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INDONESIA'S DEFENCE DIPLOMACY: HARNESSING THE HEDGING STRATEGY AGAINST REGIONAL UNCERTAINTIES

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Abstract

Indonesia has been increasingly susceptible to recent geopolitical developments. Along with the rapid pace of regional arms modernisation and unresolved territorial disputes, it begins to ponder the impact of emerging great power rivalry to the country's strategic interests. However, rather than pursuing a robust military build-up, Indonesian policymakers asserts that diplomacy is the country's first line of defence. This paper argues that Indonesia's defence diplomacy serves two agenda of hedging strategy — strategic engagement and military modernisation. This way, Indonesian defence and security officials seek to moderate the impact of geopolitical changes whilst maintaining the country's defensive ability against regional uncertainties.

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Introduction

Indonesia is inherently susceptible to geopolitical developments due to its geostrategic position. The rise of China and the U.S. rebalancing strategy have been the dominant themes in East Asia. Despite the significant volume of their bilateral trades, the Indonesian government remains aware about the potential impact of increased Sino-U.S. rivalry to regional security. Persisting disputes over the South China Sea have also become major obstacles to peace and stability within the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). Spurred by changes in military doctrines, enduring regional suspicions and the growing supply side of global arms trade, Indonesia is increasingly concerned about the rapid pace of regional military modernisation.

Rather than pursuing a robust military build-up, the Indonesian government relies on "diplomacy [as] the [country's] first line of defence".[1] With that notion, it has built an extensive network of defence and military ties with many strategic partners. In Southeast Asia, the Indonesian military regularly conducts personnel exchanges, joint training programmes and coordinated sea patrols. In addition to its defence cooperation with the United States and European countries, Indonesia engages China, Russia and South Korea in defence procurement. Using ASEAN-centred multilateral frameworks, it also discusses various security issues and develops practical cooperation among regional and extra-regional defence establishments on areas of mutual concern.

This paper argues that Indonesia's defence diplomacy serves two agenda of "hedging" strategy. At one level, it is a means of strategic engagement to build amicable defence ties with regional powers, while enmeshing their interactions into a norms-based security order. At another level, defence cooperation supports the country's military modernisation with a focus on bolstering indigenous strategic industries. To begin with, this paper will capture the essence of Indonesian defence diplomacy and discuss its policy trajectories in response to emerging regional trends. It then reviews the recent developments of the country's multilateral and bilateral defence diplomacy, and concludes by pondering the future prospect of Indonesia's defence diplomacy.

Conceptual Framework of Indonesia's Defence Diplomacy

The notion that the military plays an important role in international affairs is hardly new. Traditionally, it has been a means for achieving a government's foreign and security policy either through the threatened or actual use of coercion in diplomacy.[2] "Coercive diplomacy" had been evident during the formative history of Indonesia. The country's military campaigns against Dutch and British forces in West Papua and the Federation of Malaya were instrumental for President Sukarno's anti-imperialist foreign policy. During the New Order authoritarian regime, Indonesian invasion of East Timor was part of President Suharto's anti-communist policy stand and strategic orientation to the United States.

[1] *Indonesian Defence White Paper* (Jakarta: Ministry of Defence, 2002), p. 37.

[2] For a recent review of coercive diplomacy, see Peter Viggo Jakobsen, "Coercive Diplomacy," in Alan Collins, ed., *Contemporary Security Studies* (London: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 277-298.

The term of "defence diplomacy" became fashionable only after the end of the Cold War. Over the past two decades, a new form of defence interactions, which involve the peacetime cooperative use of military forces and related infrastructures to serve broad foreign policy objectives, has grown in significance.[3] Many scholars have listed a number of relevant activities that a government could undertake in conducting the country's defence diplomacy (see Table 1). Broadly understood, defence diplomacy turns the military establishment into an instrument of "soft power" or persuasion to achieve various diplomatic agenda.[4]

Table 1
Defence Diplomacy Activities

- Bilateral and multilateral contacts between civilian defence officials and senior military officers
- Appointment of defence attachés to foreign countries
- Bilateral defence cooperation agreements
- Training of foreign civilian and military personnel
- Provision of advice and expertise on democratic civilian control over the armed forces, defence management and military technical areas
- Contacts and exchanges between military personnel and units, port calls
- Placement of liaisons officers in defence and military establishment of partner countries
- Deployment of training teams
- Provision of military equipment and other material assistance
- Bilateral or multilateral military exercise or training

Source: Andrew Cottey and Anthony Foster, *Reshaping Defence Diplomacy: New Roles for Military Cooperation and Assistance*, Adelphi Paper No. 365 (London: IISS, 2004), p. 7.

The growing profile of defence diplomacy has been attributed to the expanding range of actors involved in international relations and its level of institutionalisation. Today, it could be undertaken by Track-1 personnel (such as ministerial-level officials, parliament members, military and police officers) and Track-2 channels (including think tanks and civil society). In terms of military-to-military engagement, defence diplomacy involves either dyadic interaction between two countries or multilateral meeting among defence professionals in a sub-regional or regionally-focused framework.[5]

In East Asia, defence and military personnel have met, consulted and interacted for decades. Not surprisingly, the practice of defence diplomacy reflects the prevailing regional security architecture. In the view of a seasoned regional expert, there are four major patterns of security cooperation in the region. The first pattern includes multilateral defence cooperation between Southeast Asian countries and external powers to address specific security concerns. The second pattern is the U.S.-led defence and security cooperation with treaty allies and strategic partners in the region. The third

[3] See Andrew Cottey and Anthony Foster, *Reshaping Defence Diplomacy: New Roles for Military Cooperation and Assistance*, Adelphi Paper No. 365 (London: IISS, 2004), p. 6.

[4] Alice Hills, "Defense Diplomacy and Security Sector Reform," *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (2000), pp. 46-67.

[5] David Capie, "The Bilateral-Multilateral Nexus in Asia's Defense Diplomacy," in William T. Tow and Brendan Taylor, *Bilateralism, Multilateralism and Asia-Pacific Security: Contending Cooperation* (New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 118-119.

pattern centres on China's multilateral efforts to bind ASEAN to a structure of regional security cooperation with a major focus on non-traditional security issues. The final pattern involves ASEAN-centred multilateral frameworks to promote security cooperation among its members and dialogue partners.[6]

Much of the scholarly literatures on defence diplomacy focus on confidence building and conflict prevention. It is considered as a low-cost and low-risk instrument for building amicable defence and security relations, thereby reducing the likelihood of international conflicts.[7] According to a regional analyst, this notion finds its relevance in Southeast Asian context where "equally weak" regional countries conduct defence diplomacy for different rationale and policy direction.[8] Often referred as a process of "strategic engagement", defence diplomacy for conflict prevention encompasses a spectrum of military cooperative engagements that works in various ways and operates on different levels (see Table 2).

Table 2
Defence Diplomacy as A Means of Conflict Prevention

- Military cooperation can act as a symbol of willingness to pursue broader cooperation, mutual trust and commitment to work to overcome or manage differences
- Military cooperation can be a means of introducing transparency into defence relations, particularly with regard to states' intentions and capabilities
- Defence diplomacy can be a means of building or reinforcing perceptions of common interests
- Military cooperation may change overtime the mind-sets of partner states' militaries
- Military cooperation can support specific, concrete defence reforms in partner countries
- Defence assistance may be used as an incentive to encourage cooperation in other areas

Source: Andrew Cottey and Anthony Foster, *Reshaping Defence Diplomacy: New Roles for Military Cooperation and Assistance*, Adelphi Paper No. 365 (London: IISS, 2004), p. 15-17.

The Indonesian government have recently picked up the essence of defence diplomacy. With the notion that diplomacy is the country's first line of defence, it implies that defence diplomacy is a key means of conflict prevention. The 2008 Defence White Paper further highlights the layers of Indonesian defence diplomacy. The first layer is military-to-military ties with ASEAN countries. The second layer involves defence and military cooperation with external powers, including Australia, China, Russia, South Korea and the United States. The White Paper also considers the Indonesian

[6] Carlyle A. Thayer, *Southeast Asia: Patterns of Security Cooperation* (Canberra: ASPI, 2010), p. 13.

[7] See International Institute for Strategic Studies, *Strategic Survey 1998/99* (London: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 40-41.

[8] Evan A. Laksmana, "Defence Diplomacy in Southeast Asia: Trends, Prospects and Challenges," in Bhubindar Singh and See Seng Tan, *From 'Boots' to 'Brogues': The Rise of Defence Diplomacy in Southeast Asia*, RSIS Monograph No. 21 (Singapore: RSIS, 2011), p. 75.

military's deployment in the United Nations-sponsored peace-keeping operations as part of the country's defence diplomacy.[9]

Nevertheless, defence or "military diplomacy" has to strike a balance between broad diplomatic agenda and security interests of a country. From a conventional perspective, arms transfer is "a foreign policy writ large" to enhance diplomatic leverage and political influence.[10] An arms contract not only involves the procurement of military hardware, but also entails other commitments with long-term implications — such as setting up training and maintenance facilities, supply of ammunition and spare parts, availability of capability upgrades, and transfer of technology.[11] This way, both recipient and supplying countries can foster and maintain closer military-to-military ties.

In that reflection, Indonesian defence diplomacy focuses on three key agenda — confidence-building, harnessing military capability, and developing indigenous defence industrial bases.[12] For trust-building, defence diplomacy involves activities such as state visits, consultations, dialogues, information-sharing, and personnel exchanges. Defence diplomacy for harnessing military capability includes joint exercises and training, technical assistances and joint or coordinated operations. To develop indigenous strategic industries, defence diplomacy includes agreements for arms sales, technological offsets, joint ventures, and research and development programmes. By and large, Jakarta views defence diplomacy as a strategic means to promote regional amity and cooperation, while helping the development of indigenous defence capabilities.

Indonesia's Security Concerns and Policy Direction

Indonesia is the largest archipelagic country in the world and geo-strategically located at the crossroads of two oceans (the Indian and the Pacific) and two continents (Asia and Australia). With over 17,000 islands, it occupies vital sea lanes for global commerce and communication. The country's *Wawasan Nusantara* [Archipelagic Outlook] has long been a normative guideline for the people to visualise their identity and geographical environment as a nation-state. It envisages the Indonesian archipelago as an integral entity where the seas and straits are natural bridges, rather than barriers to connect numerous islands and unify diverse ethnic groups.[13]

Despite its geostrategic importance and huge economic potentials, Indonesia is susceptible to geopolitical developments and security challenges. *First*, the growing power of China constitutes the most salient aspect of the on-going strategic change in East Asia. Any structural shifts in the regional power balance to Chinese favour would inevitably affect the position of the United States as the

[9] *Indonesian Defence White Paper* (Jakarta: Ministry of Defence, 2008), p. 140, 152.

[10] Andrew J. Pierre, "Arms Sales: The New Diplomacy," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 60, No. 2 (Winter 1981/1982), p. 267.

[11] B.S. Sachar, "Military Diplomacy through Arms Transfer: A Case Study of China," *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (April-June 2004), p. 290-291.

[12] Idil Syawfi, *Aktifitas Diplomasi Pertahanan Indonesia dalam Pemenuhan Tujuan-Tujuan Pertahanan Negara: 2003-2008 [Indonesia's Defence Diplomacy for Achieving State Defence Objectives]*, Master's thesis, University of Indonesia, 2009, p. 14.

[13] For the evolution of Indonesia's geopolitical thinking, see Evan A. Laksmana, "The Enduring Strategic Trinity: Explaining Indonesia's Geopolitical Architecture," *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (June 2011), p. 98-101.

predominant power in the region. On its part, the U.S. government has recently announced its "rebalancing" strategy that some analysts believe is an attempt to preserve its regional primacy.[14]

In that context, major power rivalry is at the forefront of Indonesia's strategic concern in East Asia. While China and Japan are economically interdependent to a large degree, residual historical memories and territorial dispute continue to haunt their diplomatic relations.[15] Proposals for free trade and economic cooperation, such as the U.S.-led Trans-Pacific Partnership and Chinese idea of the Asia-Pacific Free Trade Agreement are among the key instruments to promote regional integration. However, without a shared vision, these economic frameworks could further deepen the divisions of perceptions and interests in the region.

Second, maritime disputes increasingly pose a significant challenge to Indonesia's regional cohesion and security. Recent tensions between China and Southeast Asian claimants have complicated ASEAN-China relations and weakened the unity within the regional association.[16] Although Indonesia is officially a non-claimant state, it rejects Chinese historical nine-dashed line claim over the South China Sea. While brokering negotiations between ASEAN capitals and Beijing for a regional Code of Conduct, Indonesian defence officials have repeatedly expressed concerns on the vulnerabilities of the country's territorial sovereignty to China's creeping encroachment — particularly intrusions of its fishing fleet.[17]

Third, the Indonesian government is also apprehensive about the worrying trends of regional arms build-up. Defence spending in Asia has risen by 27.2 per cent from US$270.6 billion in 2010 to US$344.2 billion in 2014.[18] With that huge funding, regional countries have procured cutting-edge weapon systems such as upgraded fourth-generation jet-fighters, ocean-going naval combatants, new class of submarines, and a range of sophisticated missile systems. According to a prominent scholar, the main concern here is that if a state's decision to launch military modernisation is poorly matched to its security requirements, then the arms race that it provokes could ultimately reduce the state's security and increase the likelihood of war.[19]

Although one can contest which type of weapons are "order-enhancing" or "order-upsetting",[20] new military technologies have the potential to alter the balance of power in East Asia. At one level, information technologies have resulted in the growing asymmetric threats and cyber warfare. At another level, the development of Chinese "blue water" navy and "anti-access/area denial" capabilities

[14] Martin Indyk, Kenneth Lieberthal and Michael O'Hanlon, "Scoring Obama's Foreign Policy: A Progressive Pragmatist Tries to Bend History," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 91, No. 3 (2012), pp. 29-43.

[15] See Junhua Wu, "Economics of the Territorial Disputes," in Tatsushi Arai, Shihoko Goto and Zheng Wang, eds., *Clash of National Identities: China, Japan, and the East China Sea Territorial Dispute* (Washington, DC: Wilson Center, 2013), pp. 68-74.

[16] Rizal Sukma, "Without Unity, No Centrality," *The Jakarta Post* (17 July 2012).

[17] See Moeldoko, "China's Dismaying New Claims in the South China Sea," *The Wall Street Journal* (24 April 2014).

[18] See International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2015* (London: Routledge, 2015), p. 209.

[19] This dangerous condition has been dubbed as "sub-optimal race". See Charles L. Glaser, "When Are Arms Races Dangerous? Rational versus Suboptimal Arming," *International Security*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (Spring 2004), pp. 44-84.

[20] Paul Bracken, "Technology and the Military Face of Asian Security," in Sheldon W. Simon, ed., *The Many Faces of Asian Security* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), p. 78.

would enable Beijing to respectively enhance its naval presence and pose a serious challenge to the ability of the U.S. government to project its military power in the region.[21] If these destabilising factors go unchecked, they could raise the risks of miscalculation and deterrence failure making regional conflict unnecessarily likely.

Fourth, the complex nexus between traditional and non-traditional security issues would potentially complicate Indonesia's strategic landscape. While historical concerns among regional countries have yet disappeared and maritime boundaries are highly contested, issues such as illegal fishing, maritime piracy and shipping route vulnerabilities have overlapped with the growing demand for marine resources and energy.[22] Recent studies also suggest that climate change could exacerbate the fault lines of geopolitical competition and regional vulnerabilities to transnational threats, including organised crime and illegal migration.[23] In addition to the regional haze debacle, increased refugees from conflict-torn countries would strain bilateral ties between Indonesia and its neighbours.

Amid these regional uncertainties, the Indonesian government maintains the tradition of "independent and active" foreign policy doctrine. Referring to the Law No. 17/2007, the core interest of the Indonesian government is the maintenance of the country's "strategic autonomy" in its external relationships.[24] The past experience with arms embargo had showcased the grave danger of over reliance on a specific great power for defence materials. Specifically, the law highlights Indonesia's aspiration for "international peace and stability" despite its concerns about the emergence of "hegemonic power" and continued distrusts among the great powers.[25] That being said, the Indonesian government prefers a cooperative approach in international relations, rather than military solution to regional disputes.

In the light of the changing power structure in East Asia, Indonesia appears to adopt a hedging strategy to avoid a situation in which it must decide to align with either side of the competing major powers at the expense of another.[26] Given its geostrategic location and current level of military power, Indonesia is unlikely to commit itself to an antagonistic position toward other countries most of the time. Hence, it combines "engagement and regional integration" mechanisms with realist-style "balancing" approach in the form of military modernisation and security cooperation with strategic partners. This way, the Indonesian government preserves a maximum range of strategic options to achieve its foreign and defence policy agenda.

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[21] See Aaron L. Friedberg, *Beyond Air-Sea Battle: The Debate over U.S. Military Strategy in Asia* (London: IISS, 2014), pp. 12-13.

[22] See Clive Schofield and Ian Storey, "Energy Security and Southeast Asia: The Impact of Maritime Boundary and Territorial Disputes," *Harvard Asia Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (Fall 2005).

[23] See Christopher Jasparro and Jonathan Taylor, "Climate Change and Regional Vulnerability to Transnational Security Threats in Southeast Asia," *Geopolitics*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (2008), pp. 232-246; James R. Lee, *Climate Change and Armed Conflict: Hot and Cold Wars* (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 3-7.

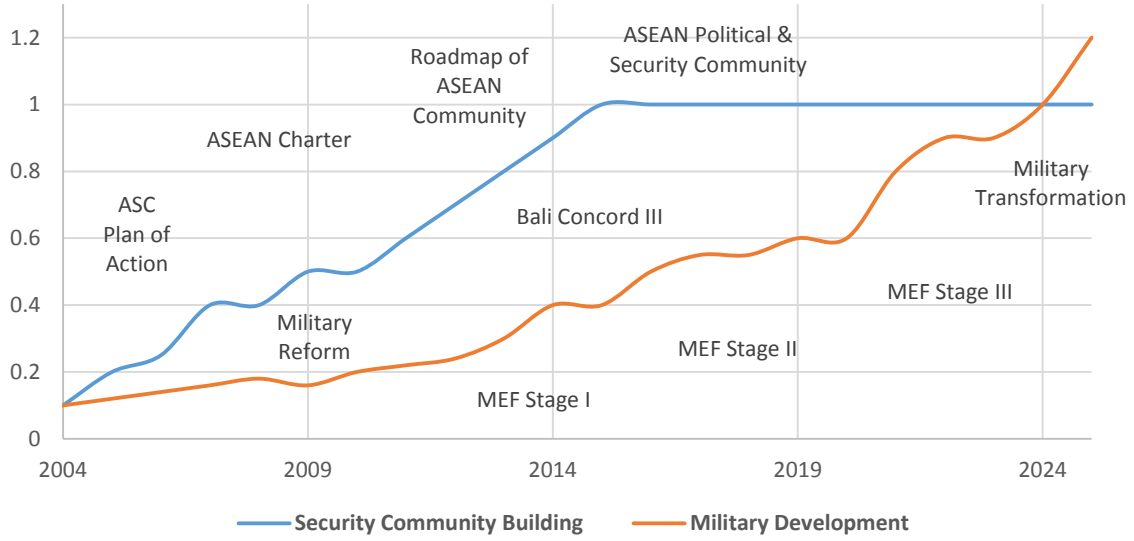
[24] See "Annex" to Indonesia's Law No. 17/2007 on Long-term Development Planning 2005-2025, pp. 36-37, 40, 44.

[25] See Ibid, p. 76.

[26] For a general definition of hedging strategy, see Evelyn Goh, *Meeting the China Challenge: The US in Southeast Asian Regional Security Strategies*, Policy Studies 16 (Washington, DC: East West Center, 2005), pp. 2-3.

Chart 1 illustrates the trajectories of Indonesia's defence planning and regional diplomacy. Despite all regional complexities, Indonesian foreign policymakers seem optimistic that creating a "security community" is the best approach to reduce tension and avoid armed conflict in Southeast Asia. In a view to develop a norms-based regional security order, Jakarta promotes the "basic principles on how the countries of East Asia will conduct themselves, like non-use of force, transparency, confidence-building measures".[27] The idea is to enhance regional cohesion, while managing great power relations in a peaceful and benign manner. For that purpose, according to a former Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, the country relies on ASEAN-centred regional frameworks to develop "comprehensive security" cooperation and ensure a "dynamic equilibrium" among Southeast Asian countries and external powers.[28]

Chart 1
Indonesia's Defence Planning and Regional Diplomacy



Apart from its multilateral engagements, the Indonesian government also undertakes a steady process of military modernisation to maintain the country's "standard deterrence" ability.[29] Under the so-called "minimum essential force" (MEF) strategy, it has outlined the nature and scale of capabilities to anticipate a broad array of military operations at the perceived flashpoints.[30] Moreover, in order to gain a higher level of self-reliance on arms manufacturing, Jakarta seeks to revamp the capabilities of its strategic industries base through defence industrial partnership.[31] Jakarta is likely to pursue an internal balancing-oriented defence policy as an "insurance" against the uncertain present and future intentions of great powers. This hedging strategy has permeated the outlook of Indonesia's multilateral and bilateral defence diplomacy.

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[27] This statement was given by Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs. See "A Conversation with Marty Natalegawa," Council on Foreign Relations (27 September 2011). Available at http://www.cfr.org.

[28] Marty Natalegawa, "Annual Press Statement of Foreign Affairs Minister of the Republic of Indonesia," Ministry of Foreign Affairs (7 January 2011). Available at http://www.kemlu.go.id.

[29] See *'Postur Pertahanan Negara'* (Jakarta: Ministry of Defence, 2008), p. 71.

[30] See *Minimum Essential Force 'Komponen Utama'* (Jakarta: Ministry of Defence, 2010).

[31] See "Annex" to Indonesia's Law No. 17/2007, op.cit, p. 62.

Recent Developments of Indonesia's Multilateral Defence Diplomacy

In East Asia, there is a long list of multilateral frameworks for defence interactions. They take place in the form of either formal meetings (such as ASEAN Regional Forum and Western Pacific Naval Symposium) or informal exchanges (including Asia Pacific Roundtable and Shangri-La Dialogue). Initiated by both ASEAN and external powers — such as China and the United States, these forums generally have a broad membership and stress on building amity among defence establishments. However, unlike ASEAN's consultative platforms, the extra-regionally sponsored defence talks does not always reflect the strategic thinking of Southeast Asian countries, bringing about a significant change of regional security architecture.

Despite the scepticism about its ability to tackle critical security challenges,[32] ASEAN has been instrumental to Indonesia's foreign policy and diplomacy in East Asia. In the view of a former Indonesian Defence Minister, the fundamental role of ASEAN mechanisms is to provide "strategic space" and calibrate "technological parity" among Southeast Asian countries and extra-regional powers.[33] The "ASEAN Way" that involves consensus building and non-confrontational approach is deemed as the most acceptable strategy to build a cohesive regional security order. With that modality, according to a regional analyst, ASEAN's cooperation on trans-boundary security issues has helped create the "building block" for defence regionalism in Southeast Asia.[34]

In terms of strategic orientation, the relevant indicators of Indonesia's recent multilateral defence diplomacy are the agenda or focus of ASEAN's official documents and the country's engagement in ASEAN-centred regional security dialogues. A review of the former indicator shows that over the past six years, the regional grouping issued a total of 149 publications or 25 documents on an annual average.[35] These official papers principally seek to address traditional and non-traditional security problems, while undertaking measures to develop institutional mechanisms in the region.[36] Interestingly, the largest portion (34 per cent) of ASEAN's publications covers cross-cutting issues — including comprehensive partnerships with extra-regional countries (see Figure 1). This further highlights that the distinction between traditional and non-traditional security issues are increasingly blurring for Southeast Asian countries.

[32] See Sheldon W. Simon, "Southeast Asian International Relations: Is There Institutional Traction?" in Narayan Ganesan and Ramses Amer, eds., *International Relations in Southeast Asia: Between Bilateralism and Multilateralism* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2010), pp. 38-39.

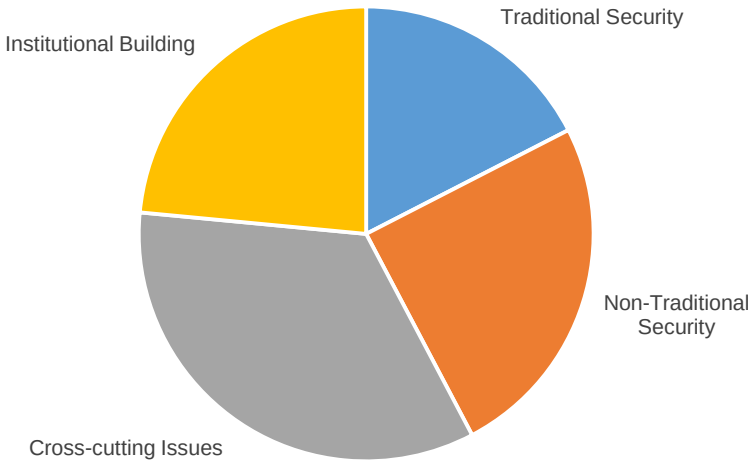
[33] Juwono Sudarsono, "The Role of Indonesia in the Region and the World," *The Jakarta Post* (3 May 2010).

[34] Evan A. Laksmana, "Regional Order by Other Means? Examining the Rise of Defense Diplomacy in Southeast Asia," *Asian Security*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (2012), p. 252.

[35] These public documents are in the form of joint communiqués or statements (57 per cent), concept papers (11 per cent), declarations (11 per cent), press release (8 per cent), plans of action (7 per cent), and others (6 per cent).

[36] While traditional security-oriented documents deals with issues — such as the South China Sea, the strengthening of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, and the implementation of Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone, the non-traditional security documents covers among others food security, human security and transnational organised crimes.

Figure 1
Focus of ASEAN's Official Documents, 2009-2014



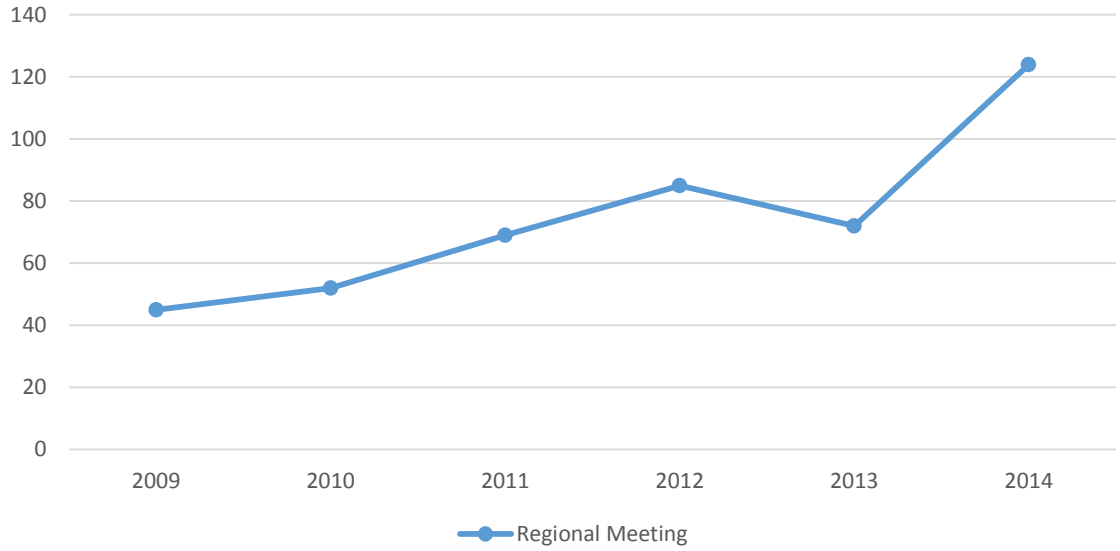
Source: Data collated from ASEAN's official websites.

Moreover, this study notes that between 2009 and 2014, ASEAN had organised an average of 75 security or defence consultative forums a year (see Chart 2), in which Indonesian delegation played an active role. The figure is more significant compared to a previous study that shows only 12 meetings taking place on an annual average from 1994 to 2008.[37] The decision of ASEAN leaders to transform the region into a Political-Security Community by 2015 appears to have opened greater opportunity for regional order building.[38] With a belief that none of the regional countries could address evolving security problems alone, Indonesia has been the key proponent of enhanced cooperative relations among defence establishments in the region. This includes a series of intra-ASEAN defence dialogues, ASEAN-Plus security talks, and regional events attached to the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and East Asian Summit (EAS).

[37] See Evan A. Laksmana, "Indonesia's Rising Regional and Global Profile: Does Size Really Matter," *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (2011), p. 177.

[38] See "Cha-am Hua Hin Declaration on the Roadmap for the ASEAN Community," adopted at the 14th ASEAN Summit, Cha-am, 24 October 2009. Available at www.asean.org.

Chart 2
ASEAN's Defence and Security Dialogues



Source: Data collated from the official websites of ASEAN and Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Out of the recorded 447 meetings, intra-ASEAN defence and security interactions constitute the most intensive event (37 per cent) of Indonesia's multilateral defence diplomacy (see Figure 2). The ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) has become more institutionalised and regularised in recent years. Supporting the objectives of ASEAN Security Community building,[39] Southeast Asian defence ministers work through a rolling three-year programme to strengthen defence and security cooperation on three levels: (i) enhancing practical cooperation among ASEAN militaries; (ii) promoting ASEAN's engagement with extra-regional partners; and (iii) strengthening the central role of ASEAN in the regional security architecture.[40] Close to Indonesia's interests, the ADMM had undertaken a number of regional initiatives, including defence industrial collaboration, peacekeeping centres network, and logistics support for non-traditional security missions.[41] No less significant, it has recently called for the establishment of a direct communication link for information exchanges in the event of crises.[42]

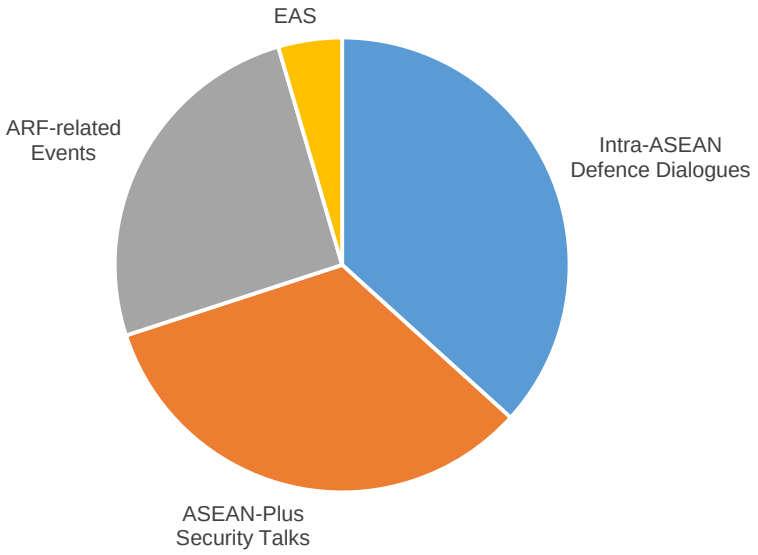
[39] See "ASEAN Security Community Plan of Action," adopted at the 10th ASEAN Summit, Vientiane, 30 November 2004, p. 3. Available at www.asean.org.

[40] See "ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) Three-Year Work Program, 2008-2010," adopted at the 2nd ADMM, Singapore, 15 November 2007; "ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) Three-Year Work Program, 2011-2013," adopted at the 5th ADMM, Jakarta, 19 May 2011. Available at http://admm.asean.org.

[41] See "Concept Paper on the Establishment of ASEAN Peacekeeping Centres Network," adopted at the 5th ADMM, Jakarta, 19 May 2011; "Concept Paper on Establishing ASEAN Defence Industry Collaboration," adopted at the 5th ADMM, Jakarta, 19 May 2011; "Concept Paper on the Establishment of Logistics Support Framework," adopted at the 7th ADMM, Bandar Seri Begawan, 7 May 2013. Available at https://admm.asean.org.

[42] See "Concept Paper on Establishing A Direct Communication Link in the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Process," adopted at the 8th ADMM, Nay Pyi Taw, 20 May 2014. Available at https://admm.asean.org.

Figure 2
Indonesia's Multilateral Defence Diplomacy Venues, 2009-2014



Source: Data collated from the official websites of ASEAN and Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

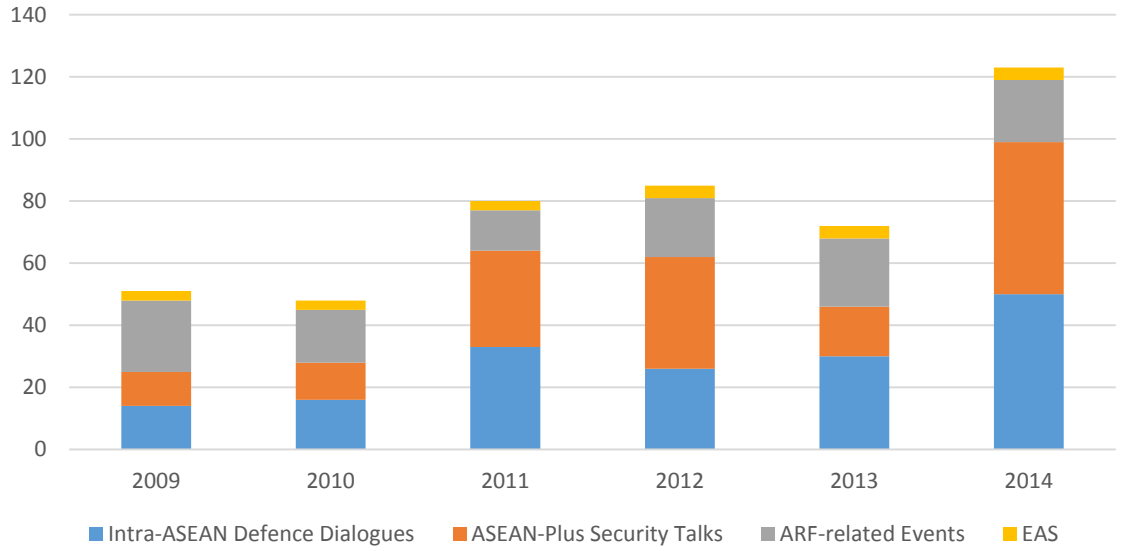
Another venue of intra-regional defence diplomacy is ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Informal Meeting (ACDFIM). With the ADMM introduced in 2006, the ACDFIM had become an annual mechanism for implementing decisions made by the regional defence ministerial forum through the implementation of a biannual activity work plan.[43] As a high-level military meeting, it serves as the "regional hub" of military-to-military interactions for trust-building and information-sharing purpose. In addition to the ASEAN Military Intelligence Informal Meeting, the ASEAN Military Operations Informal Meeting was inaugurated in 2011 and held back to back with the 8th ACDFIM in Jakarta, thereby extending the scope of multilateral cooperation to military operation level.[44]

With the rise of multilateral defence interactions within Southeast Asia, Indonesian officials appear more confidence in engaging major powers as a collective on defence diplomacy issues. Under the umbrella of the ASEAN-Plus mechanism, there were a total of 154 security or defence-related meetings with extra-regional partners in the last six years (see Figure 3). Among the significant development in the architecture of regional defence diplomacy was the creation of ADMM-Plus in 2010. Alongside the expanded membership of the EAS, the new regional defence forum brings together defence ministers from ten ASEAN members and eight external powers including China, India, Japan, Russia and the United States.

[43] See "Joint Declaration of the ASEAN Defence Ministers on Strengthening ASEAN Defence Establishments to Meet the Challenges of Non-Traditional Security Threats," adopted at the 3rd ADMM, Pattaya, 26 February 2009. Available at https://admm.asean.org.

[44] See "Joint Declaration of the ASEAN Defence Ministers on Strengthening ASEAN Defence Cooperation for Stability and Development of the Region," adopted at the 5th ADMM, Jakarta, 19 May 2011. Available at https://admm.asean.org.

Figure 3
Indonesia's Multilateral Defence Engagements, 2009-2014



Source: Data collated from the official websites of ASEAN and Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Held once every two years, the ADMM-Plus has formed Experts' Working Groups to work on five areas of cooperation — including humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, maritime security, military medicine, counter-terrorism, and peacekeeping operations.[45] Despite the scepticism of some scholars due to the modest process and agenda of the multilateral cooperation,[46] the ADMM-Plus is an important framework for two key reasons: *first*, it reaffirms the central role of ASEAN in developing an inclusive regional security order; *second*, the nascent regional framework allows bilateral meeting on the side-line to ameliorate any inter-state tensions.[47] By and large, the ADMM-Plus would further operationalise Indonesia's vision of ASEAN as the strategic space provider in East Asia.

The third venue of Indonesia's defence regionalism is the long-established ARF. Since 1994, it was regarded as a means to manage geopolitical changes in the aftermath of post-Cold War world.[48] The plethora of defence exchanges under the ARF is valuable for three organisational attributes.[49] *First*, it embodies and spreads the norms of behaviour stemming from the ASEAN Way to avoid the eruption of regional war. *Second*, given the large number of its members including Canada, European Union, North Korea and Pakistan, the regional institution reinforces "ASEAN centrality" to manage evolving regional relations beyond its traditional boundaries. *Third*, the ASEAN-driven regional dialogues also welcome extra-regional participants to make significant contributions, as in the case of China-initiated ARF Security Policy Conference in 2004.[50]

[45] See "Concept Paper on Establishing an Experts' Working Group," adopted at the ADSOM-Plus, Yogyakarta, 29 April 2011. Available at https://admm.asean.org.

[46] David Capie and Brendan Taylor, "Two Cheers for ADMM+," *PacNet*, No. 51 (20 October 2010).

[47] Ian Storey, "Good Start on ASEAN Defence Cooperation," *The Strait Times* (16 October 2010).

[48] See Ralf Emmers, "The Influence of the Balance of Power Factor within the ASEAN Regional Forum," *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (2001), pp. 275-291.

[49] Alex J. Bellamy, "The Pursuit of Security in Southeast Asia," in Mark Beeson, ed., *Contemporary Southeast Asia* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 189-190.

[50] See "Chairman's Statement of the 11th Meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum," Jakarta, 2 July 2004.

On average, from 2009 to 2014, the ARF has organised 19 multilateral events a year (see Figure 3), involving Indonesian defence and security officials. To date, it has made great contributions to foster defence transparency through a range of cooperative and practical measures, such as annual defence policy statement, regular publication of defence white paper, and increased military-to-military contacts. In 2010, the ARF's ministers of foreign affairs adopted a Plan of Action to strengthen cooperation on five areas specifically: (i) disaster relief; (ii) counter-terrorism and transnational crimes; (iii) maritime security; (iv) non-proliferation and disarmament; and (v) peacekeeping operations.[51] In addition to a series of regular Track-1 meetings,[52] Indonesian academics have engaged in the ARF Track-2 events — including the contributions of the ASEAN Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS) and Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP). This linkage would ultimately form a social modality — "a stock of trust, familiarity, ease and comfort" — that is crucial for conflict prevention and the maintenance of good-natured great power relations.[53]

Overall, Indonesia's multilateral defence engagements have taken part in the on-going process of security community building in East Asia. While encouraging greater participation of major powers in the ADMM and the ARF, Jakarta also supported the inclusion of Australia and India in the EAS and, in 2011, welcomed Russia and the United States to participate in the regional institution.[54] The adoption of the so-called "Bali Principles"[55] for mutually beneficial relations highlights the country's belief that regional uncertainties could be mitigated through a dynamic equilibrium in the regional security architecture. This further confirms the notion that like other Southeast Asian countries, Indonesia relies on ASEAN's regional processes as a means of "omni-enmeshment" approach to draw the major powers into a set of regional norms for a stable and mutually beneficial relationship.[56]

New Trends in Indonesia's Bilateral Defence Diplomacy

Indonesia has a long experience of bilateral defence interactions. In the past, its defence cooperation focused on confidence-building, information-sharing and management of border issues.[57] In some cases, the bilateral defence ties have been institutionalised through the creation of high-level panels. Indonesia, for example, had separate agreements with Malaysia and Philippines to create joint committees with a major focus on resolving maritime border issues and enhancing military-to-military

[51] See "Hanoi Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN Regional Forum Vision Statement," adopted the 16th ARF Meeting, Hanoi, 23 July 2010.

[52] The Track-1 dialogues include the ARF Ministerial Meeting, Senior Officials' Meeting, Defence Officials' Dialogue, Heads of Defence Universities/Colleges/Institutions conference, and various inter-sessional meetings.

[53] Mely Caballero-Anthony, "Partnership for Peace in Asia: ASEAN, the ARF, and the United Nations," *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (2002), p. 536.

[54] See "Chairman's Statement of the 6th East Asia Summit," Bali, 19 November 2011.

[55] See "Declaration of the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations," adopted at the 6th East Asia Summit, Bali, 19 November 2011.

[56] Evelyn Goh, "Great Powers and Hierarchical Order in Southeast Asia: Analyzing Regional Security Strategies," *International Security*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (Winter 2007/2008), pp. 113-157.

[57] See Ralph Emmers and See Seng Tan, "The ASEAN Regional Forum and Preventive Diplomacy: Built to Fail," *Asian Security*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (2004), p.11.

ties.[58] With the original ASEAN members, its defence interactions also involved bilateral military exercises and training (see Table 3).

Table 3
Indonesia's Bilateral Military Exercises in Southeast Asia

Partner	Code Name	Type	Year of Initiation	Frequency
Brunei	Helang Laut	Naval	2000	Annual
	Bruneisia	Air	2009	Annual
Malaysia	Darsasa Malindo	Air, land, naval	1982	Intermittent
	Elang Malindo	Air	1975	Biennial
	Kekar Malindo	Land	1977	Annual
	Kripura Malindo	Land	1981	Intermittent
	Tatar Malindo	Land	1981	Intermittent
	Malindo Jaya	Naval	1973	Annual
Philippines	Philindo	Naval	1972	Intermittent
Singapore	Eagle	Air, naval	1974	Annual
	Elang Indopura	Air	1980	Annual
	Safkar Indopura	Land	1988	Annual
	Englek	Naval	1974	Annual
Thailand	Elang Thainesia	Air	1980	Annual
	Sea Garuda	Naval	1975	Intermittent

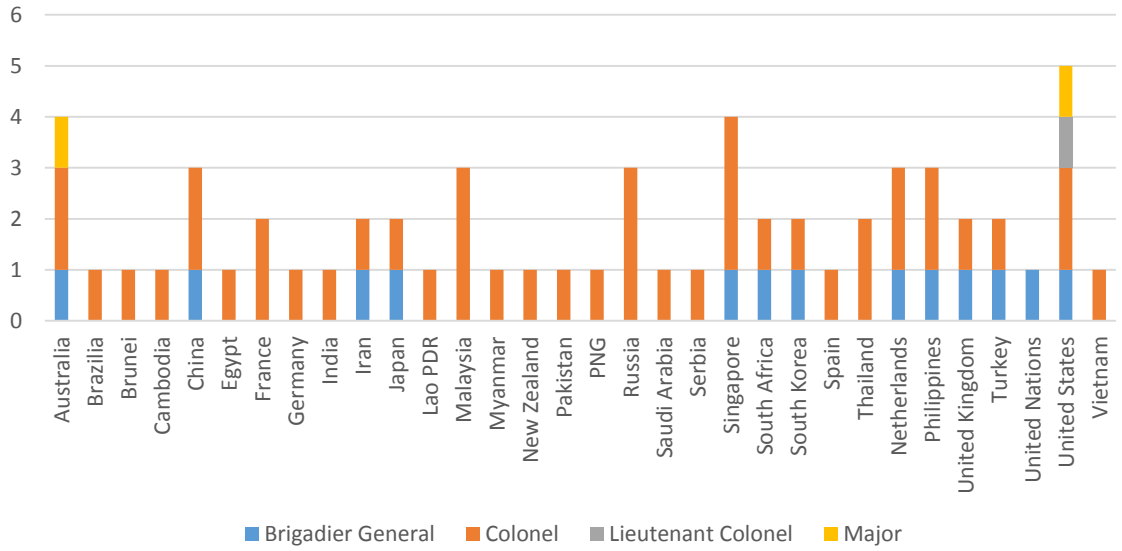
Source: Adapted from Bhubindar Singh and See Seng Tan, "Introduction: Defence Diplomacy and Southeast Asia," in Bhubindar Singh and See Seng Tan, *From 'Boots' to 'Brogues': The Rise of Defence Diplomacy in Southeast Asia*, RSIS Monograph No. 21 (Singapore: RSIS, 2011), p. 7.

As a general practice, the Indonesian government dispatches its defence attachés to countries it considers important. In 2012, for instance, there were a total of 59 military officers working in 32 Indonesian embassies and 1 senior officer posting at the United Nations headquarters (see Figure 4). Aside of assisting the ambassadors on defence and security issues, these military envoys play a crucial role in enhancing amicable working relationship between Indonesia and host countries. Between 2009 and 2013, this study notes that the country had conducted a total of 385 bilateral defence interactions. This number is more significant compared to a previous study, in which only 88 activities took place since 2003 until 2008.[59]

[58] See Sheldon Simon, "The Regionalization of Defense Diplomacy in Southeast Asia," *Pacific Review*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (1992), p. 119.

[59] See Syawfi (2009), op.cit, p. 29.

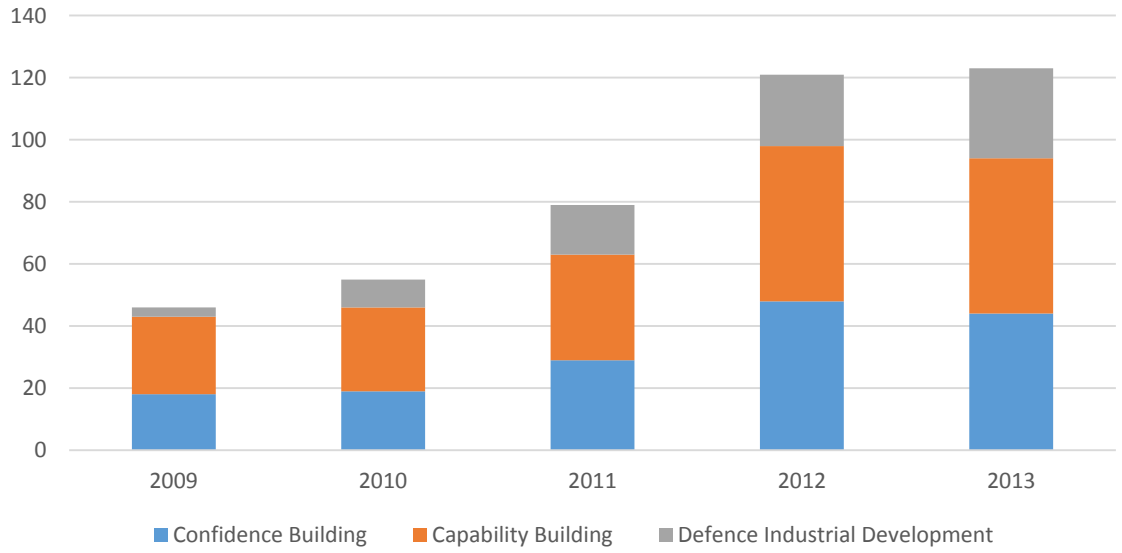
Figure 4
Indonesia's Defense Attachés Posting



Source: Indonesia's Ministry of Defence; data as of 2012.

Another important development of the current practices is the shift of focus of Indonesian defence diplomacy agenda. Unlike the earlier period, the bilateral defence interactions for developing the military capability have outgrown confidence building measures in recent years (see Figure 5). Aside from the growing need for regional cooperation on transnational security issues, this emerging trend could be attributed to the country's military modernisation programmes that require the armed forces to harness new missions and latest defence technologies. With a strong commitment to rebuilding indigenous strategic industries, Indonesia's defence industrial cooperation has also grown in prominence.

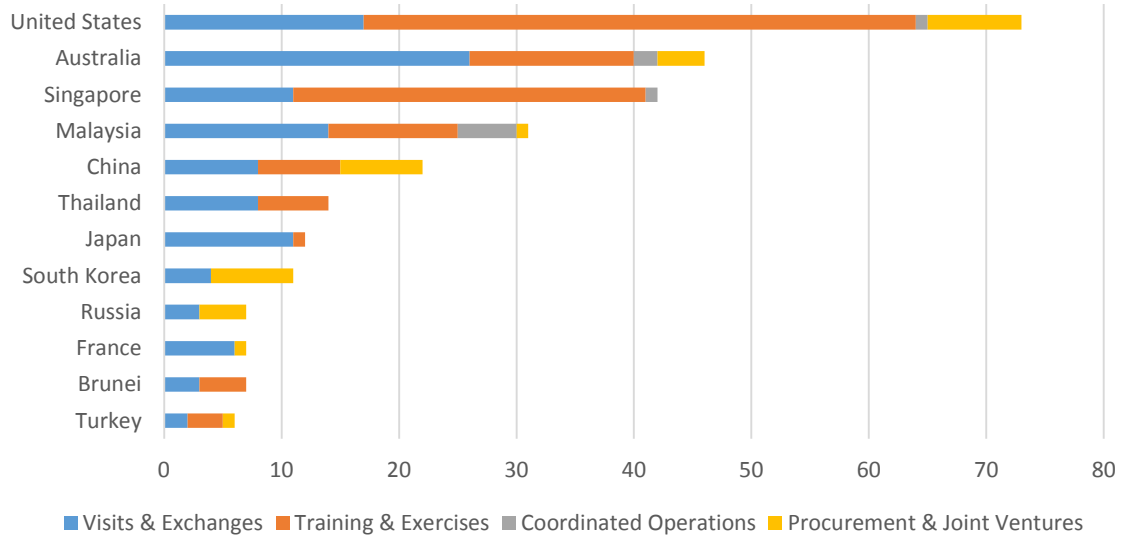
Figure 5
Indonesia's Bilateral Defense Diplomacy



Source: Dataset collated from various public records, 2009-2013.

Over the past five years, Indonesia had engaged 36 countries in bilateral defence diplomacy, suggesting that Jakarta seeks to reduce the country's security dependence and expand its strategic partnerships. The top 10 targeted countries of Indonesia's defence diplomacy represent the most important regional neighbours and the external powers that it sees as crucial security partners and potential rivals (see Figure 6). Despite the past arms embargo, defence cooperation with the United States enables the Indonesian military to access advanced weapons systems and top-class professional military education. Although Jakarta is still uncertain about Beijing's foreign policy direction with regard to the South China Sea issue, their militaries have engaged in a range of activities for confidence building purpose. Meanwhile, Indonesia's defence ties with Australia remain highly dynamic due to the continuation of contentious issues in their diplomatic relations.[60] With that said, Jakarta and Canberra still have a huge bilateral homework to develop mutual understanding on operational issues under the umbrella of a comprehensive security treaty — signed in 2007.

Figure 6
Indonesia's Top Partners in Bilateral Defense Diplomacy



Source: Dataset collated from various public records, 2009-2013.

In Southeast Asia, Indonesia have built extensive military-to-military interactions with regional countries. Apart from unsettled borderlines and residual historical concerns, defence diplomacy focuses on not only safeguarding territorial integrity but also ensuring regional security. Singapore is the leading Southeast Asian partner of Indonesia's bilateral defence diplomacy. Annually, both countries conduct intensive joint military exercises and training programmes to improve their inter-operability on areas of mutual interest, such as disaster response and maritime safety. Despite the recent diplomatic row over the Indonesian Navy's new "Usman Harun" frigate,[61] the search and locate

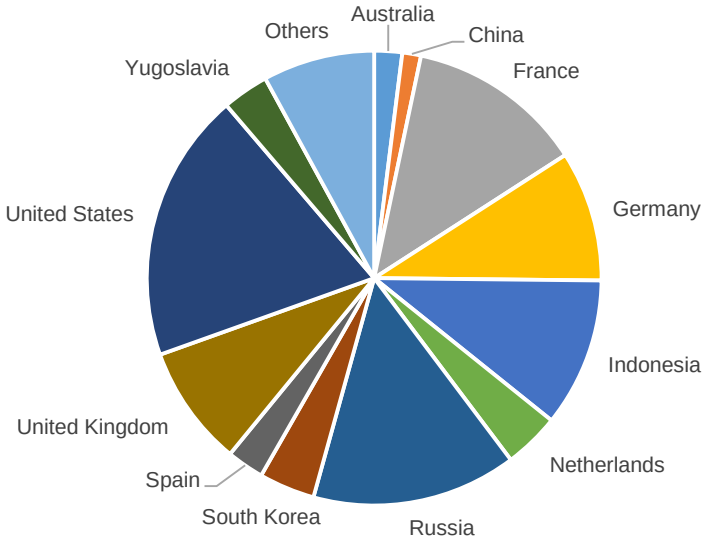
[60] See Gregorius Sri Nurhartanto, "Penyadapan dan Pasang Surut RI-Australia," *Kompas* (21 November 2013); Ikrar Nusa Bhakti, "Jika Garuda Murka," *Kompas* (22 November 2013).

[61] In February 2014, Indonesia named a newly refurbished frigate in honour of two marines, who were executed for detonating a bomb in Singapore during the infamous "Confrontation" campaign of the 1960s. In response, the Singaporean government sent a formal diplomatic note to Jakarta to register its regret. See "House Backs Govt in Usman Harun Row," *The Jakarta Post* (8 February 2014).

operation for the lost AirAsia QZ 8501 flight has been the latest showcase of mutual confidence between Jakarta and Singapore.[62]

On defence materials, the United States and West European countries had been Indonesia's traditional partners that supplied a majority of its existing weapon systems (see Figure 7). In a view to improve the country's autonomy on military equipment, it undertakes two policy initiatives on defence procurement. *First*, Jakarta expands the off-shore sources of the military's arsenal to avoid being overly dependent on specific arms suppliers.[63] *Second*, it obliges "technological offset" programmes for major defence imports and encourages overseas defence contractors to form industrial partnerships with local arms manufacturers.[64] This way, Indonesian defence policymakers seek to reduce the risks of arms imports, while rebuilding indigenous defence industrial bases.

Figure 7
Indonesia's Weapon Systems based on Country of Origin



Source: Dataset collated from various public records; data as of 2013.

Bilateral defence diplomacy has been instrumental for Jakarta's new procurement strategy. Over the past five years, Russia, South Korea and China have been the dominant arms suppliers to Indonesia (see Figure 8). With the foreign loans offered by Moscow, it has purchased a range of Russian military systems — including Su-30 jet-fighters, Mi-35 attack helicopters and BMP-3F amphibious assault vehicles.[65] Under the recent arms contracts, Seoul has supplied Jakarta with T-50 multi-role jet-trainers and Black Fox armoured vehicles.[66] Given their non-participant position to the Missile

[62] During the multinational undertaking, Singapore discovered that the controversial naval vessel was deployed as part of the Indonesian task force. Given the priority of the operation, Singaporean defence official did not raise the issue but "continue to assist in this search effort professionally". See Henrick Z. Tsjeng, "The AirAsia Search: Positive Precedent for the Future Cooperation," *RSIS Commentary* (27 February 2015).

[63] See Presidential Decree No. 41/2010 on Mid-Term Defence Policy Guidelines (2010-2014).

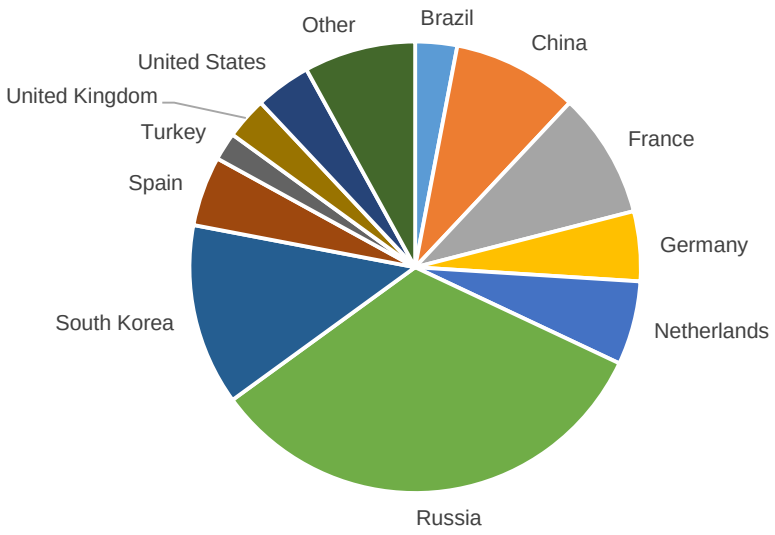
[64] See Indonesia's Law No. 16/2012 on Defence Industry.

[65] See "Indonesia Buys More BMP-3F amphibious IFVs from Russia," *Jane's Defence Weekly* (16 May 2012); "Russia Grants Credit to Indonesia for Aircraft Purchase," *Jane's Defence Weekly* (19 December 2012).

[66] See "RI Gets 16 New Korean Trainer Jets," *The Jakarta Post* (14 February 2014); "Forging Ahead: Asian Armour Update," *Jane's Defence Weekly* (26 March 2014).

Technology Control Regime treaty, Indonesia sees China as a key partner for unmanned delivery systems — particularly anti-ship missiles.[67]

Figure 8
Foreign Shares of Indonesia's Arms Acquisitions, 2009-2014



Source: Dataset collated from various public records.

As Jakarta seeks to maintain a diplomatic leverage over any arms suppliers, it is unlikely to neglect its traditional defence partners. With the notable progress of the country's democracy and on-going geopolitical changes in East Asia, the Indonesian government eventually managed to canvass diplomatic supports for the lifting of arms embargoes. Recently, it has signed bilateral arms deals with the United States and European countries, such as F-16 jet-fighters, F2000-class corvettes, Leopard-2 main battle tanks, and Caesar 155-mm self-propelled artillery system.[68] Although the expanded arms acquisition strategy creates logistical and maintenance challenges for the military, it enables local defence industries to gain access to competitive technologies for air, land and naval systems.

Bilateral defence industrial cooperation also contributes to recent developments of Indonesia's strategic industries. At one level, Indonesian defence officials promote offset-structured industrial partnership in all defence imports to enable localised production of military equipment. Over the past few years, indigenous defence firms have taken advantage from sub-contracting activity for maintenance and production of parts and components, local assembly, and transfer of knowledge, facilities and technology.[69] At another level, Indonesia's arms manufacturers engage foreign counterparts on research and development of new military hardware. Here, it focuses on key

[67] See "Indonesia and China Confirm C-705 Missile Production Collaboration," *Jane's Defence Weekly* (28 September 2014).

[68] See "Indonesia Approves Bid to Buy at Least Two F-16 Squadrons," *Jane's Defence Weekly* (26 October 2011); "Indonesia and Damen Finalize Delayed Frigate Construction Programme," *Jane's Defence Weekly* (6 June 2012); "Indonesia Turns to Germany in Bid to Acquire Leopard 2A6 Tanks," *Jane's Defence Weekly* (4 July 2012).

[69] See "Indonesia and Airbus Military Reach C-295 Production Agreement," *Jane's Defence Weekly* (26 October 2011); "Ministry, Daewoo Sign $1B Contract for 3 Submarines," *The Jakarta Post* (21 December 2012).

technologies for national defence, such as major naval combatants, multi-role jet-fighters, armoured vehicles, missile systems, sensors or radars, propellants and communication devices.[70] Overall, Indonesia's bilateral defence diplomacy has made a significant contribution in the development of national defence capabilities.

Concluding Remarks

The rapid pace of military modernisation, unresolved maritime disputes and trust deficit in great power relationships have been the key regional challenges to Indonesia's aspiration for a peaceful management of on-going geopolitical change in East Asia. As signs of rivalry among the major powers are increasingly evident, Jakarta begins to ponder the impact of regional politics to the country's strategic interests. Aside from improved bilateral defence ties, Indonesia continues to view the United States as a regional hegemon with whom it would have many convergence and divergence of interests. Meanwhile, as the rise of China becomes inevitable in the region, Jakarta is still uncertain whether Beijing would be a benign regional partner.

Amid this predicament, the Indonesian government continues to exercise an "independent and active" foreign policy. This normative guideline requires the country not to take sides in any rivalry between great powers. Although Indonesia is not in the position to dictate the strategic direction of great power relationships, it unlikely prefers both China and the United States to become rivals competing for influence in Southeast Asia. As none of the regional countries could address emerging security challenges alone, Jakarta regards regional cooperation as the relevant means to alleviate strategic uncertainties stemming from geopolitical changes.

Indonesia's response to evolving major power relationship could be understood through the lens of hedging strategy aimed at moderating the negative implications of China's rise to regional order and restraining the U.S.' hegemonic power. While the regional emergence of China works to reduce the pivotal role of the United States in East Asia, the U.S. military presence is undoubtedly vital to keep the regional balance of power in check. In parallel to that, through ASEAN's extra-regional engagements, Indonesia seeks to avoid increased Sino-U.S. competition for geopolitical primacy.

This study shows that the country's defence diplomacy has been instrumental to harness the agenda of hedging strategy. At one level, Indonesian defence and security officials engage in ASEAN's multilateral processes to help institutionalise the regional norms of behaviour — including confidence building, non-interference, cooperative security and peaceful conflict resolution. At another level, Indonesia has been using bilateral defence diplomacy to upgrade its military capabilities and indigenous strategic industries. This way, Jakarta seeks to moderate the impact of geopolitical changes and simultaneously maintain the country's defensive ability against regional uncertainties. However, in the context of complex regional relationship, the strategic orientation of Indonesia's defence diplomacy will ultimately depend on the evolving major power relationship.

[70] See "Consistency, Planning Needed in Defense Policy, Say Analysts," *The Jakarta Post* (21 February 2014).

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