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## **PEACE MOVEMENTS IN ASIA AND EUROPE: THE WAY AHEAD**

### **Peace Movement, Indonesia and ASEM: Some Issues\***

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#### **Preface**

Peace movement has long existed in Indonesia and continued to grow amidst the complexities of economic, social and political problems, which was inherited by colonialization and also the New Order regime. The emergence of peace movement might be considered as the initiatives of civilian community element in response to the violence problems occurred at domestic and international levels.

Some instances of peace movement in Indonesia include students' movement, 'baku bae' movement (local terminology representing way to resolve communal conflict in eastern regions of Indonesia), movement of caring mother's voice, movements protesting America's aggression policies against Iraq and opposing Israel's state terrorism against Palestinians. Meanwhile, the Legal Aid Institution (LBH) has so far continued to encourage peace movement by facilitating public gathering and staging rallies together with poor societies who become the clients of LBH.

The attempts to encourage peace movement have by all means sparked criticisms. They criticized the peace movement for failing to achieve maximum output due to the fact that the movement did not involve political movement to take hold of formal political power of the state institution. For instance, in some extent, the refutation of the U.S. aggressive policies would be meaningful in formal politics and diplomatic ties when the refutation statement was addressed by President Megawati Soekarnoputri, rather than, hundreds statements on such issue were addressed by a hundred activists of peace movement in Indonesia.

Those critiques surely are only one part of the major themes to discuss in this forum. However, the ultimate point is that exchanging knowledge and experience as well as building globally a joint movement will be advantageous to achieve the objectives. Cooperation among the peace movement activists across from Asia and Europe become crucial due partly to two reasons. First, many Asian countries have historical ties with European countries. Indonesia, for instance, has historical bond with Portuguese, Great Britain, and the Netherlands.

Second, from international relationship point of view, Asian countries have a lot of interests including economic and political ones with European countries and vice versa. Chris Patten, British government representative who became Hong Kong Governor (1992-1997) and now is the incumbent chairman for foreign affairs commission of the European Union, once said, "Asia should stay close and be the main agenda of Europe." Patten even added more as saying that Europe was not simply the Asia's major business partner but also co-worker in its efforts to combat terrorism, organized crimes, and drugs trafficking. Besides, European Union also becomes the countries lending remarkable loan to Asian countries.

This short article employs quantitative analysis method to elaborate some points below:

- First, the article will attempt to scrutinize whether or not the peace movement approaches and practices in Indonesia have similarities or even significant differences in response to multifarious issues both at domestic and international levels.
- Second, based on the analysis of some issues on peace and security, the writer would like to request the forum to formulate them into recommendations dealing particularly with the ASEM 5 People Forum agenda.

Despite the fact that initiatives of peace movement come out in many places in Indonesia, the article certainly puts up with limitations, particularly on the description of peace movement as some were merely taken from the media coverage. Of course, there are many other instances left unexposed by media and unwritten in English due to some reasons and constraints.

### **A. Peace Movement: Indonesia is an example**

Organizations of women, peasant and other groups might lead the initiative emergence of peace movement. Heffermehl, a writer on peace movement history, stated that the history of 'peace' that left unpublished did mean to cease to exist. The movement came out from initiatives of multi interests, position and groups. Peace movement in daily life is commonly comprehended as non-violent movement aiming to end war and minimize violence among humans that is done through pacifism, any sort of diplomacy, boycott and moral protests.

Peace movement in Indonesia is many often identified as peaceful programs and actions without violent behavior and staged by groups in community. The movement could be identified in parallel or having relation, based on issues and or based on groups or agent - in political theory term - that response to certain 'peace' issues. Due to the limitation above, the writer presented in brief some examples of peace movement in Indonesia through the article.

Peace movement led by women organization might be deemed the most progressive movement in the history of peace in Indonesia. Some instances include: the Sedar Women Movement (GERWIS) founded on June 4, 1956 - later became Indonesian Women Movement (Gerwani) in 1954 - once focused its work on the peace struggle program in the early of Indonesian independence; 'Caring Mother's Voice' was also deemed the trigger of peace movement following its rallies at the Hotel Indonesia circle compound in Jakarta on February 23, 1998. This decade another mass organization comes out, namely the Indonesian Women Coalition for Democracy and Justice (KPI). The organization is derived from 15 what they called interest groups including

indigenous people/community, professionals and academicians, domestic housewives, urban and rural poor community, peasant and fisherman community, which represents students, old women and the disabled people, informal business sectors up through lesbian and trans-gender groups.

Utilizing structural legal aid approaches, LBH tries to promote peaceful approaches and legal formal procedures to settle down structural conflicts. Moreover, LBH employs peaceful approaches to respond to repressive violence and terror against lawyers and LBH activists committed by the state apparatus and civilian militias. At further level, many LBH activists and lawyers promote approaches through dialogue and mediation to resolve problems.

Another example of peace movement responding the prolonged communal conflict in Indonesia could be observed in a so-called "Baku Bae" movement in which the opposing parties tried to resolve the communal conflict at Maluku islands. In addition, students either many often lead the peace movement in responses to the policies of the ruling government.

As of the aspect of issue on the American military aggression against Iraq and state terrorism against the Palestinians, the political stances of the Indonesian government and parliament in a way are not so much different from the Indonesian civilians' stances. As the largest Muslim country in the world, it is not quite surprising to note the fact that the government does not want to put at risk by taking different stances as those of the peace movement opposing the militaristic violence committed by the U.S. and Israel. Therefore, it seems opposing the public sentiment would jeopardize the domestic political power. On the hearing with the Parliament, Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda asserted that the Republic of Indonesia opposed any kind of one-sided action, as it was the case of the United States of America (USA) against Iraq and Israel's aggression against the Palestinians. According to Wirajuda, RI government gives its support to collective measures through the United Nations Organization.

The U.S. military aggression against Iraq invoked one of the largest protests on March 31, 2003. At the time, at least one million protesters thronged the major thoroughfares at Jalan Sudirman up through to Jalan Merdeka Selatan in Jakarta. The demonstration was led by the Indonesian Committee for Iraqis Solidarity. On the other side, the state terrorism resorted by Israel against the Palestinians has also many times sparked public protests. Following the death of Asyshahid Syekh Ahmed Yassen, the Palestine's HAMAS spiritual leader, mass organizations spontaneously staged rallies to protest the aggression.

Meanwhile, the Indonesian government and parliament showed its political stances by their political statements and actions. The Indonesian parliament took part actively in the IPU summit in Mexico City on April 20, 2004. On this summit, the Indonesian parliament had roles and endorsed the adoption of resolution on sanction given to the Israeli government concerning with its boundary marker development to separate it from Palestine. At domestic level, the House of Representatives' Commission I even condemned the coercive policies of the Israeli government that had caused the death of Palestinian leaders. The Indonesian government, on the other hand, approved the legal stance of the International Court in Den Haag on July 9, 2004 declaring the Israeli's development of boundary marker illegal action.

## **B. ASEM and the Indonesian Government**

Some cases worthy to discuss further and to resolve include:

- **Military Junta in Burma**

In the context of ASEM, it would be better for the peace movement activists to continuously support campaigning against the Burmese ruling SLORC regime. The European Union in a way takes strong stance in response to the Myanmar proposition to join the ASEM. According to Patten, in addition to arsenal embargo, Myanmar should also bear a number of sanctions including travel ban issued by Europe and letting the Myanmar financial assets prone to military junta's misuse frozen. However, Patten in a seminar in Jakarta recently declined the statement that the European Union had pushed ASEAN in such a way to ban the participation of Myanmar in the upcoming ASEM in Hanoi, Vietnam. Meanwhile chief of the European Union's Foreign Affairs Policy Javier Solana said that he did not at all impressed with the statements of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers issued by the end of the 37th annual summit. The statement concerning with Myanmar was deemed too moderate.

ASEM has so far yet to accept three ASEAN countries, Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos, to join in. The European Union would only accept Cambodia and Laos but not Myanmar. On the other hand, Japan, China and South Korea argued that all the three countries should be accepted by ASEM as one package. The Asian countries either addressed argument that they would accept 13 countries registering themselves as members of the European Union when they were officially acknowledged to be members. The ASEAN leaders on the Conference Summit in Singapore in 2000 obviously took strong stance requiring that Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia should be acknowledged together at the same time unconditionally.

It was interesting to note the Indonesian Foreign Ministry's speaker, Marty Natalegawa. He once expressed a statement dealing with the European Union's stance to refute Myanmar in the ASEM. Natalegawa said that the European Union should have accepted the three ASEAN countries as it would be the case with its intention to accept 10 new countries in ASEM. For the reason, as to Natalegawa, the European Union's negative response to Myanmar was not acceptable. In response to the European Union's stance, Natalegawa stated, "ASEM is not deemed a block-to-block meeting in such a way that the upcoming new members of the European Union would not automatically take them into ASEM".

- **Human Rights versus Other Vested Interests**

In practice, promotion and protection of human rights cannot be separated from other political and economical interest. In this context, the instance was the issue on revocation of arsenal embargo for China. France, supported by Germany, once proposed in Straffan, Ireland, the idea to revoke the ban for selling weaponry to China. However, Denmark, Swede and the Netherlands opposed the proposal. The three European countries thought that China should have to better human rights condition in its country. The point was that economic and political consideration commonly put aside the argument of human rights fulfillment. The U.S. even supported the European Union policy to turn down the revocation of arsenal embargo. It might be said that the support was much for political and geo-political considerations rather than human rights. China should go through the weaponry ban following the tragedy at Tiananmen Square in 1989. Another example is the fact that economic bilateral ties between Indonesia and Europe was not

only giving benefit but also causing problems. The European Union gives out not simply grant but also lends loan. Deputy of Coordinating Minister for Economy on International Cooperation James Hutagalung said that Indonesia had ever used ASEM Trust Fund I standing by more or less US\$ 7.5 million. Hutagalung explained that the facility was deemed grant that served as the reserved fund prepared by ASEM and administered by the World Bank on the purpose of helping the Asian countries to cope with financial crises. However it brought about problems when the grant was never dealt with any encouragement to promote human rights fulfillment in Indonesia and public accountability report on the spending of the fund, including the fulfillment of economic, social and cultural rights.

It is important to underline that the peace movement in Indonesia once has raised worry among the advanced countries in fear of their softening measures on the arsenal embargo to the Indonesian military. It seems to me that the plummeting protest of the international community against the Indonesian government -if compared with those given in 1990s-has left gross violence of human rights unresolved completely.

- **ASEAN Security Community**

It is of the importance to observe the development of the adoption proposal of ASEAN Security Community action plan recommended by Indonesia. The ASEAN's Foreign Ministers on their 37th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM) in Jakarta agreed to recommend a draft of action plan to be approved in the upcoming 10th ASEAN Summit in Laos in next November. The action plan includes the principles of the improvement of ASEAN security and political cooperation that are elaborated in five scopes, namely political development, formation of relationship norms among the neighborhood countries, conflict anticipation, conflict resolution, and post-conflict peace development.

### **Closing Note: Learning from the European Peace Movement**

Is some European Union countries' stance to refute their supports against the U.S. aggression policies one of the effects of peace movement among the civil community at each country? Or, is it any other determinant factor? The writer believed that there was correlation among the community movement at every country.

The other lesson worthy to note is about the support of peace movement solidarity for the struggles for democracy and human rights worldwide including Indonesia. The release of political prisoners and political inmates in Indonesia was part of effects of the solidarity factor. In this context, a workshop for the European and Asian activists serves an essential medium to re-examine threatening facts for peace and to discuss necessary responses to cope with the problems. Therefore, we would like to request your continuous solidarity to press on the Indonesian Government to stop gross human rights violation in Indonesia, especially in Aceh and West Papua.

Thank your very much indeed.