

SOUTHEAST ASIAN POLITICS : MALAYSIA & INDONESIA

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PREFACE

The book traces the origin and evolution of the foreign policies of Malaysia and Indonesia and their mutual relations in the context of international politics in general and Southeast Asian politics in particular. In Southeast Asia the tendency towards regional co-operation was retarded by two factors : cold war and mutual conflict among the Southeast Asian countries themselves. The confrontation between Indonesia and Malaysia was the most serious dispute in the *inter se* diplomacy of Southeast Asia, but it, at the same time, led to an unprecedented growth in the volume of communications exchanged between the countries of this region. The end of the confrontation, therefore, encouraged the forces of regional co-operation which found an institutional shape in the formation of the ASEAN. The virtual termination of the cold war, the rise of USA-USSR detente on the one hand and Peking-Washington rapprochement on the other and the process of American disengagement from Southeast Asia brought new problems to the countries of this region. This changed external environment gave an additional impetus to regional co-operation. Both Indonesia and Malaysia have now taken leadership in promoting co-operation among the countries of the region. What are its prospects? Would it be possible to integrate the communist regimes in the territory of former Indo-China within the frame-work of the existing regional group? The book seeks to explain such aspects of Southeast Asian politics.

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