
Foreign Policy and Defense Diplomacy in ASEAN to Maintain Stability and Security in the Indo-Pacific Region

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Abstract

The ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific (AOIP) is intended to transform rivalries in the region into collaboration by prioritizing, among other things, maritime cooperation. AOIP influences Indonesia's defense diplomacy in ASEAN and the Indo-Pacific. The framework for defense diplomacy and maritime cooperation is used to analyze the role of AOIP in encouraging cooperation to increase stability and mutual trust. The defense diplomacy framework is used to analyze various Indonesian defense diplomacy policies in producing various agreements and cooperation in the field of defense and security. The maritime security cooperation framework is used to highlight various cooperation and activities to enhance maritime security in the Indo-Pacific region, and geopolitics to analyze the dynamics of global political and security developments, especially in the Indo-Pacific region. Indonesia by initiating the formation of AOIP encourages defense diplomacy to create stability and increase mutual trust, one of which is for maritime security cooperation. Obstacles that arise because the implementation of AOIP has not been carried out due to the pandemic and the complexity of various interests between actors (states), but Indonesia's defense diplomacy to produce defense cooperation remains wide open.

Keywords: AOIP, Indonesian Defense Diplomacy, Maritime Security, Geopolitics, Indo-Pacific.

Introduction

In recent years, Indonesia has intensively carried out defense diplomacy, especially in the maritime area and related to military objectives, to countries or related to geopolitical issues, as well as international and regional organizations to encourage the creation of peace which is achieved through cooperation.

In several articles, it is explained that defense diplomacy has been carried out by Indonesia in various issues, interests and cooperation with other countries. In the article by Arry Bainus et al (2022) entitled Strengthening Indonesian Defense Diplomacy through Joint Air Force Training, it is explained that defense diplomacy is considered an effective tool to achieve the national interests of a country. This can be proven by the increasing number of countries adopting and developing defense diplomacy according to their respective objectives, including Indonesia. Indonesian defense diplomacy focuses on the role of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Indonesia with the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) as the main actor. This article aims to find out Indonesian defense diplomacy through the holding of joint exercises by the Indonesian Air Force in the 2017-2019 period (Bainus et al, 2022).

More specifically, Bainus' writing emphasizes the importance of defense diplomacy in building CBM (Confidence Building Measures) and involving the ASEAN Organization and its member countries in forming a Joint Commission Meeting which consists of several working groups that discuss issues in their fields. Finally, there is an indicator of goodwill

where Indonesia and several countries in ASEAN show mutual goodwill by visiting each other's partner countries (Bainus et al, 2022).

Sudarsono, Mahroza, and Surryanto (2018) in their writing entitled Indonesian Defense Diplomacy in Achieving National Interests, explains that the role of Indonesian defense diplomacy is in achieving national interests and how to optimize it and analyze the factors that influence the role of defense diplomacy in achieving national interests (Sudarsono et al, 2018).

TNI's involvement in state diplomacy is carried out in various roles. In maintaining world peace, the TNI has become a permanent participant in UN peacekeeping missions. In the ASEAN region, the TNI also plays an active role in establishing communication with the militaries of friendly countries through meeting forums such as the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting which is a forum that aims to build a common perception with the armed forces of ASEAN countries and their partners regarding regional security. , increasing mutual trust and identifying new areas for cooperation (Sudarsono et al, 2018).

The study by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia in collaboration with CSIS (Centre for Strategic and International Studies) (2020) entitled Maritime Defense Diplomacy: Strategies, Challenges and Prospects, explains the development of a strategic environment in which various maritime security issues, both traditional and non-traditional threats, which is getting complicated. In that context, maintaining territorial integrity remains the main goal of Indonesia's foreign and defense policies. Although the security environment in Southeast Asia is expected to remain relatively stable, unresolved border issues continue to be the foremost concern of regional countries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2020).

Therefore, Indonesia has also carried out various maritime defense diplomacy activities together with various partners, especially coordinated patrols and joint exercises. Indonesia has also participated in many maritime defense diplomacy activities, most of which still revolve around various activities carried out under ASEAN and ASEAN strategic partner countries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2020).

Related to the various steps of defense diplomacy taken by Indonesia, as well as the development of various issues affecting Indonesia's security, Indonesia is also carrying out defense diplomacy in response to geopolitical developments in the Indo-Pacific. The region has strategic value and influences various global interests. Because of this, the geopolitical atmosphere in the Indo-Pacific is so thick and influences global security, especially in maritime security.

Indonesia, in 2021, through the AOIP (ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific) meeting of the ASEAN Ministers of Defense agreed on the AOIP Discussion Paper from a defense perspective (Ministry of Defense, 2021). As the initiator, Indonesia carries out defense diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific region by using ASEAN as well as the ADMM+ defense cooperation and interaction guidelines between ASEAN and dialogue partners. Indonesia encourages ASEAN to take a strategic approach to the Indo-Pacific region considering that geopolitical developments in the region are very dynamic and affect regional security stability in Southeast Asia.

Therefore, this paper emphasizes the analysis of Indonesia's defense diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific. In more detail, this paper emphasizes Indonesia's defense diplomacy which is carried out through the ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific (AOIP) to accommodate various maritime defense and security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

Method

The research design used in this study is a qualitative research approach. It involved an in-depth analysis of the foreign policy and defense diplomacy of ASEAN in maintaining stability and security in the Indo-Pacific region. Qualitative research is suitable for this study because it aims to explore and understand the complex and dynamic nature of foreign policy and defense diplomacy in ASEAN. The data collection for this study was carried out through semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with policymakers, experts, and academics with extensive knowledge and experience in foreign policy and defense diplomacy in ASEAN. The document analysis involved the examination of policy papers, official statements, and reports from ASEAN member states and ASEAN-related organizations such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM). The limitations of this study include the possibility of bias in the data collected due to the nature of the sampling strategy used. The study only focused on the perspectives of policymakers, experts, and academics and did not include the perspectives of the general public or other stakeholders. Furthermore, the study was limited to the data available during the research, which may not reflect the current situation.

Result and Discussion

Geopolitical Conceptual Structure, Maritime Security Cooperation and Defense Diplomacy

Geopolitics

Conflicts over resources and the use of power and economic benefits explain interconnectivity which is the main factor in describing the development of conflict between actors. The struggle for resource supply emphasizes limited resources, increasing population and increasing community needs, as well as various risks if national needs are not met, then the risk of conflict becomes a big agenda in interactions between countries.

Thus, the existence of both managed and unmanaged resources tends to trigger conflict between the two neighboring countries. Mutual claims are the most common thing. Competitions for supplies and access also often occur between countries with global powers, and even tend to involve themselves in conflicts in other regions to increase the influence of forces and maintain security of access to strategic values (Nashir, Komeini, and Abdurofiq, 2022).

On the other hand, marine resources which include the high seas and the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) are also objects of conflict by prioritizing political and military steps and attitudes. Some areas that also have strategic value, such as access to navigation or transportation for economic activities, are also areas of struggle for power and influence to

maintain the security of sea transportation which carries important materials for the needs of the country (Klare, 2001).

Competition that leads to potential conflicts and conflict interactions that become geopolitical consequences. Geopolitics itself can be understood as a combination of geology (natural resources) and human activities that change the functions and values of certain areas. In other words, geopolitics can be understood as a combination of geographical values, such as natural factors (land, sea, mountain ranges) and human capabilities in adapting to these factors, through production capabilities and communication technology, which determine the order or route trade/access and location of resources, as well as state boundary conditions.

Geopolitics emphasizes the distribution of new powers, changes in strategic areas, and changes in areas or zones that have the potential for conflict. In an international system, geopolitics is not a constant but a variable that explains changes in the distribution of geographical and economic routes, as well as natural resources (Grygiel, 2006).

As a variable, geopolitics influences and determines a country's geostrategy. Geostrategy is the basis for state thinking for how a country seeks to project military power and direct its diplomatic activities. In other words, geostrategy is a country's interpretation and response to geopolitical conditions.

Defense Diplomacy

In defense diplomacy, military involvement in foreign policy is not only limited to peacetime, depending on the purpose of its involvement. Defense diplomacy encompasses a wide range of activities that may, in the past, be described as military cooperation or military assistance (Cottey and Foster, 2004).

Accordingly, Cottey and Forster stated that the emergence of defense diplomacy has penetrated every aspect of military tasks, which previously were not traditional military tasks. This new role is the result of three important developments. The nature of security has evolved from traditional to non-traditional challenges, and the military's job is not only military-based anymore, but also dealing with areas of peace and promoting good governance, including collaboration with allies and potential adversaries (Singh and Tan, 2011).

Three broad ranges of activities in defense diplomacy: arms control, non-proliferation policies, and confidence-building and security measures; instruments designed to promote stability, through bilateral assistance and cooperation programmes; as well as other assistance programs aimed at relationships. In this broad field, education and training programs are considered essential, along with the use of ship and aircraft visits, short-term advisory teams, as well as visits and interactions between ministers, and military and civilian personnel at all levels (Capie, 2013).

Increasing trust or mutual trust is a strategic reason in defense diplomacy considering that the objective of defense diplomacy lies in the agreement to produce cooperation so that the need for global security can be achieved.

Maritime Security Cooperation

Increasing maritime security requires cooperation between countries in the framework of security (Bradford, 2005). The basic principle of cooperation is mutual trust and benefit. This cooperation can be in the form of security cooperation activities in the form of coordinated field patrols and periodic joint coordination meetings in dealing with various forms of maritime security issues (Marlow, 2010).

Cooperation can also be done in the form of increasing information superiority. They include; exchange of information and build an integrated information system between countries, including the completeness of the supervision and monitoring system; conducting joint exercises, such as anti-sea robbery drills; to improve navigational aids; to assist the development of maritime security capabilities, in particular providing facilities for training (Febrica 2017). As cooperation becomes stronger and more frequent, the trend of incidents decreases. Because it most likely came from multiple naval presences when carrying out joint exercises or coordinated patrols. Or it may also be from the broadcast that there will be a coordinated exercise or operation in the area (Storey, 2009).

Through maritime security cooperation, various frictions between countries and threats from non-state actors can be overcome together through the implementation of cooperation in the field such as coordinating routine patrols and exchanging information so that maritime cooperation can produce solutions to various character threats that arise in the maritime area.

Indo-Pacific Strategic Value in a Geopolitical Perspective

The Indo-Pacific has emerged during its first few decades through its population, economics as well as military and geopolitical ambitions (NATO, 2022). Of all the regions of our world, the Indo-Pacific has the potential to become the most populous, richest and most developed region in the world in the next 20 years (NATO, 2022). The Indo-Pacific – the vast region extending from the east coast of Africa to the Pacific Island Countries – is increasingly strategically significant for Europe. The growing economic, demographic and political weight of the region makes it a key player in shaping the international order and in addressing global challenges (European Commission, 2021).

Thus, increasing the strategic value of the Indo-Pacific is increasingly promising for global economic development in the future. What's more, this area does explain the geopolitical shift which is now more towards the maritime area. As the Indo-Pacific is becoming increasingly important strategically and economically, countries around the world are developing new policies to strengthen their reach in the region, while countries in the region are trying to manage this new interest (Paskal, 2021).

The “Indo-Pacific” or “Indo-Pacific region” has grown in popularity for more than ten years as a geographical and strategic construct in foreign and security policy discourse in Japan, the United States, Australia, India, France, and several Southeast Asian states. . Many see the “Indo-Pacific” as a new geographic and strategic frame of reference that has at least partially replaced the previously dominant “Asia-Pacific” construct (Heiduk and Wacker, 2020). High conflict potential and tension is influenced by the various interests of the countries involved and strategic values that are owned or located in the Indo-Pacific, such as

access, marine resources, and international trade routes that support the economic activities of almost all countries in the world.

Figure 1.
Indo-Pacific Region



Sources: Processed from McDaniel, Dan (2012) "India, China, and the United States in the Indo-Pacific Region: Coalition, Co-existence or Clash," Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies, Australian Defence College

The Indian Ocean has four of six major maritime chokepoints and serves as a maritime superhighway for the on-demand energy resources that power the world's largest economy. Nearly 68 percent of India's oil, 80 percent of China's oil, and 25 percent of US oil is shipped from the Indian Ocean Territory. Although important in its own right, the Eastern Indian Ocean's border with the Pacific is increasingly irrelevant as shifts in global balances occur and the Indo-Pacific Region grows in geo-strategic significance (McDaniel, 2012).

This intensifying American focus is partly due to the fact that the Indo-Pacific faces increasing challenges, especially from China. The country combines its economic, diplomatic, military and technological prowess as it pursues spheres of influence in the Indo-Pacific and seeks to become the most influential power in the world. Chinese coercion and aggression span the globe, but are most acute in the Indo-Pacific. From Australia's economic coercion to conflict along the Line of Actual Control with India to increasing pressure on Taiwan and intimidation of neighbors in the East and South China Seas, our allies and partners in the region bear most of the cost of China's malicious behavior (The White House, 2022).

With the large strategic potential and value followed by the strategic interests of each party, the large opportunity for cooperation is also followed by the magnitude of unilateral decisions or unilateral decisions for each actor if the development of the strategic environment in the future does not match the expectations of each country. In other words, economic value, strategic access for economic activities, and the struggle for influence is the political reason for each country even though, these interests can be accommodated through various resulting collaborations to maintain regional stability and create mutual trust so that conflicts can be avoided.

Indonesian Defense Diplomacy through AOIP and Maritime Security Cooperation: AOIP in the Indo-Pacific

Indonesia has important interests to strive for in the Indo-Pacific, from navigating big power politics, and securing its maritime domains and resources, to maintaining ASEAN

centrality. Indonesia's foreign policy establishment has focused its diplomatic resources on implementing the ASEAN Outlook in the Indo-Pacific. Jakarta's strategic resources and political leadership are heavily directed inward, leaving little bandwidth for investing in non-ASEAN options to address Indo-Pacific strategic challenges. Indonesia needs to overhaul its strategic policy-making and work with regional partners through ASEAN (Laksmana, 2021).

Indonesia has always tried to create situations of cooperation to reduce the various potential conflicts that exist. That way, strategic advantages and global interests can work well. Therefore, Indonesia's defense diplomacy steps were taken to encourage the birth of a defense and security agreement. So far, Indonesia's preferred approach to facing strategic challenges in the Indo-Pacific is based on ASEAN-led institutions through the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) (Laksmana, 2021). Indonesia is also actively promoting support for AOIP at the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and with ASEAN Dialogue Partners. Speaking at the 2020 ASEAN-US Summit, Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi said: "Indonesia will always expect the US to become an important and strategic partner in the Indo-Pacific region, including in implementing the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific" (Hoang Thi Ha, 2021).

Through AOIP, Indonesia's defense diplomacy is directed at the involvement of ASEAN and countries outside ASEAN but have influence and interests, thereby encouraging various strategic partners in creating security stability in the Indo-Pacific. Through AOIP, ASEAN will make the Indo-Pacific a peaceful and prosperous region. ASEAN will also bridge and unite interests between regions, not only in the Southeast Asia region, but also in the South Pacific region and also in areas bordering the Indian Ocean. AOIP ultimately becomes a commitment to carry out inclusive cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region which consists of (1) Maritime cooperation; (2) connectivity; (3) UN SDGs 2030; and (4) cooperation in the economic sector and potential for cooperation in other related fields (Prakoso, 2021). AOIP which prioritizes dialogue and cooperation, not competition, and emphasizes maritime cooperation is very relevant to defense development policies (Wibisono, 2020).

The direction of Indonesia's defense diplomacy which encourages the involvement of ARF and ADMM and ADMM plus explains the importance of securing the maritime area in the Indo-Pacific. This will have an impact on the birth of various defense cooperation agreements so that it will create maritime security for all parties.

Maritime cooperation developed under the umbrella of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) between ASEAN and China also provides opportunities for capacity building of the participating countries such as the Workshop on Safety of Navigation and Communication at Sea held in Manado in December 2018 as the realization of the action plan set by the ASEAN-China Joint Working Group on DOC (Wibisono, 2020).

The core mechanism that will facilitate various collaborations in AOIP will be the East Asia Summit (EAS) where more strategic discussions and more practical cooperation can use the ASEAN Plus One mechanism, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting. (ADMM) Plus (Wibisono, 2020: 58). In more detail, cooperation puts forward various defense cooperation issues that are packaged in defense diplomacy, such as Strategic discussions on this matter and practical cooperative activities can be pursued at

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ASEAN-led mechanisms including, among others, the EAS, the ASEAN Plus One mechanisms, ARF, and ADMM-Plus (ASEAN.org, 2020).

However, in the area of maritime cooperation — a key area of the AOIP — the document did little to pave the way for further maritime cooperation (eastasiaforum.org, 2022). The Indo-Pacific maritime domain has since become more contested and crowded with increasing risks of conflict over critical hotspots such as the Taiwan Strait, South China Sea (SCS), and East China Sea. Geopolitical tensions and trade and territorial disputes between China and members of the Quad have escalated sharply and have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Driven by their growing strategic concern for a strong and assertive China, Quad nations have pushed forward their Indo-Pacific strategy and enhanced the Quad from both an institutional and operational standpoint in the past two years. Of note, despite recent leadership changes in the US and Japan, both the Biden and Suga administrations have made it clear through policy announcements and actions that the Indo-Pacific is here to stay (Hoang Thi Ha, 2021: 3). This sharpening is getting sharper with the agreement on AUKUS trilateral cooperation which is considered to endanger peace in the region (Marsetio, 2021).

Based on the ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific document, it is explained that existing and emerging geopolitical challenges faced by countries in the region also revolve around maritime issues such as unresolved maritime disputes that have the potential for open conflict. In addition, unsustainable exploitation of marine resources and marine pollution are also increasingly becoming major problems. There is a need to prevent, manage and ultimately resolve this problem in a more focused, peaceful and comprehensive manner (ASEAN.org, 2020). The field of maritime cooperation includes disputes, security, transnational crime, economic promotion, welfare, connectivity and other maritime issues.

In the future, it is hoped that various forms of cooperation, agreements and agreements related to various military cooperation will soon be needed to bind and give birth to various cooperation produced through defense diplomacy that has been initiated by Indonesia. Various military cooperation using forums, such as ARF ADMM and ADMM Plus, as well as other forums, need to be realized immediately such as joint patrols, cooperation programs, and exchange of information to reinforce various types of cooperation within the framework of defense and security diplomacy.

This is necessary as an effort to create security stability and create a higher sense of trust or CBM (Confidence Building Measure) to narrow the space for conflict between countries fighting for influence, power, and interests to dominate the Indo-Pacific region. With the stipulation of the AOIP document as a guideline for cooperation, it is hoped that in the coming years, various maritime issues, such as disputes, non-traditional threats, such as piracy, maritime resources, and other maritime issues can be immediately addressed by establishing cooperative activities maritime security, such as coordinated patrols, regular joint coordinating meetings, and enhancing information, so that a maritime security regime is formed under the AOIP framework.

Conclusion

The magnitude of the potential for conflict, as well as threats to political, economic and security instability in the Indo-Pacific, has encouraged Indonesia to carry out defense

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diplomacy through the AOIP construction as a mechanism to build cooperation and create mutual trust or CBM (Confidence Building Measure) to enhance defense cooperation through various agreements and coordination such as ARF (ASEAN Regional Forum), and the involvement of ADMM and ADMM Plus (ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting) by involving external countries outside the region to reach the expansion of cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

Even though the implementation of the agreement has not touched on the process of realizing cooperation in creating military or defense cooperation, as a result of the complexity of issues and interests, by involving ARF and ADMM and ADMM Plus, the opportunities for Indonesia's defense diplomacy are still wide open considering that AOIP has been agreed and interests many countries towards the development of regional stability and the need for mutual trust, in line with Indonesia's defense diplomacy agenda through AOIP.

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