

ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to find out whether the core principle of 'ASEAN Ways,' which the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has adopted for more than four decades, will be effective and enhance the counterterrorism cooperation at present. The research also aims at ASEAN's cooperation on counterterrorism on two dimensions, intra-ASEAN and external frameworks.

Since the attack of airplanes to the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. the world has changed into the new era. The era of frightened, living side by side with the emergence of non state actor - the terrorist. Following the decisive events of 11 September 2001 in New York and Washington, D. C. and especially since the deadly bomb attacks in Bali on 12 October 2002, Southeast Asia, especially the Malay Archipelago, has come into focus as the so-called "second front" in the war against international terrorism.

The existence of an Al Qaeda-affiliated network in Southeast Asia was dramatically highlighted by the arrest in Singapore since January 2002 of 32 members of the extremist Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) group, which also operates a secret network of cells in Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines, and had planned to attack US and local targets in Singapore. Prior the grave event of September 11, ASEAN did not highlight terrorism as a topic of special importance. Indeed, there is no specific mention of terrorism either in the joint communiqué of the ASEAN Ministerial Meetings before 9/11. Instead, ASEAN includes terrorism under the topic of transnational crime, along with narcotics trafficking, arms smuggling, money laundering, and piracy.

Lastly, the research proposes policy recommendations to lessen the obstacles of cooperation on counterterrorism in ASEAN, enhancing its cooperation and development. There is however, no single 'all-encompassing' or 'big answer' on how to respond to terrorism. A range of policy instruments would be required in an

effective strategy against terrorism. These would include tactical counter-terrorism measures such as military force, intelligence, criminal law enforcement, and strategic initiatives at the political, socio-economic and ideological level. Since each of the initiatives also has their drawbacks and limitations, a balance must necessarily be maintained in pursuing each of the approaches.