

## **ASEAN Defence and Security Foresighting in the next 2 Decades**

ASEAN will be able to maintain present situation of regional peace and stability in spite of traditional and non-traditional security challenges would be key issues and challenges for our region in the next 2 decades. It is clear that cooperation is needed among AMSs in order to strengthen the three pillars of ASEAN, namely: the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC), and the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC).

The ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) is the highest defence consultative and cooperative mechanism in ASEAN. The ADMM has to fulfill its ambition of to promote mutual trust and confidence through greater understanding of defence and security challenges as well as enhancement of transparency and openness. At the same time, it also has to promote regional peace and stability through dialogue and cooperation in defence and security since it is one of fundamental objectives of the ADMM. Moreover, ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus was also established for ASEAN and its Eight Dialogue Partners to strengthen security and defence cooperation for peace, stability and developments in the region.

The ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and ADMM-Plus are useful platforms for sharing perspectives of AMSs and their partners on various defense and security issues. Through these mechanisms, we are able to discuss how such challenges could affect our region and our respective states and how we could collaborate to address our common concerns.

Outside the ASEAN framework, various military-to-military interactions and activities have been held over the years, namely ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Meeting, ASEAN Chiefs of Army Multilateral Meeting, ASEAN Navy Chiefs' Meeting, ASEAN Air Chiefs' Conference, ASEAN Military Intelligence Meeting and ASEAN Armies Rifles Meet. I believe abovementioned mechanisms are quite

useful to find ways to strengthen security and defence cooperation among AMSs. But it is obviously needed to continue modifying those mechanisms to be relevant and effective.

We are currently confronted with several security challenges as a region and as individual countries. It has become imperative for us to engage our neighbors and partners across the region to find collective solutions to address these challenges. Such have been made possible by abovementioned platforms within its ambit.

Either the Asia Pivot Policy or the Indo-Pacific Strategy clearly shows how the Asia is important for the United States. Meanwhile, the regional power China tried to accelerate its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). It is sure that our region, Southeast Asia, plays a strategic important role for both China and the United States. Tension between the U.S. and China definitely would affect AMSs and thus we all have to prepare for our national interest and to focus defence and security of ASEAN as well.

If necessary, ASEAN should remind the power countries, namely the US, China, Japan, Russia and India, not to use ASEAN as a proxy for their rivalry. And we have to reaffirm the unity and solidarity of ASEAN amidst this emerging super-power competition.

Transnational organized crimes such as terrorism, human trafficking, illegal drugs trafficking, arms smuggling would be key challenges and threats for ASEAN in the next 2 decades. Such kinds of crime could not be addressed alone and thus coordination and cooperation among AMSs would be needed.

In line with current situation of the region, AMSs and partners focus and cooperate on the following sectors:

- (a) maritime security;
- (b) humanitarian assistance and disaster relief;

- (c) counter-terrorism;
- (d) military medicine;
- (e) peacekeeping operations;
- (f) humanitarian mine action;
- (g) cyber security.

We are all aware that the wide array of security challenges will remain to be a threat to the peace and prosperity of ASEAN in the next two decades. As is widely acknowledged, the regional security architecture is evolving, with more complicated security challenges emerging while other usual security challenges persist. States must deal with these challenges in partnership with other states. Indeed, the need to deal with these challenges is the foremost driver for cooperation.

We need to ensure that ASEAN will remain united and relevant in the next decades amidst the growing superpower rivalry in the region, economic slowdown, natural disaster and looming threats from terrorism, piracy, and drugs. But the most important one we have to ensure is ASEAN centrality and all of platforms, mechanisms and cooperation must reaffirm it.

Thank you!