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Session VI: Regional Formats of Military and Security Cooperation

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Regional Format of Military and Security Cooperation: ASEAN's Contribution to the Process

This paper attempts to address the contribution of an ASEAN process in development of regional format of military and security cooperation in Asia. Within the current dynamic of political, security and economic of the Asia-Pacific region, ASEAN has and contribute more tangible initiative in the development of security architecture in Asia. The ASEAN centred security mechanism that served as a core of security is the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and recently the establishment of the ASEAN Defence Minister Meeting (ADMM), which is now has emerged into ADMM-Plus, an open and inclusive security framework.¹ With the absence of regional organisation that provide an umbrella for the whole of Asia, the sub-regional grouping of ASEAN has positively contribute to enhance peace and stability in the region.

Even, during the Indochina war in 1970s, ASEAN has positively contributed to find a peaceful solution to the conflict. The ideological convergence in Southeast Asia flowing the end of the Cold War has driven the process of ASEANization of whole of Southeast Asia from ASEAN 5 into ASEAN-10 and lately the development of security community project. To take into account to the development and ASEAN process in the sphere defence/military and security cooperation. This paper will address the extent of the mechanism to enhance military interaction, the growing regional solution in security arrangement, and the impact of such process of security initiatives in promoting confidence measures in the region.

Ideas to develop an Asian security mechanism have started even since the height of the Cold War time. Many initiatives had partially developed such as Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) and Malaysia-Philippines and Indonesia (Maphilindo). The initiatives failed to develop with exception of the Five Powers Defence Arrangement (FPDA) that officially still existed. Since then, the intra-regional landscape of political and security relations was also risking to the growing pain of existing bilateral problem within ASEAN such as between Indonesia-Malaysia (Konfrontasi), Malaysia-Philippines (Claim over Sabah) and the risk of domino theory of communism in Indochina. Significantly, the Cold War was also dividing the ideological cleavages of the Southeast Asia.

Concern to the risk of conflict and the consciousness to develop more peaceful region, ASEAN was established in 1967. Since then, ASEAN has served as a sub-regional grouping that by standard of regionalism in the Southern hemisphere it has able to develop, sustain and achieve substantial condition to promote peace and security in Southeast Asia. ASEAN has develop norms and foundation to promote regional security especially through the framework of Treaty of Amity

1 ASEAN ADMM Plus Concept Paper, www.aseansec.org/21216.pdf

and Cooperation (TAC) and the creation of Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free-Zone (NWFZ) and the establishment of multiple mechanism to promote cooperation in the field of economic, culture, education etc.

International Regime

Looking the political landscape of regional security complex in Southeast Asia, it is important to review the growing of security cooperation by considering the concept of security regime. With the assumption that cooperative security will be the conceptual basis behind security cooperation in the region, it is relevant to consider the concept of international regime as a suitable mechanism. In the study of International Relations (IR), international regime is defined as “a set of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectation converge in a given area of international relations”.² This definition asserts that an international regime is unlike an organisation, it is more a loose cooperative mechanism which is built under common agreement. International regime is not expected to play a role based on power, and they would rather play a reciprocal role to existing power relations.³ Moreover, Jervis stated in respect to security regime, that they based on: “...those principles, rule, and norms that permit nations to be restrained in their behaviour in the belief that others will reciprocate.”⁴ In forming security regime, actors must believe that others share the value they place on mutual security and cooperation. Security regime will not be formed if “one or more actors believe that security is best provided for by expansion”.⁵

From this definition, it is relevant to explain the development of security architecture in Southeast Asia by referring to security regime. Security architecture refers to the formation or structure of security cooperation which is built upon such regime. The approach of regional countries in Southeast Asia which prefer to process rather than institutionalisation is relevant to the regime approach, rather than traditional tight security cooperation such as alliance model. It is also facilitate the application of incremental approach of cooperative security.

2 Stephen D Krasner (ed.), *International Regimes* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 2.

3 Lee Min-Yong, “Building Security Regime in Northeast Asia,” *The Journal of East Asian Affairs*, Vol. IX, No. 1, Spring/Winter 1995, p. 77

4 Rober Jervis, “Security regimes,” *International Organization*, Vol. 36, No.2, Spring 1982, p. 357.

5 Rober Jervis, “Security regimes,” *International Organization*, Vol. 36, No.2, Spring 1982, p. 361-362

Revisiting the Past Proposals for Security Cooperation –No Success

In the past, there have been number of proposal for security regime formation in the Asia-Pacific that could be use as a reflective reference to see current development of security dynamic in the region, which finally influences the Southeast Asian countries to take initiatives to establish their own model of security architecture for the region beyond Southeast Asia.⁶

During the Cold War when the degree of distrust and hostility between the two ideological block remained strong, the USSR president, Leonid Brezhnev first proposed on Asia-Collective Security Scheme (SCSS) on June 8, 1969.⁷ It should be understood that this proposal was not popular as in the Cold War context, the sharing of values as mentioned by Jervis above was impossible. Fifteen years later, in February 1986, Mikhail Gorbachev proposed an “All Asian Security Regime and an All-Asia Conference”, and he rejects the idea of hegemony in Asia by saying: “No state would be in a position t take on the role of a guarantor of strategic socio-economic and political security of Asia.”⁸ Gorbachev called several time for the establishment of a type of security regime in Asia. Once he said: “Asia and the Pacific, whose inhabitants make up half of the world's population, face a host of economic, ethnic, social, religious, environment, and other highly complex problem. No country can cope with these single-handedly. Therefore, we feel that the idea of a multilateral forum on security and cooperation remain as relevant as ever. Sooner or later, life will make us accept that idea.”⁹

At the time, Gorbachev's proposal was among the strongest idea to establish security cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. However, as major powers in this region were cautious toward this proposal, the idea did not receive any support. Interestingly, countries in the region recognised the need for such a mechanism to address political and security issues, but hesitant to receive Gorbachev's ideas. Significantly, Gorbachev prediction in his statement has now become reality, although in different process and model.¹⁰

Other residing countries also propose to build security architecture in the Asia-Pacific. Mongolia (1981) calling for a “convention on mutual non-aggression and

6 To address the proliferation of proposals and plans for security cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, see: Monish Ahmar, “Security and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific: Development and Prospects –Southeast Asian Perspectives”, *Proceeding of the Beijing Conference: Conference of the Research Institute in Asia and the Pacific A Guide to Discussion in 23-25 March 1992*. (New York/Geneva: United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, 1992), pp. 65-77.

7 V. Pavlovsky, “Collective Security” the Way to Peace in Asia”, *International Affairs*, Moscow, 1972, p. 25.

8 Moonis Ahmar, *Op.Cit.* p. 67.

9 Moonis Ahmar, *Op.Cit.* p. 69

10 Riefqi Muna, *Cooperative Security and Regional Reurity Architecture in Southeast Asia*. MA Thesis, Australian Defence Forces Academy, UNSW, Canberra, 1995. p. 64-65.

non-use of force in relations among countries in the Asia and the Pacific region”.¹¹ The Mongolian view was that the implementation of this proposal should be “supported by corresponding guarantee by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).¹² In 1988, the Republic of Korea (RoK) proposed a Peace Consultative Meeting among six countries in Northeast Asia in flexible multilateral talks. And in 1993 RoK proposed what was called a “mini CSCE” was introduced by Foreign Minister Han Sung-joo to build a security regime in Northeast Asia. The Canadian proposal was a specific one, as the focus was labelled as a sub-region on North Pacific. The Canadian Foreign Minister at the time, Joe Clark, proposed security talks in the North Pacific, including the U.S., the former Soviet Union, Japan, the two Koreans, China and Canada to apply the concept of security regime in North Pacific. Although the NPCSD has not yet produce remarkable result on official policy, it has provided valuable knowledge for the formation of security regime in Northeast Asia. Australia also came with proposal in 1990 for a Conference on Security and Cooperation in Asia (CSA) modelled after CSCE,¹³ but did not received wide support from Asian countries.

Japan also contributes to the table of thinking on security in the Asia-Pacific region with the concept of a “Multiplex” mechanism in Asian context which was based on four pillars:¹⁴ *One*, regional economic cooperation; i.e., ASEAN, APEC, PECC, and ESCAP, with APEC as a core. *Two*, efforts toward the settlement of sub-regional conflict –the Korean peninsula, Cambodia, the South China Sea; where a proper balance between dialogue among conflicting parties, on the other hand, and international commitment by external parties, are carefully sought after at sub-regional level. *Three*, cooperative defence relationship; e.g. The Japan-US defence relationship, and defence relations among ASEAN states. *Four*, political dialogue among parties. At that period of time, the last proposal came from the US. Although at the beginning the US preferred its own bilateral model, and “refused” a kind of multilateralism in the Asia-Pacific¹⁵ it later supported this process as shown by its attitude toward the ARF and APEC as stated by President Bill Clinton on his speech in the White House before departing for APEC Summit in Bogor, Indonesia.¹⁶ In this regard, the US recognises the significance of

11 Moonis Ahmar, *Op.Cit.* p. 69

12 Ibid.

13 Gareth Evans and Bruce Grant, *Australia's Foreign Relations in the World of the 1990s.* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1991), p. 111-112.

14 Yoshihidi Soeya, “The Evolution of jaoanese thinking and policies on cooperative security in 1980s and 1990s,” p. 2.

15 Richard H. Solomon, “Asian Security: Inegration in Economic and Differ in Security,” *US Department of State Duspach*, Vol. 1, No. 10, November 1990, pp. 243-249. In essence he reject the ideas by saying that multilateralism to address security in Asia-Pacific as “solution to find another problem”.

16 President Clinton, “U.S. - Asia Economic Engagement in the 21st Century”, *U.S. Dispatch Supplement*, Vol. 5, No. 9, November 1994.

creation of a separable sub-regional security dialogue, but such dialogue should be developed in close consultation with the U.S. Allies.¹⁷

Building Confidence and Conformable Climate

The above discussion shows example on the difficult process of building cooperative security regime in Asia/Pacific region. Many proposals have been advocated, but, actually no single proposal of the able to materialised and served the interest of the complex and pluralistic nature of countries in Asia. Significantly, ASEAN has also received severe critics both from outside and outside region. From the inside ASEAN, the critics that addressed especially due to the judgement that ASEAN was to slow in dealing with its agenda. ASEAN also perceives as being too elitist and state-centred rather directly serve the people's interest of Southeast Asia nation. In addition, the external critics to ASEAN generally related to the attempt to compare the ASEAN process with, for example, European process which is more structured and well defined target such as the EU.

Despite its critics both externally and from within, ASEAN has able to maintain regional peace and stability in the region of Southeast Asia. Significantly with the absence of any single country in the Asia-Pacific that able to gear the regional security cooperation, in a fact, ASEAN has able act with less controversy in designing and facilitating the process of security cooperation beyond its original geographical footprint of Southeast Asia. ASEAN has developed wider forum of security with the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) inaugurated in 1993. Since the concept of ASEAN post-Ministerial Conference (PMC) was launched to provide forum for dialogue with the external partners, it has able to develop the array of mechanism of dialogue on politics and security for wider Asia Pacific and not only serving Southeast Asia.

The fact that Asia's geopolitical context is unique –ASEAN has been the significant driver seat for the many of initiatives of dialogue that help to promote confidence building the region. However, in seeing the success of ASEAN process in promoting military and security dialogue, it will depend on what position being taken whether from the minimalist or maximalist point of view. It is also important to take into account the crucial aspect of strategic culture that taken from the fast and complexity of socio-cultural, geopolitical, and economic status of countries in Asia which is very diverse. Within this backdrop, it will be more realistic to stand in the position of what are the possible and doable process of security cooperation could take place in a more successful manner.

17 *East Asia Strategy Report: America's Permanent Interest in the Asia-Pacific Security*. Department of Defense, Office of International Security Affairs, PFS405 02/23/95, Embargoed Text, p. 11-12.

Defence and Security Cooperation: ADMM

Beside the establishment of the ARF as the only dialogue forum for security in the Asia-Pacific that able to accommodate all players and inhabitant in the region, ASEAN embarked into a new era of building a security community as part of larger ASEAN community. ASEAN has entered into a new era with the designing of ASEAN Community that encompasses politics and security, economic, and cultural. The development of ASEAN Community is the most tangible program in ASEAN in dealing with defence matter where the Blueprint for ASEAN Security Community (ASC) Plan of Action mandated the convening of an annual ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM).

The initial establishment of ADMM was started in 2004 when the ASEAN Secretariat requested by the Working Group on Security Cooperation of the ASEAN Special Senior Official Meeting (Special SOM) that held in Yogyakarta on 9 May 2004 to draft a concept paper on establishing a forum for ASEAN Defence Ministers. The ADMM is aimed to contribute to the objectives of the ASC as stated in the declaration of ASEAN Concord II of 7 October 2003 in which the document say to 'establish a dynamic, cohesive, resilient and integrated ASEAN Community by 2020, which was later accelerated into 2015.

According to the Concept Paper of establishment of an ADMM, it is also in line with the increasing recognition of the role of regional cooperation in the promotion of peace and security as the United Nations has been promoting the concept of 'security regions' and the U.N. Secretary General Report "In Larger Freedom" that called on regional organisations "to play complementary roles" with the UN in facing the challenge to international peace and security.¹⁸

The ADMM is an integral part of ASEAN and add-value to and complement to overall ASEAN process, and to engaging ASEAN's friends and Dialogue Partners as well as the ARF.¹⁹ The document of the ADMM identify its objectives as follow: (a) to promote regional peace and stability through dialogue and cooperation in defence and security; (b) to give guidance to existing senior defence and military officials dialogue and cooperation in the field of defence and security within ASEAN and between ASEAN and dialogue partners; (c) to promote mutual trust and confidence through greater understanding of defence and security challenges as well as enhancement of transparency and openness; and (d) to contribute to the establishment of an ASEAN Security Community (ASC).²⁰ ADMM serve as the highest body for defence dialogue and cooperation within

18 As stated in the "Concept Paper for the Establishment of an ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting". www.aseansec.org/19892.htm

19 Joint press release of the inaugural ASEAN Defence Minister Meeting, Kuala Lumpur, 9 May 2006.

20 "Concept Paper for the Establishment of an ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting". www.aseansec.org/19892.htm

ASEAN. It elevate the existing defence and military interaction from confidence-building initiatives to tangible defence and security cooperation within the ASEAN framework²¹

With the establishment of the ADMM, the existing military-to-military interactions outside the ASEAN framework, which are ASEAN Chief of Defence Force Informal Meeting (ACDFIM), ASEAN Chief of Army Multilateral Meeting (ACAMM), ASEAN Air Force Chief Conference (AAFCC), ASEAN Navy Interaction (ANI) and the ASEAN Military Intelligence Informal Meeting (AMIM) will convene annually under the guidance of the ADMM.²²

Looking at the program of the current program, the ADMM set the three years (2008-2010), the theme of “Building the foundation and setting the direction for defence dialogues and cooperation” the main focus on the following:²³

1. Regional defence and security cooperation: (a) promote understanding of defence and security policies, structures, system and developments; (b) build upon existing and future defence and military interaction and cooperation.
2. Shaping and Sharing Norms: (a) support the development and adoption of norms that promote regional peace and security, (b) promote the development of norms that enhance ASEAN defence and security cooperation
3. Conflict Prevention: (a) promote mutual trust and confidence through greater understanding of defence and security issues and challenges, (b) Strengthen confidence building measures (transparency and openness, cooperation in disaster relief and emergency operations for humanitarian purpose, promote cooperation on non-traditional security concern)
4. Conflict Prevention: (a) promote the development of mechanism for the peaceful settlement of disputes, (b) develop regional cooperation for maintenance of peace and stability (e.g. In peacekeeping)
5. Post-Conflict Peacebuilding: (a) strengthen rendition of humanitarian assistance in conflict areas.

The program of the ADMM shows the substantial development in the aspect of military and security cooperation in ASEAN through practical and concrete activities but also through strengthening the norms building. The fact the ASC is founded on the principle of democracy, governance, and avoid the use of force in

21 Protocol to the Concept Paper for the Establishment of the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting.

22 Protocol to the Concept Paper for the Establishment of the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting.

23 ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) Three (3)-Year Work Programme, theme: Building the foundation of settling the direction for defense dialogue and cooperation. www.aseansec.org

solving the problem among ASEAN member is also indicate the future direction of conflict management in the region. Another crucial aspect in the development of military and security cooperation is the decision of the ADMM to utilise of the ASEAN military assets and capacities in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.²⁴ This development is crucial for the region that is prone to disaster and this aspect also serve as means for promoting the interoperability of military and strengthen the confidence building measures.

The ADMM has also declared to strengthen the ASEAN defence establishment to meet the challenges of non-traditional security threats. This will enhance the operational effectiveness of ASEAN defence establishment in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. It was also declared the concept paper on ASEAN Defence Establishment and Civil Society Organisation (CSO) Cooperation on non-traditional security. In turn this initiative will enhance the civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) in addressing the non-military aspect of security.

Finally, another important step of the ASEAN process that contributes to the military and security cooperation in Asia is the adoption of ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus).²⁵ Decision to establish ADMM-Plus is acknowledgement that ASEAN's future was increasingly intertwined with the development of the larger Asia-Pacific region. The aspiration was to establish robust, open and inclusive regional security architecture.²⁶ The membership of the ADMM-Plus is based on (a) The ADMM-Plus country shall be a full-fledged Dialogue Partner of ASEAN, (b) The ADMM-Plus country shall have significant interactions and relations with ASEAN defence establishments, and (c) The ADMM-Plus country is able to work with the ADMM to build capacity so as to enhance regional security in a substantive manner.

Future ASEAN's Role in Military and Security Cooperation

Considering to the development of ASEAN in accommodating the development within the sub-region and larger Asia-Pacific region in the realm of security cooperation it could be highlight that ASEAN has contributed significantly in the promotion of peace and security in Asia (and the Pacific) region. The enlargement of ASEAN that encompasses the whole of Southeast Asia, despite its weaknesses and critics it help to bridge the ideological camp of like-minded state of ASEAN and the rest –the socialist regime that still effective in Vietnam and Laos, the fragile Cambodia. While Myanmar posed a difficult task for ASEAN in dealing

24 Annex D: The Use of ASEAN Military Assets and Capacities in humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief.

25 Annex E: ASEAN Defence Ministers's Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus): Principles for Membership -A Concept Paper. www.aseansec.org

26 Annex E: ASEAN Defence Ministers's Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus): Principles for Membership -A Concept Paper. www.aseansec.org

with external actors due to continuation of *junta* and its suppression to democracy. The recent election in Myanmar has resulted in widespread of criticism due to the lack of openness and transparency during the election. While release of Aung San Suu Kyi has welcomed by scepticism remained.

The moving of ASEAN into the direction of ASEAN Community (politics & security, economic and culture) that set to be achieved in 2015, especially the ASEAN Security Community is another foundation that fosters the degree of confidence building measures and transparency in the region. Initiatives to create better future of security in the region show the progress and destiny on to which direction this region will set its direction. In the sphere of security community, it is clearly shows that ASEAN has started to challenge its complexity with new vision of the region by providing security basket for every residing country, even wider Asia-Pacific region. Initiative such as ADMM-Plus will not be in the realistic comprehension of ASEAN leaders in the past decade, as now ASEAN is transforming.

ASEAN has confidently growth as a dynamic organisation that able to serve as a driver seat for larger security cooperation in the Asia-Pacific. However, the judgement to the ASEAN process in this matter needs to consider the reality of complexity of the region and its strategic culture. Without considering the local wisdom it may result in a disappointment especially if using the standard norm and mechanism that have developed in Europe. So far, whether like or not ASEAN process is more focused on process rather than a rigid structure and it is based on the pragmatic thinking on how best to address the matter in the divers and culturally complex of Asia.

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