

CONFLICT AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: TRENDS AND PATTERNS

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Rantau Asia Tenggara merupakan rantau yang dibelenggu oleh bermacam jenis konflik dari dulu lagi. Konflik-konflik ini boleh dibahagikan kepada dua peringkat iaitu di peringkat antarabangsa dan juga peringkat domestik atau dalam negara. Langkah-langkah yang digunakan untuk mengurus dan menyelesaikan konflik-konflik ini juga tertakluk kepada peringkat konflik-konflik tersebut, disamping beberapa perkiraan lain yang perlu diambil oleh negara-negara yang terlibat, seperti faktor-faktor politik, ekonomi, sosial dan keselamatan. Rencana ini memulakan perbincangan dengan memberikan gambaran umum tentang keadaan konflik di rantau ini. Perbincangan kemudiannya beralih kepada huraian teori-teori pemetaan konflik sebagai permulaan kepada pembinaan satu kerangka teoritikal bagi membincangkan konflik-konflik di rantau ini. Seterusnya, rencana ini membincangkan apakah tren dan corak umum konflik dan penyelesaian konflik di rantau ini. Peranan Pertubuhan Negara-negara Asia Tenggara (ASEAN) dalam pengurusan konflik yang wujud di rantau ini juga dibincangkan dalam bahagian terakhir rencana ini. Perbincangan tentang kes-kes konflik dan penyelesaian konflik di peringkat antarabangsa dan domestik kemudiannya diteruskan dalam rencana-rencana lain dalam edisi ini. Kesimpulan yang boleh dibuat daripada rencana ini dan juga lain-lain rencana dalam edisi ini ialah bahawa terdapat kaedah-kaedah lazim yang biasa digunakan dalam pengurusan dan penyelesaian konflik di rantau ini. Walau bagaimanapun, keadaan semasa memerlukan penilaian semula kaedah-kaedah ini untuk memastikan keadaan aman dalam ertikata yang sebenarnya dapat diwujudkan.

INTRODUCTION

Southeast Asia in the year 2001 is a region still beset by domestic conflicts and international tensions. This is despite the long experience the Southeast Asian countries have had in managing conflicts and maintaining inter-state relations, and also despite a period of economic boom in the early to mid 1990s which have resulted in relative peace and stability for the region. The period of economic crisis, which started in 1997, however, showed how fragile the

Southeast Asian economies and political structures can really be. It also illuminated the tensions and conflicts both within individual states, which ranged from revolutionary movements to armed separatism as well as conflicts between states, which continue to irritate inter-state relations.

Before going into a discussion of conflict and conflict management trends in the region, it is illuminating to ponder the question asked by Ruth McVey on armed separatism in Southeast Asia:

"...the question to be posed is not so much of why there is armed separatism in Southeast Asia as of why there is not more of it. In other words, with such shallow roots, with boundaries fixed by colonial rivalries as much as by cultural or national barriers, flying in the face of ancient folkways and immediate individual interests - what glues the Southeast Asian state together?" (McVey, 1984: 3).

Despite McVey's question of why there is not more conflict, we can be sure that this "region of revolt" (Osborne, 1971) is never short of conflicts because as an observer pointed out, it "has not passed a single day in at least forty years without major insurgent activity" (Jackson, 1985:3). The question is even more relevant today especially when combined with problems which arose out of the Asian economic crisis. That is why McVey's question of what holds the *Southeast Asian state* together is important. This question can equally be asked of the other types of conflicts in the region: inter-state and revolutionary conflicts. Revolutionary conflicts share a common category with state formation conflicts: they are both internal conflicts. Thus, McVey's question directly applies to them as well. For inter-state conflicts, however, the focus is slightly different. They are not restricted to the boundaries of a single state, but the combined boundaries of all ASEAN countries. Nevertheless, McVey's question can also be posed to these countries, with a slight modification: what glues the *Southeast Asian states* together?

This paper will try to start off the discussion of conflict and conflict management in this edition. It surveys some conflicts in ASEAN countries, making generalizations of the trends along the way. There will be an attempt to answer the two questions of what glues the *Southeast Asian state* together, and what glues the *Southeast Asian states* together. As will be shown in this paper, the strategies of conflict management have been different both between the levels (inter and intra) as well as between countries. What works at the inter-state level might not work at the intra-state level and vice versa. What is being done in one country might also be done differently in another country with varying degrees of success. The key factors are the ways the parties have

approached the various types of conflicts, the ways the conflicts have been defined, and the conflict management approaches and mechanisms used. The other papers in this volume, especially those written by Amer, Ortuoste and Thambipillai, will continue this discussion of what holds the Southeast Asian states together and how they have managed conflicts between themselves.

The paper begins by discussing some general ideas on conflict typologies, including conflict mapping. This will be used as the basis to analyse conflict cases in the region. Some cases will then be highlighted to show general trends and patterns. Other papers in this volume will highlight other specific aspects of conflict and conflict management in the region. Amer, Ortuoste and Thambipillai will look at cases of conflicts between Southeast Asian countries and highlight strategies used to deal with these conflicts. All of them will touch on conflict management strategies involving the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Specifically, Ortuoste focuses on the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and its implications for Southeast Asian security, while Thambipillai looks at some culturally-influenced conflict management approaches such as the consensus-seeking decision making approach of “*musyawarah*” and “*muafakat*”. Amer looks also at some of the more formal ASEAN documents to highlight existing procedures within the organization to handle conflict.

The other papers are divided into two groups. One focuses on the implications of extra-regional political situations on the security of Southeast Asia. Specifically, the writers have all focused on the impact that China has on the region. Swanstrom looks at China’s foreign policy outlooks, while Luo Qi discusses China-Taiwan relations and how they affect the security of the region. Mak focuses on the Spratly islands conflict and discusses how China’s political calculations will have an impact on the outcome of the conflict.

The last group of papers looks at intra-regional conflict case studies. Mansor focuses on the social conflicts in Malaysia and Indonesia that emerged after the Asian economic crisis of 1997 and asks questions on the effect of religion on these conflicts. Finally, Teehankee discusses the internal armed conflicts in the Philippines. He also discusses the strategies used by the different regimes of Marcos, Aquino, Ramos and Estrada in handling the conflicts as well as the effectiveness of these strategies.

A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

Conflict Mapping

One of the best way to observe the trends and patterns of conflict situations involve mapping them. Before conflict management strategies or techniques can be reviewed, we need to know, first of all, about the conflict, its processes, dynamics and structure. Questions need to be asked about the frequency of the conflicts, how they emerged, who are the parties, what are the issues or incompatibilities involved, and how they have been managed or resolved. The history and progress of the conflicts need to be charted along with any attempts at transforming the conflict situations and their outcomes. This exercise is an integral part of analysing conflict situations and is called conflict mapping.

Wehr argues that "the macroscopic view of conflict emerging from (a) review of transdisciplinary theory is essential for students of conflict, but it is not very helpful for analysing specific conflict situation. For that one needs a map as a framework for analysis" (Wehr, 1979: 18). Wehr goes into great detail about this and mentions that conflict mapping should include information such as conflict description, history, context, issues, dynamics, alternative routes to solutions, and conflict regulation potentials.¹

Wehr's method of conflict mapping is also evident in the work of other analysts involved in the study of conflict and conflict management, with modifications, of course, depending on the scope and concentration of each particular analytical strategy. For example, in his illustration of case studies involving 81 conflicts, Miall describes and examines conflicts in terms of their areas; parties;

¹ I. Summary Description; II. Conflict History; III. Conflict Context; IV. Conflict Parties. (A) Primary; (B) Secondary; (C) Interested Parties; V. Issues. (A) Facts-based; (B) Values-based; (C) Interests-based; (D) Non-realistic.

VI. Dynamics. (A) Precipitating events; (B) Issue mergence, transformation, proliferation; (C) Polarization; (D) Spiralling; (E) Stereotyping and mirror-imaging.

VII. Alternative Routes to Solution(s) of the Problem(s).

VIII. Conflict Regulation Potential. (A) Internal limiting factors; (B) External limiting factors; (C) Interested or neutral third parties; (D) Techniques of conflict management.

For a detailed explanation of Wehr's conflict mapping guide, please refer to Wehr, (1979: Chapter 1).

third parties; issues; (use or non-use of) coercion; hostilities; fatalities; and, resolution. He then gives a descriptive account of each conflict's background, and development, and, where applicable, resolution, outcome, and factors affecting the settlement of each conflict (Miall, 1992: Part 5).

Similarly, Peter Wallensteen and his Uppsala team have made a comprehensive list of armed conflicts and major trouble spots around the world, based on their own definitions and understanding of conflict (Wallensteen, 1988; Wallensteen, 1999; Wallensteen and Axell, 1994: 333-349; Wallensteen and Sollenberg, 1995: 345-360). Armed conflict is defined by the Uppsala team as "armed contested incompatibilities which concern government and/or territory, where the use of armed force by two parties of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths" (Wallensteen, 1994: 333). This definition is further broken into two categories, which are called "minor" and "major" armed conflicts, based on the number of battle-related deaths.² However, this type of typology of armed conflicts has its limitations, i.e. its inapplicability due to the number of battle related deaths required to classify any conflict. In the case of conflicts in Southeast Asia it is sometimes more useful to use general definitions which do not restrict the classifications in such a way. For example, in their discussion of the proposal for a framework of analysis for armed separatism in Southeast Asia, Paribatra and Samudavanija defined armed separatism as,

"a process whereby an ethnic group, seeks to secede or gain autonomy from the control, *de facto* and *de jure*, of a given state, through an organized and purposeful use of force, alone or in combination with other means. Such use of force constitutes acts of revolutionary violence in that it expresses a rejection of the prevailing political system and a determination to bring about 'progressive' changes by overthrowing this system" (Paribatra and Samudavanija, 1984: 32).

² According to Wallensteen, minor armed conflicts are those where the battle-related deaths during the course of the conflict are below 1000; major armed conflicts can be divided into two: intermediate conflicts, where there are more than 1000 battle-related deaths recorded during the course of the conflict, and where 25 but less than 1000 deaths have occurred during a particular year; and, wars, where there are more than 1000 battle-related deaths during one particular year. For further information, please see Wallensteen, (1994, 1995).

Such general description of a conflict situation is much better suited for a study of this kind, which involves looking at conflicts at different tiers or levels.

Types of Conflict: an Overview

To effectively analyze the roles, involvement, and effectiveness of ASEAN countries in managing conflicts within the region, certain limitations need to be made as to the types of conflict included in this study. The methodological framework for this classification will be roughly based on a combination of Miall's and Wallensteen's overview of conflicts. An overview of what is called the "international social conflicts" (ISC) will also be done in this section to highlight the difficulties involved in classifying conflicts into particular categories.

Wallensteen broadly grouped conflicts into 3 categories:

1. Classic wars: i.e. conflicts involving two governments using their military forces against one another;
2. Wars of state formation: i.e. conflicts involving one government and an opposition group demanding autonomy or secession for a particular ethnic group or region;
3. Internal wars: i.e. conflicts over the control of government within a given state, the existence of which is not questioned, and where the issues involved may concern changes within the existing politico-economic framework or changes of the system as such (Waleensteen, 1989: 6).

The explanation for these three definitions of conflict is quite straight forward. These 3 conflicts can also be divided into an inter-state conflict (1), and intra-state conflicts (2 and 3). Wallensteen, however, notes that conflict (2), state-formation conflicts, is in fact an "in-between category", notably because "they involve the changes of internal institution, when expressed as demands for autonomy, but affect the international community, when expressed as demands for independence or change of statehood" (Wallensteen, 1989: 6). This uncertainty regarding certain types of intra-state conflict was echoed by Miall who says that, "a strict distinction between internal and international conflict is difficult to maintain, since much conflict starts within states and then spills over their borders, while international conflict often exacerbates domestic conflicts" (Miall, 1992: 114). Ramsbotham and Woodhouse call this phenomenon an "international-social conflict" (ISC), which they define as "neither purely inter-state conflict (such as the Iran-Iraq war), nor confined within the normal institutionalised rules and procedures of domestic conflict management (such as the aftermath of the Los Angeles riots), but sprawls somewhere between the two" (Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 1996: 87). These ISCs can have

similarities in objectives and characteristics with inter-state conflicts (i.e. territorial acquisition), and internal/revolutionary conflicts (i.e. religious or political programmes imposed upon the government). The distinguishing factor is that they are fundamentally about "enduring identity groups which are organised to insist on the satisfaction of their needs, interests, and beliefs which do challenge the integrity of the state" (Lewer, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 1995: 18). This type of conflict has been given numerous other terms in the past such as "internal conflict", or, "civil war", but these terms do not capture the further "twin characteristics of ISCs: (a) that they are rooted in relations between communal groups within state borders (the 'social' component, and (b) that they have broken out of the domestic arena and become a crisis for the state itself, thus automatically involving the wider society of states (the 'international' component)" (Lewer, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 1995: 25). According to Lewer et al, there are four gradations within the ISCs:

(i) countries where there are incompatibilities between identity groups but where levels of conflict are minor (less than 1,000 deaths since inception) and humanitarian concern (denials of rights + refugee flows) compared with severe cases of ISC is low (**potential** ISC);

(ii) countries where incompatibilities between identity groups are putting pressure on the state system, where conflicts are moderate (25-1,000 in one year) and humanitarian concern is rising but which have not yet destroyed or broken through the state system (**threshold** ISCs);

(iii) Conflicts which have fractured the state system and rage unresolved (**severe** ISCs);

(iv) conflicts which have a history of ISC at level (ii) above but which are lessening in severity and subject to peace agreement or cease-fires (**dormant** ISCs) (Lewer, Ramsbotham, and Woodhouse, 1995: 18).

A fifth category, which is called latent ISCs, is also evident. This type of conflict includes those conflicts where communal identity forms the basis of discontent with state policy and development, but where frustrations have not become intense enough to challenge state stability.

There are four structural features which are conducive to the outbreak of international-social conflicts:

- (i) Social heterogeneity and the discrepancy between existing state borders and the distribution of peoples and cultures. Lewer et al argues that ISC is more likely to arise in culturally heterogeneous than in culturally homogeneous states.
- (ii) The political crisis of the contemporary state. It is suggested that ISC is more likely to arise in politically weak and unintegrated states, particularly 'quasi-states', than in strong states with developed representative institutions.
- (iii) Underdevelopment and asymmetries of wealth and power. Here, ISC is more likely to arise in societies which suffer from economic underdevelopment, or where resources are perceived to be unevenly distributed, than in developed states capable of delivering some measure of distributional justice.
- (iv) The influence of cross-border politics. The generalisation made here is that ISC is more likely to arise where external relations across borders or with other states exacerbate the situation than where they do not (Lewer, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 1995: 29-33)

The phenomenon of ISCs, as explained by Lewer, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, quite efficiently cover the essence of conflicts between communal groups and their possible implications for not only the state, but also the international community. Examples are the various communal conflicts in Indonesia such as in Ambon and Kalimantan. However, many of the conflicts in the ASEAN countries have also involved the government as an active party to the conflict, either as an extension of a communal group involved in the conflict, or as the government being directly challenged by an opposing group (which in many cases is representing a particular type of people based on ethnicity, religious, language, culture, or all of them). When this happens, the position of the ISCs is not quite so clear. This is perhaps what Ramsbotham and Woodhouse meant by the "grey areas". In some cases, however, the government can and does represent a particular communal group. For example, the conflict in Southern Thailand between the Pattani Muslims and the Thai government (seen as representing Thai-Buddhist interests). Another example is the conflict between the Moro-Muslims of the Southern Philippines islands against the government of the Philippines which is seen as representing Filipino-Christians interests. Although they have both involved the government as a party, conflicts like the two mentioned above, along with conflicts which have been resolved such as in the former East Timor between the Indonesian government and the Timorese people can be classified as examples of ISCs in ASEAN countries. This is because they fulfilled both requirements of the ISCs,

namely that it has to happen between two communal groups and that it has broken out of the domestic arena. The latter characteristic may not be as clear cut as the first one, but all three cases have involved sympathetic third parties helping out the non-government sides: elements from Malaysia and other Muslim countries have at one time or another helped the Pattani people in Southern Thailand and the Moros in the Philippines, and Portugal and international (especially, Catholic Christian and human rights interest groups) protests have raised the Timorese case at the international level.

Definitions and scope

This section will describe and define some of the working definitions used in this discussion. By **conflict**, we will mean: a situation where a minimum of two parties have incompatible views on a political issue(s), based on differing interests and perspectives, and pursuing the matter via either informal or formal action(s).

The parties to the conflict may include the parties mentioned below:

1. A sovereign government (i.e. any ASEAN country - Malaysia, Indonesia etc.).
2. Any organization or group which has a grievance/interest/cause against the government (i.e. PKM, PULO etc.), or another organization or group and seeking to rectify the situation or pursue it's interests.

Types of conflict:

1. **Inter-state:** a conflict based on a political incompatibility between two or more countries over an issue(s), or action(s), or both.
2. **State formation:** a conflict which involves a government and a group demanding autonomy or forms of secession from the existing state.
3. **Revolutionary:** a conflict which involves a revolutionary group as one of the parties and can either be within the established system (i.e. military coup), or concerning demands for revolutionary changes (i.e. democracy, socialist, or religious state).
4. **Socio-political:** a conflict which arises out of social and political changes and developments within a particular country. It can be over deep-rooted differences that have surfaced because of policy changes or certain crises in a particular country or even within the region.
5. **International Social Conflicts (ISCs):** a situation where an internal conflict has gained prominence at the international level and has invited outside interests to participate in the conflict.

These conflicts can be roughly grouped into two types of conflict:

(1) inter-state, and (2) intra-state (state formation, revolutionary and socio-political types of conflict). An intra-state conflict can also be called an ISC depending on the involvement of outside parties in the conflict. Analyses and comparisons can be made of the different strategies of conflict management to tackle these conflicts. A second comparison can also be made of the strategies to manage the various intra-state conflicts. Each conflict can be labelled using one or more of the typologies given above. There are bound to be cases where a particular conflict will include two or more categories because of overlapping interests, parties or conflict dynamics.

CONFLICTS INVOLVING ASEAN COUNTRIES

Conflicts within the ASEAN countries over the last forty years can be put into the categories described above. Many of these conflicts, especially those involving secessionist and insurgency movements, were generally not products of the cold war. They were in fact products of the earlier period of colonialism and the process of decolonialization. They have, however, remained as problems that still need to be resolved even after so many years. Then there are conflicts that emerged or resurfaced after the economic crisis of 1997. Also, although inter-state conflicts in the region are unlikely to evolve into full-scale conflicts, they remain as sources of tension, suspicion and misunderstanding.

Examples of some of the ongoing conflicts involving ASEAN countries, divided into inter-state and intra-state conflicts, include the following:

Inter-state:

1. The Sabah claim by the Philippines.
2. The South China Sea Dispute.
3. Competing claims to the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea involving Malaysia, Brunei, the Philippines, Vietnam, Taiwan and China.
4. Dispute between Malaysia and Singapore over Pulau Batu Putih (Pedra Blanca), an island about 55 km east of Singapore in the Straits of Johor.
5. Boundary dispute between Indonesia and Vietnam on their demarcation line on the continental shelf in the South China Sea, near Natuna Island.
6. Boundary dispute between Indonesia and the Philippines in the Celebes Sea.
7. Border disputes between Malaysia and Brunei over the unmarked, 247 km land border between Brunei and Malaysia, as well as the limits of their respective 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone.

8. Dispute between Malaysia and Indonesia over the islands of Sipadan, Sebatik and Ligitan in the Celebes Sea, about 35 km from the city of Semporna in Sabah.

Intra-state:

1. Armed communist insurgencies in the Philippines.
2. Moro-Muslim separatist movement in Southern Philippines.
3. Pattani-Muslim separatist movement in the Southern Thailand provinces of Narathiwat, Pattani, Yala and Songkhla.
4. The Aceh separatist movement in northern Sumatra, Indonesia.
5. Spillover from the independence of East Timor.
6. Separatist movement in West Papua, Indonesia, led by the Free Papua Organisation.
7. Communal conflicts in various parts of Indonesia including in Jakarta, Kalimantan, and Ambon.

TRENDS AND PATTERNS OF CONFLICTS

Inter-state conflicts

The conflicts in the lists above can be surveyed according to their parties, issues involved, background, conflict management (CM) methods used, and their outcomes. From there, we can make some generalizations about the trends and patterns of the conflicts. Firstly, many of the issues in contention in the inter-state and state formation conflicts can be traced back to the colonial period and the uncertainties caused by independence. Many inter-state conflicts have as their root causes contested territories and interests between the states involved. Also, because of the territorial nature of the conflicts, they are all very difficult to resolve, coming up from time to time to affect relations between the conflicting parties. At the same time, there were also tensions which have resulted from differences in opinions about the policies of neighbouring countries.

One example of an inter-state conflict that was resolved outright was the confrontation or “konfrontasi”³ between Malaysia and Indonesia which

³ **“Konfrontasi” (Malaysia-Indonesia confrontation) (1963-1966):**

Background: When President Sukarno of Indonesia heard that Malaysia was going to be formed incorporating peninsular Malaya, Singapore, and the states of Sabah and Sarawak in Borneo, he said that the move was an extension of western imperialism engineered by the British and the Malaysian

happened in the period between 1963 and 1966. Agreements were reached in 1966 to end the war and friendly ties between the parties were resumed shortly after that. It can even be said that the formation of ASEAN in 1967 was a continuation of the process of reconciliation between the two countries. The general feeling at that time was that a regional organization with a multitude of common goals and objectives would bring the warring countries as well as other regional neighbours closer together.

Another example of a conflict that can be considered as resolved was the "officer hanging incident"⁴ which happened in 1968 involving Singapore and

Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman. He claimed the whole area to be part of Indonesia Raya (Greater Indonesia). He embarked on a campaign to disrupt the fragile new state of Malaysia by sending his troops to Borneo and the western part of the Malay peninsula, and by conducting a huge propaganda campaign against Malaysia. He was unsuccessful because Malaysia had the backing of troops from Britain, Australia, and New Zealand. At home his popularity declined and he was finally toppled by a military coup in 1965 led by General Suharto who was to become the president of Indonesia until today.

Conflict management: A state of war existed between Malaysia and Indonesia between 1963 and 1965. The war break down after Sukarno lost power in the abortive GESTAPU coup in 1965 and the rise of Suharto who immediately repudiated the aggressive policies of his predecessor. Indonesia also went on to repair ties with Malaysia and together with other Southeast Asian countries formed ASEAN in 1967. **Outcome:** Resolved.

⁴ **Officer hanging incident (1968):**

Background: Two Indonesian officers were sentenced to death by the Singaporean government on charges of espionage during the "konfrontasi". This incident caused a public uproar in Indonesia and there were calls for the Indonesian government to act against Singapore. President Suharto asked for leniency by Singapore but his request was turned down. No further actions were taken after that although relations between the two countries were strained.

Conflict management: Restraint by Indonesia in the name of ASEAN unity. This was among the first test of the ASEAN conflict management process. Although public pressure was very strong asking for Indonesia to intervene, good sense prevailed in the end. Singapore, on the other hand, has always felt vulnerable as the smallest state in ASEAN and especially for being surrounded by "Malay" states. It, however, states that it has to uphold the decision to maintain its integrity as a sovereign state. This line of action is

Indonesia. Although no formal actions were taken to lower the tension between Singapore and Indonesia, the conflict lapsed after a while and eventually forgotten. In fact this "non-action", especially on the part of Indonesia, contributed greatly to the reducing of the tension and the normalization of relations. Another case which was not formally ended but was forgotten after a while was the "Contemplacion affair"⁵ of 1995 involving Singapore and the Philippines. Despite diplomatic relations being severed for a short period, the conflict lapsed after a while and relations were resumed with both parties agreeing to put the incident behind them.

evident in Singapore's foreign policy making throughout the first period of the "formative stage" (Askandar, 1994). **Outcome:** Lapsed (resolved)

⁵ **The Flor Contemplacion Affair (1995):**

Background: A Filipino citizen, Flor Contemplacion, who was working as a maid in Singapore was found guilty by the Singaporean court for the murder of a fellow Filipino maid. Contemplacion denied the charges but was found guilty and sentenced to death by hanging. There was a huge uproar in the Philippines over this sentence and there was a call by the Filipino government through President Ramos requesting for a stay of execution and the re-investigation of the case because of the belief that Contemplacion might have been wrongly convicted. These requests were denied and the sentence was carried out. Relations between the two countries worsen and resulted in the withdrawal of both ambassadors. Throughout this period, however, the two countries maintained their dialogue not only over the case but also over a whole range of bilateral and multilateral cooperation. A Filipino diplomat said that she felt that during this time diplomatic relations between the two countries have actually increased in its intensity (Askandar, 1996: Appendix 3). She said that they have never felt closer to the Singaporean leadership than during this time. There was no question at all that ASEAN unity was going to be affected by this case. She said that the Philippines government was under tremendous pressure at home to do something about the case, and that was why the ambassador was recalled and formal diplomatic relations suspended. It was also to the credit of the other ASEAN countries that they did not take sides in the conflict and refrain from making public comments regarding the issue which could have an effect on the conflict. A Malaysian diplomat said that other ASEAN countries rallied behind the two countries and tried to pacify the situation by way of informal talks and discussions (Askandar, 1996: Appendix 2). In the end, the tension cooled off and diplomatic relations was restored.

Conflict management: Restraint by both parties, along with informal talks between them. "Informal mediation" by other ASEAN countries to pacify the situation. **Outcome:** Lapsed/Resolved.

It is also interesting to note that the only conflict over territory that has been fully resolved was the one before ASEAN was created (the Malaysian-Indonesian “konfrontasi”). The other conflicts have all persisted despite moves by the parties involved to rectify the problems. It needs to be said, however, that these conflicts have been reduced in their severity and do not pose as big a risk to bilateral relations as they once did. There have also been initiatives to settle some of the conflicts. For example, Indonesia has taken the initiative to bring together parties to the Spratly islands⁶ conflict in a “Workshop on Managing Conflicts in the South China Sea”. No solutions have yet to be found for this issue, although the parties have agreed to try find a peaceful solution to the problem. On the other hand, Malaysia and Singapore have agreed to send their dispute over Pulau Batu Putih⁷ for arbitration to the International Court of Justice. Although this signals their intentions of finding a peaceful solution to the dispute as outlined by the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, it also underlines their unwillingness to use existing procedures of conflict settlement such as those provided under the Treaty of Amity.⁸

State-formation conflicts

All the state formation conflicts have also involved territories and the perceived artificial national boundaries. This has led to attempts by secessionist organizations to secede from the state and create new states based on their communal identities. To summarize the many variables involved in their identification as separate communal identities, we can say that these conflicts

⁶ Please refer to Mak’s paper in this volume.

⁷ **Pulau Batu Putih (Pedra Blanca):**

Background: Pulau Batu Putih or the island of Pedra Blanca is a small island situated between Malaysia and Singapore in the Strait of Johore. Its only importance is a lighthouse situated on the island. Both parties, however, claim that it has strategic importance because of its location. This conflict has never threaten relations between the two countries and is only contested because of principles. More recently, the success of the Growth Triangle incorporating the state of Johore in Malaysia, the island of Batam in Indonesia, and Singapore has positively affected relations between the two countries and the conflict has consistently decreased in importance.

Conflict management: This conflict has been dealt with bilaterally between the two countries. More recently, this conflict has been sent to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at the Hague for arbitration. No decision has been made yet. **Outcome:** Not resolved.

⁸ Please refer to Amer’s paper in this volume.

are over "socio-political" issues, which include communal identity, language, religion, cultural, economic, and political survival of a particular group. All the organizations advocating independence in the ASEAN countries have stressed these points, although they may differ in terms of the main issue in focus, i.e. religion, economic, or political. Most of the time however, a combination of these issues have been cited as the reasons behind secessionist activities. Ultimately, they all see the creation of a separate sovereign state as the only solution to their problems. To achieve this goal, they have all been involved in armed uprising against the central government with varying degrees of successes. Most of the cases have been dealt with using a combination of aggressive government suppression and more peaceful programmes including negotiations and appeasement policies.⁹

There are also more cases of state formation conflicts in Indonesia than in any other ASEAN countries.¹⁰ This can be attributed to the fact that Indonesia is the biggest country with the largest number of people, many of whom belong to separate ethnic, language, and religious groups. Many of these groups have been unhappy under centralized Indonesian rule because of the perceived injustices done to them. All secessionist activities in Indonesia, with the exception of the one in former East Timor, have however proved unsuccessful because of swift and severe actions taken by the Indonesian authorities.

Revolutionary Conflicts

Revolutionary type conflicts differ from the other two because their main objective is not power over a particular territory, but over the whole country. Their main goal is to create a revolution, wrest control of the government, and ultimately create a new government. Many of the revolutionary movements surveyed are ideology-based groups, either pro-communist, pro-democracy, or pro-religious. Cases in the region of pro-communist insurgencies are numerous in countries like Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Indonesia. All of them, however, have died down with the possible exception of the Philippines where the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing the New People's Army (NPA) are still surviving.¹¹

⁹ See Teehankee's paper in this volume on the policies toward armed separatism in the Philippines.

¹⁰ Examples are in the former East Timor, Aceh, Riau, and West Papua (Irian Jaya).

¹¹ **New People's Army (NPA) (1969-)**

Parties: The Philippines government vs the New People's Army (NPA) (*Bagong Hukbong Bayan*)

Background: The NPA is the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). The CPP itself was a splinter group of the old *Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas* (PKP) and its military wing, the *Hukbong Magpapalaya ng Bayan* (HMB or Huks). The CPP was established in December 1968 by young, middle class intellectual cadres who broke away from the PKP because of generational and ideological differences. The CPP/NPA has grown over the years and has managed to attract large numbers of followers as a response to the repressive and inequalitarian policies of the Marcos government. By 1985, it has an estimated 10,000 to 12,000 regulars which expanded to 25,000 in 1987 and supported by (according to it) 6 million Filipinos in 60 provinces. The reason behind the CPP/NPA's continuing attraction has to be the endless poverty and perceived social injustices as well as military misbehaviours in the countryside, in direct contrast to communist ideology's promise of equality of access to material goods and a more just social order. The failure of the government to provide for the economic well being of the people at that time has left no alternative for an increasing number of Filipinos but to join the NPA or, at the very least, give it their sympathetic support. It comes as no surprise then that the eastern rim of the Philippine archipelago, areas where traditionally government neglect has been the rule rather than the exception, and where large scale poverty can be found, have been a success with the NPA recruiters. At the same time, because of rampant corruption among government personnel including the police, soldier and paramilitary personnel, the people of the countryside who were victimised have no other recourse within the system. They then become easy targets for the NPA's propaganda, and the NPA in turn are perceived as the people's protectors against harassment and abuses by government agents. The Filipino government has tried to counter the popularity of the NPA by passing policies aimed at gaining the support of the poor, such as the land reform programme started in 1972. It also adopted other measures to meet the problem of insurgency, such as the TANGLAW (*Tanod at Gabay ng Lahi at Watawat*) programme to provide the appropriate motivational orientation to soldiers, OPLAN KATATANGAN (Operation Plan Stability) to improve the military and socio-economic aspects of counter insurgency, as well as various military reforms after 1983. However, these policies have proved insufficient to counter the communist challenge which seems to have grown more serious.

Conflict management: Military solutions such as the TANGLAW programme which involved reforms in the military, i.e. discipline and motivation; Civic Action, which saw the military providing services ranging from medical care to infrastructure construction and family assistance. The

Pro-democracy revolutions have been more prevalent in recent years with success stories from the Philippines and Indonesia, with Marcos being replaced by Aquino and then Estrada replaced by Arroyo in the Philippines, and Suharto toppled after 32 years in power in Indonesia. These revolutions were successful because of popular support from the majority of the masses representing all aspects of their societies.

Lastly, pro-religious revolutions have been unsuccessful in the region because of the multi-ethnic and multi-religious nature of many of the countries. Examples are the Islamic movements in Indonesia in the 1950's and 1960's where the Darul Islam and the BPRRI have as their goal the take-over of the government, and in Darul Islam's case, an Islamic revolution and the creation of a new Islamic state.¹² However, these Islamic-based revolutionary movements

aim here was to initiate projects to improve the people in the community; OPLAN KATATANGAN, which was the same as Civic Action with the goal of winning the hearts of the people and weaning them away from the insurgency groups such as the CPP/NPA. The plan involved the development of a people-oriented military and the adoption of a combination of security and development operations with the cooperation of the relevant government ministries and agencies. The plan also recognized the relationship between security and stability on the one hand and economic development and well being on the other. Lastly, OPLAN MAMAYAN (Operation Plan Citizen) was launched after the February Revolution. This was seen as a comprehensive approach to the insurgency problem, incorporating public safety, military, social, psychological, economic and political measures as its constituent elements. It seeks to involve the military, civilian officials, and private sectors in a co-ordinated effort to fight the insurgents. Its three priority areas are security, development and national reconciliation. It also included the concept of "territorial defence system" in which the people organize themselves against harassment and intimidation by the insurgents with military assistance. Finally, the plan also included a regionalisation of troops in that soldiers were assigned to their ethno-linguistic regions. This was designed to enhance the effectiveness of the soldiers by putting him in a familiar environment where he not only knows the country but also speaks the local language. **Outcome:** Not resolved.

¹² Revolutionary-type armed rebellions in Indonesia have mainly occurred in the past. They included (1) the Madiun communist rebellion (1948), (2) the Darul Islam (1948-1962), and (3) the PKI (1965). Indonesia has had both communist-type armed rebellions as well as religious armed rebellions. All revolutionary armed rebellions in Indonesia have suffered from severe

were successfully put down by the Indonesian authorities. An Islamic reformation of sort is also taking place in Malaysia where the Islamic based political party PAS is making headways in Malaysian politics by capturing two states and reducing votes for the incumbent regime in the last general election in 1999.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT TRENDS AND PATTERNS

Some of the factors behind the general failure of state formation and revolutionary movements to achieve their goals in the region can be summarised as follow:

Suppression by the authorities. This has been the most used strategy to counter intra-state conflicts in ASEAN countries. In all the cases surveyed, responses by the governments to these conflicts, and especially the state formation organizations, have been both swift and severe. Wherever possible, the secessionist movements were not allowed to gain momentum and support from the public. Arrests, especially of the leaders, were made to stop the movements from the top and the various militaries were deployed to suppress the armed uprisings. Of all the ASEAN countries, Indonesia has been particularly severe in its use of the military as can be seen from the examples of East Timor and Aceh, and to a lesser degree, West Papua. The Philippines' response to state formation organization has been more varied. Although military might was used against the Moros in Mindanao, there have also been other strategies like the negotiations with the Moros in Libya and the co-optation of Moro leaders into government positions. Responses to revolutionary type movements in all ASEAN countries have been more varied. Military suppression against the revolutionary groups was still the main method used, but other more subtle counter insurgency methods like the amnesty

military actions from the Indonesian authorities. The highlights of communist activities in Indonesia have been in the 1950s and early 1960s during the Sukarno era when the PKI (*Parti Komunis Indonesia*) enjoyed the status of being Sukarno's adviser and confidante. However, miscalculations over the readiness of their masses of supporters for a communist revolution led to the failure of their coup attempt in the Gestapu Affair of 1965. Government reprisals after the coup attempt completely annihilated the PKI structure. Pockets of resistance still exist in Kalimantan and East Java until 1968 but were effectively attacked by the authorities until they no longer were able to function as a meaningful insurgency group and were forced to give up their struggles.

programmes, the use of the intelligence, and rural development projects were also fully utilised.

Inter-government cooperation. The ASEAN countries have also benefited from close bilateral cooperations with each other regarding the issues of security. Many of the ASEAN countries have bilateral agreements with each other like the Malaysia-Thailand border agreements, the agreement on the fight against piracy in the Sulu Sea between Malaysia and the Philippines, as well as various military exercises conducted between Malaysia and Singapore, and Malaysia and Indonesia. Cooperation in security issues and especially against insurgencies between ASEAN countries stemmed from the beliefs of their leaders that insecurity and the instability that usually follows it is a contagious thing and can spread from one country to another. This belief started from the days when many of the ASEAN countries were fighting the threat of communist insurgencies in their respective countries and was carried on even when this threat has abated. ASEAN countries have also "supported" each other when faced with state formation conflicts by way of "non-involvement" in domestic conflicts of neighbours despite whatever inter-state problems that might exist between themselves. These "non-interference" and "non-intervention" policies are part of an important factor of the "ASEAN way of consensus". It was thus that when Indonesia invaded East Timor in 1975 and received a lot of international protests over this action, other ASEAN countries have rallied behind Indonesia by saying that Indonesia had to do it for reasons of national security. Only Singapore was late in its support of Indonesia but this was because of Singapore's perceived vulnerable position as the only Chinese dominated state in the middle of the Malay-Muslim world of Southeast Asia. In the end this did not deter Singapore from also supporting Indonesia. Another example of the non-involvement of ASEAN countries in state formation conflicts in their neighbouring countries is the case of conflict in Southern Thailand.¹³ Although there were elements in Malaysia which sympathised with

¹³ **Southern Thailand**

Parties: Thailand government vs (1) Pattani United Liberation Organization (PULO) (1967-); (2) *Barisan Nasional Pembebasan Pattani* (BNPP) or Pattani National Liberation Movement (1971-); (3) *Barisan Revolusi Nasional* (BRN) or the National Revolution Front (1960-late 1960s).

Background: The main issue of this conflict is the secession and independence of the Pattani, Yala, and the Narathiwat provinces in Southern Thailand. These three provinces have their own unique history apart from the general Thai one going back when they were part of the ancient Malay kingdom of *Langkasuka*, to the more recent one of rebelling against the Thai kingdom in the early parts of the 20th century. The latter one resulted in the

PULO and the Pattani people over the plight of the Malay-Muslims in Southern Thailand, the official stance of the Malaysian government has been one of non-involvement in what it regards as Thailand's own domestic problem. In fact, there have even been cooperations between Malaysia and Thailand such as

in the breaking up of the Pattani province and the beginning of their forced integration into the provincial administration of the Thai kingdom. Gradually, local administrators were replaced by Thais resulting in the exclusion of the Muslim-Malay elites from political participation. This is the reason behind the Pattani movement according an analyst. It was argued that the nature and impetus of the historical conflict between the central Thai Government and the Muslim-Malays in Southern Thailand are political, and not religio-cultural as some scholars seem to imply (Askandar, 1996: Chapter 3). It was also added that this conflict is not different from the conflicts between the central government and other minority or power groups in the country, although a combination of other factors such as religious, linguistic, socio-cultural, and economic, have contributed to the exacerbation of the conflict. Neither the Thai government nor the political system has ever been totally accepted by the Pattani people, especially by their elites. However, judging from the importance of religion and culture and the emphasis placed on them by all the Pattani liberation movements, we must not underestimate their roles in the mobilization of the Pattani people.

However, the unsparing use of force by the Thai military in dealing with political opposition in the region has helped dampen their spirits and put the separatists in disarray. Finally, there is a growing feeling among the Malay-Muslim groups that their situation is now irreversible and that they should face the reality of being a province in South Thailand. This more than anything else has led to the downfall of Malay-Muslim separatist movements in Southern Thailand.

Conflict management: Suppression by the Thai authorities; ban on the movements; the arrests of movement leaders. The plight of the Malay-Muslim people in southern Thailand has been a major thorn in inter-state relations between Malaysia and Thailand. Thailand has often accused Malay nationalist groups especially near the Malaysia-Thai border of supporting the Malay-Muslim people of southern Thailand. Thailand has also accused the Malaysian government of turning a blind eye to these clandestine supports. Although relations between the two countries have been strained by this case especially in the 1970s, it has never really been serious enough to hamper cooperation in other areas, including the ones within ASEAN.

Outcome: Not resolved, but very much reduced in intensity

military exercises along the Thai-Malaysia border targeted both towards the various Malay-Muslim organizations as well as the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM)¹⁴ which operated in the same areas. Because of all the evidences from the trends in conflict and conflict management within the ASEAN countries, it can be concluded that there is a huge difference between the treatment of inter-state and intra-state conflicts within ASEAN. A major factor of the ASEAN

¹⁴ **Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) (1946-1990)**

Parties: Malaysian government vs the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM)
Also Malaysian government vs the North Kalimantan Communist party.

Background: The CPM conducted guerrilla warfare soon after the end of the Second World War, first against British colonial rule and then against the Malayan/Malaysian government. They operated from the jungles in the Malaysian-Thailand border. Sir Henry Gurney, the High Commissioner killed in an ambush in October 1951, and Sir Gerald Templar, who succeeded him, believed that the "Emergency" (1948-1960) was a battle for the "hearts and minds of the people." During the Emergency period, several strategies were used to coerce and induce the revolutionaries to surrender and give up their armed struggle. Apart from the obvious military maneuvers which was aimed at flushing them out of the jungles, other more subtle methods based on the findings of the intelligence, or the special branch, were also used. For example, the resettlement programmes into the "new villages", under the Briggs Plan, deprived the guerrillas of food and other support. Amnesty was also offered under terms that gave them the courage to surrender and to convince their former comrades into doing the same. None of these measures, however, were quick-fix solutions, and it took twelve years, from June 1948 till July 1960, before the Emergency was finally called off. The CPM continued its struggle from the jungle until its leadership decided to lay down their weapons and end their armed struggle in 1990. Since then, the numbers of their already depleted cadres have been reduced even more, amidst declarations of victory from the Malaysian government.

Conflict management: Emergency 1948-1960; counter-insurgency strategies such as the setting up of "new villages", amnesty programmes, the use of the arm forces and especially the army, and infiltration by members of the special branch. An interesting aspect of counter-insurgency activities has been the many bilateral military cooperation between neighbouring ASEAN countries i.e. Malaysia-Thai, Malaysia-Indonesia. This is because communist threat is seen by the leaders of these countries as contagious and can spread from one country to another. Thus, by helping their neighbour in countering the communist threat, they are also preventing the spread of communism in their own countries. **Outcome:** Resolved

conflict management process is the non-interference and non-involvement of one country in the domestic affairs of fellow ASEAN members. This was evident throughout all the cases studied.

Economic development. Perhaps a more effective and long lasting conflict management strategy to counter intra-state insurgencies has been economic development by individual ASEAN countries. As observed by Samudavanija and Paribatra,

"Economic development is seen to be essential not only for the regime's process of legitimation, but also for the nation-state's overall security, as evident from the concepts of 'national resilience' and 'comprehensive security' espoused by the members of ASEAN. One assumption seems to be that economic development, by enlarging and consolidating a state's administrative, financial, industrial, technological and military resources, increases the efficacy of the various instruments of national power and thus helps to enhance its security. Another seems to be that economic development, by raising people's welfare and standard of living, serves to lessen and ameliorate conflicts within society arising from class, racial, ethnic, regional and doctrinal differences. In other words, prosperity is the key to both the regime's and the nation-state's security." (Samudavanija and Paribatra, 1987: 4-5).

The rate of economic development in all ASEAN countries has been tremendous over the last thirty years, until the economic crisis which started in 1997. It has come to a point now that Singapore can be called an industrialized country with the others, especially Malaysia and Thailand, following closely behind. With economic development and prosperity in the ASEAN countries, and with the corresponding increase in the standard of living of the people, there have been less issues especially for revolutionary groups to raise. An example of how this has contributed to the demise of a revolutionary group is the CPM's case in Malaysia. Socialists and communists groups in general have had difficulties in propagandizing their socialist ideals to a community who benefits from the economic success of the country, and who prefers the stability of preserving the status quo to the instability that might come about by supporting revolutionary movements. In countries where economic development and success have been more limited like the Philippines, one can see the trend of acceptance and support of revolutionary movements like the NPA among the masses. In certain areas, the people have in fact preferred rule

by the NPA who have provided security and stability in contrast to the corrupt and ineffective local Philippines authorities.

The conclusion that was made by ASEAN leaders in the 1960's and 1970's was that for the whole region to be rid of revolutionary movements, there must be economic success in all ASEAN countries. It was the Indonesian government that proposes in 1967 the idea of "national resilience" of individual ASEAN countries contributing to the "regional resilience". "National resilience" in the Indonesian sense can be achieved through national developments in all areas, and especially the economy. Also according to the Indonesian view, it has a reciprocating effect with stability and security. One way of increasing economic cooperations and linkages between the ASEAN countries is the setting up of "growth triangles" areas. At the moment, the growth triangle of southern Malaysia - Batam Island (Indonesia) - Singapore has proved successful for the three participating areas. Other existing growth triangles are the growth triangle of north-west Malaysia, southern Thailand, and northern Sumatra (Indonesia), as well as the one between Malaysian and Indonesian parts of the Borneo island and the island of Mindanao in the Philippines.

Another evident that shows that ASEAN countries value economic cooperation and success as a conflict defusing strategy can be seen from its active push for the liberalization of trade in the ASEAN region. After the 1992 Summit meeting in Singapore, the leaders of ASEAN agreed to set the stage for closer economic relations with the proposed ASEAN Free Trade Area with a 15 year period to reach this target (later decreased to 10 years).¹⁵ The importance of these developments is the fact that none of these inter-state economic projects can be achieved without the internal economic development of individual ASEAN countries.

However, the Asian economic crisis which hit the region from 1997 resulted in the suspension of many development projects in the region. Countries like Thailand, Indonesia, and to a lesser extent Malaysia and the Philippines, were badly hit. As expected, with economic crisis comes political upheavals and political instability resulting in revolutionary movements of the pro-democracy type.

Rural development. Closely related to national development and economic success for the whole country is rural development. All ASEAN governments have targeted rural development as a major strategy against both state formation and revolutionary conflicts. Most of the grievances related to these two conflicts

¹⁵ See the Singapore Declaration of 1992.

have been taken up by groups opposed to the central governments and feeding back their ideals to the affected people who mostly lived in the rural areas or the outer islands. To tackle these groups the ASEAN governments have to embark on their own rural development programmes to improve the standard of living of the people in the rural areas with the hope that they won't be too easily swayed by rebellious movements, either state formation or revolutionary. A survey of rural policies sees a general similarity between the ASEAN countries, with a slight difference depending on the administration. The Philippines for example have embarked on various programmes in Mindanao and Luzon to appease the Moros and the NPA respectively. They have also restructured the roles of the military in the rural areas so that the people can have a more favourable view of them. This was also done in Thailand. Rural developments in Malaysia were aimed among other things at decreasing the support for the CPM. Among the projects was the setting up of "new villages" away from areas vulnerable to attacks and influence by the CPM. Rural development and resettlement are also used in Indonesia with varying degree of success. In Aceh this was used to sway the Acehnese from the GAM. In West Papua, rural developments have included the building of roads into previously inaccessible areas and the opening up of new areas for agriculture under the transmigration or "transmigrasi" (TM) projects. Lastly, Indonesia also tried to bring the people of West Papua and the former East Timor closer into the general Indonesia community under their national integration programmes.

Two Thai analysts comment that, in dealing with domestic conflicts, ASEAN countries have generally

"...attempted to forge workable 'syntheses' between bureaucratic activism (or the 'thesis') on the one hand and pluralism generated by socio-economic changes (or the 'anti-thesis') on the other. These syntheses take the form of 'participatory authoritarianism' or 'guided participation' which is intended to provide the framework of security for social and economic development" (Samudavanija and Paribatra, 1987: 15).

Up until the turbulent period of 1997 to 1999, two broad types can be seen within ASEAN. The first one can be seen in countries like Malaysia and Singapore which have established democratic institutions and a tradition of civilian control over the military. Here, the process of synthesizing involves:

"a) the preservation of the democratic institutions and practices; b) the developments and maintenance of one predominant political party which controls the instruments of

power of the state and the system of patronage; c) the co-optation of the younger, well educated generations, the technocratic and the minority groups into the structure of the one-party system; and d) very strong emphasis on the ideology of development as a means of broadening mass support" (Samudavanija and Paribatra, 1987: 15).

This can be compared with Thailand and Indonesia, two ASEAN countries which used to be dominated by the military. Here the process is a two-tiered one involving:

"a) the institutionalization (or at least attempts at institutionalization) of the predominant role of the military in the processes of political, social and economic development, and b) the creation of "orthodox" democratic institutions, the parameters of whose role, progress and behaviour are determined by the military with its power of coercion and patronage" (Samudavanija and Paribatra, 1987: 16).

The domestic stability and economic success of Malaysia and Singapore bears testimony to the success of the latter type of synthesis compared with the more turbulent developments in Thailand and Indonesia. Indonesia, until the revolution of 1998, has fared better than Thailand in setting up its own brand of "participatory authoritarianism". Since after the Gestapu affair of 1965, the military's role in Indonesia was legitimated by the "dwi-fungsi" or dual-function doctrine which requires it to undertake not only the task of national defence but also a "positive socio-political role" at all levels of the Indonesian society. This led to the control of all political processes from the presidency right down to the grass root level by the military during Suharto's presidency.

CONCLUSION

This paper has shown that the ASEAN region is still rife with conflicts, both of the inter-state as well as the intra-state nature. Despite the many efforts spent on managing these conflicts, as well as trying to resolve them, there are still numerous conflicts going on within and between the ASEAN countries. One analyst commented that situations have worsened since the end of the Cold War.

"One of the more unfortunate consequences of the end of the Cold War is the likely increase in regional conflict. Not only has the salience of regional conflict been enhanced in relative

terms by the disappearance of the East-West conflict, but the end of that conflict has 'removed the tempering mechanism' that often served to keep regional tensions under control" (Ball, 1994: 160).

Many of the post-cold war security concerns that have emerged have arisen from the uncertainties brought forward by the extraordinary rate and extent of change which now permeates the region. The situation is made worse by the decline of superpowers' role and influence in the area and the transition from a situation of bipolarity to one leaning more towards some form of multipolarity. A few observations from the trend of conflicts in the post-cold war era suggest that first of all, inter-state conflicts make up about two-third of conflicts in the region, with land border being the major issue in contention in many conflicts. Secondly, since the security environment of the area is essentially maritime, another popular issue for inter-state conflicts are maritime boundaries and offshore territorial claims. Lastly, it has also been suggested that because of the high proportion of inter-state issues, there is a greater chance of inter-state conflicts in the Asia Pacific region than elsewhere (Ball, 1994: 163). All these point out the need for the institutionalization of conflict management mechanisms within not only the ASEAN region but also the wider Asia Pacific region.

Situations have also worsened after the economic crisis which hit the region starting in 1997. This crisis resulted in political upheavals of varying degrees in all countries of the region. Conflict situations in Southeast Asia, especially those which can be categorised as domestic or intra-state conflicts, are now more numerous than at any other time of Southeast Asian history.

What can be said about ASEAN's contribution as an organization to the management of these conflicts? As two different levels of conflict were discussed in this paper, ASEAN's contribution must also be looked at through these two different levels. ASEAN has contributed to the management of inter-state conflicts by prescribing a framework for conflict management through its multilateral Treaties and the decision-making process of "musyawarah".¹⁶ It has called for the peaceful settlement of disputes between member countries in its Treaties and documents.¹⁷ Secondly, ASEAN has also contributed to the management of inter-state conflicts through providing a platform for

¹⁶ Please refer to Thambipillai's paper in this volume.

¹⁷ Please see the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, 1976, as well as the Declaration of the ASEAN Concord, 1976 for examples of provisions regarding this issue.

consultation and negotiation not only of conflict issues but also all other issues. This has resulted in the prevention of conflict, as conflict issues that might affect relations between ASEAN member countries will be filtered out via the rigorous consultation and negotiation prior to decision-making. For ongoing conflicts, although ASEAN does provide a formal management strategy in its treaties, they have not been used. The members have preferred to resort to negotiating directly between each other or using ASEAN meetings as the place for consultation, albeit informally.

For intra-state conflicts, the role of ASEAN is clear. It does not, as a regional organization, involve itself in the management of these conflicts, no matter what the nature of these conflicts are, revolutionary or state formation. ASEAN's contribution to the management of this type of conflict is providing the members with a formal place to make declarations that support each other when faced with domestic troubles and which are binding upon all its members. For example, one of the most sacred principle of ASEAN is the non-intervention and non-interference of outsiders in domestic politics of individual member countries. This prohibition does not refer only to countries outside the region or outside ASEAN but also to the ASEAN countries as well. All ASEAN countries have been allowed to manage conflicts within their own borders in their own chosen ways. As such, we see a variety of ways in which these conflicts have been managed by individual countries, from setting up civic programmes to outright suppression using military force. Another way ASEAN has influenced intra-state conflicts is by reassuring member governments that despite all the domestic problems that they may facing at any time, they do not have to worry about problems arising out of their relations with other ASEAN countries. This in turn has made them able to concentrate on problems within their own border without worrying about problems from outside, or even outside help for the insurgents or revolutionaries.

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