



# AP R2P

Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect

P: +61 7 3346 645 • E: [r2pinfo@uq.edu.au](mailto:r2pinfo@uq.edu.au)

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## SPOTLIGHT ON R2P

### Second Indonesian National Dialogue on R2P and Atrocities Prevention

The Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (APR2P) and its partner organisation the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) organised the Second National Dialogue on R2P and Atrocities Prevention in Jakarta on 15 August 2017. The dialogue is a follow-up to the first meeting held in Jakarta on 15-16 August 2016 on implementing R2P in Indonesia. Around 30 local participants from several government institutions, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, the Indonesian commissioners for ASEAN Commission for Women and Children (ACWC), and academics from several universities and scholars from relevant think-tank and civil society organisation, such as The Habibie Center and Human Rights Working Group (HRWG) attended the meeting.

The dialogue started with a public seminar in the morning with a keynote speech by Ambassador Dr. Makarim Wibisono on “Regional Resilience and R2P: Mainstreaming Atrocities Prevention in ASEAN’s Community Building Agenda” where representatives from the foreign embassies in Jakarta and the media were also present. This was followed by a presentation by Ambassador Pou Sothirak, Executive Director of the Cambodia Institute for Cooperation and Peace and Cambodia R2P Focal Point on “Regional Resilience and R2P: Cambodia’s Role in Promoting Atrocities Prevention in ASEAN.” The last session in the public seminar focused on “Building National Resilience for Atrocities Prevention: Exploring Modalities in Managing the Rise of Extremism in the Southeast Asia”, with Mr. Mar-

zuki Darusman as one of the main speakers.

In the afternoon session, dialogue focused on the following issues: 1) identifying the relevant risk factors and developing early warning system; 2) developing a national action plan on implementing R2P, including the creation of a domestic network of advocates for promoting atrocities prevention; and 3) appointing a national focal point. As well, the second dialogue examined the role of Indonesia in advancing atrocities prevention in ASEAN in light of critical issues affecting the region, such as the rise of extremism, protection of minority groups, and the Rohingya issue in Myanmar.

In his welcome remarks, Dr. Philips J. Vermonte, Executive Director of CSIS, expressed his Centre’s full

support toward the initiative to establish the national focal point and national action plan to implement R2P. Specifically, he expressed hope the dialogue might identify some of the achievements and existing gaps in preventing future atrocities in Indonesia and in the region. He underlined the importance of Indonesia learning from the experiences and achievements made by other countries such as Cambodia, the only country in the Southeast Asia region to have appointed a national focal point for R2P.



**Dr. Philips J. Vermonte, Executive Director of CSIS**

In his remarks, Dr. Bradley Armstrong, Acting Deputy Head of Mission in the Australian Embassy in Jakarta, conveyed the Australian Government's strong commitment to supporting efforts to implement R2P at the global, regional, and national levels, including support for national dialogues on atrocities prevention across the region.



**Dr. Bradley Armstrong, Acting Deputy Head of Mission, the Australian Embassy in Jakarta**

Dr Armstrong stressed the importance of appointing a national focal point for R2P, as well as developing a national risk assessment mechanism to prevent atrocities. In the Southeast Asian context, he also recognised the important role of ASEAN in helping to build domestic resilience among its member states in order to address risk factors for atrocities.

In his response, Dr. Noel Morada, APR2P Director for Regional Diplomacy, thanked CSIS and the Australian government for supporting the second dialogue in Jakarta. He also provided a brief background to the Indonesian national dialogue on R2P and underscored the significance of the meeting as part of constituency building and the promotion of R2P norms in the region.

### **Public Seminar on Regional Resilience and R2P**

In his keynote speech, Ambassador Dr. Makarim Wibisono, who served as a member of the HLAP on Mainstreaming R2P in Southeast Asia, underscored the strong linkage between the R2P principle and the ASEAN vision creating a “caring and sharing” community, particularly under the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community pillar. He pointed out that initially, there was a degree of scepticism and discomfort in the region on the R2P principle – which is often misperceived as a pretext for external intervention (linked also to ‘humanitarian intervention’) and therefore a major challenge to state sovereignty. However, given there is now greater concern over the increasing trends toward mass atrocities in different parts of the world, states in the region have started to reconsider their views on R2P in order to prevent atrocities from happening in this part of the world.

Dr. Wibisono proposed several recommendations, both at the regional and national levels. At the regional level, the recommendations to ASEAN include the following:

1. raising awareness and public knowledge on R2P;
2. developing and strengthening regional capacity for early-warning system and assessment through existing institutions, mechanisms, and relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies;
3. pushing for incorporation of prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity into future agenda of AICHR;
4. supporting relevant civil society efforts to promote human rights protection and advance the norms and principles of atrocities prevention;
5. considering the appointment of a senior level official to become the ASEAN focal point for R2P; and
6. for the ASEAN Secretariat to facilitate discussions to help national authorities of each member state in establishing the national plan of action in implementing R2P.

At the national level, he proposed the following:

1. continuing the national dialogue on R2P and atrocities prevention; and
2. encouraging ratification of international treaties related to the four atrocity crimes, particularly the Rome Statute.



**Ambassador Dr. Makarim Wibisono, Member of the HLAP on Mainstreaming R2P in Southeast Asia**



He also argued that R2P is not harmful to ASEAN or to Indonesia. During the discussion after his keynote speech, Dr. Wibisono stated that R2P elements have actually been embedded in many of Indonesia's national instruments, such as the national constitution and the National Human Rights Plan of Action. Nevertheless, the specific reference to R2P principle should be explicitly made in these instruments so that various agencies and institutions could have clear direction and immediately follow up to promote R2P better at the national level. Reflecting from the incremental process of inserting human rights as a new ASEAN norm, Dr. Wibisono argued that similar process could actually be adopted for embracing and implementing R2P principle, to make it as part of ASEAN life.

## Regional Resilience and Cambodia's Role in Promoting R2P in ASEAN



### Ambassador Pou Sothirak, Cambodian National Focal Point R2P

In his presentation during the public seminar, Ambassador Pou Sothirak, Cambodian National Focal Point for R2P, highlighted the following from which other ASEAN members could consider in implementing R2P at home:

- There was a strong political willingness and commitment from the top leadership in Cambodia and this is a determining key that contributed to the successful efforts so far by Cambodia to appoint a national focal point and

deliver various R2P-promotion activities. The Government's commitment to preventing the reoccurrence of such atrocities is demonstrated by ratification of the Rome Statute in 2000 and subsequent establishment of the Khmer Rouge Tribunal and efforts to bring the perpetrators of atrocities to trial.

- Despite these achievements in Cambodia, prevention of atrocities remains important as no society is immune from atrocities. It is extremely crucial to encourage the younger generation to learn and understand their country's history of past atrocities as part of the prevention effort.
- There is willingness on the part of Cambodia to serve as a role model for other countries in the region, specifically through sharing its experiences and lessons learned in dealing with past atrocities and in preventing future atrocities with those countries that are interested in promoting R2P. It is also keen to take greater responsibility, especially to push for ASEAN to play a bigger role. Specifically, Cambodia could: a) take the initiative to organise an ASEAN-wide regional dialogue on mass atrocities prevention; b) encourage ASEAN to create a network of R2P focal points in the region to conduct assessment of risk factors; c) develop a national action plan template for implementing R2P; and d) facilitate educational training and research on R2P.

- He also underscored the crucial role of think-tanks, such as ASEAN-ISIS, to encourage the ASEAN Secretariat to mainstream R2P in its ASEAN's agenda. Think-tanks can provide policy recommendation to the government, which is the primary stakeholder in implementing R2P.

Aware of the challenges faced by Indonesia in implementing R2P, Ambassador Sothirak suggested Indo-

nesia follow Cambodia's example to create a "Friends of R2P" group to increase awareness of R2P and encourage more discussion among stakeholders.

## Atrocities Prevention and Managing the Rise of Extremism in the Southeast Asia

In the last session a panel of speakers focused on the importance of building national resilience for atrocities prevention. They presented ideas on possible modalities in managing the rise of extremism in Southeast Asia.

Mr. Marzuki Darusman ( photo page one ) who has just recently appointed as the Chair and Member of the UN Human Rights Council Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar, elaborated on the emergence of extremism and how transnational migration can undermine state sovereignty. He also argued that preventing mass atrocities and containing the rise of violent extremism, required identifying the dimensions of violence in the Southeast Asia region. The first dimension is that violence is historic. It is systematic and does not occur randomly. Secondly, violence can be state-sourced, in which the act of violence is legitimised by the state and society. Lastly, the emergence of violence can be communal related, where it defuses the responsibility and accountability.

In the context of religious extremism in Indonesia, the rise of Islamic ideology had now reached a level of serious concern largely as a result of the government and the broader community failing to provide a counter-narrative to mitigate the problem. It was critical Islamic ideology does not grow further into a movement that espouses violence. Therefore, the government needed to develop counter-narratives as an effective way to deal with the rise of extremism in the region.



**Mr. Rafendi Djamin, Executive Director of HRWG-Indonesia**

Mr. Rafendi Djamin, Executive Director of HRWG-Indonesia, argued that the rise of religious extremism was nothing new in Southeast Asia where relations between the religious majority and minority groups are not always harmonious. He specifically pointed to the inability of the Indonesian Government to effectively protect the religious minorities from acts of discrimination, intolerance, and violence by some elements of the majority. Ensuring the protection of freedom of religion still faces many challenges both at the national and regional levels, despite certain guarantees provided in the national constitution as well as various ASEAN instruments. He argued there is a need to develop R2P regional and national action plans by modifying from the existing action plan on human rights at both levels.



**Ms. Nava Nuraniyah, Senior Researcher from the Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC)**

In her presentation, Ms. Nava Nuraniyah, Senior Researcher from the Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC), elaborated on the pres-

ence of some extremist groups in Indonesia (as well as in the region) who are supporters to ISIS and how these groups use social media to aid their recruitment. She also highlighted the increasing role of women in extremist groups in the region. The challenge to dealing with this particular threat, according to Ms Nuraniyah, lies primarily in the mismatch between the program created under the framework of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) and the data to justify the creation of such programs. The lack of valid data and analysis has led to the wrong target group receiving assistance in the CVE mechanism. For example, she showed how most of the CVE agenda is directed towards Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*) on the assumption that these students are more susceptible to radicalisation. However, based on evidence or empirical data, the majority of people who are detained due to radical acts went to public schools and had never attended *pesantren*. Finally, she explained various reasons why people are interested in joining extremist groups. Based on her research, the most influential factor is the social interactions people are exposed to, such as persuasion to become part of a larger 'family' composed of those who are alienated in their society. The early identification of radical and extremist ideologies often went unnoticed by family members and inner circle relations. She therefore argued that long-term preventive measures should include engagement strategies with susceptible families, communities, and schools in order to counter radicalisation and extremist ideologies that may appeal to the younger generation and other vulnerable groups.

**Towards a National Action Plan for Atrocities Prevention : Perspectives from Stakeholders**

In the afternoon session, participants discussed ideas for implementing R2P in Indonesia by focusing on developing a national action plan. Dr. Makarim Wibisono and

Ms. Rahimah Abdurrahim from The Habibie Center highlighted the failure of the Indonesian Government to follow up on the implementation of R2P at the national level, as well as to encourage similar action at the regional level. Both speakers emphasised the primary responsibility of the government as state actor (which also include parliament) to take up the initiative of promoting R2P with civil society limited to playing a supporting role to the government's efforts. The speakers posed the key question of whether the existing strategy to promote R2P implementation in Indonesia is sufficient or is there an urgent need to develop new strategy?

In the ensuing discussion, the following recommendations were made by participants as part of promoting the implementation of R2P in Indonesia:

- Inclusion of R2P-related materials in school and university curriculum, particularly in subjects related to Human Rights, International Law, and International Relations.
- The adoption of the existing instrument/s to identify the risk factors to prevent atrocities, including the National Violence Monitoring System (NVMS) developed previously by The Habibie Center to monitor conflict potential as part of an early-warning mechanism, which can be slightly modified to also monitor potential signs of atrocity risks in Indonesia. Unfortunately, there has been a significant setback since a government institution has decided to stop using the early-warning system without explanation.
- The urgent need to conduct a preliminary study or analysis mapping existing national mechanisms and instruments in Indonesia that are useful to indicate R2P elements are actually embedded in policies and government institutions in Indonesia even without external influence. Such an effort is necessary to mitigate resistance especially among different gov-

ernment agencies to the R2P principle. Furthermore, sustained policy research and analysis of local risk factors should be conducted in parallel to the mapping exercise since no country is immune from the risk factors related to mass atrocities. The framework of analysis for atrocity crimes developed by the UN and the R2P toolkit by the ICRtoP are both useful tools to assist in these mapping and risk factors identification exercises.

- Participants were divided on whether the term R2P should be used in the promotion of the principle in Indonesia. Those who advocate for avoiding specific reference to R2P argue that this would help mitigate strong resistance. However, those who are in favour of using R2P argue that an absence of such reference will potentially dilute the focus away from the R2P, and consequently weaken the commitment and support by relevant stakeholders in Indonesia to strengthen its implementation.
- Ultimately, the primary responsibility to take the initiative in implementing R2P lies with the government. Therefore, there is an urgent need to solve the different understandings and misconceptions about the three pillars of R2P, particularly Pillar 3 since it has been perceived as championing external intervention in dealing with domestic problems, which then serves as the main source of resistance against the principle.
- All participants and partner institutions supported the idea of continuing this dialogue, especially with the government officials as well as with other stakeholders in Indonesia. It is expected that a similar exercise could be extended further to engage more relevant government officials on how to build consensus in implementing R2P in the near future. The Centre will continue working

with CSIS Indonesia and other local partners in convening a follow-up national dialogue next year. It will also concentrate on implementing the recommendations generated in the second dialogue, particularly to support a study to help frame continued engagement with the government on promoting and implementing R2P in Indonesia.

**Dr Noel Morada**  
Regional Director  
APR2P



**Ms Lina Alexandra**  
Researcher APR2P



**ASIA PACIFIC CENTRE FOR  
THE RESPONSIBILITY TO  
PROTECT**

Building 39A

School of Political Science  
& International Studies

The University of Queensland,  
St Lucia Brisbane QLD 4072

**P +61 7 3346 6435**

**E: [r2pinfo@uq.edu.au](mailto:r2pinfo@uq.edu.au)**

**W: [www.r2pasiapacific.org](http://www.r2pasiapacific.org)**



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