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The influence of political culture on international organisations: The EU and APT during the Covid-19 crisis

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**The influence of political culture on international
organisations:
The EU and APT during the Covid-19 crisis**

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Introduction

In recent decades, there has been an increase in the amount of regional organisations and the promotion of cooperation between countries (Pempel, 2010, p. 209). The creation of organisations such as the European Union (EU), the African Union and ASEAN are examples of this development. Not every organisation, however, is considered effective. While the EU is seen as a highly developed organisation with cooperative member states, ASEAN is often perceived as the opposite of this (Hurd, 2018). Due to global problems, such as climate change, cooperation between nations becomes more important, and thus the role of international organisations. These cooperations between several actors is called collective action, and the failure of this is called a collective action problem.

A collective action problem is a situation where different actors have to make a decision individually, without knowledge on the choices of the other. The optimal outcome can be achieved when the actors decide to cooperate, but this is often not the case, since actors tend to prioritise their own interest, which leads to a less optimal outcome (Ostrom, 2010, p. 155). Within the collective action problem, there are different types of goods that actors try to get, namely private goods and public goods (Kaul, 2012, p. 730). Public goods are marked as non-excludable, meaning that the effects of attaining a public goods benefits every actor. They are also non-rival, which means that the usage of the good by one actor does not limit the amount available for other actors (McGinnis & Ostrom, 1992). Public goods on a global level are called GPG's, with states as the main actors to attain the good (Kaul, 2012, p. 731). Underprovision of GPGs results in global problems, such as climate change and the spread of diseases. The GPGs that are needed in order to tackle these problems, have to be attained through national-level contributions and political leaders start to realise more and more that GPGs cannot be provided without cooperation between different states (Kaul, 2012, p. 736).

Covid-19 crisis is an example of a collective action problem. The pandemic showed that there is a collective responsibility, where everyone has to participate in fighting against the virus, in order to limit the damage. International organisations reacted differently to this sudden outbreak. While the EU was at first reluctant and slow in their decision-making, this changed to a strong cooperation between the member states (Brooks, De Ruijter & Geer, 2020, p. 33). The role of the EU during the crisis, was to support its member states, to make sure that they

were able to execute the policies against the virus (p. 40). Even though a majority of the decisions on how to solve the problem was made without consent from its member states, the crisis nevertheless was a window of opportunity for the EU. With the successful cooperation, member states might see a value in a stronger EU (Brooks et al., 2020, p. 48). In high contrast to the EU, Asian international organisations, such as the APT, are not highly institutionalised, and are even considered a symbolic organisation, without real capacity (Hurd, 2018). However, in recent years, economic growth in Asia has increased, which makes Asian countries more and more important actors in international politics. They even announced to become a more institutionalized organisation in the future (Qin, 2013). Whether their joined reaction to the Covid-19 crisis was successful compared to the EU, remains unclear.

International organisations only exists because of the commitment of its member states. The pandemic thus not only tested the response of international organisations but also the values of the political leaders, in their own state as well as on how to cooperate with other states. It showed whether political leaders mainly thought about their own country, or that they saw it as a collective responsibility (Comforts et al., 2020). This then depends on the political culture of the member states, and whether they prioritise collectivism or individualist actions. Since the EU and the APT differ in their level of institutionalisation, it is then the question whether its member states differ in their commitment to the organisation as well. The research question of this thesis therefore is:

What is the influence of the political culture of member states on the differences between the EU and the APT in their approach to Covid-19?

Literature Review

The Covid-19 crisis which started around 2019, challenged different nations on how to react to a pandemic. Different authors have written about the Covid-19 crisis being a collective action problem, where countries have to cooperate in order to stop the virus from spreading (Comfort et al., 2020). International organisations became crucial as an instrument to organise countries in order to fight against the virus together. In this literature review, I will first discuss the Covid-19 crisis as a collective action problem and how international institutions play a role within this global problem and its politics. I then go into the differences between

the EU and the APT as international organisations and conclude with an overview on the influence of national and cultural identity on cooperation and effectiveness of organisations.

The Covid-19 crisis

The corona virus that started to spread from December 2019 became a worldwide health problem, something many countries were not prepared for. The awareness of this virus was late, and it resulted in a fast spread that crossed the national borders. It thus became a global crisis (Comfort et al., 2020, p. 616). As mentioned, the Covid-19 crisis is an example of a collective action problem, and since it is a global pandemic, it can be identified as a global public good problem. Brando, Boonen, Cogolati, Hagen, Vanstappen and Wouters (2019) argue that by identifying a situation as a GPG problem, a certain normative assumption is already made (p. 558). Identifying a situation as a GPG problem, it means that it affects countries around the world, and thus that cooperation is necessary in order to solve this. Here international organisations play a role in advancing cooperation. States tend to prioritise their self-interest, which leads to free-riding, and thus an authority, such as an organisation, is needed in order to monitor and sanction them (Kaul, 2012). The case of the EU is an example of this. However, while the EU succeeded in some sense, it is argued, that organising a stable and effective international organisation is not a simple task, and faces many challenges.

Sandler (1998) contradicts this and states that supranational institutions are not the ideal solution for the collective action problems, and instead individual states have an important role in solving these problems. A highly structured institution eventually costs time and money with the result that cooperation is not seen as the dominant strategy (p. 245).

So while some scholars have argued that supranational international organisations are needed to overcome a collective action problem, such as a pandemic, others disagree and argue that setting up organisations costs too much money and time that could have been used for other purposes. While Brook et al. (2020) concluded that the EU, which is a supranational organisation, had a successful development throughout the crisis, it is still unknown how the members of the APT, which is an intergovernmental organisation, came out of it.

Institutions

International institutions are created in order to facilitate cooperation between nation states and to bind them to their promises. Global problems, such as climate change, often need international cooperation, which is managed through organisations (Hurd, 2018, p. 1). Kaul

(2012) thus argue that international institutions are a necessity in world politics to overcome global problems. How these organisations are constructed, why they were made in the first place, differs, and some are seen as more institutionalised and effective than others. Abbot and Snidel (1998) argue that an international organisation is a way for states to achieve collective activities and develop common norms that define the member states (p. 29). While they do not go into further detail about these collective activities that states try to achieve, others do. According to Adams and McCormick (1987), depending on the type of good nations are trying to obtain, private or public, the importance of institutions varies. It is argued that for attaining global public goods, and where collective action is needed in order to obtain it, institutions are crucial for states to commit to these actions (Kaul, 2012). Institutions are a way to monitor and sanction the member states and whether they properly contribute or not. It thus solves the free riding problem and facilitates collective action.

Differences between the EU and APT

As mentioned, there are differences within international institutions; how binding they are, the key goals and ideas and how they operate. The construction of the EU and the APT as an organisation are significantly different, where the EU is argued to be a more functional and formal organisation, and ASEAN, who is part of the APT, mainly symbolic, without concrete policies (Hurd, 2018, p. 275). Studies have pointed out several significant differences between the two organisations. First, the EU is a supranational organisation, meaning that the institutions within the EU have powers that go beyond the national boundaries. Both the European Commission and European Parliament can make independent decisions on legislations within the EU, and are not fully dependent on the member states. Political leaders of the member states are still able to have influence, since together they form the European Council, which sets guidelines for legislative and executive actions. The highly institutionalised EU has a wide range of different policy areas, such as agriculture, environment and fundamental rights (Brunet-Jailly, Hurrelmann & Verdun, 2018, p. 41). The APT, on the other hand, is an intergovernmental organisation, where the level of decision-making is only between the national governments of the member states. Independent institutions as strong as those of the EU do not exist, and there are no binding obligations for the member states. (Hurd, 2018, p. 275). In fact, member states try to interfere as less as possible with problems of other nations, and their decision-making is by consensus. The agenda of the ministerial meetings is provided by the sectoral bodies (p. 277). Economic relations and cooperation within Asia are the main concerns, and other issues such as security

or human rights are not of their interest. East Asia therefore is one of the most economically dynamic region, with a high percentage of intra-regional trade (Qin, 2013, p. 11). Compared to the EU, however, that has free trade among its member states and a shared valuta, this seems undistinguished. Second, the circumstances wherein both organisations are created differ. The EU was created after the Second World War, with the idea that such a war must never happen again, and is preventable by close cooperation and dependence between the nations. Their key policies even now are justice, freedom and security (Brunet-Jailly et al., 2018, p. 156). The APT, however, did not start within these circumstances and while they state that an Asian community is their primary goal, this is mainly for economic reasons, instead of justice, freedom or security. Wong (2012) argues that the difference in motive is one of the reasons the APT is not able to adopt the formal structure of the EU (p. 671). While ASEAN is said to be mainly symbolic, recently it has increased the level of centralization and institutionalisation of their norms and values, because they were inspired by the EU (p. 672).

National identity and politics

International organisations are the key in solving GPG problems and specifically the chances of free riding by member states. These institutions consist of states, and thus become the main actors within this dilemma (Kaul, 2012, p. 730). It is, however, the question whether different states are always able to work together towards a certain goal. Mansbach and Rhodes (2007) argue that national identity plays an important role within politics, and this has often led to conflicts between states. The sense of belonging to the nation, and to perceive those that are not part of the nation as ‘other’, makes threats to the state feel more dangerous. It is the source of tensions between different nations. This is especially the case for autocratic states, in contrast to democratic countries that are able to control this better. The disadvantage of political institutions is often that they undermine the authority of states, and thus their national identity (p. 428). Hurrell (1995) is less pessimistic about political institutions but does argue that identity is an important factor for a functional organisation. Cooperation within a certain region is possible, as long as the member states feel connected with each other and have a sense of a shared identity, be it through religion, language or history (p. 333).

Apart from this general debate on the influence of national identity on politics, many scholars have focussed on the role of national identity in specific regions, Asia and Europe being part of it. Acharya (1997) discusses identity within Asia and argues that in general, Asian countries prefer weak organisational structures because of the differences in national identity

between countries, that do not work well together. Forcing different Asian countries to tightly work together, thus, is unwanted and cooperation between the countries in a soft way is more preferable. Pushing for a highly institutionalised organisation is more likely to cause conflicts, which has often occurred within the region. This does not necessarily mean that there has not been an effort within Asia to build a community. With the creation of the APT, which is a partnership between the ASEAN member states and South Korea, China and Japan, a serious effort to strengthen their ties has been made. However, even the APT has its limits and is not as institutionalised as the EU, and it is argued that it is very unlikely for that to happen in Asia (Qin, 2013). Laffan (1996) points out that even the EU, which is considered a thick institution, faces challenges. He argues that the member states vary in their national identities, and that this sense of nationalism has been rising, and the sense of Europe as a community has decreased. In order to keep the EU together, however, this sense of a community is crucial, which is apparent in the way Asian countries continue to struggle to cooperate. Both in Europe and in Asia, national identity remains a struggle for the effectiveness of political institutions. The sense of being part of a community, which, as mentioned, is decreasing in Europe, is part of a political culture. Political cultures are broadly divided into individualism and collectivism (Swedlew, 2011). Collectivists tend to make decisions, not only for their own interest, but the community as a whole, while individualists tend to do the opposite. The limited partnership and their preference for thin institutions, indicate that Asian countries have a more individualist political culture, whereas the European countries, with their strong institution, have a more collectivist political culture. Whether one country fits with a certain international organisation then becomes an important factor for successful cooperation.

While scholars have focused on the differences in historical circumstances and national identity as a factor that shaped the institutions, they have not directly linked this to the resulting political culture of the member states. According to some scholars, the historical background influences ideas, norms and values of an actor (Lowndes, Marsh & Stoker, 2018, p. 210). In this case, it can be argued that the differences in historical circumstances during the creation of the EU and the APT have resulted in differences of political culture of the member states as well. Rather than a change in what happened in the past, which is not possible, a change in political culture is more likely to develop international organisations.

Abbot and Snidel (1998) conclude that organisations contribute to the creation of common norms and achieving collective action, but they do not go into detail how differences in norms

or ideas impact cooperation. Since there exist many different organisations and institutions, their achievements and level of cooperation differ as well. Pempel (2010) argues that a varying degree in cooperation is a result of varying perceptions of the member states on how to solve a certain problem (p. 231). If they are not willing to commit to their organisation because of conflicting ideas, the effectiveness decreases. The study lacks, however, an explanation of differences in norms; whether certain norms fit with certain countries but not with others and if there is a certain norm that works best in certain situations. Specifically whether different political culture of member states fit certain international organisations.

Theoretical Framework

Cultural theory and international institutions

According to cultural theory, political culture helps understand why certain actors take certain actions. It therefore criticises rational choice theory, since they focus only on individuals and their self-interest, which does not work in every case, since collectivist cultures do exist (Swedlow, 2011). Individualistic behaviour and the idea that everyone maximises their self-interest thus only works in a state with individualism as its political culture, but not every state has the same political culture. Furthermore, political cultures are fluid, and thus do not stay the same. It changes, depending on situations both internally and externally. Hence, cultural theory is able to explain political developments (p. 703).

Since this thesis focuses on international organisation, it is important to note that, according to cultural theory, institutions and political culture are indistinguishable, since values and beliefs influence the actions of an actor, and thus whether and how they cooperate with other states (Swedlow, 2011, p. 703). Cultural theory thus looks beyond history and helps explain the (un)willingness of certain states to commit to international institutions and the way they cooperate. In order to understand whether member states are committed to their organisation, the policies of the organisation need to be known. Just like their member states, differences in the norms and values of organisations explain their policies and actions. Therefore the first hypothesis is as follows:

H1: The differences in norms and values between the EU and APT are apparent in their Covid-19 approach.

Conceptualising individualism and collectivism

Cultural theory thus highlights political culture and its effects. It claims that cultural beliefs and values of an individual influences their political preferences (Song, Silva & Jenkins-Smith, 2014, p. 530). This theory specifically distinguishes these political preferences into two dimensions, namely groups and grids. Groups is about the degree of the collective bond one has with each other, while grids refer to orders that are laid upon one externally, such as social norms and rules (p. 531). Based on the degree of groups and grids, there are different cultural orientations, which are hierarchism, egalitarianism, individualism and fatalism (p. 531). Hierarchs and egalitarians both have a high degree of groups, thus a high desirability of social relationships, while fatalists do not. Individualists have a low degree of both group and grid (p. 531).

The individualism and collectivism mentioned by Song, Silva and Jenkins-Smith (2014) look at individuals and the state, where citizens who maximise their self-interest are individualists, while those who value social relationships are collectivists. In this thesis, however, the dimensions will be different, and something that is not yet mentioned in previous studies. I will argue that collectivist states have different motivations to join an international organisation than individualist states.

Conceptualising Covid-19 measures

With Covid-19 as a global problem, national governments needed to take actions to fight the disease. Policies such as vaccination campaigns and social distancing were implemented in a majority of countries. These policies can be analysed by cultural theory on individualism and collectivism, and whether actors are willing to commit to it. Song, Silva and Jenkins-Smith (2014) conducted research in the US on their childhood vaccination policy. They conclude that individualists, because of their unwillingness to commit to social relationships, are less likely to vaccinate. Furthermore, they tend to dislike authority and rules which are initiated from external powers (p. 532). This, then, would also be the case for individualistic member states. Supporting the Covid-19 policies and implementing them into their own national policies, can be seen as a form of collectivism. The APT, however, is generally less strict with policy commitment and thus more considered to have individualist member states, which than leads to the differences in levels of institutionalisation between the EU and the APT. To what extent member states of the EU and the APT were committed to the general Covid-19 policies of their

organisation, thus reflects their general attitude towards the organisation. The second hypothesis therefore is:

H2: An individualistic political culture of a member state has a negative influence on the effectiveness of the Covid-19 crisis policies set up by their international organisations.

Methodology

In this thesis I will focus on the role of individual member states and how they approached the Covid-19 crisis while being a part of an international organisation. I will do this with a comparative qualitative research method to test whether member states follow the norms and values of their organisation in order to enhance the sense of a regional community, or whether they prioritise their own national interest. Since discourse analysis is often used to analyse norms and values, I choose this method to at first gain knowledge on what the norms of the EU and APT as an organisation are regarding the Covid-19 crisis, and whether and how the member states use this in their own national decision-making.

Discourse analysis

Within the constructivist theory it is argued that ideas are socially constructed. How one sees the world is influenced by their historical memory and this has an influence on their norms, values, ideas and beliefs (Larsen, 2004, p. 62). Instead of trying to understand the reality, it focuses on the 'social reality of actors' (Braumoeller & Herrera, 2004, p. 19), which is reflected in the use of language. Discourse is thus a useful tool to analyse these norms and perceptions of the world and explains why certain actors take certain actions. Discourse analysis, thus, tries to understand the reality that is made by people (p. 20). It is important to note, however, that discourse cannot be fully understood without (historical) context and depending on the context, the meaning of discourse can change.

In my research, I will first analyse the discourse of the EU and the APT on the Covid-19 crisis and the policies they promoted to overcome the pandemic. With this, I expect a better understanding of the norms and values of the organisation, how each organisation perceives the virus, and how this connects to the actions the member states have to take in order to fight against it. As mentioned before, discourse does not stand alone, and it is thus crucial to keep the historical context, and why the organisations were created in the first place, in mind.

Especially for the APT, which in recent years claims that it became more institutionalised, it is important whether this is reflected in their Covid-19 crisis policies.

Organisations, however, lose their meaning without its member states. Whether the member states are committed to their organisation and share the same norms and values, then also becomes apparent in their use of language. In other words, it shows their collectivist or individualist attitude towards the Covid-19 crisis through their level of commitment to their organisation, and thus whether they prioritise international cooperation.

Case selection

International organisations

Both from the EU and APT, I will select one member state and focus on their decision-making during the Covid-19 crisis. The APT contains all the member states of ASEAN plus South Korea, China and Japan. Since the APT is further developed than ASEAN, I will specifically focus on their policies. The norms from ASEAN, such as ‘the ASEAN Way’, is still prominent in the APT and thus still usable for this research. For the selection of the member state, I will use a Most Similar System Design, meaning that the cases have similar variables, except for one. I select France as the member state of the EU and Japan as the member state of the APT to compare. In this case, the variable that differs is the organisation they are a part of, which for France is the EU and Japan the APT. The similar variables are their Democracy Index, GDP per capita and the role within their organisation.

Member states within the EU and the APT

Both Japan and France have a full democracy according to the Democracy Index. Since authoritarian or non-democratic states tend to be less committed towards international organisations (Mansbach & Rhodes, 2007), it is important that this variable is similar between the cases. The GDP per capita indicates whether states can ensure basic fundamental needs for their citizens and are able to implement certain policies related to the covid-19 crisis, since policies such as vaccination campaigns have high costs. The GDP per capita in 2020 was \$39,055 for France and \$39,987 for Japan, and thus very similar to each other. The role of the two countries within their respective organisation is also similar, in the sense that they both have a leading role. A member state that prioritises the role of the organisation is more likely to think of the Covid-19 crisis as a collective problem, instead of a mere individual problem. It is expected of those member states to incorporate this belief in their policies. From the

APT, it is argued that both Japan and China are the big economies within the region, and that their role within APT is crucial for enhancing the Asian community (Qin, 2013, p. 15). Since reliable data from China is difficult to obtain, I focus on Japan and how they handled the crisis. Furthermore, in the past, Japan has made several attempts within Asia to increase cooperation, and thus they, compared to other member states, prioritise a strong Asian partnership (p. 10). Similar to the relation between China and Japan within the APT, the relationship between Germany and France is crucial for the development of the EU. While they both have different views on how they want the EU to develop, it is clear that France prioritises the EU, and wants it to become a strong and influential organisation. Especially with Emmanuel Macron and its pro-EU campaign, it is apparent that they value the EU and its policies (Giurlando, 2021, p. 58).

Operationalization of discourse analysis

Operationalization of the EU and the APT

In order to get a sense of how the international organisations (the EU and APT) approached the Covid-19 crisis, an analysis of their joint statement reports of 2020 will be made. Since this report was published right after the Covid-19 situation was officially considered a pandemic, it shows their response to a crisis that is not well known yet. The differences in policies on how to fight the virus and their use of language indicates the differences between the organisation and how they operate. It is expected that it shows whether they perceive the pandemic as a global problem that needs collective action, and what kind of role the organisation has within this crisis.

The discourse analysis of these joint statements are based on three categories. The first category is whether the organisations use terms that indicate the sense that member states are a part of the group and have a collective responsibility to solve the crisis. This indicates the values of the organisation and whether they try, and if so to what extent, to enhance collectivism. Second, I will look at the concrete policies the organisation plans to implement, since this will indicate to what extent organisations plan to solve the crisis through collective action, and is also useful to measure to what extent member states commit to these policies. The final theme is how the organisations portray themselves and what they see as their role within the crisis.

Operationalisation of the political culture of the member states

As mentioned earlier, the political culture of the member states plays a role in their commitment for their organisation. To test whether member states have a more individualistic or collectivist approach to their organisation, I will look at the speeches of France and Japan of their political leaders during the Covid-19 crisis. To fit the timeframe of the joint statements of the EU and the APT, these speeches are also from 2020, right after Covid-19 officially became a pandemic. In the case of France this speech will be from president Emmanuel Macron, and in the case of Japan it is minister president Abe Shinzo.

Methods of data analysis

Organisational norms and values

In his research, Yukawa (2018) used the term the ‘ASEAN way’ as the main concept in his discourse analysis. The ASEAN way is a term used within the organisation and by other scholars, and refers to the norms and values of ASEAN. The rules within ASEAN are based on these norms. When making a code system, there is a need for key themes that fit within the norms of the ASEAN Way, and whether minister president Abe Shinzo uses words or sentences that fit within these themes. A few examples of these themes are, ‘ASEAN spirit’, ‘ASEAN community’ and ‘cooperation’. This process is the same for the EU. A code system with certain norms and values of the EU during Covid-19 is needed. Since the EU does not have such a clear term such as the ASEAN Way, analysing only its reports does not provide much information. Instead, speeches from Ursula von der Leyen are more useful. The terms she used during the Covid-19 are then compared with the discourse of the French president Emmanuel Macron.

Discourse analysis results

The first part of this section will analyse how the EU and the APT first reacted to the Covid-19 crisis, and how they perceived their role within it. It focuses on whether the organisations emphasise the importance of collective action, and what kind of policies they plan to implement during the crisis.

In the second part I will look at the discourse of the member states and whether they apply the same policies as mentioned by their organisation and whether they perceive it as a problem that needs to be solved within the region, or as an individual problem. The paragraphs are

divided according to the coding themes of the discourse analysis. Due to the space limit, the analysis of the joint statements and the speeches can be found in appendix A.

EU and APT joint statements on Covid-19

Emphasis on collectivism

With the first theme, namely whether the organisations perceived the pandemic as a global problem that needs collective action, it became clear that the APT used stronger words to emphasise their collective duty compared to the EU. Discourses such as ‘stay united’, ‘solidarity’ and ‘collective response’, were often used to remind the member states that they are part of the Asian region. Furthermore, they use discourse to indicate the success of Asia by mentioning the SARS crisis of 2003 and ‘ASEAN’s highest level commitment on collective response’. It is, however, unclear who the subjects are and whether the governments of the member states should stay united or its citizens.

While the EU does indicate the sense of collectivism in the joint statements, it is more subtle and only briefly compared to the APT. It instead prioritises a detailed plan on how to limit the spread of the disease, and how each institution within the EU can help and the role within the crisis. On top of that, their words that indicate this have a broader context, allowing the reader to understand that the European governments and EU institutions should work together in order to protect the citizens and prevent an economic crisis.

Covid-19 policies

For the second theme, which is the concrete policies they plan to implement, the EU already has more detailed policies, while those of the APT remain vague. The EU has detailed plans on the actions they want to take, and on how to take them in order to fight Covid-19. Concrete plans on which institutions they want to use and budget are already mentioned at an early stage. They have clear goals, such as a budget of 140 million euros for different projects, one of which is the making of a vaccine.

The APT, on the other hand, has less detailed plans and uses ambiguous words to describe their plans, such as ‘recognizing the decisions’ and ‘consider setting up (...)’. It thus becomes clear that the APT tries to deceive the fact that they do not have concrete policies, by focusing on the importance of collectivism. This also becomes apparent by the way the APT uses the statements of other organisations such as the United Nations (UN) and the World Health

Organisation (WHO), and claiming that they ‘support’ these statements. Other institutions that are part of the APT, such as the ASEAN Plus Three Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) also came up, but what their exact role is, remains unclear. It is only stated that they monitor the economic and financial development in the region. What this means is not further explained. On top of that, while the APT states that they support research for a vaccine and other medical tools, they have not mentioned financial support or a budget, contradictory to the EU. Without a budget, however, policies are not able to be executed, which, again, indicates a lack of a plan.

The rule of the APT and their ‘Asian Way’ becomes clear in these joint statements, since the lack of concrete policies indicates that they do not have the intention to interfere with domestic policies of the member states.

Speeches of political leaders of member states

The main themes within this analysis were whether the political leaders of France and Japan had a more collectivist approach towards the Covid-19 crisis, or an individualistic one. This was tested by analysing whether they mention their international organisation or region within their speech to emphasise that the pandemic is a collective action problem that needs international cooperation. Furthermore, it is tested whether they comply with the policies and rules set by the organisation in their joint statement. The results of the discourse analysis of the speeches can be found in appendix B.

A collectivist and individualist approach

One major difference between the speeches of president Macron and president Abe, is that the French president mentions the EU and Europe several times within his speech, so as to remind the French population that they are a part of Europe, while president Abe has not mentioned the APT or Asia once in his speech. It is noticeable that president Macron especially mentions the EU for economic and financial related problems, and how they will help to overcome this. He nevertheless emphasises the need for a united France and Europe in general. Furthermore, president Macron warns the French population about individualistic actions and how that could worsen the crisis. He specifically asks them to keep in mind that they have to act according to the policies, because France is a part of Europe. He, thus, actively acts against individualistic tendencies, with the knowledge that the French population tends to do so, and puts a high priority on collectivism.

As mentioned, the APT, more than the EU, has claimed that an united Asia is important. They try to prove this by giving the SARS crisis of 2003 as an example of the strength of Asia and its power to overcome such a crisis. President Abe, however, does not mention SARS or earlier successes within Asia, and instead focuses on the Japanese earthquake of 2011. He does this to unite the Japanese people and remind them that they have proven in the past that they can overcome a crisis with each other. It thus merely focuses on national events and collectivism within the nation instead of internationally. The Japanese president has not mentioned international cooperation or solidarity once, let alone the earlier successes of Asia that were mentioned by the APT. He does state that the different policies and rules are for the safety of others, and oneself, but does not put an emphasis on either. The safety of oneself and the community are thus considered equally important, while the president Macron puts more emphasis on the safety of all of France and not just for oneself.

Compliance of policies and rules within the member states

As for the policies of France, it mainly resonates with the statements of the EU. Rules such as limiting travels, and extra financial support for medical supplies are all mentioned within the speech, as well as the importance of close cooperation between the ministries of the member states. Only once does the French president question the efficiency of the actions of the EU bankers, but attenuates this by directly saying that EU cooperation is still a high priority. Not only the policies, but also the belief that Europe becomes stronger after the crisis because it is part of a learning process, is mentioned. In general, the French government follows the EU policies and in their discourse it is apparent that they have faith in them.

Since the APT had very few policies in the joint statement to begin with, it is more difficult for the Japanese government to comply with APT policies. However, even with the few policies mentioned by the APT, Japan only mentions one, which is the importance of research for the creation of a vaccine. Other than that, it does not mention anything that was mentioned by the APT. Other institutions that were mentioned by the APT, such as the UN and the WHO, did not appear in the speech either. Japan even contradicts actions from other countries, such as a lockdown, stating that a limitation of travel within cities such as Tokyo and Osaka are not necessary. While the APT did not mention this as a policy, it nevertheless shows that the Japanese government is able to disregard international policies. It does not mean that the Japanese government has set up only a few policies. In contrast to the APT, the policies are very detailed with exact rules on what Japanese citizens are and are not allowed to

do.

Discussion

In this section, I will first compare the different discourses of the EU and the APT in their joint statements on the Covid-19 pandemic, in particular their approach to the crisis and the way they portray themselves. While the EU has put more effort in concrete policies and plans to overcome the crisis, the APT prioritises the symbolic meaning of the organisation, namely international cooperation in Asia. The APT thus puts more emphasis on collective action and the importance of cooperation as a whole, while the EU does this less. However, compared to the EU, they lack in policies and they do not yet have concrete ideas on how to overcome the pandemic. Their discourse on solidarity and successful partnership seems to be a way to conceal the fact that they do not have a detailed plan. The EU uses less symbolic words to describe the strong cooperation between the member states, but does this instead through clear policies and the respective roles of the member states and the EU institutions.

Secondly, I will compare the analyses of the speeches of president Macron and president Abe during the Covid-19 crisis. From the speeches analysed, president Macron constantly mentions the importance of cooperation with Europe, while president Abe does not mention international cooperation once, and thus puts no priority on collective action. He instead focuses solely on national policies, the safety of the Japanese population and their successes in the past, while president Macron does the opposite by warning the French population for individualism. Individualism only worsens the situation and makes it harder to overcome the pandemic. The French national policies imposed by the French government are also closely linked to the policies made by the EU that are written in the joint statement, which again shows their loyalty to the organisation and their believe in collectivism. Again, president Abe has not mentioned the APT once, and he even distances Japan from other countries in the world by saying that lockdowns are not necessary in Japan, while other states have implemented this. The Japanese president thus not only ignores international cooperation in Asia and between the other APT member states, but international cooperation in general.

The results of both the discourse analysis of the joint statements of the EU and the APT, and the speeches of the political leaders of the member states, has found evidence for the first and second hypothesis. The different levels in institutionalisation of the EU and the APT are also apparent in their approach to the Covid-19 crisis, where the EU as a supranational

organisation with independent institutions had more detailed policies compared to the APT. The APT, however, while they have the ‘ASEAN Way’ as their norm, put a lot of emphasis on collective responses and solidarity between the member states. So, while in their use of language in the joint statements they contradict their emphasis on independence and the ‘ASEAN Way’, this was still apparent in their lack of plans. Their value of non-interference thus became clear in their policies, where member states had no significant role in the crisis. As mentioned in the beginning, the APT puts high priority in economic cooperation, and this also came forward in the few policies that they had, which mainly concerned financial stability in the region. The norms and values of the EU, namely justice, freedom and security were also reflected in their policies, namely the protection of the European citizens from the virus, the financial impacts of the lockdown, and their positive attitude to learn from the situation and use their experience for the future.

The differences in commitment between the French and the Japanese president to the international organisations, is evidence for the second hypothesis. Even though the APT only had a few policies to begin with, president Abe only mentioned one, which was the extension of the Tokyo Olympics. The reason he mentions this, however, is likely because the Olympics were planned to be held in Japan. Other than that, he did not mention a single policy, and did not even mention the APT or other Asian countries. Japan, thus, has a very individualistic political culture and ignores international cooperation. This is in contrast to the president Macron, who was committed to the EU and its policies. France, therefore, has a collectivist political culture and prioritises international cooperation, which connects to the successful cooperation in the EU and its response to the Covid-19 crisis.

Conclusion

In this thesis, the purpose was to analyse how differences in political culture of member states influences the differences between the EU and the APT in their approach to the Covid-19 crisis. After analysing the joint statements of the EU and the APT to understand their norms and values regarding the Covid-19 crisis, one member state of each organisation was selected for a Most Similar System Design, which were France and Japan. The speeches of the political leaders then were compared.

The approaches to the Covid-19 crisis of the EU and the APT, reflected their different values and ways they operate as an organisation. The EU, as a thick institution, had detailed and concrete plans on how to overcome the Covid-19 crisis and its consequences. It focused on different aspects such as the safety of the European citizens, the financial consequences of the lockdown, and their positive attitude to learn from the situation. The APT did the exact opposite and remained vague and used unclear language for the policies. This made the policies not understandable and indicated the fact that the APT did not have plans on how to overcome the crisis together with the member states. The 'ASEAN Way', which is the norm within the APT that refers to independence and non-interference with other member states, was evident since there were no policies that put restrictions or rules on the member states.

The political cultures portrayed by the political leaders of France and Japan were very different from each other, and it gave a look into their commitment towards their international organisations. Whereas president Macron emphasises to a great extent his collectivist beliefs and the importance of European cooperation, president Abe has not referred a single time to the APT or Asia in general, and focused solely on national policies, which is an example of individualist political culture. France, thus, took a leading role in European solidarity and saw the necessity of international organisations as a way to solve the collective action problem. The different political cultures match the level of institutionalisation of the EU and the APT, and it can therefore be said that political culture has an influence on the differences between the EU and APT in their Covid- 19 approach.

Despite the interesting results of the discourse analysis of the two member states, it remains limited since there are still many more member states part of the organisations. Even though the French president pursued a collectivist political culture, it does not mean that all the other member states of the EU are similar to him, and the same goes for Japan and the APT. Furthermore, the Covid-19 crisis lasted longer than a year and change or developments within the organisations is possible as they gain more knowledge on the virus. A comparison between the policies of earlier years of the crisis and to the end of it, is likely to give an insight into whether the international organisations, as well as the member states have changed.

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Appendixes

Appendix A. Discourse analysis of joint statements of the EU and the APT during the Covid-19 crisis.

Category	APT	EU
Concrete policies the organisation implements/is planning to implement to overcome the Covid-19 crisis	RECOGNISING the decisions to re-organize a number of major events including the Olympic and Paralympic Games.	We have reinforced the control of our external borders by applying a coordinated temporary restriction of non-essential travel to the EU.
	CONSIDER setting up an APT reserve of essential medical supplies that enables rapid response to emergency needs. Encourage tapping on existing regional emergency reserve facilities including the warehouses managed by the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre), among others, further consider the utilisation of the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR).	Where temporary internal border controls have been introduced, we will ensure smooth border management for persons and goods and preserve the functioning of the Single Market, based on the Commission guidelines of 16 March 2020, in accordance with the Schengen Borders Code, and the Commission's guidance on the implementation of "green lanes".
	STRENGTHEN scientific cooperation in epidemiological research, including through the APT Field Epidemiology Training Network (FETN), coordination, including with the private sector, towards rapid, research, development, manufacturing and distribution of diagnostics anti-viral medicines and vaccines	We call on the Commission to continue and accelerate its efforts to help ensuring urgent and adequate provision of medical equipment throughout the EU, which is the most acute priority.
	REMAIN vigilant to the potential risks to regional financial stability, foster closer regional financial cooperation and policy coordination and support the ASEAN Plus Three	The Commission will, in cooperation with the industry, provide an overview of stocks, production and imports and take action to improve the situation. It will actively pursue its joint

<p>Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) in monitoring the economic and financial development in the region and providing timely risk assessment and policy advice. Reaffirm our commitment to the readiness of the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation (CMIM), the Regional Financial Arrangement (RFA), as a reliable layer of the Global Financial Safety Net.</p>	<p>procurement initiatives for personal protective equipment, ventilators and testing supplies. We ask the Commission to explore ways to speed up procedures in that respect. The Commission will increase as needed the initial budget for the strategic resceEU stockpile of medical equipment, including for intensive care, and vaccines and therapeutics.</p>
	<p>EUR 140 million have already been mobilised for 17 projects, including on vaccines</p>
	<p>The Commission proposal for a Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative will provide EUR 37 billion of investment under cohesion policy to address the consequences of the crisis. With the proposed amendment to the EU Solidarity Fund, that Fund can also be used for public health emergency situations such as the COVID-19 outbreak.</p>
	<p>We also commend the EIB Group's contribution in mobilising resources for bank guarantees to and investment in European companies, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, including through the use of the EU budget. We invite Finance ministers to explore without delay possibilities to scale up the EIB Group's coronavirus response overall.</p>
	<p>A Consular Task Force has been set up by the EEAS. Close coordination is ensured with the Commission and with the Member States. The Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) managed by the Commission assists the ongoing</p>

		efforts for repatriations through the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, which should be provided with the necessary resources.
Discourse used to indicate a sense of being a part of the group and collective responsibility	STAY united on high alert and be ready to take any further action that may be required.	We will do everything that is necessary to protect our citizens and overcome the crisis, while preserving our European values and way of life.
	WELCOMING the ASEAN Chairman’s Statement of 14 February 2020 and the Declaration of the Special ASEAN Summit on COVID-19 of 14 April 2020 that demonstrated ASEAN’s highest-level commitment on collective response to the outbreak of COVID-19, in the spirit of a Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN.	We fully acknowledge the gravity of the socio-economic consequences of the COVID-19 crisis and will do everything necessary to meet this challenge in a spirit of solidarity.
	REAFFIRMING our shared commitment to strengthen solidarity , enhance cooperation and mutual support among the APT countries to control and contain the spread of the pandemic, addressing the adverse impact of the pandemic on our societies and economies.	
	Emphasising the significance of health cooperation and its existing mechanisms in addressing public health challenges, including our successful partnership in fighting the SARS pandemic in 2003.	
What do they see as their role within this crisis? How does the organisation portray itself?	SUPPORTING the call by the United Nations Secretary-General for all nations to respond decisively, innovatively and collectively to suppress the spread	All Member States have taken, based on advice from their national health authorities, decisive action to contain and slow down the spread of the virus. This effort is underpinned and

	<p>of the virus and address the socio-economic impact of COVID-19</p>	<p>supported by the guidelines of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the recommendations of the Commission COVID-19 Advisory Panel. Further guidelines will be issued as necessary, and we will continue to keep track of developments through the EU's Integrated Political Crisis Response mechanism (IPCR), activated by the Croatian Presidency.</p>
	<p>COGNISANT of the important role of APT cooperation for peace, security and prosperity in the East Asian region. Emphasising the significance of health cooperation and its existing mechanisms in addressing public health challenges, including our successful partnership in fighting the SARS pandemic in 2003.</p>	<p>The Member States should closely cooperate in this respect and provide the Commission with timely and reliable data.</p>
	<p>STRENGTHEN the early warning system in the region for pandemics and other epidemic diseases as well as regular, timely, and transparent exchange of real-time information on the situation on the ground and measures taken by each country in combating COVID-19</p>	<p>In the light of the WHO recommendations, it is a matter of urgency to increase testing capacities, and Member States will report to the Commission on the situation.</p>
		<p>Our Member States have taken extensive action to support their economies and alleviate social and employment problems. We will use EU instruments to support their action to the extent necessary.</p>
		<p>The EU commits to international cooperation and multilateral solutions in tackling the pandemic and its consequences. It will do its utmost to assist countries and communities to fight the COVID-19 crisis. It will also do its utmost</p>

		to strengthen the sustainability of global integrated value and supply chains to adapt them as necessary and to alleviate the negative socio-economic impact of the crisis.
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Appendix B. Discourse analysis of the speech of the French president Macron during the Covid-19 crisis.

category/theme	Speech Emmanuel Macron
Mentioning the organisation/region and the fact that they are part of a collective. Deny the fact that it is something one can deal with alone. Cooperation is key.	“(…) we are only at the beginning of the pandemic, in France but also in Europe , and things will continue to accelerate over the coming weeks and months.” (3:15)
	“(…) and in France as well as in Europe , we have already started working on coming up with even better tools for diagnosis.” (12:15)
	“Protocols are already in place and hopefully in the first few months we will be able to roll out widespread cures, because Europe has anything at its disposal to come up with an antidote to Covid-19.” (12:40)
	“I have called on the government to start preparing a nationwide, European wide package, which we will implement now and in the future.” (16:15)
	“(…) and I want to be clear with each and every one of you, we as Europeans , will not let a financial, economic crisis spread.” (16:43)
	“It is what France is going to do and this is the policy line that I will defend and promote at the European level , and it is what I already started at the European council yesterday.” (17:11)
	“(…) Europe needs to stand united , to protect its economy.” (17:30)
	“And we need to work together. France is doing its best to try and act in that way. And we are working with our European partners to do that.” (19:15)

	<p>“In the coming weeks and months, borders will have to be closed, but decisions that will affect Europe would have to be made at the European level, because we have to take these decisions while ensuring the mental freedoms of Europe. We also have to avoid closing off and working as individuals, because it is only when you work together, as opposed to working alone that you can deal with such challenges.” (19:47)</p>
	<p>“We have to take things back in control. We have to stand as France. We have to stand as Europe, because it is France and Europe that have destiny in their hands.” (25:28)</p>
Mentioning/following policies that were mentioned in the joint statements of the organisation.	<p>“And this is where I call upon each and every one of you. I want each and every one of you to only travel when absolutely necessary.” (09:50)</p>
	<p>“Health comes with no price, and that is why the government will put in place as much money as possible to be able to provide medical assistance, whatever the cost may be.” (11:17)</p>
	<p>“(…) because this crisis is one way we are going to learn from.” (11:40)</p>
	<p>“We will also call on our research specialists, medical research specialists, to continue to work, to carry out fast diagnoses. We want efficient diagnoses. We already have our own technology in the area, and in France as well as in Europe, we have already started on coming up with even better tools.” (12:03)</p>
	<p>“Hopefully in the first few months we will be able to roll out widespread cures, because Europe has everything at its disposal to come up with an antidote to Covid-19.” (12:34)</p>
	<p>“Our teams are also working tirelessly to come up with a vaccine (...)” (12:49)</p>
	<p>“In France and in Europe, we are ready to come up with a vaccine.” (12:59)</p>
	<p>“Companies of all sizes will be protected.” (16:00)</p>

	“We work with all European governments, and I call on all governments to support economic activity (...)” (17:00)
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Appendix C. Colour coded discourse analysis of the Japanese president Abe during the Covid-19 crisis.

Color	Meaning
Blue	Policies and rules the APT mentioned in their joint statement, and Japan will follow.
Green	Discourse about the APT or international organisation in general.
Yellow	Discourse on individualistic political culture

まず冒頭、全国各地の医師、看護師、看護助手、病院スタッフの皆さん、そしてクラスター対策に携わる保健所や専門家、臨床検査技師の皆さんに、日本国民を代表して、心より感謝申し上げます。新型コロナウイルスとの闘いの正に最前線で、強い責任感を持って、今この瞬間も一人でも多くの命を救うため、献身的な努力をしてくださっていることに心からの敬意を表したいと思います。世界全体で既に6万人以上が死亡した、この過酷なウイルスとの闘いにおいて、確かな技術と高い使命感を持った医療従事者の皆さんの存在は、私たち全員を勇気付けてくれるものです。本当にありがとうございます。

感染リスクと背中合わせの厳しい状況をも恐れず、ベストを尽くしてくださっている皆さんを支えるため、できることは全てやっていきたい。医療現場を守るため、あらゆる手を尽くします。感染予防に欠かせない医療物資について、国内での増産を進めています。電機メーカーなど、異業種のカも借りながら、更に提供体制を強化していきます。軽症者や症状のない感染者の皆さんは、医療機関ではなく、宿泊施設などで療養いただくことで、医療機関の負担を軽減します。ホテルチェーンに御協力をいただき、関東で1万室、関西で3,000室を確保しました。日本

財団も臨時の施設建設を進めてくださっています。これらを活用させていただき、医療支援を重症者対応に振り向けることで、病院の機能維持を図ります。

ただ、こうした努力を重ねても、東京や大阪など、都市部を中心に感染者が急増しており、病床数は明らかに限界に近づいています。医療従事者の皆さんの肉体的、精神的な負担も大きくなっており、医療現場は正に危機的な状況です。現状では、まだ全国的かつ急速な蔓（まん）延には至っていないとしても、医療提供体制がひっ迫している地域が生じていることを踏まえれば、もはや時間の猶予はないとの結論に至りました。この状況は、国民生活及び国民経済に甚大な影響を及ぼすおそれがあると判断いたしました。

本日は、この記者会見に尾身先生にも同席いただいておりますが、先ほど諮問委員会の御賛同も得ましたので、特別措置法第32条に基づき、緊急事態宣言を発出することといたします。対象となる範囲は、関東の1都3県、東京都、神奈川県、千葉県、埼玉県、関西の大阪府と兵庫県、そして九州の福岡県であります。最も感染者が多い東京都では、政府として今月中を目途に五輪関係施設を改修し、800名規模で軽症者を受け入れる施設を整備する予定です。今回の緊急事態宣言に伴い、必要があれば、ここに自衛隊などの医療スタッフを動員し、特別措置法48条に基づく臨時の医療施設として活用することも可能であると考えています。

医療への負荷を抑えるために最も重要なことは、感染者の数を拡大させないことです。そして、そのためには何よりも国民の皆様への行動変容、つまり、行動を変えることが大切です。特別措置法上の権限はあくまで都道府県の知事が行使するものでありますが、政府として、関東の1都3県、大阪府と兵庫県、そして福岡県の皆様には、特別措置法45条第1項に基づき、生活の維持に必要な場合を除き、みだりに外出しないよう要請すべきと考えます。事態は切迫しています。東京都では感染者の累計が1,000人を超えました。足元では5日で2倍になるペースで感染者が増加を続けており、このペースで感染拡大が続けば、2週間後には1万人、1か月後には8万人を超えることとなります。

しかし、専門家の試算では、私たち全員が努力を重ね、人と人との接触機会を最低7割、極力8割削減することができれば、2週間後には感染者の増加をピークアウトさせ、減少に転じさせることができます。そうすれば、爆発的な感染者の増加

を回避できるだけでなく、クラスター対策による封じ込めの可能性も出てくると考えます。その効果を見極める期間も含め、ゴールデンウィークが終わる5月6日までの1か月に限定して、7割から8割削減を目指し、外出自粛をお願いいたします。

繰り返しになりますが、この緊急事態を1か月で脱出するためには、人と人との接触を7割から8割削減することが前提です。これは並大抵のことではありません。これまでもテレワークの実施などをお願いしてまいりましたが、社会機能を維持するために必要な職種を除き、オフィスでの仕事は原則自宅で行うようにしていただきたいと思います。どうしても出勤が必要な場合も、ローテーションを組むなどによって出勤者の数を最低7割は減らす、時差出勤を行う、人との距離を十分に取るといった取組を実施いただけるよう、全ての事業者の皆様をお願いいたします。レストランなどの営業に当たっても、換気の徹底、お客さん同士の距離を確保するなどの対策をお願いします。

学校休校が長期化しますが、オンラインなどで学習できる環境整備を地域と協力して加速します。電話、オンラインでの診療も、初診も含めて解禁することとしました。病院での感染リスクを恐れる皆さんにこれを積極的に活用いただくことで、受診を我慢するといった事態が生じないようにします。その上で、生活必需品の買物など、どうしても外出する場合には、密閉、密集、密接、3つの密を避ける行動を徹底していただくよう、改めてお願いいたします。

今までどおり、外に出て散歩をしたり、ジョギングをすることは何ら問題ありません。他方で、3つの密がより濃厚な形で重なる、バー、ナイトクラブ、カラオケ、ライブハウスへの出入りは控えてください。集会やイベントを避け、飲み会はもとより、家族以外の多人数での会食も行わないようお願いいたします。

この感染症の恐ろしい点は、発熱などの症状が全くないにもかかわらず感染している人が多いことです。そして、知らず知らずのうちに周囲の人にうつしてしまうことで拡大していくという点です。既に自分は感染者かもしれないという意識を、特に若い皆さんを中心に全ての皆さんに持っていただきたい。外出する際にも、人混みを避け、他の人との距離を保つ、飛沫（まつ）を飛ばさないようにマスクを着けるなどの行動をお願いいたします。そのことが他の人の命を守ることになりま

す。そして、ひいては自分の命を守ることになります。国民の皆様の御協力をお願いいたします。

緊急事態としての措置を講ずる以上、当然、経済活動への大きな影響は避けられません。もとより、今でも多くの中小・小規模事業者の皆さんが事業継続に大きな支障を生じておられます。世界経済だけでなく、日本経済が、今、正に戦後最大の危機に直面している、そう言っても過言ではありません。

その強い危機感の下に、雇用と生活は断じて守り抜いていく。そのために、GDP（国内総生産）の2割に当たる事業規模108兆円、世界的にも最大級の経済対策を実施することといたしました。困難に直面している御家族や中小・小規模事業者の皆さんには、総額6兆円を超える現金給付を行います。1世帯当たり30万円に加え、次の児童手当支払に合わせ、1人当たり1万円を追加することで、お子さんの多い御家庭の家計もしっかりと下支えします。

日本経済を支える屋台骨は中小・小規模事業者の皆さんです。本当に苦しい中でも、今、歯を食いしばって頑張っておられる皆さんこそ、日本の底力です。皆さんの声は、私たちに届いています。皆さんの努力を決して無にしてはならない。その思いの下に、史上初めて事業者向けの給付金制度を創設しました。売上げが大きく減った中堅・中小法人に200万円、個人事業主に100万円支給します。固定資産税も減免します。消費税などの納税に加え、社会保険料の支払は1年間猶予いたします。当然、延滞金はかかりません。26兆円規模の猶予を実施することで、手元資金を事業継続のために回していただけるようにいたしました。民間の地方銀行、信用金庫、信用組合でも、実質無利子・無担保、最大5年間元本返済据置き融資を受けられるようにします。さらには、雇用調整助成金の助成率を過去最大まで引き上げるなど、考え得る政策手段を総動員して、国民の皆様と共に、この戦後最大の危機を乗り越えていく決意であります。

今回の緊急事態宣言は、海外で見られるような都市封鎖、ロックダウンを行うものではなく、そのことは明確に申し上げます。今後も電車やバスなどの公共交通機関は運行されます。道路を封鎖することなど決してありませんし、そうした必要も全くないというのが専門家の皆さんの意見です。海外では、都市封鎖に当たり、多くの人々が都市を抜け出し、大混乱と感染の拡大につながったところもあ

ります。今、私たちが最も恐れるべきは、恐怖それ自体です。SNS（ソーシャル・ネットワーキング・サービス）で広がったデマによって、トイレットペーパーが店頭で品薄となったことは皆さんの記憶に新しいところだと思います。ウイルスという見えない敵に大きな不安を抱くのは、私も皆さんと同じです。そうしたとき、SNSは本来、人と人の絆（きずな）を深め、社会の連帯を生み出すツールであり、社会不安を軽減する大きな力を持っていると信じます。しかし、ただ恐怖に駆られ、拡散された誤った情報に基づいてパニックを起こしてしまう。そうなる
と、ウイルスそれ自体のリスクを超える甚大な被害を、私たちの経済、社会、そして生活にもたらしかねません。

専門家の皆さんの見解では、東京や大阪での感染リスクは、現状でも不要不急の外出を自粛して普通の生活を送っている限り、決して高くない。封鎖を行った海外の都市とは全く状況が異なります。ですから、地方に移動するなどの動きは厳に控えていただきたい。地方には、重症化リスクが高いと言われる高齢者の皆さんもたくさんいらっしゃいます。その感染リスクを高めることのないようお願いいたします。

当然、社会機能はしっかりと維持してまいります。自治体とも協力しながら、電気、ガス、通信、金融、ごみの収集・焼却など、暮らしを支えるサービスは平常どおりの営業を行っていきます。高齢者の介護施設や保育所などで働いておられる皆さんにも、サービスを必要とする方々のため、引き続き御協力をいただくようお願いいたします。食品など生活必需品の製造・加工に関わる皆さん、物流に携わる皆さん、そして小売店の皆さんには、営業をしっかりと継続していただきます。ですから、皆さんにはどうか正しい情報に基づいて、冷静な行動を心よりお願いいたします。

この2か月で、私たちの暮らしは一変しました。楽しみにしていたライブが中止となった。友達との飲み会が取りやめになった。行きたいところに行けない。みんなと会えない。かつての日常は失われました。ただ、皆さんのこうした行動によって多くの命が確実に救われています。お一人お一人の御協力に心より感謝申し上げます。率直に申し上げて、政府や自治体だけの取組では、この緊急事態を乗り越えることはできない。これは厳然たる事実です。感染者の爆発的な増加を回避できる

のか。一人でも多くの重症者を死の淵（ふち）から救うことができるのか。皆さんを、そして皆さんが愛する家族を守ることができるのか。全ては皆さんの行動にかかっています。改めて御協力をお願いします。

全く先が見えない大きな不安の中でも、希望は確実に生まれています。日本中、世界中の企業、研究者の英知を結集して、ワクチン開発、治療薬の開発が進んでいます。新型インフルエンザの治療薬として承認を受け、副作用なども判明しているアビガンは、既に120例を超える投与が行われ、症状改善に効果が出ているとの報告も受けています。観察研究の仕組みの下、希望する患者の皆さんへの使用をできる限り拡大していく考えです。そのために、アビガンの備蓄量を現在の3倍、200万人分まで拡大します。国内での増産に必要な原料の生産には、各地の企業が協力を表明してくださっています。自動車メーカーは、人工呼吸器の増産を手助けしてくれています。欠航が相次ぐエアラインの皆さんは、医療現場に必要なガウンの縫製を手伝いたいと申し出てくださいました。学校が再開する子供たちのために、手作りマスクを届けようとしている皆さんがおられます。スーパーを生活必需品で満たすため、昼夜を分かたず、今、この瞬間も物流を守り続けるトラック運転手の皆さんがいます。医療現場のため自分たちができる支援をしたいと、クラウドファンディングを始めた皆さんがいます。看護協会は、5万人を超える、現在、現場を離れている看護師の皆さんに協力を呼びかけています。私からも是非お願いをしたい。この国家的な危機に当たり、ウイルスとの闘いに皆さんのお力をお借りしたいと思います。

実際、看護協会の呼びかけに応じ、既に、命を救うため、命を守るため、医療現場への復帰を申し出てくださっている方々がいらっしゃいます。あらゆる分野でこの危機にできる限りのことをやろうと、全国で立ち上がってくださっている皆さんがいる。これこそが希望であります。

9年前、私たちはあの東日本大震災を経験しました。たくさんの人たちがかけがえのない命を失い、傷つき、愛する人を失いました。つらく、困難な日々の中で、私たちに希望をもたらしたものの、それは人と人の絆、日本中から寄せられた助け合いの心でありました。今、また私たちは大きな困難に直面しています。しかし、私たちはみんなで共に力を合わせれば、再び希望を持って前に進んでいくことができ

る。ウイルスとの闘いに打ち勝ち、この緊急事態という試練も必ずや乗り越えることができる。そう確信しています。

私からは以上であります。