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TWO DECADES OF ASYMMETRICAL THREATS TO NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY IN ASIA PACIFIC AND CHALLENGES FOR INDONESIA (2003-2023)

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Abstrak: Keamanan non-tradisional (NTS) merupakan ancaman serius bagi negara-negara di kawasan Asia Pasifik, termasuk Indonesia. Ancaman NTS dapat berupa terorisme, kejahatan transnasional terorganisir, bencana alam, perubahan iklim, dan lain-lain. Ancaman NTS seringkali bersifat asimetrik, yaitu melibatkan aktor non-negara yang memiliki sumber daya terbatas. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji urgensi dan tantangan keamanan NTS di Asia Pasifik, serta tantangan bagi Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode studi literatur untuk menganalisis penelitian-penelitian sebelumnya yang relevan dengan masalah yang dibahas. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ancaman NTS semakin meningkat di kawasan Asia Pasifik. Ancaman NTS dapat mengganggu stabilitas keamanan dan pembangunan di kawasan ini. Indonesia juga rentan terhadap ancaman NTS, terutama ancaman terorisme siber, kejahatan transnasional terorganisir, dan bencana alam. Untuk mengatasi tantangan keamanan NTS, Indonesia perlu meningkatkan kapasitas pertahanan siber, memperkuat kerja sama internasional, dan meningkatkan kesadaran masyarakat tentang pentingnya keamanan NTS.

Kata Kunci: Keamanan Non-Tradisional, Asia Pasifik, Indonesia, Ancaman Asimetrik

Abstract: Non-traditional security (NTS) poses a significant threat to countries in the Asia-Pacific region, including Indonesia. NTS threats encompass a range of potential dangers, including terrorism, transnational organized crime, natural catastrophes, climate change, and other similar risks. NTS threats frequently exhibit asymmetry, meaning they involve non-state entities who possess restricted resources. This study uses a method of literature study to analyze previous research that is relevant to the problem discussed. Research results show that NTS threats are rising in the Asia-Pacific region. NTS threats could disrupt security stability and development in the region. Indonesia is also vulnerable to NTS threats, especially the



threat of cyber terrorism, transnational organized crime, and natural disasters. To address the NTS security challenges, Indonesia needs to enhance its cyber defense capabilities, strengthen international cooperation, and raise public awareness of the importance of NTS safety.

Keywords: Non-Traditional Security, Asia-Pacific, Indonesia, Asymmetric Threat

INTRODUCTION

Traditional security, which focuses on protecting nations from military threats, has been the dominant paradigm for centuries. Nevertheless, the current era creates a significant shift with the emergence of non-traditional security threats (NTSs), challenging the foundations of the concept (Biba, 2016). NTS threats emerge from a variety of non-military sources such as climate change, resource shortages, infectious diseases, natural disasters, irregular migration, hunger, human trafficking, drug trafficking, and transnational crime. Awareness of the rising threat of NTS gave rise to the concept of human security, which emphasizes the protection of human rights and the well-being of individuals. More than just a state issue, human security embraces the social and individual dimensions. Indonesia, as a country in the Asia-Pacific region, is susceptible to a variety of NTS threats (Hameiri and Jones, 2015). The most serious NTS threats to Indonesia include:

- 1. **Natural threats:** Indonesia, with its vulnerability to natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, and droughts, faces significant material losses and casualties.
- Economic Threats and Development: Economic and development challenges, including poverty, unemployment, and inequality, are potential triggers of instability and social conflict.
- 3. **Social and Political Threats:** Social and political challenges, such as ethnic, religious, and cultural conflicts, terrorism, and transnational crime, can disrupt national stability and security.



To address these challenges, a comprehensive and adaptive security strategy must be able to address both traditional and non-traditional security threats simultaneously. The comprehensive security strategy (Hsiung, 2008) should include the following measures:

- 1. Enhancing Defense and Security Capacity: An approach that responds to traditional security threats by ensuring military readiness and the national security system.
- 2. International cooperation: It is a critical step in tackling the NTS crossborder threat. We need to enhance global collaboration to jointly understand, prevent, and respond to threats.
- 3. Increased Public Awareness: Educate the public about the importance of national security and the negative impact of NTS threats. Public awareness becomes the basis for active participation in protection and prevention efforts.

Therefore, to tackle the threat posed by NTS, Indonesia must implement the following measures: a. Public awareness-raising: This involves public education and campaigns that aim to raise public awareness about the various threats of the NTS and their role in security; b. Strengthening Government Capacity: This involves developing and strengthening the infrastructure and resources necessary to respond to various threats, including rapid responses to natural disasters and economic problems; and c. International Cooperation: Given the transnational nature of the threats, Indonesia should actively engage in international cooperation for the exchange of information, technology, and resources in response to and prevention of NTS threats.

The non-traditional security threat (NTS) in the Asia-Pacific region brings challenges that involve a variety of aspects, from climate change to terrorism, which are cross-border and asymmetric. These threats create a context in which countries in the region need to formulate security strategies that face not only traditional threats but also complex NTS challenges. (Prayuda, 2022). Indonesia, for example, faces natural, economic, social, and political threats, all of which require a holistic and adaptive approach. This includes increased defense and security capacity to deal with traditional threats, international cooperation in dealing with non-



traditional threats, and increased public awareness of the importance of national security. In the Asia-Pacific regional context, where the threat of NTS involves non-state actors with limited resources, cooperation and joint responses are needed. These include the establishment of common norms, joint emergency response plans, and the strengthening of regional institutions. This joint effort defines a more holistic and coordinated approach to security in the region. By understanding the urgency and complexity of the NTS threat, countries in the Asia-Pacific can work together to protect their collective security and well-being.

METHODS

The study adopted a literature study approach to investigating the urgencies and non-traditional security challenges (NTS) in the Asia-Pacific region, with a focus on the Asia Pacific in particular on Indonesia. This approach was chosen to provide an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of threats that are asymmetrical and involve non-state actors with limited resources.

Research steps:

- Identification of Relevant Literature: collection of literature from academic sources, government reports, and international publications related to nontraditional security in Asia Pacific. Focus on previous research that has direct relevance to NTS security issues and challenges faced by countries in the region.
- Literature analysis: evaluation and critical analysis of the literature collected
 to understand trends, patterns, and developments of NTS threats in the
 region. The focus is on asymmetric threats and their potential influence on
 security stability and development in the Asia-Pacific region.
- 3. Emergency Studies and Challenges for Indonesia: Examining literature on cyber terrorism, transnational organized crime, and natural disasters provides a comprehensive understanding of Indonesia's security situation. Evaluation of Indonesia's vulnerability to NTS threats and their impact on national security.
- 4. Comparison and Conclusion: Comparison of research findings with a focus on threats and challenges faced by other countries in Asia-Pacific. To



conclude on the urgency of dealing with NTS threats, by making recommendations for strengthening cyber defence capabilities, international cooperation, and raising public awareness in Indonesia

Through these measures, the research aims to contribute to an in-depth understanding of the security complexity of NTS in Asia-Pacific, in Indonesia. The results of the research are expected to provide a basis for the development of effective security strategies that respond to dynamic threats in the region.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The world's increasingly complex and dynamic development has brought about a significant shift in the pattern of threats to national security. Traditional military security threats persist, but non-traditional security threats are increasing. A variety of non-traditional "non-conventional security" (NTS) threats, also known as "non-military security threats," "non-conventional security threats," or "asymmetric security threats," now surround Asia-Pacific. In the face of increasingly complex world developments, the pattern of threats to national security has also significantly changed significantly. Traditional military dimensions no longer limit security threats; instead, non-traditional threats are increasingly taking center stage. Discussions on the evolution of security threats in the Asia-Pacific region, which is facing a variety of non-traditional challenges known as "nontraditional security" (NTS), "non-military security threat," "not conventional security menace," or "asymmetric security threat," are in line with the highlighting of major players in the region such as the United States, China, Japan, and Indonesia. In line with the changing security paradigm, the main emphasis is on identifying and detailing the non-traditional threats that are encircling Asia-Pacific.

Asia-Pacific, as a region full of diversity and complexity, is facing a range of decisive dynamics in economic, political, and security development. Regional economic growth is among the most dynamic in the world, according to data. According to the Economic Report 2023 (IMF, 2023), the growth of gross domestic product (GDP) in Asia-Pacific continues to experience a significant boost, backed



by the contributions of a number of member countries such as China, Japan, and the ASEAN countries. Despite collaborative efforts, such as economic cooperation through ASEAN and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), regional tensions remain a dominant issue. Geopolitical competition between the major powers, China and the United States, plays an important role in shaping the dynamics of regional relations. This competition is not only political and military but also involves economic and technological aspects. Emerging geopolitical issues in Asia-Pacific include territorial tensions in the South China Sea, regional military strength growth, and the dynamics of multilateral diplomacy. This context creates serious challenges in achieving regional stability and cross-country cooperation.

While highlighting the influential geopolitical issues, it's important to acknowledge the dynamic shift of forces occurring. China, with its rapid economic growth and military power, is becoming an increasingly central player in the region. Meanwhile, the United States, while retaining an important role, faces the challenge of maintaining its dominance amid increasingly complex competition. Looking at such a dynamic Asia-Pacific strategic environment, the study aims to explore and analyse the emerging non-traditional security challenges in the region (Goh, 2008), especially those of an asymmetrical nature. Through the Enhanced SWOT approach, the study will present a comprehensive overview of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing the Asia-Pacific, guiding readers to better understand the complexity and dynamics that exist.

His use of the term "security" in this context aims to draw global attention to the issue, given its immense potential for human victimization, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. We cannot help but notice that in the last 50 years, within the framework of the globalization process, the dynamic growth of the world's societies has been remarkable, coloured by a variety of innovations in all fields. However, we remain aware that, particularly since Asia's economic crisis escaped the global COVID-19 pandemic, the openness, interdependence, and transnational nature of issues have awakened the world community, posing a threat to both national security and human security (She, 2021). The last example is the global economic crisis that hit the world as a result of the behaviour of multi-national corporations in the United States and China that behave far from business ethics. We perceive



the conduct of MNCs in the United State and China as an asymmetric threat to the global economy. The main focus is on the geopolitical and economic aspects, as well as their impact on global stability.

- a) Geopolitical aspects: The largest technology companies in the United State and China are competing for global market dominance, creating uncertainty about market dominance and technology security.
- b) Economy and fragmentation: The MNC, with full government support, decided to attract investment from several countries in response to geopolitical tensions. This created fragmentation in the global supply chain, triggering recessions in the affected countries.
- c) Asymmetrical threats: The economic and political power of multinational corporations (MNCs) makes it challenging for them to directly respond with a balanced economic or political strategy.
- d) Impact on global stability: A sudden change in MNC policy creates uncertainty that encroaches on global financial and trade markets. Market volatility is detrimental to global economic stability and stresses the need for a coordinated response.

This reflects the reality that the action of the United State-China MNC, if supported by its government, could pose a serious threat to global economic stability. International authorities must coordinate their response with great economic and political strength to address the imbalances that could pose an asymmetrical threat to global economic stability.

Increasing non-traditional security threats have posed new challenges to countries around the world, including Indonesia. Indonesia, as a country located in the dynamic Asia-Pacific region, is vulnerable to a variety of non-traditional security threats, such as terrorism, transnational crime, natural disasters, and climate change (UN, 2022). The latest incidents in Indonesia of cyber terrorism directed to damage the symbols of the state by radical groups that spread hoax, disinformation, and misinformation following the social media whispers can be said to be a synergy (hybrid) between symmetric and asymmetric threats.



We are aware that security issues have always been dominated by traditional concerns such as sovereignty, political and military independence, and defense to regional security. Nevertheless, the reality is the emergence of new challenges such as threats to health (communicable diseases such as the global pandemic of COVID-19, SARS, bird flu, and others), unemployment, poverty, economic crises, natural disasters (tsunami, earthquake, flood), environmental degradation, irregular human migration (Prayuda et al., 2022), competition for natural resources, transnational organized crime, illegal and drug trafficking, terrorism, and economic interdependence, which are very dangerous to both the state and humanity. Kofi A. Annan's view of six common threat groups (Annan, 2005) is a guide in understanding human security. Socio-economic threats, inter- and domestic conflicts, weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, and transnational organized crime are becoming dual challenges that require a two-dimensional approach. Finally, in an era of globalization where threat boundaries are becoming more vague, international cooperation and security policy integration are critical.

Non-traditional security threats have unique characteristics that distinguish them from traditional security threats. In general, these threats are cross-border, not easily predictable, and often difficult to identify in sufficient time. Another peculiarity is its ability to spread and have widespread impact, not only limited to the security dimension but also extending to the economic, social, and cultural sectors. In the Asia-Pacific context, which is the stage for various geopolitical and geo-economic dynamics, adding a special perspective on the strategic environment and key challenges in the region becomes essential. Quoting the latest data on economic, political, and security developments in Asia-Pacific (UN & RSIS, 2023), as well as compiling a list of major challenges such as terrorism, climate change, and natural disasters, enables us to understand more comprehensively the complexity of asymmetric threats in the region. Similarly, it is important to examine Indonesia's response to these challenges, both in domestic policy and in the context of joint regional or international initiatives.



This has fundamentally altered the human perspective, revealing that security threats are not solely associated with geopolitical concepts such as deterrence, power balancing, and military strategy for defense against external military attacks, which were previously the exclusive domain of security policy. Thus, the narrow definition of security began to face scrutiny. When a larger party responds to deadly resistance from the smaller party with limited involvement, asymmetrical conflicts often come to an end. In a multilateral context, asymmetry forms a pattern of uncertainty and attention. In the global system, the way the hegemons treat their people is like invisible sand that moves under their feet as they stare at their opponents. Since 2008, the United State has maintained its superiority but not dominated.

Managing asymmetric relationships in a multimodal world determines the importance of power in this era. In this phenomenon, structural asymmetry occurs when there is a strong status imbalance between the parties. The source of the conflict lies in the structure of conflicting relationships, which makes this type of asymmetry very special and distinguishes it from other asymmetries. In a conflict with structural asymmetry, the real goal of the struggle is to change the structure of the conflicting relations. Usually, one side tries to make a change while the other side avoids it. One side may be a government agency and the other is a nongovernmental organization, but this is not always the case (Pfetsch, 2011). For example, structural asymmetries are characteristic of most "conflicts concerning access and possession of land," and these conflicts were common in agricultural societies in the past, where 45% of the population struggled to make a living (Annan, 2005). Structural asymmetry plays a major role in the world. In cases like this, both competing parties are non-governmental organizations, but one of them is often supported by state agencies. Another typical case is the colonial liberation conflict. The relationship between the invaders and the colonists is at the heart of the conflict. In this type of conflict, one party is the state and the other is non-state actors, such as political organizations or liberation movements.



Within the national security framework, facing threats is no longer limited to the traditional military dimension. Security issues, both traditional and nontraditional, are increasingly demanding an integrated holistic approach. A profound understanding of these two overlapped or intertwined categories of threats creates difficulties in responding to them, especially in the context of dynamic democracies. Non-traditional threats are transnational in nature, requiring intergovernmental cooperation to address them. There are five categories of threats that undermine global security. First, natural hazards, including epidemics of disease, natural disasters, and the impact of climate change (Muladi, 2008). Second, threats to the economy and development, including the negative impact of globalization on social solidarity and democracy. Ethnic conflict, terrorism, and organized crime represent the third category of social and political threats. The fourth, on global warming, emphasized the importance of international cooperation for climate change mitigation and adaptation. Fifth, in the digital age, media convergence has become a significant phenomenon, with asymmetric warfare using media to influence public opinion.

The importance of understanding this complexity is embodied in a state of "overlapping" overlap between traditional and non-traditional security. In many cases, "soft security" and "hard security" are synergistic and interacting. Terrorism, naval raids, and extremism are real examples of non-traditional and traditional security coming side by side, creating dilemmas related to military involvement in a democratic atmosphere. Military Operations Beyond War/ Operasi Militer Selain Perang (OMSP) is an adaptive response to these overlapped threats (NIC, 2015). According to Undang-Undang No. 34 of 2004, OMSP enables military involvement in non-war situations such as counter-terrorism, armed insurgency, and assistance in natural disasters. Within the national framework, the National Security Council/ Dewan Keamanan Nasional (DKN), which is now "half" in charge of the National Resistance Council/ Dewan Ketahanan Nasional (Wantannas), has a strategic role. In accordance with Article 15 of Undang-Undang No. 3 of 2002, the DKN advised the President to integrate domestic, foreign, military, and other departmental policies; once again, the reality of the task is still under Wantannas (Unamsila dan



Edwar, 2023). This is an important step in bridging the differences between TNI and POLRI.

The analysis below uses IFAS-EFAS along with an enhanced SWOT;

Internal Factor Analysis Summary (IFAS) and External Factor Analysis Summary (EFAS) tables are generally used in strategic analysis. Since we lack quantitative figures, we will create this table using the elements highlighted in the discussion material above.

Tabel 1. IFAS

Internal Factor	Weight	Rating	Score
	(1-5)	(1-5)	
Media Convergence	4	4	16
The role of media convergence in	3	4	12
the Asymmetric War			
National security cooperation	4	3	12
National Security Council	3	4	12
/Dewan Keamanan Nasional (DKN)			
Military Operations Beyond War/	4	3	12
Operasi Militer Selain Perang (OMSP)			

Total Skor IFAS: 64

Tabel 2. EFAS

External Factors	Weight	Rating	Score
	(1-5)	(1-5)	
Asymmetric Threats (cyber	4	4	16
attacks, information warfare)			
Non-Traditional Threats	4	3	12
(pandemics, climate change)			
Media Convergence in	3	4	12
Asymmetric Warfare			
International Cooperation and	4	4	16
Human Security			

Total Skor EFAS: 56



Analysis:

- The IFAS and EFAS Total Scores provide an overall picture of internal and external conditions.
- If the IFAS Total Score is higher than the EFAS Total Score, it indicates that the organization is more likely to be able to cope with internal challenges compared to external threats.
- If the EFAS Total Score is higher, it indicates that the organization is more vulnerable to external threats.
- Overall, the integration of national security policies and international cooperation is key to addressing the complexity of today's threats.

(We adjust the weights and ratings based on the relative importance of each factor, and they are subjective. Such analysis can provide useful insights in formulating security strategies).

Enhanced SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

- Media Convergence (IFAS Score: 16):
 - Image Strengthening: The ability to use media convergence can help to strengthen the national image and understand information trends.
- National Security Cooperation (IFAS Score: 12):
 - Policy Integration: Cooperation between national security and other departments creates well-integrated policies.
- Dewan Keamanan Nasional (DKN) (Skor IFAS: 12):
 - Task Coordination: The DKN can be an effective platform for coordinating the tasks of the TNI and POLRI in accordance with the Republic of Indonesia's 1945 Constitution.

Weaknesses:

• Operasi Militer Selain Perang (OMSP) (IFAS Score: 12):



Task Selection Dilemma: The authorities must address the risk of a dilemma in selecting OMSP tasks.

Opportunities:

- Asymmetric Threats (EFAS Score: 16):
 - Enhanced Cyber Security: presents an opportunity to strengthen cyber defenses and address increasingly complex cyber attacks
- International Cooperation and Human Security (EFAS Score: 16):
 - Enhanced Global Response: International collaboration can strengthen the global response to non-traditional threats such as pandemics and natural disasters.

Threats:

- Non-traditional threats (EFAS score: 12):
 - Vulnerability to Environmental Threats: This refers to the risks associated with threats such as pandemics and climate change, which can have a significant impact.
- Media convergence in asymmetrical warfare (EFAS score: 12):
 - Information uncertainty: Media convergence can lead to information uncertainty and asymmetric warfare, where media is used as a security tool.

Strategic Implications:

1. Optimize media convergence:

- Enhanced the capacity of governments to use media convergence for security and diplomacy purposes.

2. Strengthening international cooperation:

- Focus on enhanced international cooperation to address common threats such as cyberattacks and pandemics.



3. Strengthen cyber defense:

 Investing in technology and human resources can enhance defense against cyberattacks.

4. Create an integrated policy:

 Encourage the development of integrated policies that cover the traditional and non-traditional aspects of security.

5. Evaluation and enhancement of the OMSP:

 To address the task selection dilemma, we are evaluating and improving military operations other than war.

The foundations for security in a changing world lie in international collaborative efforts and multidimensional approaches, as they effectively address the complexity involved.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings conclude that non-traditional security threats (NTSs) pose a serious threat to countries in the Asia-Pacific region, including Indonesia. NTS threats are complex and multidimensional, involving non-state actors with limited resources. Indonesia is also vulnerable to NTS threats, especially the threat of cyber terrorism, transnational organized crime, and natural disasters. Many parties, ahead of their intelligence communities, are grappling with the intricacies of non-traditional security threats. They are comprehending the behavior and signals of the long-standing conflict between the United States, a superpower, and the emerging new powers, China and India. This conflict has a significant impact on the equilibrium among all Pacific-related states, both allies of one power's polarity and neighbors of the new ones, who are apprehensive about the direct impact of these forces. Aside from that, the presence of "media convergence" in structurally asymmetric situations is a significant phenomenon in the world of communication and information.



In the context of information security, media convergence can be a powerful instrument of asymmetric warfare. Weaker parties can use media convergence to launch cyberattacks, influence public opinion, and gather intelligence. The implications and impact of asymmetric warfare in media convergence include uncertainty, required safeguards, and paradigm shifts in information security. An understanding of comprehensive security and security cooperation is very necessary by realizing that there are multidimensional security threats in the world, including facing transnational NTS, which cannot be faced by a country alone, where conflicts and threats will be managed collectively through international or regional cooperation, either multilateral or bilateral cooperative security is not a military pact (military alliances and collective security) against a specific enemy, but is a "multilateral effort to achieve security among all the participants through nonmilitary means, without attributing either friend or enemy status to the relations involved." It cannot be avoided that the complexity of intelligence shows that structured asymmetric threats can lead to major wars in the Asia Pacific region. Non-traditional threats, such as acts of terrorism or transnational crime, are among the factors that can worsen the situation and provoke fatal destruction in the true sense of war, as they involve various surrounding interests (social, economic, political, religious), natural resources, and weapons.

To overcome NTS security challenges, Indonesia needs to take the following steps in a comprehensive and integrated manner:

- a. Increasing cyber defense capacity to confront the threat of cyberterrorism is crucial. Strengthening the information technology infrastructure, enhancing personnel capabilities, and fostering international cooperation can achieve this.
- b. Enhance international cooperation to address non-traditional security issues of a transnational scope, including climate change and natural disasters. International cooperation is required to share information and resources, as well as to develop effective cooperation mechanisms.

Increase public awareness about the importance of non-traditional security. Communities need to be aware that non-traditional security threats can have a negative impact on their lives. The community also needs to play an active role in



efforts to overcome non-traditional security threats. The Indonesian government must take these recommendations seriously and comprehensively. This is important for Indonesia's security stability and development.

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