

NON-TRADITIONAL MARITIME SECURITY THREATS; THE DYNAMIC OF ASEAN COOPERATION

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Abstract

This article attempts to analyze ASEAN's response to maritime security cooperation. As an organization in Southeast Asia, ASEAN needs to establish good maritime cooperation to protect the various interests of the members and the busy SLOCs as well. The author uses cooperative security to analyze ASEAN maritime security cooperation and identifies sources of cooperative maritime security to explain their willingness to join or not to join a cooperation agreement. This article shows that there is an overlap of cooperation as the result of different in terms of prioritization, capability, and especially perspective regarding the absolute and collective gain that leads to ineffective cooperation. In addition, there are no legally binding frameworks as an outcome from formed cooperation beside a series of dialogues between ASEAN members. But, although each country has different priorities, capability, interest and perspectives, the Cooperative security may become a bridge to overcome the difference. It is possible as the ASEAN members keep showing their willingness to overcome maritime issue by doing bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral cooperation.

Keywords: maritime security, security cooperation, Southeast Asia, cooperative security, absolute gain

1. INTRODUCTION

Sea as a maritime environment has become a contested area for several political interests. Some nations fight to take control of the sea while others provide economic and military power to secure their tendency. So, maritime security is an important issue that needs to be tackled seriously due to its potential to be developed into a global problem. It is argued that maritime security relates to other country's sovereignty, that is why international cooperation is a must. For instance in Southeast Asia, the area where transnational crime continues to rise but on the other hand, there is no effective mechanism to address that issue. Armed robbery and piracy in Southeast Asia Sea have been going on for years. Piracy is considered an enemy of humankind because pirates commit acts of murder, robbery, looting, rape, or other evil acts at sea against humanity (Wu & Zou, 2009). According to an International Maritime Bureau (IMB), in January-September 2010 and 2017 report shows plenty of piracy, robberies, and attacks on ships in the Southeast Asian sea throughout 2008-2015 continued to increase and reached its peak in 2015 as many as 147 cases (IMB, Report for Period 1 January-30 September 2017). British maritime intelligence company released a trend analysis in the third quarter related to global maritime crime which increased 38% in Southeast Asia compared to the first 9 months of 2014, from 140 cases increased to 194 in 2015 (Maritimeneews. id, 2015). The Time website highlights the hijacking of ships in Southeast Asia with title "The Most Dangerous Waters in

The World" (Time.com, 2014). The following table is the IMB report regarding the number of robberies, hijackings and attacks on ships at sea during 2013-2017.

Table 1: Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ship

Period January-September 2010 and 2017

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number	128	141	147	69	76

Source: IMB 2010 and 2017

There was a rapid rise that is depicted in the table from 2013 to 2015. Although it was declined in 2016, the number increased slightly in 2017. The incident occurred in the Malacca Strait and the Sulu-Sulawesi Sea. Since March 2016, a series of kidnapping-for-ransom have been reported in the Sulu Sea and with thousands of islands and busy shipping lanes, the region offers a high potential for pirates to loot cargo (bbc.com). In addition to being vulnerable to piracy, the Sulu-Sulawesi Sea lane is also an area for illegal smuggling of goods and migrant workers. In this area, it is easier for smuggling activities because there are many gaps to escape from the surveillance of border guards. This situation endangers the maritime security of the region, particularly for ship navigation and the ship crew as well. As an international shipping lane, guaranteeing maritime security for ships passing through these areas should be deemed as a vital policy. The countries in Southeast Asia are responsible to provide such guarantees by conducting cooperation in maritime security area.

The aim of maritime security cooperation in the Southeast Asian region is to overcome traditional and non-traditional threats. Although Piracy, armed robbery, and other trans-illegal activities as non-traditional threats are a common concern of countries in Southeast Asia, the level of priorities and capabilities are different among them. The differences are articulated in varying participation in some agreements namely bilateral, trilateral or multilateral that has been carried out since the beginning of the formation of ASEAN. For instances, Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (1971), ASEAN Declaration on the South China Sea (1992), ASEAN Declaration on Transnational Crime and ASEAN Plan of Action for Combat Transnational Crime (1997-1999), Hanoi Declaration of 1998, Piracy and Maritime Crimes Fused with Terrorism (2000), Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (2002), ASEAN Maritime Forum (2003), ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and ADMM Plus (2006), ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism (2007) and Adopt the Hanoi Action Plan to implement the ARF Vision Statement (2010).

The amount of cooperation does not mean the maritime security threats decline significantly. The scope of activities and discussions doing in different platforms are deemed to be overlapping efforts, therefore risking these frameworks effectiveness and creating drained resources (ASEAN Mechanisms on Maritime Security Cooperation, 2017). For that reason, Southeast Asian countries should rethink the imperatives of single council which accommodate different level of priorities. This can be done as each member shows a desire to be active in the

diverse cooperation that has been in place to address maritime security issues. By doing that, the defense of the sea-security will not easily encounter by transnational organized crimes.

2. COOPERATIVE SECURITY; SOLVING REGIONAL PROBLEMS

This research analyzes ASEAN maritime security cooperation in two stages. The first stage is through the concept of Cooperative Security. The author sees that maritime security cooperation in Southeast Asia is carried out through cooperative security that emphasizes the process of Dialogue, Transparency, Interdependence, Mutual Assurance, Inclusiveness, and Comprehensive with a cooperative approach. However, this cooperation was carried out through various cross-sectorial forums so that maritime security cooperation was still not effective. Cooperative security is a concept coined by former Canadian and Australian Foreign Ministers, Joe Clark and Gareth Evans in the early 1990s (Mack & Kerr, 2010). In a proposal that aims at replacing the security structure of a cold war that is balanced of power and supported by military alliances in nuclear prevention efforts through a multilateral framework and promoting military and non-military security (Dewitt, 2007). Gareth Evans depicted cooperative security as an attempt to imply consultation rather than confrontation, transparency than secrecy, reassurance rather than deterrence, interdependence than unilateralism and prevention rather than correction (Evans, 1994). This concept is considered important for several reasons (Moodie, 2000): First, the emergence of new problems beyond the capacity of a country to overcome them individually. For instance, environmental problems, immigration, crime organizations, drug trafficking, and terrorism. Besides, traditional issues also become more complex which makes the state faces more challenges to secure its interests.

The second is the failure of security competition. In the cold war, countries tried to reach their security purposes through traditional approaches such as increasing military capacity or pursuing local and regional domination. This condition created tensions between states and sparked hostility and conflict. The last, cooperative security assumes the importance of environment stability, where the disintegration of internal political structures raises questions about the ability of some countries to sustain coherence and to fulfill their citizen's basic needs. Failed state tends to generate greater violence that may not be handled within state boundaries. The global and regional implications of the disintegration of the political structures of countries make cooperation become important to reduce their adverse impacts. Broadly, perhaps only in regional cooperation context, the stability and the strength of political, economic, and social structures in surrounded countries can be achieved. A strategic principle that is used to achieve goals with various institutions is compared through the material threat or physical coercion (Moodie, 2000a). Cooperative security promoted through international regimes creates provision for all parties to respond effectively to disobedience. When noncompliance occurs without punishment, the regime is weakened. While if significant non-compliance keep repeating, the regime will collapse (Moodie, 2000b).

Cooperative security is also defined as a process where countries with similar interest collaborate through agreed mechanisms with the aim of boosting the economy, reducing mutual suspicion and tension between countries, building trust and maintaining regional stability.

Cooperative Security is a strategic system shaped around the core countries of liberal democracies that connect together in formal or informal bloc networks and institutions, which share common values and practical and transparent political, economic, and defense cooperation. (Cohen & Mihalka, 2001). Generally, efforts to characterize and form this concept express a liberal perspective of world security future. Its supporters offer to act collectively, through as many international institutions as possible. They assume that democracy will be easier to obtain by working jointly in a security cooperation regime and democracy has historically tended not to fight with each other. Cooperative Security is an effort to overcome traditional collective security weaknesses. At the same time, it does not justify aggression, anywhere and by anyone. So that international cooperation is an effort to prevent and frustrate aggression. Cooperative Security supporters believe that they are currently more effective in achieving their goals. Regional conflicts between countries are an important concern for supporters of Cooperative Security. Cross-border aggression can never be accepted. Emerging internal state conflicts are a serious problem for this strategy.

Cooperative security strategies encourage the involvement of non-state actors, international organizations, and countries with different ideologies, through informal forums. This strategy model also develops the basic principles where stability can be achieved only if the actions and effects of choices, including solutions relating to economic, political, military and civilian aspects are coordinated (Framework document, 2011). According to Archarya (2007), Cooperative Security is a system of building trust and transparency aimed at reducing tension and conflicts within a group of states. This definition provides a view of Cooperative Security which is more directed at building Confidence Building Measure (CBM) among members and avoiding internal conflicts rather than focusing on safeguards against external threats (Carter, et.al., 1993). The way non-military and non-coercive effort for gaining security among all members without being associated with friend or enemy status is an approach to the cooperative. This is very important because it is inclusive; in another way, no particular parties are excluded or regarded as opponents which are also considered as the use of the power of non-military for coercive purposes (Katsuma, 2009a). By this definition, there are two critical elements: First, inclusiveness or indivisibility; Security is inclusive, where no one is excluded or considered as enemy. Security as something 'inseparable' and can be achieved through cooperative efforts. The second is the use of non-military force for coercive purposes. One feature that distinguishes cooperative security from conventional security cooperation models, such as Collective Defense and Collective Security, is that it does not prioritize non-military elements. (Katsuma, 2009b). The main purpose of Cooperative Security is to prevent war especially by preventing aggression. Therefore, for cooperation to be effective and beneficial for the engaged countries, cooperative security must involve the dimensions of individual security and active promotion of stability which should be seen in two ways: inward-looking, and outward-looking (Cohen and Mihalka, 2001a). Individual security has become an important agenda for the international community. This is related to global human security. In which an individual is very vulnerable to various threats both from the country and outside the country. Therefore cooperative security includes the dimensions of individual security as an important element in creating stability. The component actively promotes stability, that

stability can be disturbed by the effect from conflicted states and also by individual security violation within neighboring countries. How stability can be developed, restored and maintained in the world should always be a concern for countries in the Cooperative Security system (Cohen and Mihalka, 2001b).

According to Dewitt and Acharya (Mily Ming-Tzu Kao, 2011) the three fundamentals of cooperative security consist of cooperative actions, the habits of dialogue and inclusivity. First, inclusiveness is a step in recognizing the role of state and non-state actors, particularly international organizations in improving and providing security. A broader conceptualization of security issues is not only related to traditional security issues such as military representation between states but also non-traditional security issues that are increasingly prevalent such as transnational crime. Second, Cooperative security arrangements particularly begin with an informal meeting such as dialogue among the participants. This informal conversation is deemed as important step that can lead to routine discussions setting both bilateral and multilateral in terms of security concerns and how to overcome it. Over time, a routine dialogue can trigger openness, clarity, and certainty in which will reduce conflict potential such as misunderstanding. Finally, the Cooperative Security concept emphasizes that many contemporary security problems can only be solved if countries cooperate with each other and it requires cooperative action to ameliorate the security problems faced by all members.

Based on that reason, the commitment system cooperative security rests on (SIPRI, 1996): (1) the belief that is based on openness, predictability and transparency; (2) confidence-building; and (3) legitimacy, to the acceptance by members that their security is substantially dependent on military constraint of the regime. Thus, the concept of cooperative security must meet the following criteria (SIPRI, 1996): (1) Comprehensiveness, which is defined as the recognition of the relationship between preserving peace and respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as economic, environmental cooperation, legal, and cultural; (2) Indivisibility, that needs joint efforts in achieving security interests both single country or group of states because they cannot be separated from one another; (3) Cooperative approaches, as manifested in complementary supporting and complementary institutions, in any kinds of regional and sub-regional cooperation.

By referring to the statements above, this concept then becomes important in seeing how ASEAN maritime security cooperation is carried out in the context of overcoming non-traditional crimes such as armed robbery and piracy. As a policy choice, cooperative security promotes steps to build trust, security dialogue, defense exchanges, and a multilateral framework promotion. This situation encourages a rise in the "transparency" of military forces that can mitigate distrust among countries by facilitating effective threat evaluation in engaging countries. Through the distribution of intelligence reports, joint military base inspections and the exchange of observers at military exercises will be achieved with greater transparency. The main components of cooperative security are confidence and security measures of Confidence Building Measures (CBM) that increase transparency throughout the region.

3. SOURCES OF COOPERATIVE MARITIME SECURITY

Multilateral Security Cooperation in the Southeast Asia region itself has been led by ASEAN. Some initiatives have been taken by ASEAN to enhance collaboration between the members and external forces, therefore developing cooperative security as a channel for security dialogue. In establishing the ASEAN dialogue, there are several levels of mechanisms including Ministerial Level meetings between member countries. The model of ASEAN cooperative security represents the norms development where the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) as a medium for Southeast Asian countries to practice their norms, and share them with non-ASEAN countries. The norms of security cooperation practiced by ASEAN relate to the idea that security should be carried out in a cooperative and non-military manner, by increasing trust and mutual understanding through consultation and dialogue. SEAN organizations aimed at creating a safe region through a process of dialogue that is considered as CBM and as the implementation of the Cooperative Security concept.

ASEAN consist of 10 countries namely Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Brunei Darussalam, Laos, Cambodia, and Myanmar. Some countries in this region are directly adjacent to the sea which is why one of their security focuses is maritime security. Sea in Southeast Asia is one of the busiest maritime trade routes where a third of world trade and a half of its oil transits in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore which are located in Southeast Asian regions. That is why the countries in the Southeast Asia region established various platforms and cooperation to secure their interest in the maritime issue. Maritime security cooperation in the Southeast Asian region takes place on several levels and it has been proven that bilateral or trilateral arrangements beyond the ASEAN mechanisms have run well. For instance; Bilateral cooperation such as Indonesia-Singapore patrol cooperation in the Malacca Strait, Trilateral cooperation such as cooperation conducted by Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines in securing their maritime borders, Regional cooperation both with ASEAN Countries and outside the region such as Japan, China, and United States. Thailand, in maritime security, although it supports multilateral and regional agreements, in practice, is more likely to have bilateral agreements.

Preference of cooperation level in ASEAN is influenced by absolute and collective gain calculation. As a result, the mechanism taking by the countries do not run effectively for addressing the threats at the sea. The fact that each state looks out for interest, notwithstanding existing grounds for cooperation is established. Regarding the case, state capacity to engage in mutually beneficial actions without resorting to the highest central authority, to work together in anarchic system, is essential for achieving joint performance (Oye, 2011). Each country seeks mutual benefits in cooperation, and in Maritime security, it was affected by the absolute and collective gain from the cooperation. For instance, Indonesia's desire to participate in maritime security cooperation is based on an 'absolute gain' calculation of whether the benefits outweigh the costs. In this cooperation, Indonesia is interested in sharing burdens and equipment, access to training and exercises, as well as co-benefits, including agreements from partners to negotiate other assistance. As for the Philippines, maritime cooperation can make

it easier for the Philippines to reach its national interests in maintaining territorial integrity and can reduce the tension between the Philippines and China in the South China Sea.

Different Priorities is also matter. In terms of priorities, the Philippines urge the need for cooperation in maritime security due to the absence of credible council or body in terms of maritime national defense. The Philippines consistently advocate various regional and international forums, promote good governance, the rule of law, protection of the marine environment, and maximize sea potential with responsible and sustainability based on UNCLOS 1982. The Philippines start initiating the ASEAN Coast Guards Forum (AGF)) by managing an expert group meeting. Despite the forum that is formed by the Philippines does not have a long-term strategy, their national policy has already changed to be more concern with maritime security cooperation like maritime terrorism, drug trafficking, humanitarian and disaster relief and countering piracy, where previously focus on territorial defense in the South China Sea (ASEAN Mechanisms On Maritime Security cooperation, 2017). Cambodia focuses on non-traditional security issues like sea piracy, human trafficking, maritime terrorism, and IUU fishing. In December 2009, Cambodia formed a national committee on maritime security (NCMS) and strengthening law enforcement also increasing maritime sovereignty as the main goal. Vietnam also shows high interest for securing maritime area by using The Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES) application, applying management and prevention of maritime incidents at sea, protecting maritime environment, and establishing agenda for respect freedom of navigation (FON) and over flight. Thailand Government uses different strategies to secure the maritime domain based on the area coverage. Nonetheless, Thailand likely to adjust its policy with other issues relate to ASEAN and not to pay more attention to any maritime national agenda (ASEAN mechanism for maritime security cooperation, 2017). On the contrary, the foreign policy of Laos focuses on peace and independence rather than on maritime security. But Laos already has expanded its cooperative network both with other countries and international organizations. Laos is keen on enhancing mutual understanding and trust throughout the world particularly in Southeast Asia nations and stressing the imperative of cooperation.

Indonesia, as the largest archipelago in the region, is focusing its security on issues of maritime security and cooperation as well. Indonesia with its strategic position believes every country can work effectively and sea will not become the barrier. This is also true considering the sea offers tremendous potential for cooperation and to gain advantages ASEAN members should establish strong maritime connectivity and build trust among its member. Therefore, Indonesia continues to become tough supporter of maritime cooperation by initiating different platform of cooperation and mechanism like the ASEAN Maritime Forum. For instance, Indonesia forms some trilateral cooperation such as Malacca Straits Patrol Network with Singapore and Malaysia to combat piracy and with Malaysia and The Philippines addressing the same issue particularly in Sulu Sulawesi Seas.

In the case of Malaysia, its defense policy priority is maintaining peace and stability and pursuing economic sustainability. Malaysia really knows its responsibility for ensuring maritime zone - include the Malacca Strait- by providing safety for navigation. However,

Malaysia recognizes that regional preferences on issues occur among the ASEAN member such as military-to-military engagement, illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing also joint patrols among coast guards. One step ahead, Singapore established an information center that provides a sharing information platform that benefits other countries. The platform gives a better response to a dynamic maritime security environment by utilizing its links with international maritime centers, operations centers, and institutions throughout the world. This Platform Called The Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (Re CAAP). Launched in November 2006, the Re CAAP Agreement was signed by 14 Asian Contracting Parties including Southeast, North, and South Asian countries. Today, signed countries is increase to 20 parties include Europe (Denmark, Norway, United Kingdom and the Netherlands) United States and Australia (Re CAAP, 2020).

From the previous explanation, it can be seen that some ASEAN countries are very concerned about maritime security. ASEAN efforts to increase maritime cooperation across many sectors are based on the pillars of the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC). Their efforts will discuss the following matters (ASEAN.org); (a) maritime and security cooperation in ASEAN; (b) the marine environment, ecotourism and fisheries regimes in Asia; (c) freedom and security of navigation and sea piracy; (d) cooperation in the ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF). In the APSC Blueprint (2016), it was stated that ASEAN promoted the establishment of the AMF as a formal mechanism for ASEAN members to discuss issues related to maritime security. The AMF identifies maritime security threats in the form of (1) piracy, (2) armed robbery, (3) marine environment, (4) illegal fishing, (5) goods, people, weapons, and drug smuggling (Keliat, 2009). Apart from the AMF, ASEAN also discussed maritime security in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). The ARF not only identifies mainstream security issues such as sovereignty and military threats. It also includes other problems such as armed robbery against ships, piracy, illicit trafficking in drugs and arms, terrorism, and human trafficking. These broad issues then push ASEAN cooperation to focus also on the search and rescue maritime, illegal unreported and unregulated Fishing, the marine environment, climate change, and natural disasters.

From all of the cooperation above, there was still shortcoming faced by ASEAN members. Forums conducted by ASEAN are deemed only as 'talk shops' because none of the members initiate or suggest a legally binding agreement formation. Archarya (2009) found that most students of Asian security called the ASEAN Regional Forum as a useless 'talking shop' where no serious effort to overcome maritime security problems. He argues that the ASEAN's approach only focuses on how to increase trust and mutual understanding that seems so naive. However, this view is opposed by Director for ASEAN Political and Security who stated "ASEAN cooperation is not only on dialogue level". For instance ADDM plus which consist of 10 countries plus 8 other countries. The member focuses on practical cooperation. Not only for sharing information, training and workshop, but also like what is in the table top exercise, field training exercise. All the members of ASEAN were involved in the field training exercise on maritime security to counter terrorism in 2016. The scenario at that time was Abu Sayyaf who becomes recent topics, kidnapping, robbery and terrorism.

Other shortcomings are lack of trust and leadership among ASEAN members. In terms of leadership, Indonesia considers it as important factor for making effective cooperation although no declaration who can take such a role neither Indonesia. Indonesia also tries to include other high national priority issues namely Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. But unfortunately, ASEAN has failed in assisting the attempt to include IUU fishing as a transnational crime. ASEAN is likely loss of confidence while Indonesia potentially can push legally-binding regional agreement from regional forum or conference.

In terms of lack of trust among the member, if some states initiate one platform or strategy, others will form another because they do not trust the platform or the strategy will run well. To date, no country in ASEAN wants to create a legally-binding regional agreement and firmly implement punishment for breaching the rules. In the case of maritime security cooperation in the South China Sea, for example, Valencia (2018) stated that many Asian nations experience distrustful of each other historically and then become barrier for making security cooperation. They assumed the cooperation only benefits the developed country especially if the country is engaged in such cooperation. Although, engaging countries beyond ASEAN will probably bring different results and effective cooperation due to limited resources and capabilities that are experienced by most ASEAN countries. A positive outcome from maritime cooperation including non-member of ASEAN is displayed by Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia which collaborate with the United States and Australia. This cooperation focuses on piracy and terrorism in the Sulu Sulawesi Sea. The Trilateral cooperation claims that the crimes have decreased and data from Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (Re CAAP) shows that the crime in the Sulu Sea in 2018, reduced from three to seven incidents in 2017.

Notwithstanding, all forms of maritime cooperation which is initiated or implemented by a member of ASEAN do not guarantee the transnational crime at sea is addressed effectively. The efforts are likely to overlap and led to the question of why various mechanisms and cooperation are established. Why ASEAN does not form a single institution or council focusing only on the maritime issue? Is the previous did not run well? Is there any conflict between the members so they form another? The engaging multi-sectorial body definitely will trigger the single sectorial issue. This situation needs a deep analysis particularly about which mechanism or cooperation that effective in terms of overcoming transnational crime at sea. ASEAN should then identify one cooperation or strategy and discuss it together. The determined effective cooperation could be deemed as a single sectorial body that should be continued and be strengthened by the member of ASEAN. It is imperatives to interpret this maritime issue as a critical issue that needs to be discussed in one forum with a specific agenda that all ASEAN member will implement it consistently.

4. CONCLUSION

Although there is plenty of cooperation conducted by ASEAN member do not guarantee the reduction of crimes such as piracy, illegal smuggling, etc. This situation is influenced by different preferences, capabilities, priorities, absolute and collective gain calculation, lack of

trust and leadership. Some countries such as Indonesia, Cambodia, and Singapore integrate maritime security in their foreign policy, while others do not directly state this issue as a prime concern. All ASEAN members should have strong cooperation and priority adjustment as an effort to response to major global trends; Aside from that, trust and strong leadership are likely missing among ASEAN members. So, it is now making sense why a multi-sectorial body is engaged by ASEAN, and there is no single platform with the maritime issue as the foremost concern.

Having cooperation beyond ASEAN member also prove that ASEAN could not overcome the issue on their own. Lack of capability is the main factor for asking assistance from other countries such as the Australia and United States. On the other hand, engaging others is proven effective but also risky for ASEAN. Although, cooperate with others such as United States, Australia, or other developed countries will fill some ASEAN countries' drawbacks and is proven to be more effective, ASEAN members should make a serious effort to address their problems. This effort can prevent intervention and domination mainly in the policymaking process by non-ASEAN member states that often gain more benefit.

In addition, though each country has different priorities, capability, interest and perspectives, the cooperative security may become a bridge to overcome the difference. The ASEAN members show their focus on the maritime issue by doing bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral cooperation since it has been proven that bilateral or mini-lateral cooperation beyond the ASEAN mechanisms have run well. For instance, Malaysia, Philippines and Indonesia work jointly in the Sulu and Celebes Sea where this trilateral setting among ASEAN member is common and effective. Therefore, the ASEAN members should develop those kinds of cooperation. This can create also a strong legally-binding regional agreement, in which the member will be pushed to overcome the threats seriously.

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Not Applicable

Author Contributions

Rosnani: conceptualization, methodology, data collection, data curation, formal analyzes, research, writing.

Dudy Heryadi: conceptualization, methodology, review and editing, supervision, validation, verification.

Yanyan M. Yani: review and editing, supervision, validation, verification.

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