

“The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) as a conflict management regime”
by Dr Mikio Oishi

Abstract

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) was established in June 2001 by China, Russia and four Central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Although many scholars, especially those from the West, tend to regard this organisation as an anti-Western bloc, it can profitably be investigated as a conflict management mechanism. Its original form, the Shanghai Five was initiated in 1996 to deal with border disputes between Russia and the newly independent Central Asian states on the one hand and China on the other. The peaceful settlement of these disputes has boosted confidence among the member states, laying a foundation for regional cooperation in security issues. Besides fighting against the “Three Evils” of terrorism, separatism and religious extremism as major threats to regional stability, the SCO is currently embarking on managing conflicts in the region and beyond, such as the Afghan conflict, the India-Pakistan rivalry and Iran’s nuclear programme. The seminar will try to identify various functions of conflict management performed by the SCO and consider how they contribute to regional peace and stability.

Profile

Mikio OISHI is Associate Professor of International Relations attached concurrently to the Institute of Asian Studies and the Academy of Brunei Studies, UBD. With BA (Kyoto), MA (Bradford) and PhD (Bradford), Mikio is a specialist on Peace and Conflict Studies and eager to develop an Asian approach to the field. He is currently engaged in several research projects, such as the *Pax Sinica* (Chinese Peace), a new ASEAN Way of conflict management, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) as a conflict management mechanism. Mikio's recent books include *International Conflict in the Asia-Pacific: Patterns, consequences and management* (co-authored with Jacob Bercovitch, Routledge, 2010) and *Managing Conflict in Economic Development: Southeast Asian experiences* (LAP, 2011).