

Internal Conflict in ASEAN Member States: The Indonesian Experience

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1. What are the similarities and differences between internal armed conflicts in ASEAN states?
2. Is the military approach the effective way of addressing these conflicts?
3. What role can parliamentarians play in addressing these conflicts?

SIMILARITIES

- Has historical roots to time of formation of respective states
- Caused by unattended perceived deprivation
- Failure of political system to accommodate differences and arrive at comprehensive solution

DIFFERENCES

1. Historical roots are unique to each state (e.g. unfinished ideological agenda, central-region dichotomy, majority-minority conflicts, religious disharmony, etc.)
2. Responses to these conflicts also vary from state to state, influenced by:
 1. Political system
 2. Culture and tradition legacy
 3. International influence

Is the military approach the effective way of addressing these conflicts?

1. In Cold War Era

1. Sovereignty perceived as rights of states to solve internal problems.
2. Military Approach seen as the effective way of addressing conflicts.
3. Cold War environment led to least international intervention.
4. Requires high professional standards of all related elements in an integrated campaign (counter-insurgency campaign)
5. The concept of national security was the point of reference

2. In the Post-Cold War Era

1. Globalization results in transparent national borders on resolving national issues
2. Saw the development of humanitarian issues, parallel to the shift of sovereignty: from a right of state to the responsibility of the state to protect basic rights of her citizens
3. Also saw the shift of the concept of security from national security to human security.
4. Probability of humanitarian intervention of international community into a state

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5. Military approach counter-productive due to international attention and the high risk of escalating the conflict
6. Comprehensive political approach become the preferred method
7. Not a shift but reiterates that military approach cannot solve the conflict but exist only as one option in the use of instruments of national power. Internal conflict can only be resolved through a comprehensive political solution.

What role can parliamentarians play?

1. The constitutional role of check and balance, and controlling the executive powers in their policies to be in line with:
 1. Supremacy of the law
 2. Respect to and fulfillment of human rights
 3. Appropriate employment of the military with the authorized level of violence in times of emergency
2. Possibility of assuring the role of negotiator in peace process
3. Overseeing implementation of peace process

The Indonesian Experience:

1. The Aceh Peaceful Solution

1. The first time in history Indonesia opts for peaceful conflict resolution
2. Reflects the political will to shift to negotiations with the Aceh Freedom Movement and willingness to compromise
3. The first time accepts international third party to the negotiation table

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4. Learning experience for the military to be loyal to the political decision made by the political authorities.
5. Always implies sacrifice and risks
6. Absorbs political aspiration of the Aceh Freedom Movement into the national political system through recognition of existence and given the opportunity to compete for political power through democratic means.

The Indonesian Experience:

2. The Indonesia-Timor Leste Commission of Truth and Friendship

1. Political decision by leaders of Indonesia and Timor Leste to agree to put an end to past conflict (the alleged human rights violations in East Timor in 1999), and look to the future to establish reconciliation and friendship between the two nations

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2. Basically it is a political commission given the mandate to work to reach the conclusive truth of the violence of 1999 in East Timor to answer the following questions:
 1. Did the human rights violations happen in East Timor in 1999?
 2. Arrive at institutional responsibility to the violence
 3. Draw lessons learned to prevent recurrence
 4. Establish reconciliation and friendship between societies of the two nations

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3. The Commission shall conclude its mandate with recommendations to the head of state and head of government of Indonesia and Timor Leste
4. The Commission shall not recommend any judicial process
5. It is a commission between two countries without precedence, taking the initiative to agree to resolve past conflict in the form of restorative justice

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6. This type of conflict resolution can never be made possible without the support of the spirit of democracy to uphold the human rights through democratic principles
7. The Aceh Freedom Movement and CTF experience are examples of models of peaceful conflict resolution at intra and international level reflecting the shift in the approach to address conflicts as a result of the democratic transition taking place in Indonesia

CONCLUSION

1. Similarities and differences between internal conflicts in ASEAN member countries depend on characteristics of the conflicts and situations in the respective countries.
2. Military approach used to be the preferred way during the Cold-War Era requiring professional competence in an integrated campaign in a typical counter-insurgency campaign

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3. In the Post-Cold War era, military approach loses its effectiveness due to developing concept of human security and sovereignty as the responsibility of the national government to protect the basic rights of its citizens.
4. Parliaments can play the role of check and balances and control of policy formulation and implementation of the executive powers of the respective government, and the possibility of assuring the role of mediators.

THANK YOU