

The Late Comers are Catching Up? : Institution-Building in Northeast Asia

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1, Introduction

Northeast Asia is the least institutionalized region in Asia, compared with Southeast Asia or East Asia as a whole. The existence of the enduring flash points such as the Korean Peninsula and the Taiwan Strait, territorial disputes, negative identities toward each other due to the past history and current disputes, divergent political systems and competitive security perceptions have been preventing the Northeast Asian countries from developing truly regional institutions regulating interactions among themselves.

The interactions among them have been basically conducted on the bilateral and global multilateral basis. Bilateralism has been the dominant mode of managing economic, security and other matters in Northeast Asia, as has been symbolized in the bilateral alliance networks centered upon Washington. In the meantime, global institutions such as the United Nations, IMF, GATT/WTO, NPT/IAEA have been providing the basic rules and norms regulating the interactions among the countries of the region in the respective issue areas.

Northeast Asia is facing a variety of regional and global challenges that require a more institutionalized regional approach among the countries of the region. Indeed, the calls for further institutionalization at a regional level have been increasingly aired. Responding to the challenges facing Northeast Asia, the countries of the region have been gradually engaged in regional institution-building recently, even if there remain many difficulties and obstacles for Northeast Asia to overcome. There have been both "supra-structure institution" and "infra-structural institutions" building efforts since the end of the Cold War.¹

As for the institutions-building in Northeast Asia, we could roughly divide it into three categories. The first one is the "supra-structural institution building" in Northeast Asia. Those processes of identifying Northeast Asia as an integrated subregion have been facilitated by the end of the Cold War and the reopening of the economic interchanges among the countries in Northeast Asia, whose economic interactions had been to a large extent "frozen" during the Cold War era. At the beginning, the geographical scope of this "supra-institution" building in Northeast Asia was confined into a narrowly defined Northeast Asia that includes the countries and provinces along the Tumen River on the

¹ On "supra-structural institutions" and "infra-structural institutions," see Hadi Soesastro, "Towards an Anatomy of Institutions for Regionalism in Asia," *Institutions for Regionalism: Enhancing Asia's Economic Cooperation and Integration*, Manila: Asian Development Bank, 2009, pp.5-17.

one hand, and the provinces and prefectures around the Sea of Japan. This area includes Northeast provinces of China, Russian Far East, North and South Korea, the prefectures located along the west coast of Japan and Mongolia. This geographically narrowly-defined Northeast Asia did not necessarily connected with the economic dynamisms taking place in other parts of Northeast Asia.

Then, the ideas of the regional economic cooperation have been mostly explored by the non-governmental and second track processes (backed by the respective national and provincial governments) in the both case of the economic cooperation in the Sea of Japan and the Tumen River. The economic cooperation along the Tumen River was elevated into regional governmental institutions with a support by such international institutions as the United Nations Development Programs(UNDP) and the regional institutions such as the Asian Development Bank(ADB) as well as national government concerned.

Second, as for the “infra-structural” institution building, since the 1990s, there have been a series of joint efforts to construct them on the bilateral and trilateral basis to address such specific issue areas as the safety of navigation in the Sea of Japan, where the interests of the countries converged. The processes were gradual, given the lack of common experiences and trust among them.

The most distinguished recent development in this regard is the “infra-structural institution building” among three countries (Japan, China and South Korea), especially in the economic areas (trade, investment and finance). The Trilateral Summit among the three countries was formally established late 2008, based upon the previous summits held on the occasions of regional and international gatherings. There have been established a variety of ministerial and official forums covering a wide range of issues areas under the Trilateral Summit. The Trilateral Summit and a variety of trilateral cooperation activities under the Trilateral Summit do not categorize themselves as Northeast Asian infra-structural institution building. The Trilateral Summit may be still called an institution looking for its regional identity and “supra-structural institutions,” given the limited number of the participating countries. Put differently, the Trilateral Summit may be an infra-structural institution without the supra-structural institutions underlined by a shared idea of Northeast Asia as a region among the three countries. In fact, the formal launching of the Trilateral Summit in 2008 was facilitated by the shared sense of the crisis caused by the global financial crisis, not fully underlined by the common sense of “regioness” or a idea of regional identity.

The third one is the security-related “infra-structure institution-building”, especially in the Korean Peninsula. In the traditional terms, the geographical scope of Northeast Asia security region included such countries and economies as Russia, China, North and South Korea, Japan and Taiwan. The United States played the critical part in this region. However, in terms of infra-structural institution building, Northeast Asia has been divided into two subregions: One is in the Korean Peninsula that includes North

and South Korea, the US, China, Japan and Russia. The second is the subregion across the Taiwan Strait that includes China, Taiwan and the United States (and Japan to some lesser extent). Thus, in terms of infra-structural institution building, the idea of Northeast Asian security region has been divided into two subregions, although two infra-structural institutions have been interacting each other, especially through the involvements of the United States and China (and Japan to the lesser extent).

The North Korea's nuclear crisis has paved the way to construct infra-structural institution building targeted at one of the security subregions in Northeast Asia (that is the Korean Peninsula). The Six Party Talks that include North and South Korea, the United States, China, Japan and Russia was established in 2003 to respond to the crisis caused by North Korea's nuclear development.

The second track processes have been playing the important roles in creating both "supra-structural institutions" and "infra-structural institutions in Northeast Asia. Those processes have been facilitating a sense of regionness through introducing a variety of confidence and trust building measures and providing the venues for the relevant actors to seek commonly-agreed instruments for regional cooperation. Overcoming the political obstacles to promote a substantial dialogues and mutual confidence, the second track processes could play an important role in terms of enhancing mutual confidence and creating new ideas for regional cooperation and confidence-building.

There have been such second track exercises in the region where political situations were not ripe for intensive government-to-government dialogues and cooperation. NEAECF (Northeast Asia Economic Cooperation Forum), ERINA (Economic Research Institute for Northeast Asia) and ERINA-initiated Northeast Asian Economic Conference have played the important catalyst roles in facilitating a shared sense of regionness and offering concrete ideas of regional economic cooperation through conducting joint research, collecting and disseminating information and providing the venues for further facilitating regional interchanges among the actors concerned. The NEACD (Northeast Asian Cooperation Dialogue) that started under the initiative of Susan Shirk of the UC San Diego and financed by the US department of energy in 1996 is another examples.

Although there have been several endeavors to construct regional institutions in Northeast Asia, the institutional tasks of these regional institutions are not necessarily similar. There is a tendency among the experts of international political economy to focus on the regulatory aspects of the regional institutions. Our interest in such regulatory institutions as regional free trading arrangements demonstrates such a tendency. However, there are several other types of regional institutions that are carrying out different tasks. As Oran Young claims, regional institutions can perform what he calls regulatory, procedural, programmatic, and generative tasks or various

combinations of these tasks.² Understanding the different tasks of regional institutions is important. A failure to understand these institutional differences can only lead confusion and frustration on the part of those who are seeking to enhance the roles of regional institutions in a contemporary Northeast Asia.

As for the regulatory and programmatic institutions in Northeast Asia, one of the most interesting aspects is what the experts of international institutions call institutional linkages or institutional reconciliation. Individual regional institutions in Northeast Asia do not operate alone. They are interacting with other institutions in some way or another. How one institution should interact and link with other institutions sometimes causes serious political disputes, thereby leading to different institutional performance. Some institution could strengthen its institutional performance by appropriately linking itself with other institutions.

Put differently, although the individual institutions in Northeast Asia are relatively weak in terms of institutional norms and rules, Northeast Asia has been trying to enhance their institutional performance by linking themselves with other institutions, whatever bilateral, trilateral, quadrilateral, regional and global ones. Weak rules and norms, and thin performance of the regional institutions have been enhanced by linking(nesting) themselves with other institutions. By nesting regional institutions into the global institutions such as the NPT/IAEA, the stronger and more constraining rules and norms have been introduced into the regional institutions. By overlapping with other institutions the regional institutions have been enhancing their institutional performance. The implementation of the agreements has been pursued by creating collective pressures (constraints) through institutional linkages. Through institutional linkages with other institutions, some division of labor has been established between the regional institutions and other (such as the global) institutions. They have been trying to establish what may be called "institutional-networking." Therefore, the roles and functions of the individual regional institutions have to be understood and assessed within the broader regional institutional relationships. The Six Party Talks have been developing such institutional relations with other institutions, thereby enhancing its institutional performance.

The structure of this paper is as follows. The second part, following the arguments by Oran Young, will briefly summarize the different tasks of regional institutions. What regulatory, procedural, programmatic and generative institutions mean will be explained briefly. The concept of institutional linkages will be briefly explained in this part. Based upon the arguments in the part two, the third part will analyze the background of institution-building, the institutional characteristics of the individual regional institutions in Northeast Asia. The fourth part will analyze the regional institutions in Northeast Asia from a broader context of institutional relations. How Northeast Asian institutions have been enhanced its performance by linking themselves

² Oran Young, *Governance in World Affairs*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999, chapter two.

with other institutions will be analyzed. I will touch on the Six Party Talks as one of the examples. This will be followed by the concluding part.

2, Institutional Tasks and Institutional Linkages

(1) Institutional Tasks

Individual regional institutions perform different tasks. There are regulatory institutions which center on the specific rules and norms regulating interactions among the actors concerned. Under the specific rules and norms, the participating actors are expected to take actions prescribed by these rules and norms. Regional free trading agreements are the typical examples of this type of regional institutions. We usually measure the performance of regional institutions by whether the rules and norms are clearly defined; whether compliance and enforcement mechanisms are built in the institutions, etc.

There are procedural institutions, the purpose of which is to provide mechanisms that allow actors to reach to the collective actions regarding problems that arise in the issue areas covered by the institutions concerned. The procedural institutions usually contain the clauses on who participate in the decision-making process, what decision-making procedures are adopted, and how the disputes are resolved, etc.

We may add programmatic institutions to this list. These institutions are generally motivated by a desire to pool resources to undertake projects that can not be provided in a unilateral basis. Regional institutions dealing with cross-border issues often adopt this kind of institutional shape.

Generative institutions could be added to the list. The main function of these institutions is to find new ideas or ways that were not existed before. We need new ideas that may contribute to promote regional cooperation. We need to enhance mutual confidence among the actors concerned before tacking with specific programs and creating new ideas for cooperation. Forums for dialogue are often designed to create for this purpose. The purpose of such forums is not to create specific rules and norms to promote regional cooperation, but to be jointly engaged in the creation of new idea and the enhancement of mutual confidence. Given the history of the Cold War division and the existence of mutual antipathy and suspicion, Northeast Asia had to develop such institutions before tackling with specific regional cooperation activities such as economic and political cooperation. The main roles and functions of the second track institutions lay in this function, neither developing specific rules and norms nor being engaged in "real" policy coordination, that are left to the governmental agencies at the later stage. Their roles are those of "policy entrepreneurs," creating new ideas and deliver them to the region including government agencies.

Institutions usually have various combinations of the above-mentioned tasks. The Six Party Talks is the only regional institution that directly deals with the specific rules and norms(regulatory aspects). The Trilateral Summit may develop more specific rules and norms, decision-making procedures and compliance mechanisms such as enforcement

mechanism in the specific issue areas at the later stage. But, for the moment, the main functions of the trilateral summit will be on procedural, programmatic and generative tasks.

(2) Institutional Linkages

Institutions do not operate alone. They are linked with other institutions in some way or another. And what institutional linkages are established has a grave implication for regional peace and security. If we succeed in constructing an appropriate institutional design, an overall regional cooperation will be more enhanced, even if we do not have the legally binding and strong individual institutions. There are a variety of forms of institutional linkages: embedded, nested, overlapped and clustered one. Depending upon the type of institutional linkage, we expect both positive and negative effects on the operation of the respective institutions.

When actors choose to create new institutions, they must decide on their specific characteristics (strength, nature and institutional scope and so forth).³ Usually how to define the characteristics of the institutions causes a lot of disputes, given differences of state preferences and capabilities. Some members may wish to cover a wide range of issues area. Some others may desire to establish strictly legally-binding rules, depending upon their policy preferences and capabilities.

In addition, how new institutions link with other institutions is causes a lot of disputes among the members. Some members may wish to establish a new institution, having no direct institutional relations with other existing ones. But, some others may hope to link a new institution with other existing institutions. Furthermore, what institutional relations are established is a matter of conflict. Thus, the politics of institutional reconciliation will be developing, the result of which will determine a institutional shape and performance.

The regional (infra-structural) institutions in Northeast Asia are generally weak, not constraining the behaviors so strictly. However, if we could design appropriate institutional design that connect regional institutions with other institutions (whatever, bilateral, trilateral, regional and global institutions), the institutional performance would be largely enhanced, as I explain in my analysis especially of the Six Party Talks.

3. Analysis of Individual Institutions and Institution-Building

(1) Economic Cooperation in Northeast Asian Subregion and Sea of Japan

1) Vision and Aspiration

The first critical point for the causes of regional "supra-structural" and "infra-structural" institution-building was the end of the Cold War. The end of the Cold War created new opportunities for new thinking about economic development of the

³ Vinod K. Aggarwal, "Analyzing Institutional Transformation in the Asia-Pacific," Charles E. Morrison and Vinod Aggarwal eds., *Asia-Pacific Crossroads*, New York, St.Martin, 1998, p.26.

long-neglected Sea of Japan and Northeast Asia subregion. There was the recognition that complementary human, natural, and capital resources could be mobilized to generate new economic dynamics throughout the subregion after the end of the Cold War. China's three northeastern provinces, Japan, South Korea, North Korea, Mongolia and the Russian Far East are differently endowed with natural and human resources and stand to gain great potential benefit from an international division of labor among them.

The idea of what Robert Scalapino of the UC Berkeley claimed Natural Economic Territories(NETs), connecting parts of the national economies that shares common borders, rivers, seas or gulf, has been explored after the end of the Cold War. The Sea of Japan economic cooperation program belongs to this category. The joint endeavors have been mainly conducted by the local governments and think tanks (and partially supported by the central governments financially and logistically). They have been conducting the research on appropriate regional joint activities and held seminars and conferences inviting the relevant actors such as the representatives of the local governments and chambers of commerce and the academics.

The Niigata(Japan)-based ERINA (Economic Research Institute for Northeast Asia) and the ERINA initiated Northeast Asia Economic Cooperation Conference and the Honolulu-based NEAEF(Northeast Asia Economic Forum) have been playing the facilitating roles in "supra-structural" institution building through conducting research, collecting and disseminating information and providing the venues for regional dialogue and confidence building.

The Tumen River Development Program(TRDP)⁴ that was aimed at promoting the regional economic cooperation in the areas along the Tumen River has been undertaken by the countries concerned to establish an "infra-structural" institution to explore the economic potentials. The United Nations Development Program(UNDP) has been playing the catalyst role to facilitate regional economic cooperation along the Tumen River.

2) NEAEF(Northeast Asia Economic Cooperation Forum): The idea of thinking a Northeast Asian/Sea of Japan subregion as an integral economic unit first emerged in 1988, when the Niigata Conference on the Sea of Japan was organized by former Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. Saburo Okita and Dr. Lee-Jay Cho of the East-West Center, Honolulu. The participants recognized that there remained formidable obstacles to realize regional economic development. Institutional barriers and different values, legacies, and attitudes continued to constrain cooperation. To overcome these barriers, the NEAEF was formally created in 1991, with a secretariat located at the East-West Center in Hawaii, to sponsor and facilitate research, networking and dialogue relevant to the economic and social development of Northeast Asia. NEAEF brought together some 40 institutions from PRC, Japan, both Koreas,

⁴ The name of the program changed in 2003. It is called Greater Tumen Initiative(GTI).

Mongolia, and Russian Federation as well as ADB, World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and others..

Since 1991, through dialogue, education, and training, NEAEF has served as a vehicle for exchange of information and ideas among Northeast Asian and North American policy-makers, businesspersons, academics, and members of nongovernmental organizations. NEAEF has created a network of country committees in China, Japan, Korea, Russia, Mongolia, the United States and the European Union dedicated to promoting NEAEF activities and goals. Through an annual meeting, on-going working groups, and ad hoc meetings and seminars, the NEAEF network has been sponsoring dialogue and research on such areas as energy efficiency and electric power systems, energy security and regional energy networks, energy conservation and the environment, financial institutions and capital mobilization, demographic change and social security, human resources development, Northeast Asia Development Bank, regional transportation networks, scenarios for regional cooperation, trade and investment liberalization, and Tumen River area development. These have ranged from infrastructure projects in communications, power transmission, and transportation to identifying the natural resource and production complementarities of countries in the region and to building institutions capable of carrying out development.

3) ERINA and Northeast Asia Economic Conference

With the end of the Cold War and the increasing attention to the possibilities of developing Northeast Asian subregion and the Sea of Japan area, the Japanese government, some prefectural governments and business circles cooperated together to establish a research institute to explore the possibilities of developing the Northeast Asian subregion. The NEAEF processes encouraged the Japanese counterparts to establish a permanent institution to conduct research and to provide the venue for the relevant actors (the governments, provinces and business and academic circles in Northeast Asia) to exchange the views. In October 1993, ERINA(Economic Research Institute for Northeast Asia) came into being in Niigata City, Japan.⁵

ERINA's aims were to conduct research, accumulate information about the economies of Northeast Asia, and promote economic exchange through the joint efforts of local areas, thus contributing to the formation and development of the Northeast Asia Economic Subregion and to international society as a whole. ERINA has been supporting economic exchanges between private sector companies in local areas. In collaboration with central and regional governments, research institutions, business sectors and international organizations from across Northeast Asia, ERINA has been undertaking various initiatives in the fields of cross-border cooperation.

Holding the international conference has been one of the key activities of the ERINA. Since its establishment, the ERINA has been hosting the Northeast Asia Economic Conference (renamed as the Northeast Asia International Conference for Economic

⁵ ERINA's contributed fund is 3,585,000,000 yen(40 million US dollar) as of March 2009

Development recently), at which representatives of the relevant countries and regions gather to discuss issues affecting the region and search for more appropriate designs for regional economic cooperation.

(2) The Greater Tumen Initiative(GTI) (formerly named Tumen River Development Program: TRDP)

1) Vision and Aspiration

The Greater Tumen Initiative (GTI) is an intergovernmental cooperation mechanism in Northeast Asia, aimed at enhancing regional economic cooperation. GTI serves as a catalyst in expanding policy dialogue amongst member states and in strengthening the fundamentals for economic growth in the region. For the more remote and less economically developed areas of the Tumen Region, increased economic cooperation has proven to be an effective way to ensure economic development. At the same time, the regional cooperation fostered by GTI serves a building block for effective participation in world trade and capital markets, and moreover, helps to ensure energy security, improve basic infrastructure, develop tourism, and promote international environmental standards in the region. GTI has been also expected to contribute to peace and stability in the Tume River region.

The mechanism has been supported by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The formal members are five countries: China, North Korea, Mongolia, South Korea, and Russia. UNDP helped launch the Tumen River Area Development Program (TRADP) in 1991 to facilitate regional cooperation and promote economic development, investment opportunities, and environmental management in the Tumen River Area. In 1995, China, South Korea, North Korea, Mongolia, and Russia formally agreed to establish the Consultative Commission, composed of representatives of each member country to foster support for the development of Northeast Asia and the Tumen River Economic Development Area.

2) Agenda for Cooperation

Since its launching, the program has helped implement regional agreements between the area's governments that focused on the development of an interregional infrastructure, the promotion of trade, and a more business-friendly environment. The program has also served as a catalyst in expanding policy dialogue in Northeast Asia by providing a forum for regular communication and cooperation amongst member states.

The Changchun Agreement that was agreed in 2005 validated TRADP's direction and confirmed the desire for continued regional cooperation. The member states of TRADP agreed to extend the period of cooperation for ten more years and to take full ownership of the program through increased contribution of financial and human resources, with the continued support of UNDP. The result was TRADP's successor, the Greater Tumen Initiative, was established, The Changchun Agreement heralded a geographical expansion, extending the areas from the Tumen River Area to the Greater Tumen Area. It was expected that the expansion would bring not only the support for cooperation, new markets, and investment opportunities, but has also strengthened the cooperation

that underpins regional security and development.

The GTI member states, by assessing regional development potentials against human development needs, have identified four priority sectors of development for the Greater Tumen Region – energy,⁶ trade and investment (facilitating more private sector investment), transportation (as a regional transport hub),⁷ and tourism.⁸ GTI also aims at addressing environmental issues throughout these four areas. The successful growth of these sectors is expected to provide the region with an investment infrastructure.

3) Organizational Structure

GTI has been increasing their efforts to fully involve the private sector in Northeast Asian development through the establishment of the Business Advisory Council (BAC), the GTI Energy Board, and the GTI Tourism Council. Each of these bodies can strengthen dialogue between governments and the private sector, engage the private sector, and create deeper and more sustainable regional cooperation and development initiatives.⁹

Especially important is the BAC, a public-private partnership instrument that stemmed from the 2005 Changchun Agreement. The BAC represents an opportunity for the private sector to directly affect the investment climate in the region by providing advice and direction to policymakers. By providing a platform for dialogue between governments and the private sector, the BAC is expected to establish mutually beneficial relationships that could result in better and more effective economic cooperation and greater economic activity across borders.

(3) Achievement

Exploring economic cooperation in Northeast Asian subregion/Sea of Japan area has been mainly carried by the non-governmental institutions, although the respective governments have supported their activities in both budget and human resources. The Honolulu-based NAEFC and Niigata-based ERINA (and ERIN-initiated annual international conferences) have been the critical roles in conducting research, collect and disseminate information and providing the venues to further explore the

⁶ The GTI Energy Board was established to address regional energy issues.

⁷ The Tumen Region has great potential as a major hub for international trade because of the strategic location of the Tumen transport corridor, vast natural resources, and the area's accessibility to the resources and markets of Northeast Asia. Besides the five GTI member states, countries like Japan and the United States, have an interest in seeing the Tumen transport corridor brought up to international standards in order to tap into the considerable potential time and cost savings for transit trade.

⁸ Under GTI the member states are seeking to coordinate tourism policies. The GTI Tourism Council was established.

⁹ These three bodies, and continuing public-private partnership initiatives, are key topics for the 9th meeting of the Consultative Commission of GTI (Vladivostok) in 2007.

possibilities of economic cooperation in the Northeast Asian subregion, and designing blueprints to overcome the obstacles and impediments.

There are a plenty of quite useful studies and researches. The pressing factors to implement of the proposals and ideas examined in these research and studies will be political and economic incentives to push those ideas and proposals to move ahead. In this regard, it may be useful to locate the Northeast Asian subregional cooperation within the broader regional contexts in Northeast Asia and East Asia as a whole.

Indeed, there was great room for further expansion. How can we remove the impediments constraining the international division of labor? In order to gain the momentum for regional economic cooperation in narrowly defined Northeast Asia, the existing supra-structural institution building and the idea of region may need to expand to include a wider region including North and South Korea, China, Japan and Russia and/or to connect itself with a broader economic cooperation institutions in East Asia as a whole. The momentum may also be gained through connecting itself with the security infra-structural institution building now undertaken through the Six Party Talks.

There may be some useful institutional developments in Northeast Asia and East Asia as a whole that could contribute to the implementation of the ideas and proposals, if economic cooperation ideas are linked with and nested into broader regional and subregional frameworks of cooperation. There are several suggestions in this regard.

First, effective implementation of the China-Japan-ROK Investment Treaty: The Trilateral Summit of the three countries which resumed in Cebu in January 2007 agreed upon the early conclusion of a trilateral investment treaty. Its effective implementation will facilitate trade and investment expansion among the three.

Second, integration into WTO rules. Once negotiations are concluded for Russia's accession, Northeast Asia will be subject to the common WTO rules for trade and investment. However, accession to WTO does not assure the full observance of WTO rules. We need to support these new members in adjusting their domestic rules to the WTO standard and observing the WTO rules.

Third, incorporation into an East Asian FTA In order to promote economic cooperation effectively, we need a closer cooperation framework between the countries concerned. An effective framework for this task is a regional integration framework such as an FTA or EPA which are being pursued in every part of the world. We need to appeal to the China-Japan-ROK trilateral summit so that the development of Northeast Asia is regularly on its agenda and the other three members may be included in the group some day later.¹⁰

¹⁰ Ippei Yamazawa, "Economic Development and Cooperation in Northeast Asia," *Joint Report on the Vision of Development and Cooperation in Northeast Asia*, Northeast Asian International Conference and Cooperation in Northeast Asia, February 5-7 2007, Niigata,

Fourth, linking the ideas of economic cooperation in Northeast Asia with the on-going Six Party Talks Processes: According to the September 2005 agreement, the Six Party Talks will develop the measures and instruments not just for the dismantling of the North Korea's nuclear facilities but also for a variety of economic cooperation projects towards North Korea, including the possible large amount of economic cooperation by the Japanese and South Korean Governments, once the relations between Japan and North Korea and North-South relations were normalized. The Northeast Asian economic cooperation ideas could be more effectively implemented if those are more closely linked with the processes of the Six Party Talks processes in the years to come.

(2) Trilateral Summit: Japan, China and South Korea

1) The First Trilateral Summit

Three leaders of Japan, China and South Korea held a summit on December 17 2008 in Dazaifu, Fukuoka, Japan. Japanese Prime Minister Aso, Chinese Premier Wen and Korean President Lee attended the one day summit. This was the first trilateral summit that was held without an institutional support of other broader institutions such as the United Nations and ASEAN-related institutions.¹¹ They agreed to have a summit on an annual basis. They agreed to rotate the host of the Summit every year.

At the Dazaifu summit, the three leaders claimed in their joint statement that the summit opened a new era of a trilateral cooperation and that the trilateral cooperation should be underlined by the five principles---openness, transparency, mutual trust, common benefits and respect of diverse cultures among them. Three leaders issued three key documents: Joint Statement for Tripartite Partnership, Joint Statement on the International Finance and Economy, and Action Plan for Promoting Trilateral Cooperation among Japan, China and the Republic of Korea.

The international financial and economic crisis played the catalyst role in launching the first trilateral summit independently from other gatherings. The call by the Korean President Lee to hold the trilateral summit to respond to the economic difficulties facing South Korea was the direct cause of holding the trilateral meeting in Dazaifu. But, Japan and China also had their respective reasons that demanded to enhance more intensive cooperation among three countries respectively.

Global economic crisis, especially the sudden decline of the US imports from overseas including these three countries, was posing a serious challenge to the economic growth strategies of the three economies. The US and EU markets are of critically importance for three countries as the destinations of their manufactured products. The sharp

Japan.

¹¹ There had been an assumption that they could not hold such summit meeting without the institutional support of a broader cooperative framework, because political and other differences were so deep and wide. It was assumed that they needed the neutral and balanced playing field set by the ASEAN.

decline of the import of the EU countries and the United States has been posing serious challenges for the export-led growth strategy of the three economies.

These three economies have been integrated through regional production and distribution networks. Japanese and South Korean companies have been relocating their respective production sites to China and these Japanese and Korean companies relocated to China have been importing a variety of parts, components and intermediate goods from Japan and Korea, and exporting final products to the world. These materials were assembled in China for export to overseas. The US market was still major destinations of these goods assembled in China. Newly emerging trilateral economic connectedness has been contributing to economic growth of three economies. However, it was uncertain whether these development strategies could be sustained in the years to come, given the sharp decline of the consumption of US customers.¹²

The 2008 Dazaifu Summit must also be understood in a broader and historical context. The 2008 trilateral summit is based upon the achievements made under the previous trilateral summits that have been conducted on the sideline of the ASEAN+3 summits since 1999.¹³ Indeed, the agreements at the Dazaifu summit and the agreed action plans for trilateral cooperation were largely based upon the previous agreements and plans. Therefore, in the following analysis of the trilateral summit, I would touch upon the tripartite cooperation that had been addressed by three leaders on the sideline of the ASEAN+3 from 1999-2007.

2) Vision and Aspiration

The tripartite summit started in 1999 to enhance mutual political trust, to increase trade and economic contacts, and to expand social and cultural exchanges and to strengthen financial cooperation. The trilateral summit aspires to help lay a solid foundation in promoting the tripartite cooperation among Japan, China and South Korea, thereby creating a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable future for the region and international community. At the same time, the trilateral cooperation will address the serious challenges in the global economy and the financial markets.¹⁴ They expect

¹² The damage was so severe for South Korea. Its trade deficit had multiplied. Foreign capital in South Korea fled. Stock market and foreign exchange markets declined due to the global economic turmoil. South Korea was facing the falling of the Korean currency and the increase of the trade deficit. There were newspaper reports claiming that Korea might face a currency crisis that Korea faced late 1997, in spite of repeated denial of such claims by the Korean Government.

¹³ The tripartite summit started in 1999 in an informal atmosphere. The first three meetings were held with a breakfast. This format changed at the fourth meeting, with three leaders sitting in the triangular-shaped table. Eight annual meetings (except 2006) among the leaders of the three countries were held as part of the cooperation within ASEAN+3 framework. The 2006 summit was not held due to political difficulties among three countries.

¹⁴ The leaders shared common concerns that protectionism will prevail in the world

Asian countries to play a role as “the center of world economic growth” in order to reverse the downward trend of the world economy.

The trilateral cooperation should also contribute to advancing wider regional cooperation frameworks such as ASEAN+3, EAS, ARF and APEC in a complimentary and mutually reinforcing manner. The trilateral cooperation aims at enhancing cooperation with ASEAN contributing to East Asian regional community-building,¹⁵

The 2008 summit issued the Action Plan for Promoting Trilateral Cooperation. This action plan is based upon the joint declaration on the promotion of tripartite cooperation conclude in 2003, the action strategy on trilateral cooperation agreed in 2004, and the agreement reached by the three leaders at the 8th summit held in 2007. According to the joint statement, the trilateral cooperation will pursue comprehensive cooperation including political, economic, social and cultural fields within both governmental and non-governmental frameworks (security and military issues are not included in the areas of cooperation).

3) Issue Coverage and Agenda Setting:

The agenda of the leaders meeting is roughly divided into two areas. One was general discussions on regional and international issues. The other was functional cooperation in specific issue areas.

Economic and environmental and cultural and people-to-people exchanges of the younger generations issues had been discussed almost all tripartite summits. At the second meeting in 2000, they agreed to ask the respective government agencies to present specific policy proposals to the third meeting and to start the joint study on possible economic cooperation among three countries by the relevant thin tanks in three countries. The report of the joint study was presented to the third meeting.

The agenda addressed by trilateral cooperation has been expanding. At the third and fourth meetings that were held in 2001 and 2002, three leaders agreed to enhance tripartite cooperation in such priority areas as economics and trade, information technology, environmental protection, human resource development, tourism and sports exchanges, terrorism, environment, international crime, drug and disease. At the 7th meeting in 2007, the leaders agreed to add six priority areas, namely finance, science and technology, logistics, public health, tourism and youth exchange to their cooperation.

economy. Therefore, as the short term measures, the leaders agreed that within the next 12 months, the three governments would refrain from raising new barriers to investment or to trade in goods and services, from imposing new export restrictions, or from implementing WTO inconsistent measures to stimulate growth.

¹⁵ Three countries commit to support ASEAN as the driving force for cooperation in East Asia.

Regional and global issues such as ASEAN-related issues(supporting ASEAN's integration), East Asian cooperation(reconfirm three countries' commitment to the cause of East Asian cooperation and community-building), North Korea (joint efforts to end the nuclear crisis in a peaceful manner), UN reform and Iraq were raised and discussed. But, the priority was given to economic issues.

FTA: The possibility of the trilateral FTA has been addressed at the trilateral meeting in the context of enhancing economic cooperation among the three economies. Three think tanks of the respective countries were assigned to conduct a joint research on economic cooperation including FTA. The three representative research institutes submitted a joint report with an analysis that the trilateral FTA will have positive effects and many challenges on all three economies.

Investment Agreement: The trilateral meetings to discuss the trilateral investment agreement were held quite often. Based upon their respective draft submission, the unified draft was prepared. The articles of principles of the agreement, national treatment, intellectual property rights, and dispute settlement procedures were key items of intensive discussions.

The issue of international finance and economy was addressed in the separate joint statement in 2008. Reflecting their common concern, the three countries agreed to increase in the size of the bilateral swap arrangements at the trilateral finance ministers' meeting just before the summit meeting. It was also agreed to hold the trilateral governors' meeting of the three central banks on a regular basis. The leaders confirmed their commitment to work with ASEAN countries to expedite the process of the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralization and strengthen the regional surveillance mechanism for monitoring on the regional economy and finance markets.

Action Plan agreed at the 2008 summit covers the following issue areas: Economic affairs: Joint studies on the trilateral FTA¹⁶ (Join study), Trilateral investment agreement¹⁷ (facilitating to conclude the negotiations), Trilateral energy cooperation (dialogue), Promoting cooperation in logistics (facilitating to construct specific details and launching working level meeting with experts for implementation), Promoting cooperation in customs affairs (adopting the facilitated customs clearance models, improving the enforcement environment at ports of entry, protecting intellectual property rights on borders, and developing customs capacity), trilateral consultation mechanism in industry cooperation, and so forth.¹⁸

¹⁶ Joint study on FTA that began in 2003 was expected to reach the conclusion phase in the year 2008. After then, in-depth studies will begin in 2009 by three institutions of three countries.

¹⁷ The trilateral investment agreement was discussed for some years. The leaders agreed to facilitate negotiations to conclude the investment agreement as soon as possible.

¹⁸ The trilateral cooperation on disaster management was addressed in the separate joint announcement of the 2008 summit. The leaders agreed to enhance cooperation

4) Organizational Structure and Institutional Processes:

The annual summit is the supreme body for trilateral cooperation where the future direction and specific issue areas of the trilateral cooperation are discussed and decided. There have been set up a variety of ministerial meetings, senior governmental meetings, the expert level forums on specific issues. Three countries had gradually established mechanisms at the ministerial, senior officials and working levels in various ways.

In order to support the summit and deepen the cooperation among the three countries, especially in the economic areas, it was agreed to hold the ministers meeting in charge of economy and trade, finance, environment etc, together with senior officials and working levels meeting to support the relevant ministerial meetings.¹⁹ The first foreign ministers' meeting held in 2007 independently from other regional and international meetings, and they agreed to have the meeting on a regular basis. They have discussed not just trilateral cooperation but also other regional and global issues. The situations of Northeast Asia such as North Korea's nuclear development and the Six Party talks, the reform of the United Nations were discussed at these meetings. Together with the foreign ministers' meeting, the trilateral senior foreign affairs officials consultation (at deputy-minister level) was institutionalized.

The Three-Party Committee headed by the three foreign ministers to study, plan, coordinate and monitor the cooperative activities was set up at the trilateral summit in October 2003. The committee was requested to submit progress reports to the annual summit meeting. The committee submitted its first progress report at the six summit meeting in 2004. Since then, the second and third reports were submitted in 2006 and 2007 respectively. The report was compiled with the support of relevant ministries, covering the progress made in various functional areas.

At the 7th meeting in 2007, the three leaders issues the joint press statement in which they announced to set up a trilateral consultation mechanism at the level of senior

especially in three areas: developing comprehensive disaster management framework, developing measures and systems to reduce vulnerability to disasters and to minimize damage from disasters, Strengthening effective disaster management at the national, local and community levels. For the three areas cooperation to be implemented, they agreed to hold the trilateral heads of government agency and expert level meetings on disaster management.

¹⁹ One example. The Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting(TEMM) was established in order to address environmental issues. They in particular addressed common environmental concerns of the regions such as dust and sandstorm, marine litter and illegal trans-boundary movement of toxic and hazardous waste. Base upon the areas and principles of cooperation agreed by the TEMM, director-general meetings on sandstorm were held and agreed to set up a steering committee of joint research group on dust sandstorm. As for the joint efforts to fight against illegal trans-boundary movement of toxic and hazardous waste, the workshop was held in 2007.

foreign affairs officials to conduct close communication and coordination on major political and diplomatic issues involving the three countries as well as international and regional issues.

5) Trilateral Finance Ministers Meeting(TFMM) and Governors of the Central Banks Meeting

Financial cooperation is one of the key areas for trilateral cooperation, The future developments of trilateral financial cooperation will have a grave impact on not just the trilateral relations but also the financial cooperation of the entire Asia-Pacific.

The first TFMM was held in 2000 on the sideline of the APEC financial ministers meeting and thereafter held on an annual basis at the occasions of regional and global gatherings. The first few meetings had been held for the purpose of exchanging the views of macro economic policies and promoting mutual understandings among three ministers. The dialogue had not gone beyond the exchanges of views among the tree finance ministers. But, being faced with regional and global economic challenges, the TFM has been dealing with specific financial arrangements and produced specific joint policy measures in the recent years.

Two areas deserve attention. One is the area of the currency swap arrangements. Following the Chiang Mai Initiative at the ASEAN+3, three countries concluded their respective bilateral currency swap agreements and expanded them recently to respond to the global economic crisis. They also discussed the “multilateralization” of the Chinag Mai Initiative and finally came to the conclusion on the amount of foreign reserves that three countries would contribute to a common fund respectively.

The second is in the area of macroeconomic and financial stability. The global economic crisis has been pushing the trilateral financial dialogue and cooperation. Based upon the agreement at the TFMM in May 2008, the trilateral workshop on macro economy and financial stability among the senior officials of finance ministries, financial supervisory authorities and central banks of the three countries was held in November 2009 in Tokyo.

According to the Japanese Ministry of Finance that proposed to hold the workshop, the workshop was intended to elevate into an “Asian version of the Financial Stability Forum(FSF), a Basel-based advisory board to the G7.²⁰ The FSF was established in 1999 after the 1997-8 Asian financial crisis, and brought together the senior officials of national financial authorities such as finance ministries, central banks and financial supervisory bodies from the G7 members and other major economies. At the G7 meeting in Washington in May 2008, the FSF submitted the report and sought joint monitoring of large financial institutions to enhance risk management and prevent the recurrence

²⁰ The name of the Financial Stability Forum(FSF) was changed to the Financial Stability Board(FSB) on the occasion of G20 summit in London.

of the global market turbulence. The FSF incorporated all G20 members recently.²¹ The Tokyo workshop was regarded to be a step towards establishing an institutionalized mechanism to jointly monitor the financial system of each economy through such means as examining the amount of bad loans held by financial institutions. Enhancing control on the financial system was also discussed. Japan is eager to invite the relevant financial authorities from the ASEAN countries to the following workshop to be held in 2010.

It is still uncertain whether the workshop will evolve into an "Asian version of the FSF," given the FSF requires a detailed and sensitive information of the assets and bad loans of the financial institutions of the respective member countries. If three governments agree to set up some kind of financial stability measures and introduce the domestic policy measures (institutional reforms) similar to those of the FSF, the financial cooperation among three would be more deepened, thereby making a grave impact on the construction of the financial stability mechanisms of the entire Asia including the ASEAN countries. The Asian mechanism for financial stability will be enhanced to a large extent.

The global economic crisis has also been enhancing trilateral dialogue and cooperation among the governors of the central banks of the three countries. There had been informal trilateral meetings among the governors of the central banks among the three countries. The trilateral meeting was formalized in 2009. The first trilateral governors' meeting among the central banks was held in July 2009. The governors reviewed the recent financial developments of the three countries and exchanged the views on macro-economy, financial stability, regional monetary cooperation.

6) Principles for Trilateral Cooperation

The leaders agreed that the trilateral cooperation should be based upon five principles: openness, transparency, mutual trust, common interest and respect for the diverse cultures.

7) Impacts

As for the Trilateral Summit, the combined GDP of Japan, China and South Korea occupy about 75% of the total GDP of Asia and 17 % of the total GDP of the world, roughly equal to those of the European Union and the United States. These countries are the members of the key regional institutions in the Asia-Pacific such as ADB, ASEAN+3, ARF, EAS, and APEC. They are also the members of the major global institutions such as G20 that are expected to play an active and leading role in managing international economy after the global economic crisis.

If deeper economic cooperation is successfully conducted among the Northeast Asian countries through the Trilateral Summit framework, it will have huge impacts on not just Asian economy but also on the global economy as a whole. It also will have

²¹ Chin, India, South Korea and Indonesia became the members of the FSF early 2009.

tremendous security and political implications for Asia as well as the international society. If successful, the trilateral summit would be much more important than ASEAN+3 or East Asia Summit both regionally and globally. Trilateral cooperation will be a *de facto* driving force to promote East Asian wide regional cooperation in the decades to come, although there remain a variety of stumbling blocks to be overcome by the joint efforts by three countries. In the meantime, the global institutions and Asia-Pacific and East Asian institutions could continue to play the important roles to further facilitate the trilateral cooperation and institution-building in Northeast Asia.

There remain a deep-seated mutual suspicion and strategic rivalries among Japan, China and South Korea. There will emerge conflicts and competitions among the three countries in the years to come. However, the reality of deepening economic interdependence and facing common regional and global challenges has been pushing three countries to search for the common foundation of trilateral cooperation, especially in the areas of trade, investment and finance. And, those tensions and competitions will be more effectively managed within a web of institutional arrangements, even if the individual institutions are not necessarily strong enough to bind the state behaviors. The Trilateral Summit would play the important role as an umbrella under which a variety of trilateral functional cooperation could be promoted, thereby enhancing mutual understanding and mitigating tensions and conflicts.

(3) The Six Party Talks(SPT)

The Six Party Talks was launched in August 2003 to end North Korea's nuclear program through multilateral negotiations among the North Korea, South Korea, the United States, Japan, China and Russia. Since then, the Six Party Talks had periodically faced diplomatic standoffs among the parties, especially between North Korea and the US.²²

1) Vision and Aspiration

The goal of the SPT is the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner. ²³The SPT is a multilateral negotiating forum aimed at dismantling North Korea's nuclear weapons development program. Although the main objective of the SPT is to respond to the North Korea's nuclear issue, the SPT agreed that they would need to tackle with a variety of regional issues such as the transformation of the current armistice regime to the peace regime, economic cooperation to DPRK, normalization between Japan and DPRK and the US and DPRK and so forth. Therefore, the SPT, if successful, will dramatically change an overall regional political economy in the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia as a whole.

²² On the institutional analysis of the Six Party Talks, see, Tsutomu Kikuchi, "Institutional Linkages and Security Governance: Security Multilateralism in the Korean Peninsula," Martina Timmermann ed., *Institutionalizing Northeast Asia: Regional Steps towards Global Governance*, Tokyo and New York, The United Nations University Press, 2008, pp.204-224.

²³ "Joint Statement of the Fourth Round of the Six Party Talks," September 19 2005.

The roles and functions of the SPT are twofold. One is to address region-specific proliferation dynamics. The SPT should be seen such a regional institution to address region-specific proliferation causes. There are many regional proliferation causes to be addressed to resolve the North Korea's nuclear crisis. In this regard, we may develop a regional institution with specific regional characteristics. On the other hand, the SPT have to enhance global governance such as global non-proliferation regime. The SPT must be consistent with the global institutions. They must comply with the norms and rules embedded in the global institutions such as NPT/IAEA.

2) Issue Coverage and Agenda Setting

The objectives of the SPT are to stop the nuclear weapon development program of DPRK, DPRK's return to the international non-proliferation regimes such as NPT and IAEA, allowing the international inspectors to monitor and inspect DPRK's nuclear facilities, dismantling the facilities to produce nuclear weapons in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

The issues addressed at the SPT have been expanding since its launching in 2003. As parts of this joint multilateral efforts, the SPT deal with other related issues such as the provision of energy and food, the transformation of the 1953 armistice regime to the permanent peace regime, the normalization of Japan and DPRK and the US and DPRK, economic cooperation and the establishment of a multilateral security framework in Northeast Asia.

The first major breakthrough of the SPT was achieved in September 2005. The SPT agreed for the first time to the goals and principles of the SPT. In the joint statement of September 2005, the SPT declared that the goal of the SPT was a denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. DPRK promised to abandon all nuclear weapon and the existing nuclear program and return, at an early date, to the NPT and to IAEA safeguards. South Korea reconfirmed not to receive or deploy nuclear weapons in accordance with the 1992 Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, while affirming that there exist no nuclear weapons within its territory.

After the September 2005 joint statement, however, the SPT were deadlocked for over 18 months, due to the sanctions against Banco Delta Asia, a Macao-based bank for assisting North Korea with illegal activities.

North Korea's first nuclear testing in October 2006 prompted the participants of the SPT to resume negotiations. On February 13, 2007, the SPT adopted the "Initial Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement" that called on North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons and existing nuclear weapon programs, and return to the NPT and IAEA safeguards in exchange for a package of incentives that included the provision of economic, energy, and humanitarian assistance equivalent to one million tons of heavy fuel oil (HFO). The agreement also established a 60-day deadline by which North Korea was to shut down and seal (for the purpose of eventual abandonment) its nuclear

facilities at Yongbyon. Accordingly, in its first contact with the IAEA since expelling inspectors in December 2002, the North Koreans extended an invitation to IAEA officials. In July 2007, North Korea began shutting down and sealing its main nuclear facilities under IAEA supervision. The IAEA team applied the necessary seals and other necessary surveillance and monitoring equipment.

A second-phase action plan was adopted by the SPT in October 2007 whereby North Korea agreed to "disable" its key plutonium production facilities which had been shut down and sealed under the IAEA monitoring. Under the agreement, Pyongyang also committed to provide a "complete and correct" declaration of its nuclear program by the end of 2007 while Washington pledged to remove North Korea from the U.S. government's list of states sponsoring terrorism and to abort the Trading with the Enemy Act with North Korea. But, the negotiations have been deadlocked over the issue of verifying North Korea's nuclear activities and holdings. This dispute ultimately led to the collapse of the latest round of the SPT, held in December 2008. In the highly tense situation North Korea conducted its second nuclear testing in May 2009 and claimed that the SPT was dead and never return the negotiating table again.

3) Principles of Action

There are many agreements of the SPT. And, the implementation of the agreements at the SPT is based on the principle of "words for words" and "action for action." The implementation of the agreements is based upon reciprocal actions among the parties. Enforcement and sanction mechanisms are not included the SPT themselves. However, through its institutional linkages with other institutions such as the UN Security Council, the SPT could utilize the sanction mechanisms, thereby putting the pressures to North Korea to comply with the SPT agreements.

4) Institutional Structure;

The SPT consists of a series of the meeting among the government officials. The structure of the SPT contains (1) plenary meeting among the delegates from the six parties, (2) bilateral, trilateral and other mini-lateral meetings among the relevant parties, (3) meetings of the working groups. The plenary and mini-lateral meetings were headed by vice minister for foreign affairs and director-generals in charge of the bureaus in charge of North Korea in the respective foreign ministries. At the 6th round the SPT, five working groups were established. The working group meetings were usually headed by the deputy head of the delegations to the SPT.²⁴

The plenary meetings of the SPT have been held in Beijing. The meetings were chaired by the then Chinese vice minister for foreign affairs. There is no secretariat for the Six Party Talks. The Chinese Foreign Ministry, in consultation with other participating governments, has been serving as the communication hub for the SPT.

²⁴ It was agreed that the foreign ministers' meeting to push the denuclearization process ahead should be held on an ad hoc basis. But, the meeting has not yet been held.

5) Institutional Linkages to Enhance Institutional Performance

Among various regional institutions in Northeast Asia, the Six Party Talks has been developing its institutional structure to enhance its institutional performance, although there is a long way to go to realized the goal. In terms of the institutional operation of the SPT, institutional linkages and harmonization between the existing institutions have been critically important.

The SPT does not operate alone. It is linked with other institutions in some way or another. In addition, according to the September 2009 Agreement, the SPT will develop a variety of sub-institutions in the SPT, whatever bilateral, trilateral and quadrilateral ones. How the institutional relations are established between the SPT and other institutions on the one hand and institutional relations within the SPT have a grave implication for the operation of the SPT as a whole. The processes of the Six Party Talks provide us with an excellent laboratory to consider the way for the single institution to enhance its institutional operation more effectively through appropriately designing institutional relations within the SPT one the one hand and the SPT with other institutions such as the UN and NPT/IAEA on the other hand. .

a) The Past History of the Institutions in the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia

Why have institutional linkages been regarded so important at the SPT? We need to look back the past history of the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia.

First, there are already a variety of institutions in the Korean Peninsula that would address pressing regional issues. There are already many institutions that are quite useful for military, political and economic management. The problem in the Peninsula is not the lack of institutions. For example, there are many agreements (institutions) between South Korea and North Korea such as the 1992 Basic Accord and the agreement on non-nuclearization concluded in 1992. The Basic Accord was a *de facto* peace agreement between South and North.

Second, these institutions, however, have not functioned well so far. Overall the institutions so far developed in Northeast Asia were weak, not having strongly bound the behaviors of the parties concerned. There have not been enforcement mechanisms. Even if some agreements were concluded, therefore, we quickly found serious difficulties in implementing the agreements.

Third, one of the reasons of institutional malfunctioning was that various institutions were designed and operating independently, not linked with each other. Or, mutually coordinated institutional linkages that would generate a positive synergy effect on institutional performance have been blocked by the parties concerned.

For example, the North-South 1992 Basic Agreement has not well linked itself with other institutions such as the South Korean-US, South Korea-China, South Korea-Japan, DPRK-US, DPRK-Japan bilateral institutions. Because of this lack of institutional linkages and coordination, one party could easily sabotage the

implementation of the agreements.

Put differently, bilateralism has been a dominant mode of policy management in the Korean Peninsula. Reflecting different strategic calculations and policy preferences, the countries of Northeast Asia have been taking bilateral approaches to the issues relating to the Korean Peninsula. This has allowed North Korea to conduct skillful maneuvering, thereby avoiding facing collective pressures which would be generated through institutional coordination.

One of the ways to strengthen implementation as promised is to establish a web of institutional linkages around the North-South agreements. The US, China, Russia, Japan and regional and global institutions could contribute to enhancing regional structure through establishing institutional linkages around North-South agreements. Through institutional linkages, we could develop a dense web of institutional coordination which would put collective pressures on North Korea to implement the agreements with South Korea.

b) A Successful Story? The 1994 US-DPRK Agreed Framework, KEDO and NPT

The first nuclear crisis was diffused with the conclusion of the US-DPRK Agreed Framework in 1994. Under the Agreed Framework, North Korea promised to freeze and eventually dismantle its graphite moderated nuclear reactors and related facilities. North Korea also affirmed its NPT membership status, committed itself to come into compliance with its IAEA safeguards agreement at a later stage, agreed to implement the 1992 North-South Denuclearization Agreement, and also agreed to work with the US to store and dispose of the spent fuel from the 5-megawatt reactor in a safe manner.

²⁵

In exchange, the US agreed to lead an international consortium to oversee and finance the construction of two light water type nuclear power reactors (LWRs), to “compensate” the DPRK for energy foregone by providing heavy fuel oil annually until the completion of the construction of the first LWR, and to take steps to reduce economic and financial restrictions on North Korea. KEDO (Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization) was established in 1995 to implement key parts of the Agreed Framework—to build two LWRs and deliver heavy fuel oil to DPRK. ²⁶

The Agreed Framework was well articulated to link itself with other institutions. Through institutional linkages, an overall structure for implementing the 1994 agreed framework was enhanced. We could identify several institutional linkages that

²⁵ Hideya Kurata, “North Korea’s Withdrawal from the Agreed Framework and Denuclearization (in Japanese),” in Mitsuru Kurosawa ed., *Disarming WMD*, Shinzansya, July 2004.

²⁶ On KEDO, see Scott Snyder, *The Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization: Implications for Northeast Asian Regional Security Cooperation?*, North Pacific Policy Paper 3, Program on Canada-Asia Policy Studies, University of British Columbia, 2001.

contributed to strengthen institutional capability to implement the US-DPRK Agreed Framework.

First, because the role of global institutions such as NPT/IAEA was limited, region-specific (local) institution was developed to support/supplement the global institution. Resolving the crisis needed to establish some local (region-specific) arrangement to supplement the global institution, because the causes of proliferation are generally connected with the particular conflict and political relations in the respective specific regions. The paths and dynamics of nuclear proliferation are not uniform around the world.²⁷ Therefore, the global approach has not necessarily succeeded when addressing a specific nuclear proliferation dynamics in a specific region.²⁸ A regional approach (regional institution building) to non-proliferation provides the flexibility to adapt to specific local conditions and requirement of each region.

North Korea's nuclear issue has been and is closely connected with local and region specific issues such as DPRK's diplomatic normalization with the US, the transformation of the armistice regime to the peace regime, the provision of security reassurance, provision of economic assistance, DPRK's specific security concerns originating from its specific political, economic and social systems and so forth.

Those region-specific and local issues were not fully addressed by the global institutions such as NPT/IAEA. The NPT/IAEA are the institutions dealing with specific issue areas(nuclear non-proliferation) and do not have any mandate to deal with other issues such as the normalization of bilateral relations and the provision of nuclear reactors and fuel. Those go beyond the mandate of NPT/IAEA. Furthermore, the global institutions take universal approaches, applying the same rules and approaches to the all over the world. The global institutions are not flexible in taking region-specific approaches, paying due attention to regional specific causes of the problems. Therefore, it was necessary to address region-specific factors on a regional(local) level, through establishing a region-specific institution. This makes it possible for the specific region to address the region-specific causes of the problems, thereby contributing to resolving region-specific issues in a manner consistent with the global norms and rules.

Furthermore, NPT/IAEA did not have any instruments respond to North Korea's specific demand for some "compensation" in exchange of the abandonment of its nuclear weapon program. NPT is global in nature. Non-discrimination between states is one of the IEAE's operational principles. Therefore, all non-nuclear weapon states signatories

²⁷ On the causes of nuclear proliferation, see the following new arguments. Jacques E.C. Hymans, *The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation: Identity, Emotions, and Foreign Policy*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006; Etel Solingen, *Nuclear Logics: Alternative Paths in East Asia and the Middle East*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007.

²⁸ Gerald Steinberg, " US Non-Proliferation Policy: Global Regimes and Regional Realities," *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 15, No.1, April 1994.

are treated on the same terms. NPT could not offer any “special favor” such as the provision of heavy fuel oil and light-water reactors to DPRK. Therefore, the North Korea’s demand had to be addressed regionally. KEDO was established to address this region-specific “demand.”

Second, although the Agreed Framework and KEDO that was established under the Agreed Framework were designed to address the region-specific causes, it had to be consistent with the norms and rules of the global non-proliferation regimes. NPT and IAEA were the primary institutions in providing a set of rules to resolve the North Korean crisis. North Korea officially announced to withdraw from NPT. So, legally speaking, it was free from the obligations under the NPT. Furthermore, North Korea withdrew from IAEA in June 1994. Thus, the obligations and rules of IAEA were not applied to DPRK any more.²⁹ This caused serious damages to the global non-proliferation regime, especially given the fact that the NPT Review Conference was scheduled to be held in the following year. Therefore, the Agreed Framework had to be designed to put North Korea into a global non-proliferation regime in some way or another. The Agreed Framework had to be consistent with the global non-proliferation norms and rules.

In this regard, the Agreed Framework and KEDO served as an instrument to enforce North Korea to still remain within the global non-proliferation regime, even if temporarily and on an *ad hoc* basis. Although North Korea withdrew from IAEA (therefore, not being bound by the safeguard agreement between North Korea and IAEA), the Agreed Framework made it possible for IAEA to inspect North Korea’s nuclear facilities. IAEA inspectors could obtain access to North Korea’s nuclear facilities not as part of the North Korea-IAEA Safeguard Agreement but as part of implementing the Agreed Framework. The Agreed Framework played an important role for DPRK to comply with global non-proliferation norms and rules. The Agreed Framework and KEDO served as local supporting and complementary mechanisms to make the NPT work in the specific region.

Third, KEDO turned to be the key regional institution around which other institutions were clustered. KEDO was created based upon the US-North Korea bilateral agreement, but expanded its membership to include other core countries and organizations such as South Korea, Japan, EU and other countries concerned about security in Northeast Asia. Within the KEDO-centered clustered institutional framework, coordination among the interested parties has developed and various bilateral relations worked to support the operation of KEDO.

Fourth, by linking with the 1992 North-South Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, the Agreed Framework contributed to putting additional constraints on North Korea’s nuclear development program. The

²⁹ IAEA has had the position that DPRK has an obligation to comply with the safeguards agreement, even after DPRK’s withdrawal from IAEA.

1992 Nuclear Joint Declaration prohibited both South Korea and North Korea from developing nuclear re-processing facilities and enriched facilities that could be used to produce weapon-grade plutonium and highly enriched uranium that were allowed to hold under the NPT. Both agreed to conduct mutual inspection of nuclear facilities of the other. In this regard, the overlapping institutional relations(between NPT and North-South Joint Nuclear Declaration) contributed to the strengthening of non-proliferation at a local level (Korean Peninsula), supplementary to the global institutions(NPT). This is the case of enhancing non-proliferation norms by overlapping NPT and regional institution.

Fifth, the NPT served the key global institution in providing basic norms and rules to resolve the crisis. Institutions at a higher level(NPT) provided a multilateral context of the local institutions such as the Agreed Framework and KEDO. Through nesting itself into global non-proliferation institution, the Agreed Framework and KEDO contributed to strengthening the global non-proliferation norms on a local(regional) level. The KEDO and Agreed Framework underlying KEDO were nested into the global NPT regime.

c) Institutional Design of the Six Party Talks

Considering the past lack of institutional linkage and coordination, it is not difficult to understand why institutional linkages have been tried to enhance the operation of the Six Party Talks.

First, there are a variety of political economic and security issues to be addressed in Northeast Asia. And these issues are closely connected with each other. And those issues have to be addressed simultaneously to resolve the DPRK's nuclear issue. A piece-meal approach is not effective in this regard. They must be dealt with as a whole. The SPT must deal with many pressing issues simultaneously. A comprehensive approach is critically important at the Six Party Talks.

Second, while a variety of issues have to be addressed simultaneously at the SPT, each issue needs different commitments by the participating countries/parties. Some issues would be handled on a bilateral basis more appropriately. Some other issues may be addressed by a group of three or four. There are some issues that need to be addressed by all the six countries. Anyway, different issues need different groups of countries and organizations and their respective commitments. For example, the transition of the armistice regime to the peace regime needs a group of countries different from the group of the countries that address the missile issue. A single multilateral institution can not address all of these issues. Some division of labor is necessary among the institutions.

Third, because of this multiplicity of the issues, there are and will be a variety of (sub) institutions to address the issues facing the Peninsula, whatever bilateral, trilateral, quad lateral and other forms/composition. There will be bilateral institutions between, for example, the US and DPRK, North-South Korea, Japan-DPRK, China-DPRK, reflecting different agenda and commitments. A trilateral institution addressing

military confidence-building across the DMZ may be established. We may have a quad lateral institution among North and South Korea, US and China that deal with the transition of the armistice to the peace regimes. We may develop a more broadly based institution dealing with economic cooperation.

Fourth, because of the need of comprehensive approach, of critical importance is how to coordinate different institutions that will address different issues, thereby strengthening an overall regional security structure. Put differently, how one institution links others and what institutional relations are developed between the institutions is critical for regional stability. The establishment of mutually reinforcing institutional relations is important in this regard.

Fifth, not a single multilateral institution, but well-coordinated and mutually connected institutional relationships will form a *de facto* multilateralism in the region. A *de facto* multilateralism will emerge as the result of the amalgamation or coordination of various different institutions through institutional linkage.

Sixth, although almost all security related issues in the region will be addressed by different groups of parties, we need some comprehensive forum or umbrella framework where we could coordinate institutional relations to enhance an overall security structure. The plenary session of the SPT could play this role. This means that the SPT Talks is not a venue where security and economic cooperation issues are directly addressed. But the SPT is important in coordinating a variety of institutions that will be developed to address different security and economic cooperation issues among different groups of parties.

The Six Party Talks should be understood as a regional coordinating institution within which a variety of (sub) institutions will be formed on specific issues and coordinated among them. Indeed, the Third Session of the Fifth Round of the Six Party Talks held in February 2007 agreed to set up working groups in order to carry out the initial actions and for full implementation of the September 2005 Joint Statement.³⁰ The respective working groups were requested to discuss and formulate specific action plans for the implementation of the 2005 Joint Statement. They are also requested to report to the Six Party Heads of Delegation Meeting on the progress of their works. These arrangements indicate that, based upon the working groups, a variety of institutions with different membership composition will be established under the umbrella of the Six Party Talks. The Six Party Talks will serve as an institution coordinating various other institutions.

(4) NEACD(Northeast Asian Cooperative Dialogue)

1) Vision and Aspiration

The first NEACD meeting was held in October 1993, at the initiative of Prof Susan

³⁰ Initial Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement, adopted at the Six Party Talks, Beijing, 13 February 2007.

Shirk of the University of California, San Diego. The NEACD started as the discussion forum comprising government officials (in their private capacities) and the academics. The first task of the NEACD was to promote confidence-building among the participants from the countries in Northeast Asia through jointly discussing the security and military affairs that the region has been facing, and to create more concrete and specific ideas for security cooperation to be addressed by the relevant governments at the later stage. The NEACD has been serving as a "policy entrepreneur" in terms of encouraging dialogues among the parties that had deep suspicions with each other, enhancing mutual confidence, and designing specific ideas for regional security cooperation.

At the later stage, the sub-group among the military officers was established under the auspice of the NEACD. The membership covers Northeast Asian countries including the United States, given its military and political engagements in the region. Holding "full-house" meetings including all relevant actors has been a critical condition, given the fact the NEACD aimed at enhancing mutual confidence building by jointly developing the ideas of regional (mainly security-related but include economic) cooperation.

There are other broader regional processes, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), that deal with a wider selection of nations in the Asia Pacific. The Six Party Talks was launched in 2003. The goal of the NEACD is to supplement these regional fora with a sub-regional approach; namely by involving the six nations ((the US, Japan, China, South Korea, North Korea and Russia) with the largest militaries and the most at stake in the security situation in Northeast Asia. Generally, five representatives from each country participate in the NEACD meetings: one policy-level official each from the foreign and defense ministries, a uniformed military officer, and two participants from private research facilities, think tanks, or universities.

2) Agenda for Cooperation At the third session, participants decided to establish two study projects to examine more deeply subjects discussed at the meeting: 1) principles governing state-to-state relations in Northeast Asia; and 2) economic, political and military mutual reassurance measures (MRMs). Each study project, comprised of one member from each of the participating countries, sought to prepare a set of suggestions in each area to present to dialogue members for discussion at the Beijing and following meetings. Prior to the seventh session, a pair of similar study projects on defense information sharing (transparency) and principles of cooperation in Northeast Asia were held in Honolulu, Hawaii, with the principles group establishing a set of principles that were endorsed by the NEACD 7 plenary discussions.

3) Organizational Structure There are annual plenary session involving the academic, official and military representatives (participating in their private capacities). In addition, there have been sub-study groups. The Defense Information Sharing study group has met seven times since its creation. In the fall of 1999, DIS discussed the

drafting and contents of each state's defense budget. The most recent DIS study project took place in Moscow in October 2002.

The NEACD has been playing the critical roles in providing a "full-house" gathering among the academics, senior government officials and military representatives of all the countries in Northeast Asia. At the initial stages, the NEACD provided a useful venue to discuss security issues with Chinese counter parts. In the recent years, with the participation of the North Korea's representatives, the NEACD has been the only forum to provide a "full-house" meeting among the countries concerned. In addition, the NEACD has been providing the venues for the informal talks between government officials, as has been demonstrated in the informal talks between the senior officials of the US State Department and North Korea's Foreign Ministry, to discuss the reopening of the Six Party Talks and bilateral issues between the US and North Korea.

5, Conclusion

I would conclude by summarizing my arguments developed in the article.

First, the external changes have been the facilitating roles in constructing the "supra-structural" and "infra-structural" institutions in Northeast Asia. The first critical turning point was the end of the Cold War. The "supra-structural institution building" in Northeast Asia(the processes of identifying Northeast Asia as an integrated subregion) have been facilitated by the end of the Cold War and the reopening of the economic interchanges among the countries in Northeast Asia, whose economic interactions had been to a large extent "frozen" during the Cold War era.

At the initial stages, the geographical scope of this "supra-institution" building in Northeast Asia was confined into a narrowly defined Northeast Asia that includes the countries and provinces along the Tumen River on the one hand, and the provinces and prefectures around the Sea of Japan. This area includes Northeast provinces of China, Russian Far East, eastern parts of North and South Korea, and the prefectures located along the west coast of Japan.

The ideas of the regional economic cooperation have been mostly explored by the non-governmental and second track processes (backed by the respective national and provincial governments) in the both case of the economic cooperation in the Sea of Japan and the Tumen River. The "bottom-up" approaches were distinct in constructing "supra-institution" building.

Second, the "infra-structural" institution building dealing with specific issues started quite recently, although the multilateral efforts to construct the institutions on the specific issue areas started since the end of the Cold War. There are two distinguished developments in this regard. One is the formal launching the Trilateral Summit among three countries (Japan, China and South Korea), especially in the economic areas (trade, investment and finance). A variety of ministerial and official forums covering a wide range of issues areas have been established under the Trilateral Summit. The external changes such as the global economic crisis played the catalyst role in formally launching

the Trilateral Summit. Although these recent initiatives were based upon the deepening economic interdependence among three countries, the external factors such as the global economic crisis played the catalyst role in facilitating the trilateral cooperation.

The Trilateral Summit and a variety of trilateral cooperation activities under the Trilateral Summit do not categorize themselves as Northeast Asian infra-structural institution building. In this regard, the Trilateral Summit may be called an institution looking for its regional identity and “supra-structural institutions,” given the limited number of the participating countries and the lack of the common identity of their regionaess. The Trilateral Summit may be an infra-structural institution without the supra-structural institutions underlined by a shared idea of Northeast Asia among the three countries.

The future of the Trilateral Summit among Japan, China and South Korea is still uncertain, although their economic and security interconnectedness and common interests to respond to regional and global challenges collectively requires deeper collaboration among them. Probably, for the moment, some sense of crisis will be necessary for three countries to be engaged in deeper cooperation. External factors such as the current economic crisis, not internal factors resulting from internal dynamics of interdependent relations among three countries, could continue to play a more important role in facilitating deeper trilateral cooperation. Put differently, three countries need to develop some “supra-structural” institution on a firm foundation that underlines the trilateral cooperation.

The second one is the security-related “infra-structure institution-building”, especially centered on the Korean Peninsula. The North Korea’s nuclear crisis has paved the way to construct infra-structural institution building targeted at one of the security subregions in Northeast Asia(that is the Korean Peninsula). The Six Party Talks that include North and South Korea, the United States, China, Japan and Russia was established in 2003 to respond to the crisis caused by North Korea’s nuclear development.

The second track processes have been playing the important roles in creating both “supra-structural institutions” and “infra-structural institutions in Northeast Asia. Those processes have been facilitating some sense of regioness through introducing a variety of confidence and trust building measures and providing the venues for the relevant actors to seek commonly-agreed instruments for regional cooperation.

New ideas of cooperation were developed and mutual understanding and confidence building were enhanced at the second track levels, especially in the economic areas.. However, in the area of security cooperation, it has not been easy to have the frank exchanges of views among the relevant parties, although a variety of new joint cooperative exercises were conducted energetically.

Third, following the typology of the tasks of institutions that were briefly introduced in

the part 2 of this paper, regional institutions in Northeast Asia are mostly dealing with the programmatic, procedural and generative tasks. Finding the programs to be addressed jointly by the relevant actors(governments) and implementing them were the major tasks of the regional institutions. Geopolitical tensions and mutual antipathy among the countries in Northeast Asia requires the intensive processes of enhancing confidence-building. Addressing joint program has been expected to contribute to enhancing mutual-confidence among the parties concerned.

The Six Party Talks is the only regional institution that developed more strict rules and norms to be observed by the participants. The major reason is the nature of the issue to be addressed by the Six Party Talks. Nuclear proliferation is one of the most important national security issues for the parties involved in the Six Party Talks. Therefore, they needed to develop strict rules and norms to be observed by especially North Korea, when they dealt with the nuclear challenge. And, even in this case, the basic rules and norms were introduced / borrowed from the global institutions such as the NPT/IAEA.

The Six Party Talks are now facing serious difficulties. However, the institutional structure of the SPT well fit with the political, security and economic reality of Northeast Asia. Therefore, the SPT will continue to serve as an important regional institution. And the institutional performance of the SPT will greatly affect the future direction of the regional institution building in Northeast Asia including the Trilateral Summit.

Fourth, because of the tasks assigned to the regional institutions in Northeast Asia, the strict rules and norms regulating regional cooperation were not developed. If necessary, those rules and norms were "borrowed" from the global institutions which provide stronger rules and norms through institutional linkages with those institutions. The Six Party Talks is a good example. The Six Party Talks is a regional infra-structural institution dealing with region-specific nuclear proliferation dynamics. However, the basic norms and rules are borrowed from the global institutions such as NPT/IAEA and UN through its institutional nesting into those global institutions. The currency swap is another example of institutional nesting. The efforts to construct an "Asian version of the Financial Stability Forum(FSF) may take the similar institutional development in the years to come. The rules and principles of the FSF may be introduced into the Asian FSF thorough institutional nesting into the global FSF.

Fifth, no enforcement and sanction mechanisms were developed within the regional institutions. In the case that regional institutions needed the enforcement and sanction mechanisms, those were provided by other (mostly from the global) institutions through establishing institutional linkages with those institutions. The Six Party Talks do not have any sanction and enforcement mechanisms within the institution, but resort to sanction and enforcement through its institutional linkages with the United Nations Security Council.

Sixth, the institutional structures of the regional institutions are "thin," not developing

well-articulated rules and norms regulating interactions among the parties strictly, and enforcement and compliance mechanisms. However, the cases of institution-building in the Korean Peninsula for the last two decades may suggest that by institutionally linking Northeast Asian institutions with other institutions, the institutional performance would be enhanced more, even if the regional institutions continue to be “thin” as a single institution.

The Six Party Talks have already agreed to address such issues as the transformation of the current armistice regime to the permanent peace regime, economic cooperation to revitalize North Korea economy, the diplomatic normalization between Japan and DPRK and the US and DPRK respectively, the enhanced cooperative relations between South and North, the institutionalization of the multilateral security framework among the countries in Northeast Asia. This implies that a variety of (sub) institutions addressing individual issues will be established under the auspice of the Six Party Talks and the institutional coordination among these (sub) institutions is critical for the Six Party Talks to resolve the nuclear issue peacefully. This also implies that the peaceful resolution of the North Korea’s nuclear challenge will dramatically change the security, political and economic landscape of not just of the Korean Peninsula but also in Northeast Asia as a whole, having grave implications for international political economy in Asia as a whole.

Seventh, the role of the United States in both “supra-structural” and “infra-structural” institution building is ambiguous. To constitute a region, it needs to display an intensity of interactions sufficient to mark it out as a distinctive subsystem in some significant way. Barry Buzan describes a regional security complex as a set of states with significant and distinctive networks of security relations that ensure that the members have a high level of interdependence on security: a group of states whose primary security concerns link them together sufficiently closely that their individual national security cannot realistically be considered apart from one another.³¹

If we follow this definition of regions, the geographical scope of “Northeast Asia” may be expanded or narrowed, depending upon the intensity of interactions in a specific issue area. For example, the US is part of East Asian security complex, given its alliance relations with Japan and South Korea and its security commitment to Taiwan. This argument implies that Northeast Asian cooperation and institution-building should not be confined to the geographically defined Northeast Asia. Northeast Asian cooperation and institution-building should be extended to include “extraregional” actors. The role of the United States is critical in this regard, when we discuss the institution-building in Northeast Asia, in particular in the security and military related areas. Indeed, the recently enhanced bilateral security alliances such as the US-Japan and US-South

³¹ Barry Buzan, *People, States, and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, 2nd ed., Boulder, Lynne Rienner, 1991. See also various articles included in David A. Lake and Patrick Morgan eds., *Regional Orders: Building Security in a New World*, PA, Pennsylvania University Press, 1998.

Korea alliances have facilitating the further engagement of the US to the "infra-structural" security institution building. Indeed, the US engagement and role is distinguished in the security "infra-structural" institution building, as was analyzed in the part of the Six Party Talks. And, the recently established Trilateral Summit between Japan, China and South Korea has not touched upon the security and military related issues among themselves.

On the other hand, however, in the field of economy (trade, investment and finance), the "infra-structural" institution building has been under way, especially among Japan, China and South Korea. Financial and investment cooperation between three countries has been enhanced. The joint study to explore the possibility of the trilateral FTA started recently at the 1.5 track level with the participation of the government officials. As far as regional economic institution building is concerned, it has been talking the different courses.

In the meantime, the "supra-structural" institution building has not well developed in Northeast Asia. Although there have been a variety of "infra-structural" institution building efforts on the specific issue areas, those were not underlined by the "supra-structural" institutions, an idea of "regioness." Probably how two institutions will evolve in the years or decades to come will be crucially important: One is the Trilateral Summit and the other is the Six Party Talks. The former is the institution based upon a geographically defined Northeast Asia. The latter is the institutions based upon a functionally defined Northeast Asia, with the United States as a critical part of the regional institution building. The future developments of these two regional institutions will have a grave impact on not only regional institution building in Northeast Asia but also on institution building in East Asia as a whole.