unresolved territorial disputes between ASEAN countries themselves have come to the fore. The problem of the South China sea has again gained unprecedented relevance, although it would seem, has developed a code of conduct and reached a consensus. But the intervention of external players began to violate this fragile, as it turned out, the balance. Between the countries Of Southeast Asia, as well as once between the countries of Central Asia, China and Russia there are unresolved problems of borders. And in this respect, the Central Asian region may have, in some ways, historically, surpassed South-East Asia, because it has largely solved these problems before creating an institutionalized organization.

In General, the formation of a common, indivisible security through mutual understanding, mutual respect and mutual cooperation is largely a projection of the fundamental elements of philosophy inherent in ASEAN and SCO. The rapprochement of the two organizations that have observer status at the UN General Assembly not only strengthens their positive international image, but also contributes to an even greater demand in the world for their matching ideological baggage [11] .

On 11 November, 2022, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Secretary-General Zhang Ming, attending the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, met with ASEAN Secretary-General Lim Jock Hoi as well as his deputy Michael Tene. Both sides underlined the expediency of developing new forms of interaction, further intensifying ties between the secretariats as well as enhancing coordination and exchanges between the SCO and ASEAN member states in the political, economic and humanitarian fields in order to maintain regional security and stability.

The analysis of the studied materials gives us reason to come to the following conclusions:

- 1.Cooperation between the SCO and ASEAN can develop vigorously in many, if not all, of the areas they are engaged in. To that end, it was important to establish information exchanges between the secretariats in Beijing and Jakarta. The development of cooperation between the SCO and ASEAN is facilitated by the establishment of investment and financial cooperation, including the establishment of information exchange on overcoming the consequences of the global recession, as well as contacts between representatives of the business community and the implementation of joint projects.

2. It seems promising to establish contacts through two important working bodies – the Council of national coordinators of the SCO and the meeting of senior officials in ASEAN.

3. In both organizations, there are either special programmes or specialized structures to combat terrorism, drug trafficking and cross-border crime. The SCO, for example, operates on a permanent basis the Regional anti-terrorist structure with headquarters in Tashkent city, which could timely warn of the counter-terrorism service ASEAN about conspiracies of religious extremists and terrorists. In the

framework of the SCO also accumulated useful experience in the field of combating cybercrime.

4. There is a lot in common on the SCO agenda and the ASEAN regional forum. Both structures will benefit from the establishment of a dialogue, from the SCO's early involvement in the work of the forum. Over the years, ASEAN has gone through a number of difficult periods of transformation, including expansion of its original composition. Responsive and timely adapting to changes in external circumstances. ASEAN today acts as a leading factor in the integration processes in the Asia-Pacific region. Many properties and qualities of ASEAN can serve as a worthy and useful example for the SCO, which is now entering the stage of intensification of its development. Each organization can complement the other without prejudice to its independence, self-sufficiency and specificity.

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