



The Habibie Center



insperon

Consulting Group



SEMINAR ON
**ASEAN Centrality
within Indo-Pacific**

THE WESTIN JAKARTA
14 AUGUST 2018

The image features a dark blue background with a large, diagonal white shape on the left side. On the right side, there is a decorative pattern of overlapping triangles in various shades of orange, yellow, and light blue. The word "Introduction" is centered in the lower half of the page in a white, sans-serif font.

Introduction



On Tuesday, 14 August 2018, The Habibie Center (THC) and Insperon Consulting Group held a seminar entitled “ASEAN Centrality within Indo-Pacific Framework” at Java Ballroom, The Westin Jakarta. The seminar was opened by Prof. Dr. Dewi Fortuna, M.A (Chairperson, Institute for Democracy and Human Rights, The Habibie Center) and featured Dr. Siswo Pramono (Head, Policy Analysis and Development Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Indonesia) as a keynote speaker. Also presenting were Dr. Ridwan Djamaluddin (Deputy III for Infrastructure Coordination, Coordinating Ministry for Maritime Affairs, Republic of Indonesia), Dr. C. Raja Mohan (Director, Institute of South Asia Studies, Singapore), Mr. Endy Bayuni (Senior Editor, The Jakarta Post), and Dra. Evi Fitriani, M.A., Ph.D. (Head of Miriam Budiarjo

Resource Center) as speakers with Dr. Alexander C. Chandra (Associate Fellow, The Habibie Center) moderating.

The objectives of this dialogue were to: (a) discuss the implications of recent developments surrounding the ‘Indo-Pacific’ to ASEAN centrality and neutrality, the dispute in the South China Sea and maritime connectivity between the Indian and Pacific Oceans, among others; (b) discuss possible responses from regional powers to recent developments surrounding the ‘Indo-Pacific’; and (c) discuss ways to make the ‘Indo-Pacific’ concept more inclusive and centered on ASEAN.

This discussion report summarizes the key points of each speaker, as well as the question and answer session that followed.



Opening Remarks

Prof. Dr. Dewi Fortuna, M.A

(Chairperson, Institute for Democracy and Human Rights, The Habibie Center)

Prof Dewi opened her remarks by posing a question of how to ensure ASEAN centrality in the development of an inclusive, open, participatory Indo-Pacific framework that truly promotes cooperation for peace, stability, and prosperity. Despite the concept first being popularized in 2007, the Indo-Pacific became the topic of the hour after the President of the United States of America Donald Trump unveiled it in Vietnam during the 2017 APEC Business Summit.

It was noted that during the administration of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, Indonesia through former Foreign Minister Marty M. Natalegawa had earlier proposed the development of an Indo-Pacific treaty of friendship in 2013. Unfortunately, nothing much happened afterwards due to the change of administration in the country; in fact, criticisms emerged on whether ASEAN was really a cornerstone of Indonesia's foreign policy under the current government.

There has been a lot of concerns within ASEAN circles on whether the Indo-Pacific strategy for Indonesia means pushing the regional organization aside and going in a different direction.



However, Prof Dewi reminded that it has been emphasized by the government that to Indonesia, the Indo-Pacific strategy is not about a post-ASEAN foreign policy – it is beyond such, but still based on ASEAN centrality, ensuring that ASEAN still plays the convening role.

Prof Dewi then addressed the many challenges in the region, comparing the different situation between 2007 and the present, in terms of geo-strategically and geo-economically. In light of these differences it is important to find out how ASEAN will try to calibrate the Indo-Pacific concept so that it can take into account all the different interests of major powers and make itself more relevant, as well

as ensure its centrality in the middle of challenging regional and global dynamics. She also mentioned the need to clarify what exactly the Indo-Pacific is about, how it relates to the Asia Pacific, whether the concept of the Asia Pacific will be shelved and replaced by Indo-Pacific, and how the strategy would make a difference in managing relationships between major powers and ASEAN. Prof Dewi ended her opening remarks by reminding that the Indo-Pacific should not be a framework of divisiveness that would be seen as a containment of Chinese policy, and shall the situation happen, ASEAN needs to figure out how to overcome it.



Keynote Speech

Dr. Siswo Pramono

Head, Policy Analysis and
Development Agency,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Republic of Indonesia

Dr Siswo began his presentation, entitled “Indonesia’s Perspective for an ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific: Towards a Peaceful, Prosperous, and Inclusive Region” which had been presented in front of ASEAN member states as well as East Asian Summit (EAS) countries, as a developing concept from Indonesia. He noted that looking at the current dynamic situation in the region, the form of having a working paper for the concept is better, in order to keep up with the regional developments.

As ASEAN is now working together for an Indo-Pacific perspective, one may question why an Indonesian perspective is needed for such an ASEAN outlook. Dr Siswo explained that Indonesia wants to contribute because ASEAN is the cornerstone of Indonesia’s foreign policy, as mentioned in the Indonesian Law No. 38 of 2008, which states that its involvement in ASEAN has a strategic meaning in addressing various forms of threats and challenges.

Dr Siswo affirmed that ASEAN must have its own perspective in



developing the Indo-Pacific. Amidst the development of various concepts by countries in Asia and the Pacific region, Indonesia is of the view that the wider region is facing new challenges and opportunities. There is a need for creating new momentum to ensure that the existing ASEAN-led mechanisms remain relevant and is able to manage new challenges and seize new opportunities, and in this regard, ASEAN needs to assume leadership by providing ideas to ensure ASEAN centrality in the immediate region as well as the wider region.

Indonesia applies bottom-up approaches in doing consultation with numerous institutions within the country. From the consultations, Dr Siswo concluded that there is a need to strike a balance between economic interests, political stability, and inclusive platform - which Indonesia plots to

be the East Asian Summit (EAS), as it has been a geographically inclusive meeting from the beginning. He then went on to elaborate on how the East Asian Summit should be prioritized as the most suitable forum to discuss the Indo-Pacific, as it is naturally inclusive.

ASEAN centrality for the Indo-Pacific concept, as Dr Siswo noted, can mean two things. Firstly, ASEAN is a fulcrum of connectivity, as from the beginning, ASEAN is meant to be inclusive and out-reaching with a rules-based mechanism where everyone can participate. Secondly, ASEAN is a fulcrum of norm-setting. Talking about rules-based community, ASEAN has the capacity to contribute a lot, as ASEAN has the convening powers in which ideas and norms have been developed and promoted in the region, with the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation with 37 state parties as a prime example.

On the objectives of the Indo-Pacific concept, Dr Siswo mentioned that the region is facing not only challenges, but also many opportunities. This is an important aspect why the EAS is key: the current concept should be aimed at promoting a new strategic outlook, creating an enabling environment for peace and stability by promoting prosperity through closer economic cooperation, strengthening ASEAN-led mechanisms - particularly the EAS, and forwarding new priorities for cooperation. Dr Siswo agreed with Prof Dewi that from the very beginning, we should aim for pure cooperation, but we should start by seeing others as potential friends instead of threats.

Dr Siswo remarked that there are

three proposed areas of cooperation for the current concept, namely maritime, connectivity, and SDGs. In the political and security aspect of maritime cooperation, as guided by international law, more efforts are needed to manage maritime boundaries-related issues including conflict prevention and conflict management mechanisms, assure safety of navigation, guarantee the openness of sea lanes of communications, and address transnational security issues such as trafficking. In economics aspect, more initiatives are also needed to promote sustainability management of marine resources, address maritime pollution, and further develop marine connectivity. On connectivity cooperation, it needs to be a priority for ASEAN and its partners to develop a broader connectivity outlook. ASEAN needs to further promote connectivity in the Indo-Pacific region and consider development of connectivity as a key priority area of cooperation in the EAS to promote prosperity in the Indo-Pacific, as well as promote regional public-private partnership development agenda to mobilize resources for connectivity projects in the Indo-Pacific. Dr Siswo also explained that there is a plan to align the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 with the UN SDGs 2030, and how ASEAN should be contributive to the achievement of SDGs, including through working together for an Indo-Pacific forum with the UN.

The EAS in itself is naturally inclusive, particularly in economics and investments. While the Indo-Pacific concept needs concrete forms of cooperation, Dr Siswo specified that it

is not obligatory to create new forums and symposiums, because everything has already been established. The main idea, particularly from Indonesia, is that everyone in the EAS can contribute proposals to find commonalities and work towards a synergy of existing efforts. Having done the Master Plan of ASEAN Connectivity before, ASEAN has the extra edge of experience which should be an opportunity for synergy in the EAS. The EAS, therefore, becomes crucial because all the stakeholders are there to contribute to both the Indian and Pacific Oceans and synergize existing mechanisms. It is not to blend various concepts of the Indo-Pacific, but to put everything in the table and find convergence for the Indo-Pacific cooperation.

As a closing case study, Dr Siswo discussed the need for an Indo-Pacific connectivity outlook. Looking at the big picture of the region, it is certain that main connectivity routes such as China's Belt and Road Initiative will survive, but there are still 'dark' areas in the Indo-Pacific that are not as active. The problem, therefore, is not the master plan, but it is in the outlook of connectivity, which is about having the right infrastructure for the right economy. Dr Siswo closed his speech by reinstating that the Indo-Pacific is not only about countries in the region, but Western countries can also participate and contribute, so that the Indo-Pacific can learn from other regional organizations such as the EU and further cooperate, re-emphasizing the importance of using the EAS as ASEAN's main mechanism to push forward the Indo-Pacific concept.

Dr. C. Raja Mohan

Director, Institute of South Asia Studies, Singapore

Dr Raja Mohan began his presentation by explaining the history behind the ideas of the Indo-Pacific as well as the Asia Pacific, which are concepts that have evolved over a period of time in relation to the changing circumstances, political attitudes of leading territorial entities, and economic orientation of various geographic units that constitute any large territorial conception. He noted that Southeast Asia itself is a fairly new concept that did not really exist until about 1943, and was set up by Lord Mountbatten as a consequence of the Japanese invasion which was eventually successfully pushed away by the Allies' Southeast Asia Command, with help from other countries such as India, China, and the United States. With regards to the long history, part of the current debate on the Indo-Pacific is then about the potential for change in the way geography is constructed and reconfigured.

Dr Raja Mohan asserted that it is not just the US that is formally driving the construction of a new region. The rise of China, particularly in the framework of the rise of Asia, is transforming the physical space around it. Its interests are no longer limited to the eastern



seaboard of the Asia Pacific, as evident in the use of the Belt and Road Initiative to connect the Eurasian landmass as well as the Maritime Silk Road that connects the Indian and Pacific Oceans. The space is not going to be as static as when ASEAN was constructed, as present day's large Chinese capitalism will involve the creation of new corridors and cities, highlighting the redistribution of economic power as well as a growing interest of Asia as a trading entity.

On geopolitics, Dr Raja Mohan stated that the rise of China has altered the balance between east and west, as well as the balance among nations. He argued that when there is a huge power shift, attempts to reconstitute the balance will take place, one way or another. Balancing behavior is normal, but the question is then how a new balance of power is constructed.

If the power balance within Asia has fundamentally changed, the question of building a new security framework then becomes inevitable. At the moment, all the key actors are recalibrating their positions in response to this change of power. Dr Raja Mohan reminded the audience to not take anything the US has done in this region for granted, particularly in the economic and security realms, because of the uncertainty of the US policy at the moment; and that the regional security framework cannot be the same as what has been known for the last five decades.

Dr Raja Mohan went on to make his point that ASEAN is the center of this region and there is no denying its geographic centrality, but the current debate is on whether ASEAN can translate its geographical centrality into institutional centrality that is sustained in the new context of changing dynamics. On this, Dr Raja Mohan suggested that ASEAN needs to have its own perspective, and there has to be a form of response stating that ASEAN will not simply leave things to the 'good will' of China and the US but instead will construct its own regional framework with credibility and stability. Within this framework, however, the changing geography and power structure is threatening the structure of ASEAN's coherence, and part of the challenge is how to retain the coherent unity of ASEAN and sustain the institution as the principal vehicle in the region.

Indonesia's role in making ASEAN a success is real, and the capabilities of Indonesia make it one of the key players of how the current discourse of Indo-Pacific is going to be done. In

response to Dr Siswo's presentation, Dr Raja Mohan agreed that multilateralism is needed in the Indo-Pacific context, but it alone will not be enough. Within a multilateral order, no set of norms will survive without a stable balance of powers underlying such system. Dr Raja Mohan advised that what the region needs from Indonesia for the Indo-Pacific is the creation and promotion of a new framework for Indo-Pacific, complemented with reinforcement by Indonesia's strategic partnerships with other countries. He concluded by saying that as a geographically important state, Indonesia will have to play a much larger role in the Indo-Pacific.

Dr Ridwan Djamiluddin

Deputy III for Infrastructure
Coordination, Coordinating
Ministry for Maritime Affairs,
Republic of Indonesia

Dr Ridwan began by explaining that Indonesia's concept at the moment is a "peaceful, prosperous, and inclusive" Indo-Pacific that respects ASEAN centrality. He noted that after the Aceh tsunami in 2004, the Indo-Pacific was first talked about in discussing how to build a more integrated tsunami warning system. At that time, the Indo-Pacific was seen as a softer approach for issues

in the region. Currently, it is the reality that 60% of the world's population lives in this region and the growing middle class in Asia will play an important role in the global economy.

According to Dr Ridwan, the current government is working on the aspects of global energy demand and infrastructure. He reiterated that no matter what concept Indonesia has, at the end of the day it will come to the economic aspect of the cooperation. Dr Ridwan then explained in detail how most of the global economic growth, in terms of GDP contribution, is contributed by countries around the Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean. As an economic hotspot, the two oceans are the most active in maritime transport. Looking at fleets ownership, while many of them are indeed from neighboring countries, some of them are from European countries that go around the oceans, Indonesia does not have that many ships in international cargo transport, but is very active in domestic cargo transport - which in that aspect, Indonesia needs to strengthen cooperation with countries in the neighborhood. In terms of energy supply, the availability of oil and gas in the region will also generate maritime transport and trade. The Asia Pacific is still behind in providing for oil and gas, but for coal, the region contributes 70% of the world's resources. The Indian and Pacific Ocean are also where seabed minerals are most found, especially for the three main marine mineral deposits. There is also potential for palm oil in the region, as Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand are responsible for almost the entire global production.

Dr Ridwan said that the Indian Ocean-Pacific Ocean region is a hotspot of global development, with large population, natural resource abundance, and geostrategic location. There are still many other resources that this region is rich in, such as fish, marine biodiversity resources, and tourism, of which Indonesia and other ASEAN member states are already discussing. However, beside all such potentials, the region is also facing common challenges of environmental threats, such as coral bleaching as a result of global climate change, and natural disaster threats, such as tsunami which are very well known to happen in the two oceans.

Strategically located in the world's economic hotspot, Indonesia has also been promoting a very ambitious infrastructure development program



that requires lots of funding. While only 20-30% funding can be secured from the national budget, the rest needs to come from the private sector, both national and international, hence the need to strengthen cooperation. The spirit of the global maritime fulcrum promoted by the current Indonesian government, said Dr Ridwan, is basically to provide better connectivity, both to national development and provide better infrastructure for international trade. To attract partnerships, the Indonesian government has been working hard to provide better trade environment and improve ease of doing business.

The maritime economic potential in Indonesia is promising. Dr Ridwan explained that the government is now developing 12 integrated marine and fishery centers to improve connectivity as well as to give better attention to the outermost islands of Indonesia. For example in Natuna island, when neighboring countries are busy with the South China Sea, Indonesia prefers to provide a better approach, based on economic prosperity through promoting, more tourism activities, building better infrastructure, and establishing better cooperation with neighboring countries. In terms of cooperation, Dr Ridwan stated that Indonesia does not really pick partners but as long as there are common interest and goals, then the two can talk. So far, Indonesia has been working with many countries such as with India on infrastructure, as well as with China. In this framework, the Indonesian government always promotes that Indonesia is doing this because there is a common interest between the global

maritime fulcrum and Chinese Belt and Road Initiative.

Dr Ridwan concluded that there is a real global hotspot of development in the region. He believed that a prosperity approach is key, and to achieve the goal of this cooperation, ASEAN needs to be incorporated within the Indo-Pacific fulcrum.

Mr. Endy Bayuni

Senior Editor,
The Jakarta Post

Mr Endy opened his presentation by highlighting that there is a different understanding between geography and geopolitics. The East Asian Summit (EAS) includes countries such as New Zealand, Australia, and India, making the summit more of a geopolitics concept rather than geography. He then raised the question of why Indonesia is pushing the concept of the Indo-Pacific now, as it was also asked by ASEAN countries when President Joko Widodo first presented the idea in Singapore, as well as last month during the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting where Indonesia pushed for the proposal to become an ASEAN position paper in the upcoming EAS.



Indonesia has a clear strategic interest in the Indo-Pacific because Indonesia is sandwiched by two oceans, but for other ASEAN countries, there are no direct strategic interests. There is little appetite for the creation of another regional structure on top of what those countries have at the moment, showcasing that not all countries place as much importance on ASEAN as Indonesia does. ASEAN may be the cornerstone for Indonesian foreign policy, but it is not the case with other ASEAN member states. Mr Endy pointed out that it is always a struggle to convince other ASEAN member states, for example on the Code of Conduct on the South China Sea, to unite and try to resolve issues as one ASEAN rather than as individual states.

Indonesia has always been an archipelagic and two-ocean nation, but maritime power was not talked

about until 2014. In response to the situation, President Joko Widodo then came up with the concept of the global maritime fulcrum. Indonesia indeed needs to protect its territory and sovereignty, especially its resources at sea; but it is a constitutional mandate that Indonesia shall play an active role in promoting peace and prosperity. One may question what is in it for ASEAN, but Mr Endy explained that this is the Asian century, where the center of global economic activities is shifting to Asia. Mr Endy reminded that we have to recognize the fact that Asia spans across two oceans, and rather than the Asia Pacific, the Indo-Pacific is now more embraced by countries as a geopolitical concept. Naturally, there are consequences of this situation, such as the change in the balance of powers as well as changes in the economic relationships within the region and with the rest of the world.

As Indonesia has already proposed the paper and seen the response, the next question would be whether Indonesia will succeed in getting this paper accepted. Mr Endy argued that there will be some modifications, but we should not undersell our own diplomats, given the country's history and good track records. As there are already several regional proposals on the table, Mr Endy stated that the Indo-Pacific concept that Indonesia is proposing will hopefully have greater chance of being accepted as an ASEAN concept, with regards to ASEAN centrality and unity.

Mr Endy suggested further that we have to accept the reality that the Indo-Pacific progress is going to be slow and that patience and perseverance

is needed. However, it is uncertain whether we have the time as we rush for the East Asian Summit (EAS). In the event of no ASEAN support for the Indo-Pacific, given the strategic interests, Indonesia has to prepare for a 'plan B'. The Indo-Pacific concept proposal is going to be a test of Indonesia's diplomatic skills, as well as of ASEAN being the cornerstone for Indonesia's foreign policy. Given the short period of time but also the good history and track record, Mr Endy was confident that Indonesia has good chance of success in getting the concept accepted. He then ended his session by suggesting that shall a 'plan B' need to be pursued, Indonesia would benefit from bringing in other partners and seeing if there can be any convergence between the proposals.

Dra. Evi Fitriani, M.A., Ph.D.

Head of Miriam Budiarjo
Resource Center

Dr Evi began her presentation by reiterating that while ASEAN centrality depends on the integrity and solidarity of all ASEAN member states, it also needs leadership as it does not come by itself, and it is crucial that one or more member states needs to make sure that all the others share ownership on ASEAN. At this point, ASEAN

centrality can be very difficult because of the delicate and complicated global circumstances, particularly with the rising competitiveness of the US and China.

The Indo-Pacific concept itself is not new, but has been revived because President Trump mentioned it last November in Manila. Dr Evi then questioned: had he not mentioned this concept, would we enthusiastically care? Would other countries pick up this concept? Does it matter that President Trump was the one who raised it? She then argued that the concept of the Indo-Pacific has been raised to contain China, as in this context, the Indo-Pacific has been used to put forward obstacles against China's strategy in the Indian Ocean.

Dr Evi found the way ASEAN takes this issue and push ASEAN centrality in the



Indo-Pacific concept very interesting, as ASEAN looks like a group of small and medium countries testing the major powers. ASEAN tries to adopt and respond to the surrounding factors, which in this sense are the proposals by major powers. As an institution, it is a normal response to use this framework and bring its own interests.

According to Dr Evi, ASEAN's maneuver to put ASEAN centrality in the Indo-Pacific is smart, as ASEAN seems to be pushing major powers to accept the concept, bearing the characters of the Indo-Pacific that are based on ASEAN's version: inclusive, aiming for stability and prosperity, addressing the rule of law. With this normative approach, Dr Evi shared her confidence that it would be difficult for major powers to reject ASEAN's proposal. By putting the concept of the Indo-Pacific through the existing institutional mechanism, ASEAN would not only synergize, but it would also revive existing mechanisms while cutting the cost of institutional cooperation.

However, if EAS is used as a platform for the Indo-Pacific, Dr Evi questioned whether the East Asian Summit (EAS) will survive, as it has its own rationale. As Malaysia also promotes the Indo-Pacific, it is also important that Indonesia talks to Malaysia in light of shared ownership. The concept nowadays is more on testing ASEAN's solidarity by pushing forward this concept and convincing others to join. By putting ASEAN centrality in the Indo-Pacific, ASEAN does not only adopt and respond to surrounding influence, but it also twists the concept by major powers, bringing back the concept with ASEAN quality to the table. Dr Evi

argued that whether or not ASEAN can convince major powers to accept will very much depend on ASEAN centrality, how smart ASEAN can drive this concept, and how ASEAN unity goes through this contemporary challenge. She also challenged whether the Indo-Pacific discussion will still continue if President Trump no longer talks about this – whether ASEAN will maintain it, or it will be just another test to ASEAN institutionalism development.

In response to Prof Dewi's questions on how to ensure ASEAN centrality, Dr Evi stressed that leadership is needed in ASEAN centrality, so that all ASEAN member states can share the ownership of it. ASEAN also needs all the 'brains' in the region to support and contribute to make a meaningful concept with a functional purpose, and to ensure the progressing development of ASEAN community.



QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION



SESSION I

Question:

How can ASEAN create cooperation in the field of defense, aside from the ASEAN Defense Ministerial Meeting (ADMM)?

Indonesia has a bargaining position with countries such as the US, Russia, and China, but how about ASEAN?

Question:

How does the framework of deterrence that the Indo-Pacific requires look like? Considering the various backgrounds of involved states, what form would it take?

Question:

Do we really have the power to project ourselves as a regional power at the mention of maritime fulcrum, in terms of naval fleet?

RESPONSE

Dr Raja Mohan

Dr Raja Mohan argued that no security system, let alone the collective one, can work without the mechanism to prevent rules violation, as well as the mechanism for redress shall someone actually violates the rules. In this case, if there is no reasonable balance of powers between key actors, then the ability of the regional system will become severely limited. Any system of multilateral norm setting will need to be reinforced by major powers in the region. If there are no consequences, the powers in the region get together to prevent such outcome and a mere declaration would be enough. If not reinforced by a structure of balance, all the nice things they agree on would not be beneficial. Dr Raja Mohan highlighted that there is a need for balance of major powers, as Indonesia is constructing a larger role for itself given its national capabilities. ASEAN can produce collective defense policy to strengthen existing bilateral and trilateral cooperation.

Dr Ridwan

Dr Ridwan explained that at the moment, Indonesia does not see issues based on countries, but more on technical and economic cooperation, and dialogues are also based on the common interests between countries.

On the issue of maritime power, Dr Ridwan preferred to see it from a more practical cooperation perspective. As seen in the South China Sea issue, Indonesia is not involved in the power projection, but instead Indonesia takes a different approach by promoting the advancement of industrial and tourism cooperation with Japan and India.

Dr Evi

Continuing Dr Ridwan's response, Dr Evi explained that Indonesia relies more on soft power, as its capability to convene and get trust from major powers is more important than its maritime capabilities. Indonesia has to maintain this as a stable country, otherwise it could risk losing its credibility.

Indonesia tries to use the ASEAN centrality within the Indo-Pacific concept by stressing on some qualities, including the capability to maintain stability, as well as bringing the Indo-Pacific mechanism to create and construct peace and stability in the region based on the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation as the rule of law. More importantly, in dealing with the issue of the South China Sea, even when Indonesia cannot push China to comply with international law, Indonesia can still bring them to the table to discuss the Code of Conduct, proving that Indonesia has an agreeable peaceful mechanism to discuss the differences.

Dr Evi believed that Indonesia indeed has the capability to be a regional power and to bargain with China and the US, but noted that with ASEAN, Indonesia can be stronger, as Indonesia will not be as strong as now without ASEAN and vice versa.

Mr Endy

Mr Endy agreed that currently Indonesia does not have enough power to project itself as a regional power in terms of military power, but he admitted that there is a plan to build a strong military by 2024. Indonesia is now a rising middle power in the region, albeit without the military power, but for Indonesia to be able to defend its sovereignty and security, it would need the military capability. Such capability is not to threaten or intimidate anyone, but more for its own national interests as it plans to play a bigger role in protecting peace and stability in the region.

Mr Endy also explained that in the defense field, ASEAN defense minister meetings has been expanded to ADMM+, bringing other countries into the dialogue. Each ASEAN member state also has bilateral cooperation with each other, establishing joint exercises in building security measures.

SESSION II

Question:

If we cannot make a politically secure region, how are we going to expand the cooperation? How would multilateralism in the scheme of the East Asian Summit (EAS) stimulate globalization as a whole? Is this process complementary, substitutable, or competing with other strategies? If regionalism is substitutionary to globalization, is this function trying to reconstruct global system in a completely new way?

Question:

During its conception, ASEAN might now seem idealist, but during its conception it was seen from a realist point of view, but with constructive approach. Looking at the Indo-Pacific, our history is we exist in a strategic environment that we cannot completely control. The global power structure is not a given, and in managing this, we need to revisit the 10 Bandung Principles and return to the principle of peaceful co-existence. We have to try to not to be taken hostage by dominant powers, and as for what the Indo-Pacific concept is trying to achieve, we need to find space for small and medium states to have economic autonomy and bridge the different concepts so that ASEAN continues to be a comfortable place for everyone to speak at. ASEAN is not about trying to blend in everything, but trying to provide space for all ideas to take place.

For the non-aligned Indonesia to enter a common security framework, ideologically it is going to be very difficult and there are going to be political obstacles. However, in facing transnational security threats, the circumstances are now much easier and more peaceful. As seen in the Straits of Malacca, there is still a coordinated patrol, but in facing the spillover from the Siege of Marawi, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines are now engaged in an unprecedented joint security patrol.

Question:

As a reminder for the Indonesians on the panel, Indonesia actually started with the concept of the Indo-Pacific in 2005, when Indonesia forced Malaysia to put India into the East Asian Summit (EAS) in order to balance the presence of China, as the US and Russia were not available at that time. Starting from this point, Indonesia needs to have this history in mind and think ahead in developing the concept.

RESPONSE

Mr Endy

On whether Indonesia's Indo-Pacific concept will rival with other concepts on the table, Mr Endy said that the current proposal is just the beginning, which it is subject to change, and open for ideas by other countries. The idea is to have a common platform for countries across the Indo-Pacific, therefore firstly, Indonesia needs to convince other ASEAN member states that the Indo-Pacific is worth supporting, and after ASEAN centrality is well-established, then ASEAN can start inviting other countries along the Indo-Pacific region to contribute to the discussion. There will be rivalry with China as the 'big elephant in the room' and Indonesia has to be prepared for that. Mr Endy explained that although we cannot yet tell the final outcome document, as it is subject to negotiations with major powers, Indonesia still has control over the direction of this discourse.

Dr Evi

On cooperation, Dr Evi inferred that it will depend on how Indonesia tries to achieve security, because as seen in ASEAN, peace indeed can be maintained without military means. In fact, security can be achieved and will be more strengthened when started with trust and built through cooperation, as ASEAN is also an example of change from an era of conflict to an era of cooperation.

Dr Raja Mohan

Dr Raja Mohan explained that to date, the circumstances that benefited this part of the world are changing. From 1961, when the US and China came together, there was no great power conflict as Russia was still marginal. The way China was integrated into the Western system provided a basis where harmony was introduced, and everyone benefited from the process. However, there is a new dynamic in China that is different with the last 50 years.

There are multiple possibilities in which the current ASEAN system could evolve, and each of them will demand a response. If the two core conditions that made ASEAN prosper – great power harmony and globalization – are under stress, ASEAN would need a new response. Dr Raja Mohan thought that the Indo-Pacific concept is already a part of that new response of how to deal with the new situation.

For Indonesia, there is no reason to abandon the 'friendly neighborhood' that it has constructed in favor of a large power role. If the constructed region is vulnerable to external pressure, Dr Raja Mohan suggested that Indonesia can start on 'plan B': reinforcing a structure multilateralism regional security with a set of national actions, building strategic partnerships with key players, and constructing a measure of balance to reinforce a multilateral structure – it is indeed about finding harmony between power and principle as well idealism and realism. Indonesia would also need to respond to the new situation as ASEAN might have, that providing some measure of balance is going to be an important consideration for everyone, as there is a reasonable confidence and capability in Indonesia to improve its negotiating leverage with major powers.

Dr Ridwan

Dr Ridwan supported Dr Evi's proposal to better develop the ASEAN Community. He stated that with the development of the latest technology, many countries now have the capability to produce, therefore we need to consolidate the ASEAN market to be more efficient and competitive for product suppliers. ASEAN member states also need to work more closely to improve the efficiency in the region so the ASEAN Community can grow better with competitiveness.

