



TALKING POINTS

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Looking at the institutional aspects of East Asian economic integration, in Southeast Asia the institutional framework of trade liberalization called the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) has already come into effect, and in addition the discussion has been moved forward in a format with ASEAN at the core for the concepts of economic integration covering the entire area of East Asia, such as ASEAN+3 and ASEAN+6. Meanwhile, in Northeast Asia there are China and Japan, which are next behind the United States in economic size, in addition Japan and the ROK are at a level classified as developed in per capita income terms, and moreover the degree that they are dependent on international trade with other countries is high. These, generally, are conditions which advance intraregional economic integration, yet in reality institutional integration in Northeast Asia is lagging greatly behind that in Southeast Asia.

Furthermore, in recent years, as the US response to East Asian institutional economic integration, new frameworks for economic integration have been indicated. As a medium-to-long-term vision a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP), an FTA covering APEC in its entirety, has been advocated, and additionally the negotiations for the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP) that have been designated as its forerunner version by a limited number of starter countries have been steadily moved forward, and a situation has emerged where the number of countries participating in the negotiations has also expanded.

This presentation examines the influence Japan’s participation in the TPP negotiations will have on the course of subsequent East Asian economic integration, and mainly from the perspective of the three Northeast Asian countries of Japan, China and the ROK.

* The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies.