

**/Session Moderator**  
**/Associate Professor Miki SUGIMURA**  
**/Sophia University**

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to this afternoon's session.

Please let me introduce myself, my name is Miki Sugimura from Sophia University. Today, I'm honored to be acting as the chairperson for this panel discussion.

This morning, we talked about trends in the internationalization of higher education and regionalism. We highlighted some internationalization trends in higher education and we found that this had expanded very rapidly. The title of this session is 'Experiences of Asian Higher Education Frameworks and Their Implications for the Future.' We have three distinguished speakers joining us this afternoon. Each presentation will be 20 minutes in length.

First, we will hear the three presentations and just after we will have a discussion period, when we will be taking questions and comments.

I would like to invite the first guest speaker, Professor Supachai. He is the director of the SEAMEO Regional Centre for Higher Education and Development.

**/Professor Supachai Yavaprabhas**  
**/Director, SEAMEO Regional Centre for Higher Education and  
Development**  
**/Presentation: Experiences of Asian Higher Education Frameworks and  
their Implications for the Future**

Thank you very much and good afternoon.

First of all, I would like to join the presenters this morning in thanking Waseda University and thanking Professor Kuroda for having invited us to this very important meeting.

I will make a rather quick presentation and I'll try my best to keep it under 20 minutes.

This presentation is based on my paper and it will be divided in five parts. The first part, you may not find in your booklet because I just added it. It is just a very brief

introduction to our organization: SEAMEO-RIHED. SEAMEO stands for the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization, and RIHED stands for the Regional Institute for Higher Education and Development.

Next, I will touch upon higher education challenges, and implications for national agendas. Then, I will talk about current frameworks for higher education harmonization and integration. Professor de Prado already outlined the European situation in the morning session, so I will touch on it only briefly. Then, I will talk a little about Latin America, the Caribbean and West Africa. I will then touch on the future trends for a regional higher education framework in the Asia-Pacific, its characteristics and the possible areas of collaboration. Finally, I will discuss the possible future framework for closer higher education harmonization in the Asia-Pacific.

This is our umbrella organization: the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization or, SEAMEO, established in November of 1965. If you trace the history of our organization, SEAMEO RIHED, you will find it was indeed established in 1965, but it only came under the umbrella of SEAMEO about 10 years ago. This is a chart of this international organization, which explains our aim to promote cooperation in education, science and culture in Southeast Asia. Actually the members of the organization are not limited to ASEAN, but include Timor Leste, as well. Presently, we have 11 member countries.

This is the SEAMEO family: we have BIOTROP in Indonesia who deals with tropical biology; we have SEAMEO-CHAT in Myanmar; we have SEAMEO-INNOTECH in the Philippines; we have SEAMEO-RECSAM in Penang; we have SEAMEO-RELC in Singapore; SEAMEO-RETRAC in Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh; we have our offices in Thailand; SEAMEO-SEAMOLEC in Indonesia who deals with open and distance learning; we have SEAMEO-SEARCA which offers various renowned agricultural training programs located in the Philippines; we have SEAMEO-SPAFA in Thailand; we have SEAMEO-TROPMED in Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand; and we have SEAMEO-VOCTECH who deals mainly with vocational education in Brunei. That is our SEAMEO organization. For SEAMEO-RIHED, the mission is to assist member countries in promoting efficiency and effectiveness in higher education policy planning and development. So we deal mainly with higher education policies in Southeast Asian countries. That was just a brief introduction of our organization and I would encourage you to visit our website.

So now I would like to touch on the challenges of higher education and their implications. At the national level in developing countries - like we said in the morning - we see a massive population boom and a greater need for access to higher education. At the end of the last session, we spoke about the low quality of the courses and the higher cost of higher education. If you look at the developed countries, like Japan and Korea, you will notice smaller student numbers because of the changes in demography. So there is a greater need to attract tertiary level students and this leads to increased competition amongst higher education institutions.

So, there is a need to enhance student mobility, as well as maintaining, if not increasing, the quality of higher education at the same time. At the international level, because of globalization and because of the liberal economic regimes, as was mentioned in the morning session, higher education has become a key economic resource and is readily exported. Higher education is to be open and held accountable to public scrutiny especially through the quality assurance movement; a challenge that I think we face in every country nowadays. Given this trend towards competitiveness, concerns of quality assurance and flexible mobility, I think the institutional response has been to rethink university governance, curriculum design and quality assurance both in teaching and research.

As Professor Morshidi from Malaysia discussed this morning, universities in Malaysia are also working towards achieving more autonomy. I think this university autonomy movement does not apply only to Malaysia, but to most universities in Southeast Asia. I'm from Chulalongkorn University and we have just transformed from a regular public university to become an autonomous public university, only a month ago. And other universities such as Mahidol University, Chaingmai University and others, have also transformed from regular public universities to become autonomous public universities. As of now, there are about 17 regular public universities that have transitioned to become autonomous universities.

As far as intergovernmental responses, my observation is that higher education policies have been moving toward harmonization and greater interaction at the governmental level. In the morning session, Professor de Prado discussed the Bologna process, so I will not touch on this. But I would like to call your attention to the fact that we should study what Europe has been going through this harmonization process, notice how it works and what we can learn from it.

I would also like to mention that in Latin America there is a move toward cross-border regional integration, working particularly with the EU. In Latin America and the Caribbean, as opposed to creating a newly integrated higher education system, they work with Europe so that it will be easier for them to move forward: aligning themselves with the European system. They want to have a common space with Europe, as well.

In West Africa, they are also working on the promotion of regional integration in higher education; this is the instrument they are using to upgrade the quality of their higher education system. I will not discuss this further because you can find this information in my paper.

Now, when we look at ourselves, look at Europe, look at Latin America and also to West Africa, we find that in the Asia-Pacific, the existing cooperation in higher education within the region is mainly institution-based; that is, cooperation is mostly institution-to-institution.

We can also find higher education cooperation in functional programs, such as in quality assurance with the APQN: Asia Pacific Quality Network; and promoting student and staff

mobility, we find UMAP. Perhaps you can ask Professor Ninomiya about this, as he knows much better than me. And in terms of research and other activities, we have the AUN (ASEAN University Network), which covers QA (Quality Assurance), student and staff exchange and research collaboration. We also have the APRU, the Asia-Pacific Research University based in Singapore. The very first network of higher education institutes in Southeast Asia, however, is ASAIHL (Association of Southeast Asian Institutes of Higher Learning). ASAIHL has been established for more than 40 years and continues to serve the region.

Cooperation among universities in the region has thus existed either between the institutions or in the form of different networks. The scope of regional cooperation is however, limited to certain functions such as quality assurance and student exchange. There is no, as of yet, intergovernmental “infrastructure” for promoting cooperation in higher education. What we may need is a kind of voluntary regional policy mechanism or framework, leading to a structured cooperation in higher education within the region; something similar to what we see in Europe.

If this kind of framework is needed, who will be the prime movers? Maybe it will come from the ASEAN socio-cultural communities; one of the three pillars of ASEAN. Perhaps it will be SEAMEO; because SEAMEO centers are quite keen on promoting diverse aspects of higher education cooperation in the ASEAN community. The prime mover maybe Australia: the first promoters of UMAP and later the Brisbane Communiqué.

There are also other networks that could become prime movers in this movement. The journey for harmonization of higher education in the region, for us, SEAMEO-RIHED, is focused on raising awareness among universities and member countries. SEAMEO-RIHED has organized the meeting of the director general/secretary general responsible for higher education in Southeast Asia, to meet and discuss the possibility of integration of higher education in the region. The outcome was quite positive. We'll later submit our proposal on higher education harmonization in Southeast Asia for the consideration of the education ministers of SEA countries.

What we have been doing and are now doing is very much in-sync with what was recommended by our speakers this morning: we look at the existing networks, we see what is lacking and subsequently we try to fill in the gap. It is at the intergovernmental level where we need to pay more attention. We do need an intergovernmental infrastructure to facilitate cooperation in higher education in the region. To this end, we must work together more closely.

Thank you very much.

**/Session Moderator**  
**/Associate Professor Miki SUGIMURA**  
**/Sophia University**

Thank you very much Professor Supachai, for that good presentation. You gave us concrete and functional points for cooperation and future frameworks.

To point out one of those networks, I would like to invite our next speaker, Professor Piniti. He is the director of the ASEAN University Network.

**/Professor Piniti Ratananukuk**  
**/Director, ASEAN University Network**  
**/Presentation: Experience of Asian Higher Education Frameworks and their Implications for the Future**

Thank you very much madam chairperson and good afternoon ladies and gentlemen.

Again, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Professor Kuroda for inviting me to participate in this important symposium, allowing me to share our experience and our work with you today.

To begin my presentation, I would like to quickly touch on the impact of globalization on Asian higher education and how our organization has responded to this issue. I believe the impact of globalization on Asian countries began to be felt in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Of course, we have adopted a Western model for our higher education system. Also, English has become the common language of higher education, especially in international programs in countries where English is not native. Also, there has been an increase in student and staff mobility in higher education mobility, information exchanges and new course delivery systems. And what I would like to focus on is the mobility of students and staff; specifically, how to make use of this to respond to the calls for cooperation in education and also to address the issue of regional integration or more precisely, ASEAN integration.

So, my presentation today will cover three main themes: first, it will cover ASEAN education cooperation; then I will look at AUN implications and experiences; and the last part will consider the AUN strategic framework from 2008-2015. Some may wonder why the strategic plan spans 2008-2015. As you may already know we, the ASEAN University Network, were established as one of the secretariat bodies of ASEAN. Under the new ASEAN charter we would like to address the ASEAN education issue. There is a new

mandate under the new ASEAN charter to build-up the ASEAN community by the year 2015 to be a single community. That is the impetus to develop this strategic framework.

Last November, we had a workshop to discuss these issues and we were very lucky to have the ASEAN Secretary General join our workshop to develop this strategic framework. In terms of ASEAN cooperation, South Asia development of internationalization in higher education was initiated in the early 1990s. This was then followed by the various efforts put forth by parties sharing a common interest in internationalization activities.

Many of the universities in the region are already engaged in international activities ranging from student and staff exchange to joint-research and development projects. At the political level, under the ASEAN official framework on education ASEAN leaders set a new direction for regional education collaboration when they welcomed the decision of the ASEAN Education Minister at the 11<sup>th</sup> Summit in December 2005, to convene meetings on a regular basis. The ASEAN Education Minister identified three priorities for education. The first was to promote ASEAN citizens, particularly the youth, to strengthen ASEAN identity through education. The second is to build ASEAN human resources in the field of education. And finally, to strengthen the ASEAN University Network. I think the priority for AUN is to make use of the existing network to support these priorities that I have mentioned.

I would like to provide you with more information about the ASEAN University Network. Our organization was considered to constitute a central body within ASEAN. We work together on the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Education. This is the legal body that operates under the ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting, ASEMM. At this level, we also work together with SEAMEO, the Southeast Asia Ministers of Education Organization that Professor Supachai mentioned. When we have a policy recommendation, we will submit it through the summit and then go through the ASEMM. It will subsequently reach the ASEAN Summit for approval. This is the way we operate under the ASEAN framework.

Before 2005, the ASEMM did not exist. I can say that the ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting stems from an initiative Professor Supachai and I launched, after having met with the Thai Education Minister at the Ministry of Education. We told him that within ASEAN, a body that could overlook the whole education system did not exist. ASEAN The first ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting was held in Bangkok in 2005, as a retreat before commencing the year.

Our network was founded by an idea that came out of a head of states meeting in 1992. Until 1995, the Charter of the ASEAN University Network had only been signed by the ASEAN minister responsible for higher education. Subsequently, the presidents, rectors and vice-chancellors of participating universities also signed an agreement recognizing the establishment of the ASEAN University Network.

The picture shows the trustee meeting, which is held bi-annually, every 6 months, and is hosted by board members in alphabetical order. This year, the meeting will be held in June, in Vietnam.

The objective for the establishment of the AUN is to promote collaboration and solidarity among ASEAN scholars and academicians; to develop academic and professional human resources; to promote information dissemination among the ASEAN academic community; and to enhance the awareness of regional identity and the sense of 'ASEANness' among members. At present, we have 21 universities representing member countries from within ASEAN. The secretariat is located at Chulalongkorn University, in Bangkok, Thailand. Qualifying universities, as you can see, have to be nominated by the Ministry of Education from each country. We are lucky to have a leading university from each country as partners within this framework.

There are a lot of questions asking why we cannot extend membership to other universities. The reason is that we only want active members to participate in our activities. This is because some of our activities are conducted on a cost-sharing basis and some activities are funded by the ASEAN Secretariat or by our dialogue partners. The main activities we are conducting within ASEAN include: the ASEAN Study Program, student exchange programs and the AUN Educational Forum (this program is conducted annually on a cost-sharing basis, bringing students and staff together). As well, we have the AUN Distinguished Scholar Program, the AUN Youth Cultural Forum (this is also conducted on a cost-sharing basis), collaborative research activities and information networking and the AUN Quality Assurance program.

The purpose of setting-up the AUN Quality Assurance program is to set a benchmark for the quality of education in ASEAN. We do set up something like a guideline for the institution to choose the KPI that is most suitable. We also have the ASEAN Graduate Business and Economics Program Network. This is a network wherein graduates in business administration and economics can join together to discuss their research.

The purpose of these activities is to narrow the gap between ASEAN + 6 and ASEAN + 4. ASEAN + 4 includes Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam. Last year we set up another network called the AUN Intellectual Property Network. This network will focus solely on 'intellectual property' education in universities. This program is partially supported by the EU. We also hold activities in cooperation with dialogue partners, including China, European Union, Japan and the Republic of Korea.

From the activities that I have mentioned, how can the AUN contribute to ASEAN integration? As you can see, education permeates all three pillars of the ASEAN community. The three pillars include economic, security and socio-cultural communities. The activities mentioned provide students with opportunities to take part in regional collaboration. We are working toward developing a regional system for accreditation; as you can see, we have set up a guideline for a quality assurance mechanism. We began using this guideline to assess education programs from amongst AUN member institutions. Last year, we undertook an assessment of the engineering and business

programs at the University of Malaya. This year the assessment will be conducted in the Philippines, at both De La Salle University and the University of the Philippines.

And what about building an ASEAN identity? This can be done by building robust exchange programs, in order to promote the concept of “ASEANness” within the region. As I already mentioned, the new ASEAN charter was adopted in Singapore in November of last year. There have been some changes in AUN’s structure since the adoption of this new charter. I have spoken with the new Secretary-General and suggested that we, the AUN, can act as the ASEAN’s educational arm. We can address some issues for ASEAN; for example, if there are some questions or problems that need dealing with by means of research, the AUN can supply those services.

From the workshop that was organized to define AUN’s strategy and position toward and within the ASEAN community, we acknowledged four main areas that need to be addressed to satisfy priority areas identified by ASEAN. The four main themes include: investing in people, narrowing the developing gap, narrowing the digital divide and promoting deeper regional awareness.

How to respond to an investment in people? We should develop an AUN scholarship initiative. The ASEAN secretariat has already adopted this idea: it will be offered in the next couple of years. We can also realize this investment by developing research partnerships for knowledge transfer; concentrating on building relationships with ASEAN dialogue partners. We can begin narrowing the developing gap by considering existing offers of scholarships: the II project that I already mentioned was financed by the ASEAN secretariat, through the ASEAN Foundation. A distinguished scholar program should be implemented, as well as an ASEAN credit transfer system. The ASEAN credit transfer system can be implemented, provided we do not have a gap in the quality between ASEAN universities. This is why we are also emphasizing a full implementation of the quality assurance system.

In an effort to narrow the digital divide, we should consider enhancing our website along with those belonging to member universities. We also need to concentrate on promoting a greater awareness of ASEAN and the AUN by publicizing them more in the universities. We are considering the establishment a series of annual AUN sporting events to promote integration, as well. In the same vein, we would like to facilitate student mobility and internships within ASEAN.

These are the four main themes that we would like to implement and evaluate on our way to promoting greater regional integration within ASEAN.

Thank you very much.



**/Session Moderator**  
**/Associate Professor Miki SUGIMURA**  
**/Sophia University**

Thank you very much Professor Piniti. Along with Professor Supachai's presentation on SEAMEO, Professor Piniti's presentation of the ASEAN University Network showed us frameworks and networks are developing in the region - thank you very much.

Thank you very much, as well, for keeping to the time limit – it is most helpful.

I would like to invite the last speaker, Dr. Zainal. He is the coordinator of the Regional Center of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development at the University Sains Malaysia. His presentation is entitled: Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development.

**/Mr. Zainal Abidin Sanusi, PhD**  
**/Coordinator, Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development, Universiti Sains Malaysia**  
**/Presentation: Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development (RCE-EfSD): An Emerging Model for Regional Cooperation through Higher Education**

Thank you, madam chairperson.

First and foremost, I would like to register my double honor to be here: first, to be invited for this momentum-building conference; and secondly, to be able to come back to this university, from which I graduated. I remember graduating downstairs, just two years back, and now I am coming back again to present my paper – I very happy to be here.

After listening to this morning's presentations, I feel like there isn't much that I would like to elaborate, except perhaps to share our experiences, from a bit of a different perspective. I've just listened to two presentations that explained two big institutions in ASEAN, and this, by two big professors. The way I see it, we have structured the discussion around the structure, the actors and the contents. What I'm going to look at is the contents of higher education; that is, how do we shape the content, given the structure and actors that we already have. I have a few small contentious issues that I'd like to add to the discussion of integration and cooperation.

Because I come from background of political economy, I find it a little confusing to speak of this kind of 'regionalism' in higher education. Okay, I'll have two parts to my

presentation. I thought I would have extra time since the presenters before me finished early. But, I'm happy to spend more time on the Q&A.

I would like to propose a question – again, coming from a political science background – to set the context within which I intend to go forward. First, I'd like to give some contextual background to regional integration; although Professor Kuroda already covered this, I'd like to offer my own perspective on this. Secondly, I'd like to speak about regional integration in higher education, again, just to set the background to my talk and my experience. Lastly, I'll be looking at a case study, that of the Regional Center of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development, and I'd like to propose a model for regional integration through higher education. This may look complicated as a topic, but I'll try to simplify it in the actual presentation.

I would like to say that I'm personally, very interested in this subject because I am trying to connect the two things that I am currently teaching: regionalism from both perspectives; as well as my current project work: promoting education for sustainable development. So, when I taught, I would always wonder how I'd really be able to contribute to regionalism in a practical way – it is something that I think about a lot. At the end of the day, the role of the university is to contribute back to society. So this is the platform for my arguments.

Again, I will share maybe the ideal that has been put forward already: we would like to see how our local values, regional values, Southeast Asian values can be used as a framework to really promote our own unique higher education framework. On this, I would like share of the ideas I have in mind.

So, I agree with what Professor Morshidi said, we have old and new regionalisms, we see different driving forces in regionalisms - economic, trade, etc. And, Professor Supachai also mentioned functional cooperation, and it is precisely this point that my talk will focus on – that is where I have the most experience. Looking at functional cooperation and functional regionalism means that we are looking at thematic issues rather than specific ones; like security issues, which was a driving factor for regionalism before. We see in previous regionalisms, a sort of top-down approach. What I would suggest is an emerging trend - or the issue that is becoming more important – and which I am currently working on, is the mainstreaming of functional cooperation. So I'm share the same thoughts Professor Supachai advanced: Promoting a kind of functions-based cooperation. That will encompass human resource development, global issues, environmental issues, human rights, and so on; and it will most definitely include sustainable development.

When trying to conceive of the structure of such an approach, I think it will adopt something of the bottom-up type of regionalism, rather than top-down. And here, we witness another important element of the equation: the functions of networking. I think Professor Piniti spoke about this already, but I believe this will be a very important platform we have to look at. Another point I would like emphasize is the presence of multiple actors and multiple stakeholders, in order to really forward a regional higher education framework. There is another contention I have when we talk about this topic.

Are we going to focus on higher education alone, or are we going to get seriously involved with the other stakeholders: civil society and the community?

This will set the basis from which I can explain my experience at the Regional Centre of Expertise. This can be summed up by asking, what are the different elements between the new and old? Something that I find is quite interesting to talk about is locally developed platforms, where we really get bottom-up participation from actors: treating the issues and developing future structures. At the same time, we need to ensure regional interests really call for maintaining diversity. This is where my definition of sustainability comes from; meaning that different cultures need to compromise to be maintained. And lastly, we need to integrate multi-disciplinary thinking in the integrated higher education framework. So the question becomes, is there any existing model that can be duplicated which will accommodate these integrated platforms?

I think this next point has already been mentioned, but in response various development models have been put forth, from the globalization approach, the localization approach, and so on. And from these perspectives various universities have sprung up: private universities, state-based universities, and many others. These are the models and approaches we've been discussing, and they all aim to produce internationally-valued students. However, many universities still wonder what 'value' must comprise the designation 'international.' This is what I will discuss when I mention 'content.' I simply throw out academic imperialism. So, I would like to end this section with a question: What are the elements, contents and framework of such a system of education, and what are they leading to? Our work try's to deal with the latter part of the question "where are they leading to?"

And again, as has already been mentioned, there is a common 'recipe of responses' to the internationalization process: I'm trying to focus on developing networks (consortiums and multilateral agreements) and developing a common regionalization based on common issues - functional things.

To provoke some thought I would like to another few questions: who is setting the benchmarks? What will be the final output? These questions suggest that we need a model of higher education that will reflect the emerging trend of regionalism.

After having set the background, I would like to talk about my experiences. I am now part of a group of centers, called the Regional Centre of Education for Sustainable Development. And would like to suggest the term GLORENACAL. Some, in the literature, have suggested a GLOCAL perspective, others a GLONECAL – Global, National and Local. I would like to suggest that the regional perspective is equally important, and that would translate into GLORENACAL.

I was really quite impressed by this quotation from a French anthropologist: "The Age of the Nation is past, it is time to build the Earth." It means we need to work towards achieving a global consensus.

I will engage in a little promotion, where the university is and what it is about. What is an RCE? It is a regional center, as you can see, existing of formal and non-formal education organizations, mobilized to deliver education for sustainable development to local and regional communities. A network of RCEs worldwide will constitute the Global Learning Space for Sustainable Development. RCEs aspire to achieve the goals of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, by translating its global objectives into the context of the local communities in which they operate. That is where I see the regional contributions of these RCEs.

How are these RCEs running? At the moment, we have 44 centers - 44 RCEs around the world - and they are aiming to have 300 RCEs by the end of the decade, by 2015. So what are core elements of an RCE? Governance: addressing the management of different stakeholders; collaboration: understanding how the many different stakeholders are invited to consult with each other – it is important that even the small minority in our extensive network be represented. These RCEs are led, mostly, by top universities in the region.

They are also involved in research and development in both the sciences and social sciences, often working to bring them together. They also focus on transformative education; contributing to the transformation of the current education and training systems to satisfy the ambitions of the region regarding sustainable living and livelihoods. So, this is a framework for all the RCEs, but then it is important to note that it is entirely up to the RCEs to contextualize their work, because we still respect the principle of contextualization. Local issues need to be approached differently.

This is an example of what an RCE is – they are all stakeholders: we find the Ministry of Education representatives, a higher education component, a vocational education component, a NGO component, media groups and insights from individuals. Here, we have different views being represented, from the local to the national level.

As you can see RCEs are really spread out around the world; I think are 23 of them now in the Asia-Pacific. These are the universities leading the RCEs around the world. Some of them are ranking quite high and others not so high, but they all have their own strengths. So, I have presented a few projects that we have and are currently engaged in, but I would also like to present those we would like to commence in the very near future. We see emerging platforms that really try to bring collaborative projects among different universities within the RCE's framework. Last year, we held an RCE international conference, which I organized at the university. 44 RCEs joined the conference, representing more than half of all the universities in our system. It was a general conference on inter-regional collaborative projects. It helps us survey which different regions have their own local projects and how they are putting them together. The outcome of this conference is the list of collaborative projects I listed before, and this for projects within the region and between regions. RCE Penang was the one leading the conference, coordinating different issues throughout. Also, the RCE is closely related to the United Nations University and we translate information from the regional level and the inter-regional level to the local level, and that's how it works.

The other program we have involves 4 RCEs actually, University Sains Malaysia and 3 universities in Japan, all involved in collaborative research. Their research focuses on understanding the governance of sustainable development in both countries by means of a comparative approach: what can we learn from each other's experiences and what kind of general template can be used in order to promote local solutions at the regional and global levels through NGOs and other actors.

The other research that I am particularly interested in is very recent. Having associated with the United Nations universities' framework, I would suggest that this platform will become very important in the future. This platform is founded upon postgraduate research of education for sustainable development; at present it comprises a network, which we call the Asia Pacific network. Apart from one Australian university, I would consider all the other institutions as being from Asia. Rather than promoting a general framework – which we already find in ASEAN, the UN and SEAMEO – just take small fragment of the debate, the part concerned with sustainable development, and we promote it at the local levels. So, it goes from the researcher's level to the student level.

The other program we are working in, to be launched in April, is a kind of channel for sustainable development. A place where scientists and social scientists can really integrate and share their local solutions from their countries, for the rest of Asia. So, this is, I believe, a way to harness local solutions for regional problems, ultimately giving way to a regional approach.

And the last project I would like to talk about will be held in June, it is the first Southeast Asian conference on sustainable development. I really find this initiative quite interesting, insofar as it is a promotion of local solutions. In my eyes, this means that regional values are being promoted. So, slowly a shared understanding amongst countries in the region will develop. We plan to call expert scientists from different universities in the region to come up local solutions. For example, some of our scientists have developed a very cheap and affordable kit that can be made accessible to the poor families in the region. Most inventions nowadays are not accessible to the poor as they are often meant for the rich. We are addressing the lower levels of the community. So, what we have is this kind of platform for innovation and idea sharing among different agencies in the region.

Based on the 3 projects we are planning, we have learnt is that apart from talking about the structure, we need to consider how to fill in the contents. Sustainable development is really an overarching issue that can bring structure and content together.

Thank you.

**/Session Moderator**  
**/Associate Professor Miki SUGIMURA**  
**/Sophia University**

Thank you very much Zainal-sensei. Dr. Zainal's speech was also very informative and instructive. He gave us a very crucial framework, some argument points, especially focusing on functional based cooperation. He also explained RCE inter-regional activities, which is important to us.

So I'd like to now move on to our discussion session. The floor is for open for discussion. We have 40 minutes for discussion from now. Please don't hesitate to offer questions, comments or answers.

**/Comment # 1**  
**/Professor Tereso S. Tullao, Jr.**  
**/De La Salle University**

Hello, I'm Professor Tullao from the Philippines.

I would like to link this discussion with the morning discussion. We have been discussing cooperation in higher education, but one of the issues in the globalization of higher education is the issue of divide: which framework are we going to pursue, a framework of divergence or a framework of convergence?

The discussion here is on how higher education institutions, whether the ASEAN University Network or SEAMEO, are cooperating with each other. But these universities are the select universities in the respective economies and countries. What is not mentioned are the local educational issues; I mean this is where the divide and divergence exists. This is the issue of globalization. What is left out, are the other educational institutions.

My question to the panelist is: how are your organizations trying to address this potential divide within the educational system in your respective countries?

**/Comment # 2**  
**/Professor César de Prado Yepes**  
**/Universidad de Salamanca**

This morning in my presentation I talked about the developments in Southeast Asia, and Northeast Asia. Northeast Asia will perhaps be addressed in more detail later, but since you mentioned that there is a drive towards having a first ministerial of Northeast Asian

Ministers of Education, I wanted to know whether the ASEAN Ministerials have been key drivers of this, or has it been an autonomous development?

Thank you.

**/Comment # 3**  
**/Professor Anthony R. Welch**  
**/University of Sydney**

Thank you very much.

My question is for Mr. Sanusi. I was interested in your allusion to Asian values - a long-standing debate within Asia. And I started thinking about what that might mean. Does it mean, for example, a socialist market economy: Vietnam, China? Does it mean strong authoritarian state based on a neo-Confucian model: Singapore? Does it mean a plutocracy of a few competing families, such as in the case of Pakistan?

What does, in your view, Asian values really mean? To what extent do you see them converging or diverging?

**/Comment # 4**  
**/Professor Kazuo KURODA**  
**/Waseda University**

I would like to pose an additional question to Professor Piniti and Professor Supachai about ASEAN identity. Both of your presentations mentioned ASEAN identity. But ASEAN, as well as the rest of Asia, is a very diverse network, so how do you pursue ASEAN identity within diversity?

Thank you.

**/Session Moderator**  
**/Associate Professor Miki SUGIMURA**  
**/Sophia University**

Thank you all for your questions and comments.

Since we have received so many questions, at this point I would like to turn the microphone over to our panelists. Thank you Professor Tullao, Professor Welch, Professor de Prado and Professor Kuroda for your questions.

Professor Supachai, if you wouldn't mind addressing these questions, first.

**/Respondent # 1**  
**/Professor Supachai Yavaprabhas**  
**/Director, SEAMEO Regional Centre for Higher Education and  
Development**

Sometimes I find that the questions are better than the answer.

I would like to share my ideas on some of the questions that have been raised by our colleagues. First, to address Professor Tullao's question; I just want to give you a picture of the AUN that I sometimes evoke: sometimes I joke it is like the OECD group in higher education, because it groups the premier universities in ASEAN. But for our organization, SEAMEO-RIHED, we cover all higher education systems in ASEAN. And I would also like to point out that most of our work focuses on policy issues and policy directions. One thing that I would like to mention – you asked about inequality within one system – my own opinion is that it is different within all ASEAN countries, from one to another. For example, I would like to pick Thailand, because I know it best.

When there was an increase in demand for higher education 30 years ago, the reaction from the country is to allow private institutions establish themselves. But, at the same time, we established open and distance learning programs. So, those who cannot afford private higher education can have access to higher education through open and distance learning: everywhere learning is possible. I think that it is quite a smart strategy, in a way, because it can respond to the increasing demand in a good manner. I think one of our distance learning centres, the STOU, have at any one time something like 100,000 students. So this is one way those who cannot afford private higher education, can still gain access to higher education. And for other countries like Indonesia, that's why we have SEAMEOLEC. This is the SEAMEO center dealing, mainly, with open and distance learning. They are also taking the same route. I think in Malaysia, Professor Morshidi can correct me if I am wrong, but I think in Malaysia they now have at least two true open learning centres. One is run by the government and the other is private. But they are amongst those championing the AEU under the framework of ACD. I think this is the appropriate response to an increased demand in higher education: using electronics and the Internet as a base.

If you look at 10 countries, you will see that they each have their own way of reacting to react it. But what we try to do at the regional center, is to share the regional experiences on who is doing what. I think that is quite important, because in ASEAN we rely on voluntarism; we will not impose, but share and learn from each other. So, I think it is



important for every nation to deal with inequality within first, but then we can assist, share and learn. That's what we are doing now.

I think the role of ASEAN - perhaps Dr. Piniti can address this later - will be to keep moving forward with more important agendas from different countries and also from other organizations like the UN, SEAMEO-RIHED, other SEAMEO centres, in order to try to table the important issues for ASEAN. I just discovered this morning listening to your presentation that there would be a meeting with the DG for higher education in Northeast Asia, and I would encourage you to invite the three countries to participate in our meeting; I think that will be a good way to have a dialogue not only at the ministerial level, but that the civil service level, as well.

I just want to share one more idea with you. Professor Sanusi, one thing that we will do at the DG meeting in Kuala Lumpur in December, is to inject special content in the general education curriculum. Perhaps, one thing we could add in this segment at the undergraduate level, something like sustainable development. And perhaps another could be about discussing the ASEAN dimension; yet another could be about sustainable development in the ASEAN context. If students at every university can have a chance to look at this kind of concept, it will be good for not only them, but for their families and our future.

The last point I would like to mention relates to ASEAN identity. This is difficult and I think that perhaps Dr. Piniti may be able to give you a better answer, but I want to mention that we could put more ASEAN dimensions in every subject taught in the universities. Now, in Thailand for example, every course we offer to the students is based on textbooks from abroad – mostly from Western countries. So the examples and illustrations do not represent ASEAN. But, through course collaboration, I think we can gradually add the ASEAN dimension to every subject. And this will make the students in our own region appreciate what we have, more.

Thank you.

**/Session Moderator**  
**/Associate Professor Miki SUGIMURA**  
**/Sophia University**

Thank you very much.

Would Professor Piniti please respond to the questions.

**/ Respondent # 2**  
**/ Professor Pinit Ratananukuk**  
**/ Director, ASEAN University Network**

Well, first of all, I would like to discuss the perception some of you may have of the ASEAN University Network as an exclusive club, because we have only the 21 leading universities in ASEAN joining us as member universities. But, as I have pointed out, the reason behind this is to bring these leading institutions to join hands, to work together, to set-up a kind of benchmark for the quality of education in ASEAN. And later, we hope that non-member universities, the less developed universities, can build their own capability and capacity to meet that benchmark.

The second reason is that if we were to open the membership to all universities it would be very hard to manage the programs, involving a lot of budgeting. As you know, ASEAN countries are not rich. We have to work, as I told you, on a cost-sharing basis. Some activities are funded by ASEAN and dialogue partners fund others. So, we have to manage our finances according to the budget that has been allocated to support this organization. That's why we have limit the membership.

The purpose, as I told you, is to narrow the gap between universities in ASEAN; not only between countries, but also at the university level. In over 20 twenty activities we are collaborating and helping each other within ASEAN.

Regarding the ASEAN Education Minister Meeting, this was originally initiated to overlook education in ASEAN as a whole. In the past, as you can see, we have had SEAMEO, the Southeast Asia Education Minister Organization. Some of you may already know that this organization was established before ASEAN, during the cold war. Even though SEAMEO is not a member of ASEAN, we work together, side by side. Actually, the body of the ASEAN Education Minister Meeting and the members of SEAMEO's board, are exactly the same persons: education ministers in ASEAN. This organization will develop the strategic plan or policy recommendations, focusing on education issues for the ASEAN Summit. It will overlook issues of education, for the whole region.

In the past, ASEAN was more focused on economics and trade. Now, we try to persuade the leader of ASEAN to look more on education as a source of development of future human resources. That is the reason why ASEMM was set-up.

Actually, I'm very lucky because Dr. Supachai was the former executive director of the ASEAN University Network, and has already answered some of your questions. But from my experience, as the director of this organization, operating so many activities, I would like to share the idea that ASEAN is very diverse. But, we have something in common that we can share. We can learn from our joint experiences and activities. For example, we have cultural forums that bring together staff and students in the ASEAN University

to express their identity by dance, songs, or other performances. At the end of the forum, we have a conversation with members of the forum, and we encourage them to create something together. It was very successful in the last 5-6 years, and it fostered a feeling of 'ASEANness' amongst the students and staff when they joined in these activities. All the other activities at the educational forum, along with the young speakers contest, brings students and staffs to a work camp for about 2 weeks. The organization of these activities is led from different countries, rotating in alphabetical order. When one country hosts the event, we learn about that country in terms of history, economics, culture and so on. At the end of the second week, students will make a speech based on a theme we offer.

So, this kind of activity will promote a sense of 'ASEANness' or ASEAN identity. And, it works quite well. Now, I can say we have over 500 students from ASEAN countries and when they join the network, they are linked together, sharing information. This is the contribution of these activities.

Thank you.

**/Session Moderator**  
**/Associate Professor Miki SUGIMURA**  
**/Sophia University**

Thank you very much. And next, I would like to ask Dr. Zainal to respond to some parts of the questions, please.

**/Respondent # 3**  
**/Mr. Zainal Abidin Sanusi, PhD**  
**/Coordinator, Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development, Universiti Sains Malaysia**

I was hoping that Prof. Piniti would proceed with his response, so that I wouldn't have to answer the questions.

I totally agree with what Professor Piniti mentioned. Looking at these comments from a sustainable development perspective, it reminds me of the three pillars: the social aspect, economics and environment. My observation is that if you look at the possible solutions from a social, economics and environmental perspective, you see the need for local solutions. Of course there are those debates like the one on Asian values, I suppose those people downstairs are debating the same subject. But again, we need to look at these issues as something that is up to us. The values are debatable. If you reframe the debate as an appreciation of the diversity or a critique of the diversity, that is where we will find our answer.

For myself, from a socio-cultural perspective – because if you look at it from a political perspective it is indeed very debatable – there are some similarities: communal values of the Asian society in comparison to the Western society, and also how close we are to the environment, especially in Japanese society, for example.

These are some of the little differences that are debatably different, between what I perceive to be Asian values and so called Western values. Finally, one last thing that I would like to highlight from my presentation was the presence of multiple stakeholders: high school teachers, kindergarten teachers, etc. So, it forces us to ask, what are the local issues to be addressed. These platforms of multiple actors and multiple stakeholders are key, according to me.

Thank you.

**/Session Moderator**  
**/Associate Professor Miki SUGIMURA**  
**/Sophia University**

Thank you very much. We have 10 more minutes, so I would like to continue the Q&A session.

**/Comment # 5**  
**/Professor Ki-Seok Kim**  
**/Seoul National University**

I find Professor Welch's question very difficult, because the subject is not "Asian identity", but because we are talking about "identity"; the terminology is the problem. For example, it's not a singular word, it's plural: we cannot say Asian value, rather we say Asian values. Likewise, we can say Asian identities. The concept of identity is very difficult.

Can you identify American identity? No. Does the Anglo-Saxon heritage represent American identity? How about the Afro-American heritage? And the indigenous cultures, like the Apache? Are they not also a part of the American identity?

Can you identify a European identity?

It's very difficult, because we are talking about identity, something that is not immediately obvious or given. It is something we are making; it is being made, unmade and remade. It is a very complicated process.

But compared to other continents, there is some commonality in Asia. We are in the primitive stages of defining Asian identities, but we are sure that there is something in common and the remaining issue becomes, how to work together.

This is good place to be talking about this; to find out similarities and dissimilarities; to discuss common experiences; allowing us then to elaborate on what Asian values may be.

Thank you very much.

**/Session Moderator**  
**/Associate Professor Miki SUGIMURA**  
**/Sophia University**

Thank you very much.

Professor Sirat, would you care to follow-up with some comments, please.

**/Comment # 6**  
**/Professor Morshidi Sirat**  
**/ Director, National Higher Education Research Institute**

In Malaysia, all the universities – private and public – offer a compulsory course called Islamic and Asian civilizations. We don't have one civilization as such, and at the end of the day we are teaching about Japanese civilization, Indian civilization and Chinese civilization. And cutting across these civilizations, we have Confucius and Islamic teachings. Those are the two pillars of civilization that we have.

This is unlike the European context, where they have they the Christian heritage as the binding force of Europe. But can we have this kind of phenomenon in Asia? I don't know. Can we find one in Asia? No.

In other regions of the world, there exists one binding element. But can we have such a thing? Do we need to have one? Can there be three or four binding elements?

This is the issue, as I see it.

**/Session Moderator**  
**/Associate Professor Miki SUGIMURA**  
**/Sophia University**

Thank you very much, Professor Sirat.

We are almost out of time, so if there are any more pressing comments, I would invite them now.

Professor de Prado, if you would speak first, followed by Professor Yamaguchi. After the responses to these comments, if you would all please provide some closing remarks; that would be appreciated.

Thank you.

**/Comment # 7**  
**/Professor César de Prado Yepes**  
**/Universidad de Salamanca**

I would like to add a few comments to the discussion on values.

In Europe there is a great diversity that has been breached, thanks to the European Union and other projects. But one can still distinguish between Anglo-Saxon, Nordic, as well as Latin and eastern countries. Latin countries are actually much closer to Asia than many realized: family, communities and neighbors are still very important.

I would argue that in Asia, especially in China, communities are important because the states are not functioning very well. And in other countries you could say the same: you rely on your personal family and extend family networks. In Japan, the networks are different. They tend to be more concentric with smaller groups embedded in larger groups. It's quite a different system of community building, I believe.

The different approaches to values in Europe, those of the Catholic and Christian cultures, have been breached to some extent. Many Europeans want to adopt more humanistic values. Luckily they don't diverge too much, but there are some tensions. Some rather strong tensions were evident when they were debating the European constitutional treaty; whether to include terms relating to humanistic or religious values in the preamble. They made some compromises, but now with the Lisbon Treaty this is a little off the mark, because it's not really a constitutional treaty, but rather an intergovernmental upgrade of previous treaties.

I want to say that perhaps these types of balances, between traditional religions and globalized human values, could be the answer for Asia, for the time being.

Thank you.

**/Session Moderator**  
**/Associate Professor Miki SUGIMURA**  
**/Sophia University**

Thank you very much, Professor de Prado. Professor Yamaguchi, if you would like to speak next, please.

**/Comment # 8**  
**/Professor Yumi YAMAGUCHI**  
**/Tokyo Institute of Technology**

My name is Yumi Yamaguchi, from the Tokyo Institute of Technology.

I have been enjoying this heated discussion on identity and ‘ASEANness’. And to cool down the debate, I would like to pose a question from a different perspective.

I enjoyed the presentation made by Dr. Sanusi, particularly the part that touched on functional integration. I think when we talk about integration, it is important to recognize that there are different levels of integration: national-local or global-local integration, as well as the integration of different agencies. There is also integration of academic disciplines. As Dr. Sanusi mentioned, I think one of the important aspects of integration – and this may not only be limited to the ASEAN framework - is the integration of science and technology and the social sciences.

This stems from my experience working for the Tokyo Institute of Technology, because my background is in the social sciences, but my university’s focus is mainly on science and technology. I have been realizing the vertical functions within the university, or the vertical function of the disciplines, within Asia. This means, when we talk about integration in higher education, not many different disciplines mingle. And some researchers, as Dr. Sanusi has mentioned, have been trying to create a synergy within programs.

So, my simple question is: are there, right now, any specific platforms to try to gather and integrate science and technology cohorts - professionals at different levels from Universities, NGOs, government officials, and so on – with people from the social sciences. I think this is going to be one of the important areas of discussion when we talk about integration in higher education in ASEAN nations.

Thank you.

**/Session Moderator**  
**/Associate Professor Miki SUGIMURA**  
**/Sophia University**

Thank you very much.

First, I would like to ask Dr. Zainal to respond and after that, since it is the time to wrap up this portion of the conference, could we have a few words from Professor Piniti and Professor Supachai to close the session.

If you could please go first, Dr. Zainal.

**/Closing Remarks**  
**/Mr. Zainal Abidin Sanusi, PhD**  
**/Coordinator, Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development, Universiti Sains Malaysia**

Thank you very much for those comments; indeed, they were very interesting observations.

I suppose we come from the same background, the social sciences, and we are both working in a scientist's world. In the response, yes, we do have platforms in place. In terms of practical experience, I would like to share one project with you.

We have one project in place, in which the research is usually based on science, but we have proposed a science and arts innovation space. So, we are essentially promoting the science elements in an arts package.

We also have programs that bring together NGOs and local stakeholders. There is one program, where we make paper from banana trees. The scientists are providing the technology and it benefits the surrounding villages. This is what we mean by science and art coming together.



To conclude, I would like to say that again that this goes back to values. Despite people who would criticize the existence of Asian values, I would suggest that they have been progressing and developing based on local solutions. These local solutions are based on values that they already have. These values have to correspond with national and regional development.

Thank you.

**/Closing Remarks**  
**/ Professor Pinit Ratananukuk**  
**/ Director, ASEAN University Network**

Well, to conclude, I would like to point out that globalizing pressures are unavoidable, hence the only possible alternative is to engage in international cooperation. We must do this in ways that would take advantage of globalizing trends.

I sincerely believe that a networking arrangement, such as the ASEAN University Network, is one such possible way.

Thank you.

**/Closing Remarks**  
**/Professor Supachai Yavaprabhas**  
**/Director, SEAMEO Regional Centre for Higher Education and  
Development**

I would like to conclude by saying that we share something in common. We want to see a more peaceful world. And we want to see higher education serve the world to this end. As long as we share our thinking, as long as we open our mind to listen to others and keep our goals, we will reach this shared future.

Thank you.

**/Moderator's Closing Remarks**  
**/Associate Professor Miki SUGIMURA**  
**/Sophia University**

Thank you very much.

I think that it's an appropriate time to bring the session to a close, discussing the experiences of Asian higher education, the frameworks and the implications for the future. I think that similar to this morning's session, we have had a very fruitful discussion, despite the poor chairwomanship.

I would like to thank you all for your active participation. Thank you audience members for your excellent comments.

Thank you.