

CAREC INSTITUTE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

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Session Two

Regional Integration and Macroeconomic Dynamics Beyond
COVID-19 Pandemic

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Discussion of “How Kazakhstan sees opportunities in ASEAN and its member countries in a post-COVID-19 world”

Discussant

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4-5 March 2021

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Motivation

- In order to understand how Central Asia could develop and coalesce as a region in terms of trade, infrastructure, and investment attractor from ASEAN, it is essential to understand how Southeast Asia is perceived locally
- Analysing and understanding Kazakhstan's perception of ASEAN could offer a glimpse of the possible and most efficient cooperation patterns that could be established
- By analysing Kazakhstan's elite and popular perceptions of ASEAN greater understanding and insights can be drawn on how Kazakhstan and ASEAN can develop stronger relations and take advantage of their respective strengths



Key takeaways

- The FTA, signed in May 2015, led to a significant increase in trade between Vietnam and Kazakhstan (food, agricultural products, and metals)
- In October 2019, Singapore followed Vietnam in signing a FTA with the EAEU, the second ASEAN country to do so.
- Possible opportunities for Kazakhstan, as countries might want to diversify food importers which became important during COVID-19 crisis as cross-boarder trade became disrupted

Major comments

- **Literature review:**

- Mainly newspapers and reports are cited; add citations of articles from peer-reviewed journals
- Review literature and methods studying perception on countries. Why such studies are important
- Based on lit.rev. provide contribution of this study

- **Section 2:** when explain trade and investments structure of trade across goods and investments across sectors is important

- **Section 4:** the objective of sec.4 is not clear

- **Conclusions:**

- 'ASEAN is also seen as a potential economic partner for Central Asian countries to diversify their foreign relations with and to lessen their dependence on a particular country, be it China or Russia.' This mainly due to oil/gas exports. How could ASEAN diversify this? ASEAN is energy net exporter.
- Add policy recommendations/implications (as stated in your introduction and conclusions)

- Support your statements using data (tables and figures) showing trends and comparison

- Add tables and figures to make more visual, currently there is none.

- Add contribution to the literature

- Who benefits from this study? ASEAN policy-makers or investors?

Minor comments

- List of referenced should be added at the end instead of footnotes
- You may refer to this paper for comparison of ASEAN with central asia
<https://www.adb.org/publications/toward-energy-security-asean>
- Instead of 'Elite' consider using government or policy-makers etc.
- Instead of 'made investments' use 'invested'