



The Impact of the ASEAN Way and We Feeling Concepts on Indonesia's Involvement in Strengthening Regionalism

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Abstract. Indonesia is an inseparable part of a regional organization in the Southeast Asia region, namely ASEAN. The role of Indonesia also determines the movement of the ASEAN regional organization and strengthens ASEAN's position in the world view. The production of a Plan of action for the three main pillars of the ASEAN community, namely the ASEAN Security Community, the ASEAN Economic Community, and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community listed in the Bali Concord II which is the basis of ASEAN's future work, is one proof of Indonesia's role in strengthening regionalism. At the time of the establishment of the ASEAN Community, it was necessary to have a sense of community among its members, so that then ASEAN organizations were required to have a sense of belonging (We Feeling) in their organization to continue to ensure the sustainability of the community in the Southeast Asia region. This paper aims to examine the contribution of interregionalism involving Indonesia as a member state of the ASEAN community in its involvement and role in strengthening regionalism through the concept of the ASEAN Way and We Feeling. This paper follows the theoretical argumentation of the concept of transactionalism, which states that intense and extensive interaction among regional actors is very important to produce a fundamental "We Feeling" foundation for the formation of regional organizations. Departing from this conception, this paper sees that the ASEAN Way factor as a universal norm of the ASEAN community provides a forum as well as boundaries for Indonesia's involvement in order to strengthen regionalism in the region. This can be seen through the non-intervention policy in the ASEAN Way, in which Indonesia is politically restricted from being involved in the internal affairs of other community members.

Keywords: ASEAN; Regionalism; Indonesia; We Feeling; ASEAN Way

Introduction

The establishment of the ASEAN regional organization which was marked by the signing of the Bangkok Declaration on 8th of August 1967 became the initial milestone of regionalism in the Southeast Asian region. In its formation, representatives from five countries agreed that ASEAN was formed without using an agreement to be ratified by its members, but only based on a declaration signed by five foreign ministers from member countries. The concept of “United Southeast Asia” has been a shared goal of ASEAN since its founding in 1967. This cannot be defined in terms of an integrated state, federal state, or unitary state but must be defined as an increasing sense of cohesion or cohesiveness among member countries of the ASEAN (Farida, 2015).

The concept of a United Southeast Asia does not make the ASEAN community a regional community that has the motivation to compete for power and influence with other regional communities, but rather brings the ASEAN community to be able to answer challenges to the needs of peace, stability, and development in the economic sector so that it can play a constructive and positive role in international relations. Therefore, the ASEAN community is built on recognition and respect for the differences and diversity of its members. Community terminology based on this understanding then refers to the notion of shared values, norms, and symbols that give a sense of identity or our sense of belonging (We Feeling). The ASEAN community can be described based on the community building formulation that community is one thing about people, and community development is a process of forming a state of mind (Luhulima, Dewi, & Ikrar, 2008).

In addition, the ASEAN Community was also formed to provide protection for its members against possible threats from outside the Southeast Asian region itself. Therefore, ASEAN has its own mechanism to resolve problems that occur within the region as regulated in the “ASEAN Charter”. In carrying out its duties, the ASEAN community has a universal norm called the ASEAN Way. The ASEAN Way plays a role in mediating various cultural differences and norms among its members which can sometimes lead to disputes. The ASEAN Way contains norms about non-intervention, non-use of armed forces, prioritizing the regional economy, and avoiding collective defense (Khoo, 2004).

The definition of the ASEAN Way shows that basically this concept is definitively continuous with the concept of We Feeling. The principles and rules in the ASEAN

Way such as the non-intervention policy provide a real obstacle for Indonesia to be actively involved in the domestic affairs of community members, but on the one hand this obstacle also provides a guarantee of sustainability for projects or programs and activities of ASEAN community interregional cooperation because there is a guarantee of freedom for member countries to manage their domestic affairs without having to worry about intervention from other members in the region.

An area or a region is a territorial confluence distinguished by the premise of geological proximity, culture, exchange, and interdependence of financial, communication, and useful support in organizations around the world (Raymond Hopkins and Richard Mansbach, 1973). Regionalism is an abstract concept; therefore it cannot be explained empirically. In a definitive sense, regionalism is in the sense of a moral position, while in its definition as a form of geopolitics, regionalism means a doctrine or about how international relations should be regulated.

Historically, the concept of regionalism is divided into two forms of regionalism, namely classical regionalism and new regionalism. Classical regionalism is a concept that developed in the 1960s in addition to the emergence of regional cooperative organizations, which were highly political in nature, in which the implementation of the organizations was regulated from a political point of view. The emergence of classical regionalism could be reached through two conditions. The first condition appeared in the preparatory version of the UN charter drawn up at Dumbarton Oaks in 1944 and stipulated that the existence of regional institutions that deal with issues related to peace and security and should not be impeded. The second condition was the emergence of organizations such as NATO, the Warsaw Pact, the Rio Pact, SEATO, CENTO, and ANZUS as regional agents which were subordinate to the power and influence struggle of the two states, the USA and the Soviet Union (Fawcett, 2005). New regionalism is a concept of regionalism that developed in the 1990s post-cold war period with a low political nature, in which the economic and cultural aspects dominated the cooperation of world countries. The new regionalism is mainly influenced by the role of non-state actors who often formed regional cooperation. This is due to the fact that in the modern era, regional cooperation is mostly constructed by the process of global transformation or globalization (Hettne & Soderbaum, 2008).

The formulation of the problem in this paper is how the ASEAN Way and We Feeling concepts affect Indonesia's role and involvement in strengthening regionalism in ASEAN.

The type of methodology used in this writing was a qualitative method. Qualitative method is a method that uses a descriptive approach in examining an issue (Mas'ood, 1990). This method was chosen because it would enable us to understand, explain, and describe the role of Indonesia in strengthening regionalism in ASEAN through the concepts of 'ASEAN Way' and 'We Feeling'. In addition, qualitative method also seeks to understand the problem or research topic from multiple perspectives. Qualitative research is very effective in obtaining specific information about certain values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts.

The research used data collection techniques in the form of literature studies by collecting various data from books, articles, and journals. The data analysis method used in this research was the data interpretation process. So after the data were collected, they needed to be sorted, categorized and interpreted so that they were in accordance with the research objectives, namely finding answers to the influence and involvement of Indonesia in strengthening regionalism with the concepts of the ASEANWay and We Feeling.

Finding and Discussion

Security is very important for a country. The country struggles to increase its power to create security. The country struggles to increase its strength to deal with every threat. In order to achieve the national interest, the country acts rationally by attaching importance to strength, especially increasing defense power.

The trend in security faced by Southeast Asia is a shift in regional security issues, such as the existence of various conflicts originating from territorial claims, security of maritime communication lines, and trade routes by sea, to non-traditional security issues such as terrorism, piracy at sea, arms smuggling, illegal migration, or illegal fishing. In addition, this is also greatly influenced by the dynamics of the countries that inhabit the region.

Southeast Asia, in this case, also already has the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting (ADDM) which is a forum for countries in Southeast Asia to carry out defense diplomacy. The ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting (ADMM) is an

ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting that discusses strengthening defense cooperation in the region in order to increase transparency, openness and mutual trust among ASEAN member countries.

ADMM is a cooperation platform among ASEAN Defense Ministers which aims to increase Confidence Building Measures (CBM) and to maintain peace and security stability in the region through dialogue and practical cooperation. ADDM is a form of expansion of ADMM Defense cooperation by involving 8 (eight) ASEAN Dialogue Partner Countries, namely the United States, Australia, People's Republic of China (PRC), Japan, Republic of Korea (ROK), New Zealand, India, and Russia.

In addition, Indonesia is a very active country and is involved in ADDM to carry out its diplomacy. Indonesia seeks to fulfill its national interests, especially in the field of defense. The ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting (ADMM) is the highest defense consultative and cooperation mechanism in ASEAN. ADMM aims to promote mutual trust and confidence through greater understanding of defense and security challenges and to increase transparency and openness.

The goals of ADDM are:

1. To promote regional peace and stability through dialogue and cooperation in the field of defense and security;
2. To provide direction to senior defense and military officials, dialogue and cooperation in the field of defense and security within ASEAN and between ASEAN and its dialogue partners
3. To promote mutual trust and confidence through a better understanding of defense and security challenges and to increase transparency and openness; and
4. To contribute to the establishment of the ASEAN Security Community (ASC) as stipulated in the Bali Concord II and to promote the implementation of the Vientiane Program of Action (VAP) in the ASC.

ASEAN uses a very strong principle of not interfering in each other's domestic affairs. The ASEAN Way or the traditional 'ASEAN Way' assumes that criticizing the political systems of other ASEAN member countries is taboo and should be avoided in order to maintain regional harmony. Khoo (2004) explains that ASEAN is an integration that has finally succeeded in being formed after various efforts to regionalize Southeast Asia failed, such as Maphilindo.

The ASEAN Way can be said to show the fair and advanced conditions of its members. Their decision to disobey or walk away from mutually agreed agreements has never happened or will be subject to sanctions or other forms of serious retaliation. Cooperative arrangements are based on a minimalist, shareable set of values, with an inherent emphasis on flexibility and pragmatism, and a rarity on binding rules. Prohibitions or provisions regarding violations or non-compliance with existing agreements are too lax (Saragih, 2020).

In addition, ASEAN was formed during the Cold War so that one of its concerns was to block the influence of communism which had penetrated Indochina through Vietnam. Acharya (2001 in Khoo, 2004) argues that ASEAN is a growing security community. The security community itself is characterized by the absence of war, various significant organized preparations for dealing with war such as contingent military planning, as well as military power competition among community members.

Indonesia's Role in Strengthening ASEAN Regionalism

Indonesia has always viewed the importance of ASEAN cooperation for the achievement of national, regional and global interests. Indonesia has a vision for ASEAN to develop into an independent and secure region. This vision is in line with paragraph IV of the opening of the 1945 Constitution which states that one of the objectives of conducting foreign policy is to realize the ideals of the Indonesian nation, namely protecting the interests of the nation and state, advancing public welfare, educating the nation's life, and participating in maintaining peace and world order.

Indonesia has played a very important role in the development of ASEAN. Considering that Indonesia is part of the main environment of this region, its role will determine the future of this region. This important role is especially evident from Indonesia's role in its active involvement in the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting (ADDM) which is a forum for countries in Southeast Asia to carry out defense diplomacy.

Regarding Indonesia's own role in regional security issues, as mentioned earlier, Indonesia views ASEAN as an instrument that can create regional stability. The role that Indonesia has played so far in the security sector can be seen in the example of the case when Indonesia became a mediator in the resolution of the Cambodian conflict, in particular by holding the Jakarta Formal Meeting twice at

the end of the 1980s. Besides, Indonesia also has tried to resolve the Spratly Island conflict between the Philippines and China since 1990 so that when referring to the 42 years of the founding of ASEAN, this organization has been running well and has made a great contribution to the stability of the Southeast Asian region and Indonesia has played an important role for the success of the regional security dimension.

Although Indonesia is actively involved in maintaining the stability of the Southeast Asian region, the question of the effectiveness of the ASEAN Political-Security Community in the future has become a critical question. This is due to the principles of the 'ASEAN Way' which have been adopted by ASEAN member countries in dealing with problems in the region as the main guideline. Principles such as sovereignty, consensus-based decision making, and non-interference will result in at least three major problems in the implementation of the ASEAN political-security community in the future, namely: 1) Obstructing conflict management mechanisms; 2) hindering the enforcement of democracy and human rights values; and 3) hindering the achievement of ASEAN goals (Dewi, 1994). This then raises deeper questions regarding the relevance of Indonesia's role in strengthening regionalism in the future.

In general then it can be said that Indonesia's role in the regional security dimension can be said to be very adequate. In addition to Indonesia being the initiator, Indonesia can also include several articles in the APSC (ASEAN Political-Security Community) such as promoting good governance, promoting principles of democracy, promotion and protection of human rights, promoting peace and stability in the region (especially in terms of south china sea), preventing and combating of corruption, promoting stability in maritime sea, and several other articles in the APSC Blueprint agreed at Cha-Am Hua Hin, Thailand. In addition to this pillar, Indonesia actually emphasizes changes in ASEAN countries to be more democratic through the characteristics contained in this pillar, namely political development in ASEAN countries.

However, the problem here is that there are differences in the application of discourse and practice in reality, for example, Indonesia articulates the value of democracy but on the other side, and Indonesia is not firm with the Myanmar Junta government and welcomes the arrival of leaders who do not go through a smooth democratic process in their country. This is an irony in itself in Indonesia's role in the ASC pillar. Indonesia, which should have played an

important role as a mediator in resolving the problems in Myanmar, seems less proactive. Even though Indonesia should have mediated the conflict between Vietnam and Cambodia in the 1980s, and Indonesia's current position which is considered to have returned to stability with its democracy, Indonesia should have been able to play a more proactive leadership role in the political-security dimension of ASEAN.

Conclusion

In order to further streamline Indonesia's role in the political-security dimension and also to streamline the vision of establishing an ASEAN Security Community, Indonesia needs to encourage other ASEAN member countries to streamline the implementation of the peaceful dispute settlement mechanism within the ASEAN framework. With Indonesia encouraging other ASEAN member countries to have the same perception regarding security and anticipating strategies, the mechanisms in the region that have been made in detail to anticipate security issues, both in terms of insurgency, separatism, terrorism, and transnational crimes will again meet a glimmer of hope. However, if Indonesia's playing style in the political-security dimension of ASEAN has not changed and tends to regard ASEAN as a "house of cards" which is very vulnerable to the dynamics of its member countries, then Indonesia's previously adequate leadership role in promoting ASEAN regionalism will only become a paradox that does not bring ASEAN closer to its vision as a regional community.

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