

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Buzan describes security as pursuit of freedom from threats.<sup>1</sup> International security, however, has a slightly more extreme meaning, international security is more firmly rooted in the traditions of power politics, in this context security is about survival.<sup>2</sup> The significance of security cannot be understated, in fact most consider it of utmost importance and a primary value<sup>3</sup>; a person would not have the time and effort to invest to be prosperous when they are not secure. The same is true for other actors within international relations. A country, let alone a region, cannot achieve steady economic growth, and spread its values beyond its frontiers if its constantly facing security threat. Various regions of differing sizes are scattered around the world all of them. Regional security is a dire issue for most, one of them that deserves special attention is Southeast Asia.

Since the term Southeast Asia was coined during the mid-20th century, the region has navigated the treacherous shifting global order with relative success. Although often dismissed as the “Balkans of Asia” the constituents of Southeast

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<sup>1</sup> Buzan, B. 2007. People, states and fear: an agenda for international security studies in the post-Cold War era. In ECPR Press eBooks. <http://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA83009458>

<sup>2</sup> Buzan, Barry, Ole Wæver, Ole Wæver, and Jaap De Wilde. 1998. *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

<sup>3</sup> Browning, C. S. (2013). *International Security: A very short introduction*. Oxford University Press.

Asia sought out to create their own path after being granted independence.<sup>4</sup> These included Myanmar's enthusiasm for a new Asian order, press from Malaysia and Thailand viewing Southeast Asian regionalism with positive potential. One of the most significant of these was Indonesia's Asia Africa conference and their staunchly nonaligned foreign policy to benefit off both sides of the cold war.<sup>5</sup> Despite some disagreements and armed conflict between Southeast Asian states, the region's navigation of troubles and opportunities from within and without persisted.

Shared vision of fighting communism between Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Philippines led to creation of Association of Southeast Asian Nations in 1967.<sup>6</sup> The pursuit of economic growth and desire for a platform to foster and strengthen mutual trust and understanding amongst its members were other motivating factors as well. ASEAN's involvement in not only resolving but also reconciling the Vietnam and Cambodia conflict demonstrated the region's ability to handle its pressure.<sup>7</sup> Security issues aside, today ASEAN benefits from multilateral trade deals like ASEAN +3 and RCEP.<sup>8</sup> Deals like these and more aided in Southeast Asia earn comments from observers as an economically rapidly

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<sup>4</sup> Acharya, Amitav. 2013. *The Making of Southeast Asia: International Relations of a Region*. Cornell University Press.

<sup>5</sup> Acharya, Amitav. 2013. *The Making of Southeast Asia: International Relations of a Region*. Cornell University Press.

<sup>6</sup> SCMP Reporter. (2020, September 3). What is Asean and why was it formed? South China Morning Post. <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/explained/article/2186774/explained-asean>

<sup>7</sup> Acharya, Amitav. 2013. *The Making of Southeast Asia: International Relations of a Region*. Cornell University Press.

<sup>8</sup> HuiShan, M. (2022, May 27). All aboard! The RCEP Ticket to ASEAN+3 Post-Pandemic Growth - AMRO ASIA. AMRO ASIA. [https://www.amro-asia.org/all-aboard-the-rcep-ticket-to-asean3-post-pandemic-growth/#:~:text=For%20ASEAN%2B3%2C%20RCEP%20is,RCEP's%20key%20provisions%20\(Figure\).](https://www.amro-asia.org/all-aboard-the-rcep-ticket-to-asean3-post-pandemic-growth/#:~:text=For%20ASEAN%2B3%2C%20RCEP%20is,RCEP's%20key%20provisions%20(Figure).)

growing region. In addition to that, compared to not only its neighbors but other regions scattered across the world Southeast Asia is arguably the most peaceful region in the world, given the fact that interstate conflicts were absent from the region over past few decades.

Southeast Asia's efforts in adapting and navigating through the ever-changing political economic world order remains to be true. While these are milestones worth celebrating, the need for regional security is becoming increasingly dire. Various international actors view Southeast Asia with strategic significance as it is located in the center of the Indo Pacific. Indo pacific is increasingly becoming a hotbed for great power competition as heavy political and economic interest from major power sways to its direction.<sup>9</sup> The trade war triggered by former US president Trump have redirected capital to move away from the US and China and towards Southeast Asia.<sup>10</sup> China's persistent presence in the South China Sea is beginning to meet considerable opposition with the establishment of US military bases in the Philippines.<sup>11</sup> The need for stability and predictability through security in Southeast Asia is becoming more urgent. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the region amounts to around 3.66 trillion United States Dollar (USD).<sup>12</sup> Estimates claim that

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<sup>9</sup> Hawksley, Humphrey. (2018). *Asian Waters: The Struggle Over the Indo-Pacific and the Challenge to American Power*. Abrams.

<sup>10</sup> Rougheen, Simon. (2020, January 21). The real winners in the trade war might be found in Southeast Asia. Lowy Institute. <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/real-winners-trade-war-might-be-found-southeast-asia>

<sup>11</sup> Wingfield-Hayes, B. R. (2023, February 2). US secures deal on Philippines bases to complete arc around China. BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-64479712>

<sup>12</sup> O'Neill, Aaron. 2023. "ASEAN Countries GDP 2028 | Statista." Statista. May 4, 2023. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/796245/gdp-of-the-asean-countries/#:~:text=Gross%20domestic%20product%20of%20the%20ASEAN%20countries%20from%202018%20to%202028&text=In%202022%2C%20the%20estimated%20total,increase%20from%20the%20previous%20years.>

the GDP of the region is expected to grow even further; Asian Development Bank forecast that this number will grow by 4.8% in 2024.<sup>13</sup> All these accomplishments amassed along with the potential growth will be lost if regional security is not achieved. Not only that, but the possibility of achieving ASEAN centrality, a concept where ASEAN becomes the driver and architect of cooperation among Indo-Pacific states will also be lost. A chance where the influence of ASEAN will surpass its border will be lost. If there is any country that should be concerned regarding this issue and is capable of stepping in further and better to contribute more to regional security, it is Indonesia.

Indonesia is worth paying closer attention to. Being one of the founding members of ASEAN, the archipelagic state is often dubbed the de facto leader of ASEAN, and rightfully so.<sup>14</sup> It has the highest GDP in the region, and the most diplomatic clout and often countries outside the region view it as an entry point to the rest of Southeast Asia. Indonesia too views the region with importance. Officials from Indonesia often called ASEAN the cornerstone of its foreign policy. This is shown in Indonesia's past actions. Indonesia played significant roles in resolving the Vietnam-Cambodia conflict in the 1980s, the 2011 Thailand-Cambodia border dispute, and in brokering ASEAN's 6-Point Principles on the South China Sea in 2012.<sup>15</sup> Not only that, but Former President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono showed

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<sup>13</sup> Ralph. 2023. "Economic Forecasts: Asian Development Outlook April 2023." Asian Development Bank. April 27, 2023. <https://www.adb.org/outlook>.

<sup>14</sup> Mahesa Drajat, Gibran. 2018. "Assessing Indonesia's Leadership in the Advancement of ASEAN Political Security Community under President Joko Widodo." *AEGIS Journal of International Relations*, March.

<sup>15</sup> Haerunnisa Fajrilla Sidiq, Mabda. 2022. "Cornerstone No More? The Changing Role of ASEAN in Indonesian Foreign Policy." *The Diplomat*. October 5, 2022.

his commitment to the region expressing his hope to the Group of 20 (G20) leaders in Pittsburgh that the ASEAN Chair could be invited to every G20 Summit.<sup>16</sup> To top it off most recently, the central bank of Indonesia along with other Southeast Asian states have collaborated to establish and launch the cross-border digital payment.<sup>17</sup> Clearly because Indonesia have invested heavily into the region it has a lot at stake. Along with this fact and following the line of action Indonesia has taken in its approach to Southeast Asia, observers of the region can expect Indonesia to have bigger actions in building and maintaining regional security.

During President Joko Widodo's (Jokowi) tenure so far as President of Indonesia which started in 2014 to present, Indonesia has amassed considerable attention from observers worldwide. Foreign Direct Invest (FDI) into the country skyrocketed, in 2014, it amounted to USD 2.8 million, and that number jumped to USD 4.5 million in 2022.<sup>18</sup> Indonesia was seen as one of the most rapidly growing countries in the region economically. Politically it has sought to be more assertive against encroachments within maritime territories to the north while orienting itself as the Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF).<sup>19</sup> Following its free and active foreign policy, Indonesia gained a reputation as a bridge builder between nations. The

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<https://thediplomat.com/2022/10/cornerstone-no-more-the-changing-role-of-asean-in-indonesian-foreign-policy/>.

<sup>16</sup> P Hermawan, Yulius. 2011. *G-20 Research Project: The Role of Indonesia in the G-20: Background, Role and Objectives of Indonesia's Memberships*. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

<sup>17</sup> Ghifari, Deni. 2023. "QRIS Expands to Malaysia in Push for Cross-Border Payments." *The Jakarta Post*, May 8, 2023. <https://www.thejakartapost.com/business/2023/05/08/qr-is-expands-to-malaysia-in-push-for-cross-border-payments.html>.

<sup>18</sup> "Badan Pusat Statistik." n.d. <https://www.bps.go.id/indicator/13/1843/1/realisasi-investasi-penanaman-modal-luar-negeri-menurut-negara.html>.

<sup>19</sup> Parameswaran, Prashanth. 2016. "Indonesia Sinks 23 Foreign Vessels After China Spat." *The Diplomat*. April 6, 2016. <https://thediplomat.com/2016/04/indonesia-sinks-23-foreign-vessels-after-china-spat/>.

highlight of this effort manifested in June of 2022 when Jokowi visited Ukraine and Russia in an attempt to resolve the conflict between nations which has significantly damaged the global economy.<sup>20</sup> Under Jokowi, Indonesia seemed to ascend to new political and economic heights.

Despite President Widodo's administration's foreign policy taking beyond the frontiers of Southeast Asia, Indonesia's approach and commitment to the region seems unchanged. Indonesia was heavily involved in the process leading to the adoption of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) in 2019. This points to Indonesia's lingering inclination toward ASEAN.<sup>21</sup> Indonesian diplomatic weight could also be found in dire situations such as, the creation and the push for the implementation of the ASEAN Myanmar 5-point consensus.<sup>22</sup> Given the fact all of these and more were not perfectly consolidated there must have been obstacles here and there. Although these foreign policy decisions from Indonesia towards Southeast Asia requires further analysis based on their merits and results, these past foreign policy decisions make observers' anticipation for Indonesia's potential next steps to building regional security larger and more eager.

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<sup>20</sup> Ekawati, Arti. 2022. "Jokowi Visits Ukraine and Russia amid Global Food Crisis." *Dw.Com*, June 29, 2022. <https://www.dw.com/en/indonesia-jokowi-visits-ukraine-and-russia-amid-global-food-crisis/a-62303066>.

<sup>21</sup> Haerunnisa Fajrilla Sidiq, Mabda. 2022. "Cornerstone No More? The Changing Role of ASEAN in Indonesian Foreign Policy." *The Diplomat*. October 5, 2022. <https://thediplomat.com/2022/10/cornerstone-no-more-the-changing-role-of-asean-in-indonesian-foreign-policy/>.

<sup>22</sup> Haerunnisa Fajrilla Sidiq, Mabda. 2022. "Cornerstone No More? The Changing Role of ASEAN in Indonesian Foreign Policy." *The Diplomat*. October 5, 2022. <https://thediplomat.com/2022/10/cornerstone-no-more-the-changing-role-of-asean-in-indonesian-foreign-policy/>.

The dire need for security in Southeast Asia needs no more introduction. The shifting global order and the heightening tension among great powers surrounding the region in both political and economic frontier have placed Southeast Asia under the spotlight. With its significance recognized, a lot of interest from major international actors is directed towards the region. Competing interests would inevitably lead to tension. In such an environment a desire for stability and predictability through security will be a lot more sought after. One country that should be concerned and is equally capable of spearheading the effort in fostering regional security in Southeast Asia is Indonesia because of their economic, political, and diplomatic prowess. However, before questioning what Indonesia can do regarding the matter, we need to examine what it has done so far. Thus, this thesis will be dedicated to studying “BAKAMLA and TNI-AL as Indonesia’s balancing instrument for Southeast Asian regional Security 2019 -2023.”

## **1.2 Research Questions**

The significant position Indonesia holds within Southeast Asia along with its potential in general is recognized and the boundary of Southeast Asia is limited to countries that hold membership to the regional organization, ASEAN. Taking these two perceptions into consideration this thesis will limit its scope to 2 institutions under the jurisdiction of Indonesia in their performance in contributing to Southeast Asia’s regional security. These include These include *Badan Keamanan Laut* (BAKAMLA) “Maritime Security Agency” and *Tentara Nasional Indonesia* –

*Angkatan Laut* (TNI-AL) “Indonesian Navy.” The reason for their selection is as follows.

Water bodies within Southeast Asia include straits, chokepoints, and sea. These water bodies bear significant strategic importance and resources such as oil, gas natural gas. Because of this, major powers focus their interest and attention to region, followingly this breeds competition and eventually leads to threat to regional security. Amidst this great power competition middle powers are often coerced to bend to the will of major powers. With no balance of power within the structure, Southeast Asia becomes vulnerable of conflict.

BAKAMLA and TNI-AL as maritime institutions are of the adequate position and capability to reinforce regional security. While the Indonesian ministry of foreign affairs also has significant influence under its belt, it is BAKAMLA and TNI-AL that is at the forefront of area where major security concerns stem from. The situation in the waters of Southeast Asia can be largely influenced based on the management and decisions made by these maritime institutions. This is why it is important to examine the performance made by BAKAMLA and TNI-AL.

The various cooperation initiated, led and hosted from the year 2019 to 2023 by these institutions will be examined. These include joint naval exercises, signing of Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and seminars. Ultimately the thesis will seek to answer;

1. What were the significance of BAKAMLA and TNI-AL’s efforts within the context of addressing Southeast Asian regional security?



2. What were the challenges BAKAMLA and TNI-AL have faced in implementing in their efforts?

### 1.3 Research Objectives

With the research questions laid out, the objectives of the thesis are to:

1. Examine the significance of BAKAMLA and TNI-AL's efforts within the context of addressing Southeast Asian regional security?
2. Identify the challenges BAKAMLA and TNI-AL have faced in implementing their efforts.

### 1.4 Research Significance

Brining into light Indonesia's efforts to its region in terms of security, this thesis aims to provide not only the academic circle but also the public an objective view of Indonesia's synergy with its fellow ASEAN members states in matters of regional security. Additionally, the thesis also aims to shed more light for the dire need for regional security in Southeast Asia considering the increasing tension coupled with unprecedented economic growth experienced by the region. As mentioned before, Indonesia have claimed Southeast Asia and ASEAN as the cornerstone of its foreign policy. On a related note, Indonesia holds the title as the de facto leader of ASEAN. This thesis aims to explore and expose if Indonesia have been faithful to its claims and if the title still holds water within the aspect of spearheading efforts in fostering regional security.

Furthermore, this thesis aims to focus on the core challenges in creating Southeast Asian regional security. Every region must have challenges and problems that are unique to its own. This thesis will seek to uncover it, in hopes of aiding policy makers to accurately assess their decision-making process to bring them closer to creating Southeast Asian regional security while taking into consideration the obstacles identified.

### **1.5 structure of writing**

This thesis is divided into 5 chapters, the first chapter is an introduction. As seen from above, the chapter goal was to provide an understanding of the background of the topic, its urgency and significance for examination as well as the limited scope that the thesis will work with. Introduction provides research questions and objectives, concepts that is to be solved in the chapter 4.

Chapter 2, the theoretical framework is comprised of 2 major parts. Literature and theories and concepts. Literature review presents the major categories of literature that will be used as resources to answer research questions and eventually fulfill the research objectives. The pool of literature has been categorized into 1) Understanding Southeast Asia, 2) Southeast Asian regional security obstacles and 3) Indonesian foreign policy that deals with regional security. The second part of the chapter, theory and concepts will elaborate a certain IR theory that would be used to examine the topic at hand. This part will also argue why those said theory and concepts fit the best for topic.

Chapter 3 will explain the specific research approach, research method, data collection technique, and data analysis technique. Chapter 3 defines the direction in which the research will be conducted.

Chapter 4 will examine the collected data and create connections among them to produce a plot which will answer and fulfill the research questions and objectives. This focal point of the thesis will be examined through the theory and concepts mentioned in chapter 2.

Finally, chapter 5 will summarize the core findings and arguments from the research. In addition to that this chapter will be completed with the by offering recommendations for future research regarding similar topics.

