Successful Security Communities

The thesis of the present volume is that Asian and Pacific regional organizations have turned zones of conflict into arenas of peace. What has been presented thus far has proved that thesis: The Association of South-East Asian Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum have played pivotal and crucial roles in mitigating conflicts and now are embarked on formal conflict resolution.

Why have ASEAN and the Forum succeeded so well and other organizations in the Asian and Pacific have continued without fanfare, failed, or languished? Information presented in the volume above provides a quantitative database for answering that question, so the present chapter undertakes a statistical approach to provide additional insight.

Hitherto most studies on regional cooperation have tended to describe individual organizations or sets of organizations in a particular region of the world without developing a theory of success or failure—or testing a theory comparatively. However, an early attempt to perform such a test was a study by Karl Deutsch and associates, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area* (1957), which compared 12 attempts at political unification, 7 unified states that broke apart, and 14 cases of pluralistic security communities (groups of countries for whom war was unthinkable) within Europe and the North Atlantic.

There have been some dissents from the Deutschian framework. Stanley Hoffmann (1965) argued that the entire idea of preconditions missed the point—that governments in the last analysis agree to form,
expand, contract, and abolish IGOs on the basis of national interest. His theory, now characterized as intergovernmentalism, has been echoed more recently (Moravscik 1991; Garrett and Tsebelis 1996; Tsebelis and Garrett 2001).

In an implied critique, political scientists Ernst Haas and Philippe Schmitter (1964) compared ten economic IGOs in Africa, Europe, and Latin America, advancing the theory of neofunctionalism. Sociologist Amitai Etzioni (1965), explicitly critiquing Deutsch, used organization theory concepts to contrast two cases of successful unification with two unsuccessful attempts. Later, Haas (1975) used a sample of 30 IGOs. Their studies were primarily within Europe.

A decade later, I attempted a comparison between five existing organizations and two defunct cases in Asia and the Pacific to test the theoretical approaches of Deutsch, Etzioni, and Haas with statistical methods (M. Haas 1986). I first made judgments based on my extensive knowledge of the organizations. I then correlated each judgment with a dichotomous measure based on whether the IGO was defunct or still existed, using two versions of Kendall’s tau as the appropriate way to calculate correlations involving dichotomous variables. I then computed measures of statistical significance to contrast stronger from weaker correlations.

Intergovernmentalists might have predicted that I would find either no correlations or spurious correlations, but that was not the case. What I found is that organizations that fail or become defunct have the following major characteristics: (1) lack of mutual compatibility of main values, (2) a quest for only goal harmonization rather than integration, (3) low popularity in the public, (4) loss of members, (5) decreased cooperativeness, (6) decision making not centralized, and (7) failure to enhance prosperity. Organizations that survive have the opposite characteristics.

More recent efforts have attempted to find the keys to the success of regional organizations. One scholar used public opinion data to compare ASEAN, the European Union, and Mercosur but did not find any consistent predictors for organizational success (Tusicinsky 2007). As noted in Chapter 1 above, data assembled by three Korean economists identified cultural factors as preconditions to success in political-security matters within six regions (Kim, Kim, and Park 2011). A third empirical study, involving 25 economically oriented