Transnational Threats to ASEAN Security: A Plea to Renew the Spirit of Cooperation*

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This paper attempts to elaborate to what extent cross-border issues such as human rights, political openness, terrorism, economic interdependence, immigrant workers, environment, and separatist movements, caused by globalization influence ASEAN cooperation. Although these issues have not affected greatly cooperation among ASEAN nations, but it is important to note that these issues have influenced the nature of relationship between the state and society, which sometimes disrupts state-to-state relationship within ASEAN. So far, in responding to these new developments, ASEAN members are strict with their main spirit of non-intervention, and leave the problems to individual countries. In contrast to the view that any attempt to solve these assumed domestic issues may raise tension among ASEAN members, this paper argues that such a response is not adequate and that it is by addressing these issues ASEAN may renew the spirit of cooperation and solidarity among its members.

ASEAN has been seen as one of the most successful regional organizations in the world outside European Union (Eng 1999: 51; Hass 1989). In spite of the fact that it consists of countries with different ethnic, religious, cultural and political systems, ASEAN remains intact. It has also been able to reduce tension, mitigate security dilemma and make war between its members seem unlikely (Collin 2000: 182). In this regard, Democratic Peace Proposition[1] which argues that relations between democratic states are inherently more peaceful than relations between other regime-types such as democratic versus non-democratic or non-democratic versus non-democratic, has been challenged in the ASEAN case. Different political systems, indeed, make cooperation among countries difficult but it does not necessarily mean that the countries are prone to war.

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[1] Rummel (2005) for example argues that 'democratic peace propositions are that democracies do not make war on each other; the more democratic two countries, the less likely there will be severe violence between them'.

One of ASEAN's most important fundamentals supporting its existence is the principle of non-intervention. It has become the norm in regulating the behavior among its members. To achieve this level of understanding the members of ASEAN have experienced conflicts and tension. The threat to territorial status quo of one country and another used to be a serious problem before. The possibility of this threat could exist even in the future but not at the level that can threaten the relations among states.

However, in the era of globalization where problems are more complex, interrelated and overflow across boundaries, the non-intervention and sovereignty principles face serious challenges. Issues such as human rights, political openness, terrorism, economic interdependence, immigrant workers, illegal trade, environmental problems, and separatist movements often cross the boundaries and sovereignty of a state. Many of these problems are beyond the ability of ASEAN individual states to handle.

This paper attempts to see to what extent these issues influence ASEAN cooperation and how ASEAN has handled them so far. Although the issues have not affected ASEAN cooperation directly, they have, however, affected the essence of state-society relationship, which in turn disturbs state-to-state relationship between ASEAN countries. In responding to these issues, ASEAN countries have attempted to consolidate and strengthen their own boundaries of authority and leave the issues to individual countries to handle. This paper argues that such a response is not good enough. In contrast to the argument that if ASEAN handles these problems, then there will be tension among its members, this paper argues that it is by solving these issues ASEAN may renew its spirits of cooperation.

This paper is divided into four sections. First, it examines approaches to explain the current ASEAN situation. Secondly, it shows the seriousness of transnational issues and their likely influences on ASEAN. Thirdly, it examines ASEAN responses to the transnational issues, some criticisms toward ASEAN and their implications to norms and principles of sovereignty. Fourthly, it attempts to elaborate the possibility of redefining the principles of non-intervention and the 'ASEAN Way' of conducting relationship with member countries.

Approaches to Explain ASEAN

The common explanation for regional organization departs from integration perspective applied to European Union (EU). This started from the idea that integration in one area may spill over to another area. Integration is the final goal of a regional organization and EU has achieved a degree of integration including economic and political integration.

ASEAN is clearly different from the European context. In contrast to the European Union, which has relatively common cultures, ASEAN countries do not have homogenous political cultures and systems. If Europe needs economic cooperation and

integration because of their lack of natural resources, ASEAN countries have rather similar natural recourses that make them competing rather than complementing in selling their economic products. Despite this problem, ASEAN however has remained intact for four decades. Of course, it cannot be compared to the EU in terms of forming strong institutions to handle various inter-state and societal issues. But it has been more successful than any other regional organization of its kind such as SAARC in South Asia. Some regions have not even been able to form their regional organizations.

ASEAN has been able to reduce suspicious among member countries in the region. It has expanded its membership from 5 to 10 to include all Southeast Asian countries. It has also been able to develop dialogue mechanisms with other states in Asia and big countries in the world. ASEAN Regional Forum has become the only effective forum in this region to discuss various multilateral issues after the Cold War. Non-ASEAN members in the Asia Pacific region support ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference (PMC), as a forum for regional security dialogues. In economic areas, ASEAN is among the most important part of APEC. It just institutionalized ASEAN+3 to improve economic cooperation with Japan, China and Korea, the strongest economic powers in Asia.

How do we explain this ASEAN phenomenon? To start, Alexander Wendt's (1999) division of three kinds of anarchic cultures in international politics may describe the general condition of relationship among ASEAN members. Wendt states that the cultures consist of Hobbesian, Lockean and Kantian. In the Hobbesian culture, there are no trusts among states. The states support and pursue their selfish interests, including intervention into another state. In the Lockean culture, states start to cooperate and respect each others sovereignty, but they may still use military power for self-defense. Buzan (1999) mentions in these cultures there have been 'institutionalization of shared interest and identity amongst states, and Rationalism puts the creation and maintenance of shared norms, rules and institutions at the center of IR theory'.

Finally in the Kantian culture, there has been peace and mutual cooperation among members of the community. States do not use violence and war to pursue their interests. Buzan (1999) argues that 'Kant takes individuals, non-state organizations and ultimately the global population as a whole as the focus of global societal identities and arrangements, and Revolutionism puts transcendence of the state system at the center of IR theory.'

ASEAN clearly has passed the Hobbesian's cultures of relationship but has not achieved the Kantian level. The Lockean culture, to a large degree constituted and regulated the ASEAN situation. In other words, ASEAN has developed certain common norms, cultures and values such as the principle of non-intervention and the 'ASEAN way' to solve tension among them. This situation is also somewhat similar to the concept of order in international society enunciated by Hedley Bull. By

international society Bull means 'a group of states, conscious of certain common interests and common values, form a society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another' (Bull 1995: 13).

Bull and Watson (1984:1) then expanded their classic definition of international society to 'a group of states (or, more generally, a group of independent political communities) which not merely form a system, in the sense that the behavior of each is a necessary factor in the calculations of the others, but also have established by dialogue and consent common rules and institutions for the conduct of their relations, and recognize their common interest in maintaining these arrangements'.

In addition to international society, Bull also defines international order as 'a pattern of activity that sustains the elementary or primarily goal of the society of states' (Bull 1995: 3). Bull's order initially applied to Europe and then for broader international level. Nevertheless given Bull's broad definition of international society, it can apply also for regional level. Regional groupings can not only build 'common global international society foundations' but also contribute to global order (Buzan 1999). In their history some regions such as Europe and the Islamic world expanded their international society (Buzan 1999). Furthermore Bull recognized the possible contribution of non-Western forms of international society to norms and values of international society.

In applying international society concept to regional level, Diez and Whitman (2002) include transnational aspects as one element of what they call Regional International Society (RIS). In spite of the fact that both authors are not aware of the fact that Bull in his latest writings was also concerned with this transnational issues, both authors give a clear reason why RIS needs to include transnational problems. The significance of transnational issues such as human rights and environment cannot be disregarded presently. They suggest that it is important 'to see the articulation of norms, rules and principles referring to individuals or groups' as part of transnational society. For these authors, whether RIS takes care or gets involved in the articulation of such norms, rules and principles, is an important issue to see.

Regarding these transnational issues, in his latest writings Bull adopted a concept of cosmopolitan solidarism (Makinda 1997) in which he mentioned that the common set of 'rules and norms of society of states are only to be valued if they provide for the security of individuals'.[2] The concept of solidarist international society shows the possibility of more expansive international order. In addition to common agreements to

[2] This concept according to Mackinda closely related to the concept critical security approach, which is developed by Barry Buzan and others who attempt to include non-military aspect in security.

support sovereignty, international laws, diplomatic usages and balance of power as parts of common rules and the basis for international society, solidarist international society attempts to expand the shared norms to include moral norms. These norms become 'standards of civilization with regard to the relationship between states and citizens (i.e. human rights)' (Buzan 1999). This also means that to develop such solidarism, states need to recognize and handle transnational issues and their developments. Consequently, the core concept in international society such as sovereignty may also be adjusted. As Buzan (1999) argues, in solidarist international society 'sovereignty can also embrace many degrees of political convergence (as in the EU)'.

From this description, it is quite clear that international society and RIS need to accommodate transnational issues in global politics, which may impact on order in a region. From solidarist international society point of view, RIS also tolerates limited intervention or even political and economic integration. In international society's basic argument, this still goes along with its main principle to reduce anarchy in international politics. For the application of RIS concept in the ASEAN case, see table 1 at the end of this section.

In the logic of moral and norms expansion, however, Bull and other interpreters of his ideas such as Buzan did not offer a detail process of how common rules, norms and principles supporting an international society might emerge and change. Bull and Watson only mentioned about dialogue, consent and common interest behind the formation of international society. Similarly, Buzan did not outline clearly how and when the new common norms, values and rules were formed and accepted in a region. The RIS was called as community and society because there had been regularity of behavior that became norms and orders. To what extent and how the values and norms were formed and changed were beyond the RIS approach to explain.

For the ASEAN case, it is important to understand how ASEAN has achieved current level of mutual understanding and cooperation or current state of Lockean cultures. ASEAN states have regarded the principles of sovereignty, non-intervention and 'ASEAN Way' as their main common norms in relations with each other. In such a situation, we need an approach that may explain the process through which the above-mentioned rules, norms and values sustaining ASEAN were formed, changed and institutionalized.

For this purpose, constructivist perspective may fill the gap. Constructivists as well as international society perspective are based on sociology. In addition to international society concept, which explains regularity in international society, constructivist attempts to understand how such regularities have been constructed and accepted as normal rules. It emphasizes on discursive processes and discourses through which common rules, norms, institutions, and identities are formed within a social process and then constitute interest. States through a learning process, for example, adopt certain rules and norms in dealing with each other.

These common norms have never been static. They may change over time because of actors' changing behaviors. The rules and norms become powerful only if they become an ideational or normative structure or the rule of the game constituting the identity and behavior of state. In this regard, ASEAN norms and customs formed so far may also become 'static', 'sticky and last for long time' (Wendt 1999) if its members keep behaving according to the rules of the game. Wendt (1999) mentioned the norms supporting structures become strong because structures are self-reinforcing. Onuf (1998) and (Ruggie 1999) had argued that 'this phenomenon can be better understood from the position of rule constructivists. Rule constructivists note that structure is both constitutive and regulative rules. By obeying the regulative rules, states help to constitute the structure. For example, as long as states behave according to the regulative rules of anarchy, they create anarchy'.

ASEAN principles of cooperation based on norm of non-intervention and the ASEAN informal and consensus styled of decision-making or 'ASEAN Way' has been formed and strengthened more or less through the above processes. They become a socially shared identity, strength, sticky and long lasting through dialogue and learning process. Among ASEAN members, there have been habits of bureaucratic and ministerial consultation and cooperation characterizing "a virtual quasi-familial quality" of relations among them (Leifer 1992: 168).

The style of cooperation and handling issues within ASEAN is commonly called the 'ASEAN Way'. Kusumohamidjojo (2002) mentions at least three principles of the 'ASEAN Way': '(1) emphasis on the principle of non-interference in other states internal affairs (self-restraint); (2) preference for consensus and non-binding plans (in conflict resolution) rather than treaties or legalistic rules ('understated' respect for the other members); (3) reliance on national institutions and actions and consideration for each other's interests and sensitivities, rather than creating a strong central bureaucracy of the ASEAN (joint responsibility).' According to Collin (2000), these norms have encouraged ASEAN members to negotiate their problems between friends and not opponents.

In addition to the above norms, ASEAN has also a sense of solidarity in dealing with external issues. For example, solidarity was strong when ASEAN members faced external threats from Communist countries during the Cold War. The members reduced the differences among them and built consensus to face the threat. This sometimes meant that they actually attempted to expand room for maneuver in international structure dominated by superpowers.

The norms and solidarity are of more than marginal significance to support ASEAN cooperation so far. The norms contribute to behavior and attitudes of ASEAN members. According to an academic (ASEAN way: 20) the existence of these norms 'has significantly altered the behavior of member states in ways that could not reasonably have been anticipated in the absence of cooperation.' Every new member

of ASEAN such as Indochina and Myanmar had to adjust and apply the principles before being accepted into ASEAN.

As a regional forum being recognized as the only effective organization for the time being in the Asia Pacific region, ASEAN provides a dialogue forum not only to its member but also to states in Asia and Pacific. Through ASEAN-PMC, for example, a vacuum of a forum for countries in the region to talk about security has been mastered. There has been other optimistic views regarding to the stability of the Asia Pacific region such as coming from the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Asia (CSCA), APEC and AFTA proposals, but all seem to move slowly.

Many factors have contributed to the significance of ASEAN since its formation in 1967. The concern of this paper, however, is only on 'ASEAN Way' and the sovereignty aspect of ASEAN states. This is especially important, because these principles were formed through social and learning processes since ASEAN formation. ASEAN experiences have shown that conflicts over sovereignty of territorial have been the source of instability. There has also been anxiety to external threats using the region as an arena for their interests, which questions ASEAN independence.

In ASEAN's experiences, the settlement of this vulnerability has departed from the recognition of sovereignty principle of its members reflected on, following Leszek Buszynski, the "commitment to regional order based upon the territorial status quo" (Buszynski, 1992: 830). The Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, signed in Bali in 1976, is one where the principle of non-intervention and hence the strengthening of sovereignty of ASEAN states was formally institutionalized. Although this treaty, as Michael Leifer argues, has not been developed toward a common security in the region, it continues to be "a code of conduct for relations among regional states," framing the cooperation and consultation among ASEAN members (Leifer 1992: 168-169). The Treaty that honors territorial integrity and the peaceful or non-violent settlement of disputes (Simon 1992: 113; and Thayer 1992: 4) becomes a fundamental factor for the emergence of a security regime and for a common framework for cooperation. As shown on the acceptance of Vietnam and Laos into ASEAN at the heads of government meeting in Singapore in January 1992, the acceptance of the Treaty by Vietnam and Laos has become one important requirement (Leifer 1992: 168).

The likely development of ASEAN norms and principles from RIS perspective can be seen in the following table.

Table 1. ASEAN 'Regional International Society'

	ASEAN 'International Society'	**ASEAN 'International Society' in transition**	**ASEAN new emerging 'International Society'**
Organization	Informal, limited institutionalization	Institutionalization new areas of cooperation	Increasing institutionalization of cooperation
Norms	Non-intervention, sovereignty	Enhanced interaction	Constructive intervention
Conflict resolution	ASEAN Way	Open talks, wars of words	Frank discussions in institution
Units or actors	State	Emerging civil society	State, organized NGO and societal movements, renewed state role
Issues	Territorial security	Emerging human security problems	Human security
Communication	Formal diplomacy	Emerging people and 2nd track diplomacy	State and people diplomacy
Economic cooperation	Inter-state trades	AFTA	AFTA
Cultures	Lockean	Lockean	Kantian

New Challenges: the Importance of Transnational Issues

Whether the above ASEAN common norms, principles and values are still applicable depend upon the issues that ASEAN will face and the way ASEAN responds to them. In the past the norms and principles were successful because the main issues among the countries were tension caused by territorial conflicts among themselves and the likely external threats from communist states from the North. Nowadays the problems ASEAN faces are more complicated because they are sometimes part of transnational issues such as human rights, political openness, terrorism, immigrant workers, environment, and separatist movements.

In contrast to the old issues centering on military threats, these new issues are cross-border issues. Some analysts have argued that the solution cannot be left solely to individual countries. There is a need for an agreement among members of ASEAN to handle them by coordinating their national policies. However, this will mean that ASEAN members have to relegate their sovereignty to other states. Before looking at how ASEAN has responded to these issues, it is worthy to discuss the significant and nature of the issues in detail.

There are at least three prominent characteristics of these transnational issues, which are more or less different from those during the Cold War. First, the essence and nature of the issues are different from those in the past. Secondly, the problems become more acute than before because of globalization. Thirdly, the issues are also thought provoking because there has been a common assumption that ASEAN has not played any role to solve them.

First, the essence and nature of the issues are different from those in the past. The issues such as economy, environment, immigrant workers, democracy and human rights had taken place in the past but they have now become more serious. In the past these issues were not considered as main issues because the interest of ASEAN was on state and military security. After the end of the Cold War, there have been rapid changes in East Asian countries' economies, declines in the US hegemony and expansion in economic activities that have widened the security agendas in this region (Camilleri 1993: 22). The transnational issues are new agendas, which ASEAN's conventional definition of security has to confront.

The past definition of issues focusing on the military competitions between East and West is not enough. It is now thought as hiding human security dimensions such as economic development, human rights, environment, ethnic conflicts (Dalby 1992: 102-102), and terrorism. The transnational issues now overflowing across border can be mentioned. Among others are refugees from Myanmar to Thailand, immigrant workers from the Philippines and Indonesia to Malaysia, haze caused by forest fire in Kalimantan, Indonesia, and likely terrorism links in this region. In the past, issues such as economy and human rights are secondary to ideological and territorial integrity. The settlement to these problems certainly cannot be done through military forces but needs policy coordination among states.

Secondly, globalization influences the concern to the transnational issues. Globalization in broader sense has changed the way people think and behave. This was particularly caused by modern communications and transportation systems, which have made Southeast Asia countries a transparent and knowable region where many activities could be known immediately in other parts of the world. This, in turn, affects the awareness of a society about its needs and situations around it (Clements 1992: 174).

Society demands the state to take more action to overcome problems rising because of globalization of free trade and capital. The globalization has caused income inequality, environmental degradation, unemployment, and the low price of agriculture products. Those who become victims of the globalization and not integrated into world markets may start to organize themselves on transnational basis either to save the environment or to show solidarity to the victims of globalization in other states. They demand state to activate their human service function and uphold their interests (Falk 1997: 52). Domestic powers also demand new style of foreign policy. There have been growing societal forces within society, which were sometimes inspired by similar forces from other countries. Transnational groups have also linked each other and some of them are relatively independent from the state to control.

Globalization has at least changed many forms of organization and identity. Majid Tehranian (2003: 63) gives a clear picture in the following table of how globalization has changed the characters of polity, culture and organization and identity.

Table 2. Globalization and Fragmentation

	Pre-modern	**Modern**	**Post-modern**
Polity	Traditional and authoritarian tribal chiefdoms and monarchies	Centralized and technocratic polity	Liberal democracy
Culture and communication	Oral, kinship and local ties and values	Literate and national ties and values	Electronic, cosmopolitan ties and values
Organization and identity	Organic, kinship organization, identity and solidarity	Mechanical, technocratic organizations, identity and solidarity	Super-organic, network organization, identity and solidarity

Based on the Tehranian perspective, we see at least three types of relationship between: state-society, society-society and global power-state, which seem to be influenced by globalization. In the first type, state-society includes the issues rising because of the unsettled relationship between the state and society. As mentioned by Surin Pitsuwan (2001), in the past there were no civil society, no media, no NGOs, no private sectors, to criticize and make the work of government more complicated. A central government in the past could handle many issues, but now there has been growing demands for pluralism. Some states still work with this centralistic government but how far they can manage everything is questionable. There has been growing criticism to this centralistic government and the role of strong state. Even in

Malaysia and Singapore, the demands for more pluralistic system are always there and waiting for a moment to come up. In Malaysia when the Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim was dismissed in September 1998, opposition groups used the opportunity to protest. In Singapore, criticisms toward monotonous life style go on although government tries to anticipate them.

The effectiveness of state control to society in the era of global communication has some limitations because of the flow of information and the continuing support from international communities to the opposition groups. The communication has changed the face of civil society. In the Philippines, the United States presence and influence received growing criticism from the society shown by the many protests to US presence in the country. The ideas of freedom, democracy and human rights have spread over in ASEAN civil society.

Centralistic governments in Southeast Asia also face big problems to manage the unity and complexities of problems in their country. This happened in Indonesia. When the country got lost much of its ability to control the society, it gave more autonomy to regional provinces and districts. However, some regions might not be satisfied with the policy because of the damage that has been done by central government to them in the past. For long time, in Aceh and West Papua, the disappointments turned into rebellion from sections of their population against the central government before the government offered greater autonomy to these areas. Aceh problems were settled in 2005, because of greater autonomy given by central government. Tsunami tragedy in December 2004 that killed thousands of Aceh people became catalyst to the achievement of peace agreement between Jakarta and Free-Aceh Movement (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*).

For ASEAN, the problem relating to separatism relates to the possibility of the rise of refugee, which can overflow into the border of another state. At the height of the Aceh separatist movement and also during the West Papua problems, there was fear of an overflow of refugees from these territories to other countries. Indonesia cohesion, therefore, according to Smith (2000: 50) became an issue for the entire region. However, the settlement of Aceh's case involved limited participation from ASEAN. ASEAN countries did not want to get involved to these problems because they were afraid of intervening in internal problems of Indonesia. The peace process involved United States, European Union and Finland representatives to facilitate dialogues and to become mediators between Indonesia and the Aceh Free Movement.

Another example of the changing relationship between the state and society relate to the way terrorism is handled in the region. The coordination to handle the problem in ASEAN level is more difficult than before because of different styles of decision-making process between democratic and semi-democratic countries. Countries such as Malaysia and Singapore have criticized the slow process in handling terrorism by Indonesia. This slow process has invited comments from Singaporean Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew that Indonesia was a 'nest' for terrorism. The Indonesian government,

however, has stated that it has done its best to overcome terrorism. The country is in the process of democratization and cannot accuse Islamic militant groups and arrest them without enough proof. Many political parties including the government party are afraid of losing their popularity, if they take harsh actions on the militant groups.

The point to make here is that if an issue in one country cannot be overcome or is mishandled by its government, then the problems may spill over into other ASEAN states. As the haze problem had already indicated, bad policies in forest management have caused the spread of smoke to other countries. Similarly the economic crisis in one country may increase illegal trade and with an increase in immigrant workers seeking for jobs in another country.

In short there have been attempts to strengthen the sovereignty principle within ASEAN. The member states are reluctant to go beyond the principle because they believe that the principle is still able to maintain order in the region. Experiences in the past seem to occupy such assumption. As such, the principle is hard to change and become regulative. It is difficult to identify any attempt by ASEAN state to take part addressing these transnational issues. Even ASEAN states have not criticized the violation of human rights taking place in the region because of attempts by some central governments to overcome the separatist groups. The pride of their sovereignty and independence has strengthened feelings of nationalism among ASEAN states, which did not allow any kind of external pressure and intervention.

The second type in transnational issue relates to relationship between society and society. There has been particularly ideological links among social forces and movements crossing the border of a state. One example was the ASEAN NGO forum, which protested the detention of Anwar Ibrahim. The NGOs have also supported Myanmar opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi. Representatives of 8 NGOs went to the streets in Rangoon to protest against the military government in Myanmar.

Another problem regarding society-to-society relationship that concern ASEAN countries is terrorism. This problem according Jones and Smith (2003) was hidden for long time by authoritarian governments in some ASEAN countries. ASEAN cooperation, which always uses good rhetoric and symbols such as peace and harmony in the region, had blinded its membership to the growth of terrorist movements in society. Jones and Smith (2003: 143-144) particularly mention about the development of radical and militant Islamic movements in Indonesia.

The growth of these transnational movements is quite significant. This is particularly because there are groups and forces according to Falk (1997) rising because of globalization of capitalism. These groups are social forces marginalized by the globalization of capitalism and emerge as alternatives to the homogenizing culture of capitalism. Some Islamic groups in Indonesia such as *Laskar Jihad* and *Jamaah*

Islamiah are clearly against the American hegemony in the world. These Islamic groups may have links with other groups in Southeast Asia and the world.

The third type of transnational issue is the relationship between global powers and ASEAN states. These global powers such as the United States and Western Europe pressure ASEAN states to apply human rights and democracy, and to overcome terrorism. One of the clear pressures from Western government was during the inclusion of Myanmar into ASEAN. There had been Western objection to ASEAN policy to include Myanmar because of the human rights violation by the Myanmar military junta. Although ASEAN stuck to its policy to include Myanmar, to a certain degree, ASEAN followed the Western influence by suggesting the military government to start a dialogue with opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi. ASEAN adopts a policy of constructive engagement with Myanmar.

In particular, a growing number of NGOs in Southeast Asia are critical on human rights violations and political participation issues (Acharya 1993: 75). Their reactions have sometimes contradicted with the interests of ASEAN governments as the holder of the supreme authority in their domestic politics. As having been shown in the human rights conference in Manila and Bangkok during 1990s, agendas of violations of human right in East Timor had given rise to strong protests from Indonesia toward the host countries where the conferences were held.

Thirdly, the transnational issues have forced ASEAN to rethink of new directions to achieve its main goals. After more than three decades, the goal for integration has not progressed well. The increase in ASEAN's membership from 6 to 10 did not mean a new vigor but instead has created problems of adjustment among the old and new members. The problems within ASEAN remain the same. The economic gaps among members have even widened because of the inclusion of poor Indochina and Myanmar.

In general, the question for ASEAN in the region is, what roles can it be expected to play when it is really needed to overcome crisis. ASEAN simply did not perform its function. The level of institutionalization of ASEAN is also still weak. Tan Sri Dr Razali Ismail, an Adviser to Malaysian Prime Minister, in his speech on 19 September 2002 mentioned his disappointment to the attitudes of ASEAN members, who still promote their own selfish interests instead of considering the interest of ASEAN as a whole. Similarly writing 20 years ago, Hans Indorf (1984: 5) mentioned in terms of integration, ASEAN had not moved as it was expected as a regional organization. According to him, 'a regional organization is judged by what it has achieved along this path towards integration'. His statement remains valid today because the progress toward institutionalization and integration remains very slow.

The principle of non-interference, which becomes norm and the main principle of ASEAN, is not able to offer solution to the growing social and interdependent issues

within ASEAN countries. According to Bull (1995), norms and values would be respected if they gave benefit to people. This seems to reflect the concern that ASEAN does not really give benefit for the people (Kusumahamidjojo 2002: 8). Its state centric approach has made ASEAN only benefit some elites claiming to pursue the interests of their nation, while the interests of people such as welfare has not been addressed. The protection of human rights and promotion of democracy has not been taken seriously by ASEAN, as shown in its slow response to Myanmar violation of human rights. According to Kay Moller (1998: 1104) if ASEAN does not review the ASEAN Way, then ASEAN would be no more than 'a self-help group of anachronistic elites'.

This concern was initially answered in Kuala Lumpur on July 1997 when ASEAN declared 'ASEAN vision 2020'. It claimed to be 'people of ASEAN', attempting to pursue justice and openness in a community composed by 'caring societies'. At the 6th ASEAN summit in Hanoi, ASEAN states attempted to realize the 'ASEAN vision 2020' by adopting plans of action in the 'Ha Noi Plan of Action' (HPA) on 15 December 1998. However this is still a long way to go. Despite its good plans and goals, their implementation seems to be vague and only add to the many ASEAN 'plans but few actions', because of no monitoring and review mechanisms (Kusumohanidjojo 2002: 11). As such it only attempts to give an image that ASEAN now is more 'people friendly', which implies that in past it was 'Less People's of ASEAN' (Kusumohanidjojo 2002: 12). A recent case of handling immigrant workers where there are no serious concern and coordination taken by ASEAN leaders, prove that the HPA is only 'a letter from heaven' (Kusumohanidjojo 2002: 11) for ASEAN people. One Indonesian's observer said that ASEAN spirit and solidarity simply did not work in the case of immigrant workers (*Kompas*, September 2002).

In such a situation, it is important to recall Indorf's (1984: 7) statement that ASEAN leaders seem to be happy with current ASEAN identity. For them, regionalism and integration is not the main goal. They treat ASEAN more as a supplementary institution for advancing their interests. It is not at the level to address transnational issues such as human rights, economic rights and democracy as mentioned by Diez and Whitman (2002) to support the development of new norms and principles in a Regional International Society.

ASEAN Responses to Transnational Issues

There have been two approaches offered so far in handling the transnational and cross border issues among ASEAN members, to improve their cooperation. The first response is by looking at the current non-intervention principle within ASEAN, which can be called as 'Retaining the Sovereignty Approach' (RSA). This is a formal and dominant view suggesting ASEAN to be strict and back to its main framework of non-intervention spirit. The second one may be called pro-intervention solution, which can also be called the 'Constructive Intervention Approach' (CIA).

This paper will show that the first response is inadequate to cope with the ASEAN complex issues. It needs to accommodate the critiques particularly those enunciated by the CIA. This paper argues that any attempt to renew ASEAN spirit of cooperation, however, needs to depart from common accepted values, norms and ways of conflict resolution, which has become the foundations for ASEAN regional international society. By borrowing an international society and constructivist perspective, this paper endeavors to show that ASEAN spirit of cooperation can be maintained and even strengthened whenever ASEAN is able to incorporate the transnational issues as part of their agenda.

One problem with renewing ASEAN spirit is the existence of current norms and values, which is highly respected and regularly applied by ASEAN leaders. The principles of non-intervention and the 'ASEAN Way' still serve well the interests of the ASEAN leaders in managing their nations. Norms, principles and values that define ASEAN identity and behavior, however, can change because they are a product of continuous process of interpretative construction taking place at all levels of states and society. Before looking at the challenges to such norms and principles, I look first at the ways the above principle has been maintained or in the words of Wendt become 'static', 'sticky and last for long time'. As long as the ASEAN states follow these rules, then the norms and principles of non-intervention will become self-regulating rules.

The Retaining Sovereignty Approach (RSA) responses

In facing transnational issues, most ASEAN states maintain the Retaining Sovereignty Approach (RSA). In the RSA, those transnational issues remain the business of individual states to handle. Intervention into other states is seen as humiliating the pride of other states as independent nations. The non-intervention principle allows ASEAN states to calm down any dissent movements and voices, without being afraid of losing legitimacy in its regional and global environment. Peter Eng (1999: 51) said that 'ASEAN is so obsessed with "non-interference", reaching consensus, and papering over differences'.

Under the sovereignty principle, the members of ASEAN are not concerned with the abuse of human rights and demands for autonomy in neighboring countries. They are not convinced by the critics from Western countries regarding human rights abuses in suppressing democracy and human rights movements. These Western pressures on human rights are rejected on the basis of non-intervention principle. It can be stated that ASEAN in general is not convinced with the ideas to help its members. An academic (nd: 20) had stated that '(t)urning a blind eye' to abuses in neighboring countries was a price that had to be paid, it was argued, in order to achieve regional stability'.

It is not surprising to note that regarding the new nature of state-state and society-society relationship, the RSA does not have a lot of things to say. So far, it can be stated that there have been efforts at strengthening the role of the state and its sovereignty among ASEAN countries. There are three important reasons to suppose that the appreciation of territorial status quo and the sovereignty principle may have further significance for ASEAN members. First, ASEAN is needed as a regional organization through which vulnerable status of ASEAN states' sovereignty can be overcome. It emphasizes very much on the role of the state security. There have been assumptions that only if one state respects the sovereignty of another state, the relations between the two countries will run well. Then, peace and harmony in the region may follow. Security of the state is still the main priority, while security of the people has not been part of the ASEAN agenda.

As Robert H. Jackson argues, such states are quasi-states that are only formally independent, but on many areas are still dependent on foreign supports (Jackson 1993: 21-25). Their equalities with other states, according to Jackson, are only achieved because there have been international laws and norms recognizing the principle of sovereignty and non-intervention. In practice, these states lack the capability to sustain their freedom and independence. For economy, they need foreign aid, and for security, they need protection from big powers.

As seen in the history of Southeast Asia states, the strengthening of sovereignty itself has been a continuing process. Indonesia, for example, had struggled to get its independence and had been afraid of any kind of external domination toward its country and region. The conflict between Indonesia and Malaysia in the 1960s known as *Konfrontasi,* and again disputes between both countries over Sipadan and Ligitan islands and between Malaysia and the Philippines over Sabah are good examples. There had also been examples of territorial revisionism threatening regional order. In addition, disputes over Spratly and Paracel islands in South China Sea have been perceived as a danger towards the stability in the region because there has not been a common affirmation of who has authority over the islands (Valencia: 156-169).[3] On the latest development, Malaysia and Indonesia have agreed to settle dispute over Sipadan and Ligitan through the International Court of Justice. In short, sovereignty over territorial borders for Southeast Asian states is not a taken-for-granted status but having been a contested one. In the case of Singapore, Michael Leifer had argued that the need to respect sovereignty was strong because of its vulnerable position between two big Muslim neighbors Malaysia and Indonesia (Collin 2000: 95).

Under such conditions the ASEAN states need a coordinating body to make sure that the principle of sovereignty has always been there. It is obvious that ASEAN reflects these aspirations. Through this organization, recognition towards the sovereignty

[3] Three meetings held in Indonesia have not been successful in looking for breakthrough for the disputes. See Valencia (156-169).

principles has been a starting point framing the conducts of behavior among them and towards non-member states.

Some cases have shown how ASEAN states have reacted to their environment by imposing their identity as sovereign entities. Following Robert Jackson's concept, this type of conduct reflects a "negative sovereignty" (Jackson 1993: 26-30), practiced through concepts such as ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality). In reality, it is not much that ASEAN can realize through ZOPFAN, except by asking other powers a guarantee to freedom and peace in the region. The main idea of ZOPFAN, as in "negative sovereignty" concept is to make voices of ASEAN as a group of independent states to be heard by others, particularly big powers. This "negative sovereignty" has been shown on the demands such as "freedom from" (Jackson 1993: 11) any external threat and in the ASEAN case, a "desire" to remove superpower military presence from its region (Buszynski 1990: 259). In contrast, countries practicing "positive sovereignty" have capabilities to realize their interest that is defined in terms "freedom to" act regarding their ideals and to deter threats towards their security (Jackson 1993: 11).

By practicing "negative sovereignty", ASEAN has attracted developing countries in Southeast Asia to join. Indochina and Myanmar have become members of ASEAN. It seems difficult for these authoritarian and communist countries to stand apart from ASEAN, while they need recognition for their identity and legitimacy after the collapse of the communism model in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (Guilbert 1990: 272-273; Cotton 1989: 256-258). Myanmar and Kampuchea clearly took advantage by entering ASEAN. As an organization respecting the sovereignty of its members, those two countries expect that their suppression of oppositional groups would not be discussed and they blamed. For Vietnam and Laos that are trying to diversify their foreign relations both in economic and political area (Tung 1993: 85-87), ASEAN may be a place where their aspirations as sovereign and independent states can also be fulfilled.

Seen from a constructivist perspective, the inclusion of Indochina and Myanmar has strengthened the non-intervention norms in ASEAN. However, on the other hand, these new members have joined and complied with ASEAN norms and principles not only for the sake of norms and principles itself, but also for getting a new identity and status for themselves as ASEAN members. In addition they benefited by getting protection for their sovereignty and justification for their internal policies to oppress opposition groups.

Secondly, countries in Southeast Asia still face many problems in managing the relations between state and society. There have been beliefs among ASEAN leaders that a strong state is needed to manage their people, to maintain the unity of nation and to develop their economy. Under sovereignty principle, this management is completely under the authority of the existing government where demands from domestic powers can be settled without interventions from external powers.

The role of ASEAN in this case is to provide a guarantee that the principle of non-intervention is maintained. As Muthiah Alagappa argues, regional organization such as ASEAN has created a benign international environment and prevented external intervention in domestic conflicts and this permitted the regional states to manage national resources for economic and political development of their societies (Alagappa 1993: 15). Solidarity and toleration have become common themes originating from the recognition of the non-intervention principle.

To a certain extent, the management of ethnic conflicts and other separatist movements in ASEAN states has been based on solidarity among ASEAN members. The recognition both toward sovereignty principles and individual and minority rights, has allowed ASEAN members to settle their domestic problems. This, in turn, has created an awareness among countries involved in ethnic conflicts, for example, to redefine their goals and settle their problems through peaceful means (Alagappa 1993: 15-16). In particular the settlement of Moro movement in the Philippines before 2001 and Pattani in Thailand followed this direction. The attitudes of Moslem majority countries, Malaysia and Indonesia in not giving political and military support for the separatist Moslem movements, particularly to Moro movement (Alagappa: 16) had motivated the Philippines and Thailand governments to settle the problems through dialogues.

Thirdly, in relations to big powers, ASEAN has got new significance in the region in this interdependence era as a forum to formulate and strengthen national and regional identity. Many criticisms from the West toward the violation of human rights, political repression and degradation of environment need to be handled by states in this region. In addition as Carlyle A. Thayer mentions, in this era of economic interdependence and rapid changes in communication technology, the states are being threatened of losing their national and regional identity.

The responses from ASEAN states toward these challenges have emerged from many meetings. Three countries and their respective leaders Malaysia's former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, Singapore's Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew, and former Indonesian President Soeharto have been particularly concerned with the way the Western countries have imposed their own values on Asia. At the twenty-fourth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting and the Post Ministerial Conference (PMC) in Kuala Lumpur in July 1991, such criticisms toward the Western approaches become an important agenda. In the joint communiqué, the ASEAN states stated that the implementation of human rights in the national context "should remain within the competence and responsibility of each country, having regard for the complex variety of economic, social and cultural realities" (Jie 1993: 233). A similar communiqué was also stated at the ASEAN Summit in January 1992 and again at the twenty-fifth AMM in July 1992 (Jie: 1993: 233). Similarly, the weak pressure on Myanmar, which has poor records on democracy and human rights issues, shows that ASEAN often disregards Western attacks.

These three developments show that ASEAN has not departed from its original platform in facing changes in its region. The principle of territorial integrity is still the main standard within which a code of conduct of its members has to be based. Such a platform may have brought many successes for ASEAN cooperation particularly, as many commentators have mentioned, in maintaining regional stability and order. However, in facing interdependence and economic globalization after the end of the Cold War, new issues hiding behind the Cold War issues in the region have emerged. These issues that may give rise to the formation of new cooperation will cause tension within ASEAN framework of cooperation.

The Constructive Intervention Approach (CIA) Responses

Quite a significant number of critiques have been addressed to the RSA from the Constructive Intervention Approach (CIA) in handling transnational issues. In general, the criticisms attempt to anticipate the proliferation of the above transnational issues within ASEAN context. The supporters of the CIA were not limited to state officials, but include individual leaders, NGOs, think tanks and other social forces in ASEAN states. However in this part, I concentrate only on the role of official leaders of some ASEAN states. It can be argued that these groups of leaders supporting CIA attempt to change norms and principles supporting the Regional International Society in ASEAN after identifying the likely problems ASEAN currently faces and will face in the future given the nature of transnational issues. Since common platforms and rules of conduct of ASEAN are not static but depend on its members to maintain or change them, it is expected that some changes to the norms may take place with the growing criticism to the principles. The strategy taken to change is not aimed at creating new norms but giving new understanding to the current shared norms and identity.

In the above strategy to change the norms and principle of Regional International Society (RIS), CIA does not completely attempt to replace the principle of sovereignty but only questions the meaning of sovereignty for ASEAN. The strategy also evolves according to the development in ASEAN. There has been learning process to adjust the initial idea of the CIA. The starting point for the CIA was a statement from the former Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim who suggested proactive measures to overcome problems with ASEAN members before they blow into a crisis. He initially proposed the idea of 'constructive intervention' by ASEAN to the reconciliation process in Kampuchea in 1997, which included assistance for electoral process, legal and administrative reforms, developing human capital and strengthening civil society and the rule of law.

He further stated 'ASEAN's direct involvement in the affairs of its members is but the application of an ASEAN solution to an ASEAN problem. Given the nature of the problems that we may face in the region, where the threat of spillovers of domestic economic, social and political upheavals can seriously undermine the stability of the entire region, we should reach a consensus to adopt this approach' (Anwar Ibrahim 1997: 13; quoted in Peter Eng 1999: 49).

The CIA clearly attacks the RSA directly on the assumption that everything can be left to individual states within ASEAN to handle. In other words, it questions the traditional understanding of sovereignty adopted by ASEAN. In the interdependent ASEAN, problems in one country may have impacts on other countries. This means that wrong or inappropriate policies or mistakes in one country may have its ramification in other neighboring countries. The haze problem is a good example. The forest fire in Indonesia has caused misery in other ASEAN countries. Similarly lagging economic developments in Indonesia and the Philippines, causes people to search for jobs in richer neighboring countries.

These transnational issues in the CIA need to be handled by making more coordination of policies among ASEAN states. After the fall of Soeharto the idea was developed further with different concepts and approaches because of objections from countries supporting the RSA. Thai foreign minister used the terms 'flexible engagement' for the same purpose. He argued that domestic problems in one country have external dimensions. After experiencing the flow of Myanmar refugees caused by repression by the military regime in Rangoon, Pitsuwan asked ASEAN to adjust its non-intervention principle to globalization and interdependence (Collin 2000: 183).

This idea implies that ASEAN needs to be more open and frank to talk with each other. Pitsuwan further states that this should not be considered as interference in other countries internal affairs. According to him, '...taking and articulating a more active interest in one another can help to promote ASEAN regionalism in the long term. It can act as an early warning system to alert one another to the gravity of certain domestically generated transnational or international problems. It can provide policy option and facilitate the pooling of scarce resources for addressing such problems. It can help to establish the appropriate conditions for closer cooperation both among members and between members and the international community.' (Eng 1999: 57).

This argument attempts to overcome the worries of the RSA supporters that the proposal would go too far and cause intervention in other countries businesses. Pitsuwan attempts to show that the proposal does not disregard the common believe and norms in ASEAN. As such this proposal does not ignore the fear among those who are involved in building ASEAN for long time. Alatas stated that the proposal might return ASEAN 'to the situation before ASEAN was born, with a lot of suspicion, a lot of tension' (Chanda and Islam 1998: 25, quoted in Collin 2000: 184). The argument suggests that ASEAN needs to see the future by starting to discuss their interdependence and transnational problems.

Although the idea 'constructive intervention' did not get strong hold and finally became a concept of 'enhanced interaction', ASEAN however started to pay attention to the people. As mentioned before, it proposed 'ASEAN vision 2020' in Kuala Lumpur in 1997 which was endorsed at the 6th ASEAN summit in Hanoi within 'Ha Noi Action Plan' on 15 December 1998.

Toward a Redefinition of Sovereignty?

The above debates between the supporters of the CIA and the RSA perhaps ended together with the replacement of leaders like Anwar Ibrahim, Surin Pitsuwan and Siazon; and with the compromise to adopt a concept of 'enhanced interaction'. This, however, does not mean that the current norms, cultures and principles of non-intervention and 'ASEAN Way' remain unchanged from their original meaning. The principles of sovereignty and 'ASEAN Way' exist in a social context. The strengthening and the weakening of the meaning of the principles depend on the agents attempting either to maintain or change them. The agents that change and strengthen the norms and principles, therefore, do not depend mainly on individual leaders but also on groups of people, think tanks, social movements, religious and ethnic movements, and non-governmental organizations.

Being put in a social process, there have been processes going on either to maintain or to redefine the principles of sovereignty and 'ASEAN Way'. In the following description, it can be seen that ASEAN countries learn that the common norms and principles of non-intervention and 'ASEAN Way' in some ways cannot be maintained. However, on the other hand, domestic practices within some countries show the efforts to manipulate current transnational issues to strengthen the role of the state authority and sovereignty. Furthermore, it is not surprising to find out contradictory signs of changes.

There has been social and learning process in which the meaning of the principle of sovereignty and non-intervention in some ways has been contested and changed from its initial understanding. In its initial meaning, sovereignty almost meant that no other country is allowed to intervene whether in the military sense or for other reasons. There has been also ASEAN consensus in the decision-making process that restraints its members from giving open statements regarding issues. ASEAN leaders prefer to settle any problem arising through informal meeting and to halt the open discussion of the issues. If there is no agreement then the ASEAN countries will leave the problem aside and return to it later when time is right.

In the process of inclusion of Kampuchea and Myanmar into ASEAN, the main principle of non-intervention has been modified to a certain degree. Kampuchea was planned to be included into ASEAN in 1997 but its entry was delayed three times until 1999 because of crisis in the Hun Sen government. Their main reason for the delay was the situation in Kampuchea, which was perceived by many members of ASEAN, as unsettled. This attitude showed that the meaning of sovereignty was not as strict as it was often imagined by traditional concept of sovereignty. ASEAN indirectly attempted to influence the domestic process, taking place in Kampuchea by setting the condition for its entrance. Initially Hun Sen government was disappointed with the ASEAN attitude but then accommodated the ASEAN proposal. The country has learnt that without joining ASEAN, its position could have been weak.

Similarly when attempting to include Myanmar, ASEAN attempted to influence the political development in the country. It proposed dialogues between military junta and opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi. In this regard, the main reason for ASEAN was actually to accommodate the pressures from Western countries by proposing the idea of constructive engagement. ASEAN attempted to convince its European dialogue partners about the reason behind the inclusion of Myanmar into ASEAN. The inclusion of Myanmar was seen as part of ASEAN effort to engage Myanmar in more positive ways to settle its problems with opposition groups. The new members had to understand that there was an exception to non-intervention, particularly if the problem is related to global accepted norms such as democracy and human rights.

In addition to this changing meaning of sovereignty, ASEAN states face growing interdependence and transnational problems. In dealing with these cross-border issues, the ASEAN countries have not been able to maintain its 'ASEAN Way' of solving conflict. Some ASEAN leaders cannot restraint themselves from commenting on issues that can influence their own country. This is particularly the case with regard to economic disparity and different political systems. Singapore's Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew, for example, commented on increase of crime in Johor, Malaysia. Lee also made comment on the possibilities of crisis if BJ Habibie became Indonesian President. The Singapore Senior Minister even criticized the slow action taken by the Indonesian government in dealing with terrorism. This, according to him, had made the country a nest for terrorists.

In responding to Lee's objection to Habibie, Habibie's supporters protested at the Singaporean Embassy in Jakarta. Habibie also reminded Singapore about its vulnerable position, by saying 'Look at the map, all the green is Indonesia, and that red dot is Singapore. Just look at that' (Smith 2000: 57). Habibie also mentioned that Singapore was a real racist because of discrimination toward the Malays in the Singapore military. In 2002, groups of protesters were at Singaporean Embassy in Jakarta because of Lee's statement that Indonesia was a home for terrorists. Such war of words also happened between Indonesia MPR speaker Amien Rais and Malaysia Foreign Minister Hamid Albar regarding the punishment to Indonesian workers in Malaysia. Different political systems necessitated the leaders to be responsive to people demands. Demands for political powers in domestic politics have persuaded the Philippines and Indonesian Presidents, Joseph Estrada and BJ Habibie to make public comments to support sacked Malaysian Deputy PM Anwar Ibrahim.

From the above cases, different political system, disparity in economic development and progress were the sources of problem that could cause tension and conflicts. Malaysia and Singapore, for example, worry with the slow progress and recovery in their neighboring countries from economic crisis. This may mean the increasing number of immigrant workers will come to their countries. It can be argued, therefore, that inequality in terms of development and progress in ASEAN may become new sources of tension in this region. Most ASEAN countries, however, still see these conditions as problems faced by individual countries and have nothing to do with their countries.

In contrast to the tendency to redefine the sovereignty principle within ASEAN, however, the developments as mentioned below indicate different story. There has been a tendency to make use the transnational phenomena to consolidate elite political power and national identity in countries such as Singapore and Malaysia. The leaders of these countries, for example, have portrayed the political and economic crises in Indonesia, as examples of bad political and economic management that Malaysians and Singaporeans should not follow.

In this case, the state selfish interest has been strengthened. Different economic level and political openness has strengthened the sovereignty and identity of individual states instead of strengthening solidarity as ASEAN members to solve the problems. Individual countries remain the focus for each country. They are busy in consolidating their own countries by imagining the danger outside their countries. Such a case happened when picturing immigrant workers as 'alien workers'. This may consolidate power and authority of the state and increase sense of nationalism. The idea of 'ASEAN people' in such a case is limited. It also can be argued that the idea of ASEAN people as enunciated in 'ASEAN 2020' is only a lip service.

This of course does not necessarily imply that there should be no border between states or states need not strengthen their identity. Rather it is to say that there should be some way to strengthen the identity of 'people of ASEAN' as enunciated in the 'ASEAN 2020' declaration. In this regard, as people start to think of problems such as poverty, inequality and justice as humanity problems, there should be efforts to see that those problems have a leeway and become a common ASEAN problem too. In other words, ASEAN solidarity needs to include the solidarity to solve and care for the problems in society of its member states. For the moment, those who think there would be changes in the meaning of sovereignty and non-intervention should satisfy themselves to the fact that the principle is still needed and remains strong but it should not be something static and unchangeable. The processes to demystify the principles are going on.

Conclusion

ASEAN is in transition. It faces many challenges in bringing benefit for the state and people in the region. To a certain degree it fulfills the goal to create no-war situation between states in this region but with the growing transnational problems among its members, ASEAN needs to extend its cooperation. This paper attempts to see to what extent ASEAN has extended its cooperation by looking at the emerging transnational issues and the ways this organization handled them.

This paper argues that the extension of cooperation is necessary given the deep problems brought about by the transnational issues. The transnational issues range from immigrant workers, democracy, human rights, and environment. Because of globalization, the issues become deeper and influence relationship between state and society, society and society in another country, and global power and the state. The

issues therefore cannot be limited to state-to-state problem but involves broader political and social actors. These social actors demand the state and government to address the issues, including in the ASEAN context.

So far ASEAN has left such problems to individual members to handle. This is because the ASEAN organization has developed its own common principles and rules of the game centering on the non-interference and 'ASEAN Way'. These principles have been accepted and strengthened through social process and relations among ASEAN members. Given the complexity of transnational issues, these common values and norms, however, have been questioned, to a certain degree redefined and given a new meaning.

On some occasions, ASEAN has attempted to address the transnational issues, which for a long time has been understood as internal problems of its members. In the case of Myanmar and Kampuchea, before these two countries become formal members of ASEAN, ASEAN played active roles in the so-called constructive engagement to make sure that those two countries respected concerns of international community on the treatment of opposition groups. On other occasions, ASEAN members broke the taboo to talk openly on issues taking place in other ASEAN countries. Given the likely ramification of the problems to inter state relations, some leaders have started reminding other fellow members to address the issues seriously. Leaders of Singapore and Malaysia for example are concerned with the slow actions taken by Indonesia in handling terrorism activities. Leaders of Indonesia and the Philippines, on the other hand, concerned with the treatment of Malaysian opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim at one time.

Being seen from a constructivist perspective, such processes show the efforts of creative agents to redefine the meaning of sovereignty or to demystify the absolute understanding of sovereignty and non-intervention principle of ASEAN. The processes are toward building a new social-shared identity. The seed for these new social-shared values and norms have been endorsed partly by the situation and partly by active involvement of some social and political actors in this region. The idea of constructive intervention may not be accepted formally and had been so far modified into the concepts of flexible engagement and then enhanced integration.

ASEAN leaders in many ways and styles have also started to engage in the business of other ASEAN states. One state cannot live in harmony in this region while its neighboring states are left behind. The leader of one ASEAN member state can blame the leader of another member state for mishandling policies. Of course the leaders can also make use of the problems of its neighbors to consolidate the identity of their nation. This in many ways reflect the realist selfish assumption of state interest. The idea of fulfilling state interests still attracts support, but for how long this can be justified depends much on the awareness of the people and the growth of regional civil society. ASEAN has declared the 'ASEAN 2020' vision planning to build 'a community of caring society' and 'people of ASEAN'. This may still be a long way to

go and can be stated as diplomatic lip service, but the reality taking place in the region necessitates those elites to consider the expectations and demands from the people to address their interests.

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