

The Role of Indonesia's Armed Forces (TNI) in Non-Traditional Security Challenges

BG Jan Pieter Ate (Indonesia Delegate)

Presented at the ARF Security Policy Conference (ASPC)
Yangon, Myanmar, 8 June 2014

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

I am very pleased to have this opportunity to share Indonesia's views and experiences of the role of the Indonesia's Armed Forces in Traditional and Non-Traditional Security Challenges.

Indonesia's armed forces was born during the time of the struggle for independence. Hence, the functions performed by the armed forces were the result of both historical and legal factors.

From legal aspect, the armed forces is tasked to defend the country against traditional security challenges that confront the sovereignty, the unitary state of Indonesia, and the safety of the whole people of Indonesia. The tasks of the armed forces to defend the country is clearly stated in the Constitution, then translated in the Defence Law released in 2002, and the Law on the Indonesian Defence Forces released in 2014. The two laws are the produced in the framework work of democracy after Indonesia turned to democracy in 1998.

As mandated by the constitution and Laws, the primary role of the armed

forces is the defending of the country and all its well being from traditional security challenges. Other tasks assigned to the armed forces including the role in dealing with non-traditional security challenge are not the primary tasks of the armed forces, instead, the armed forces plays supporting role to assists the civil authorities and other security institutions.

Against this backdrop, Indonesia develops the capability of our armed forces on a conventional term, and we are maintaining a regular forces to ensure the protection of our sovereignty and all the interest of the state against traditional security challenges that may arise. Let me also introduce to the Forum of the military modernisation conducted by Indonesia in the recent years and we set the plan until the next few years. The military modernization is not aimed to enlarge our armed forces, not even it is going to a level of so called "arms raising". Our defence budget allocated for the modernization is still small. Among the ASEAN member states, Indonesia's defence budget is not the largest one.

Military modernisation is crucially important to Indonesia, given its size and strategic location in the cross road of international passages connecting the two oceans, Hindia and Pacific Oceans and two continents, Asia and Australia. A fragmented Indonesia will have complex implications to the region, particularly countries surrounding Indonesia. A stable Indonesia will contribute significantly to the peace and stability of the region.

In the interest of promoting peace and stability in the region, Indonesian armed forces has close relations with many armed forces in the region. As well as the increased bilateral relations with armed forces among ASEAN

member states, that we maintain through bilateral and multilateral conducts, relations with other armed forces in the region and beyond the region are increasingly growing in positive and constructive ways.

For example, Indonesia armed forces establish good cooperation with Chinese armed forces and conduct regular interactions through concrete activities conducted annually and alternately. With the same vein, Indonesia's armed forces also enjoys matured relations with armed forces of Australia, US, India, East Timor, PNG, South Korea, Japan, New Zealand, Canada, and armed forces of EU members bilaterally.

Indonesia has maintained its concrete contribution to the world peace through PKO missions since 1957. We now deploy our PKO Contingents in various UN missions including in our own region, the Southern Philippine. Our involvement in the UN PKO missions is now being intensified. As well as we deploy around 2000 peace keepers in various missions, in the past few years we deploy one corvette in the Lebanon waters to join the international task forces in that area. In the immediate future we will send three helicopters to Sudan to support the UN Mission in the Africa. We are still working to fulfill the request of sending C-130 Hercules aircraft to support UN Mission. We have also received invitation from other friendly countries to join mission in Mali which is now being discussed in Indonesia. Indonesia has been committed to maintain our participation in the PKO mission while improving the quality of our peacekeepers. In this regard, Indonesia has now established a modern PKO Centers that has been visited by UN Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki Moon recently, and Head of States and Defence Ministers from many countries. Indonesia is committed to increase the number of peacekeepers to reach 4000 peacekeepers which now

already 2000 personnel.

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to the role of the armed forces in Non-traditional security challenges:

Indonesia follows the developing country's paradigm where the armed forces is often the leading agency of modernization of the state. For many decades after the formation of the armed forces right after the state independence in 1945, and before Indonesia turned to democracy in 1998, the armed forces was arguably the most modern institution in society. Before becoming the democratic state, Indonesia's armed forces played active roles, not only in defence affairs in traditional security context, but also in national building which brought the armed forces engaged in the handling of security challenges, many of the areas actually are not the primary responsibility of the Armed forces.

It may be worthwhile noting in fact, from the time of its establishment, the Indonesia's Armed Forces has been part of and working hand-in-hand with the other elements of the nation in various development activities and engaged in operations to secure the independence and fought for the security and stability against extremist and radicalist groups, and other forms of security challenges across the country. This brought the armed forces to go far beyond its professional responsibility to defend the country against traditional security context. You may be aware of the dual function of the Indonesia's armed forces in the past, which truly undermine its professionalism.

The reform carried out in 1998 change the role of the armed forces to function as a professional army which means the primary role and responsibility is the role in traditional security challenges. The armed forces is no longer involve in politics as done before the reform.

Turning to democratic state, the *armed forces* perceive the role in non-traditional challenges as a supporting role. To this aim, and in dealing with non-traditional security challenges, the assignment of the armed forces is only based on political decision and with reference to the request of civil authorities and relevant agency who becomes the focal point to the issue.

I would also take this opportunity to share Indonesia's armed forces' experiences in various operations to deal non-traditional security challenges in the domestic context and beyond our EEZ.

Our armed forces has reach experiences in dealing with non-traditional security challenges such as combating terrorism, armed robbery and piracy, arms smuggling, illegal logging, illegal fishing, search and rescue, and even involved in law enforcement activities.

In natural disasters, the armed forces is always the first booth stepping on the ground to help the people, as seen in many catastrophic events such as tsunami and earthquake occurred in Aceh and Nias in 2004, and many other occurrences took place thereafter. Just recently Indonesia's armed forces were deployed to overcome the haze occurred in various spots in Indonesia and stopped the fires.

Indonesia's armed forces also had experiences in conducting several operations took place beyond the EEZ of the state.

In combating terrorism, the armed forces has undertaken successful special operation to rescue an Indonesian Airline and passengers on board the aircraft form hijacking which took place in Don Muang airport in Thailand in the 1980s. This experience was inspired to the establishment of special forces unit in the mid 1980s which actually has tasks to handle the issues including combating terrorism, counter piracy and armed and sea robbery, handling of radicalism and extremism. Of late in the 1990s, Indonesia's special forces also conducted a successful operation to rescue American citizens kidnapped by separatists in Napenduma, Papua.

In counter piracy operation, the armed forces sent task force consist of special forces of army, navy and air force to rescue "the Sinar Kudus", a commercial ship, hijacked in Somali in 2012. The task was conducted successfully, and the ship and crews on board the ship were safely rescued and several pirates were killed during the operation. In deed, the operation in Somali was the first time in the 21st century where Indonesia deploys an expeditionary unit of the armed forces to a place far from its EEZ. This experience also builds Indonesia's confidence of the capability and obligation to join other nations in maritime security missions across the globe to secure our oceans and seas, and to promote the world peace and stability at large.

Together with Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand, Indonesia's armed forces also conducts joint operations, the regular activities in the form of

coordinated patrols and eye on the sky operations to secure Malacca Strait. The cooperative activities have significantly reduced the crime at the Strait at the very minimum level.

Indonesia's armed forces also joined other countries' forces to conduct relief operations in the event of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippine through the sending of C130 aircraft to transport Indonesia's assistance. The aircraft stayed for a few weeks to help the Philippines authority.

As well as the real operations mentioned above, Indonesia's armed forces is also active in the capacity building effort in the region including the conduct of the ARF Direx in Manado, North Sulawesi in 2011. Together with Japan as the co-chairs, Indonesia has successfully undertaken the exercise that brought the ARF to have significant contribution to a regional capacity building effort.

Together with Australia, Indonesia's armed forces to draft and finalise mechanism and SOP for HADR mission, including the conduct of a Table Top Exercise held at the Naval Command and Staff College in Jakarta few years ago.

Last March, Indonesian Navy held a multilateral exercise in Indonesia, called "Komodo" Exercise and participated by Navies in the region. The exercise themed HADR at sea which include search and rescue at sea. The exercise was aimed at building confidence building and partnerships among armed forces particularly the navies in the region. This becomes modality for the region that when a catastrophic event takes place at sea, the navies

are able to contact each other and necessary assistance can be arranged and delivered. Indonesian Navy plans to conduct the exercise in Indonesia every two years.

In conclusion, with regard to the role of the armed forces in traditional and non-traditional security challenges, the implementation of the roles has to be put under the respect of rules of laws. An excessive of the armed forces in the roles which do not become the primary responsibility can violate and jeopardize common fundamental rules and norms we all respect, such as human rights and even the responsibility to protect own people against mass atrocities and crimes against humanity.

In order to prevent the armed forces from any unlegitimate role assigned to them, there has to be a concrete decision delivered by political authority of the task assigned to the armed forces, especially with regard to non-traditional security challenges.

I thank you.