Conflict in East Asia: Economics to the Rescue?

Political tensions have been rising recently in East Asia, as countries have become preoccupied with grievances over borders, maritime rights, and the region’s colonial and wartime history. The rise of China, the U.S. push for the Trans Pacific Partnership trade agreement, and nationalistic concerns over foreign enterprises have also led to concerns about whether the region’s economies will continue to prosper. Professor Plummer explores how better economic policies and regional economic and political agreements could be the keys to easing regional tensions and reigniting strong Asian and global economic growth.

Michael Plummer received a B.A. in Economics and a B.A. in French from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor in 1980, an M.A. in Economics from Michigan State University in 1984, a postgraduate diploma from SAIS, and a Ph.D. in Economics from Michigan State University in 1988. Professor Plummer was Head of the Development Division at the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) from 2010 to 2012. Prior to joining SAIS, he was research fellow at the East West Center, professor at the International Business School, Brandeis University, and professor at the Research Institute for Economics and Business Administration, Kobe University, Japan. Plummer is currently editor-in-chief of the Journal of Asian Economics, president of the American Committee for Asian Economic Studies and a non-resident senior fellow at the East-West Center.

The Seiji Naya Asia-Pacific Lecture Series was established in honor of Seiji Naya, who is professor emeritus and former chair of the UH-Mānoa Department of Economics. He also served as chief economist of the Asian Development Bank, director of the Resource Systems Institute at the East-West Center, and director of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism for the State of Hawaii. He is widely recognized for his contributions to understanding development issues in Southeast Asia.

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