

## Editorial Note for the Special Issue

This special issue celebrates the tenth anniversary of the inauguration of the *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding*. Given this opportunity, the editorial team here at the Seoul National University Institute for Peace and Unification Studies would like to express deep gratitude to all people who were involved in the launching of the journal and its development over the past decade—as an editor, reviewer, copyeditor, advisor, or administrator. The collection of articles in this special issue is the result of a virtual conference on this theme held on July 16, 2022, and the peer review process. It consists of nine articles: one introductory article, seven country cases, and one Southeast Asian case. All articles examine the development and trajectories of peace studies, although in different ways. At the same time, the articles show that both changes in the international environment and democratic transition from authoritarianism have brought about a new momentum of peace studies in the Asian context. Peace studies is not static but is evolving and becoming increasingly complex, while reflecting dynamics of real conditions. One of the objectives of this special issue is to shed light on the nexus between the socio-political changes and the development and trajectories of peace studies in Asia.

On the sideline of the tenth anniversary of the journal, the editorial team would like to point out some tasks that peace studies in Asia must carry out in the coming decade, and that the *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding*, in particular, must also pay attention to. Thanks to the quantitative growth of the research since the early 1990s, several distinctive developments are observed: the importance of national security as a topic of analysis has relatively decreased; development-based human security with special reference to post-conflict societies has become one of the most burgeoning topics in the field; and community identity, as shown in the ASEAN case, remains a vibrant subject of research. Despite such developments, however, there remain challenging tasks. First, stagnated democratic transitions still interfere with both human security and relevant research. Without institutionalized democracy, the value of national security and unity will continue to be prioritized over the value of individual lives. Procedural democracy is not enough, but democratic consolidation is essential to the growth

of human security and peace. Peace studies in Asia should delve into the ways to transition to a democracy that facilitates peace culture, inclusion, and justice, as opposed to discrimination, parochialism, and marginalization. Second, in Asia where sovereignty is considered sacred and power politics prevail, protection-based human security has been left untouched. The principle of noninterference has shielded violent leaders and regimes from public discussions about the responsibility to protect, not to mention its implementation. The current situation of prioritizing sovereignty must become a subject of critical scrutiny among researchers and practitioners. Third, peace studies in Asia should make efforts to combine the specificity and universality of peace. Each conflict or violent event has its own specific causes, and prescriptions for its resolution thus differ case by case. Emphasis on specificity, however, may lead to parochialism and localism. Close connection between local and international scholarship and close interactions among intellectuals with different approaches and perspectives will expand the scope of research and open opportunities for finding appropriate solutions.

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