

POLICY OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY TOWARDS ASIA

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I.

1. Early in November 1983 Chancellor Helmut Kohl visited Japan, Indonesia and India. The Chancellor's visit translated his policy statement of 4 May 1983 into practical politics and constituted a visible manifestation of the Federal Government's interest in the countries of Asia, where one out of every two people on this planet is born. The trip also underscored the high priority which Asia is accorded in German foreign policy and which meets with widespread support among the German public.

The pioneers of German involvement in Asia were not soldiers or politicians, but scholars, missionaries and traders. Primarily in the 18th and 19th centuries, they kindled German interest in Asia and, to a certain extent, Asian interest in Germany, too.

On examining German-Asian relations over the past 300 years one encounters in many Asian countries the work of German scholars, who sought the spiritual values of Asia and helped the peoples of that part of the world to develop an appreciation for the treasures of their own civilization.

In Germany, contacts with China in particular reach far back into history. As long ago as the late 17th and early 18th centuries, people started to occupy themselves with China on a remarkable scale. A marked enthusiasm for things Chinese emerged in the 18th century in Germany, as in other European countries. All branches of oriental studies flourished in Germany in the first half of the 19th century. In 1845 the first central body for such studies was set up at Darmstadt, with academic interest focusing on China, India, Indonesia, Japan and Korea.

2. After World War II it was possible for German policy towards Asia to re-establish relations on existing bonds of trust. This holds true not only of Japan, an ally of the German Reich during the war, but also of those countries which did not acquire or regain their independence until after the war: Burma, Pakistan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Korea and Sri Lanka, to name but a few. Relations with China, which declared war on Germany in

1941, were not re-established until 1972 owing to the radical changes in that country.

Leaving aside the Soviet Union, whose territory extends far into Asia, and the Middle East, there are now well over 20 countries in South, South-East and East Asia which German policy must today take account of. The Federal Republic of Germany has not recognized some of those countries (e.g. North Korea and Taiwan), and with others it does not maintain diplomatic relations (e.g. Cambodia). Economic and commercial relations exist with the first two countries, however. In Taiwan there is, in addition, a trade office under the auspices of the Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce as well as a German cultural institute sponsored by the Steyler missionaries. Hong Kong and Macao are two countries of economic importance; economic and cultural relations exist with them, but owing to their special international status no political ties are maintained with them, as is the case with Taiwan.

The Federal Republic of Germany's partners in Asia include not only the highly developed nation of Japan, but also the newly industrializing countries of Korea and Singapore (Hong Kong and Taiwan belong to this category, too) as well as the scarcely developed countries of Bangladesh and Laos, whose national incomes are among the lowest in the world. The partners also include expansive and highly populous countries of the world like China, India and Indonesia as well as thinly populated Outer Mongolia. Then there are the Himalayan kingdoms of Bhutan and Nepal under patriarchal rule bordering on India, the world's largest democracy. One of the latter's neighbours is China, which describes itself as a "socialist State under the democratic dictatorship of the people" (Article 1 of the Chinese Constitution). It is a permanent member of the UN Security Council and the only nuclear-weapons State among the developing nations. Most Asian countries are non-aligned, and the others are allied with the Soviet Union, China or the United States of America.

This list could be continued, but one thing is already clear: in view of the multitude of political, economic and cultural structures, there can be no uniform German policy towards Asia, but only a German policy in Asia directed towards one or (as in the case of the ASEAN nations and the South-Asian Regional Association "SARC") several states.

This policy is founded on the principles of German foreign policy as applied to Asia. They include:

- the safeguarding of peace through co-operation in a spirit of partnership, free self-determination of nations and non-intervention
- the strengthening of the independence and non-alignment of countries to ward off all hegemonic aspirations
- support for regional associations
- the peaceful reconciliation of antagonisms and the prevention of the East-West conflict being transferred to the Third World
- the economic and social development of the poor countries of the continent, including efforts to combat famine and want
- the granting of humanitarian aid.

3. It was no coincidence that the Chancellor visited all parts of Asia: the East, South-East and South. All of the countries visited by the Chancellor play - alongside China, the other ASEAN nations and Pakistan - an eminent political role. They are all marked by large territories, high population figures and great cultural appeal. It therefore goes without saying that German policy should focus on them in particular.

The friendship between the Federal Republic of Germany and Japan rests on shared values, interest and responsibilities. Emerging from the disaster of World War II, both countries have performed outstanding feats. They are both in a similar geopolitical situation and exposed to like threats. To safeguard peace is their greatest task and duty. Their political co-operation is now unprecedentedly close, as illustrated by the consultations and visits at all levels.

The deployment of Soviet intermediate-range missiles in Europe and Asia strongly aided this process of convergence. The process acquired a new dimension when the Prime Minister of Japan signed on 29 May 1983 the declaration of the Williamsburg summit, which states that the security of the seven summit countries is indivisible. This signature marked Japan's entry into the great community of solidarity made up by industrial democracies and the consolidation of the triangle in world affairs formed by Western Europe, Japan and the United States. This triangle was strengthened on the European side by making political consultations between the foreign ministers of the European Community and Japan a permanent institution. The Federal Republic of Germany strongly urged this institutionalization, and it was accom-

plished in 1983 under the German Presidency of the European Community.

In his speech to the Japanese Parliament, Chancellor Kohl noted with particular gratification that Japan is in agreement with the basic elements of German and European security policy; on that occasion, he spelled out the common goal of the policy: to secure equilibrium at the lowest possible level of armaments and to stabilize it with the aid of confidence-building measures. In the Tokyo Declaration, the two countries expressed their resolve to continue their efforts - on the basis of solidarity and unity of the free world, including Western Europe, Japan and the United States - to work together with other countries to preserve freedom, peace and stability, to secure a thriving world economy and to promote the development of the Third World. The attainment of these goals will also be one of the decisive tasks of German foreign policy in the years ahead.

Japan and Germany are not only close political friends and allies of the United States, but also major trading partners and competitors. Germany is Japan's largest customer in Europe. In 1982, the volume of trade amounted to DM 17.8 billion. As is known, this trade involves some problems. Japan's surplus in trade with Germany totalled DM 7.4 billion in 1982. The Federal Government considers it its task to support the Commission of the European Community in seeking to reduce this imbalance. It trusts that the Japanese Government will, in the interest of exercising joint political responsibility, show consideration for Europe's structural problems.

Japan is aware of the responsibility it shares for maintaining a freely functioning world economy. It appreciates that it is unsatisfactory in the long run if Japan exports almost three times as many goods to the European Community as it imports and that it is called upon to do the utmost to preserve free international trade and eliminate protectionism. It has indeed started to open up its markets. Further steps in this direction are needed, considering that Japan's trade surpluses again rose in 1983. The Federal Republic of Germany and Europe must, for their part, step up their exports to Japan in order to redress the trade balance. The German exhibition to be held in Tokyo in late April/early May 1984 serves this purpose.

4. Relations with the Republic of Korea are now again free from problems. The Federal Republic of Germany follows with great interest the efforts undertaken by this dynamic

country for securing a modus vivendi on the Korean peninsula and supports this policy as far as possible.

In the last 30 years, Korea has managed to build its country up again from a state of complete destruction and, together with Hong Kong and Taiwan, become a rival of the highly developed industrial nations. The Federal Republic of Germany takes pride in having contributed and continuing to contribute to this development by providing economic aid. The shared fate of being a divided nation links it to this North-East Asian country of such great strategic importance. The Federal Republic of Germany expects North Korea, in the interest of peace and security in the Far East, to refrain from an attitude of violence and murder towards its southern neighbour. It should instead opt for the path of direct talks on equal terms with the Government in Seoul. As long as the North Korean Government does not embark upon such a course, the Federal Government will not be able to respond to North Korea's wish to establish relations. A modus vivendi between South and North Korea enabling these two States to join the United Nations would help to relax the tensions in that region.

5. Of great importance for such a development would be the position taken by the People's Republic of China, which, like the Soviet Union, is an ally of North Korea. The Federal Republic of Germany maintains close relations with this great power in the Far East. It has always welcomed China's adoption of an outward-looking stance and its assumption of international responsibility commensurate with its populations and size. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1972, the German and Chinese Governments have engaged in a continual and intensive exchange of views on all questions of relevance to world affairs. The climax of Sino-German relations thus far was the Federal President's visit in October 1982; another highlight will be Chancellor Kohl's visit to China this year.

The reasons for such close and friendly ties are self-evident. China plays an important part in international affairs. Its policies have a decisive influence on stability in the Far East. Particularly at a time of heightened international tension, the Federal Republic of Germany has a vital interest in presenting its views on international matters to this permanent member of the Security Council and nuclear-weapon State, and at the time to hear China's views. The different social systems of the two countries do not preclude such an exchange of views.

On establishing diplomatic relations, the Federal Republic of Germany recognized the People's Republic of China as the only Chinese State. It appreciates Peking's policy of reunification. Official relations have never existed with Taiwan. This has not materially affected private trade and contacts between the Federal Republic of Germany and Taiwan.

The People's Republic of China is determined to become a modern industrial nation. In view of the way in which other Far Eastern countries have developed, there can hardly be any doubt that this goal will be attained in the foreseeable future. However, its attainment requires support by industrial nations. The Federal Government is prepared to contribute as far as possible. Excluding Hong Kong, the Federal Republic of Germany is today China's third largest trading partner after Japan and the United States. (Trade amounted to approximately DM 4.7 billion in 1983).

A stable, outward-looking and independent China can render a lasting contribution to world peace and in this way do justice to German and European interests as well. The Federal Government welcomes the fact that the United States has stated its readiness to supply the People's Republic of China in future with the modern technologies so urgently needed for the modernization of that country.

This decision by the United States greatly reduces the irritations between the two countries. This is also of great importance for German and European interests. For us and Europe it cannot be immaterial whether, in the political triangle of Washington-Moscow-Peking, the distance between Washington and Moscow grows shorter or longer. While China and the West have no shared strategic interests, one must nonetheless not overlook their parallel interests in world affairs. This is all the more true since the deployment of Soviet intermediate-range missiles in the Far Eastern parts of the USSR, as a result of which Japan and China feel exposed to a greater threat.

II

1. Chancellor Kohl's trip also took him to South-East Asia. There he visited Indonesia, which will shortly receive President Carstens for a State visit. Indonesia was the second stop on the Chancellor's journey. It is an important member of ASEAN, alongside Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines and Brunei.

The members of ASEAN have impressively demonstrated the efficiency of market economies. Favoured by their wealth of raw materials and energy as well as their potential of skilled labour and qualified leaders, they achieved high growth rates even during the past worldwide recession. Their growing prosperity is a spur to and model for other developing countries far beyond their region. They have developed into important trading partners for Germany and Europe and are regarded as the growth markets of the decades ahead in the Pacific region, which is acquiring increasing importance. It is in our own interest to interlink the European market even more closely with the market of South-East Asia, where 290 million people live, which is as many as in the countries of the European Community.

In political terms, too, the nations of ASEAN are gaining ever greater importance. They constitute an effective, stable counterbalance to the expansionist aspirations of the Soviet Union and Viet Nam in the region. Furthermore, the members of ASEAN have started to play a decisive and moderating role in international organizations. This holds equally true of the North-South dialogue and of other economic and political issues of our time. In some cases, they act as spokesmen for moderate developing countries. Through their membership of the non-aligned movement, the organization of Islamic States, the Group of 77, the Commonwealth and other associations, they exercise influence in bodies that are inaccessible to us.

The countries of ASEAN are located in a zone of great geostrategic significance. The waterways and straits between the Indian and Pacific Oceans lie in their military and political sphere of influence. This applies particularly to Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia. In this context, one must not overlook the increased Soviet naval presence in the South China Sea as a result of the Soviet Union being granted the right to use the ports of Danang and Cam Ranh. Japan's energy supplies and a large portion of overseas trade in the East-West directions pass through the straits in that region.

It is therefore obvious that we cannot be indifferent to the fate of this region as our trading partner and an interlocutor in a political dialogue. The Federal Republic of Germany and the ten members of the European Community have attained a sizeable political and economic stature in South-East Asia. We want to preserve and expand this position, which stems from historical factors and is founded on manifold ties. This was one of the purposes of Chancellor Kohl's

visit. We realize that this purpose is best served by a policy which convincingly contributes towards strengthening the independence, stability, security and economic advancement of the region. In its clear commitment to these goals, the Federal Government worked for close ties between Europe and ASEAN. The co-operation agreement and the network of consulations between the European Community and ASEAN are largely the product of German initiatives.

2. Contrasting with the prosperity and stability of the ASEAN nations are the communist countries of Indochina, which have not yet been able to effect a transition to peaceful conditions. Indochina is still the scene of a regional conflict revolving around Cambodia. The long-standing Vietnamese quest for hegemony in the region has resulted in Viet Nam militarily occupying Cambodia and developing a position of dominance in Laos. The conflict in Indochina is exacerbated by the competing interests of Moscow and Peking. In Viet Nam, the Soviet Union has been able to gain a lasting foothold.

We support ASEAN's position that the independence of Cambodia should be restored and the free exercise of the right to self-determination should be made possible in the shape of internationally supervised elections. ASEAN's approach towards bringing about a political solution that does justice to Viet Nam's legitimate security interest is flexible, yet rooted in firm basic principles, thus making it easier for us to lend support to it. The Chancellor's visit was seen in this light, too.

The close-knit bilateral relations with Indonesia also played a part in his visit. These relations have attained a great intensity above all in the fields of economic co-operation, cultural exchange, as well as scientific and technological ties.

III

1. Of the countries of South Asia, India stands out not only on account of her population and size. Her democratic form of government has also brought her particularly close to us. As a result of long-standing and extensive co-operation, a relationship marked by friendship and partnership has evolved in the economic and political spheres. India has become the focal point of not only development co-operation, but also - to an increasing extend - economic, scientific

and technological co-operation in Asia. This populous country affords a major market for our exporters. In a spirit of partnership and with regard for considerations of foreign trade, the Federal Government is doing its utmost to assist India's economic development. The steel works at Rourkela, whose 25th anniversary was celebrated on 3 February 1984, has become a symbol of the co-operation offered throughout Asia by the Federal Republic of Germany. Co-operation with India is but an example of the collaboration with other populous countries in the region, for example Pakistan and Bangladesh. Co-operation with these countries, founded on equal rights and preservation of one's independence, autonomy and national, cultural and religious identity, has borne fruits. They know that we do not wish to export our political or social system, to establish spheres of influence, or pursue power-political objectives.

In the efforts to preserve peace, particular importance attaches to India in its capacity as one of the founders of the non-aligned movement, of which it is currently holding the office of President. Our policy towards India and the other countries of the region, almost all of whom play an active part in the non-aligned movement, is designed to assist them in their endeavours to secure increased co-operation with a view to attaining greater stability and reducing the danger of crises in the Third World. By establishing the institution of South-Asian Regional Co-operation (SARC), the nations of South Asia have taken a major step towards lowering tensions in the region. India and Pakistan, whose mutual relationship is marred by three wars, thus become partners in an albeit limited form of economic co-operation. SARC marks a start, which the Federal Republic of Germany can fully support. Promoting this kind of co-operation is synonymous with contributing towards reducing the manifold tensions existing between States in the South Asian region.

2. The situation in South Asia is overshadowed by the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. With varying intensity and by different means, all countries in the region are working for a political settlement that restores Afghanistan's independence and non-aligned status. The Federal Government backs the efforts, especially those of the Islamic countries led by Pakistan, for a solution to the Afghanistan problem.

In individual countries of the region, considerable frictions exist between the various sections of the population.

One of the causes of such tension is the way in which limited resources are distributed. It remains the duty of the Federal Republic of Germany, like other industrial nations, to engage in intensive development co-operation and thus contribute towards economic development and the elimination of domestic tensions. Considering the magnitude of this task in populous countries with a high birthrate and a large percentage of people below the poverty line, we cannot content ourselves with referring to what has been achieved thus far.

IV

Germany's and Europe's future hinges on developments in Asia, too. In the struggle being waged both openly and covertly in Asia for the future structures of society there, they are therefore both called upon to support those forces who espouse the principles to which they themselves are committed. The Federal Republic of Germany and Western Europe cannot achieve a great deal on their own. Instead, they need the support of Japan and the countries of North America and the South Pacific, indeed of all nations that regard self-determination, independence and freedom from external intervention as the highest assets. Only in unison will they succeed in putting a check on hegemonic aspirations.

The Federal Republic of Germany has contributed to this task in the past. It remains determined to do so in the future, too.