

## Nuclear security governance in the Indo/Asia-Pacific: Building out from Southeast Asia?

This paper explores pathways toward building a robust framework for nuclear security governance in the Asia-Pacific, building out from the nuclear security cooperation framework and progress in Southeast Asia. It argues that the progress made in Southeast Asia on building nuclear security cooperation can be expanded to the broader Asia-Pacific region. It explores potential policy pathways and practical collaborative mechanisms to export ASEAN norms and frameworks on transboundary issues (e.g., security, environmental issues) to the Asia-Pacific region to advance and improve nuclear security governance. Southeast Asia could be regarded as the test-bed for regional cooperation on nuclear safety and security, with key capacity-building cooperation initiatives from the ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEANTOM) as well as collaboration with other Asia-Pacific states such as Japan, South Korea, and China, among others.

As the driving force for regional interactions, collaboration offers an avenue for regional states to tackle emerging nuclear security threats and challenges to the civilian applications of nuclear technology and peaceful use of nuclear/radioactive materials. The importance of regional cooperation on nuclear safety and security is accentuated in the 2018 EAS Leaders' Statement on the Safe and Secure Use, Storage, and Transport of Nuclear and Other Radioactive Materials. In this regard, the paper offers recommendations as to how regional nuclear security cooperation in ASEAN, primarily facilitated by ASEANTOM, could contribute to norms and frameworks on civilian nuclear governance in the Asia-Pacific. It identifies and argues for the relevance of ASEAN-led mechanisms to deal with nuclear security in Southeast Asia and the broader Asia-Pacific region—starting with the development of nuclear security culture. It analyses prospects for and emerging challenges to enhancing regional nuclear governance, covering three key issues: (1) nuclear security capacity-building; (2) the role of nuclear security centres of excellence and knowledge centres; and (3) nuclear emergency preparedness and response.

The specific objectives of this research are the following:

- i. To identify and examine nuclear governance issues, national approaches, best practices and regional cooperation on civilian nuclear energy and radiological security in the Asia-Pacific;
- ii. To explore and assess how ASEANTOM's nuclear and radiological security capacity-building initiatives can be expanded to the Asia-Pacific;
- iii. To discuss and evaluate the effectiveness of nuclear security border exercises and best practices in Southeast Asia and wider Asia-Pacific region ;
- iv. To explore and study how ASEANTOM's nuclear emergency and preparedness initiatives can be expanded to the Asia-Pacific; and
- v. To provide recommendations on and map out an agenda for a regional collaborative network of nuclear security centres of excellence and knowledge centres in the Asia-Pacific region.

### Gender

Female

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**Track Classification:** CC: Advances in nuclear security research and development; international cooperation on nuclear security research