



## Implementing Comprehensive Security Through Institutional Synergy: Indonesia's Total People's Defense Framework in ASEAN Defense Minister's Meeting (ADMM) Cooperation

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### Abstract

This study examines Indonesia's implementation of comprehensive security through institutional synergy within the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) framework, grounded in the constitutional doctrine of Total People's Defense (Sistem Pertahanan Rakyat Semesta). In the context of multipolar geopolitics and intensifying nontraditional security challenges, it explains an implementation gap in which the whole-of-government mandate embedded in Total People's Defense is not translated into consistent domestic coordination for ADMM engagement. Existing research emphasizes Indonesia's geopolitical strategy or ADMM's regional architecture, leaving domestic organizational and bureaucratic impediments underexamined. A qualitative phenomenological case study combined observation of 15 ADMM activities (2020–2023), analysis of policy documents, including the State Defense Policy Guidelines (2020–2024), and interviews with eight senior policymakers. Three coordination failures were identified: 75% of non-defense officials were unfamiliar with policy provisions assigning their agencies as primary responders to nontraditional threats; 80% of ADMM activities relied on ad hoc rather than routine inter-agency coordination; and follow-up mechanisms were absent for integrating multilateral commitments into domestic planning and budgeting. Consequently, BNPB, BSSN, and the Ministry of Health remained peripheral despite statutory mandates, reinforcing fragmentation that constrains Indonesia's capacity to advance regional security governance and fulfill its ADMM leadership role. It is concluded that conceptual alignment between Total People's Defense and ADMM comprehensive security is necessary but insufficient without institutionalized coordination. Three interventions

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| <b>DOI:</b><br><a href="http://dx.doi.org/10.33172/jp.vx11i3.19884">http://dx.doi.org/10.33172/jp.vx11i3.19884</a> | are proposed: structured orientation and quarterly briefings, formal role delineation through regulation, and a standing ADMM Coordination Working Group to ensure continuity and domestic policy integration. |
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## INTRODUCTION

The post-Cold War era fundamentally reshaped the global geopolitical landscape, shifting from a unipolar world dominated by the United States to a more intricate, multipolar system (Buzan & Waever, 2003). This transition has substantial implications for national security strategies, compelling nations to re-evaluate their approaches to an increasingly diverse range of emerging threats, such as cyber warfare, terrorism, and regional conflicts (Acharya, 2019; Sarjito, 2024). New power centers, particularly in Asia, have emerged as countries such as China and India assert substantial economic and political influence, leading to a more distributed global power structure (Buzan, 2003). This transformation has also amplified the role of non-state actors in shaping international relations, such as multinational corporations and non-governmental organizations, thereby illustrating the importance of collaborative approaches to security (Amable, 2022; Emmers, 2009).

The advent of multipolarity necessitates a critical reassessment of national security paradigms (Morgan, 2003). Traditional concepts, which primarily focus on military capabilities and territorial defense, are increasingly inadequate for addressing the complex, non-traditional security challenges that define the modern world (Caballero-Anthony, 2005; Chin et al., 2023). Contemporary threats now encompass conventional military conflicts, cyberattacks, economic coercion, and global issues such as terrorism, climate change, and public health (Stern, 1995). Between 2020 and 2023, Southeast Asia experienced over 12,000 documented cyberattacks on critical infrastructure, 47 major natural disasters, and pandemic-related economic contractions averaging 5.4% of GDP, underscoring the material salience of these non-traditional threats (AHA center, 2023; ASEAN Secretariat, 2023). We can no longer address national security in isolation, given these multifaceted and interconnected challenges. Instead, nations must collaborate on both regional and global scales, recognizing that threats frequently transcend borders and that the security concerns of one nation often spill over into regional or global crises (Liaw et al., 2024; Prezlj, 2015).

This interdependence is particularly evident in Southeast Asia, a region whose strategic location and historical significance as a hub for international trade and geopolitical competition have made it a focal point in global security dynamics (Buzan, 1988; Goh, 2014). In response to this global shift, Southeast Asian nations have prioritized regional cooperation, with ASEAN playing a pivotal role in fostering political, security, economic, and sociocultural collaboration (Jati, 2014). ASEAN's concept of a "security community" diminishes the likelihood of conflict by cultivating trust, shared

norms, and mutual interests, stabilizing the region despite external pressures and internal challenges (Acharya & Tan, 2006).

A key initiative within ASEAN is the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM), established in 2006 (Ba, 2017). This meeting tackles several regional security concerns, from border management and maritime security to cybersecurity and disaster relief efforts (Chye, 2016). By 2023, ADMM frameworks encompass 31 distinct cooperation mechanisms across seven functional domains, expanded in 2010 to include eight external dialogue partners (ADMM-Plus) (ADMM Secretariat, 2023; Tan, 2020). Over time, the ADMM's scope has expanded to reflect the growing complexity of regional security threats (Task Force, 2024). The meeting has become a critical platform for fostering dialogue, building trust, and enhancing cooperation among member states to address shared security challenges (RSIS, 2015).

As a central player within ASEAN, Indonesia exemplifies the harmonization of national and regional security strategies (Anwar, 2020). The country's defense diplomacy is guided by its "free and active foreign policy," enabling it to engage with multiple global powers while maintaining sovereignty (Haryanto, 2014). This policy facilitates Indonesia's active participation in regional security initiatives, particularly through its involvement in the ADMM (Teo, 2023). The Global National Defense Policy Document (*Kebijakan Umum Pertahanan Negara/Jakumhanneg*) for 2020-2024 further underscores its commitment to strengthening ASEAN's collective security and highlights Indonesia's role in fostering comprehensive regional security (Perpres RI, 2021).

Indonesia's defense cooperation is constitutionally grounded in the Total People's Defense doctrine (*Sistem Pertahanan Rakyat Semesta/Sishankamrata*), enshrined in Article 30 of the 1945 Constitution and operationalized through Law No. 3/2002 (Murfi & Brantas, 2024). This doctrine mandates whole-of-government participation from all state components, governmental ministries, civil society, and citizens, recognizing that contemporary security threats transcend military dimensions (Malik et al., 2022; Sulistyani, 2018). Indonesia's General National Defense Policy 2020-2024 designates non-defense ministries as primary responders (*komponen utama*): the Ministry of Health for pandemics, BNPB for disasters, and BSSN for cybersecurity (Perpres RI, 2021, Articles 7-9).

This institutional architecture theoretically positions Indonesia advantageously within the ADMM framework, as the forum's expanded focus on non-traditional security challenges, encompassing disaster relief, pandemic preparedness, cybersecurity, counter-terrorism, and maritime security, aligns precisely with Indonesia's Total People's Defense doctrine. If effectively implemented, this alignment would enable Indonesia to leverage its constitutional framework as a model for operationalizing comprehensive security through regional defense cooperation. However, this study demonstrates through empirical analysis of Indonesia's ADMM participation that a substantial gap remains between doctrinal prescriptions and actual implementation practices, which undermines Indonesia's capacity to translate its Total People's Defense framework into effective regional security leadership. Empirical observation of 15

ADMM-related activities during 2020-2023 revealed systematic coordination failures in 12 instances (80%), characterized by limited non-defense ministry participation despite domain-specific mandates. Interview data from eight senior officials indicated that 73% of non-defense policymakers were unfamiliar with Indonesia's General National Defense Policy 2020-2024, which explicitly delineates interministerial responsibilities. To enhance Indonesia's contribution to regional security, it is imperative to rectify this coordination deficiency and ensure that all relevant entities operate more effectively in concert.

There is a well-established academic literature on Indonesia's defense diplomacy and the institutional efficacy of the ADMM, which stands for the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (Ba, 2017). However, this body of research tends to be *outward-looking*, focused primarily on geopolitical dynamics, such as Indonesia's balancing strategies against major powers or the effectiveness of the ADMM as a regional security architecture. Consequently, a significant research gap persists regarding inward-looking, organizational, and bureaucratic challenges that impede policy implementation. Scant empirical attention has been paid to the practical dynamics of institutional synergy between the Ministry of Defense and its non-defense counterparts (e.g., BNPB, BSSN, and the Ministry of Health) in the context of defense cooperation. Therefore, this article offers a distinct novelty by filling this gap. It shifts the analysis from Indonesia's policy to the reasons for its domestic implementation, encountering significant obstacles. Using an empirical qualitative approach grounded in policymaker interviews and direct observation, this article analyses the failure of interagency synergy as a critical variable determining the effectiveness of Indonesia's defense diplomacy in the region.

The global transition to multipolarity underscores the pressing need for cohesive national and regional security policies. The strategic importance of Southeast Asia, together with Indonesia's pivotal position in ASEAN, necessitates that the nation addresses its internal coordination issues, particularly in areas such as defense, diplomacy, and economic cooperation, to ensure a unified approach to regional security. By enhancing interagency collaboration, Indonesia can more effectively contribute to the promotion of a secure and stable Southeast Asia.

## METHODS

This research employed a qualitative case study approach to analyze ASEAN's defense cooperation within the ADMM framework over the past 3 years. The methodology was designed to investigate policy implementation gaps and interministerial coordination challenges in Indonesia's defense diplomacy (Kasmad, 2018).

Methodologically, a qualitative phenomenological case study was deemed necessary because coordination failures constitute what Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) term "implementation deficits," gaps between policy intent and bureaucratic practice that emerge from organizational routines and tacit assumptions that are invisible in formal documentation. Such phenomena require interpretive methods capable of

reconstructing actors' sense-making processes and uncovering latent coordination mechanisms. Quantitative approaches cannot trace the causal pathways through which ministerial fragmentation produces implementation failures, which is the core analytical task of this study. The phenomenological approach enabled moving beyond describing what coordination gaps exist to explaining why they persist despite constitutional mandates. This question requires process tracing, which is unavailable through quantitative methods (Beach & Pedersen, 2019), to understand the underlying mechanisms that contribute to the persistence of coordination gaps despite constitutional mandates.

To achieve this, data were gathered through a multifaceted approach that combined a comprehensive literature review with direct, systematic observation of ADMM activities and semi-structured interviews with senior policymakers from relevant government ministries and institutions. Observation sites were purposively selected from Indonesia's ADMM participation across three non-traditional security domains (pandemic response, disaster management, and cybersecurity) during 2020-2023, encompassing 15 of 47 Indonesia-attended ADMM activities (32%) deemed most relevant for examining inter-agency coordination. Interview participants were selected through purposive sampling, targeting officials with direct ADMM engagement responsibilities: two from the Ministry of Defense, one from the TNI, and five from non-defense ministries (BNPB, BSSN, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Coordinating Ministry for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs). Data collection continued until thematic saturation was achieved, as evidenced by repetitive patterns in coordination challenges across the three final interviews. This combined strategy was essential to facilitate robust data triangulation.

The methodological rigor of the study was maintained by grounding the design in established qualitative principles (Sugiyono, 2016; Creswell, 2009). The inductive and phenomenological approaches used the researcher's direct professional experience, a method crucial for capturing the complexities of social phenomena and actor motivations (Moleong, 2017). This approach, a validated principle of case study design (Yin, 2003), ensured that the structured observation accurately reflected contemporary social realities, thereby enhancing the study's overall validity (Bungin, 2003). Data analysis proceeded through thematic coding of interview transcripts and observational notes, followed by process tracing to reconstruct causal pathways linking coordination failures to implementation outcomes (Beach & Pedersen, 2019). Triangulation across data sources, policy documents, observational records, and interview transcripts enabled the validation of key findings and mitigation of researcher bias (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researcher's insider status in the Ministry of Defense enabled access to valuable information and perspectives but necessitated reflexive awareness to preserve analytical objectivity, ensuring that personal biases did not influence the interpretation of the data collected.

### **RSCT and Comprehensive Security: Indonesia's Regional Defense Framework**

The conclusion of the Cold War marked a profound transformation in global geopolitics, necessitating a fundamental reassessment of national security strategies (Buzan & Wæver, 2003). This shift is particularly evident in Southeast Asia, a region grappling with the complexities of a multipolar world (Buzan, 1988). To understand this evolution, the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) and comprehensive security frameworks provide crucial insights. RSCT highlights the complex interdependencies among regional states, demonstrating that security concerns are not confined to national borders but are inherently transboundary and geographically clustered (Haacke & Williams, 2009). In Southeast Asia, this process results in a situation in which the actions of one state, whether in territorial disputes, such as those in the South China Sea, or in broader geopolitical alignments, can reverberate across the entire region (Sudirman, 2017). For instance, maritime security incidents in the South China Sea directly affect Indonesia's Natuna waters, demonstrating how regional security dynamics immediately impact national sovereignty concerns (Connelly, 2021). The involvement of external powers, including the United States, China, and Russia, further compounds this dynamic, creating a nexus of competing interests that demands robust cooperative security mechanisms (Shiddiqy, Lugo, & Novarizal, 2024).

Indonesia, as a pivotal actor within this complex regional landscape, exemplifies the practical application of RSCT (Umar, 2023). Its foreign policy, firmly rooted in ASEAN principles, underscores the imperative of regional cooperation (Muzakki, 2017). Through its active participation in forums such as the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting, Indonesia demonstrates its firm commitment to dialogue and collaboration (Bland et al., 2021). Indonesia's chairmanship of ASEAN in 2023, which included chairing the ADMM, positioned it as a key architect of regional security frameworks addressing both traditional territorial concerns and emerging non-traditional threats (ADMM Secretariat, 2023). This approach recognizes that national security is inextricably linked to the stability of a broader region and acknowledges that contemporary security threats transcend national boundaries, necessitating collective action (Murphy, 2017).

Complementing RSCT, the concept of comprehensive security broadens the traditional security paradigm to encompass economic, environmental, and social dimensions (Räisänen et al., 2021). This holistic perspective recognizes the complexity of modern security challenges, which extend beyond military considerations to include issues such as climate change, cyberwarfare, and transnational terrorism (Chau, 2008). This expanded understanding is essential for building resilience and fostering long-term stability in Southeast Asia, a region vulnerable to a diverse array of threats (Hsiung, 2004). Indonesia's General National Defense Policy 2020-2024 exemplifies this integrated approach, demonstrating how RSCT and comprehensive security can work together. It emphasizes the value of regional cooperation through multilateral forums and capacity-building initiatives while simultaneously addressing non-traditional security challenges that threaten the region's stability (Räisänen et al., 2021). Specifically, Indonesia's General National Defense Policy designates non-defense ministries as

primary responders (*komponen utama*) for non-military threats, explicitly recognizing that pandemic response falls under the Ministry of Health's authority, disaster management under BNPB, and cybersecurity under BSSN, operationalizing comprehensive security principles within Indonesia's defense architecture (Perpres RI, 2021, Articles 7-9).

The post-Cold War security environment has significantly increased the complexity of national defense policy. It is no longer sufficient to focus solely on military strength (Liaw et al., 2024). A comprehensive effort is required. Indonesia's defense strategies reflect this nuanced understanding, prioritizing regional collaboration and a broad spectrum of security challenges (Muladi, 2007). By integrating RSCT and comprehensive security, Indonesia contributes to its national security and the broader stability of Southeast Asia as it navigates the intricacies of the evolving geopolitical landscape. However, the conceptual coherence of these frameworks at the policy level does not automatically translate into effective implementation, as demonstrated by persistent inter-agency coordination deficits within ADMM participation, a gap this study empirically examines, highlighting the need for improved collaboration and communication among agencies to enhance the effectiveness of these security frameworks. This comprehensive approach is vital for ensuring that the region remains a bastion of peace and stability in an increasingly complex world (Minnich et al., 2025).

The integration of RSCT and comprehensive security frameworks is institutionalized in Indonesia's Total People's Defense doctrine. Article 7 of the Jakumhanneg 2020-2024 explicitly designates civilian ministries as "primary components" (*komponen utama*) for addressing non-military threats, effectively operationalizing comprehensive security principles within a whole-of-government structure (Perpres RI, 2021, Articles 7-9). This institutional design aligns conceptually with the ADMM's evolution toward non-traditional security cooperation, in which RSCT identifies transboundary security interdependencies that require regional coordination, and comprehensive security broadens the threat spectrum beyond military domains. Indonesia's Total People's Defense doctrine provides the domestic governance architecture to mobilize diverse state capacities in response. Theoretically, this alignment positions Indonesia's Total People's Defense framework as a domestic institutional mechanism for implementing regional comprehensive security through ADMM cooperation, a structural advantage that distinguishes Indonesia from ASEAN member states lacking comparable constitutional mandates for whole-of-government defense participation. However, as subsequent empirical analysis reveals, this conceptual coherence at the policy level does not automatically translate into coordinated implementation. Persistent inter-agency coordination deficits, manifested in limited participation by non-defense ministries in ADMM activities, the absence of systematic information-sharing mechanisms, and weak follow-up on multilateral commitments, undermine Indonesia's capacity to leverage its Total People's Defense doctrine for effective ADMM engagement. This implementation gap, examined in detail through three ADMM cooperation domains (pandemic response, disaster management, and

cybersecurity), demonstrates that institutional synergy is not only desirable but constitutionally mandated, yet systematically absent in practice, a paradox with direct implications for Indonesia's regional security leadership aspirations.

### **Effective Defense Implementation: The Role of Inter-Agency Cooperation**

The bedrock of national sovereignty and integrity rests on the practical implementation of defense policies (Prayitno et al., 2024). In Indonesia, aligning governmental policies with the national defense strategy is crucial for navigating the complexities of modern security threats, as it ensures a cohesive approach to addressing issues such as terrorism, cyber threats, and regional instability. The Ministry of Defense emphasizes the importance of efficient resource management, asset utilization, and infrastructure development to achieve strategic defense objectives (Shobri et al., 2024). This cohesive approach is intended not only to bolster national development but also to provide a robust shield against a spectrum of security challenges, both traditional and emerging (Sulistyani, 2018). However, empirical analysis of Indonesia's ADMM participation reveals that ministerial resource allocation and personnel deployment often misalign with stated policy priorities, particularly when non-traditional security domains require expertise beyond the defense ministry. Indonesia's "total people's defense," which mandates the active participation of all societal sectors in national defense, fundamentally aligns with this strategy. This doctrine underscores the necessity of a unified, collective approach to safeguarding national security, ensuring that all elements of society contribute to strengthening the nation's defense posture (Malik et al., 2022).

A cornerstone of Indonesia's strategic framework is the pursuit of international defense cooperation, which leverages defense diplomacy to cultivate comprehensive security in Southeast Asia (Drab, 2018). This initiative fosters an environment conducive to regional development, yielding mutual benefits for all participating nations. Critically, it strengthens Indonesia's defense capabilities by building trust and confidence with regional partners, enhancing military capacity, and elevating the skills of defense personnel (Simatupang & Panggabean, 2022). Within the ADMM framework, Indonesia participates in seven expert working groups addressing pandemic response, disaster relief, cybersecurity, counter-terrorism, peacekeeping operations, military medicine, and maritime security, domains where effective implementation necessitates substantive contributions from ministries beyond defense, including Health, BNPB, BSSN, Foreign Affairs, and Transportation (ADMM Secretariat, 2023). Indonesia's national defense policy places significant emphasis on this diplomatic approach, including resource allocation, conflict prevention strategies, and strengthening regional security partnerships (Scott, 2019). This strategic outlook recognizes that national security is not solely dependent on military strength but also on sustained diplomatic engagement and robust global partnerships. Indonesia's comprehensive strategy thus underscores the imperative of integrating military and non-military efforts to safeguard national and regional stability.



However, the effective implementation of defense policies, particularly those involving international cooperation and defense diplomacy, faces significant hurdles (Seraw & Lu, 2020). A persistent gap exists between policy development and its execution, primarily due to insufficient inter-agency coordination. Many government bodies prioritize their core functions over defense matters, which leads to a fragmented approach to national security. Observational data from 15 ADMM activities (2020-2023) revealed that Defense Ministry and TNI personnel accounted for 87% of Indonesian delegations (13 of 15 events) across pandemic response, disaster management, and cybersecurity forums—despite these domains falling under the statutory mandates of the Ministry of Health, BNPB, and BSSN, respectively. Interview data corroborated this pattern: six of eight non-defense ministry officials (75%) reported receiving ADMM meeting invitations on an ad hoc basis with insufficient lead time for substantive preparation, while three ministries (Health, BNPB, and BSSN) indicated a lack of formalized procedures for integrating ADMM outcomes into domestic policy planning. The lack of robust oversight by the Ministry of Defense further exacerbates this issue, with ministries operating in 'silos,' hindering effective policy execution. This disjointed approach undermines the national defense strategy and hinders adaptation to non-traditional security threats, such as cyberattacks, which require an integrated and coordinated response.

To address these challenges, synergistic collaboration among all pertinent government agencies is essential (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1979). Synergy theory posits that the combined efforts of multiple organizations, when effectively coordinated, produce results far beyond those achievable by individual entities. In this context, ministries must establish robust communication and coordination channels to facilitate the sharing of resources, expertise, and strategic alignment. This collaborative framework will minimize inefficiencies, eliminate redundancies, and foster a holistic approach to national security. Crucially, it will enable Indonesia to maximize the effectiveness of its defense diplomacy initiatives. The following empirical analysis demonstrates how coordination deficits manifest across three ADMM cooperation domains, namely, pandemic response, disaster management, and cybersecurity, and examines the institutional mechanisms that either facilitate or impede inter-agency synergy in defense policy implementation. While Indonesia has made considerable strides in strengthening its national defense, sustained efforts are needed to further interagency collaboration and policy alignment, particularly in international defense cooperation. Effective implementation of defense policies requires the active participation and collaboration of all governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. By ensuring that these elements work in concert, Indonesia can achieve its paramount objective of safeguarding national sovereignty and promoting the well-being of its citizens.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Indonesia's defense diplomacy within the ADMM framework**

Established in 2006, the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting represents a pivotal development in Southeast Asia's security architecture (Ba, 2017). It emerged in response to both traditional and increasingly prominent non-traditional security challenges confronting the region. The main goal of the ADMM was to build trust and confidence between ASEAN member states and promote peace and stability in the region through constructive dialogue and practical cooperation. This initiative was strategically aligned with the broader goal of establishing an ASEAN Political-Security Community, as articulated in the 2003 Bali Concord II, demonstrating ASEAN's commitment to a unified and secure region. The ADMM's inclusive approach facilitated collaborative efforts in critical areas such as maritime security, disaster relief, and counterterrorism, effectively addressing the region's interconnected and complex security concerns.

In 2010, the ADMM's framework was expanded with the inauguration of the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus). This expansion included dialogue partners such as Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Russia, and the United States, indicating a more profound commitment to multilateral security cooperation (RSIS, 2015). ADMM-Plus aimed to deepen defense cooperation and enhance AMS capacity through a range of practical mechanisms, including joint exercises, workshops, and knowledge-sharing initiatives. It has proven instrumental in promoting trust, transparency, and practical cooperation among participating states, particularly through the establishment and activities of its Experts' Working Groups. These EWGs effectively address a spectrum of critical security issues, including counterterrorism, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and maritime security, fostering focused collaboration and capacity building. Throughout its evolution, ADMM-Plus has consistently upheld ASEAN centrality and the core principles of consensus and non-interference, ensuring that ASEAN remains the primary driver of regional security dialogue.

As the region continues to confront evolving threats, such as cybersecurity and pandemics, both platforms must demonstrate adaptability. A recent stocktaking exercise highlighted the need for AMS to reassess its strategies proactively. Timor-Leste's inclusion as an observer at ADMM events demonstrates ASEAN's commitment to inclusivity, while the growing interest from non-Plus countries further underscores the platform's significance (Task Force, 2024). Looking ahead, the ADMM is poised to place increased emphasis on cross-sectoral cooperation, requiring ASEAN to manage this growing demand while steadfastly preserving ASEAN centrality and ensuring that the organization remains at the core of regional initiatives. After nearly 2 decades, the ADMM has fostered diverse forms of cooperation, with approximately 30 activities per year. However, the institutional complexity of implementing this cooperation framework poses significant coordination challenges, particularly for Indonesia, given its constitutional doctrine of total people's defense, which mandates whole-of-government participation in security matters.

In Indonesia's context, neither the Ministry of Defense nor the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) can solely execute this regional defense framework. The

comprehensive security approach embedded in ADMM's cooperation domains necessitates substantive involvement from multiple civilian ministries and agencies whose statutory mandates align with specific security challenges. Table 1 synthesizes the institutional architecture of Indonesia's ADMM participation, compiled from ADMM official documentation, Indonesian ministerial regulations, and the researcher's structured observations across 15 ADMM-related activities during 2020–2023, triangulated with interviews with eight senior policymakers. The mapping demonstrates that of the 10 thematic clusters, seven require primary contributions from non-defense ministries: disaster management falls under BNPB authority pursuant to Law No. 24/2007; cybersecurity under BSSN per Presidential Regulation No. 53/2017; pandemic response under the Ministry of Health per Law No. 17/2023; maritime affairs under the coordination of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, the Coast Guard (BAKAMLA), and the Ministry of Transportation; and counterterrorism involves BNPT as the designated national coordinating agency under Presidential Regulation No. 46/2010. Critically, these findings are presented in Table 1, which outlines formal institutional mandates; subsequent empirical analysis reveals significant discrepancies between these legal responsibilities and actual participation patterns in ADMM activities.

**Table 1.** Institutional mapping of Indonesia's defense diplomacy within the ADMM framework: formal mandates and multi-agency responsibilities

| Cluster                                     | ADMM & ADMM-Plus Cooperation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Relevant Ministries/Agencies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Maritime Security                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ASEAN Direct Communication Infrastructure</li> <li>- ADMM Guidelines for Maritime Interaction (ADMM GMI)</li> <li>- Implementation of AOIP in the Defense Sector</li> <li>- ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Maritime Security</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- TNI,</li> <li>- Indonesian Navy,</li> <li>- Indonesian Coast Guard</li> <li>- The Defense Ministry's Data and Information center.</li> <li>- Ministry of Foreign Affairs</li> <li>- Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries</li> <li>- Ministry of Transportation</li> </ul> |
| Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Logistic Support Framework</li> <li>- ASEAN military Ready Group on HADR (AMRG on HADR)</li> <li>- ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief</li> </ul>                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National Agency for Disaster Countermeasures</li> <li>- TNI,</li> <li>- Ministry of Defense</li> <li>- Ministry of Foreign Affairs</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                   |
| Counterterrorism                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ASEAN Our Eyes</li> <li>- Network of ASEAN Chemical, Biological, and Radiological Defense Experts</li> <li>- ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Counterterrorism</li> </ul>                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National Counterterrorism Agency</li> <li>- TNI,</li> <li>- TNI Strategic Intelligence Agency</li> <li>- The Defense Ministry Strategic Information center.</li> </ul>                                                                                                          |

|                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | - Ministry of Foreign Affairs                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Peacekeeping Operation             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ASEAN Peacekeeping Center Network</li> <li>- ASEAN Flag Display at AMS Military Units Participating in UN PKOs</li> <li>- Enhancing Support Mechanisms for ASEAN Women Peacekeepers</li> <li>- ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations</li> </ul>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- TNI Peacekeeping center (PMPP TNI)</li> <li>- Ministry of Foreign Affairs</li> <li>- Ministry of Defense</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                              |
| Military Medicine (MM)             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ASEAN Center of Military Medicine (ACMM)</li> <li>- ASEAN Military Medicine Conference (AMMC)</li> <li>- Enhancing Cooperation Among AMS Defense Forces in Cross-Border Pandemic Containment</li> <li>- ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Military Medicine</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- TNI Surgeon General</li> <li>- The Defense Ministry Health Directorate</li> <li>- Ministry of Health,</li> <li>- Ministry of Foreign Affairs</li> <li>- National Agency for Disaster Countermeasures</li> <li>- The National Border Management Agency</li> </ul> |
| Cybersecurity                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ASEAN Cyber Defense Network</li> <li>- ADMM Cybersecurity and Information center of Excellence</li> <li>- ADMM-Plus Expert Working Group on CS</li> </ul>                                                                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National Cyber and Crypto Agency</li> <li>- TNI Cyber Forces</li> <li>- Defense Ministry Cyber Defense</li> <li>- Ministry of Communication and Information Technology</li> <li>- Ministry of Foreign Affairs</li> </ul>                                         |
| Border Management                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Role of the ASEAN Defense Establishment in Supporting Border Management Management (BORMA)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- TNI,</li> <li>- National Agency for Disaster Countermeasures</li> <li>- Ministry of Defense</li> <li>- Ministry of Foreign Affairs</li> </ul>                                                                                                                    |
| Defense Industry                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ASEAN Defense Industry Collaboration (ADIC)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Defense Ministry's Defense Industry Directorate</li> <li>- Indonesian Defense Industry Policy Committee.</li> <li>- Ministry of Foreign Affairs</li> </ul>                                                                                                   |
| Defense Education                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ADMM- Wide Training and Education Exchanges (AETEs),</li> <li>- ASEAN Defense Educational Institutions' Collaboration (ADEIC)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ministry of Foreign Affairs</li> <li>- Ministry of Defense</li> <li>- TNI</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Other confidence-building measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ASEAN Defense Interaction Program (ADIP)</li> <li>- Guidelines for Air Military Encounters (GAME)</li> <li>- ASEAN Defense Establishments and Civil Society Organizations</li> </ul>                                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ministry of Defense</li> <li>- Ministry of Foreign Affairs</li> <li>- TNI,</li> <li>- Indonesian Air Force</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                            |

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- Cooperation on Non-Traditional Security (CSO)
  - ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA)
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Sources: researcher, 2025

The institutional architecture presented in Table 1 reveals a fundamental paradox in Indonesia's engagement with the ADMM. The mapping demonstrates that seven of the ten thematic clusters require primary contributions from non-defense ministries under Indonesian law: disaster management (BNPb, Law No. 24/2007); cybersecurity (BSSN, Presidential Regulation No. 53/2017); pandemic response (Ministry of Health, Law No. 17/2023); maritime affairs (coordinated by the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Bakamla, and the Ministry of Transportation); and counterterrorism (BNPT, Presidential Regulation No. 46/2010). On the one hand, the diversity of cooperation domains aligns with Indonesia's comprehensive security doctrine and the Jakumhanneg 2020-2024's explicit designation of non-defense ministries as primary responders (*komponen utama*) for non-military threats (Perpres RI, 2021, Articles 7-9). This normative framework theoretically positions Indonesia advantageously within the ADMM, as its whole-of-government defense posture aligns with the forum's non-traditional security focus. However, this institutional complexity creates significant coordination challenges, and subsequent empirical analysis shows that these designated agencies systematically do not participate, highlighting the core implementation paradox examined in this study. Each ministry operates under distinct legal authorities, budgetary mechanisms, and organizational culture factors that complicate the horizontal coordination required for coherent ADMM participation. The Ministry of Health, for instance, prioritizes the ASEAN Health Ministers' Meeting (AHMM) over the ADMM-Plus Expert Working Group on Military Medicine (MM), viewing the latter as peripheral to its core mandate despite overlapping pandemic preparedness agendas. Similarly, the BSSN primarily engages through ASEAN Regional Forum cyber dialogues rather than through the ASEAN Cyber Defense Network (ACDN), perceiving the former as better aligned with its civil-cybersecurity mandate. This organizational fragmentation creates what implementation scholars' term "bureaucratic layering", in which new coordinating demands (ADMM participation) are superimposed on existing institutional arrangements without corresponding mechanisms for integration, resulting in coordination gaps examined in subsequent sections.

To empirically assess how this institutional complexity manifests in practice, this study analyzed Indonesia's participation across three ADMM cooperation domains selected for their strategic importance and multi-agency character: (1) pandemic response via the ADMM-Plus EWG on MM and ASEAN Military Medicine Conference (AMMC), encompassing eight observed activities during 2020-2023; (2) disaster management through the ADMM-Plus EWG on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster

Relief (HADR), including four observed coordination meetings and one hybrid exercise; and (3) cybersecurity cooperation within the ADMM-Plus EWG on Cybersecurity, ACDN, and ADMM Cybersecurity and Information center of Excellence (ACICE) establishment process, observed across three key negotiation sessions. These three domains were purposively selected because they represent non-traditional security challenges that, under Indonesian law, explicitly require non-defense ministry leadership but fall within the ADMM's institutional purview, thereby providing optimal analytical leverage for examining inter-agency coordination dynamics. For each domain, observational data on delegation composition, interministerial consultation processes, and follow-up implementation mechanisms were triangulated with interview responses from ministry officials directly involved in these activities, thereby

The sheer volume and diversity of cooperative efforts under the ADMM's defense cooperation umbrella underscore the fact that the military and defense sectors cannot operate in isolation. This reality necessitates close collaboration with government ministries and agencies that may not, at first glance, appear directly related to a nation's defense strategy. However, the scope of these organizations' responsibilities is demonstrably relevant to the evolving threat landscape. Therefore, synergy among all relevant institutions is indispensable to ensure that Indonesia's defense diplomacy is conducted effectively and seamlessly. Nevertheless, empirical examination of Indonesia's participation across the three selected domains reveals persistent coordination deficits that undermine this aspirational framework. The following analysis demonstrates that despite Indonesia's sophisticated policy architecture for comprehensive security (Table 1), systematic inter-agency coordination failures constrain the translation of multilateral ADMM commitments into coherent domestic implementation, a pattern with direct implications for Indonesia's capacity to advance regional security governance and fulfill its declared ADMM leadership ambitions.

### **Synergizing Inter-Agency Defense Policy Implementation**

Indonesia recognizes that the effective implementation of its national defense policy is not merely a matter of military strength but a multifaceted endeavor crucial to upholding national sovereignty and territorial integrity. In an era marked by increasingly complex and diverse security challenges, Indonesia's approach requires a cohesive, coordinated effort across governmental and non-governmental institutions. This is particularly vital in defense diplomacy, where Indonesia seeks to play a proactive role in advancing comprehensive security in Southeast Asia. To achieve these objectives effectively and efficiently, promoting robust institutional synergy is paramount. However, as the preceding institutional mapping reveals (Table 1), the multi-agency character of Indonesia's ADMM engagement spanning seven cooperation clusters that require non-defense ministry leadership poses acute coordination challenges, which this section empirically examines.

In this context, the concept of synergy extends beyond simple cooperation. It embodies a dynamic process in which the combined efforts of multiple institutions,

working in a coordinated manner, generate outcomes that far exceed the sum of their individual contributions (Benecke et al., 2007). It involves a holistic approach that spans from the initial stages of policy formulation and organization to the subsequent phases of mobilization, implementation, and control. This necessitates open communication, shared understanding, and a unified commitment to overarching goals, which implementation scholars' term "integrated interests," "coordinated efforts," and "communicated results" (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1979).

However, the path to achieving this synergy is not without its challenges. Empirical analysis of Indonesia's participation in the ADMM reveals three critical coordination gaps. The following analysis addresses the central research question: How do domestic inter-agency coordination failures impede Indonesia's implementation of comprehensive security through ADMM defense diplomacy? Three systematic coordination gaps emerged from triangulated data sources, each representing a distinct causal mechanism linking bureaucratic dysfunction to implementation deficits. First, insufficient policy socialization generates cognitive gaps that policymakers cannot coordinate when they lack understanding. Second, ad hoc coordination creates procedural gaps; without systematic mechanisms, interagency engagement remains episodic and ineffective. Third, the absence of follow-up mechanisms produces integration gaps, as multilateral commitments fail to translate into domestic policy action, leading to a disconnect between international agreements and local governance practices. Together, these gaps form a comprehensive explanatory framework for Indonesia's implementation paradox: constitutional mandate without operational capacity.

First, a primary obstacle lies in the lack of a unified understanding of defense cooperation policies across ministries and agencies. Interview data revealed that six of eight non-defense ministry officials (75%) demonstrated limited familiarity with the Jakumhanneg 2020-2024, particularly regarding provisions designating their ministries as primary responders (*komponen utama*) for non-military threats (Articles 7-9). During interviews conducted with non-defense ministry officials during the research period, a senior Ministry of Health official revealed limited awareness of their ministry's statutory responsibility for pandemic response coordination within ADMM frameworks, having previously assumed such matters were exclusively within the Defense Ministry's purview. This leads to fragmented approaches, duplication of efforts, and a diminished capacity to respond effectively to complex security threats. In some cases, institutions may prioritize their specific mandates over broader national security objectives, resulting in "siloed" operations and a lack of cohesion.

Second, observational data revealed that inter-agency coordination for ADMM activities operates predominantly on an ad hoc rather than systematic basis. Of the 15 ADMM meetings observed between 2020 and 2023, only three (20%) involved formalized pre-event coordination meetings among relevant ministries. The other 12 meetings were led by delegations from the Ministry of Defense/TNI, whereas non-defense ministries were either not invited or given too little notice to prepare properly. For example, during the 13th ADMM-Plus Expert Working Group on Humanitarian

Assistance and Disaster Relief, which took place online in June 2021, BNPB, the national authority for disaster management, sent a mid-level official who didn't know what had happened at previous meetings and left before the session was over. This meant that Defense Ministry staff had to negotiate technical disaster response protocols that were outside their area of expertise. This way of coordinating on the spot leads to inconsistencies in Indonesia's positions during meetings because the knowledge about past decisions is held by individual officials instead of being part of a structured process between ministries.

Third, robust mechanisms for monitoring and implementing follow-up actions from ADMM commitments remain absent. Seven of eight interviewed officials reported that their ministries lacked formalized procedures for tracking ADMM outcomes and integrating them into domestic policy planning. During the research period, interviews with BSSN officials indicated that although they received invitations to cyber-related ADMM events, there was no systematic mechanism to convert multilateral discussions into the formulation of domestic cybersecurity policy. Documentary analysis confirmed this finding: of the 23 ADMM meeting reports examined (2020-2023), none included distribution lists showing circulation to pertinent non-defense ministries, indicating that meeting outcomes are confined within Defense Ministry channels. This monitoring deficit undermines the translation of multilateral commitments into coordinated domestic implementation, thereby directly impeding Indonesia's capacity to operationalize comprehensive security principles through its participation in the ADMM.

These empirically identified coordination gaps necessitate targeted interventions across three dimensions: First, enhancing understanding and awareness is essential. A fundamental prerequisite for effective institutional synergy is a shared understanding of defense cooperation policies. This necessitates proactive measures to disseminate information and promote awareness among all relevant stakeholders. The socialization of key policy documents, such as the National Defense Policy Document (Jakumhanneg), is crucial in this regard. Current dissemination practices, limited to official gazette publication without targeted outreach, are inadequate for reaching non-defense ministry operational levels, which can lead to misunderstandings and misalignment in defense strategies across various institutions. These efforts should aim to clarify the goals, objectives, and strategic direction of defense cooperation, ensuring that all institutions are aligned in their understanding and approach. Specifically, structured orientation sessions for non-defense ministry officials assigned to ADMM-related functions would establish a baseline level of policy literacy. At the same time, quarterly inter-ministerial briefings on evolving ADMM priorities would maintain alignment over time. Furthermore, continuous dialogue and engagement among institutions can help foster a culture of shared understanding and facilitate the exchange of perspectives.

Second, effective synergy requires a clear delineation of the roles, responsibilities, and interdependencies of each ministry and agency involved in defense cooperation. This will help avoid duplication of effort, minimize conflicts, and ensure that each institution contributes optimally to its specific functions and expertise. The current absence of



standard operating procedures (SOPs) for inter-ministerial collaboration in ADMM contexts generates role ambiguity: Defense Ministry officials often assume responsibilities beyond their technical competence (e.g., negotiating pandemic response protocols), while technically competent ministries remain uninvolved. It is essential to recognize that defense is no longer the sole domain of the military or the defense ministry but a shared responsibility that requires the active participation of various civilian agencies. Formalizing role delineation through presidential regulation specifying lead agencies, supporting ministries, and coordination protocols for each ADMM cooperation cluster would provide the legal clarity necessary for systematic inter-agency engagement. By clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of each institution, it is possible to create a framework for seamless collaboration and integrated action.

Third, the establishment of robust coordination and communication mechanisms is the linchpin of effective institutional synergy. This involves creating channels for the regular exchange of information, intelligence, and perspectives among institutions. It also necessitates the development of joint planning and decision-making processes that enable institutions to work together seamlessly toward common objectives. Current coordination mechanisms, such as episodic email exchanges and occasional phone calls, lack institutional weight to compel cross-ministerial engagement. Establishing interagency task forces, joint working groups, and regular meetings and forums for dialogue can facilitate this. Specifically, establishing a standing ADMM Coordination Working Group, chaired by the Coordinating Ministry for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs and comprising designated focal points from each ministry mapped in Table 1, would institutionalize systematic coordination. Quarterly meetings of this body would enable joint planning for upcoming ADMM events, review of implementation progress, and resolution of inter-ministerial coordination challenges. The use of technology and digital platforms can also enhance communication and coordination, enabling real-time information sharing and collaborative problem-solving.

A further measure to establish these mechanisms would be to expedite the effective operationalization of the National Defense Council (*Dewan Pertahanan Nasional*/DPN), as mandated by the 2002 State Defense Law. The council serves as a forum for ministers responsible for national defense and could facilitate intensive communication and closer coordination, enabling the synergistic implementation of defense policies, including in defense diplomacy. While the DPN's ministerial-level composition positions it for strategic policy coordination, operational-level synergy requires complementary working-level mechanisms; hence, the proposed ADMM Coordination Working Group would function as the implementing arm of DPN directives for ADMM-specific coordination. The council also allows for closer people-to-people contact, which, as is customary in the Indonesian context, often yields better results in fostering mutual understanding and collaboration among diverse communities.

By prioritizing institutional synergy, Indonesia can significantly enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of its implementation of the national defense policy, particularly in the critical area of defense diplomacy. The empirical evidence presented

here, including 75% policy unfamiliarity, 80% ad hoc coordination, and zero systematic follow-up mechanisms, demonstrates that current coordination deficits are not marginal inefficiencies but systemic impediments to the effectiveness of Indonesia's ADMM. This will enable Indonesia to play a more active and influential role in shaping the regional security landscape, addressing the increasingly diverse and complex threats that confront Southeast Asia, and navigating the geopolitical realities of the 21st century while upholding its commitment to a "free and active" foreign policy. Furthermore, a synergistic approach will strengthen Indonesia's capacity to advance ASEAN ideals through key platforms, such as the ADMM, thereby contributing to maintaining peace, stability, and prosperity in the region.

## **CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND LIMITATIONS**

This research concludes that institutional synergy is a prerequisite for the effective implementation of defense policy and the successful conduct of defense diplomacy within the ADMM framework. Through qualitative analysis of Indonesia's ADMM participation across three cooperation domains—pandemic response, disaster management, and cybersecurity—the study identifies three critical coordination gaps that systematically undermine policy execution: (1) insufficient policy socialization, with 75% of non-defense ministry officials unfamiliar with Jakumhanneg provisions designating their agencies as primary responders; (2) ad hoc rather than systematic inter-agency coordination, evident in 80% of observed ADMM activities; and (3) absence of follow-up mechanisms to translate multilateral commitments into domestic implementation. This lack of implementation is especially important because Indonesia's constitution requires all levels of government to be involved in security matters. If this principle were put into practice effectively, Indonesia could become a model for comprehensive security implementation within the ADMM framework and use its unique institutional structure to lead the way in regional security. This research demonstrates that implementing comprehensive security through institutional synergy as mandated by Indonesia's Total People's Defense framework requires not only constitutional provisions or policy documents but also the systematic operationalization of coordination mechanisms within multilateral cooperation frameworks such as the ADMM.

The study's central finding is that Indonesia's comprehensive security architecture, while conceptually robust, is poorly implemented due to bureaucratic fragmentation. Non-defense ministries, particularly BNPB, BSSN, and the Ministry of Health, remain peripheral to ADMM processes despite their statutory mandates for disaster management, cybersecurity, and pandemic response, respectively. This implementation deficit directly constrains Indonesia's capacity to advance regional security governance and fulfill its declared role as ADMM leader.

To address these deficits, the research proposes three targeted interventions: [first](#), institutionalized policy socialization through structured orientation sessions and quarterly inter-ministerial briefings; second, formalized role delineation via presidential regulation specifying lead agencies and coordination protocols for each ADMM

cooperation cluster; and third, the establishment of a standing ADMM Coordination Working Group under the Coordinating Ministry for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs, with designated focal points from relevant ministries meeting quarterly for joint planning and implementation monitoring.

This study's contribution lies in shifting analytical focus from Indonesia's external defense diplomacy posture to the internal bureaucratic dynamics that determine policy effectiveness. While existing scholarship examines Indonesia's geopolitical balancing strategies and the ADMM's regional architecture, this research provides empirical evidence of how domestic coordination failures constrain multilateral engagement, a gap largely unaddressed in defense studies literature.

Limitations and future research directions: This study focused primarily on *why* institutional synergy fails and *how* coordination mechanisms might be strengthened. It has not examined in detail the operational methodologies of defense diplomacy itself—how specific diplomatic instruments (bilateral defense agreements, joint exercises, and capacity-building programs) translate into tangible security outcomes. Future research should investigate these operational dimensions, particularly: (1) comparative analysis of coordination mechanisms across ASEAN member states to identify best practices; (2) longitudinal assessment of whether the proposed interventions (once implemented) successfully enhance inter-agency collaboration; and (3) examination of how effective domestic coordination correlates with Indonesia's influence within ADMM decision-making processes. Such research would enable Indonesia to lead ASEAN more effectively in adapting to dynamic geopolitical shifts and operationalizing comprehensive security principles within Southeast Asia's evolving threat landscape.

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